



Kent Transition Protocols

'Supporting disabled young people
from adolescence to adulthood'

Handbook for families

October 2008



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Handbook for families

Introduction

Professionals use the term 'transition' to describe the time in young people's lives when they are moving toward adulthood and need to think about opportunities after leaving school. Transition begins when a young person reaches the age of 14, and ends when the young person has planned what to do next and moved on from school.

Thinking about the future and making plans about what to do after leaving school should be an exciting time. It is a challenge for any teenager, but for disabled young people and their families the move from school can seem particularly daunting.

Making sure that the changes involved in the transition process run smoothly is important for all concerned. Being a teenager should be a time of opportunity for young people and should be a positive experience as they take steps towards adulthood.

We have produced this handbook to help guide a young person and their family through these changes. It explains the different stages for the transition process and set out some of the things young people, parents and carers can expect to happen and how you can be involved in all decision-making processes.

How the handbook is organised

The transition process starts in Year 9 when a young person is 14. While the young person is still in school, yearly reviews will continue until their 19th birthday. For young people who choose to go to a further-education college after the age of 16, the arrangements for funding and support will change. The Year-12 review marks another important stage in transition, as this review may link to a move at 18 from children's to adult social services. To simplify a complicated process, we have arranged the handbook in two parts:

Part 1 - Planning for the future - who, what and when

Part 2 - The transition planning background

There are also appendices containing checklists, diagrams and a glossary of jargon.

We have also produced an easy-to-read guide to transition for young people with learning disabilities.



Part 1 - Planning for the future - who, what and when?

Year 8, age 13 - starting the planning process

Agencies start to identify young people who need support during Year 8 when a young person is 13. A number of agencies have responsibilities at this early stage.

The local authority is responsible for making sure that planning takes place for all young people with statements of educational need (SEN).

If a young person is excluded or their education takes place somewhere other than at school, the local authority will make arrangements to hold a review meeting.

Schools will confirm with Connexions, Kent and Medway the names of young people who have statements.

Connexions Kent & Medway will make arrangements with the Connexions Service of the relevant authority if a young person is placed outside Kent.

Lead professionals will identify disabled young people without SEN who meet the conditions of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.

Kent Adult Social Services make sure that local links are in place with other agencies to get information early about young people who may need Adult Social Services to help them with their planning.

Year 9, age 14 - preparing for the first transition meeting

There are a number of tasks that should be carried out to prepare for the first transition meeting.

The lead professional will carry out the following tasks for all young people for whom a formal transition plan is agreed. They will:

- work with schools and Connexions to co-ordinate the process;
- ask for permission from the young person or parents to share information;
- give you local information (see below);
- work with the young person to prepare their plan for the transition planning meeting;
- consider with the young person how best to promote their involvement;
- consider whether the young person needs independent representation;
- consult you to help plan an agenda (just for discussion) for the meeting; and
- gather information and decide whether extra assessments are needed.



The local information should include:

- written confirmation of the name of lead professional;
- local opportunities to become independent and training in how to use public transport;
- leaflets on all benefits and funding opportunities (to include the Independent Living Fund and Supporting People);
- Appropriate support networks (including links to the voluntary sector) and independent representation services;
- local youth, sport, leisure and recreation so young people can explore a range of options and consider what may be available from youth centres, mobile youth projects and other youth projects;
- local housing options; and
- a list of useful information, books or links;

Shannon - age 14

Hobbies: boccia and power-chair football and using a treadmill. I ran a music club at school on a Tuesday. My best friend is Chelsea who came to the review. I stay over at school during the week which helps my family a lot.

Shannon's view of person-centred reviews

- I am listened to much more.
- I can get my point across easily.
- Planning for it was much more led by me.
- I am calm, relaxed and able to talk.
- My family were very pleased with the layout.
- It was more about my views.
- I am now working towards my future and independent travel

The young person's plan

It is important that young people can give their views, especially if they have communication difficulties. There is a range of materials and tools available to help young people with learning and communication difficulties. The lead professional will work with the young person to help them think about their future to prepare for the meeting.



The work the young person produces should tell the meeting about:

- who they want to be there to help them give their views;
- how the young person prefers to communicate;
- who the young person sees as important in helping to plan for the future;
- what they are good at;
- what they enjoy doing, including leisure activities;
- what they find difficult and do not enjoy;
- what special interests they have;
- what work they might like to do in the future;
- where they would like to live in the next few years and who with;
- training needs in terms of using public transport;
- independent living skills that they would like to develop;
- issues the young person wants to raise about their health or safety;
- the young person's hopes and dreams for the future; and
- what the young person thinks might prevent them doing these things.

How parents and carers can prepare - it is a good idea to prepare for the transition meeting as it is easy to forget things during a meeting. Your preparation could include:

- reading the papers that are sent round before the meeting and highlighting any parts that you or your child would like to discuss at the meeting;
- writing down questions or topics that you want to raise at the meeting;
- if the young person has a statement, looking at the statement and the report from last year's review to make sure that targets have not been overlooked, and to check on the progress made;
- thinking about hopes for the young person's future, in terms of further education, training, independence skills, work, leisure and living arrangements;
- researching what is available locally and thinking about your role in supporting your child; and
- thinking about any other support which you may need.

Some parents find it useful to discuss some of the issues with staff at school or the lead professional, friends, or a member of the parent partnership service before the meeting.

Sometimes young people do not have the same ideas for the future as their parents and it is important that you understand this and nevertheless help them to express their own views.

The young person can ask for someone independent to support them at the meeting if they want and the lead professional will talk to them about this.



Health

If a young person has a statement that includes health needs or a young person without a SEN has health needs, health professionals should:

- offer an appointment to prepare a health report;
- meet (child health services, primary care (GP and health visitor) and the young person and parents and carers) to review the young person's health needs now and into adulthood;
- provide advice about how health and disability issues may affect the young person's wellbeing, vocational opportunities and future placements and identify appropriate strategies;
- Introduce the idea of health plans to disabled young people and their families and begin to develop them with young people who want them;
- review equipment, aids and adaptations, alongside social services and education;
- offer a health action plan if the person has a learning disability; and
- if a young person has health needs, at least one member from the health team should go to the transition meeting and future reviews to make sure joint working takes place.

Kent's Children's Social Services will provide advice to education colleagues for the transition review if asked to do so.

Kent's Children's Social Services should always go to the transition review for children in care and Children in Need.

Kent Adult Social Services make sure that other agencies have clear information about KASS conditions for eligibility and services to allow them to advise young people appropriately.

The transition meeting and support plan

Schools (both maintained and non-maintained) will normally take the lead for young people with statements.

The **lead professional** will lead for those without SEN. The tasks include:

- working between schools, Connexions and the lead professional to arrange the transition review or meeting for young people;
- identifying professionals and others to invite to the planning meeting to become the 'team around the child';
- identifying the venue (usually the school for young people with SEN);
- making sure that at least six weeks' notice is given to allow most people to go to the meeting;
- sending round written reports at least two weeks before the meeting;
- making sure that at least one hour is allowed for the meeting;
- consulting anyone with an interest to invite to the meeting;
- identifying a chair for the meeting; and
- drawing up an agenda (list for discussion) the meeting.



Who will be invited?

- The young person
- Parents and carers with responsibility for the young person
- The class teacher or form tutor
- The Connexions personal adviser (who must go to the meeting if the young person has a statement)
- An educational psychologist for the school
- A special education needs co-ordinator (SENCO)
- Health professionals who are involved with the young person
- The Education Support Service if involved (for example, Behaviour Support Service and Learning Support)
- Children's Social Services (for children in care or children in need)

You should be asked if there are any other professionals who you would like to be invited to the meeting. In some cases this might be a member of the Partnership with Parents service or an independent representative for the young person.

It may not be possible for all these people to go to the meeting. Health professionals particularly might find it difficult. If a professional cannot go, we will ask them to provide a report.

The agenda for the meeting should make sure that there is time to discuss the transition plan, although at 14 it is too early for firm decisions to be made on most issues. The Year-9 transition meeting gives you 'thinking time' and an opportunity for the young person to begin to develop their vision for the future. The agenda will normally include:

- a review of the statement (if a young person has one);
- progress in school for young people with no statement;
- education or training options after age 16 (further education at school or at college or by another provider);
- work experience - all students now receive 'work-related learning' as part of the Key Stage 4 Strategy for schools;
- employment and work-based training options for after school and college;
- health issues (if there are any) – the discussion about a transition health plan, including health care after age 16, forms an important part of the Year-9 transition planning meeting;
- the support needed to access learning and help develop independent living and vocational skills; and
- well-being – any health concerns and how best to manage them.

Work-related learning means:

- learning through work, for example work placements in the community;
- learning about work, for example visits to places of employment; and
- learning for work, for example training in important skills.



Headings used by Shannon at her transition planning meeting

- **Who contributed** – mum, Cottie, Jim, Sheelagh (organiser) Chelsea (my friend), Sue, representative from Social Services, Gina (school occupational therapy)
- **What we like and admire** = about me
- **What is important to** – now = about me being able to be independent and able to use travel independently.
- **What is important to** – future = Being able to get good grades and to get a good job.
- **What support and help the person needs to stay healthy and safe** = being able to get good exercise and generally not have any illnesses.
- **What is working is not working** = getting good grades.
- **Action plan** = What I could be doing to be more independent.
- **Relationship map** (optional) = how I get on with others.

The agenda may not automatically include the following and you or the young person may want to ask that they are added.

- Leisure and social activities
- Housing needs, including any equipment and adaptations
- Eligibility for adult social services and the process of referral
- Support for daily living
- Allowances and benefits available
- Voluntary agencies that might offer support
- Independence and training in using public transport

At the meeting

The head teacher, or their representative, will normally chair the first transition meeting for a young person with a statement. The lead professional will identify who will chair the meeting for children who do not have statements.

Developing the transition support plan

The lead professional, by working with the school, should:

- draw up a review report and transition plan after the meeting and after consulting the Connexions Service;
- help create a person-centred focus on developing the individual's plan;
- make sure that the transition plan sets out both targets to be achieved and tasks to be carried out – identifying who will be taking them forward and the timescales;
- include a specific 'health plan' if appropriate; and
- send the plan to anyone with an interest.



