



PREPARING FOR ADULthood TRANSITIONS GUIDE

A guide for parents and carers of young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND) aged 13 to 25 years in mainstream or special education or post-16 learning, training or employment

Includes information about:

- Education and training
- Health
- Social care
- Employment
- Transport
- Finance
- Housing

*Written by parents for
parents and carers*

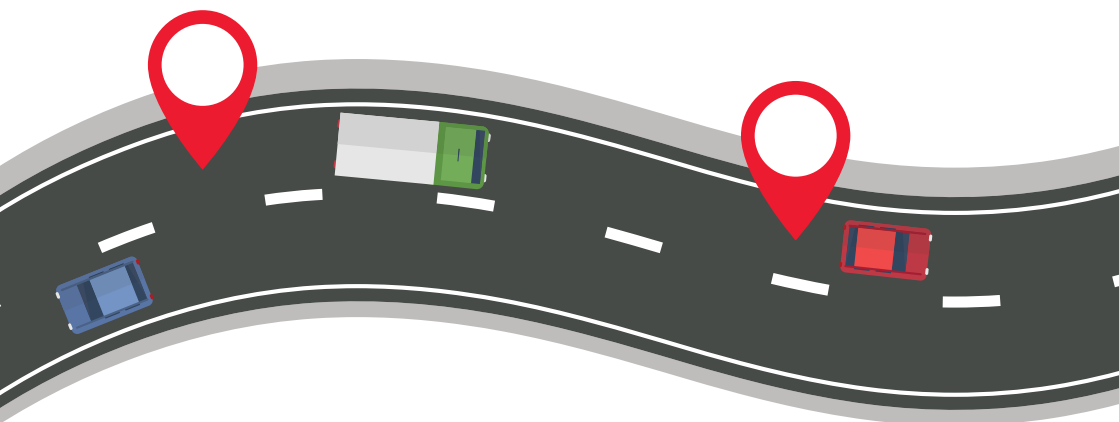


STOCKPORT
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL



Contents

Introduction	2
• What is “Preparing for Adulthood”?	2
• Who is this guide aimed at?	2
• Who can I contact for help?	3
• About PIPS (Parents in Partnership Stockport)	3
The transition journey – age and stage	4
Age 13-14 (Year 9)	7
Age 14-15 (Year 10)	9
Age 15-16 (Year 11)	10
Ages 16 – 19 (Years 12 and 13 if in full-time education)	11
Young adults ages 19-25	14
General information and advice	16
• Transport and Travel	16
• Young people with SEND and the law	18
• Finance and Benefits	19
• Support in employment	20
• Housing	22
Useful Information and Contacts	24



What is “Preparing for Adulthood”?

Preparing for Adulthood is about taking steps so children and young people with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) -

- can enjoy independent living as adults as fully as possible
- can achieve as much as possible

Preparing for Adulthood includes preparing for

- higher education and/or employment, including self-employment
- independent living, including supported living
- participation in wider society
- living as healthily as possible as an adult

Supporting children and young people with SEND to become more independent can be life-transforming. It should happen from their earliest years and certainly no later than age 13 or 14.

The information in this guide is based on the Children and Families Act 2014 and the government’s SEN Code of Practice 2014.

The Code of Practice says that local authorities (LAs) and health bodies which support children and young people with SEND must have regard to:

- the views, wishes and feelings of the child or teenager, and their parents/carers
- the importance of families (the child, teenager and their parents/carers) participating as fully as possible in decisions
- families being provided with the information and support needed to help them take part in those decisions
- the need to support families in the development of the child or teenager and in helping the child/teenager achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood.

Every effort has been made to check the accuracy of information in this booklet, which was correct as at March 2018.

Who is this guide aimed at?

This guide is for parents and carers of young people with SEND who want to know more about what to do when their child is a teenager. It gives information on the process of transition to adulthood, more independent living and the support services that may be available.

These young people will usually either be on SEN support (if in education) or have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Schools where young people are on SEN support should continue to “assess, plan, do and review” support with the teenager and their families at least every year until they leave education, or until support is no longer necessary. Those with an EHC Plan will have annual transition reviews from year 9 until their plan ceases.

Once young people leave education, they may need to prove their disability to get support. The legal definition of disability is “a physical or mental impairment that has a ‘substantial’ and ‘long-term’ negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities”. More information at www.gov.uk/definition-of-disability-under-equality-act-2010.

Who can I contact for help?

Many organisations which can help young people with SEND and their families are mentioned in this guide. There is a list of organisations with contact details on **p24**.

About PIPS

PIPS (Parents in Partnership Stockport) is an independent local forum run by parents for parents, carers and other family members with a child/teenager between the ages of 0 - 25 with a disability and/or additional needs. See www.pipstockport.org or ring 07786 101072.

PIPS is grateful to staff of Stockport Council, NHS Stockport CCG and Foundation Trust and the Dept for Work and Pensions for their help in producing this booklet.

