

# Preparing for adulthood

A protocol for professionals working with young people with special educational needs or a disability





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# Introduction

The Children and Families Act 2014 introduced a new special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) system. At the heart of the changes is a commitment to ensuring that children, young people and their families are at the centre of decision making in order that they achieve better outcomes.

The majority of children and young people with SEND can be successful with support from their schools, family and the community.

This document focusses on those young people with SEND, aged 13 years up to 25 years who need additional support. It sets out the vision and principles for how services will work together to support young people with special educational needs and disabilities to prepare for adult life.

The pathway to adulthood is sometimes referred to as 'Transition' to adult life and services. 'Transition' is not a word that young people tend to use when discussing their future; instead they might talk about 'growing up' which may include ordinary things like:

- Forming views about their own future;
- Increased right to make requests and decisions;
- Leaving school;
- Starting further education or training;
- Having boyfriends/girlfriends;
- Leaving home;
- Moving on to higher education/university;
- Travelling;
- Getting a job.

From Year 9 (the academic year during which a child/young person becomes aged 14), those supporting young people must focus on enabling young people to achieve outcomes such as paid employment, independent living, community inclusion and health and wellbeing.



## Our vision

Young People with SEND in Leicestershire are prepared for a successful adulthood and their voice is heard

## Principles

- Promoting independence;
- Preparation for life;
- Well informed and able to make choices;
- Opportunities for work, education and leisure;
- Access to information and advice to support health and wellbeing.

Good preparation for adult life needs to start early and high aspirations are crucial to success. The focus should be on the young person's strengths and capabilities and the outcomes they want to achieve. To plan successfully, all services involved in the young person's life need to actively engage and support the planning for adulthood. Schools and other service providers should start having discussions with young people about long-term goals, ideally before they reach the age of 14.

As children get older and become young adults, it is important that they are provided with opportunities to take more control over their lives, including health care and become directly involved with choices. They should be supported to make decisions for themselves, wherever possible, and workers should take account of the Mental Capacity Act. Discussions about their future should focus on what they want to achieve and the best way to support them to do this. Aspirations and needs will vary and change over time as young people get older and approach adult life.

# Young people preparing to make their own decisions

As young people develop and form their own views, they should be more involved in decisions about their own future. After compulsory school age (the end of the academic year in which they turn 16) the right to make requests and decisions under the Children and Families Act 2014 applies to them directly, rather than to their parents/carers. Parents/carers and other family members can continue to support young people in making decisions, or act on their behalf, provided the young person is happy for them to do so.

Within Health services, Gillick competency and Fraser guidelines are widely used to help assess whether a young person has the maturity to make their own decisions and to understand the implications of those decisions in relation to treatment - <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-protection-system/legal-definition-child-rights-law/gillick-competency-fraser-guidelines/>.

The specific decisions which apply to young people directly from the end of compulsory school age include the right to:

- request an assessment for an Education Health and Care (EHC) Plan;
- make representation about the content of their EHC Plan;
- request a particular institution is named in their EHC Plan;
- request a Personal Budget for elements of an EHC Plan;
- appeal to the First-tier Tribunal (SEN and Disability).

This does not mean that parents/carers are excluded. The local authority, schools, colleges, health services and other agencies should continue to involve parents/carers, particularly when the young person is not yet 18 years. Typically, young people this age will still want support and advice from their parents/carers on decisions that affect them, but the final decision rests with the young person.





Recognising the increasing independence of young people once they reach age 16 and beyond - the local areas have a number of legal responsibilities such as making sure:

- information, advice and support is available and accessible directly to young people; independent of their parents/carers if that is what they want;
- that all reviews of EHC Plan for young people from age 13-14 onwards, include a focus on preparing for adulthood;
- that young people have access to support from an independent skilled supporter if they want or need this;
- services they provide, such as housing and adult social care, help young people prepare for adulthood;
- an adult care transition assessment is carried out for young people approaching or aged 18 and over with SEN or disabilities, if they think it will benefit that young person;
- where a young person is in receipt of continuing health care that a transition assessment is completed at 17 years.