Taking the transition support plan forward

The Connexions personal adviser has a legal responsibility to take forward any action relating to future education or training.

The lead professional will:

- move the planning process forward and make sure that others carry out agreed tasks;
- provide advice and information to you and young people.

You may have actions relating to out-of-school activities to carry out as part of the plan.

Adult social services - if it is likely that a young person may need support from adult social services after they reach their 18th birthday, the lead professional will fill in a notification form for Kent Adult Social Services so that they can include the young person in their planning.

Yearly review

We will review the transition plan every year until the young person reaches the age of 19 (or 24 if a young person has a learning disability and is still in full-time education). If there is a statement, we will only review this until the young person leaves school.

The review process will be similar to the process for the year-9 transition meeting.

The lead professional will:

- ask you if you want to make any changes to the plan;
- consider whether the young person could lead the meeting; and
- consult on whether anyone else should be invited to the transition meeting, for example a youth worker.

Health

If a young person has health needs these should be regularly monitored and reviewed each year.

After the meeting

The head teacher or lead professional will draw up a revised transition plan, to reflect:

- progress which has been made towards the transition targets;
- any new task or targets; and
- the names of people taking tasks forward and the timescales.



Year 10, age 15 - planning for changes

16 is a time of change for many young people and the year-10 annual review will give you the chance to consider and plan for some of the changes that will take place when the young person reaches 16.

Mathew - age 15

Hobbies – boccia, football, and shopping

I go to Valence School in Westerham, Kent. I started in Year 7 and I am now in year 10. I use a communication book and a dynamyte (communications aid). It is slow to talk so people have to be patient and listen.

The lead professional

Who may be the same in Year 10 as for Year 9, will:

- ask you and the young person if they want to make any changes to the plan;
- consider whether the young person could lead the meeting; and
- find out whether anyone else should be invited to the transition meeting, for example, a youth worker.

The transition review should consider the effect of the following.

Continuing education

If the young person is leaving school at 16 to transfer to college, much of the focus of the meeting will be on considering the young person's continuing education. The Connexions personal advisor has a responsibility to help you and the young person to identify the most appropriate education if they are planning to leave school in Year 11 at age 16. The adviser may visit the school and interview the young person. The Connexions PA will offer a S.140 assessment to young people planning to go to college.

The school option

- If a young person decides to continue at school, for some this may involve moving into the sixth form of their mainstream school or staying on at a special school, which has a department of further education.
- The local authority will continue to pay for education;
- Access to school-based health and social-care services may continue to 18, but this will vary with individual services (for example, in Kent – audiology services transfer at 16)

The local college option

A 'local college' is defined as one which a student might reasonably be expected to travel to. In Kent, most young people with special educational needs or disabilities, who want to continue their education, move on to a local college so that they can live at home and keep links with friends and the local community.



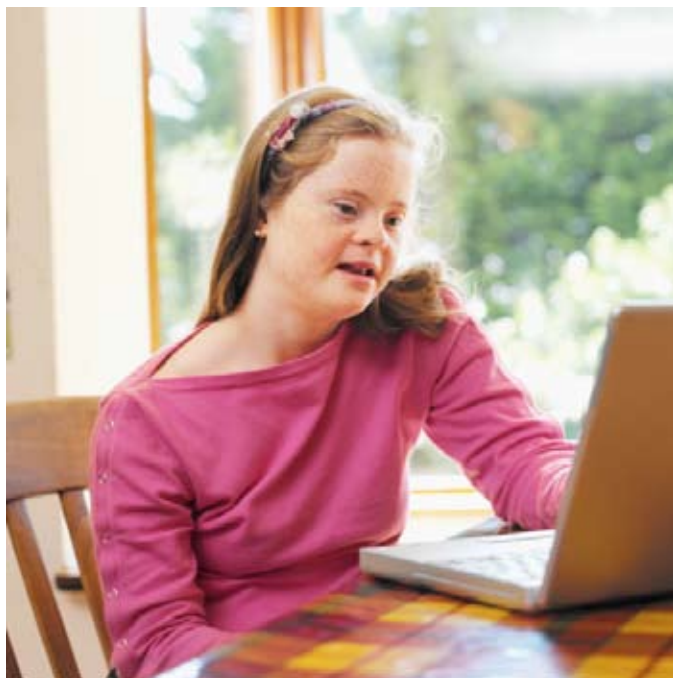
- Before a student is accepted for a college course we will assess them to make sure that their needs can be met in that environment. For most students in Kent, the school and the college will already have made links during Years 10 and 11.
- The Connexions PA will offer to fill in a 'moving on' plan (SI40 assessment) if the young person wants to go to college. This, together with the college assessment, will take account of the learning, social and physical support the student needs to take part successfully in their chosen course.
- Colleges should take account of the information provided in the 'moving on' plan (section-I40 assessment).
- Transport will not be provided to college and you will need to make travel arrangements (which may be paid for from various sources).

Assessment for access to local college courses

Before a student is accepted for a college course, they will be assessed to make sure that their needs can be met in that environment. The assessment will take account of the learning, social and physical needs of the student. For most students in Kent, the school and the college will already have set up links during Years 10 and 11 so that the young person will be familiar with the college campus and the routines of the day. They will have also sampled some of the college courses and got to know important members of staff. The link between the school and the college will also mean that college staff know the needs of that young person before a place is offered on a course.

Each college will have its own procedure of assessment that may vary in how formal it is. It is important that the assessor understands the special educational needs of the young person. If their needs are particularly complex the college may ask for advice from other professionals, for example a speech and language therapist, occupational therapist, physiotherapist or educational psychologist.

Colleges should take account of the information provided in the 'moving on' plan (section-I40 assessment). The Connexions PA will review the 'moving on' plan (SI40 assessment) at least every year with the college.





Good practice for a move to local college

Research has shown that the move from school to college between 16 and 19 can be made easier for the young person if:

- parents and young people arrange to visit local colleges and ask about suitable courses (it is often helpful if this is done with school staff, who may know of other students with similar needs who have been to the college or who are on particular courses);
- link placements are set up so that the young person can sample options and get used to the college campus and routines;
- link visits are supported in school so that the young person can talk about the experience in groups or one on one;
- links are built up gradually during Year 11 so that the young person gets used to change gradually and builds up a relationship with important members of staff at the college;
- Information is shared well between the school and college about the young person's needs - including equipment and accessible environments for learning and independent living;
- the young person shares a book of achievement, photographs, records of trips and so on with college staff; and
- you discuss the possibility of link placements for Year 11 with the school and local colleges.

Specialist colleges

In a very few cases it may not be possible for a local college to meet the needs of a young person. In these cases a specialist college place may be found after a discussion at the transition-planning meetings.

- Connexions Kent & Medway can give you advice about which colleges are available and how to apply for a place.
- Many of these colleges will be some distance from home and so you will need to consider carefully the full implications of this for keeping links with family, friends and the local community.
- The process of assessment for a specialist college involves collecting a range of information which will include reports from school and the local college to show that the young person's needs cannot be met locally;
- The local colleges will have to confirm that they cannot meet the young person's needs before a specialist college can be considered.
- If there is a possibility that a specialist placement will be needed, it is important for this to be set up early in the transition-planning process, so that there is time for the whole process to be completed before the young person is due to leave school.

Funding

The Learning Skills Council (LSC) is responsible for funding and planning the education and training of people over 16 years in England, who no longer go to school. The LSC have clear duties to meet the needs of students with disabilities or learning difficulties.

The Learning Skills Council must also consider what will be best value for money. If you or a young person is not happy with the LSC's decision about a college placement, you or they can ask for



the decision to be reviewed. The Connexions PA will be able to give you information about this process.

If a young person at residential college has been assessed by Kent Adult Social Services and is eligible for services, KASS may pay for the young person to stay in the residential college or other residential setting during the vacation period if this is appropriate, after the assessment. KASS will be charged according to residential charging rules.

Other changes

Ideally, the transition meeting should also provide an opportunity to consider some of the other changes that will take place when the young person reaches 16.

- **Employment**

The young person may be considering leaving school to work and the meeting should consider whether there are any work-experience opportunities that could help with this move.

- **Children in care**

If a young person is in the care of Kent County Council, the named social worker must, under the Leaving Care Act, fill in a Pathway Plan. The plan specifically relates to young people leaving care and helps them to think about and plan their future. This is then documented so that there is a record of what the young person feels should be part of their future goals. If possible, the transition review should be held at the same time as a looked-after child's statutory review to avoid going through the process twice. The two plans should be linked.

- **Health care**

Legally a young person becomes an adult in terms of health provision at 16 and is responsible for their own prescription charges and can make decisions about their own health care.

In Kent, most young people with special educational needs will continue to be offered a service from child health services (paediatricians, occupational therapists and physiotherapists) while they are in full-time education until they are 19 years old. In some circumstances paediatricians may offer a service after 19. However, the young person may choose not to take this up.

However, some children's services, such as audiology and rheumatology, are not available beyond 16.

If there is no local adult specialist service available, a young person may continue to have their health needs co-ordinated by the paediatric service for longer, before this role is transferred to the general practitioner (GP). This arrangement may continue beyond age 19, if appropriate.

The timing of the transfer to adult services may depend on the young person's condition. Some conditions, such as epilepsy or diabetes, may be relatively unstable during puberty and this might affect the timing of the transfer to adult services. In the case of students with unstable or complex health problems, it is particularly important that health and education services work closely together to co-ordinate the move between placements. This is because a sudden change of environment or change in routine may affect the stability of a complicated health condition as well as create more challenges for managing needs.



If a young person leaves education before 19, access to child health services will normally end at 18.

Once a young person transfers to adult health services, their general practitioner (GP) will take on the role of co-ordinating their health care.

We are working to introduce the new models of good practice, but in the meantime individual health-care pathways will vary.

Children and young people with mental-health problems are referred to the local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) which will provide a service until they are 18. However, young people with a diagnosis of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) would not be referred on to adult services unless there were other mental-health issues.

During this phase in the life of a young person it may be helpful to keep a careful record of:

- when the transfer to adult services will take place and who will be responsible for care; and
- progress in achieving the transition plan and any action or changes needed.