PIPS is also grateful to Sheffield Parent Carer Forum for permission to reproduce information from their Transitions Guide. See http://sheffieldparentcarerforum.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Transition-Timeline_web.pdf on their website.

The transition journey - age and stage

Transition planning can involve a lot of different things. This table shows year by year what you and your teenager may need to plan for. You can use it as a checklist for transition planning. More detail on each age and stage is in the rest of the guide.

Age / Year	Stage	Things to Plan	Support available from
13 / 14 Year 9	Key stage 4 option planning	Post-16 employment, education or training Key stage 4 alternative curriculum Age at which to sit public examinations Revise EHC Plan Work experience Transport arrangements Ask about when transition to adult health and/or mental health services begins	School and LA SEN teams School/college/academy information, advice and guidance (IAG) team Local authority Education & Careers Advice Service and Participation & Education Services Local Information, Advice and Support (IAS) service Local Health Trust GP SEN Transport team Social worker
14 / 15 Year 10	Review of key stage 4 progress School nurse offers health review for those on Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) Transition to adult health and/or mental health services?	Post-16 employment, education or training Age at which to sit public examinations Review transition plan Work experience For those with a learning disability (LD), ask GP about being added to the LD Register Mental health assessment of needs & care plan	<i>As above, plus</i> Post-16 education/ training provider Work experience coordinator Healthy Young Minds Dept of Work & Pensions Adult mental health services

Age / Year	Stage	Things to Plan	Support available from
15 / 16 Year 11	Post-16 applications Transition to adult health and/or mental health services Transition to adult social care may begin	Post-16 employment, education or training Transport arrangements Access to Work application Revise transition plan Health and/or mental health transition	<i>As above, plus</i> Post-16 education/ training provider Work experience coordinator Healthy Young Minds Dept of Work & Pensions Adult mental health services
17 Year 12	Review of post-16 progress Transition to adult health and/or mental health services	Review transition plan Post-18 planning Access to Work application or review support Assessment for eligibility for adult social care Independent living	Post-16 education/ training provider School/college/ academy IAG team Local authority IAG service Transition social worker Dept of Work & Pensions Local Health Trust GP
18 Year 13	Transition to post-18 occupation/ programme Oversight of health care moves from paediatrician to GP	University application, including Student Finance England & Disabled Student Allowance (DSA) DSA assessment Review Access to Work support	<i>As above, plus</i> DSA assessment centre
19 - 25	Post-18 occupation/ programme	Review levels of support and adjust if necessary (social care, Access to Work, DSA)	

Age 13-14 (Year 9)

If your teenager has an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan, the local authority (LA) must ensure that all reviews from Year 9 onwards focus on preparing for adulthood. Relevant education, health and social care services should all be involved in planning and supporting transition from Year 9. Para 6.13 of the SEN Code of Practice says the local Information, Advice and Support Service has a duty to advise young people with SEND and their families. Voluntary and other agencies can also help with preparing for adulthood.

Education and training

If your teenager attends a mainstream school, they will be asked to choose which subjects they want to study from age 14 (Year 10). If appropriate, these will be the subjects they will take for GCSE exams. If your teenager is not working at the level needed for GCSEs, ask the school about other accredited qualifications that might be available. For instance:

- Entry-level qualifications are closely linked to the National Curriculum but also cover vocational and life skills. Assessment can be written, oral or practical
- Functional skills qualifications support the development of practical skills in English, maths and ICT. They focus on explanation and problem-solving, with a choice of assessment methods
- BTEC qualifications are vocational and work-related courses which suit the needs of employers. They allow students to progress to further and higher education or into employment

For some students with SEND the National Curriculum from Year 10 is not appropriate, especially in relation to qualifications and examinations. The law allows pupils with EHC Plans to have the National Curriculum disapplied. This means that they can instead follow other more appropriate learning. This can be at school or a local college or other place of learning. For more information, see <https://tinyurl.com/hxa3735>.

Your teenager may have a particular career in mind. Find out from the school careers officer or local authority Education & Careers Advice Service what courses are available and what they may enable them to do later.

Health

It's a good idea to make sure that your teenager's GP records on their notes any special educational need or disability. If your teenager has a learning disability, ask the GP to put them on the Learning Disability Register. The surgery can then make reasonable adjustments when providing health care. The GP should offer those with a learning disability an annual health check from age 14. This is when a GP or nurse:

- carries out a general physical examination
- assesses emotional well-being and behaviour



- asks about lifestyle and diet
- reviews current medication
- checks whether any chronic illnesses (e.g. asthma, diabetes) are well managed
- reviews what other health professionals may be doing to care for the teenager

The check is a chance for your teenager to get used to visiting the doctor's surgery on their own where appropriate. GPs not paediatricians are responsible for coordinating the health needs of those over 18 with multiple or complex conditions and arranging additional health support. The family and GP can review arrangements for moving to adult health services. Information from the check can go towards annual reviews of the transition plan. More information about annual health checks is at <https://tinyurl.com/ydg5vor3>.

