

Transition to Adulthood

A guide for young people with special educational needs and disabilities, and their parents and carers



NHS

Leicester City

Clinical Commissioning Group



Leicester
City Council

Introduction

Welcome to Leicester's Transition to Adulthood information guide. This guide is to help young people with additional needs and their parents/carers think about the future and make plans for when the young person becomes an adult.

By young people with additional needs we mean young people who have received additional support as a child. This may include young people with Special Educational Needs and/or disabilities (SEND) with an Education, Health and Care Plan or those who received SEN Support in schools.

'Transition' refers to the period when you approach adulthood and start to think about your plans for the future – with the support of your parents/carers and professionals who work with you. Generally, this is from Year 9 (age 13 or 14), but planning earlier is also a good idea. The move from being a child to becoming an adult is a significant change in the lives of all young people.

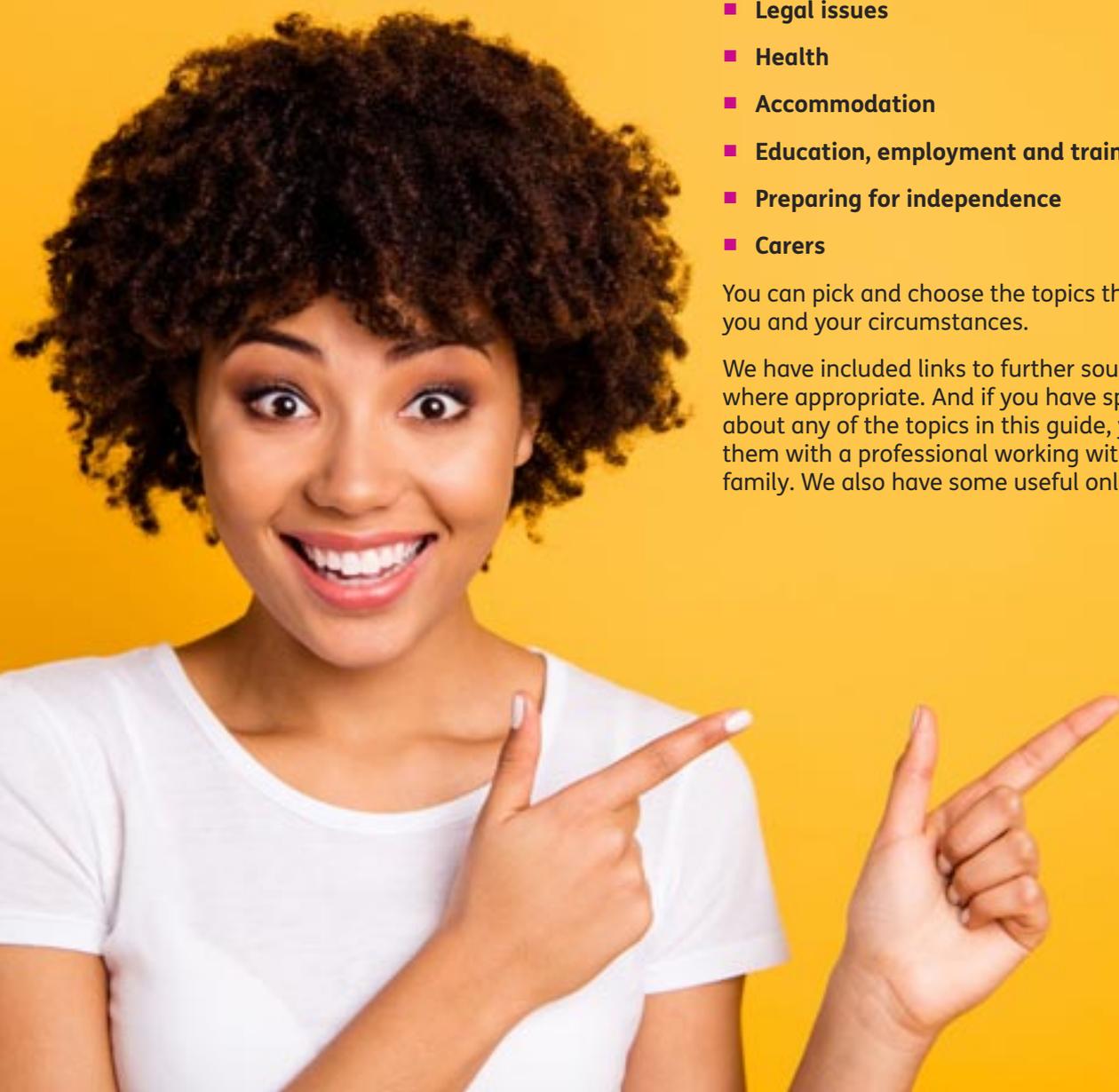
The systems in place to support children are different when they become an adult. This may mean the support or professionals who work with you changes. This guide gives an overview of the key topics related to transition. We hope it will help you and your parents and carers prepare for the move into adulthood.