If a young person is in school or college, the yearly review transition plans will help with this planning.

The Government has advised that all people with learning disabilities should be offered a 'health action plan' which should be linked to the person-centred plan. The aim is to promote health and wellbeing. It could be developed by the young person with their GP or practice nurse or school nurse. It could also be developed involving other specialised health professionals.

- **Lead professional**

If the young person is leaving school to go to college or to work, the role of lead professional may need to transfer to another professional, possibly in the college (if it was carried out by a school-based professional).

If a young person leaves school without a college place or to go to work, unless they are in care the Connexions personal advisor will take on the lead professional role.



Year 11, age 16 - preparing for adulthood

Kelly

Kelly went to a school in Kent for statemented young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. She experienced family difficulties in Year 11 and found being at school a challenge. Kelly was supported by her school pastoral care team and she regularly met with her Connexions personal adviser. During Year 11, Kelly worked on her transition plan and was aiming to move on to a supported learning course at her local further education college. They arranged extra pastoral support for her based on her 'moving on' plan. Over the summer holidays Kelly became undecided about continuing her education at college. She was feeling very unsettled now that she had finished at school. She particularly missed her school friends. Her Connexions personal adviser met with her and suggested she considered an 'Entry to Employment' course with a local training provider. Kelly's moving-on plan was updated and the training provider offered Kelly a place to start in August. Kelly enjoyed her experience on Entry to Employment and with the support of her Connexions personal adviser decided to continue in work-based training rather than take up her place at college.

The yearly review in Year 11 will need to consider the following.

- **Education** - if the young person is leaving school at 16, are the transition plan targets planned far enough ahead?
- **S.140 assessment** - has the Connexions PA offered this to a young person planning to go to college?
- **Higher education** - some young people may want to go to university at 18. The school and Connexions personal advisor can provide advice on how best to make sure that the young person's needs are met during the application process.
- **Lead professional** - if the young person is leaving school to attend college or to work, the role of lead professional may need to transfer to another professional (if the role was carried out by a school-based professional). If a young person leaves school without a college place or work, unless they are in care, the Connexions personal advisor will take on the lead professional role.
- **Children in care** - we will give young people in foster placements who are assessed as needing to continue with a placement after the young person turns 18 advice and information about the Adult Placement Scheme.
- **Health** - arrangements for health services that do not continue beyond 16 will need to be confirmed.
- **Benefits** - you should be aware that young people may be eligible to claim a range of allowances and benefits in their own right from the age of 16 that include:
 - Housing Benefit;
 - Disability Living Allowance;
 - Income Support - including young people at school or college if they have severe physical or learning disabilities; and
 - Incapacity Benefit.



You can get more information from the benefits enquiry helpline. You can also get advice locally by contacting the disability employment adviser at Jobcentre Plus or a citizens advice bureau. If social services have been working with the young person, they can make a referral to our benefits adviser.

- **Discretionary allowances from age 16** - the Education Maintenance Allowance is available to all students from 2004, who choose to stay on at school or enrol at college to follow either academic or vocational courses. Students may be eligible for up to £30 a week to cover day-to-day costs such as for travel, books or equipment for a course. The allowance depends on the family income. The Connexions PAs and careers teachers will have more details.
- **Direct payments and In Control** - If you are receiving services from Children's Social Services, you may well have been offered a Direct Payment. When a young person reaches 16, they may be eligible to hold the direct payment or individual budget themselves.
- **Kent Adult Social Services** - if professionals or the young person, their parents or carers believe that a young person is likely to need support from adult social services when they reach their 18th birthday, the lead professional will fill in the full KASS notification form and send it to the appropriate local KASS team leader no later than six months after the young person's 16th birthday. This notification will not be a referral but will allow KASS to check whether the young person is eligible for assessment.
- **Carers** - the local authority will consider whether a carer's assessment is needed under the Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995.

Year 12, age 17 - the move to adulthood

From the age of 17, young people can choose to stay at school, go to college or move into the world of work, or work-based training. The services available and the funding arrangements will be different according to the options the young person chooses.

Whether the young person continues in school or transfers to college, the Connexions personal advisor and the lead professional will continue to contribute to the transition plan by:

- overseeing how plans are put into practice from the Year-9 transition review and future reviews;
- offering to complete a 'moving on' plan (SI40 assessment) which is an assessment of needs (during the young person's final year at school); and
- transferring information from school to college, with the permission of the student.

Monitoring progress at college:

- Under our Transition Protocols formal transition reviews must continue until the young person reaches the age of 19 if the young person is continuing in education.
- A statement of SEN has no legal status in a college.
- The responsibility for monitoring the educational progress of individual students and making sure that their needs are met passes to the college.
- The formal monitoring process does not apply to young people in higher education establishments.



The move to adult health services

It is important that the transition support plan includes arrangements that make sure there is a seamless transfer at 18 for those not in education.

The move to adult social services

If it is thought likely that a young person will need services from KASS in the future, the lead professional will have filled in the KASS notification form and sent it to the local team leader no later than six months after the young person's 16th birthday. If the team leader considers that a young person is likely to be eligible for assessment, KASS will send a representative to the year-12 transition review.

The lead professional will then make a formal referral to KASS as soon as possible after the young person's 17th birthday and KASS will arrange for an assessment under the NHS and Community Care Act 1990.

If the young person is taking up services at 18, a KASS care manager will be allocated to link with the lead professional from 17 ½ to make sure the transfer is as smooth as possible. The lead professional will maintain the link and act as a consultant to the care manager until they reach 18 ½.

A young person or their parents or carers can refer themselves to adult services for support after 18 themselves if they prefer. You can make general inquiries about social services from the County Duty Service.

After the meeting

The transition plan will be revised to reflect any changes identified and should set out:

- how Kent Adult Social Services will work with Children's Social Services or other agency to help the young person's transfer;
- how funding will be taken forward (if this is an issue); and
- arrangements for transferring from children's to adult's health services.



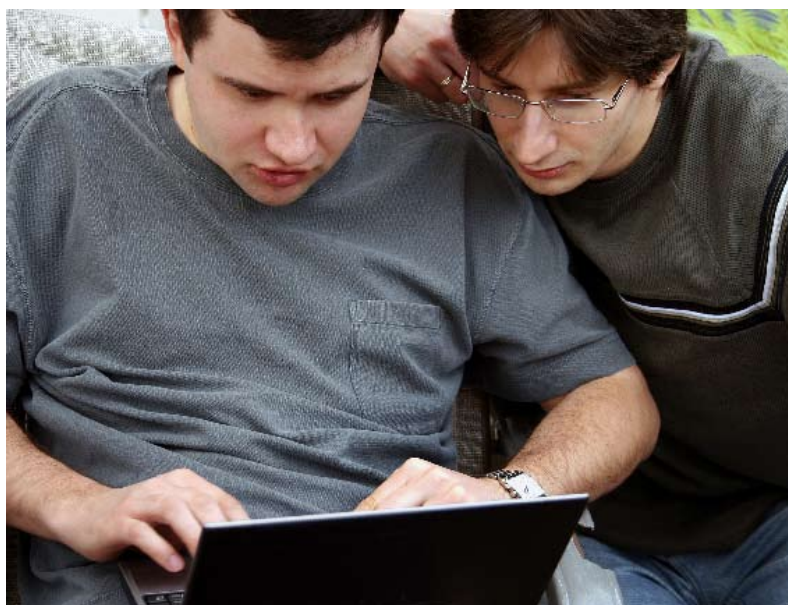
Year 13 - reaching the age of 18

Jim

Jim is finishing his final year at an out-of-county residential school for young people with Asperger's Syndrome. His placement is for 38 weeks a year and at holiday time he returns to the family home in North Kent. He will be returning to Kent full-time to live with his family. In the past he has been supported by social services, but does not meet the conditions for support by adult services. He wants to go to a local college and also make friends in his home area.

His Connexions personal adviser met Jim and his mother during their holidays and drew up a moving-on plan (S140). She told him about suitable college courses, helped him apply and went with him to his interview. Despite feeling very nervous, he coped well with meeting the learning support manager and was put at ease by the tutor. He is still concerned about how he will fill his time during the summer holiday and his Connexions personal adviser is currently looking for a work-experience placement for him during the summer holidays. He will also be doing some voluntary work.

- It is important to remember that the young person is an adult at this point with all the rights and responsibilities that that involves.
- The discussion should reflect that the young person will now be receiving adult health services.
- If the young person is eligible for Kent Adult Social Services, a care manager will have been chosen to take forward the care plan and should go to the meeting.
- A few young people will stay in education beyond 19 and the Connexions PA will be responsible for reviewing the 'moving-on' plan at least every year.
- If funding for a specialist college placement is needed, Connexions will arrange this.
- If the existing lead professional no longer has a role then it may be appropriate to identify another professional from the agencies that continue to support the young person.





Summary and main contacts for the young person

Name of school or college			
Address			
Phone number			
Name of head teacher or principal			
Name of SENCO or course co-ordinator		Phone number	

If at school, date of next yearly review		
SEN case worker	Name	
	Phone	
Connexions personal advisor	Name	
	Phone	
Learning Skills Council	Phone	0800 496 3074
Social worker from the Disabled Children's Team	Name	
	Phone	
Social worker from the long-term team	Name	
	Phone	
Disabled Living Foundation	Phone	Helpline : 0845 130
GP	Name	
	Phone	
Community paediatrician	Name	
	Phone	
Occupational therapist	Name	
	Phone	
	Name	
	Phone	
	Name	
	Phone	

List details of any other people involved with your son's or daughter's care (for example, other



doctors or therapists)

After 19

Most young people with special needs will leave school or college at 19, although a few may go on to higher education. The move to adult health and social services will already have been co-ordinated through the transition plan.

After 19, the focus will be on further developing the independence skills of the young person and giving them the power to make choices and decisions about their life. This could include who they live with, where, and choices about personal care. To achieve the goal, it is important to consider the communication skills of the young person and make sure that systems such as simplifying information, signing or using symbols and using communication aids all stay in place when the young person leaves school or college.