Planning for the move from children's to adults' hospital services should also begin from age 14. National guidance (see <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs140>) says it should:

- be led by a named worker, often a nurse, who will coordinate a teenager's transition care and support
- be developmentally appropriate and consider a teenager's capabilities and needs
- not be based on a rigid age threshold
- take place at a time of relative stability, e.g. not at the same time as moving from school to college or during a health crisis
- be reviewed at least annually

Different hospital departments do transition differently and at different times, although they should all follow the national guidelines for transition. Ask at the next hospital appointment about transition arrangements.

Flu jab for carers

The seasonal flu vaccine is the best way to protect yourself and the person you care for from flu and may prevent you from being too ill to care. Speak to your GP or pharmacist about having a flu jab along with your disabled child. Some young people aged 2-17 years may find a flu vaccine nasal spray easier.

Social care

If your teenager is in a mainstream school, they may leave at age 16. Leaving school may also mean leaving behind friends and social support. You could plan how to make this transition as smooth as possible. For instance, would they be interested in joining a club outside school that would continue while other things change? Is there a hobby or interest they could pursue as an older teenager? Your teenager may be eligible for a personal budget to help pay for social and leisure activities or even a Personal Assistant (PA) to access them. See p19 for more details.

Age 14-15 (Year 10)

Remember that a transition plan is not set in stone. If necessary it can be reviewed and updated at any point in the year, not just at the annual review. It is important to get the views of relevant professionals and/or voluntary groups before agreeing changes.

Education and training

Now is the time to review how studies are going, begin to plan for learning beyond age 16 and make arrangements for work experience. Stockport Council can help young people gain work experience by putting them in touch with employers. You can find out more at <https://www.stockport.gov.uk/people-peebs>. It's also not too early to visit possible post-16 colleges, sixth forms or employers to see what they offer and how easily your teenager could access them. Your teenager can make final changes to their learning, so they get the most out of their time in school.

Health

If you haven't already started to discuss moving to adult health services, including adult mental health services, you should do this as soon as possible. See p7 for more information.



Age 15-16 (Year 11)

Education

Teenagers may leave school at 16 but must continue in accredited education or training until their 18th birthday. All young people with SEND up to 19 should follow a study programme that stretches them, prepares them for adulthood and supports progression into work or further study. For students with a transition plan, a study programme can last up to the age of 25.

Applications for further learning must be made early in the school year. Check the applications deadline for any sixth form or college your teenager wants to apply to. Look out for open days or evenings, which normally happen early in the autumn term. If a teenager finds open days challenging, the SEN team at the school or college may be able to arrange a separate visit.

It's also time to confirm any special arrangements for exams. Students with SEND may need help such as extra time, a computer or a smaller/ individual room. Access arrangements allow them to sit exams as fairly and comfortably as possible. Access arrangements are based on evidence of need and the normal way of working in the classroom and must be appropriate to the student and the exam. Talk to the SENCO and/or Examinations Officer as soon as possible.

If your teenager is applying for a job with training, find out which employers offer appropriate courses. Supported internships and traineeships offer work-based learning and apprenticeships offer employment with training. See p11 for details. Discuss possible options with the school and/or the independent Education and Careers Advice Transitions Team Worker. It is important to investigate more than one option in case a teenager does not get their first choice. As all the above options include learning, the transition plan will still stand but is likely to need significant changes from that point. If a teenager intends to begin working after 16, discuss at the annual review how to make an Access to Work application (see p20).

Post-16 learning may include English and maths at an appropriate level. Some students with SEND may have to work towards achieving at least GCSE level 4 (C) or equivalent qualification (e.g. Functional Skills Level 2), whereas others may be exempt from this. If jobs with training are an option, discuss them with the school/college, employer and/ or careers officer to find out about what lies ahead.

Health

Discussions about transition to adult health services should happen from age 14 - see p7 of the guide.

Not all health services continue into adult life and the service provider may change when a teenager turns 16 or 18. Discuss with health professionals what services exist, who runs them and who is responsible for funding them from 16 or 18.

