



TRANSITION?

“What's it all about?”

**A Guide for PARENTS and CARERS of
young people with special educational
needs and/or disabilities who are
approaching Year 9 at school**

"As a parent of a young adult in Year 12 at a Special School, I was surprised how little information there is out there for parents/carers of young people with Special Educational Needs, whether those needs are being met at mainstream or special school."

Parent, April 2009

When a young person with special educational needs and/or disabilities reaches Year 9 the transition process begins. In all schools at this point, young people will be making decisions which will affect their future eg choosing their options for study in KS4. Young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities need more input from their parents or carers and from other professionals involved with them, in order to understand what choices are open to them. Where a young person has significant levels of need the formalities of planning through statutory procedures may be required.

The Parent Partnership Service can give impartial advice and support around education issues relating to Special Educational Needs.

Contact details can be found at the end of this information booklet.

If your child has a **Statement of Special Educational Needs** or has a high level of need and is at **School Action Plus** it is likely that you will need to meet with professionals from several agencies.

This will include some, or all of the following. This list is not exhaustive! :

- School staff eg class teacher, teaching assistant, SENCO
- Educational Psychologist
- Connexions Personal Advisor
- SEN Officer from the Local Authority
- Social Worker
- Transitions Coordinator from Social Care
- Paediatrician
- Clinical Psychologist
- School nurse
- Speech and Language Therapist

If your child has a **Statement of Special Educational Needs** it must be reviewed annually. The Annual Review meeting in Year 9 is the start of formal planning for your child's move towards adult life; it is also called the **Transition Review**. The Connexions PA must be at this Year 9 Annual Review. If the young person is at **School Action Plus (SA+)**, and is considered to have a high level of need, the school should consider having one of the IEP review meetings in Year 9 as a Transition Review.

All those attending the Yr9 Annual Review will be involved in writing a **Transition Plan**, which should be reviewed annually. The **Transition Plan** should include:

- parents'/carers' views and hopes, and the support needed to attain these
- the young person's views and how they have been sought
- the involvement of other agencies, and their input
- any action plans

It is the Connexions PA's responsibility to oversee the Transition Plan.

Post-16 placements

At the Year 9 Transition Review, whether this is for a young person with a statement or at SA+, those attending must begin to plan a suitable placement for the end of Year 11. This could be the current school (mainstream or special), a different school (mainstream or special, a local college or a residential college. Some young people take up employment options at the end of Year 11. Once a young person leaves school, the **Statement of Special Educational Needs** will no longer be maintained by the Local Authority.

Young people with very significant needs, which would include those with a statement, are likely to either remain in or transfer to a special school for Year 12 onwards, or take up a place in a residential college. Those who have somewhat less significant needs often take up day courses in their local FE college.

For young people with very significant needs, the considerations for an appropriate placement for when they finally leave school, at any age between 16 and 19, may need to be wider than a local college placement, and may include :

- residential college
- residential college with additional options for care outside normal college terms
- day centre
- supported living
- residential care home
- staying at home with parents/carers
- an individualised package

Some of these services will only be available to young people who are eligible to access services through Adult Social Care.

The Connexions PA will be able to offer support and advice regarding college courses and residential placements, and by the end of Year 11 will have completed a **Section 140 Assessment**. This helps colleges or other placements to understand the young person's level of needs.

"The Section 140 Assessment is a Statutory Assessment outlined in the Learning and Skills Act, for all young people in transition to post-16 education, training or employment with a statement of special educational needs, and is recommended for all young people with learning difficulties or disabilities. The assessment is undertaken in the last year of compulsory schooling and is often accompanied by or includes similar assessments by social services and health."

You may find that new agencies are now involved, so that you are working with a wider range of professionals involved with your child, for example a Transitions Co-ordinator from Adult Social Care. As time goes on medical professionals from children's health services will need to hand over the care of your child to the adult health care services. These agencies have their own rules, timelines and guidelines which they should follow regarding assessment and providing resources necessary to meet a young persons needs. The Connexions PA should continue to be involved at all stages.

And finally: -

The Transition Process takes place over several years and can cause parents/carers frustration, anxiety and worry. Clearly, making these important decisions can be very difficult for parents/carers and for the young person and it is crucial that everyone is well supported through this process.

There are organisations which can provide independent support and guidance throughout some or the whole of the process. The Parent Partnership Service can support parents/carers while their young person is still at school and can signpost to other sources of support where necessary.

Useful contacts :

Parent Partnership Service

Clarendon Chambers,
32 Clarendon Street
Nottingham
NG1 5LN
Tel: 0115 948 2888
E mail: enquiries@ppsnotts.org.uk
Website: www.ppsnotts.org.uk

Skill

National Bureau for Students with Disabilities
18-20 Crucifix Hill
Chapter House,
London
SE1 3JW
Tel: 020 7450 0620
Fax: 020 7450 0650
Website: www.skill.org.uk