

Preparation for Adulthood in Annual Reviews- A Short Guide for Schools and Settings

Background

From Year 9 at the latest, preparing for all aspects of adult life must be an explicit element of conversations with young people and their families and Annual Reviews of EHC Plans from Year 9 must have a focus on this. The LA has a duty to include provision to assist in preparing for adulthood in the EHC Plan Annual Review. This includes effective planning for transition from children's to adult health and social care services.

Transition planning must be built into the EHC Plan and there should be clear outcomes that are 'ambitious and stretching' and will prepare young people for adulthood. The Annual Review meeting that takes place each year from year 9 onwards should therefore have a focus on considering education and training options for the next phase of education. There is more information about planning for adulthood in the information booklet '*PfA Outcomes across the age ranges for children and young people with SEND*' which has been provided.

The relevant parts of the SEND Code of Practice are Chapter 8, in particular paragraph 8:11, and in Chapter 9 at paragraphs 9:184-9:185.

Exit planning for young people

If you know that a young person will be leaving education or training, an Annual Review of their EHC Plan must still be carried out. In these circumstances, the Local Authority will cease to maintain the Plan when the young person leaves education or training.

Leaving the formal education and training system is a significant and often worrying time for vulnerable young people and their families. It is therefore important that the Annual Review meeting should include giving information to the young person and their family about what services and provision are available for them after they have finished their formal education and training. Whatever plans there are for the young person, they need to be clear, through the Annual Review process, about their transition plan including what support is available to them afterwards, what help they will get to access this, who will help them and what the timescales are.

Not all young people will move on to higher education or training, or to employment. Some will need support from services such as social care and some will need support from universal services.

Where a young person has a statutory Care and Support Plan, this needs to be reviewed when the EHCP is due to come to an end- that is, when the young person is due to leave formal education or training. It is good practice to review this as part of the Annual Review of the EHC Plan as this will help to provide the right support and guidance for the young person to support their transition to adult services. The Care and Support Plan can remain in place after the EHCP has ceased and the young person's need for a Care and Support Plan does not normally need to be reassessed unless their circumstances have changed.

Transition to adult health and social care services

EHC Plans give a good basis for transition planning. Health and social care assessments and consideration about the transfer to adult health and social care services should, where appropriate, contribute to a Review of the EHC Plan.

In some cases, families may have previously declined social care support because they have felt able to meet their social care needs without professional support. As their child becomes older and expresses a wish to become more independent, or as their needs have changed or become harder to meet, families may wish to explore what help their young person can receive from social care to support their social

care needs. This may particularly apply to young people who are over the age of sixteen but could also apply to younger children. In these situations, please do discuss with the family a referral to social care services so that support for their child to transition successfully to adulthood can be fully explored.

What this means for schools and other settings

A key part of the discussion at Annual Review meetings for children from Year 9 onwards needs to be around preparation for adulthood. We have provided detailed information about preparation for adulthood, '*PfA Outcomes across the age ranges for children and young people with SEND*' which has been sent to you with the revised Annual Review process and documentation. We hope you will find this helpful. We also ask that you send this to families as early as possible before having the Annual Review meeting so that they have time to consider options with their child and think about this in preparation for discussing preparation for adulthood at the meeting.

Schools also need to ensure that they have provided good quality preparation for adulthood and careers/further study pathways advice to this group of pupils, including advice about the opportunities for supported internships. This should be discussed at the Annual Review meeting, and included in the Annual Review documents that are sent to the LA and family after the meeting.

Please give health and social care practitioners who are already working with the young person plenty of notice of the Annual Review and ask them to provide updated advice to contribute to it. Please ask them to attend the meeting to assist in early transition planning, particularly for those young people who will be leaving formal education and training within the next two years.

