



Preparing for Adulthood

Preparing for adulthood is a process that all young people go through. It is an exciting time, but it can also be a difficult time for some young people, especially those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The process can sometimes take longer and need more careful preparation than for other young people of a similar age.

Your child can legally leave school on the last Friday in June if they will be 16 by the end of August.

Over time your role as a parent will change; previously you may have made decisions on your child's behalf. Now they will be encouraged to form and share their own views. They will need to think about their aspirations, and the outcomes they want for the future in relation to four specific areas:

- 1. Continuing education, training or getting a job:** The information in your child's EHC plan will help with this discussion. The discussion with them will need to include what they will do during the day when they leave school e.g. will they attend a day service, further education, or supported employment. They may want to carry out a supported internship, traineeship, or an apprenticeship. Consideration will need to be given for how your child will prepare for work, where they will work or where their future income will come from.

You can find out about colleges in your area through the Local Offer. You can also visit the college website and attend their open days. Colleges are happy to talk to prospective students and parents about the courses they offer.

Some young people with special needs may wish to study at university. EHC plans do not continue for Higher Education but the information contained in them can be used to inform continuing support needs.

2. Living independently:

How to make informed choices and take control over their lives, the support they receive, their accommodation and living arrangements, where they want to live and with whom and the type of support they will need including housing benefits and social care support to achieve this

3. Having friends and participating in the local community:

How to participate in society including mobility and transport support and how to find out about and become part of social and community activities; developing and maintaining friendships, going on holiday and developing interests and hobbies

4. Being as healthy as possible:

How to maintain good health in adult life including physical activities, healthy eating and life skills. Having access to sport, going to the dentist, self help/care skills etc.

Some young people will need an ongoing health plan with the professionals they see already like an occupational therapist (OT), physiotherapist, doctor, specialist nurse or consultant. The people they see may change as they move from children's to adult services and these may need to be planned well in advance. A small number of young people may need a continuing health care plan.

When will preparing for adulthood start and how will this impact on their EHCP?

Your child should be encouraged to think about their long term goals, aspirations and ambitions from as early an age as possible.

If your child has an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) you should find that the EHC plan review at Year 9 and every review thereafter, includes a focus on preparing for adulthood. The plan should grow and evolve as your child learns new skills and achieves existing outcomes. Outcomes should be 'ambitious and stretching'.

Planning must be centred around your child as an individual and should explore their aspirations, abilities and the support they need to achieve their ambition.

Transition planning must be built in the EHC plan if the young person is moving from children's to adult care and health services.

EHC plans can now remain in place until a young person is aged 25. The EHC plan will only remain in place though, after age 19, where there are some education or training outcomes in the plan, which have not yet been achieved.

What are your Child's decision making rights as they get older?

Some specific decision making rights pass to the young person after compulsory school age (the end of the Academic year in which they turn 16).

These are –

- the right to request an assessment for an EHC plan (which they can do at any time up to their 25th birthday)

- the right to ask for changes to (make representations about) the content of their EHC plan
- the right to request that a particular institution is named in their EHC plan
- the right to request a Personal Budget for elements of their EHC plan
- the right to appeal to the SEN and Disability Tribunal about decisions concerning their EHC plan.

However– The SEND Code of Practice says that parents should still be involved in discussions about a young person’s future; they may still need your help with this process.

Who might be involved in creating and reviewing the plan?

- **The young person:**

The law says that as the young person develops they should be more closely involved in decisions about their future and that if there is a disagreement the young person’s view can override that of their parents.

They will be able to say what they feel their needs are and what they would like to do after leaving school. There are a range of possibilities for how young people can share their wishes and views.

Young people can also ask for the support of an advocate. This person’s role is to make sure that the young person’s views are acknowledged and valued by all who are involved.

- **Parents:**

You should continue to be involved in discussions about your young person’s future. You should think about what they would like to achieve and what support they may need to do this.

- **The school or college:**

They can provide **information about progress made and learning programmes.**

- **Other professionals who are actively involved with your young person:**

- **Health and Social Care professionals:**

If your young person is likely to need continuing support health or care services.

The SEND Code of Practice says that there is a statutory duty for pupils to be provided with independent careers advice

How might the plan be funded?

Some young people, especially those with the most complex needs, may be eligible for a personal budget. For more information see our factsheet Personal Budgets for SEN.

How can you help?

Talk to your child and explain what they need to think about. This could include:

What they are good at

What they enjoy?

What is important now and what is important for the future?

What is working and has been achieved?

What is not working and needs to be changed?

What do they still need to learn? What support might they need to do this?

Don't forget – preparing for adulthood is a process and happens gradually. That's why it's good to start early and have a plan to work towards.

Further useful information:

- <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/livewell/local-offer-for-children-with-sen-and-disabilities/preparing-for-adulthood/preparing-for-adulthood.aspx>
- <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/livewell/local-offer-for-children-with-sen-and-disabilities/preparing-for-adulthood/how-we-plan-for-adulthood/the-preparing-for-adulthood-planning-process.aspx>
- <https://www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/>
- https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/livewell/care-and-support-for-children/services-from-childrens-social-care/youth-offending-and-preventative-services/youth_support.aspx
- https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/jobs_and_careers/apprenticeships_a-team/apprenticeships.aspx

	<p>Cheshire East Information Advice and Support (CEIAS)</p> <p>Website: www.ceias.cheshireeast.gov.uk</p> <p>Telephone: 0300 123 5166</p>
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