In keeping the young person's voice central to what we do, we will follow the law and help those involved understand this.

For children and young people under 16 the Gillick or Fraser Test is used and this broadly allows them to make decisions for themselves where they understand it and the possible consequences of making it.

The Mental Capacity Act applies to 16 and 17 year olds and makes it clear that they have the right (with very few exceptions) to make their own decisions. The statutory principles in the Act fully support the approach in this pathway and must be followed by all those involved.

Professionals should understand the law and be able to put it into practice. They should assume the person has capacity and support them to make their own decisions even if these are unwise.

Where it is shown that they lack capacity to make a particular decision then all acts and decisions made on their behalf have to be in their best interests and be done in the least restrictive way.

Supporting young people and their families with decisions making is therefore a vital part of preparing for adulthood. There needs to be good communication and co-ordination between the young person's family (if involved with young person) and service providers to maintain choice and control for the young person





Advocacy is about speaking up for young people and helping them make decisions that affect their lives, making sure their rights are respected and their views and wishes are heard and acted upon by decision makers.

For many young people, parents/carers and professionals advocate with and on behalf of the young person. However there are times and circumstances when an independent advocate may be needed or requested by the young person to ensure their views, wishes and feelings are heard when decisions are made about their lives. This is particularly the case when a young person feels vulnerable, isolated, disempowered, is Looked After, or has different views to their parents/carers.

There are several types of advocacy available including:

- Citizen Advocacy: partnerships are long term, not time-limited; are ordinary members of the local community. They are unpaid and usually operate with support from a coordinated scheme;
- Peer Advocacy: one-to-one support provided by advocates with a similar disability or experience. Trained and supported volunteers are often part of a coordinated project.

- Self-Advocacy: recognises that people are experts by experience and involves them in speaking out for themselves about the things that are important to them.
- Professional Advocacy: Paid independent advocates support to enable people to speak up and represent their views, usually during times of major change or crisis is issue-based and may only need to work with the person for a short time.

Successful advocacy involvement can lead to a young person having more choice, control and their voice heard leading to improved empowerment and an increased awareness of access to rights and raised expectations.

# Careers advice for children and young people

Schools and colleges should ensure that students are provided with independent careers guidance. Schools and colleges should raise the career aspirations of their students with special educational needs and disabilities and broaden their employment horizons. They should use taster opportunities, work experience, mentoring, role models and inspiring speakers to assist young people to make informed decisions.

# Post 16 Options

## Further education

Study programmes should be individually tailored but will typically combine the elements below:

Substantial academic, applied or vocational qualifications, English and maths where students have not yet achieved a GCSE grade 4, work experience and work placement in external settings to give young people the opportunity to develop their career choices and to apply their skills in real working conditions and other non-qualification activity to develop students' character, skills, attitudes and confidence, and to support progression

All students are expected to take part in other meaningful non-qualification activity alongside work experience. This should take account of their needs and career plans, as well as preparation for adult life more generally. For example:

- Activities to develop confidence, character and resilience, group work to develop team working, leadership and problem solving, tutorials and seminars (including careers education), life skills, such as the ability to travel independently, how to cook and to eat healthily, stay safe, personal finance, or preparation for University life.





## Training

Traineeships are study programmes for young people without level 3 qualifications to help prepare them for an apprenticeship or other sustainable employment where training is 'on the job'. Traineeships should last for a minimum of six weeks and a maximum of six months.

## Supported internship

Supported internships offer young people with an EHC plan an opportunity to develop the skills, experience and confidence they need for employment. A supported internship is a substantial work placement with the support of an expert job coach.

## Apprenticeship

Apprenticeships combine work and study by mixing on-the-job training with classroom learning doing a real job while studying for a formal qualification, usually for one day a week either at a college or a training centre. By the end of the apprenticeship, gained the skills and knowledge needed to either succeed in chosen career or progress onto the next apprenticeship level.