- The Connexions PA is responsible for reviewing the S-140 assessment every year until the young person finishes their education. (Connexions can continue to support a young person with learning disabilities up until their 25th birthday.)
- The Connexions PA will continue as lead professional for young people who are not in education or training (NEETs).
- The lead professional should continue to hold reviews each year involving the education or training establishment and KASS (if appropriate) until the young person leaves education or training.

Major issues for discussion may include:

- education and training;
- work options;
- housing and independent living;
- financial arrangements;
- leisure activities;
- getting out and about;
- support for carers; and
- relationships and sexual health.

Education and training

Some young people will continue to go to a further education or specialist college beyond the age of 20. Monitoring their progress will be the task of the college. However, if the young person has a learning disability, a Connexions personal adviser can be involved to offer advice and guidance until the young person is 25.



The world of work

Many young people with disabilities would like to have the opportunity to work.

Disability Discrimination Act 1995

This act makes it unlawful to discriminate against disabled people because of their disability (in other words, providing goods, services or employment). It is unlawful for employers of 15 people or more to treat a disabled person less favourably because of their disability, unless there is a 'good cause'.

Many young people have had the opportunity of work-link experience while at school or college and this will help them to make a more informed choice about the work they would like to do. The discussion at the annual reviews and the transition plan will include ideas about what might be possible in terms of employment and should influence the choice of work experience. It should identify the support needed. Some college courses will lead to vocational training and qualifications. A few young people with disabilities will be able to enter employment without any special support, but for many, extra support will be appropriate.

Supported employment schemes will help a young person with a disability to find a job and continue in work.

Workstep is the Government's supported employment scheme. Its aim is to provide opportunities for young people with disabilities to work in a supported environment and, when possible, to move on to unsupported employment. Referrals to Workstep are through the disability employment advisor (DEA), who is based at the local Jobcentre Plus office. The DEA will help with:

- advice and information about employment for people with disabilities;
- details of government initiatives to help young people with disabilities to find employment; and
- local job vacancies that might be suitable.

Workstep includes:

- the Job Introduction Scheme - the disabled person can work at a job for a trial period while Jobcentre Plus helps the employer with the wages;
- Access to Work - this helps to tackle some of the practical problems, such as help with transport costs, special equipment or providing a support worker;
- modern apprenticeships - the young person can learn on the job, building up knowledge and skills while earning a wage. These are available to young people aged 16 to 24. The Connexions PA and Jobcentre Plus will have information about the apprenticeships.

These supported employment schemes are flexible and designed to meet the needs of a young person with disabilities. The employment offered may be part-time or full-time.



Voluntary work

For some young people there may be opportunities to do voluntary work to gain experience and skills, which could lead to paid employment. There is no restriction on the number of hours that someone can do voluntary work without it affecting entitlements and benefits. However, if they or you are claiming benefits, you should tell the Benefits Agency and Jobcentre Plus about any plans to carry out voluntary work.

Permitted work

In 2002, the idea of permitted work replaced the previous category of 'therapeutic work'. Under the permitted work rules, anyone receiving incapacity benefits can work for up to 16 hours each week for up to 26 weeks without it affecting their entitlement to benefits.

There are other, quite complicated, rules about how much a person can earn and extending the time beyond 26 weeks and your local Benefits office will provide advice.

There have been many changes in the law since the early 1990s which are helpful to disabled people who would like to work. These include the following.

- The New Deal for disabled people, which is part of the Government's Welfare to Work strategy. The aim of the scheme is to help people into work who receive health-related benefits, such as the Disability Living Allowance. People do not have to join the scheme - it is voluntary.
- The Minimum Wage Legislation of 1999, which protects vulnerable employees, such as disabled people, from being exploited. With a few exceptions, which are set out in the legislation, it is illegal for employers to pay less than the minimum wage. The law has worked against a few people who need a lot of support because employers may be reluctant to take them on. However, all employers over a certain number are expected to employ a percentage of people who are registered as disabled.
- There have been changes in the rules of the benefit system, which may make it more flexible when people want to move from benefits into work. However, some benefits are at risk if a person enters paid employment and so it is important to get reliable advice.

Housing and independent living

White paper 'Valuing people'

People with learning disabilities should have more choice and control over where and how they live.

Young disabled people may face considerable barriers if they want to move into a home of their own. A shortage of suitable housing in both the private and social-rented sector is one problem in Kent.

A further common difficulty is the ability of the district housing and social-care services to work together effectively to co-ordinate the accommodation available and the support needs of a disabled person. The local plan for 'Valuing People' includes a commitment to more people having



their own homes, with support.

Young disabled people may want to consider a range of housing options and their ideas about where and how they want to live may change over time.

The initial discussions about hopes for future living should take place as part of the Transition Review in Year 9, at school, when the young person may only be 14 years old. By the age of 19 or older, after leaving college or school, the young person may have very different ideas, which can, if appropriate, be included in their care plan under the NHS and Community Care Act (1990).

The following housing opportunities are available to young disabled people.

Renting from a private landlord

It may be possible for some young people to join the private rented sector and buy in any support that is needed from adult social services. To do this, the young person will need to have the ability to enter into a tenancy agreement. This means they must be able to understand the consequences of entering into an agreement and understanding their rights and obligations under the contract. If support is needed, a care manager will carry out an assessment to make sure that a young person is eligible for support and assess individual care needs. Making any adaptations to the property itself may be more difficult in this sector.

Social housing and supported living

If a disabled person wants to apply for social housing, the first step is to fill in an application form and attach a copy of a current assessment of their needs. It is possible for a young person to register for housing from the age of 16 if they have a guarantor or support from social services. However, most people register from the age of 18, when they may be granted a tenancy in their own right.

The tenants can live in friendship groups and have the support they need arranged through social services. The level of support may vary from low level, such as help in budgeting or cooking, to a higher level, such as help with personal needs.

In some areas premises, which were residential care homes, have been adapted to offer supported living opportunities. Residents may share facilities such as the kitchen, bathroom and living room but have their own bedroom. Some of these schemes can offer sleep-in support for residents.

Housing associations

Housing associations, now known as registered social landlords, can build homes specially designed to meet the needs of disabled people. Housing associations can apply to housing departments for social-housing grants and grants to adapt properties to meet the needs of disabled tenants.

Adult placement schemes

These schemes offer disabled people who are over 18 the opportunity to live with a family in the community. The adult placement carer is the key worker for the scheme and the young person will share the daily routines and activities of the carer's household. Like a foster carer, the adult carer is paid to provide the service. Rent would be paid using Housing Benefit and the young person would pay for food and fuel from their benefits while their care needs are assessed and paid for by adult social services.



The adult placement scheme can usually also provide a temporary placement while a young person is developing the skills to allow them to live more independently in the community.

Living at home

Some young people choose to continue to live at home with their family rather than living independently. These arrangements may work well while parents are fit and in good health, but may need to be considered again over time. The Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000 states that we must assess a carer's ability to provide, and continue to provide, care. We discuss the role of the carer in more detail later in this section.

While a young person is living at home they do not receive Housing Benefit in their own right even if they are paying rent to their parents. The householder may pay less council tax if the home is adapted because of a person's disability and may be eligible for other benefits such as Income Support or Disability Living Allowance.

Residential-care homes

Although most disabled people are now being supported to live in the community, there are a few people who will need high levels of support and for whom residential care may be appropriate. We would discuss the need for a residential placement at 18 as part of the assessment under the NHS and Community Care Act 1990. However, as needs change over time, the care manager may carry out an assessment at any stage in the life of a person who is disabled. (This may be 18 in some cases.) The care manager will discuss the residential options which are available. The homes will vary in size and the level of support that they are able to offer the residents. Some of the main questions that you might need to consider when thinking about a suitable residential home would include the following.





- What is the philosophy of the home?
- What are the levels of staffing and what are their qualifications?
- What are the ages and support needs of the other people living in the home?
- How are the residents encouraged to be independent, in other words, do they choose their own meals and do their own shopping and so on?
- How are the communication needs of the residents met?
- Some people may need to use communication methods which don't involve speech, so are the staff trained to use signs, symbols or any other communication aids that a young person might need?
- Does the home operate a key-worker system?
- What opportunities are there in the day?
- How do residents access the local community?
- Do residents have the opportunity for privacy?
- How do staff monitor the person's progress?
- How does the home involve parents and other family members in decision-making?
- What are the procedures for responding to abuse?
- What is the complaints procedure?
- Does the home have a contract with social or community services? If not, you should ask why. Most care homes should have one!

As all residential care homes are registered and inspected by the National Care Standards Commission (CSCI), it may be helpful to see a copy of the most recent report. However, it is always important to visit the home and if possible, talk to the staff, residents and the families of residents.

Buying a property

A few young people may be fortunate to have the money to buy a house or flat for themselves. However, the young person must have either the ability to enter into a legal contract on their own or have a trustee who can act on their behalf. If the young person is assessed at 16 under the NHS and Community Care Act (1990), the care plan and future reviews will take account of any adaptations to a house, which are needed to support independent living. A home visit and assessment by an occupational therapist may be arranged.

Financial arrangements

Helping a disabled person with their finances may be an area of anxiety for some carers. The issues may include the following.

- Collecting benefit for a disabled person - this is done by becoming their 'agent' so that the carer can cash the giro and so on, on their behalf.
- Claiming benefit on behalf of a disabled person - this is done by becoming their appointee. The Benefits Agency will then deal with the carer as if they were the person claiming the benefit.
- Dealing with banks and building societies - to do this the carer would need to take out a 'third-party mandate' by writing to the bank or building society. Or it may be easier to consider having a joint account with the disabled person.



- Taking power of attorney - this may be a good idea if a person with a disability has complicated financial affairs or a large amount of money is involved. The power of attorney is a legal document that allows someone to take control of the financial affairs of another person. The other person would have to be judged to be unable or unfit to manage their own affairs. A solicitor or the local citizen's advice bureau would be able to provide more information about this.
- Providing for a disabled person through a will - if a person with a disability may not be able to manage money or property left to them in a carer's will, it may be worth considering setting up a trust. The trust will mean the trustees who the carer has chosen will manage the funds according to the wishes as set out in the will.

