

Preparing for Adulthood

14 - 25 Transition Guide



Giving
disabled children
a brighter future

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INTRODUCTION

The move from childhood to adulthood can be a stressful time of change for all young people and their families. Young people may have lots of questions about who they will become as adults and how they will achieve their goals and aspirations. This period of time can be even more stressful if you have Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities.

This guide will help you plan and navigate your way smoothly through one of the most important times in you and your child's life.

Preparing for adulthood means planning for:

- Higher education and/or employment – this includes exploring different employment options, such as support for becoming self-employed and help from supported employment agencies.
- Independent living – this means young people having choice, control and freedom over their lives and the support they have, their accommodation and living arrangements, including supported living.
- Participating in society - including having friends and supportive relationships, and participating in, and contributing to, the local community.
- Maintaining good health in adult life

Reminder! Preparation for adulthood should happen no later than year 9. This gives you time to prepare and think about all possible pathways towards becoming an adult.

If your child has an EHC plan (Education, Health and Care Plan), your Local Authority must ensure that all annual reviews from Year 9 onwards focus on preparing for adulthood. You should receive support from all relevant services in the transition to adulthood from Year 9.

Education

Young people attending a mainstream school will be asked to choose which subjects they want to study from (Year 10 and 11, ages 14-16). If appropriate, these will be the subjects they will take for GCSE exams. English, Math and Science are all compulsory subjects, although some schools have other compulsory subjects.

However if your teenager is not working at the levels necessary for GCSEs, ask the school about other accredited qualifications that might be available such as:

- Entry level qualifications
- Functional skills
- BTEC qualifications

Social care

Your child's social care needs may change as they get older. Therefore the support they receive regarding their social care might change. You need to make sure that the support they will be receiving will be relevant.

You might want to consider asking about direct payments to pay for a PA (Personal Assistant), who can help the young person access social and leisure activities, work experience and/or Short Breaks.

Health

Young people with the most complex needs may need to start planning as soon as possible. This will ensure support can be given at every stage effectively.

Hospital services

Planning the move from children's to adult hospital services should begin in Year 9. Your teenagers developmental and health needs will be taken into consideration when managing the move to adult hospital services.

Reminder! Clinical services do the transition differently, ask your local SENDIASS for advice on transitioning to adult health services.

Annual health check

Your doctor's surgery should offer your teenager an annual health check. It is a chance for your teen to get used to visiting the doctor's surgery on their own where appropriate.

The annual health check will involve visiting the doctor's surgery to see a nurse or doctor who will:

- Carry out a general physical examination
- Assess emotional wellbeing and behaviour
- Ask questions about lifestyle and diet
- Review currently prescribed medication
- Check whether any chronic illnesses, such as asthma or diabetes, are being well managed
- Review arrangements with other health professionals, e.g. physiotherapists or speech and language therapists

Education

Now is the time to review how your child's studies are going. If you think your child needs extra help to successfully take their GCSE exams at the end of Year 11 such as extra time or an individual room, you should talk to the SENCO and/or Examinations Officer at school as soon as possible about Access Arrangements.

Access Arrangements allow students with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access exams without changing the demands of the assessment.

Health

Flu jab for carers

The seasonal flu vaccine is the best way to protect yourself and the person you care for from the flu. Speak to your GP about having a flu jab along with your disabled young person.

Reminder! Proof of receiving Carer's Allowance may need to be provided.

Education

Year 11 is the last year of compulsory schooling. After your child has completed their compulsory schooling in Year 11. They have the option to attend 6th form or college to continue their education. You can check websites for open days/evenings.

The school year finishes early in Year 11, whether your young person is taking exams or not. It will end either on the last Friday in June or earlier because of study leave. Check with school in good time to make alternative arrangements.

Health

Looking ahead is important to ensure your child maintains good health into adulthood. In year 11 your child should be invited to attend an annual health check by their GP (General Practice) if they are on the Learning Disability Register.

Legal matters

Some rights related to EHC plans transfer from parents to the young person once the young person reaches the end of compulsory school age (the last Friday in June of the school year in which they turn 16).

These are the right to:

- Ask for an EHC needs assessment
- Make representations about the content of their EHC plan
- Ask that a particular education setting is named in their plan
- Request a personal budget, and the right of appeal to the SEND Tribunal.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005

Young people aged 16 and over who are unable to make some or all decisions by themselves are affected by this Act. Mental capacity is assessed in relation to a specific decision that needs to be made at that particular time. For example, some young people may be able to make a decision on what they want to do on a particular day but might lack the capacity to make complex financial decisions.

Decisions can be made for young people in their best interest if they do not have the capacity to make the particular decision themselves, after each decision has been assessed. The person that requires the decision to be made should lead the decision process to make the best interest decision.

The Act requires young people to have an advocate. This would usually be their careers and family members. Where there is not an appropriate person to advocate on their behalf, the Preparing for Adulthood social worker will support you to access a formal independent advocate to support you with the assessment process and decisions arising from it.

