



Preparing for Adulthood Strategy

**Developing positive transitions
for young people from 14,
who are likely to need services post 18**

Preparing for Adulthood Strategy

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1. Introduction

The need for effective transitions feature as key elements of both the Children and Families Act 2014, and the Care Act 2014, as well as NICE guidelines (2016), and Devon County Council acknowledges its responsibility and legal duty to prepare and support children and young people who are likely to continue to have additional needs through childhood and into adulthood. This strategy sets out how the council intends to meet its obligations in collaboration with key partners.

The way that statutory services are configured and operate have meant that some young people and their families have had a negative experience of change in the types and levels of support as they grow older and although improvements have been made, more still needs to be done to ensure young people have better opportunities to stay safe, be healthy and have their needs met.

A key part of transition is about how young people and their families are included and prepared, and how services are coordinated. Provision from statutory authorities is subject to different legislation across child and adult provision, and it is not always the case that services provided for young people have an equivalent adult alternative that a person is eligible to receive.

Effective preparation for adulthood can have a very positive effect in prevention by helping manage change and promoting independence, and partner agencies need to be committed to developing best practice in order to deliver continuity and best outcomes.

Our Vision

All young people should experience the transition to adulthood as a positive, exciting, and challenging time. Effective transition will support them to reach their full potential as an adult, by helping them to make decisions about their career, education, social life and where they are going to live. The transition process will be driven by the needs, views and wishes of the young person and their family, and not by the agencies surrounding them, in order that they can become as independent as possible.

Our aim is to design and provide for a person's needs, aspirations and desired outcomes and to ensure that they receive timely information, advice and guidance to help them achieve this. We need to fulfil our statutory responsibilities in such a way that it makes sense to the young person and successfully enables his/her transitional journey from childhood to adulthood, ensuring that they are able to effectively participate in their community and grow to live the life they want.

An effective transition from one service to another may hardly be noticed when it goes well and where the young person and family have been included, but where services fail or end, or where expectation is not met the person may be left increasingly vulnerable and distressed. Preparation for Adulthood should be seamless and not create additional processes, but utilises existing plans, support, advice and information through effective intra-organisation coordination, and wider multi-agency partnership working.

'Local authorities must ensure that the Education and Health Care plan review at Year 9, and every review thereafter, includes a focus on preparing for adulthood. Planning must be centred around the individual and explore the child or young person's aspirations and abilities, what they want to be able to do when they leave post-16 education or training and the support they need to achieve their ambition. Local authorities should ensure that children and young people have the support they need (for example, advocates) to participate fully in this planning and make decisions. Transition planning must be built into the revised EHC plan and should result in clear outcomes being agreed that are ambitious and stretching and which will prepare young people for adulthood.'
(SEND Code of Practice 2014)



2. Definitions – Who is included?

'The duty to conduct a transition assessment applies when someone is likely to have needs for care and support' (or support as a carer) under the Care Act when they or the person they care for transitions to the adult system'.
(Care Act 2014)

The Care Act identifies three groups that should have their own specific transition assessment; children, young carers, and a child's carer. The young people who are the focus of this strategy are within the age range of 14-25 years who are likely to gain significant benefit from a transition assessment, including;

- Children and young people identified as requiring support through statutory health and social care assessments whose needs will require continuing support from statutory adult services.
- Young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND), who may be likely to require support in adult life to achieve economic independence,
- Young people who may be vulnerable as adults e.g.;
 - Children and young people in care, and care Leavers.
 - Young People who are subject to safeguarding plans.
- Young Carers.
- Young people with long term complex medical conditions requiring palliative care, and those with life limiting conditions and complex long term conditions requiring assessment and support. This includes Complex Health Care, Mental Health and Drugs and Alcohol issues.
- Young people in the secure estate community including prison, Young Offender Institutions, Secure Children's Homes, Secure Training Centres or other places of detention as well as children and young people in the youth justice system.

Our Commitment

Devon County Council acknowledges its responsibility to young people in transition, and recognises that positive outcomes will only be achieved through a positive commitment to working across the council and with partners as well as children, young people and their families and supporters.

Children and young people involved in transition should be able to say;

- I am receiving the services I need, when I need them.
- I have a transition plan, which I understand and am able to contribute to.
- I understand what is planned and when things will happen, I am not surprised or worried about what is happening as I have the information I need.
- I am able to voice my views, wishes and opinions and they are listened to.
- I know who to ask for help if I am not sure of something and they respond to me quickly.
- Me and my family understand what will happen to my money as I transition to adulthood.
- I have a choice about my future, including where I will live, where I will go to school or work.
- I can access an advocate to support me and to make sure my views are heard and responded to.

3. Overview of the Pathway to Adulthood

The pathway sets out to provide a clear direction in three stages starting with 'Identification'. This first stages occur at age 13 when children with special educational needs and disabilities are identified to provide early engagement with families at age 14, allowing individual plans and progress to be tracked as they move on and are supported to 'Prepare for Adulthood' and finally 'Transfer' to adult services.