One complication is that a trust may affect the benefits available to the person with a disability and their entitlement to social-care services. If a disabled person is left money but does not have the ability to manage it and no trust has been set up, the Court of Protection will appoint a receiver, who will act in the same way as a trustee.

It is important to get legal advice to make sure that the person with the disability gets the best possible outcome when there are complicated financial arrangements to be made.

Leisure activities

As young people with disabilities move into adult life it is important for them to be able to pursue leisure activities separately from their parents or other family members. All young people need to be encouraged to develop their own interests and try out new activities and experiences.

Some people may be able to join local clubs or activities without extra support. However, it may be helpful to explain any special needs (for example, difficulties understanding what is said) to the organisers, so that any possible difficult situations can be avoided.

As well as the usual range of leisure facilities that are available locally, there are activities and events organised specifically for people who are disabled.

Some young people may find it difficult to take part in local leisure activities for a variety of reasons, which might include:

- a lack of suitable transport which is available at the weekend or during the evening; and
- finding or paying for the level of support which is needed.

The Children's Information Service (CIS) may be able to help with some of these difficulties. The service has an information officer who will research and provide information about services and facilities for children with special needs, up to the age of 18. This includes information about suitable leisure activities.

The Family Fund may be able to help towards the cost of a holiday while a young person is under 16. After age 16 there are a number of other organisations that may be able to help with costs.

'Holiday Care', a national registered charity, is a good source of information about funding possibilities.



Getting out and about

Using public transport is often difficult for disabled people. For some people access may be the problem, for others learning the skills for independent travel and coping when things do not go according to plan may be the issue.

There are a number of schemes which may help with travel needs.

- Some district councils offer a choice of travel concessions for young people over the age of 18 in the form of bus passes.
- The Disabled Persons Railcard allows you to buy cheaper tickets for the disabled person and another adult travelling with the person. The cards are valid for 12 months, but people need to meet certain conditions to qualify for a railcard under the scheme.
- Accessible taxis - a number of local taxi firms have wheelchair-accessible vehicles.
- Dial-a-ride schemes – district councils provide a service for people who are unable to use regular public transport.

Travel by car

Many disabled people will want to learn to drive and young people who are receiving the higher rate of Disability Living Allowance may start to learn to drive when they are 16. The DVLA will need to know about a disability to assess a person's ability to drive. Your GP will also need to provide supporting evidence. When a young person receives their licence, there will be an assessment to see what modifications might need to be made to the vehicle and what concessions might be needed when they take their test.

Motability is a UK charity which allows people to use the higher-rate mobility element of the Disability Living Allowance to hire or buy a car. If the disabled person does not drive, they may still be able to help buy a car and the person with the disability can choose up to two named people as the drivers.

We also operate the European Blue Badge Scheme, which allows people who are blind, or have certain other disabilities, to park close to shops and services that they need access to. The Blue Badge is only valid if the disabled person is the driver or a passenger in the car. The following link gives information: www.kent.gov.uk/SocialCare/disability/parking/





Caring for carers

For many years carers have been a hidden workforce within the community, with little access to either personal or financial support. The National Carers Strategy represents a commitment to carers and recognises the role they play in society. The vital but informal care that is offered to sick or disabled people by parents, children, friends, relatives and neighbours is specifically dealt with in the following acts.

- Disabled Persons (Services, Consultation and Representation) Act 1986
- Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995
- Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000
- Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004

Disabled Person's (Services, Consultation and Representation) Act 1986

This act says that we must take account of the ability of a carer to continue to provide care regularly.

Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995

A carer may ask for an assessment under this act, if they are caring for a person who has already had an assessment under the NHS and Community Care Act 1990. We have a responsibility to make sure that carers are aware of their assessment rights and provide information about the assessment. If a carer asks for an assessment, we have a duty to carry this out.

Carers may be eligible if they fall into certain groups.

- Adults (18 or over) who provide, or plan to provide, care regularly.
- Children (under 18) who provide, or plan to provide, care regularly.
- Parents who provide, or plan to provide, a substantial amount of care regularly for disabled children.

The act does not give a specific entitlement to services but the assessment will help with the care plans of the disabled person and so may benefit the carer.

Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000

This act gives us a duty to assess a carer's ability to provide care for a disabled person who is over 18. The carer must be over 16 and will have to ask us to carry out the assessment. We will decide whether the carer has needs in relation to the care that they provide. If the assessment shows that the carer does have needs, we have the power, but not the duty, to provide services to the carer rather than to the person who is receiving care.



The assessment framework will include:

- the carer's view of the arrangement and their willingness to provide care;
- the relationship of the carer to the disabled person;
- the network of support that the carer might have from friends and family;
- the other responsibilities that the carer has, for example work, childcare and family commitments;
- the health of the carer – physical and emotional – and whether there are mental-health issues;
- the understanding that the carer has of the needs of the person with a disability in the short-term and over time;
- the strengths and abilities of the carer; and
- the caring tasks which are performed and their effect on the carer, for example caring for a disabled person who needs supervision at night.

Before the assessment takes place it may be useful to get information about what services are available and helpful in Kent and their likely costs.

Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004

Sets out our duty to let carers know about their right to an assessment and says that the assessment must include a consideration of whether the carer wants to work, follow up education or training opportunities or access leisure activities.

Benefits

The main benefit available to carers is the Carer's Allowance. It is available to carers who are under 65 and care for someone for more than 35 hours a week, if they receive the middle or higher band of the Disability Living Allowance. The Carer's Allowance depends on income - currently the carer must earn less than £77 a week to claim the allowance.

Retired carers who are eligible for the Carer's Allowance may also be eligible to receive the Carer premium.

Young carers

There has recently been much more awareness of the role of young carers who may support parents who have a disability, and young adults who will provide care for brothers or sisters with a disability. Young carers are specifically included under the Carers Act. However, young carers will not be eligible for transition planning under this procedure unless they themselves are disabled. We are developing a separate strategy to make sure we prioritise the interests of young carers.



Relationships and sexuality

All young people are entitled to information, help and support on personal relationships and sexuality. Young disabled people have the same needs, behaviour and rights as all young people but are often discouraged from having sexually active relationships.

It can be a very difficult and confusing time for young people and their parents or carers and there are a number of things that may be helpful to know.

- Talking about growing up and the changes that happen to our bodies mean that professionals and parents and carers have to think about the words they are going to use to describe private body parts and sex. Most schools decide to use the 'proper' or biological names. Most parents want their children and young people to know these names but may have other names they use as well.
- As children grow up, they are faced with many new experiences and it is important that they are helped to become more independent by trying not to protect them too much. They will learn from these experiences, especially if the adults around them help them to take some carefully planned risks.
- Adults also need to make sure that children and young people are protected from exploitation and abuse. As a result, they need to know that some parts of their bodies are private, and they learn what to do and say in certain situations.

The law and sexual activity

In England and Wales, the law on sexual offences has been updated. The legal age for young people to agree to sex is 16, whether straight, gay or bisexual. This applies to someone with a learning disability as long as the person has the ability to agree to sexual activity.

Even at 16, some people with learning disabilities do not have enough understanding to be able to agree to sexual relationships. They may be able to do so in the future with some appropriate sex-and-relationships education, or they may never develop this ability. The law gives these people extra protection against abuse.

The aim of the law is to protect the safety and rights of young people and make it easier to prosecute people who pressure or force others into having sex if they don't want to. Forcing someone to have sex is a crime.

Although the age of consent is still 16, the law is not normally used to prosecute teenage sexual activity between two young people of a similar age who both agree to it, unless it involves abuse or exploitation.

Under the Sexual Offences Act young people still have the right to confidential advice on contraception, condoms, pregnancy and abortion, even if they are under 16.

But remember, whatever their age, young people should not have sex until they feel ready.

For more information about sex and relationships and advice on local services, visit www.ruthinking.co.uk or phone 0800 282930.



Part 2 - The transition planning background

The main points of transition

It is important to remember that young people transfer from children's to adult services at different ages for different services.

- 13 for the transfer to Connexions Services (involvement can continue up to the 25th birthday for those with learning disabilities).
- 16 and above for the transfer from school to other training in further education or work-based learning.
- 16 for Children in care transferring to 'leaving care' and developing a pathway plan.
- 18 for transferring from children's to adults' health services.
- 18 for transferring from children's to adults' social services.
- 19 and above from FE college to higher education.
- 19 and above from education and training providers to employment.
- After 19 and above for transferring from a specialist college placement into further education college.

Which young people?

The Education Act 1996 involves a transition review in Year 9 for all children who have a statement of special educational needs.

However, our procedures recognise that a few young people with special or complex needs do not have a statement (with formal review systems) and would benefit from having a formal transition plan. The following young people are eligible for formal transition planning under these procedures.

- Young people with statements of SEN.
- Young people who are disabled (under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005).
- Young people aged 13 to 24

Kent's policy

We have a number of policies that help professionals in their roles and these are set out in detail in the strategic framework. However, there are four main policies that form the basis of effective transition planning.



Supporting independence

We and our partners are committed to promoting independence. Kent's Children's Trust want to see all disabled children and young people, including those with learning difficulties, having the same opportunities to achieve as all children and young people. We are committed to making sure that children and young people with complex needs enter adulthood feeling supported and able to take part both socially and economically within their communities.

Lead professional

Our vision, endorsed by Kent's Children's Trust, is that all children and young people with additional or complex needs who need support from more than one practitioner should experience a smooth and effective service in which one practitioner takes the lead to make sure that services are co-ordinated, clear and achieve the outcomes we aim for.

As a result, all young people going through the formal transition process will have an identified lead professional and we will tell you their name. It may be a Connexions PA or a special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). If a young person is in care or has a social worker, they will normally take on the lead professional responsibilities.

Person-centred planning

Is a term we use to make sure that the young person is at the centre of planning their life. It involves:

- listening to and learning about what the young person wants from their life;
- helping the young person think about what they want now and in the future; and
- family, friends and professionals working together with the young person to make this happen.

The lead professional will help the young person to develop a 'person-centred plan' that sets out their goals and ambitions to make sure that there is the highest level of involvement at transition meetings.

We will need to review the person-centred plan and change it as goals are achieved and expectations change.



Megan – age 14

Hobbies – art, pottery, shopping and having friends round.