The guide has been divided into subsections on:

- **The transition process**
- **Money and finances**
- **Legal issues**
- **Health**
- **Accommodation**
- **Education, employment and training**
- **Preparing for independence**
- **Carers**

You can pick and choose the topics that are relevant to you and your circumstances.

We have included links to further sources of information where appropriate. And if you have specific questions about any of the topics in this guide, you can discuss them with a professional working with you and your family. We also have some useful online links below.



The Local Offer

Here you can find information about services, advice and support in your local area relating to education, health and social care. **The Local Offer** also has links to neighbouring counties to make information sharing easy.



Care Leaver Offer

The **leaving care service** is where you can find support available for care leavers within the local authority.

MyChoice

MyChoice is a directory for care and support products and services for people living in Leicester. Some of these services or products are available for everyone but for some an adult social worker may need to refer you.

Links

Leicester's Local Offer

<https://families.leicester.gov.uk/send-local-offer>

Leaving care service

<https://www.leicester.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/adoption-and-fostering/looked-after-children/leaving-care-support>

MyChoice

<https://mychoice.leicester.gov.uk>

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The Transition Process EHCP Transition Review

1

What is this about?

An Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) is a plan for children and young people aged up to 25 who have more complex learning and health or social care needs. It identifies a young person's educational, health and social care needs and sets out the additional support required to meet those needs.

Once you have an EHCP, it must be reviewed every year for the length of the plan. From Year 9 (age 13 or 14 years), the annual review of your plan must include a focus on preparing you for adulthood. This includes consideration of future employment, good health, independent living and participation in society as you move into adult life. These reviews are sometimes called transition reviews.

How does it work?

The school, college or setting will gather and circulate information about your progress and, with at least two weeks' notice, invite the relevant people to the review. Within four weeks of the meeting, Leicester City Council will decide whether to maintain, amend or stop the plan.

The review of the EHC plan uses a person-centred approach which places you and your family at the centre of the review meeting. From Year 9, this should include speaking to you and your family about your future aspirations. This can include your post-16 education and training, where you would like to live and what skills you need to develop to meet these aspirations.

Who is involved?

The school, college or setting will organise and invite the following people to the review:

- you
- your parents/carers
- relevant school/setting staff
- other involved education, health and care professionals such as social workers, speech and language therapists, specialist teachers
- SENDIASS officer (where involved or where you have requested their support).

We may ask some additional people who support with the preparation for adulthood to attend the review.

The role of parents and carers

Parents can support you by:

- attending EHCP annual meetings
- preparing you for the EHCP meetings and thinking about your aims for the future
- contributing to identifying education, health and care needs and future planning.

Once you turn 16, you have greater rights with regards to the content of your EHC plan provided you have capacity. For more information on capacity, please see the section on the Mental Capacity Act.



The Transition Process

Person-centred Reviews



When will this happen?

A person-centred review will happen annually but will only take place when you attend a school which holds its reviews in this way.

The role of parents and carers

Parents and carers are a key part of person-centred reviews. They can help you prepare for the review by guiding you to think about your achievements, hopes and aspirations as well as contributing at the review meeting.

What is this about?

Person-centred reviews are a way of holding EHCP annual reviews. They are a family friendly and effective way of bringing everyone together to identify needs and develop an action plan for you. Person-centred reviews put you at the centre of a meeting or plan about your needs. Making plans person-centred aim to ensure that you are listened to, respected, valued and cared for, and that you belong.

How does it work?

The meeting is led by your needs and wishes. You will be invited to attend all or some of the meeting and will be encouraged to present to attendees work you have done in and outside of school. Also, to share what you have and haven't enjoyed, things to improve and your aspirations for the future. This may be a PowerPoint presentation, but you may choose to present in different ways such as a pre-recorded video.

Teachers from your school will help you prepare for the person-centred review and will explain the process to your parents/carers. A facilitator may lead the review and will ensure you remain at the centre of all discussions.

Who is involved?

The person-centred review is arranged and led by your school or college but we may invite other professionals working with them to attend.



The Transition Process

Transition Assessments and Accessing Adult Social Care

1

What is this about?