Not all children who are identified at the first stage will transfer and receive services at the end of the pathway:

- Where they do, they will be subject to transfer of care management and funding as appropriate.
- Where they do not, they will have clear decisions communicated with any appropriate signposting.

Supporting successful preparation for adulthood is best achieved by joint working to help children and young people realise ambitions in relation to:

- **higher education and/or employment** – including exploring different employment options, such as support for becoming self-employed and help from supported employment agencies
- **independent living** – enabling people to have choice and control over their lives and the support they receive, their accommodation and living arrangements, including supported living
- **participating in society** – including having friends and supportive relationships, and participating in, and contributing to, the local community
- being as **healthy** as possible in adult life

(SEND Code of Practice 2014)

The Pathway to Adulthood

IDENTIFICATION

- Identify child for transition from age 13 (Year 8)
- Engage young person and family from Year 9

PREPARING FOR ADULTHOOD

- Transition plan established
- Additional assessments
- Refer/agree funding
- Refer to employment
- Post-school plan in place

TRANSFER

- DCC Adult service /NHS allocation
- Funding agreed
- Adult provision in place

4. Children and Young People's Needs

Each service will need to plan for the numbers that may be coming through the system. Given that not all of the children and young people, in each group identified in the groups listed in 2 (above), will be referred for transition plans and that some will enter or leave the pathway at different stages, exact numbers are difficult to predict. However, from current data, the trend indicates that we might expect 360 children with EHC plans or who have a statement, in each school year from year seven.

As planning and monitoring improves, this should allow for improved data from which to build more accurate identification of numbers of reviews required each year, as well as identifying future levels of demand for services.

Information and data can be found via the following links;

[Devon's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment](#)

[National Statistics on Special Educational Needs](#)

Other key documents relating to/supporting this strategy:.

[Special Education Needs and Disability code of practice 0-25 years](#)

DfE, DoH, January 2015

[Care and Support Statutory Guidance](#)

DoH , 2014

[Transition from children's to adults' services for young people using health or social care services](#)

NICE, February 2016.

5. The Way Forward – Priorities for the next 12 months

A person-centred approach to improved transitions for young people has been identified as a priority for Devon County Council, and the initial focus for development will be the agreed priority areas of the Pathway to Adulthood, Commissioning for Better Outcomes, and Choice and Control.

In line with NICE guidance, DCC is committed to providing a supporting infrastructure by nominating both a senior executive accountable for developing and publishing this strategy, and senior managers from education, children, and adult services, to be accountable for its implementation.



Pathway to Adulthood

Work here sets out to develop a clear, integrated and effective pathway into adulthood that begins in year nine and that offers the children, young people, and their families who require it, direction, information and support appropriate to their needs. It will also provide a clear framework for multi-agency working, describing tasks and processes that best support families and fulfills the duties and responsibilities of the council.

This will include;

- Ensuring effective and accurate recording, sharing of data and information in support of a smooth transition.
- Updating and providing operational protocols to guide practice and ensure a smooth and effective transition from children's to adult services.
- Ensuring that Preparing for Adulthood Locality Meetings (formerly YPIT) will be attended by all appropriate services, and have a focus on monitoring the performance and decision making throughout the transition process, and are used to inform services of the future needs of young people by collecting data and identifying gaps in provision
- Ensuring reviews are scheduled for each year (or more frequently as appropriate) to enable maximum attendance and provide clear communication with individuals and their families.



Commissioning for Better Outcomes

As people progress along the pathway, systems and practice in commissioning and care management will need to reflect a commitment to person-centred approaches across agencies to best plan with, and support, children, young people and families so that developmentally appropriate services are available at the right place and at the right time.

Activity here will:

- Work with provider organisations to promote creative approaches to health and wellbeing, developing independent living skills and emotional and mental resilience so that young people have the best opportunities as they approach adulthood.
- Strengthen joint working arrangements across commissioning, contracting and procurement teams to ensure that continued post-transition placements or services are a positive choice of quality and value.
- Provide a needs and gaps analysis to ensure that Devon is able to secure sufficient, affordable accommodation and services for the medium and long term future.
- Support the plans to provide accommodation and community services for people who display behaviour that challenges through ‘transforming care’ partnership working.
- Ensuring consultation of the strategy and design of the pathway takes place and that there is the opportunity for feedback to the steering group.



Choice and Control

'The wellbeing of each young person or carer must be taken into account so that assessment and planning is based around the individual needs, wishes, and outcomes which matter to that person'

Care Act Guidance

Central to all developments is the maximizing of opportunities for the inclusion and participation of children, young people and their families throughout the pathway, ensuring that children and young people with even the most complex needs are not excluded from their individual plans and wider service design and delivery.