Finance and benefits

Young people turning 16 can:

- Claim benefits in their own right. If they stay in full time non advanced education (GCSE's, A-levels, BTEC's and NVQ levels 1-3) parents can choose to continue to claim for them on their behalf as part of their family.
- Receive direct payments in their own right
- Be assessment for PIP (Personal Independence Payment). If they have been receiving DLA they will get reassessed.

16-19 Bursary Fund

Young people aged 16-19 could be entitled to receive a bursary for education related costs such as books, transport and clothing if they are:

- Studying at a publicly funded school or college in England – not a university
- On a training course, including unpaid work experience

Find out more about 16-19 Bursary funds here <https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund>.

Appointeeship

If the young person is unable to manage their own affairs because they lack the mental capacity you can become their 'appointee' for benefit claims.

You are then given the responsibility to:

- Sign the benefit claim form.
- Tell the benefit office about any changes which affect how much the claimant gets.
- Spend the benefit (which is paid directly to you) in the claimant's best interests.
- Tell the benefit office if you stop being the appointee, for example the claimant can now manage their own affairs.

Reminder! If the benefit is overpaid, depending on the circumstances, you could be held responsible.

Find out more about becoming an appointee here

<https://www.gov.uk/become-appointee-for-someone-claiming-benefits>

Education

Young people must continue their education or training until their 18th birthday. Young people with an EHC plan can apply to a study programme that continues up to the age of 25. Study programmes should always include English and maths, at an appropriate level.

Some students with SEND will be able to work towards achieving GCSE grade C (4) or above, whereas other young people may qualify for an exemption.

Young people with an EHC plan can undertake Supported Internships or Traineeships which aim to prepare them for employment or apprenticeships.

For more information visit Local Offer – Education and Learning or contact your local SENDIASS.

Social care

The Local Authority must complete a transition assessment before the young person reaches the age of 18, as the eligibility for Adult Social Care Services is different to the eligibility for Children's Social Care, SEN support and EHC planning.

It is not a requirement to offer a five day service however the Local Authority has the responsibility to complete a needs assessment and develop a social care support plan that meets the needs identified.

The young person's aspirations and goals will be considered throughout the assessment and social care support plan. Furthermore maintaining and developing independence wherever possible will be a continuing focus.

For more information contact your local SENDIASS.

Finance and benefits

The young person may be eligible for An Access to Work grant which can cover the additional support your young person may need for the in work element of a support internship or traineeship.

Find out more about An Access to Work grant here ([link the gov website](#)) or contact your local SENDIASS.

Transport and travel

Beyond the compulsory school age (16 years) there is no automatic entitlement to free travel assistance for students attending sixth form or college.

However there are schemes and funds to support people of all ages with additional needs to access education, while preparing students to be independent and confident travellers.

For more information on transport and travel assistance visit your Local Offer or contact your local SENDIASS.

Education and training

Ending the EHC plan

Most young people with an EHC plan will have completed their education by age 19. However it is understood that the length of time needed will vary according to each individual up to the age of 25.

The Local Authority must annually review an EHC plan for young people age 19 to 25 years old. They must not cease the EHC plan simply because the young person is 19 or over. They need to take into account whether the education or training outcomes in the EHC plan have been achieved.

Reminder! The EHC plan must contain outcomes to help young people successfully complete their training and education successfully.

Special School

Young people aged 19 and over cannot remain in a special school unless they are completing a secondary education course started before they were 18 years old.

Higher Education

Social care

Every young person's Needs Assessment will be reviewed on an annual basis, to confirm the support plan is still meeting their social care needs. You or the young person can request a review at any time, if there is a change in their support needs.

Finance and benefits

Care and support costs

People over the age of 18 who have eligible care and support needs under the Care Act may have to contribute towards the cost of their care and support. The Local Authority will carry out a financial assessment to check how much your young person can afford to contribute towards their care and support.

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP):

Young people who are disabled may be eligible to claim:

- **Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)** - which offers financial support if they are unable to work or personalised help to work if they are able to.
- **Personal Independence Payment (PIP)** – which is additional weekly payments. The amount awarded depends on how your condition affects you, not the condition itself.
- **Work Choice** - provides help to get and keep a job if your young person is disabled and may find it hard to work. The type of support offered depends on needs and is different for everyone, but can include: training and developing skills; building confidence; interview coaching.

Supported employment

Supported Employment has been successfully used to support people with significant disabilities to secure and retain paid employment. A partnership strategy is used to enable people with disabilities to achieve sustainable long-term employment and businesses to employ valuable workers.

Find out more here <https://www.base-uk.org/>

Transport and travel

Students attending sixth form or college up to the age of 25 may still qualify for Travel Assistance.

Contact Us

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) provides free impartial, confidential and accurate information, advice and support about education, health and social care for children, young people and their parents on matters relating to special educational needs and disability.

Contact your local SENDIASS to find out more about SEN Support in schools.

Visit our SENDIASS website:
<https://www.kids.org.uk/sendiass>