Ages 16-19 (Years 12 & 13 if in full-time education)

Young people must continue in education or training until their 18th birthday. All students aged 16 to 19 (including those in employment) should follow a study programme that stretches them, prepares them for adulthood and supports progression into work or further study. For students with an EHC plan, a study programme can apply up to the age of 25. While some young people with SEND will be on programmes which help them achieve academic qualifications, others will benefit more from those focusing on high-quality work experience and activities to prepare more directly for employment and adult life. Young people with an EHC plan can undertake supported internships, traineeships or apprenticeships, all of which aim to prepare them for employment:

- Supported internships are structured study programmes based mainly at an employer. They support young people with SEND to gain and further develop a range of skills through learning in the workplace. They normally last for a year and include unpaid work placements of at least six months. Wherever possible, they support the teenager to move into paid employment at the end of the programme. Only young people with an EHC plan can access supported internships. For more information, see <https://tinyurl.com/yc8uujxc>
- A traineeship is an education and training programme with work experience that helps young people aged 16 to 24 become work ready. They are designed for those who don't yet have the appropriate skills or experience for work. Traineeships provide the essential work preparation, English, maths and work experience needed to help gain an apprenticeship or employment. For more information, see <https://tinyurl.com/kjxhmzc>
- Apprenticeships are actual jobs with training, allowing people to earn while they study for nationally recognised qualifications. They last between one and seven years and are available in over 1,500 occupations across 170 industries. They range from level 2 (GCSE levels 4-9) to level 7 (higher degree) and are employer-run. They are employment-based, with learning delivered by a training provider. See <https://www.gov.uk/apprenticeships-guide>.

Having the right education and training outcomes at this stage in an EHC plan is very important. This is because the decision whether a teenager aged 19-25 still needs a plan will depend on whether they have achieved their education and training outcomes – and if they haven't, whether remaining in education/training will help them to achieve them. If the EHC plan ends, young people with social care and/or health needs may still be eligible for an adult care and support plan from 18.

Health

If a teenager has very significant health needs, they should ask for an Adult Continuing Health Care Assessment. This should be done well before their 18th birthday, to allow enough time to complete the assessment and for any discussions about the care they are entitled to. Some adult health services use Hospital Passports for people with learning disabilities as a way of sharing important information about the patient and how best to care for them. For an example of a Hospital Passport, see <https://tinyurl.com/ybgvxvdf>.

Up to age 16 or 18, a paediatrician usually coordinates the health needs of young people with multiple or complex conditions. After 18, however, this passes to the GP, who is also responsible for arranging additional health support. So it's a good idea to ensure the GP has an up-to-date picture of the teenager's health and other needs. From age 17, the Paediatric Community Nurse may also support transition to the district nursing service.

Health services **must** involve families in discussing the care of young people until they reach 18. However, young people over 16 are primarily responsible for making decisions about health care unless they are thought to be not competent to do so (see p18). It's a good idea to talk this through early on with your teenager and GP or paediatrician.

Social care

The Care Act 2014 places legal duties on LAs about what must happen when a teenager transfers from children's to adults' services. If a teenager is likely to have care and support needs, the LA must complete a transition assessment before they reach 18. This duty also applies if a teenager is not currently receiving children's social services but may need services as an adult, e.g. if they have a degenerative condition or a mental health problem. A teenager or parent/carer can ask for this assessment. The Care Act does not say that the teenager must be a certain age before asking for an assessment. It says that LAs must consider, in all cases, whether there would be a 'significant benefit' to the individual in making an assessment. If after assessment the LA decides the young person is not eligible for support, it should signpost them to appropriate agencies. If the LA decides not to make an assessment, it must explain why in writing. It must also provide information and advice about what can be done to prevent or delay the development of care and support needs.

It is sensible to assess care and support needs only when it is clear what those needs will be beyond the age of 18. Eligibility for children's social care does not guarantee the same support as an adult. Stockport has an online tool to help a teenager or their family estimate whether they are likely to be eligible. Ask a social worker for details or see <https://www.mycaremychoice.org.uk/online-tools>

Even if a teenager is not eligible, an assessment will give a good picture of overall strengths and needs that voluntary organisations may be able to meet. Remember that a parent/carer may be eligible for Carer's Allowance. The transition assessment should consider this too.

The cost of social care support

People over the age of 18 who have eligible care and support needs may have to contribute towards their care and support costs. The transition assessment will include a check on how much a teenager can afford to contribute. A teenager may have to pay towards:

- home care (day and night)
- day activities and respite care
- supported living
- support from a Personal Assistant (PA)

Ensuring there is no gap in services

When a LA assesses a teenager who is already receiving support from children's social care, they must continue providing support until adults' services are in place to take over – or until the assessment shows that adult care and support will not be provided. There should be no gap in services.



Young Adults Ages 19-25

Education and Training

School or College

Young people with SEND are not automatically entitled to continue with EHC plans after they turn 19. Most young people with plans complete their further education by age 19 and the plan ceases, but some 19-25 year olds will need a plan for as long as it takes them to complete and consolidate education and training. In such cases the LA must continue to review it at least annually. The plan must contain outcomes which enable the teenager to complete their education and training successfully and move on to the next stage of their lives.

Ending an EHC plan

One of the reasons for ending an EHC plan is that the teenager no longer requires the special education or training provision specified in the plan. When deciding this about a teenager aged 19 or over, the LA must take account of whether the education or training outcomes in the plan have been achieved. LAs must not end the plan simply because the teenager is aged 19 or over. When a teenager is close to finishing their education and training, the LA should use a final annual review to agree the support needed to help them engage with adult services. From that point, an adult care and support plan and/or Continuing Health Care plan may replace the plan.

