**Part 2: Preparation for Adulthood
(Code of Practice Chapter 8)**

1. The ultimate aim of the SEND Reforms is to enable children and young people to make a successful progression to adulthood. This can be life-transforming for children and young people with SEND and all professionals across education, health and care involved at every stage of a child or young person’s life and should work together to help prepare individuals for adulthood. Early identification and intervention is vital in ensuring even very young children make a good start in life and solid foundations are laid on which they can build towards adulthood. Setting high expectations early on will set an important precedent for decisions children, young people and their parents will make as they get older.
2. Preparing for adulthood means preparing children and young people with SEND for:
* Higher Education and/or paid employment;
* Independent living; and
* Participating in society.
1. Effective preparation for adulthood is one of the overarching indicators of the SEND reforms that will be considered as part of the SEND Area Inspections.

**Starting Early**

1. From the outset, families need to know that with the right support, the vast majority of children and young people with SEND can find work, be supported to live independently and participate in their community. Health workers, clinicians, therapists, social workers, early years providers and schools should encourage these ambitions right from the start.
2. Maintained nurseries and all schools must ensure that, subject to certain conditions, pupils with SEN engage in the activities of the nursery or school together with those who do not have SEN. They must be encouraged to participate fully in the life of the nursery or school and in any wider community activity.

**Preparing for adulthood from Year 9 onwards (aged 13/14)**

1. Sheffield City Council must ensure that the EHC Plan review at year 9 and every year thereafter, includes a focus on preparing for adulthood across education, health and care. SENCOs, social workers, health professionals and others involved in these reviews should consider how they are helping children and young people progress towards adulthood and provide advice and support that will enable children, young people and their parents make good choices about the future. These reviews should focus on and agree outcomes and support relating to:
* **Higher education or employment**: planning the journey to apply for a place at University and securing any associated allowances for students with disabilities. Consideration of post-16 employment pathways, including supported internships, traineeships and apprenticeships; as well support in finding jobs, access to work experience, and understanding available benefits such as Access to Work. Opportunities for self-employment of setting up social enterprises should also be considered.
* **Preparing for independent living**: exploring what decisions young people want to make for themselves as they get older and how they will be supported to do so.[[1]](#footnote-1) This should include discussions about where they might want to live in future and who with, local housing options and possible support from social care as well as opportunities to learn the skills they will need such as being able to manage personal hygiene, cook a meal etc.
* **Participating in society**: understanding mobility and transport support – including developing greater independent in travel. Support to develop and maintain friendships and relationships and how to find out about local social and community activities and opportunities to be involved in local decision making.

**Transition to adult health services**

1. Effective transition planning should take place for all those moving from children’s to adult health services. This is particularly important where young people will be moving from the care of a paediatrician to different consultants and/or teams.
2. For those with EHC Plans, Sheffield City Council and health services must cooperate, working in partnership with each other and the young person to ensure that the EHC plan and the care plan for the treatment and management of the young person’s health are aligned. Considering how this can be best planned for and supported should be part of the annual reviews of an individual’s EHC Plan from year 9 onwards.

**Transition to adult social care**

1. Young people with SEN turning 18 may become eligible for adult care services regardless of whether they have an EHC Plan or have been receiving care under the Children Act 1989.
2. Under the Care Act 2014, Sheffield City Council must carry out an adult care transition assessment where there is significant benefit to a young person in doing so and they are likely to have needs for care or support after they have turned 18.
3. Transition assessments for adult care must take place at the right time for the individual. Assessments should be well planned and integrated with the annual reviews of EHC Plans for those that have them. Where a young person will have eligible needs, these will be provided through a statutory care and support plan. This will form the care element of the young person’s EHC Plan (Part H2) which should be the overarching plan used to ensure young people receive the support they need.
4. Where a young person’s needs are not eligible for adult services, Sheffield City Council must provide information and advice about how those needs may be met and the provision and support that young people can access in their local area.

**Further Information**

1. Further information, advice and good practice on preparing children and young people for adulthood can be found on the Council for Disabled Children’s website: <http://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/preparing-adulthood>
1. From age 16, young people should be making decisions about their own lives, subject to mental capacity.
 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)