

Young people with special educational needs (**SEN**) can be supported up until the age of 25 – well beyond compulsory school age. **Annual Reviews** are an opportunity for the child or young person to discuss with their family, school or college, and the local authority (**LA**), what they would like to achieve as they grow up. The aim of this is for young people with SEN to be supported towards greater independence and employability.

From Year 9 onwards, the local authority has a **duty** to ensure that the annual review meeting “*consider[s] what provision is required to assist the child or young person in preparation for adulthood and independent living*” (Regulation 20(6) and Regulation 21(6) of the SEN and Disability Regulations 2014).

Preparing for adulthood (PfA) means preparing for:

- Higher education and/or employment.
- Independent living.
- Participating in society: friendships and contributing to the local community.
- Being as healthy as possible in later life.

Start planning early

The [SEND Code of Practice](#) (2015) sets out the requirements of the [Children and Families Act](#) (2014).

There may be very good reasons to start planning for adulthood sooner than Year 9. In Chapter 8 Preparing for adulthood from the earliest years, the **SEND Code of Practice** says:

High aspirations are crucial to success – discussions about longer term goals should start early and ideally **well before Year 9** (age 13-14) at school. They should focus on the child or young person’s strengths and capabilities and the outcomes they want to achieve.

To prepare for annual reviews, we highly recommend that you use this [Preparing for Adulthood \(PfA\) Outcomes Tool](#), designed by the **Department for Education (DfE)**. It promotes consideration of the **four PfA outcomes** as part of EHC planning **across the age range**. It includes consideration of aspirations, activity and provision that can support progress towards the PfA outcomes and what this might mean at different ages and stages of development.

Person-centred planning

In the **Children and Families Act**, there is a clear expectation that children, young people and their families will be central to planning and that young peoples' voices are absolutely critical. In Chapter 9 Education, Health and Care needs assessments and plans, the **SEND Code of Practice** says:

Involving children, young people and parents in decision-making means:

- focusing on the child or young person as an individual
- enabling children and young people and their parents to express their views, wishes and feelings
- enabling children and young people and their parents to be part of the decision-making process and review meetings

You can find a large range of [person-centred planning tools](#) on the [Preparing for Adulthood website](#). These include:

- [Planning My Future Life](#)
- [Additional Helpful Tools: Planning My Future Life](#)
- [What Island Matters](#)

The Year 9 Review

Paragraph 8.9 of the **SEND Code of Practice** says that:

Local authorities **must** ensure that the EHC 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.

Paragraph 8.10 of the **SEND Code of Practice** says that Preparing for Adulthood planning in the review of the EHC plan should include:

- **support to prepare for higher education and/or employment**

This should include identifying appropriate post-16 pathways that will lead to these outcomes. Training options such as supported internships, apprenticeships and traineeships should be discussed, or support for setting up your own business. The review should also cover support in finding a job and learning how to do a job (for example, through work experience opportunities or the use of job coaches) and help in understanding any welfare benefits that might be available when in work.

- **support to prepare for independent living**

This should include exploring what decisions young people want to take for themselves and planning their role in decision making as they become older. This should also include discussing where the child or young person wants to live in the future, who they want to live with and what support they will need. Local housing options, support in finding accommodation, housing benefits and social care support should be explained.

- **support in maintaining good health in adult life**

This should include effective planning with health services of the transition from specialist paediatric services to adult health care. Helping children and young people understand which health professionals will work with them as adults, ensuring those professionals understand the young person's learning difficulties or disabilities and planning well-supported transitions is vital to ensure young people are as healthy as possible in adult life.

- **support in participating in society**

This should include understanding mobility and transport support, how to find out about social and community activities and opportunities for engagement in local decision-making. This also includes support in developing and maintaining friendships and relationships.

It is important to remember that **schools and colleges have duties** to participate in the planning process for Year 9 onwards. Paragraph 8.24 of the **SEND Code of Practice** says:

If it is clear that a young person wants to attend a different school (sixth form) or a college, then that school or college **must** co-operate, so that it can help to shape the EHC plan, help to define the outcomes for that young person and start developing a post-16 study programme tailored to their needs.

This [Preparing for Adulthood checklist](#) provides a framework for you to make sure the key topics are covered at annual reviews from Year 9 onwards.

Options post-16

The following websites provide information about the options available beyond the age of 16. These include further education, employment and training that might be useful when outcome planning:

- [Contact](#)
- [IPSEA](#)
- [Preparing for Adulthood](#)
- [MK Council Local Offer](#)

SENDIAS has a range of factsheets and specific information for young people. This support can be found in the [Young People](#) section of the website.

Where can I get more information, advice and support?

Milton Keynes Special Educational Needs & Disability Information, Advice & Support Service (MK SENDIAS) can give you:

- Information about SEND support, including information about SEND funding
- Advice about what to do if you are not happy with the support your school is providing
- Support to prepare for school meetings and Annual Reviews.
- Information and advice about your rights to request an EHC needs assessment and support with the process
- Help to navigate Appeals and Complaints procedures
- Information about other organisations, support groups and information services that could help

You can contact us:

- By completing a [referral form](#)
- Via our [website](#) for lots of useful information and factsheets
- To discuss your concerns by phone on 01908 254518
- By [email](#), briefly outlining your concerns
- On [Facebook](#)