Special schools

Young people aged 19 cannot remain in a special school unless they are completing a secondary education course started before they were 18. Instead they will need to move to college to continue their education or training.

Higher Education

A young person in higher education is not entitled to an EHC plan. Instead, there are separate systems in place to support disabled young people in higher education, including Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs). These are non-repayable grants that help with the additional costs which disabled students incur. The government pays independent assessors to assess students' needs and recommend necessary support. DSAs fund a range of support, including help with the cost of specialist equipment, including computers, travel and non-medical helpers (e.g. sign language interpreters). For more information, see the DSA finance guide at <https://tinyurl.com/mj6sfot>. Where the teenager is eligible, adult social care helps with HE daily living and personal care costs.

Social care

Where young people aged 18 or over still have EHC plans and receive support from adult social care, it is provided under the Care Act 2014. The EHC plan remains the overarching plan that ensures young people receive the support needed to achieve agreed Preparing for Adulthood outcomes. The adult care and support plan forms the 'care' element of the teenager's plan.

Supported employment

Supported employment has been successfully used as a model for supporting people with significant disabilities to secure and retain paid employment. The scheme enables people with disabilities to achieve sustainable long-term employment and businesses to employ valuable workers. For more information contact Jobcentre Plus or the British Association for Supported Employment (BASE) at <https://tinyurl.com/yauzylyu>.



General Information and Advice

Transport and Travel

Stockport Council has a duty to provide free home to school travel support in certain circumstances. The information below summarises Stockport's transport offer. The policy is subject to change and families are advised to read the current detailed policy at <https://tinyurl.com/y7mhypng>.

Stockport Council usually makes travel arrangements for young people who are eligible for travel assistance and who have SEN, complex medical needs or a disability. Different conditions apply when these young people turn 16.

A teenager will be eligible for free home to school transport if

- they live more than walking distance from their nearest suitable school/college,
- they are unable to walk in safety to and from their nearest school/college because of the route
- they are unable to walk to and from their nearest suitable school/college, accompanied by an appropriate adult, due to their SEND.

Where a child is assessed as eligible for free home to school travel support, transport will be provided at the start and end of the school day (or, for those in residential placements, at the start/end of the week or term as appropriate).

The LA can also at its discretion provide transport free or at a charge for young people not eligible for free transport.

An LA officer will assess any need for a passenger assistant on a vehicle, taking advice from relevant professionals/agencies including the school. Where there is a health requirement as part of the transport arrangements (e.g. administration of medicines or medical procedures) and the teenager meets the NHS Continuing Health Care requirements, a medically trained support worker may be provided as a passenger assistant on home to school transport. This is normally Education/Health joint funded. The support required will be agreed as part of the EHC planning process.