The focus of work here includes:

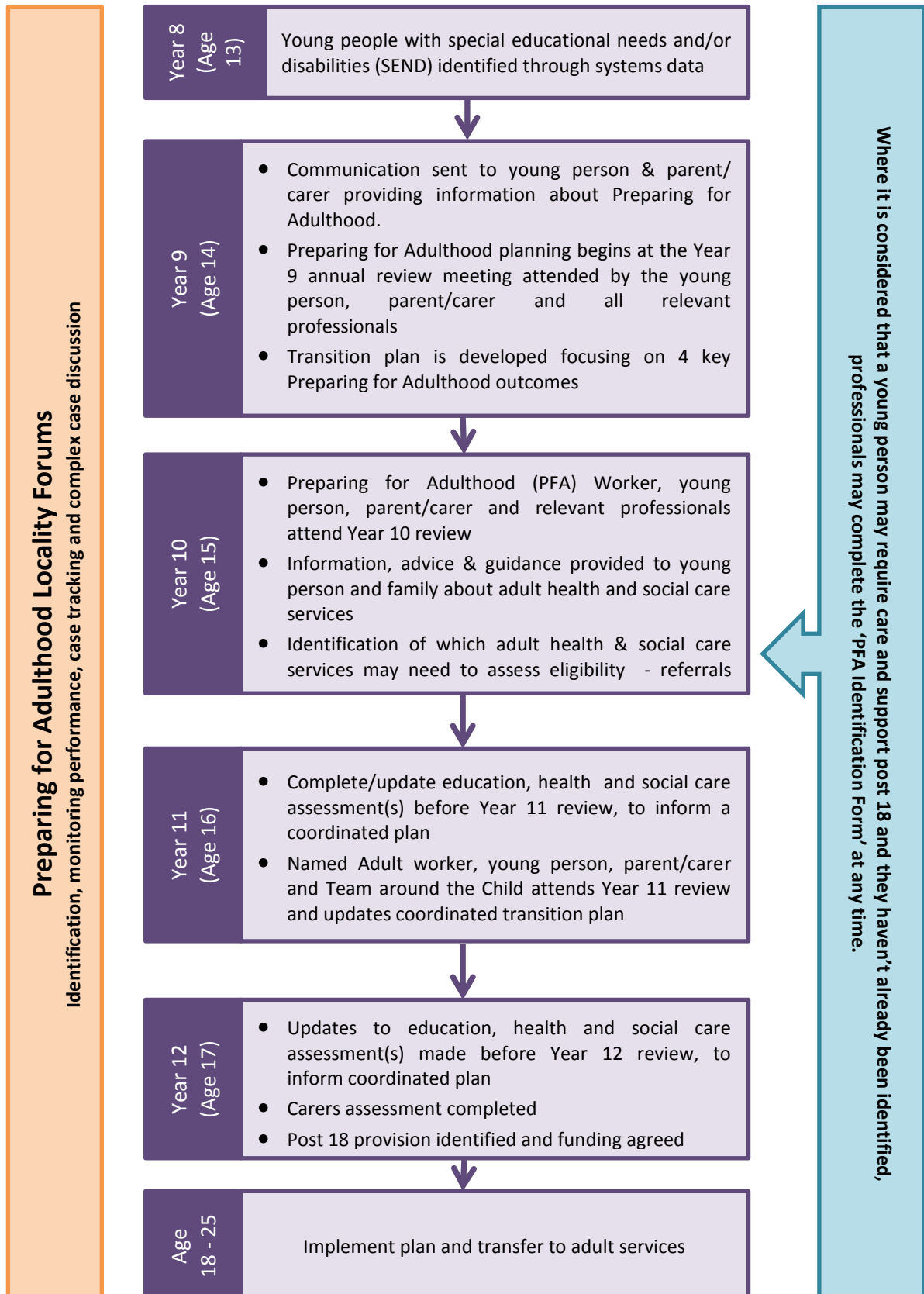
- Ensuring that full opportunity for inclusion in the Pathway to Adulthood is offered to all relevant families, and that there is careful coordination of planning to include family needs.
- Developing good advanced planning with coordination of pathway plans with the young person.
- Providing support to enable children and young people to have a voice, including access to advocacy services as required.
- Ensure opportunities for eligible families to request personal budget and direct payments and effective transfer from children to adult direct payments where appropriate.

Action Plans

Each of these priority areas will be subject to an action plan with clear timescales and lead responsibilities. Progress reporting will be ongoing and a review undertaken after 12 months when the next set of priorities will be established.

6. The Pathway

The steps of the Preparing for Adulthood pathway can be seen in the diagram below. Each step will include specific actions that will be undertaken at each year with performance measures and reporting, and will be designed to be compliant with the SEND Code of Practice, and Care Act guidelines.



7. Monitoring Impact

The commissioners will require robust and measurable outcomes to be monitored on a regular basis, and must also ensure that thorough monitoring systems are in place to support this plan and to evaluate its impact.

Performance Measures will be developed to monitor progress and will include new national performance measures, and will focus upon:

- Percentage of young people at year 9 with a transition plan.
- Percentage of young people receiving a transition plan review at year 11.
- Percentage of young people allocated an adult services worker at 17.
- Percentage of young people successfully transitioning to adult services at the appropriate time.
- Through case sampling, there is evidence of increased participation of children, young people and their families, where their views, wishes and opinions are heard and responded to.
- Evaluation and feedback from young people relating to agreed outcomes being achieved or not.