At school, I run a chess and games club. I also help Sam with the disco.

Megan’s view of person-centred reviews

- It was warm and welcoming.
- I felt in control.
- I could say what I wanted it to be like.
- I did my own invites.
- There was music.
- I invited a friend.
- There was lime cordial and chocolate muffins.

Direct payments and In control

We are committed to helping people take more control of their lives. As a result, we will offer direct payments to young people who are eligible for a service from Children’s Social Services when they reach the age of 16. This will help to promote social inclusion and the principles of independent living as they offer the opportunity for young people to make more decisions themselves and to have more control over their lives and help the move into adulthood.

Kent Adult Social Services are in the process of putting ‘In Control’ into practice. This idea builds on the principles of person-centred planning and Direct Payments. We will put In Control into practice for all young people moving on from children’s to adult’s services.

Roles of the main agencies

If a young person has a statement of special educational needs or additional or complex needs they may need a co-ordinated response from a range of agencies. The law says that we must link with the Connexions Service, health services, social services and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). Other agencies such as housing, the youth service and voluntary sector, might also have an important contribution to make.

Local education authority

They are responsible for making sure that they meet all other duties placed on them by the SEN and disability codes of practice. This includes the requirement to have a transition review of a child’s statement in Year 9.

Schools

From the start of Key Stage 4, all young people are supported by their school to consider their options for further education and career choices. Although the local authority has primary responsibility for planning for young people with statements, it usually passes this task to the head teacher of the school that the young person goes to. The transition planning meeting for children with statements of SEN is usually referred to as a transition review as it will include a review of the statement.



The school is not responsible for arranging transition meetings for young people who do not have statements. This is the responsibility of the lead professional (see below).

The Connexions Service is a support service for all 13- to 19-year-olds and can stay involved with young people with learning disabilities up to their 25th birthday.

Connexions personal advisers offer support through local Connexions access points, schools and colleges where all young people, whatever their situation, can see information on a number of issues. Specialist advisers can make referrals if this is appropriate.

The Connexions Service works closely with schools and young people and their families to support them with planning for past the school age of 16 and has a central role to play in planning a young person's future educational, training and employment needs. The service is delivered by personal advisers who hold a number of skills and qualifications. Personal advisers can offer support on career choices and any issues that stand in the way of the young person going into education, employment or training.

Some Connexions personal advisers work with specific schools while others work more in the community. Some personal advisers are skilled in working with young people with special needs. They also have responsibilities to special needs schools and can work alongside young people with learning disabilities until the young person's 25th birthday

The Learning Skills Council is responsible for funding and planning education and training for young people over 16 in England and Wales. Nationally most disabled young people are in education at a school or a college when they are 16. However, other young people choose to go into work training and employment. The transition support plan should help to set out and support pathways to training and employment when this is what the young person and their family wants. This may involve working closely with social and health services.

Health services

The SEN Code of Practice sets out the responsibilities of the local health authority when it comes to transition planning. They:

- identify those young people likely to have continuing health-care needs after leaving school (those with health needs on their statement of special educational needs); and
- make sure arrangements are in place to allow health-care needs to be met after leaving school.

It is sometimes difficult to co-ordinate the appropriate requests because specialist services may work from acute or primary-care trusts. The range of health professionals involved with children who have SEN, disabilities or complex needs include:

- speech and language therapists (only for primary-age children);
- physiotherapists;
- occupational therapists;
- clinical psychologists;
- doctors;
- nurses from schools or community teams;
- services such as audiology and ophthalmology; and
- child and adolescent mental-health teams.



We would usually only contact them if a need for their service was included on the statement of special educational needs. The responsibility for identifying health needs and for arranging transition is co-ordinated by the most relevant health professional, often the community paediatrician.

It is often not possible for all health professionals to go to reviews although they will try to prioritise the meeting if there are current concerns about the young person in their area of specialism. In some cases one health professional such as a school nurse may be the health representative.

In many cases we will ask health professionals to supply a written report. The requests would usually be sent to the relevant professionals, including therapists and doctors. This may be co-ordinated by the GP or the community paediatrician.

The community paediatrician may recommend that specialist reports are collected from other specialists, for example an audiologist or child and adolescent psychologist. The need for new referrals to other specialists should be noted in the transition support plan and discussed with the relevant health professional. (A referral to any of these specialists would go through the relevant health professional.)

Children's Social Services (CSS)

Services work with children and families if the child, up to the age of 18, has been assessed as being in need within the meaning of the Children Act 1989. If a child or young person meets the conditions they may be eligible for support:

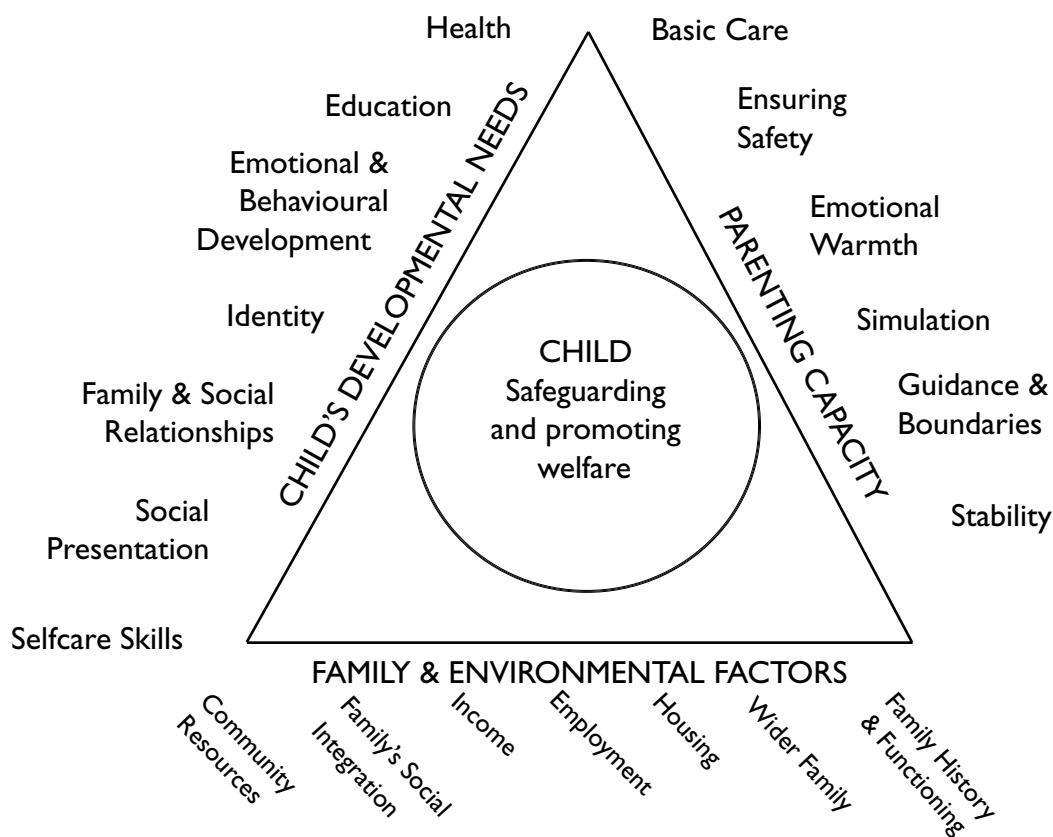
- from the Disabled Children's Service (DCS) which works with children and young people with significant and ongoing disabilities up to the age of 18, offering a range of services and advice by qualified social workers, family support workers and occupational therapists to support disabled children; and
- as a 'child in need' if the child has significant and ongoing health problems that need extra support but does not meet the conditions for a service from the Disabled Children's Service.

Children's Social Services also have a duty to provide advice as to whether a young person with a statement is disabled within the meaning of the Children Act 1989.

Any referrals for Children's Social Services must be made through the county duty service. The referrals are then passed through a duty and initial assessment team or direct to the Disabled Children's Service, if appropriate, to assess whether the young person is eligible to receive services. Action could include:

- providing advice and information on local services and benefits; or
- assessing the child or young person to get what care they need and, if appropriate, develop plans and processes to meet the agreed needs.

Kent Children's Social Services must use the national framework for Assessment of Children in Need and their Families when assessing children. The triangle below sets out the main elements of the framework.



From 'Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families' - DoH publication available at <http://www.doh.gov.uk/scg/cin.htm>.

There are no charges for Children's Social Services unless a child or young person is in care when parents are assessed to make financial contributions to their care.

Kent Youth Offending Service

The aim of this service is to work with young people, their families and other agencies to prevent offending and re-offending.

Kent Adult Social Services (KASS)

They have a range of services for adults from the age of 18 who have physical or learning disabilities or chronic ill health, which causes a substantial impairment. These services are organised as follows.

- Services for people with learning disabilities are provided by district community learning disability teams (CLDT) which include both social-care and health community-based professionals such as care managers, care manager assistants, community LD nurses and speech and language therapists. They may also contain a transition worker, housing support officer, psychologist or psychiatrists. Not all of these are always included and sometimes professionals are shared across teams or districts.
- The professionals carry out joint assessments, though different parts of the assessment may involve different relevant professionals. The teams arrange services to meet the county council's legal responsibilities and relevant NHS community-based duties which are specific to learning disability. They also link with local mainstream health services to provide other expertise in learning disabilities. As well as the work meeting individuals' needs, they also often do group work, such as healthy eating or in managing anger.



- The teams are also active in the district partnership groups, which give people with learning difficulties more choice and control over their lives.
- Local promoting independence teams, which include care managers and assistants, assess the needs of people with physical disabilities. They cover a patch of part of a district. Health needs are met through the mainstream NHS services.
- New referrals for both groups go through the county duty service, although for people who are known to Children's Services this information is also passed to the relevant adults' team.
- KASS services depend on eligibility that is decided under Fair Access to Services (FACS). Once KASS have decided if a young person is eligible, they carry out a community-care assessment to see what services may be provided. These services include:
 - assessing the young person to see what care they need, and developing plans and processes to meet the agreed needs; and
 - agreeing and negotiating appropriate resources, which could include monitoring a young person's progress in line with their care plan and negotiating amendments to make sure changing needs are met.