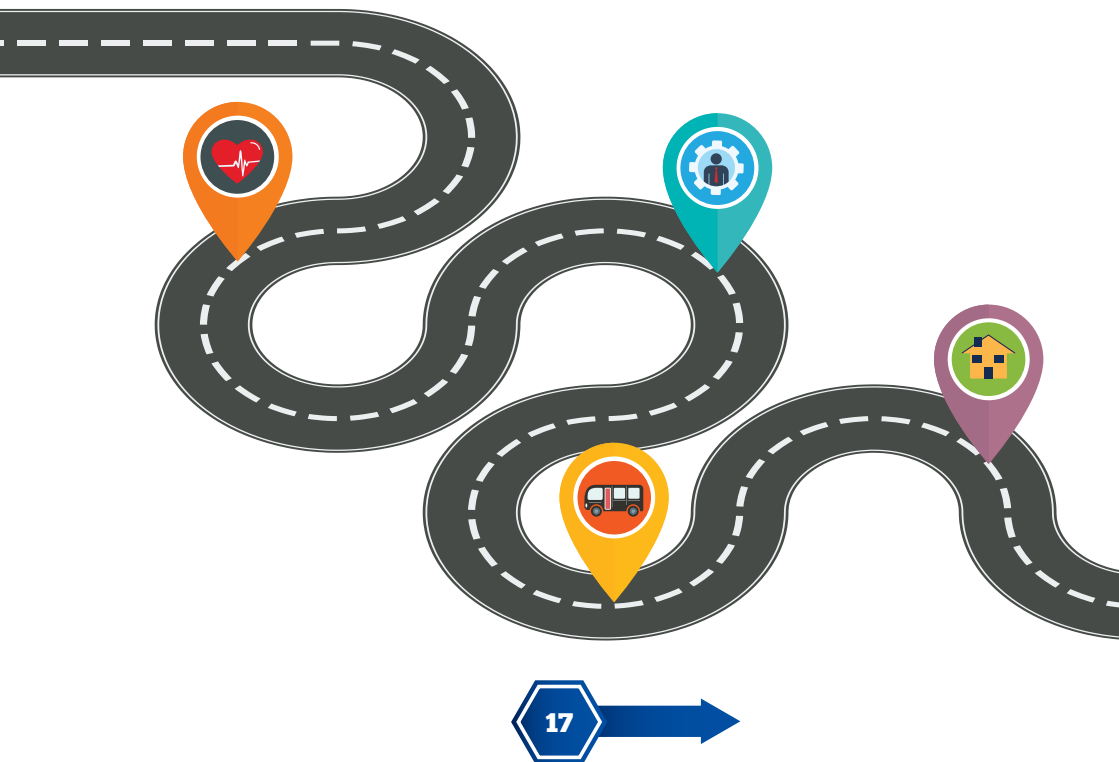
Independent Travel Training

Where appropriate, students who receive home to school travel assistance will travel independently to school as soon as they are able to do so. When students are of secondary school age, all travel assistance assessments will include an assessment for Independent Travel Training, with the aim of ensuring that, where possible, students will be able to travel independently before the end of compulsory schooling (age 16). Independent Travel Training is designed to equip a teenager with the confidence and skills required to travel on their own to and from school or college.

Young people receiving the higher rate mobility component of DLA or the enhanced rate mobility component of PIP may hold a provisional driving licence from age 16. Details are at <https://tinyurl.com/yavvgfhv>.

Students who are assessed as being able to travel independently, but choose not to, will not receive supported transport if that route to school is considered reasonable. Where a teenager no longer has a transition plan, they fall under the Adult Social Care Travel Assistance Policy and will be assessed by adults' social care.

Young people over 16 with additional support needs (a disability, physical health condition or a mental health condition) and in paid employment (including self-employment, or self-arranged work experience) may be entitled to additional support, including support with transport. Families should apply via the Department for Work & Pensions Access to Work scheme. See <https://tinyurl.com/l4rsrpr> for more details.



Young People with SEND and the Law

Shaping EHC plans

When a teenager reaches the end of compulsory school age (the end of the academic year in which they turn 16), they have the main say over some aspects of EHC plans rather than a parent or carer. They can:

- ask for an EHC needs assessment
- propose what should be in their plan
- ask for a particular education setting to be named in their plan
- request a personal budget
- appeal to a SEND tribunal

Most young people still want to talk through these issues with their families, but the law says that from this point LAs and health bodies must first and foremost take account of the teenager's wishes. The only exception is if a teenager lacks mental capacity to make one or more of these decisions (see below). If you think that is the case, you should alert social services. If everyone agrees with you, you can act as the teenager's official representative.

Mental Capacity Act

Anyone entitled to make decisions on behalf of a teenager must comply with the Mental Capacity Act (MCA). Their capacity to decide is decision-specific, in other words must focus on particular decisions that need to be made at particular times. This is because a person with SEND may be able to make some decisions but not others. For example, they may lack capacity to make complex financial decisions or consent to medical treatment, but be capable of deciding what they would like to eat. It also stops blanket assessments of a person's ability to make decisions based simply on their disability diagnosis. The social worker and/or health professional will advise on a teenager's capacity to make decisions.

When someone is judged not to have the capacity to make a specific decision, any decision taken for them must be in their best interests. The process of making a best-interest decision should be led by the person who requires the decision to be made, such as a doctor who requires consent before carrying out treatment. Consulting with others is a vital part of best interest decision-making, and the MCA requires the involvement of parents/carers and family members. Parents/carers and professionals must always support a teenager to be involved as much as possible in a decision made on their behalf, even if they do not have the capacity to make it themselves. The charity Mind has published further information about the MCA and topics like the role of an independent mental capacity advocate at <https://tinyurl.com/yazrb229>.

Young People with SEND and the Law

Personal budgets and direct payments

A personal budget is an amount of money identified to deliver the outcomes in an EHC Plan. This may include funding for special educational, health and social care provision.

A personal budget is the funding a teenager is entitled to for care needs. Direct payments is just one way they may receive the funds.

Personal budgets can help families

- know how much things cost
- have more control in deciding the best and appropriate support
- tailor their own unique package of care
- decide how the personal budget is looked after

Personal budgets can be paid in different ways:

- by direct payments - you receive the money
- notional - The LA or Clinical Commissioning Group commission services for you
- third party - you can request a third party such as a broker to manage your support for you
- combination - a mix of the above

If a teenager is eligible for an EHC plan or social care support, families can ask a support worker for more information on personal budgets, or see <https://tinyurl.com/yatbezys>. Young people over 16 can also receive a personal budget in their own right.

Direct payments

Direct payments may be available if a teenager receives social care funding through the disabled children social care short breaks budget. It can be spent on anything agreed in the EHC or social care support plan, such as

- access to local community and groups
- access to a variety of short breaks
- personal care
- day trips/activities
- personal assistants

It can't be spent on goods or services which don't reinforce the plan outcomes.