## Post 16 Funding

Many young people with SEND will have their needs met from the colleges' core funding, also referred to as 'place' funding. If the cost of an individual's support is over and above the core funding additional funding can be paid by the local authority in which the student resides to enable a student to participate in education and learning; this is referred to as top-up funding (sometimes called element 3) and is part of the High Needs Funding system.

### High Needs Funding is for:

- pupils or students aged 5 to 18 (inclusive of students who turn 19 on or after 31 August in the academic year in which they study) with high levels of SEN in schools and academies, further education (FE);
- institutions, specialist post-16 institutions (SPIs) – it is not necessary for these pupils or students to have a statement of SEN or EHC Plan in order to receive high needs funding;
- those aged 19 to 25 in general Further Education institutions and Specialist Post-16 Institutions (SPIs) who have an EHC Plan and require additional support costing over £6,000.

High Needs Funding cannot be used to fund students aged over 19 who do not have an EHC Plan. The Skills Funding Agency is responsible for funding adult learning, this includes learning for those aged 19 and over with learning difficulties and/or disabilities that do not have an EHCP.



## Progressing beyond an EHCP

The EHC Plan will end when a child or young person no longer requires the special educational provision specified in the plan as educational or training outcomes have been achieved, or a young person aged over 16 leaves education to take up employment or higher education, or a young person aged over 18 no longer wishes to engage in further learning the Local Authority will notify parents/carers and/or young people of their decision to begin the process of ceasing the EHC Plan. Support for a child or young person may still be accessed from identified services.

## The Care Act 2014

Under the Care Act the local authority has a duty to carry out a transition assessment for a young person or carer, in order to help them plan, if they are likely to have needs once they (or the child they care for) turn 18. If a young person or young carer is likely to have needs when they turn 18, the local authority must assess them when it considers there is a significant benefit to the individual in doing so.

The kind of support you can get depends largely on your needs. This means the type of health problem you have, or the severity of your disability. The aim will be to maximise your independence and build on your strengths and your network of support.

This is normally done through a personal budget, which is an agreed amount of money allocated to you personally to meet your care and support needs. The range of support available is very broad but includes equipment, care services, employing personal assistants, support to access a range of community activities, short stays to give you or your carers a break and accommodation with support.

Clinical Commissioning Groups have a duty under Section 3 of the NHS Act 2006 to arrange health care provision for the people for whom they are responsible to meet their reasonable health needs.



## The Local Offer

The Leicestershire Local Offer provides information about help and support services in Leicestershire for children and young people with SEND and their families. The Local Offer provides clear, comprehensive, accessible and up to date information about the available provision and how to access it. It also informs commissioning and so makes the provision more responsive to local needs and aspirations by directly involving disabled children and those with SEN and their parents, and disabled young people and those with SEN, and service providers in its development and review.

## Reference/Toolkit

The Leicestershire Local Offer; information for children and young people with SEND and their families

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/special-educational-needs-and-disability/about-the-local-offer>

Preparing for Adulthood website; provides a range of information and resources.

<https://www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/>

'Preparing for Adulthood': a useful benchmarking tool for measuring progress.

<http://www.helensandersonassociates.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/ProgressinPreparingforAdulthoodweb-2.pdf>

Tools to enhance local transition pathway and transformation programmes:

<http://www.uhs.nhs.uk/OurServices/Childhealth/TransitiontoadultcareReadySteadyGo/Transitiontoadultcare.aspx>

NICE Guidance: Transitions from children's to adult's services for young people using health or social care services:

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng43>





# Preparing for adulthood path

Having advice about education, training and employment

Having dreams and aspirations

Being listened to and being involved in planning support and services

Person Centred Planning

Being involved in my community

Being as healthy as possible

Making my own choices and decisions



# Way

Friends  
and  
Family

Being  
supported  
by agencies  
working  
together



Being  
involved in  
work related  
activities

ing  
own  
ces and  
sions

Being as  
independent  
as possible



# Preparing for adulthood pathway

Transition planning starts with the aspirations of the young person. This may include employment, independent living, community participation, friendships and relationships.