A more detailed description of the assessment is set out below.

The Integrated Community Equipment Service (ICES) combines adult and children's social services and health-equipment services and provides equipment for all ages. One of their main aims is to pool resources. KASS pay for all standard equipment for children but funding for specialist children's equipment has moved over to CSS. Recycled equipment is 'pooled' for access across all services.

Assessment for Kent Adult Social Services (NHS and Community Care Act 1990)

A central function of Kent Adult Social Services is to assess people under the NHS and Community Care Act 1990. The assessment is carried out if there is evidence that a person may need community-care services.

There is a duty on the local authority to carry out an assessment and, from the results of the assessment, to decide if services are provided. The local authority rarely refuses to carry out an assessment and we must give reasons if we do. The assessment will cover both the needs of the young person and their ambitions for the future.

An assessment can be asked for through the county duty service. A referral may be made on behalf of a young person by:

- their family or carer;
- friends;
- solicitors or other advocates;
- health-service staff; or
- any other government or independent agency.



The assessment process

The assessment is currently carried out by the adult social services key worker who is known as the care manager. In children's social services the key workers are called social workers.

The young person is at the centre of the assessment process. The aim of the assessment is to share information to identify their needs so we can see what support they need to meet those needs.

The assessment is carried out so the young person can:

- gain a better understanding of their situation;
- identify the options that are available for managing their own lives;
- identify the outcomes required from any help that is provided; and
- understand the basis on which decisions are reached.

There is no legal framework for the assessment, but the guidance sets out a number of areas that we will need to consider:

- Skills or lack of them
- Preferences and ambitions
- Living situation
- Support available from relatives and friends
- Other sources of support available

Wherever possible KASS will gather information that is already recorded about the young person by other agencies to avoid doing it again. However, information will have to be updated and gaps filled to make sure that we have a full picture of a young person's needs.

Where will the assessment take place?

The care manager will arrange a date for the assessment, which may take place at any venue which is convenient for the young person to be assessed. At least one meeting will usually take place in your home so that the care manager can assess the daily environment.

Who will be involved?

Several people may be involved with the assessment, but the care manager, the young person and their main carer are central to the process. There will be one or more face-to-face meetings between the young person and the care manager, and other specialist professionals may also be asked to make a contribution. There are often confidential discussions between the care manager and the other professionals who can inform the assessment.

The main areas for assessment are shown below.

- Environment and circumstances
 - Family and friends
 - Accommodation
 - Neighbourhood
 - Care and support
 - Financial issues



- Daily living
 - Communication
 - Self-care and independent living skills
 - Transport
 - Physical and mental-health and medical issues
 - Any substance misuse or offending
 - Personal ambitions
 - Background, culture, religion
 - Social, leisure, education or employment
 - Family, friends and personal relationships
- Associated assessments

Specialist assessments may be relevant in some cases and it is the care manager's responsibility to arrange and co-ordinate these assessments. The associated assessments may include information from:

- the GP;
- community or hospital nurses;
- psychiatric consultant;
- psychologist;
- therapists (occupational therapist, physiotherapist or speech and language therapist);
- school and SEN services; and
- sensory impairment checks.

There may also be a separate carer or young-carer assessment

Changes in financial responsibility

At 18, if the young person receives a service from one of the adult teams, we can carry out a financial assessment to see if they will have to contribute to their package of care. We do not look at your financial status as part of the assessment process. So, if we did not review benefits at 16, it is important we review them at 18 to make sure we make the most of them.

Charging for services

By law, the local authority must charge for residential services but the charges are set to take account of the financial circumstances of the young person in line with the Government's Fairer Charging for Services policy. In Kent there may also be charges for supported living, support in the home and respite services. However, there is currently no charge for day-care services and the process of assessment and drawing up of care plans is free.

A recent court ruling has said that we can take resources into account when assessing the needs of disabled people. We have a duty to make sure we provide best value. This means we must take into account their resources when deciding how to meet a need.



Risk assessment

The care manager will summarise the risks identified in any of the sections of the assessment as a risk assessment plan.

The care plan

The plan will use the information gathered during the assessment to draw up a care plan. The care plan will cover all the relevant areas which have been identified. This will include all the information from the social-care and risk assessments, financial assessments and any specialist assessments.

The Disabled Children's Services and Kent Adult Social Services both have access to advice from occupational therapy (OT). They provide equipment and the housing adaptations that are needed for young people to live independently.

Once a service has been agreed in the care plan, we cannot withdraw it without assessing the young person's needs again.

We need to send a copy of the care plan to the disabled young person and, with their permission, to their carer and any other relevant person. This might be a potential provider or another professional who is already involved with the care or welfare of the person.

We regularly review how the care plan is put into practice. We do not normally expect to carry out a yearly review, but more frequent reviews will take place when complicated or changing needs are involved.

If a young person has been assessed as eligible for Kent Adult Social Services at or after 18, a KASS representative should go to the meeting. If the young person is taking up services at 18, a KASS care manager will link with the lead professional to make sure the transfer is smooth.

Complaints procedure

If, following the assessment, you disagree about the content of the care plan, it is possible to raise the issues with the care manager in the first instance. If they cannot sort any issues out, there are three stages to a formal complaints procedure.

- Informal resolution or problem-solving - stage 1
- Formal investigation and response - stage 2
- Referral to a review panel - stage 3

You should get a leaflet that explains the procedures during the assessment process.

Equipment and adaptations

For many young people their equipment needs at home and in school will have been co-ordinated by therapists (through their school). Even if the young person stays on at school after 16, the responsibility for arranging home equipment and adaptations will pass to adult services.

You can contact some services through health (for example, the wheelchair service) and others through the disability team.



The assessment under the NHS and Community Care Act 1990, takes account of equipment needs and any adaptations that may be needed in the home. There is an occupational therapist (OT) available within KASS who can make a home visit to assess your daily living needs.

In some cases the OT or physiotherapist may suggest specialist equipment and arrange assessments. The Integrated Equipment Service can pay for the equipment. However, you may need to claim extra (charitable) funding.

Disabled living centres around the country have permanent exhibitions of equipment that you can try out and there is an exhibition each year of new products which is organised by Naidex: Touchstone Exhibitions and Conferences Ltd. The Disabled Living Foundation provides up-to-date advice about aids and equipment for disabled people.

Adapted housing

To help with adapted housing, you may be entitled to a Disabled Facilities Grant. The aim of the grant is to make sure that a young person has access to various parts of the home and an occupational therapy assessment is needed. The work carried out with the grant must be 'necessary, appropriate, reasonable and practical'.

The district housing authority will consult an occupational therapist from social services to decide whether the work is needed and appropriate. If this is agreed, the housing authority assess your income to see whether you should pay some of the costs for the work. If a grant is approved, the payment must be made within a year of the original application.

The district housing departments and adult social services work closely to provide a co-ordinated response to housing adaptations and the assessment for eligibility for grants.

Carer's assessment

The Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995, entitles carers to have their own needs assessed when the young person's needs are being assessed. We will carry out the assessment but carers can also ask us for an assessment. The results of the assessment will not give carers direct access to services but we will take their needs into account when agreeing the care plan.



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Appendix I

Checklist for young people

We have set up the transition planning process to make sure that the move from school or children's services to the next stage in a young person's life goes as smoothly as possible. Collecting and passing on good and helpful information means that young people receive the specialist help and support that they need during their continuing education, care or training.

The SEN code of practice says that all parents or carers of children with special educational needs should feel they are **treated as partners** and can:

- play an active part and valued role in their children's education;
- know what they can expect for their child; and
- have access to information, advice and support during any assessment and any related decision-making process about special education provision, including transition planning.

Good practice for parents and carers, involves making sure that you:

- have spent some time with the young person, finding out, in whatever way is possible, what their hopes and wishes for the future might be;
- have discussed hopes and expectations about the young person's future at home and this can be shared with others involved in the process;
- have considered your needs for practical and other help in the years into adulthood;
- have thought about ways in which the young person can be offered new experiences and skills which will help them as they move towards their new adult role and lifestyle; and
- understand transition planning and who is likely to be involved, so you can contribute to a real and effective partnership in the process from the start.

Questionnaire

These questions should help you think about your child's needs in the future. If you are not sure about the answers to some of the questions set out below, you can contact the lead professional to ask for information or one of the support agencies listed to ask for information.

- Have you been able to help your son or daughter, in whatever way is possible, let you know what his or her hopes and fears for the future are?
- Have you thought about what support and services he or she will need in future?
- Do you have some idea of the kind of help that you, and other people close to the young person, would find useful over the next few years?
- Do you understand what a transition plan is and what you can expect from the yearly review (transition planning) meeting when the transition plan is drawn up?



