

# PREPARING FOR ADULTHOOD (YEAR 9 ANNUAL REVIEW)

This fact sheet has been written by parent carers for parent carers.



## Preparing for adulthood in the Year 9 annual review

Every young person who has an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan must be given help to plan for their future. For the Year 9 annual review of their EHCP, you and your child will be asked to think about their future and, with the input of the professionals involved, a plan of action will be put together. This is called transition planning and is the beginning of preparations for adulthood. It will focus on their strengths, interests and aspirations & identify their future needs around education, health, housing, relationships and work. It is the first step in a process that will take several years and is designed to encourage your young person to be involved in decision-making about their future, by using a person-centred approach.

## What is the Year 9 annual review?

The Year 9 annual review is a meeting all about your child's future. It will take place at their school and the school will organise the meeting, send out invitations and get all the paperwork that they need. The meeting will include your child, family members, a teacher or someone who knows them from school and their Senior Planning Co-ordinator from the local authority's special educational needs team. If your child has health needs, there may also be someone from health services there, and someone from social care if they have had or may need support from social care services. Your child can also ask anyone they trust to go with them. At the meeting, the professionals will listen to your child and offer advice about the kinds of help they can get now and in the future with education, health, care and more.

## Preparing for the meeting

Make sure the meeting is in a place that's accessible and familiar to your child and at a time that suits them. Encourage them to be involved in planning and preparing for the meeting as much as possible. You or a teacher could help them to plan what they want to say, or they could ask the West Sussex SEND Information, Advice and Support (SENDIAS) service for their help (see below for contact details). Encourage them to spend some time thinking about their future and what they'd like it to look like. They might find it helpful to use the ten questions below to think about what they'd like to say. Writing down their answers, perhaps with support, could be very useful.

- What am I good at?
- What do I find difficult?
- What do I like doing?
- What is going well in my life?
- What is not going so well?
- What can I see myself doing as an adult?
- What support will I need to help me achieve my dreams?
- What needs to happen to keep me healthy and safe in future?
- Can I get around by myself? Would I like help to learn how?
- Where would I like to live when I grow up?

If you & your young person haven't looked at their EHC Plan for a while, take some time to look at it together before the meeting and think about whether anything has changed. If they want someone else to help give their views at the meeting – an advocate or trusted adviser – allow plenty of time beforehand to plan how to do this so that their views are accurately represented. See our companion fact sheet on *Involving Young People* for more ideas to support this process.



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### At the meeting

Paying attention to some practical things will help the meeting go more smoothly:

- Agree whether your child will be there for some of, or all the meeting and, if it's only for a part of it, which part it is.
- Make sure they can choose where they sit and know what will happen if they need to take a break.
- Ensure they are introduced to anyone they haven't met before. Be aware that people at the meeting may not have any previous knowledge of your child, so you may need to fill them in. Ask what each of the services represented at the meeting can offer, and what the planning process will be.
- Encourage your young person to have some written notes to remind them what to talk about and what's important. If they prefer to have pictures to show people, they could bring these too.
- If someone is acting as your young person's advocate, they can help to put their point across or remember what's been said. Ensure that your child's views are reflected back to them to check they have been clearly understood. Try to ensure your young person has opportunities to show if they haven't understood something or to ask for further explanation.
- Be clear about your child's strengths and the support they need.

For more advice on preparing for the year 9 review, see the chapter on *Planning for Your Child's Future* in our handbook, *Making Sense of It All: From Birth to Adulthood* (details below).

A Senior Planning Co-ordinator should come to the Year 9 Review meeting. They will write the transition information into your child's Education Health and Care (EHC) Plan. It must outline the support your child should have to help them reach their future goals. If they want to go to college, their EHC Plan will be used there too. You will be sent a copy of the EHC Plan afterwards and it should be in a format that you & your young person can understand. If you or your child don't think the new EHC Plan says what was agreed in the meeting, tell the Senior Planning Co-ordinator. At every annual review after the Year 9 meeting, transition planning should be a part of the process.

### Ask About

- **Reaching Families** – provides training, information & other fact sheets related to this topic. See especially our workshops on *Making Sense of Adult Life* and *Making Sense of Annual Reviews*. We also offer benefits advice, peer support, a Facebook group & handbook (see below) for parent carers of children & young people with SEND in West Sussex. See: [www.reachingfamilies.org.uk](http://www.reachingfamilies.org.uk).
- **West Sussex Advocacy Service** – can help disabled children and young people who have a social worker. Advocates can go to meetings with a young person, help them to make a complaint or get legal advice. Call: **0330 222 8686**, email [AdvocacyService@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:AdvocacyService@westsussex.gov.uk), or go to: [www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/your-space/support/advocacy](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/your-space/support/advocacy).
- **West Sussex SEND Information, Advice and Support (SENDIAS) Service** – contact them for independent advice and support about children & young people's special educational needs and/or disabilities. They also have Young People Advisers, who can support young people up to the age of 25 to help them to think through their options. Go to: <https://westsussexsendias.org.uk>, **0330 222 8555**, or email: [send.ias@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:send.ias@westsussex.gov.uk) (parent carers) or: [cyp.sendias@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:cyp.sendias@westsussex.gov.uk) (children and young people).

### Further information and useful links

- ***Making Sense of it All: From Birth to Adulthood*** – Reaching Families' handbook for parent carers of children and young people with SEND in West Sussex. This provides essential information on money matters, including claiming DLA and PIP, as well as social care, health, leisure, travel, education and employment. Go to: [www.reachingfamilies.org.uk/guides.html](http://www.reachingfamilies.org.uk/guides.html).
- **National Development Team for Inclusion:** – has a range of tools & resources about preparing for adulthood & involving your young person. Go to: [www.ndti.org.uk/resources/preparing-for-adulthood-all-tools-resources](http://www.ndti.org.uk/resources/preparing-for-adulthood-all-tools-resources).
- **West Sussex Local Offer** – go to: <https://westsussex.local-offer.org> for local services, support and details of Short Breaks providers for children & young people aged 0 - 25 years with SEND.

