

## Preparing for Adulthood

### Introduction

Preparing for Adulthood means identifying the support a young person with a Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND) will need to live as full and active life as possible. It includes preparing for the following outcomes; Higher Education and/or employment; Independent Living; Participating in Society and Health. This My Guide provides some information and links to sources of support.

### Who does Preparing for Adulthood apply to?

The Preparing for Adulthood process applies to all young people who have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan. However, even if they don't have an EHC plan, you can still use this guide to start to plan for their transition into adulthood.

### When should I start to think about Preparing for Adulthood?

The formal Preparing for Adulthood process starts when a young person is in Year 9 (13 or 14 years old). The local authority must ensure that each annual EHC plan review from Year 9 includes a focus on Preparing for Adulthood. Education, Health and Social Care services should all be involved in planning and supporting this from Year 9 and into adulthood.

However, it may be advisable to start familiarising yourself with the process when your young person is in Year 8.

### Where can I find out about Preparing for Adulthood?

There are many sources of useful information about the Preparing for Adulthood Process. The following links may be helpful, but there are many others:

- **Bexley Voice Parent Transition Planner**  
<https://www.bexleyvoice.org.uk/bexley-voice-parent-transition-planner.html>
- **Bexley Local Offer**  
<https://www.bexleylocaloffer.uk/Services/5526>
- **Preparing for Adulthood**  
[www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk](http://www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk)

### Year 9 Review

#### What should I expect at the Year 9 Review?

The Year 9 Transition Review meeting is the starting point for a single planning process which supports the young person until they are settled into adult life. In order to get the most out of this meeting, it is important that you help your young person to think about what they like and their hopes for the future before the meeting.

The Year 9 Review should start with the young person's aspirations and ideas for adult life and how these can be met. A person-centred approach should be taken with this, where your young person is at the centre of discussions. This is an opportunity to look beyond educational needs and to include wider aspects of life such as health needs, personal and social development, training and employment, transport and independent travel, housing and leisure. Your expectations for your young person's adult life should also be included.

The Year 9 review must result in a Transition Plan which records the actions needed to help the young person achieve their short and longer-term goals which is then reviewed annually.

A Case Officer from the Preparing for Adulthood team in Bexley should attend the Year 9 Review if your young person has an EHCP. Make sure that your SENCO or school has invited them. For more details about what to expect at the Year 9 Review, see the relevant section of the Bexley Voice Parent Transition Planner (see link above).

## **Benefits and Finances**

### **How do I apply for Universal Credit and who can help?**

Universal Credit is a secure digital service and you will need to make your claim online. To make a claim you must first create a secure Universal Credit online account. You can create your Universal Credit online account at <https://www.universal-credit.service.gov.uk/start>

There is a Universal Credit Helpline: **0800 328 5644**

In addition, Citizens Advice can help with claims: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/helptoclaim/>

If you need help making a Universal Credit claim online or managing your online account, you can visit your local Jobcentre Plus office for assistance. They have staff available to help you.

### **My child receives Disability Living Allowance (DLA), do I need to apply for Personal Independence Payments (PIP) and if so, when?**

PIP is a weekly benefit which has replaced DLA for people of working age which is from age 16.

You will be “invited” to claim PIP near to when a DLA claim is coming to an end. There is no automatic transfer process between any existing DLA claim and a new claim for PIP. They are two separate benefits. The DWP therefore treat your application as a ‘new claim’ for PIP. Ensure you apply when ‘invited’ to ensure the new benefit is in place when DLA ends.

To claim PIP, you will need to call the DWP to start/register a claim and complete part one of the form with them over the phone. Someone can do this on behalf of the claimant if they have been officially appointed to deal with their claims. Otherwise, the claimant needs to be present to confirm their identity during this phone call.

In some situations, part one of the form can be posted to you. You can request this during this first phone call or request in writing to the DWP by letter.