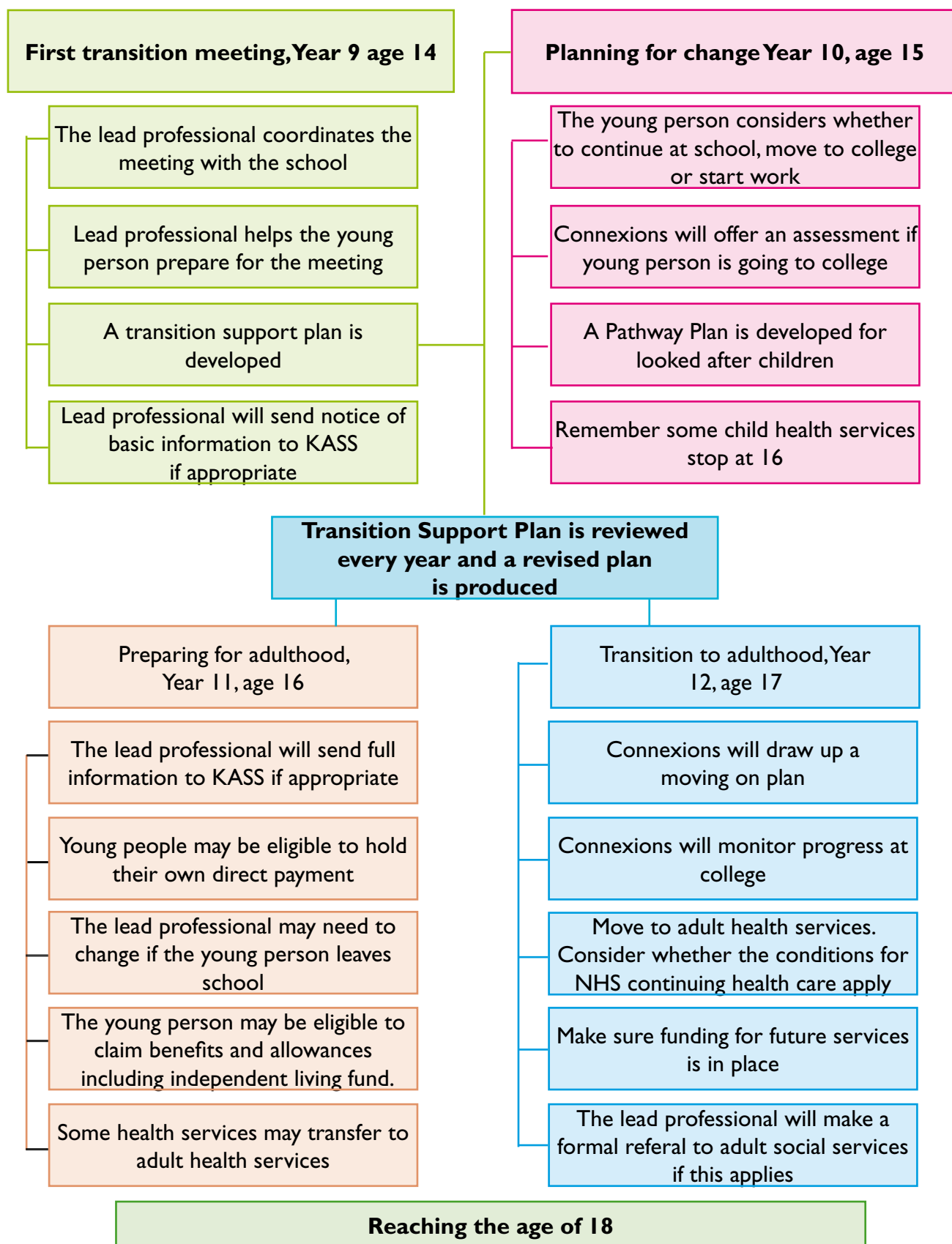
- Did you know that you can invite someone to go along with you to the review meeting to support you? If you do not have someone in mind, do you know how to find out who would support you, if this would be helpful?
- Have you found out who are the main people whose job it is to help you and your daughter or son through the process of transition, and how to contact them?
- Have you been able to find out what the main choices are for your son or daughter after leaving school or college?
- If your family does not receive any help from social services, are you aware that your son or daughter may be eligible for children-in-need services and you can have an assessment of your needs as a carer?
- Have you been told who has been invited to the transition plan meeting? Do you know you can have written reports from those who cannot go to the meeting?
- Are you clear about how the transition plan is to be used once it has been drawn up and who it can be sent to (with your permission)?
- Do you feel confident that your wishes are being seen as important? Have you made sure that your son or daughter is fully involved?

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Appendix 2 Kent Transition process diagram Years 9 to 12





Appendix 3 Jargon

There is a lot of jargon in most processes. This glossary helps to explain some of the jargon used in this pack:

Yearly review	If a young person has a statement of special educational needs, this must be reviewed each year and you must be involved in this. It reviews and sets out targets.
Care plan	The care plan is the document drawn up as a result of consultation between social services and you and the young person. It shows the ways in which services will meet the needs of the young person.
Children Act 1989	An act that identifies our duty to “safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need” (‘children’ being defined as up to 18). It is built on the belief that “children and young people and their parents should all be considered as individuals with particular needs and potentialities.”
Code of practice	The SEN code of practice sets out all the requirements involved in supporting children and young people with special educational needs.
Collaborative multi-agency assessment	Where a group of agencies (usually education, social services and health) work together to assess and make plans.
Connexions Service	The role of this service will include the work currently done in some areas by careers services.
Direct payments	Payments made direct to young people and carers to buy their services.
Disabled Persons Act (1986) Assessment	The procedure for identifying a person as ‘disabled’ and placing them on the disability register.
‘External team’	In this pack this refers to the range of LEA support staff (including specialist teachers and educational psychologists) who provide skills advice and support. It can also refer to other professionals, such as therapists, mobility and orientation officers.
Health Act 1999	The act that promoted joint planning, funding and delivering services between health and social services.
Health authority (HA)	The organisation that provides funding for health care
Inclusion	The process where young people (and all pupils) gain control over their lives and learning. It is often used to emphasise the requirement in the ‘SEN and Disability Act’ to strengthen the right of children with SEN to be educated in mainstream schools.



Inclusion (continued)	The Department of Health Assessment Framework also recognises that “all children share the same developmental needs to reach their optimal potential but that the rate or pattern of progress of individual children may vary because of factors associated with health and impairment.”
Individual education plan (IEP)	This is a document drawn up - with the young person - that identifies targets for learning, behaviour and independence. Normally, it is reviewed at least twice a year.
Learning and Skills Council	The regional organisation that plans and pays for training and support for young people.
Multi-agency	More than one service working together.
Non-maintained or independent school	Schools which may be used by the local education authority but not maintained by them (fees are paid).
Out-of-county placement	Where a young person goes to a school outside of the local education authority where they live.
Personal adviser (PA)	Connexions professionals who provide a complete service for all from age 13 to 19 to help them prepare for life after school.
Provision for those over 16	The education or training that happens after 16. Within special schools, where young people sometimes stay until 19, this often means education in a separate department or sixth form usually with college-linked courses.
Primary care trusts (PCTs)	A development of within the NHS - funding is paid to the local group and it makes health decisions for the community.
Records of achievement	Folders used by most schools to record the achievements and progress of the student. These usually contain pieces of work, the student’s views, photographs and certificates.
Self-review	The process that all organisations go through in looking at what they do with a view to improving practice.
SEN	Special educational needs.
Statement of special educational needs	A document written for school pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities setting out the full range of needs and how these are to be met.
‘SEN Toolkit’	A pack that backs up the SEN code of practice and provides detailed advice about how the requirements within the code can be met practically.
SENCOs	The SEN co-ordinator in schools. This is the person who usually links with parents and makes all SEN arrangements.
CSS	Children’s social services



Transition	In this context, the process that happens for young people between 13 and 19 to make sure there is an effective move from school to adult life. It may continue up to 25 for young people with learning disabilities.
Transition plan	A plan that sets out what a young person's hopes and aspirations for the future are including school, post-school, work, leisure and support arrangements.
Voluntary agencies and organisations	Usually registered charities or projects that help young people and their families to find the best solutions. They also give us advice.



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Appendix 4

Useful contacts and references

Useful contacts

MENCAP (local): Unit 4 East Ct, Enterprise Road, Maidstone ME15 6YH 01622 692383

MENCAP (national): 117-123 Golden Lane, LONDON EC1Y 0AT 02074540454

Citizens Advice (local): 2 Bower Terrace Tonbridge Road, Maidstone ME16 8RY 01622-752420

Kent Association for the Blind: 2 College Road, Maidstone, ME15 01622-691357

Hi Kent: 18 Brewer Street, Maidstone ME14 1RU 01622-691151

Carers FIRST : 192 High Street, Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 1BE, Tel: 01732 357555

Kent County Council Contact Centre: 0845 515 045

NHS Direct: 0845 46 47

Materials and resources that might be helpful

Feeling Grown Up

Shepherd School, 1999

Phone: 0115 915 3265

A series of illustrated booklets aimed at young people with learning disabilities.

Titles: Female Masturbation, Male Masturbation, Menstruation at Home, Menstruation at the Disco, Public Toilets, Wet Dreams

Growing Up, Sex and Relationships: A Booklet for Young Disabled People

Christophers H

London : Contact a Family

This booklet is for physically disabled young people and aims to provide information about sex and relationships, and sexual health

Website: www.cafamily.org/packs.html

Growing Up, Sex and Relationships: A Booklet to Support Parents of Young Disabled People

Baker S

London: Contact a Family

This booklet has been written for parents and families whose children have disabilities, including those who may have mild to moderate learning disabilities.

It includes a directory of further publications and useful organisations.

Website: www.cafamily.org/packs.html

Now They are Growing Up ... (What Young People Need to Know)

Shepherd School, 1999

Phone: 0115 915 3265

A series of illustrated booklets aimed at parents to go alongside the Feeling Grown Up booklets.

Titles include: HIV & AIDS, Loss, Female Masturbation, Male Masturbation, Menstruation, A Planned Independent Life and Sexuality, Protecting your Child



Let's Talk . . . about Sex and Relationships!

Sheffield : Centre of HIV and sexual Health

A booklet for parents including a section for parents of children with learning difficulties or special needs, and a list of contacts for more information.

Phone : 0114 226 1900

Books Beyond Words

Royal College of Psychiatrists - a set of full-colour picture books aimed at people with learning difficulties.

Titles include : Bob Tells All, Falling in Love, George gets Smart, Hug Me Touch Me, Jenny Speaks Out, Keeping Healthy Down Below, Looking After my Balls, Looking After my Breasts, Making Friends, Susan's Growing Up

Website: www.rcpsych.ac.uk/publications/bbw/index.htm

Talking Together About Growing Up

Scott L & Kerr-Edwards L, 1999

fpa, ISBN 1899194967

A workbook for parents to help their children and young people to learn about growing up and the changes that will happen.

Website: www.fpa.org.uk

Talking Together About Contraception

Scott L & Kerr-Edwards L, 2005

fpa & Teenage Pregnancy Unit

Book One for parents and staff (ISBN 1899194797)

Book Two for young people with learning disabilities (ISBN 1899194797)

Sense - An Interactive CD on sex and relationships

This interactive CD ROM aims to explore issues around sex and relationships.

It includes puberty, the law, self-esteem, alcohol and where to go for help.

The CD ROM is easy to use and needs very little reading as there is an audio lead with clear instructions. It also covers aspects of diversity including disability, ethnic background and same sex relationships.



Produced by Kent County Council
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