

Preparing for Adulthood Policy: Executive Summary

Both the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Care Act 2014 places duties on Local Authorities in regard to arrangements for young people with care and support needs in preparing for adulthood. These two pieces of legislation capture the principles of personalisation, inclusion, participation and co-production.

We are guided by the following principles:

- Young people and their parents or carers are provided with good information throughout, both about what to expect as they approach adulthood and the range of options for the future.
- Young people and their circle of support are fully involved in planning. All the agencies involved in supporting the young person are properly engaged in the planning process.
- Young people are placed at the centre of decision making and supported to make their own choices in planning for their future.
- Young people are supported to develop skills to be as independent as possible.

Services are informed by an understanding of the needs of young people aged 14 plus and will be as flexible and accessible as possible.

The annual review of the young person's Education Health and Care (EHC) Plan held in Year 9 (age 14) should involve the young person, their parents or carers and all the agencies that play a major role in the young person's life.

From the young person's 18th birthday Adult Social Care has the legal and financial responsibility for social care services and should ensure that there is no gap in the provision of services when the young persons reaches the age of 18

To achieve this the Preparing for Adulthood Forum is attended by all agencies involved in supporting the young person. The forum is responsible for coordinating the provision of services which the young person is assessed as needing when they enter adulthood. A lead professional is someone who takes the lead to co-ordinate provision for a child and their family. This person acts as the single point of contact when a range of services are involved with that child or family and a joined-up response is required.



The forum will arrange for an existing childrens' or adults' worker to act as lead professional. Their role is to:

- Act as a single point of contact for the child or family, who they can trust and who can support them in making choices, navigating their way through the system and effecting change.
- Co-ordinate the delivery of the actions agreed by the practitioners involved, to ensure that children and families receive an effective service which is regularly reviewed. These actions will be based on the outcome of the assessment and recorded in a plan.
- Reduce overlap and inconsistency in the services received

Adults Social Care will aim to complete assessments prior to a young person's 18th birthday so that the relevant funding and services may be agreed and arranged prior to the young person becoming an adult.

If there is no appropriate other person to support and represent them, The Local Authority must arrange for an Independent Advocate to be available to represent and support the young person throughout the process of moving from children to adult services.

Young people with a disability who are also looked after by the Local Authority, will have their accommodation and support needs assessed before the young person reaches 16 years and 3 months.

Once a young person reaches the age of 16 they have the right to make their own choices; this includes decisions about where they would like to live, how and with whom.

For young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities, the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Children and Families Act 2014 set out special provisions concerning decision making when individuals are aged between 16–25 years.

From the age of 16, Children's and Adults Services will consider whether a Mental Capacity Assessment is required and arrange for it to be completed.

For young people with long-term health conditions, the planning process should start at around age 14 but will depend on individual circumstances. The exact timing of transition from children to adolescent or adult health services varies from person to person, but most young people transition between 16 and 19.

Your comments are welcome by email to sunny.mehmi@reading.gov.uk