To see if you are eligible, speak to your child's social worker or the contact centre on 0161 217 6028. You must already have an updated EHC Plan or Early Help Assessment and a personal budget plan. The Short Breaks Panel meets monthly to discuss and review new requests and current packages of support. For more information, see <https://tinyurl.com/y8lznqey>.

Benefits for over 16's

Support for education and training costs

A young person in post-16 education (school or college) or training may be eligible for a 16-19 bursary. There are two types:

Vulnerable student bursary - up to £1,200 per year if one of the following applies to a teenager:

- is disabled and getting Income Support (IS) in their own name
- is disabled and getting Education and Support Allowance (ESA) and either Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
- is disabled and getting Universal Credit in their own name in place of IS or ESA
- is in or recently left LA care

Or families can apply for a **discretionary bursary** if a teenager needs financial help but doesn't qualify for a vulnerable student bursary. The education or training provider decides how much your child will get and what it can be used for. It is based on individual circumstances, which usually include family income. For more information, see www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund.

Over 16's can apply for ESA if they are in full-time education and get DLA/PIP. For more information, see <https://tinyurl.com/bs23x5z>. Remember that if a teenager receives ESA, any benefits a parent/carer gets for their child as a dependant (e.g. child benefit, tax credits) will stop. Families should seek specialist advice to check if their family will be worse off.

Support in employment

An Access to Work grant can cover the additional support a young person may need for the in-work element of a supported internship, traineeship or paid employment. This could cover things like an in-work job coach, adaptations and/or taxis to work (subject to assessment). To get an Access to Work grant, a young person must be 16 or over and have a disability, health condition or mental health condition that affects their ability to work. They must also meet one of the following conditions:

- have a paid job (you cannot get a grant for voluntary work)
- be self-employed
- have a job interview
- be about to start a job, or a work trial arranged by the Department for Work and Pensions

A young person may not be eligible if they are claiming ESA or IS. The amount of grant given depends on their financial circumstances and the upper limit is currently £41,400. The grant doesn't have to be paid back, will not affect other benefits and can pay for things like:

- adaptations to any work equipment used

- special equipment
- fares to work if they cannot use public transport
- a support worker or job coach to help them in the workplace
- a support service if they have a mental health condition and are absent from work or finding it difficult to work
- disability awareness training for colleagues
- a communicator at a job interview

For more information, see www.gov.uk/access-to-work/overview.

The Department for Work and Pensions offers specialist employment programmes to support people into work. These include the Work and Health Programme and Specialist Employability Support.

The Work and Health Programme helps a disabled young person to get and keep a job. The support offered varies according to need, but can include identifying employment needs, matching skills to available jobs, support and training to get a job and help to manage health problems which may impact on work, developing skills, building confidence and interview coaching. See <https://www.gov.uk/work-health-programme>.

Supported Employment services are available in Stockport for people over 18 that meet social care criteria. These provide tailored 1:1 support for people with disabilities and significant barriers to employment. See <https://tinyurl.com/y9o9owvm>. Specialist Employability Support provides mentoring and training to help disabled people into work if they can't use other employment programmes. Work coaches also signpost claimants to other local options. See <https://www.gov.uk/moving-from-benefits-to-work/job-search-programmes>.

Benefits for young people out of work

19-to-25-year-olds who make a benefit claim should be invited to meet a work coach at the Jobcentre. For those claiming Job Seekers' Allowance, this will be as soon as possible. Those with a long-term disability or health condition who claim ESA will be given a Work Capability Assessment to see how it may affect their ability to work. They will either go into a Work-Related Activity Group (with regular interviews with an adviser to help claimants get work), or a Support Group (if employment is not an option). A Disability Employment Adviser can sit in with the work coach and the young person to ensure that the right adjustments and support are in place for their disability or health condition.

If they are not eligible for ESA, they may be eligible for Jobseekers Allowance. For more information, see <https://www.gov.uk/jobseekers-allowance>.

Age is important!

It is much easier to open a bank account for your teenager before they turn 18.

Young people over 16 can claim benefits in their own right. However, if they stay in full-time non-advanced education (e.g. GCSEs, A-levels, BTECs, NVQ levels 1-3) or some types of training, families can choose to carry on claiming for them. Families will need to weigh up which option is likely to leave them better off. You can get help from Contact a Family's benefits advisers (0808 808 3555) or Citizens Advice Stockport (0344 411 1444).

Young people over 16 will at some point be reassessed under PIP if they have been getting DLA as a child. For more information, see <https://tinyurl.com/c6ssof6>. If a young person over 16 is unable to manage their affairs, a parent/carer can become their appointee for benefit claims. This means that parents/carers are responsible for making any claims, giving any information required, and disclosing any changes that may affect the claimant's entitlement to benefits. Benefits will be paid to parents/carers on the teenager's behalf. Becoming an appointee for benefit purposes does not mean you have any wider rights to deal with their affairs. For more information, see <https://www.gov.uk/become-appointee-for-someone-claiming-benefits>.