When you turn 18 and become an adult, the way both you and your family are seen legally changes. Leaving compulsory education can also change the support that you may need. The transition assessment takes these changes into account. You have the right to a transition assessment if you are likely to have needs when you become an adult and require adult services. The assessment will look at your wellbeing, including how to prevent risks and help you stay safe and decide whether you are eligible for adult social care.

How does it work?

As you approach the age of 18 you can request a transition assessment **via an online form**. Your parent, carer, social worker or another professional can also ask for the assessment.

Once we receive the request, we will allocate you a worker from the transition team. This worker will then visit you, your family and your school. They will also contact other professionals involved, to gather information for the assessment. They will find out how you manage everyday tasks, what you are good at, what you enjoy and what you want to achieve as you move into adulthood.

If support needs are identified, the social worker can arrange support or help you and your family to arrange support. If you are not eligible for adult social care support, we will signpost you on to other services, voluntary agencies and support groups who can assist. More information on the assessment is available on the next page.

Who is involved?

An allocated worker from our transition team will carry out the assessment.

When will this happen?

The transition assessment should take place at the time right for you. This will be when we are reasonably confident about what you or your carer's needs for care or support will look like after you turn 18. If it looks likely that you will need support as an adult, please inform the transition team from Year 9 onwards.

The role of parents and carers

Parents and carers can help you prepare for the transition assessment by helping you think about your plans for the future. During the assessment process, they can tell the allocated worker about your day to day life, hopes, strengths and needs. They can also tell them about their role as a carer and what they do to support you.



Links

Request a transition assessment

<https://families.leicester.gov.uk/send-local-offer/preparing-for-adulthood/transition/request-a-transition-assessment>

Care Act 2014 eligibility criteria

<https://www.scie.org.uk/care-act-2014/assessment-and-eligibility/eligibility>

When do you qualify for support?

A social worker uses 'eligibility criteria' set out in a law called the Care Act 2014 to work out if you need services from adult social care. They help to make sure that everyone is treated fairly, and that you get the support you need. You may be eligible if, due to a long-term physical or mental impairment or illness, you are unable to manage two or more of the following areas independently.

- Manage and prepare your food and drink
- Look after your personal hygiene
- Manage your toilet needs
- Be able to dress yourself
- Use and move around your home safely
- Keep your home environment habitable
- Develop and maintain family or other personal relationships
- Take part in work, training, education or volunteering
- Use facilities or services in the local community such as public transport and recreational facilities or services
- Carry out any caring responsibilities

More information on eligibility can be found on the [website](#).



The Transition Process Carer's Assessment

1

Who is a carer?

A carer is a person who looks after someone with a disability. It could be a family member or friend. The cared for person generally could not cope without the support that the carer provides which is usually on an unpaid basis.

What is this about?

The parent of a child or young person with either a physical or learning disability or a mental disorder can request a carer's assessment. When you turn 18, the carer has a right to have a carer's assessment if they appear to need support.

The carer's assessment is separate from the needs or transition assessment that you might have, but they can ask to have it at the same time. Even if you are not eligible for support from adult social care, your carer can still have a carer's assessment. This is because the carer's assessment is about the carer and not the cared for person. If there are other children or young people in your home that help to look after you, they can request a young carer's assessment.

How does it work?

The social worker will ask your carer some questions about their life to establish:

- If their needs are the result of providing necessary care to you.
- If their caring role affects their ability to achieve any of the **outcomes** outlined in the Care Act.
- If there is a significant impact on their wellbeing because of the above.

They may have needs identified from the assessment that qualify for further support. This could be respite care (also known as a short break) where someone else provides care while the carer has a break. If they are not assessed as having eligible needs, they will receive information and advice such as accessing **Leicester Carers Support Service**.

Who is involved?

A social worker from adult social care (or if you have a social worker already), will be responsible for completing the carer's assessment.

Barnardo's CareFree Young Carers' Services would carry out a young carer's assessment.

When will this happen?

A carer's assessment may take place at the same time as a transition assessment if the transition social worker feels the carer may have needs that qualify. A carer also has the right to refer themselves for an assessment if they feel providing care is having a significant impact on their wellbeing.

Links

Carer's assessment

<https://www.leicester.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/adult-social-care/support-for-carers/get-a-carers-assessment>

The Transition Process

Strengths-based Practice

What is this about?

We use a strengths-based approach to social work at Leicester City Council. This approach explores your ability and circumstances. The focus is on the positives rather than making your problems and issues the focus of an intervention. Working from a strengths-based position, is about working with you to identify together, the best next-step for you – using the strengths and resources you currently have or may have access to.