Transition planning also thinks about transport needs, health care, personal care, living arrangements, support ratios, personal budgets, and social care provision.

The school / college will need to consider and plan for:

- How they will help the young person to become more independent
  - How they will help the young person to be active in the school community
  - How the school / college will help the young person to take on new roles
  - How the school / college will help to develop skills, knowledge and experience to achieve aspirations
  - Which agencies should be involved in the future
- School / college should make clear the actions, timescales and responsibilities and should cover transition from school to further learning and from child to adult services.
  - School / college need to consider any actions to make appropriate services as accessible as possible for the young person. For example: Universal Health Services, Specialist Health Services, Technological Support, Access to Social Care Services, Access to Benefits, Housing and adaptation needs, Community, leisure and voluntary services.
  - Disabled Children's Service involvement with families so aspirations and abilities are identified. What a disabled child can achieve must be discussed with parents.
  - The 'Preparing for Adulthood' conversation needs to happen at the very best time for the family.



## Employment - Steps towards outcomes

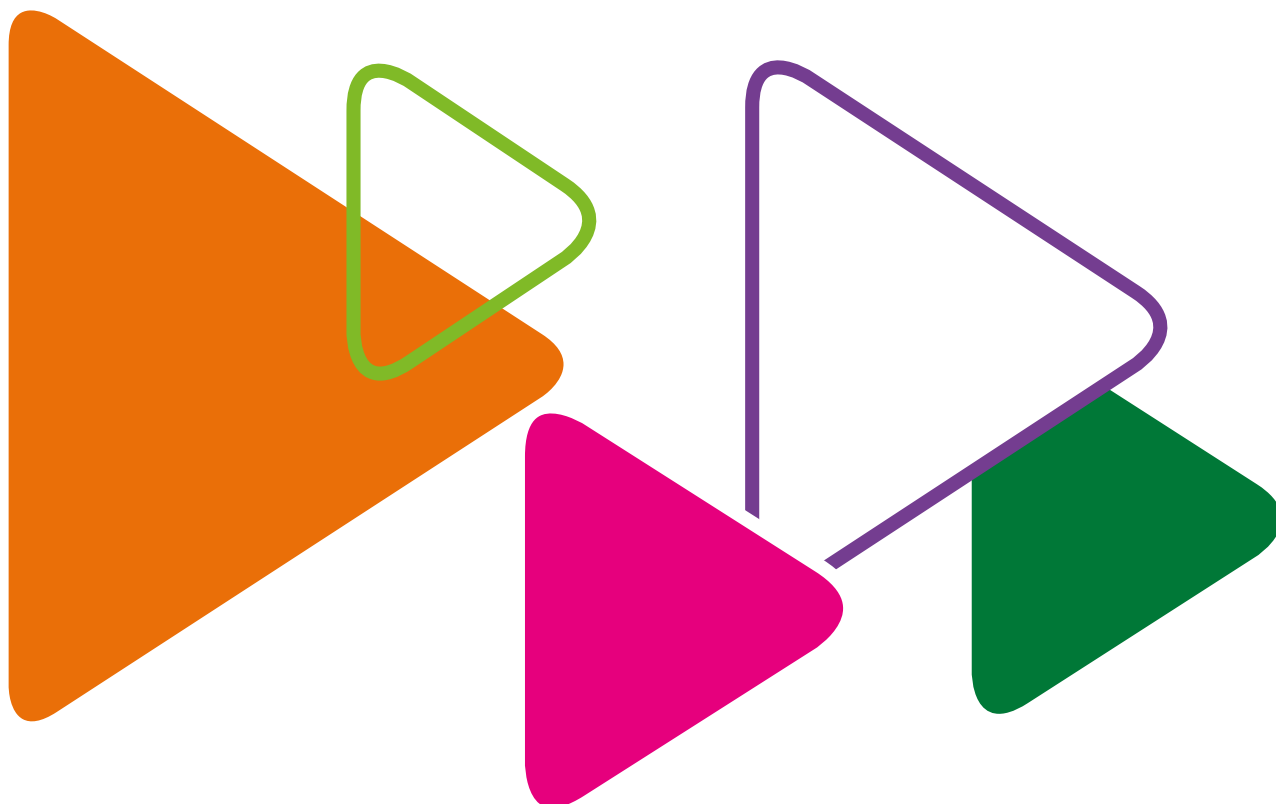
Year 9 – Year 11	Post 16 – 16 – 19 years of age	Post 19 – 19 – 25 years of age
<p>Choosing academic / vocational subject options</p> <p>Thinking about which college to attend</p> <p>Exploring different careers and planning for employment including choosing a study programme</p> <p>Starting to access structured information and guidance sessions</p> <p>Having work experience or being involved in enterprise projects</p> <p>Transition to new setting</p> <p>Careers Guidance for young people.</p> <p>Support for parents/carers</p> <p>SENCO's in schools, Teachers and Head-teachers often see parents and hold Parents/Teacher meetings where advice is provided for parents</p> <p>Parents Carer Groups</p> <p>Carers Services in Leicestershire are funded through LCC</p> <p>Carers can request a Carers Assessment</p> <p>There are support groups for Young Carers – these are funded by LCC and delivered by Barnardo's</p> <p>Helping parents/carers to see what is possible – videos, young people's journey stories</p> <p>There will be 'Holistic' Transition Events for Parents/Carers to attend where all services are represented and so that information can be provided and news shared about the support and services which are available</p>	<p>Enter college / training provider on chosen study programme to gain further academic and vocational qualifications</p> <p>Careers Guidance for young people.