The Phone number to start the claim process for PIP is: **0800 917 2222**

### **What is the process for the transition to adult financial services for personal budgets/direct payments/ payment cards etc?**

Carer’s Support (Bexley) offer help and advice relating to personal budgets and direct payments and can assist with applications. <http://www.carerssupport.org/> Tel: **020 8302 8011**

### **How do I open a bank account in my young persons’ name?**

If the young person is under 18, it is best to speak to the Bank at which you wish to open the account to find out what they require from you and what type of account is appropriate.

However, if the young person is over 18 and lacks mental capacity to manage their financial affairs, this is more difficult. You may need to think about becoming a Deputy for their Property and Affairs. See the section on Mental Capacity, below.

## **Health and Welfare**

### **What is an Annual Health Check and who qualifies?**

Annual health checks are available for all adults and young people aged 14 and above who have a learning disability. They are designed to help the person stay healthy by checking on things like their weight, blood pressure, diet, blood and urine etc. Health checks are free of charge.

### **Who should I contact to arrange Annual Health Checks?**

Annual health checks are carried out by the person's GP and you or your young person should register with GP as soon as possible. They should then be invited automatically for their Annual Health Check. At the same time, you might want to consider registering yourself as a carer with your GP.

### **Mental Health Services - What happens at age 18?**

When a young person reaches 18 years of age, they will transition from child mental health services to adult services. Therefore, if your young person receives services from CAMHS, the transition from child to adult services must be included as part of the Preparing for Adulthood process. Some services for adults will be different to those available for children. The services available will depend upon individual need. For details about adult mental health services see: <http://oxleas.nhs.uk/services/>

## **Independent Living and Activities**

### **Where can I find out about activities and support available for the over 18s?**

Bexley Local Offer provides details of services and activities for the over 18s in Bexley and surrounding areas and the providers of these services. See: <https://www.bexleylocaloffer.uk/Services/2348>

## **Education, Training and Employment**

### **Where can I find out about education, training and employment opportunities?**

Bexley Local Offer provides details of education, training and employment opportunities for young adults:

#### **Education and Training Post 16:**

<https://www.bexleylocaloffer.uk/Services/5555>

#### **Employment and Work:**

<https://www.bexleylocaloffer.uk/Services/2333>

In addition, see the Further Information section of the Bexley Voice Parent Transition Planner (see link above).

### **Where can I find out about developing skills for independence?**

LSEC college offer independent skills courses within their high needs Nido Volans unit. For details, see the attached link: <https://www.lsec.ac.uk/>

Re-instate is a local charity based in Erith that can also support independence skills through their Living Well programme. For more information, see the attached link:

<https://www.bexleylocaloffer.uk/Services/5255>

## **Respite**

### **What overnight/weekend respite services are available for young adults?**

The following may be able to provide respite care for adults:

- **101 Brook Street** – this is a residential home providing outreach and overnight respite. <https://www.carehome.co.uk/carehome.cfm/searchazref/10001010BROC>
- **Shared Lives Respite** – this involves the adult staying in the home of a Shared Lives carer. <https://www.bexley.gov.uk/services/health-and-social-care/social-care-for-adults/shared-lives-scheme/about-shared-lives-scheme>

In addition, Direct Payments can be used to access other respite provisions in and outside of the borough or to have support for the adult in the community or in their own home.

## **Mental Capacity**

### **My young person lacks the mental capacity to make key decisions for themselves, what should I do?**

If your young person lacks the mental capacity to make key decisions about their health and welfare or to be able to manage their financial affairs, you may need to think about Deputyship. For more information on this, see our My Guide on Understanding Deputyships:

<https://www.bexleyvoice.org.uk/deputyship.html>

## **Sources of Further Information and Support**

- **Bexley Voice Transition Planner** <https://www.bexleyvoice.org.uk/bexley-voice-parent-transition-planner.html> - See Further Information Section
- **Bexley Local Offer (Social Care)** <https://www.bexleylocaloffer.uk/Services/2314>