As you move into adult services, if you work with a social worker, they will want to know more about you and what you want to achieve. They will work to assess your strengths to understand how to help you achieve your goals.



How does it work?

An assessment of your social care needs will focus on your strengths and resources around them. Your allocated social worker will listen to you and take a more conversational approach.

Who is involved?

Your social worker will work with you in a strengths-based way and can explain more about how this will affect you.

When will this happen?

The strengths-based approach begins once you start working with adult services at the transition assessment and will continue while you remain in contact with adult social care.

The role of parents and carers

Parents and carers are an integral part of strengths-based practice as their support can be one of the key strengths for you.



What is this about?

Benefits are payments from the government to people who are on low income, out of work, have children, are pregnant, sick or disabled, have been bereaved or are a carer. Many people with a disability can access money and benefits to help them be independent.

Once you turn 18, you are considered an adult and you will need to apply for your own benefits. As you prepare to turn 18, it is important to check what benefits you will be entitled to and that the benefits will be registered in your name. It is also important that you get the right support to claim the benefits you are entitled to.

There are different benefits you may be able to claim. Some of these benefits include the following.

- Carer's Allowance – Carer's Allowance is the main benefit for carers. If someone is looking after another person for 35 hours a week or more, they may be eligible. More information is available on the section on Carer's Allowance on the **government website** or on a **Carers UK factsheet**.
- Disability Living Allowance (DLA) – you can claim Disability Living Allowance if you are under 16, disabled and need extra help to look after yourself or have difficulty walking or getting around. More information about Disability Living Allowance is available on the **government website** or on the **Disability Rights UK website**.
- Personal Independence Payment (PIP) – a benefit for people who need help taking part in everyday life or who find it difficult to get around. PIP replaces Disability Living Allowance for people aged over 16. More information about Personal Independence Payment is available on the **government website** or on the **Disability Rights UK website**.
- Universal Credit – Universal Credit is a new benefit introduced by the government. Universal Credit replaces several older benefits. With Universal Credit people have one monthly payment to cover their housing and living costs. People aged 18 or over (or aged 16 or 17 in some cases) might be able to make a claim. More information about Universal Credit is available on the **government website** or on the **Disability Rights UK website**.
- Access to Work benefits – If you are disabled or have a physical or mental health condition that makes it hard for you to do your job, your employer must make certain changes called 'reasonable adjustments'. If the help required at work is not covered by the employer making reasonable adjustments, it may be possible to get help from Access to Work benefits. If you qualify, you will be offered support based on your needs, which may include a grant to help cover the costs of practical support in the workplace.
- Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) – You can apply for Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) if you have a disability or health condition that affects how much you can work. ESA gives you money to help with living costs if you are unable to work or support you to get back into work if you can. You can apply for ESA if you're employed, self-employed or unemployed.
- Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) – Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs) are grants to help with any extra essential costs you may have as a direct result of your disability while studying at university. It covers some of the extra costs you have because of a mental health problem, long term illness or any other disability.

Links

You can find out more about benefits here:

Mencap - money and benefits

<https://www.mencap.org.uk/advice-and-support/benefits/money-and-benefits>

Carers and disability benefits

<https://www.gov.uk/browse/benefits/disability>

Citizens Advice LeicesterShire

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/contact-us/search-for-your-local-citizens-advice/local-citizens-advice-details/?serialnumber=204594>

Universal Credit

<https://families.leicester.gov.uk/family-information/family-finance/universal-credits>

Money

Carer's Allowance

What is this about?

Carer's Allowance is the main benefit for carers. If someone qualifies for Carer's Allowance, they are paid a fixed amount per week. Not every carer can get Carer's Allowance. A carer may be eligible if they meet all of the following conditions.

- Look after someone who gets a qualifying disability benefit
- Look after that person for at least 35 hours a week
- Are aged 16 or over
- Are not in full-time education
- Don't earn over £128 a week (after deductions)
- Satisfy UK residence and presence conditions

More information is available from **Carers UK**.

How does it work?

To claim for Carer's Allowance, a carer can:

- Visit the **government website** to apply online or download a claim form or
- Request a claim pack DS700 (or DS700(SP) if you are getting a State Pension) by calling the Carer's Allowance Unit on 0800 731 0297 (text phone 0800 731 0317, calls from Typetalk are also welcome).