</p> <p>Planning for post 19 – higher education, vocational training, employment</p> <p>Supported Internships</p> <p>Apprenticeships</p> <p>Supported Employment</p> <p>Paid Employment</p> <p>Employment for young people</p> <p>'Access to Work' is the Government organisation that assists people with additional needs who get Internships or have full employment</p> <p>Access to Work support is for young people aged 16 years and over</p> <p>Guidelines are on: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/eligibility">https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/eligibility</a></p> <p>Welfare Benefits</p> <p>The Benefits System changes when a young person reaches their 18th Birthday. Information on the Local Offer website</p>	<p>Consolidate or finish learning</p> <p>Complete outcomes in EHC Plan</p> <p>Careers Guidance for young people.</p> <p>Adult Education / Community Learning Programmes</p> <p>Voluntary Work</p> <p>Supported Internships</p> <p>Apprenticeships</p> <p>Supported Employment</p> <p>Paid Employment</p> <p>Accessing support from Job Centre post Education and understanding benefits</p> <p>Employment for young people</p> <p>Access to Work support assists people with additional needs who get Internships or have full employment</p> <p>Guidelines are on: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/eligibility">https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/eligibility</a></p>

## Independent Living - Steps towards outcomes

Year 9 – Year 11	Post 16 – 16 – 19 years of age	Post 19 – 19 – 25 years of age
<p>Developing travel training skills</p> <p>Making decisions about what to spend money on</p> <p>Learning to make own food and being healthy</p> <p>Learning to socialise unsupervised</p> <p>Developing independent living skills</p> <p>Schools offer 'Life Skills' programmes, often these are accredited awards. To assist transition planning the outcome of the work in school will be shared with Adult Services to assist with making assessments that inform Transition Planning</p> <p>Children's Disabled Services</p> <p>Referrals are received from parents and professional agencies</p> <p>There is Eligibility Criteria that determines whether a child/young person can receive services and support.</p>	<p>Learning to manage income and expenses</p> <p>Learning to manage time, independent living skills, personal safety</p> <p>Schools and colleges offer 'Life Skills' programmes, often these are accredited awards. To assist transition planning the outcome of the work in school will be shared with Adult Services to assist with making assessments that inform Transition Planning</p> <p>Looking at living options and local learning options</p> <p>Mental Capacity Assessments if appropriate</p> <p>Understanding different types of living arrangements</p> <p>Actively planning for future living arrangements with family and agencies</p> <p>Transition into care</p> <p>Referrals to Adult Services</p> <p>Referrals are received from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•DCS</li> <li>•Children in Care</li> <li>•SENA</li> <li>•Adults can self-refer into the Service</li> </ul>	<p>Arranging potential independent or supported living</p> <p>Understanding correspondence, bills, appointments</p> <p>Continue to develop independent living skills as part of a study programme</p>