Housing

Gaining the skills for successful independent living takes time. Young people with SEND may need more time than most. So if a teenager wants to live independently, it's essential that families start the process early. Think about what they can learn to do while they are still at home – don't automatically do everything for them.

Moving into independent accommodation probably also means a teenager will have to get used to a location with different shops, GP and transport. As young people with SEND often have restricted social networks, it's particularly important to consider what impact moving out may have on their ability to keep their existing circle of friends. Before making decisions, do discuss this as a family and be prepared for lengthy discussions on independent living with the LA or voluntary/private housing providers. Young adults needing extra support to live independently may be able to get help with tasks like:

- setting up and maintaining their own home
- learning to cook, shop, manage money and bills or travel independently
- help with finding a job, going to work or going to college or university
- personal care, including washing and dressing
- specialist equipment or adaptations around the home

Different types of supported living

There are four basic options for young people who wish to live independently with a degree of support:

Supported tenancies

A supported tenancy enables people with SEND to live in their own accommodation and premises can be adapted to suit. Access depends on LA assessment of need and may result in an indicative budget for support. Individual budgets can be pooled if a group of people want to live together. Accommodation can be commissioned by the council or chosen by the family, but the provider must be Care and Quality Commission (CQC) registered. Rent usually comes out of a teenager's housing benefit and support services from the personal budget. Running costs, furnishings and personal belongings must come from other benefits or from people's own pockets.

Another option is when a teenager over 18 has support from Stockport's Adult Learning Disability Team, can live on their own and wants to do so. A referral from their Social Worker to Stockport Homes can lead to support in suitable accommodation such as a Stockport Homes tenancy. Additional support, called "floating" support, can be brought in alongside their existing support package to help them maintain the tenancy.

Shared Lives

This is where trained and approved single people or families offer accommodation in their own homes to adults with learning disabilities, either as short-term respite or on a longer-term basis. It's more flexible than supported tenancies as it doesn't provide permanent accommodation. Short-term can range from one night to a few weeks. There are also holiday schemes and emergency placements to cover things like if a carer is suddenly ill. Longer placements offer the person receiving support the chance to live as part of a family for a period.

Residential care

Residential placements provide specialised care for over 18's with a physical or learning disability. Several operate in Stockport, both LA and independent. Some specialise in particular disabilities. They must be CQC-registered. Access depends on assessment and suitability.

Residential placements provide accommodation and care, but only some personal care. The cost of care depends on facilities in the home and the amount and kind of care needed. An LA may provide means-tested support.

Useful Information and Contacts

You can find the **SEN Code of Practice** at <https://tinyurl.com/nr5zqtm>.

Preparing for Adulthood has a wide variety of downloadable resources available for parents/carers, young people and professionals: www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk.

Stockport Council has a wide range of information on services and support for those with SEND, including contact numbers, in their Local Offer pages. See www.sensupportstockport.uk.

SENDIAS provides information, advice and support (IAS) to children and young people with SEND and their families, in relation to education, health, social care, disability benefits and leisure.
Contact details at <https://tinyurl.com/yb9vp9vr>.

The **Stockport Vision Team** provides information and advice on transition to post-16 services. The skills a teenager might need are considered in the transition, including work experience opportunities and career planning. Links are made with adult social care and specialist adult mobility services and with career and young people's services. See <https://tinyurl.com/y9m4ua6u>.

Stockport provides **independent information, advice and guidance on careers and employment options**. See <https://www.stockport.gov.uk/careers-information-advice-and-guidance>. Information on financial support for over 16's in education is at <https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund>.

Adults' social care, housing and health information is on Stockport's "**My Care, My Choice**" home page at <https://www.mycaremychoice.org.uk/home>. The adult social care eligibility checker is at <https://www.mycaremychoice.org.uk/online-tools>.

Information on DLA and PIP is at <https://www.gov.uk/pip>.

Information on **health services** for young people with SEND can be found at <https://tinyurl.com/ycyo74hm>. Ask your health professional about arrangements for transfer to adults' services. Stockport's Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is based at Stepping Hill Hospital and also covers Derbyshire. See <https://tinyurl.com/y877fj7g>.

You can get general information on **rights and benefits** from Citizens Advice Stockport (<http://stockportcab.org.uk/>) or Contact a Family (www.cafamily.org.uk).

For information on **employment and benefits**, see <http://www.jobcentrenearme.com/item/stockport-jobcentre-plus/>. The British Association for Supported Employment (BASE) has information on supported internships, traineeships and apprenticeships. See <https://tinyurl.com/yauzylyu>.

Disability Rights UK produces a range of guides including on employment opportunities. See <https://tinyurl.com/y9jf4p34>.

Information on support for disabled higher education students and DSAs is at <https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas/further-information>.

