



Transition from
secondary school to post-16 education

A guide for parents and carers

This guidance was co-produced in collaboration with a number of organisations including:



Access Through Technology



Family Voice Norfolk

What is transition?

Our lives are full of change, during which we transition or move from one stage to another. A transition from one educational setting to another can be both an anxious and exciting time for young people (YP) and their parent carers.

This guide is to help parent carers of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) who are preparing to move from a secondary school (key stage 4) to a post-16 setting or placement such as an apprenticeship, traineeship or volunteering. Pupils transfer from secondary schools to post-16 settings or placements at the end of year 11, in the September after their 16th birthday.

This booklet uses the terms:

- ‘Post-16 setting’ to cover any provider of education to young people over the age of 16. This covers further education colleges, sixth-form colleges, schools with sixth forms and other training providers
- ‘Placement’ for other participation such as employment, apprenticeship, traineeship or volunteering
- ‘Post-16 options’ to cover both post-16 settings and placements

Post-16 education and the law

The law requires all young people aged 16+ in England to stay in education or training until their 18th birthday. However, there are several options open to young people:

1. Full-time study at a post-16 setting (full time is approximately 18 hours per week for post-16 study)
2. Full time employment or volunteering (defined as 20 hours per week) while in part-time education or training
3. Starting an apprenticeship or traineeship

How do we plan for success?

Effective transitions rely upon...

- ✓ Good planning
- ✓ Good communication

Good transition planning benefits all YP.

However, for those with additional needs, including SEND, additional planning and preparation will be required to ensure that transition is successful. The transfer to post-16 settings will involve many new experiences and expectations. YP choosing volunteering, apprenticeship, traineeship or employment will also need preparation and support for the different requirements of these placements.

When should I start to think about post-16 options?

If your child does not have an education, health and care plan (EHCP)...

- ✓ You both need to start thinking about post-16 options by the summer of year 10, ready to start visiting post-16 settings, considering other placements and making applications in the autumn of year 11
- ✓ Explore the website www.helpyouchoose.org, which contains all post-16 courses in Norfolk as well as information on voluntary organisations, apprenticeship and traineeship vacancies and training for work opportunities
- ✓ Your child can also apply for all courses, apprenticeship, traineeship and training for work vacancies using this website. Many secondary schools will register their students so they can have an overview and support application choices
- ✓ Your child's school will advise on the time they think it's best to start making applications for post-16 courses, training and apprenticeships, not usually before the second half of the autumn term

If your child has an EHCP...

- ✓ Discuss both your thoughts with your YP's special educational needs coordinator (SENDCo) at their current school from the year 9 annual review onwards. You can consider post-16 courses and training for work; apprenticeships and traineeships as well as volunteering and employment coupled with training or education
- ✓ Review your thinking with the SENDCo at the year 10 annual review
- ✓ Ask for the year 11 annual review to happen during the autumn term so this is up to date, ready for making any applications
- ✓ In the summer of year 10/early autumn of year 11, start exploring the website www.helpyouchoose.org, which contains all post-16 courses in Norfolk as well as information on voluntary organisations, apprenticeship and trainee vacancies and training for work opportunities. Your child can also apply using this website. Many secondary schools will register their students so they can have an overview and support application choices
- ✓ Your child's school will advise on the time they think it's best to start making applications for post-16 courses, training and apprenticeships, not usually before the second half of the autumn term
- ✓ By the spring of year 11, the EHCP coordinator will start asking the current school where your child is likely to go in September

I want to find out more about an apprenticeship, traineeship, volunteering or a supported internship

Apprenticeships

An apprenticeship is a job so your child will be learning and earning.

Visit:

- ✓ Apprenticeships Norfolk at www.apprenticeshipsnorfolk.org
- ✓ The Department for Education's (DfE) apprenticeships site at www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship
- ✓ The apprenticeships and training area of the Help You Choose website at <https://helpyouchoose.org/content/infoadvice/work-training/successful-apprenticeship-job-hunting/find-and-apply-for-an-apprenticeship/>

Apprenticeships have minimum English and maths requirements; however, for YP with SEND there are exceptions to this. Page 23 of the following booklet gives further guidance:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/734414/Specification_of_apprenticeship_standards_for_England.pdf

Traineeships

For traineeships, visit the section on the Help You Choose website:

www.helpyouchoose.org/content/infoadvice/work-training/apprenticeships-traineeships-preparing-for-work/traineeships/

Volunteering

The volunteering section of the Help You Choose website has links to opportunities available to your child:

www.helpyouchoose.org/content/volunteering

Supported internships

A supported internship is for young people aged 16–24 with an EHCP who want to work. It is a one-year study programme that helps students get the skills and experience to succeed in employment.

Students spend six months in an unpaid work placement with an employer, coupled with a personal study programme that gives them the chance to gain useful qualifications, for example in English and maths.

Supported internships are very similar to a traineeship but with a higher level of support.