## Community Inclusion - Steps towards outcomes

Year 9 – Year 11	Post 16 – 16 – 19 years of age	Post 19 – 19 – 25 years of age
<p>Making decisions about how to spend free time</p> <p>Managing social media and other technology</p> <p>On line gaming and staying safe</p> <p>Belonging to different groups</p> <p>Learning about friendships and relationships</p> <p>Understanding the bigger picture and developing resilience</p>	<p>Developing and maintaining friendships and relationships</p> <p>Exploring personal budgets – how could they be spent post 16 for further Preparation for Adulthood aspirations</p> <p>Knowing how to manage own time effectively</p> <p>Being safe on the streets</p> <p>Understanding alcohol and drugs</p> <p>Volunteering</p> <p>Understanding the criminal justice system</p> <p>Knowing where to go for help and how to use the emergency services</p>	<p>Accessing adult social care post 18</p> <p>Maintaining friendships and social groups outside of an educational setting</p>



## Health – Steps towards outcomes

Year 9 – Year 11	Post 16 – 16 – 19 years of age	Post 19 – 19 – 25 years of age
<p>Access to sex education</p> <p>Age related immunisations</p> <p>Managing more complex health needs</p> <p>Understanding what the GP can help with</p> <p>Annual Health Check with GP if registered Learning Disability</p> <p>Understanding mental health and well-being</p> <p>Having drug and alcohol education</p> <p>Switching screens off and having a good night's sleep</p> <p>Annual Health Checks</p> <p>Annual Health Checks for people aged 14 years and over have been instigated by the NHS in recognition that people with learning disabilities who often have poorer physical and mental health than other people. Further information is available on the NHS website:</p> <p><a href="https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/learning-disabilities/annual-health-checks/">https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/learning-disabilities/annual-health-checks/</a></p> <p>The Annual Health Check scheme is for adults and young people aged 14 or above with learning disabilities who need more health support and may otherwise have health conditions that go undetected</p> <p>Adults and young people aged 14 or above with learning disabilities who are known to their local authority social services, and registered with a GP who knows their medical history, should be invited by their GP practice to come for an Annual Health Check and needs to be included in the Transition Plan</p>	<p>Taking responsibility for dental and optical appointments</p> <p>Managing own health</p> <p>Transition to adult health services</p> <p>Knowing when to see the GP</p> <p>Staying physically active and healthy</p> <p>Understanding relationships including sexual relationships, choices, safety and good health</p>	<p>Managing health appointments</p> <p>Managing own health</p> <p>Maintaining positive relationship and friendships</p>



