

STARTING TO PREPARE FOR ADULTHOOD

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. During Year 9 there is a meeting for you and your family, and the professionals who work with you to help you to start thinking about your future. This is called your Year 9 annual review.

What is the Year 9 annual review?

The Year 9 annual review is a meeting all about your future. It will take place at your school and the school will organise the meeting, send out invitations and get all the paperwork that they need.

The meeting will include you, your family, a teacher or someone who knows you from school and your Senior Planning co-ordinator from the local authority's special educational needs team. If you have health needs, there may also be someone from health services there, and someone from social care if you have had or may need support from social care services. You can also ask anyone you trust to go with you.

At the meeting, the professionals will listen to you and offer advice about the kinds of help you 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 and at a time that suits you.

Ask your parent carer or teacher to help you prepare for the meeting. You could also ask West Sussex Information, Advice and Support Service (IASS) for their help, see 'Ask about' below.

Spend some time thinking about your future and what you'd like it to look like. You could use the ten questions below to help you think or ask someone you trust to go through the questions with you and write down your answers.

- 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 haven't looked at your EHC Plan for a while, ask your get your parent, carer or trusted adviser to look at it with you before the meeting and think about whether anything has changed.

If you want someone else to help to give your views at the meeting – an advocate or trusted adviser – make time to share your views and ideas with them beforehand.





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At the meeting

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

- Agree whether you will be there for some or all of the meeting and, if it's only for a part of it, which part it is.
- Make sure you can choose where you sit and know what will happen if you need to take a break.
- Ask to be introduced to anyone you haven't met before (or get your parents to ask for you).
- Have some written notes to remind you what to talk about and what's important. If you prefer to have pictures to show people, you could take them to the meeting too.
- Make use of your friend or trusted adviser. They can help put your point across or remember stuff that's been said.
- If there's anything you don't understand, ask people to explain or get your friend to ask for you. It's your life so don't be afraid to speak up.

After the meetings

Someone from the council, called a Senior Planning Co-Ordinator, should come to your Year 9 Review meeting. They will write your information into your Education Health and Care (EHC) Plan. This is a document that says what is important to you and what you want to do in the future. It also says what support and help you should have. If you want to go to college, your 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 can understand. If you don't think the new EHC Plan says what was agreed in the meeting, tell the Senior Planning Co-Ordinator. You need to agree on what it says about your future.

At every Annual Review meeting after your Year 9 meeting, everyone should continue to help you to plan for your future.

Ask About

- **Advocacy Service** – can help young people who have a social worker. Advocates can go to meetings with you, help you to make a complaint or get legal advice. For more information call: **0330 222 8686**, email AdvocacyService@westsussex.gov.uk, or go to: www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/your-space/support/advocacy.
- **West Sussex Information, Advice and Support Service (IASS)** – contact them for advice and support. They also have Young People Advisers, who can support young people up to the age of 25 to help you to think through your options. Call: **0330 222 8555**, or email: send.ias@westsussex.gov.uk (parent carers) or: cyp.sendias@westsussex.gov.uk (children and young people).

Further information and useful links

- **Making Sense of Adult Life** – Reaching Families' handbook, which is aimed at parent carers of young people with SEND aged 14+ will guide them through helping you with decisions, as well as providing essential information on further and higher education, social lives, money matters, social care, health, employment and travel. Go to: www.reachingfamilies.org.uk to find out more.
- **Fact Sheets** – for further information see the **Amaze/Reaching Families'** fact sheet Involving Young People, which is aimed at parent carers. It can be downloaded from our website: www.reachingfamilies.org.uk/factsheets.html.
- **British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD)** – information and resources for families and easy read guides for people with learning disabilities. Go to: www.bild.org.uk.
- **Preparing for Adulthood** – resources on involving your young person and preparing them for transition to adulthood. Go to: www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk.
- **West Sussex Local Offer** – go to <https://westsussex.local-offer.org>.