There are no entry requirements for a supported internship, and they are run by several post-16 providers, for example in

hospitals, schools and public gardens. The YP will need to demonstrate that they are positive about working and will listen to advice from others in the workplace.

Further information is provided in the resources and links section at the back of this booklet.

Preparing for Adult Life (PfAL) Service and the Norfolk SEND Local Offer

There are many people who can support your child in their transition to adult life; you as parent carers, teachers and social workers.

If specialist help is required, it may be appropriate for the PfAL Service to work with your child.

All YP aged 14–17 who are likely to require support from Adult Social Services after they turn 18 should be referred to the PfAL Service.

Referrals can be made to the PfAL Service if:

- ✓ Your child is 14–17 years old. They can be referred at 13 years old, if the referral follows an EHCP review in Year 9
- ✓ Your child has a disability. This could be a learning disability, mental health needs, autism or physical disability

- ✓ Your child is likely to need support from adult social services (under the Care Act, 2014), to achieve their outcomes of good health, independent living, employment, friends, relationships and community inclusion

Making a referral to the PfAL Service

If the YP has a social worker in Children's Social Services, they can make the referral. Alternatively, a referral can be made by anyone by ringing the Children's Advice and Duty Service (CADS) professionals' referral line, or in the case of members of the public, call 0344 800 8020.

www.norfolk.gov.uk/children-and-families/send-local-offer/preparing-for-adult-life/help-to-plan-ahead/people-who-can-help-in-transition-to-adult-life

The Norfolk SEND Local Offer and PfAL

The PfAL section of the Norfolk Local Offer focuses on the support available for young people and covers:

- ✓ Planning ahead
- ✓ Getting a job
- ✓ Leisure and community
- ✓ Somewhere to live

- ✓ Keeping healthy
- ✓ Money
- ✓ Travel

It can be accessed at www.norfolk.gov.uk/children-and-families/send-local-offer/preparing-for-adult-life

What do I need to do before my child makes an application?

Transport worries or concerns

- ✓ Discuss this with the SENDCo at their current school, ideally in the autumn term of year 11. They may talk about TITAN travel training which is useful for some young people

Visits to settings

- ✓ As well as holding open afternoons and evenings, many settings will welcome a further visit. Contact the setting directly to make an appointment
- ✓ It is a good idea to ask to speak to the SENDCo at the setting. Post-16 settings do not always use the term SENDCo but they do have a named person who leads on SEND in the setting. Some settings have very large SEND departments so you may see one of the SEND team rather than the named person
- ✓ You may want to take someone with you, so you can discuss what you saw and how you felt about the setting.
- ✓ You may want to jot down some thoughts and feelings, 'pros and cons', particularly if you are looking around a number of different settings. Try to do this straight after your visit
- ✓ If your child has an EHCP, you should take it with you to show the support that is written in the plan but bear in mind that the setting may not have time to look at it in full at the meeting
- ✓ You may wish to check with your child before the visit how they feel about discussing their special needs with others and consider how you handle this during the visit

You may want to ask the setting about

The structure of the day

- What will my child's day look like in terms of what they will be doing both academically and socially?
- What are the timings of the day?
- How many days per week will they attend?
- What are the arrangements for social time?
- Are there quiet areas?
- How are the young people supported during social times?
- Will my child have homework or any follow-up to do?
- What is the approach to behaviour? How is bullying dealt with?

How they support learners with SEND

- How does your setting support children with SEND?
- How do you make adaptations for children with SEND?

How you can communicate with them

- Who would be my main contact in the setting if I have any concerns or I want to check something?
- How do we communicate and when?
- Will my child have a key worker?
- How will you support me to support my child?

Transport

- If my child arrives by bus/taxi, how will they be met?

What your child will need

- Will they need to buy any specialist equipment? Where can this be bought from?
- How do they pay for lunch? What do they need to bring?

Wider aspects of setting life

- What trips, clubs and activities are available?
- How the teachers/tutors/lecturers should be addressed.
Post-16 settings will often use first names

Will my child receive more support or funding if they have an EHCP?

No. Post-16 settings have funding streams available to them for YP aged 16 –18 regardless of whether or not the young person has an EHCP

Once my child gets an offer from a post-16 setting or placement, what happens next?

The offer of a place may be conditional on your child achieving certain qualifications or unconditional, which means that the qualifications that they achieve at age 16 will not alter whether they have a place on a course in September

Secondary schools and post-16 settings need to work together with you and your child to ensure a positive transition. They should:

- ✓ Meet to discuss the transition arrangements for YP with additional needs
- ✓ Ensure that information about your child's needs is shared with the new setting in good time
- ✓ Invite you and any professionals involved with your child to a transition meeting where a transition plan can be recorded and actions agreed

What extra transition support is available to help my child?