## Process Chart for Staff to implement the Transition Plan

School Year - EHCP Review	Extending the EHCP Review	What needs to happen alongside the EHCP Review?
<b>Year 9 - EHCP Review</b>		
<p>Who will be present:</p> <p>SENCO Leading</p> <p>Parents</p> <p>Young Person</p> <p>Specialists may also be invited</p> <p>Specialist Services: Special Education Needs Assessment Team, Disabled Children's Service Health Services, , OT, SALT, Specialist Teachers, GP, Family Carers</p> <p>What happens at the review:</p> <p>Person Centred Planning documents are discussed in the meeting and the EHC Plan is reviewed</p> <p>SENCO starts Transition Planning process</p>	<p>Parents are reminded to set up the GP Health Check for young people aged 14 years and over who have Learning Disabilities</p> <p>Written information about Adult Life will be presented to the family. This will be on the Local Offer website</p> <p>The Scoping Questions are made into an 'Early Notification Form.' This is completed at the review – signed by parents to give consent for information to be shared with Adult Services</p>	<p>Roadshows in each school to provide information for parents – these are to be 'joint' events – Special Education Needs Assessment Team, Disabled Children's Service, Education Providers, and Adult Services</p> <p>6 Meetings each year of Transitional Operation Group - staff are from relevant health, education, social care professionals</p> <p>(This work is repeated each year)</p>
<b>Year 10 - EHCP Review</b>		
<p>Who will be present:</p> <p>SENCO Leading</p> <p>Parents</p> <p>Young Person</p> <p>Transition Worker</p> <p>Specialists may also be invited</p> <p>Specialist Services: Health Services, Special Education Needs Assessment Team, Disabled Children's Service, OT, SALT, Specialist Teachers, GP, Family Carers</p> <p>What happens at the review:</p> <p>Person Centred Planning documents are discussed in the meeting and the Plan is reviewed</p> <p>SENCO gives update on Transition Planning</p>	<p>Parents are reminded to set up the GP Health Check for young people aged 14 years and over who have Learning Disabilities.</p> <p>Written information about Adult Life will be presented to the family. This will be on the Local Offer website</p>	<p>SENCO gives update on Transition Planning</p> <p>6 Meetings each year of Transitional Operation Group - staff are from relevant health, education, social care professionals</p> <p>(This work is repeated each year)</p>

School Year - EHCP Review	Extending the EHCP Review	What needs to happen alongside the EHCP Review?
<b>Year 11 - EHCP Review</b>		
<p>SENCO Leading Parents Young Person Transition Worker Specialists may also be invited Specialist Services: Health Services, Special Education Needs Assessment Team, Disabled Children's Service, OT, SALT, Specialist Teachers, GP, Family Carers</p> <p>What happens at the review: Person Centred Planning documents are completed prior to the review, are discussed in the meeting and the Plan is reviewed SENCO gives update on Transition Planning</p>	<p>Transition Worker should start at age 16. Moving On Assessment will have started by age 16 years. Parents are reminded to set up the GP Health Check for young people aged 14 years and over who have Learning Disabilities Written information about Adult Life will be presented to the family. This will be on the Local Offer website</p>	<p>Adult Services use the Moving On Assessments at their Resource Allocation Panel to determine the level of support that would be provided for a young person</p>
<b>Year 12 - EHCP Review</b>		
<p>SENCO Leading Parents Young Person Specialists may also be invited Specialist Services: Health Services, Special Education Needs Assessment Team, Disabled Children's Service, OT, SALT, Specialist Teachers, GP, Family Carers</p> <p>What happens at the review: Person Centred Planning documents are completed prior to the review, are discussed in the meeting and the Plan is reviewed SENCO gives update on Transition Planning</p>	<p>Completion of Moving On Assessment Parents are reminded to set up the GP Health Check for young people aged 14 years and over who have Learning Disabilities</p>	<p>Adult Services use the Moving On Assessments at their Resource Allocation Panel to determine the level of support that would be provided for a young person.</p>

School Year - EHCP Review	Extending the EHCP Review	What needs to happen alongside the EHCP Review?
Year 13 - EHCP Review		
<p>EHCP Review</p> <p>SENCO Leading</p> <p>Parents</p> <p>Young Person</p> <p>Specialists may also be invited</p> <p>Specialist Services: Health Services, Special Education Needs Assessment Team, Disabled Children's Service, OT, SALT, Specialist Teachers, GP, Family Carers</p> <p>What happens at the review:</p> <p>Person Centred Planning documents are completed prior to the review, are discussed in the meeting and the Plan is reviewed.</p> <p>SENCO gives update on Transition Planning</p>	<p>Parents are reminded to set up the GP Health Check for young people aged 14 years and over who have Learning Disabilities.</p>	<p>Adult Services take on case responsibility at age 18</p>



