



Parent guide

How to secure a diagnosis for a child

Seeking a diagnosis for your child can be a big step.

The first question to consider is *what are you hoping to achieve by securing a diagnosis?*

- Are you seeking a greater understanding of your child and their challenges?
- Do you believe your child would benefit from Access Arrangement in exams?
- Are you worried about the way teaching is being adapted to meet your child's needs and believe a diagnosis would help?

We always advise talking to school about your concerns. Waiting lists for a diagnosis can be long, and there are many steps that can be taken without a diagnosis or whilst waiting for one.

Below is a helpful guide to seeking a diagnosis for commonly occurring Special Educational Needs.

Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	Option 1: NHS Referral Service A referral for ASD and ADHD is managed through the Children and Young People Management Referral Service (NHS). A school pack is completed by the school and parent pack by the parents which will include your child's views. Staff and others will be asked to fill in a range of questionnaires which will inform the decision of the referral service.
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)	The Referral Service will decide if the documentation meets their criteria for assessment and will accept or decline the referral.
Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)	If accepted – parents will receive a letter to say that the referral has been accepted and will outline the next steps. The letter also outlines the current waiting time, and that referrals cannot be prioritised. The current waiting time is approximately 4 years.
	Option 2: the 'Right to Choose' pathway. Parents visit the child's GP and discuss their concerns. They explain that they would like their child to be assessed for ASD/ADHD and that they would like to go down the 'right to choose' route. The GP will signpost them to approved services / clinicians. Parents apply to that agency directly – questionnaires will be sent to school as part of their processes. This method is likely to be quicker.
	Option 3: Private Diagnosis Seek a private diagnosis. This route can cost in excess of £1000
Specific Learning Difficulty: Dyslexia, Dyspraxia & Dyscalculia	There is no NHS pathway for a diagnosis in these areas – it is always a private pathway. Instead, visit the British Dyslexia Association (https://www.dyslexiauk.co.uk/) / PATOSS (https://www.patoss-dyslexia.org/) and look for a list of assessors. Parents need to apply to that agency directly – questionnaires will be sent to school as part of their processes. If parents commission a private dyslexia assessment / SPLD assessment, the assessor must contact the school, especially if a report is likely to recommend Access Arrangements.

If, as part of any diagnosis, students are assessed for Access Arrangements outside of school, the assessor must contact the SENDCo. If they don't, the school is legally unable to accept their recommendations for Access Arrangements.