This might include:

- ✓ Extra visits (before the main transition days for all young people) to familiarise themselves with the new environment and new people
- ✓ Taking photos of the new setting
- ✓ Providing prompt cards or checklists as reminders of new people or new routines
- ✓ Creating 'social stories' to help prepare your child for change
- ✓ Providing a transition pack to give information about the new setting, including new routines
- ✓ Providing clear maps of the site and/or timetables
- ✓ Identifying a key worker for YP and families to contact
- ✓ Working with health professionals to adapt the learning environment and ensure accessibility
- ✓ Organising specialist training for staff
- ✓ Providing specialist equipment or resources to facilitate access to learning
- ✓ Creating individual support plans for your child

If your child is going to do volunteering, a traineeship or an apprenticeship, consider which of the above may be useful.

What can I do to help my child prepare?

- ✓ Talk to your child about what is going to happen and look at pictures of the new setting or placement together
- ✓ Find out if their friends from secondary school are going to the same setting or placement
- ✓ Arrange for them to have a visit or visits before they start
- ✓ If you know any other YP at the setting or placement, ask them to talk to your child about their experiences
- ✓ Think about how best to explain things to your child and how your child can communicate their worries to you
- ✓ Practise things that they will need to do like getting the bus to the setting
- ✓ Use countdowns or calendars so that they know when the change is coming
- ✓ Keep talking to the new setting or placement. The more they know you, the better

Key terms

Apprenticeship: it is a job with accredited training. Apprenticeships are usually full time for a minimum of 30 hours per week. There are different levels of apprenticeship. Those doing an apprenticeship aged 16 are likely to do a level 2 (intermediate) or level 3 (advanced) apprenticeship.

EHCP: education, health and care plan. A legal plan for children and young people aged 0–25 with more complex needs, requiring a multi-agency approach.

EHCP coordinator: the person employed by Norfolk County Council to oversee children with EHCPs in a given area. EHCP coordinators will usually be assigned to settings so that all children with an EHCP in a setting will have the same EHCP coordinator.

Key stage 4: age 14–16 (year 10 and 11)

Post-16 setting: any provider that educates young people aged 16+. These include further education colleges, school sixth forms as well as training providers.

Secondary school: a school for children in years 7,8,9,10 and 11. Some secondary schools have sixth forms catering for years 12 and 13 as well. Some are called ‘academies’ but they are still secondary schools.

SENDCo: special educational needs and disabilities

coordinator. The teacher in a setting who oversees the provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities. Some settings use the term 'SENCo' instead, but the role is the same. Post-16 settings do not always use the term at all but will have a named person in charge of SEND.

Supported internship: a programme for YP aged 16–24 with an EHCP to prepare them for the world of work.

Traineeship: a course with work experience that gets YP read for work or an apprenticeship. It can last up to six months.

Resources and links

Apprenticeships: find an apprenticeship in England

www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship

Apprenticeships Norfolk

Lists apprenticeships available in Norfolk

www.apprenticeshipsnorfolk.org

Child Law Advice

Information on what the law in England says about young people aged 16+ needing to remain in education, employment or training until their 18th birthday.

www.childlawadvice.org.uk/information-pages/participation-of-young-people-in-education-

[employment-or-training/](#)

CitizenCard

Non-profit issuer of police-approved proof of age and ID cards.

www.citizencard.com

Help You Choose

The full range of courses, apprenticeships, traineeships and volunteering opportunities on offer for post-16 students can be viewed on www.helpyouchoose.org. You can also apply for courses on this site.

National Careers Service

Information, advice and guidance available at <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk>

Norfolk Preparing for Adult Life (PfAL) Service

Referrals for 14–17-year-olds

www.norfolk.gov.uk/children-and-families/send-local-offer/preparing-for-adult-life/help-to-plan-ahead/people-who-can-help-in-transition-to-adult-life

Information for 14–25-year-olds

www.norfolk.gov.uk/children-and-families/send-local-offer/preparing-for-adult-life

Norfolk SEND Local Offer

www.norfolk.gov.uk/send

Norfolk supported internships

Find out more at this page in the Norfolk SEND Local Offer

www.norfolk.gov.uk/children-and-families/send-local-offer/education-and-training-0-25/post-16/internships-and-supported-internships

TITAN travel training

www.norfolk.gov.uk/education-and-learning/school-and-college-transport/transport-support-and-training/transport-support-and-training-titan

titan@norfolk.gov.uk

01603 638021

Traineeships

Find a traineeship in England

www.gov.uk/find-traineeship

For further advice and support...

Consider contacting Norfolk SEND Partnership Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)

Telephone: 01603 704070

Website: www.norfolksendpartnershiass.org.uk/

Other sources of help are available on the Norfolk SEND Local Offer.

www.norfolk.gov.uk/send



This leaflet is part of a series designed to support and enhance transitions in all Norfolk settings. The guidance has been co-produced with input from education and Norfolk County Council professionals including SENDIASS and representatives from family groups including Family Voice Norfolk and SEN Network.