The person claiming will receive a written decision on their claim that tells them whether they have been awarded Carer's Allowance and from what date. If a decision is made not to award Carer's Allowance, you can ask the Department for Work and Pensions for a review and if this is unsuccessful, you can lodge an appeal with the Tribunal Service.

Who is involved?

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) decide whether someone can claim Carer's Allowance and distribute the money people receive.

When will this happen?

As you move into adulthood, your family may continue to provide care for you. The level of care they provide may increase if you leave full time education. If this is the case and they look after you for more than 35 hours a week, they can claim Carer's Allowance to support them financially. A young person may provide care for a family member. Once they turn 16, they may be entitled to claim Carer's Allowance.

Carer's Allowance can generally be backdated for up to three months before the date you submit your claim. Carer's Allowance can also be claimed up to three months in advance, so long as it can be proved the conditions will be met.

The role of parents and carers

Parents are responsible for claiming Carer's Allowance if they are a carer for their young person. They will need to apply for the allowance.

Links

Carer's Allowance

<https://www.gov.uk/carers-allowance/how-to-claim>



Money

Managing Money

2

What is this about?

Being able to manage money is an important life skill. As you approach adulthood, you may have access to more money such as from work and the benefits you claim yourself. When you turn 18, your money becomes yours and should not be included in the household income. Therefore, it is important for you to understand and learn the skills of how to manage money.

Managing money is also called budgeting. The key to budgeting is to spend less than you earn. When managing money, you may find it helpful to divide it into the following categories. This will make it easier to make decisions about money and avoid accidental overspending.

- Spend money wisely on things you must have – these are needs.
- Save money for the things you like but can live without – these are wants.
- Set aside money for unexpected expenses, such as when something breaks down and needs replacing – these are savings.

Budgeting will help you to keep track of what you are spending and help you avoid spending money you don't have. It will also help you to decide whether you can afford to buy something you like.

How does it work?

When working out your budget, list all the money you have incoming each month and then list all the things you regularly spend money on. You can then put some money aside in savings to help cover unexpected costs like repairs and long-term goals like holidays. Spending can be regular fixed expenses, variable expenses or one-off expenses.

- Fixed expenses can be for items like rent or utility bills for gas, electricity, council tax, water, phone, house and personal insurance.
- Variable expenses such as for items like food, things for the house, maintenance, entertainment, clothing, haircuts and transport.
- Unexpected costs/long term goals such as for fixing leaks, boiler repairs or holidays.

When budgeting, you should:

- claim the benefits you are entitled to
- look at a price comparison website to make sure you are not overpaying for a service
- make shopping lists and choose where you shop
- save energy to reduce bills
- avoid paying estimated bills for gas and electricity or get a smart meter
- open a bank account.

Links

Guide to managing your money

<https://www.moneyadvice.service.org.uk/en/articles/beginners-guide-to-managing-your-money>

Community Advice and Law Service

<https://cals.uk.net>

LeicesterShire Citizens Advice (Leicester)

<http://www.leicscab.org.uk>



Money

Opening a Bank Account

2

Why is this important?

Having a bank account can help you manage your money. You will need to have a bank account to be paid if you get a job or to receive any benefits.

By law once you are over the age of 16, you can make decisions for yourself (unless it is proven that you lack mental capacity). This includes looking after your own money and bank accounts.

How does it work?

To open a bank account, you will need to complete an application either on the internet, over the phone or in person. The form will ask for your name, address, details of your employer if you have one and how much money you expect to pay into the account each month. If you have additional needs, the bank should offer you appropriate support if you need it. This might include:

- providing information and letters in an easy read format, braille or larger font
- using different forms of ID to open an account
- using a chip and signature card if you might find it hard to remember a PIN number.

There are different types of accounts that may be appropriate for a young person with additional needs.

- A basic current account – this is an account with limits (to stop you going overdrawn)
- A joint account – if you have mental capacity, you can agree to have a joint account with someone who supports you such as a parent or carer. This allows either of you to access the account and take money out.
- A third-party mandate – if you have mental capacity, you can agree for someone who supports you such as a parent or carer to help manage your account.
- A Post Office card account – these are accounts that can only be used to receive payments of benefits, state pension and tax credits. You can nominate someone to have access to a Post Office account. (The government wants to phase these accounts out and these will all be closed in late 2021.)

When will this happen?

You can open your own bank account from age 16. Some banks allow children to have current accounts from age 11 but these have to be opened by parents or carers and have certain restrictions. It is a good idea to have your own bank account before you turn 18 as any benefits you claim must be paid directly to you rather than via your parents' account.

The role of parents and carers

Parents and carers can support you to open an account at a suitable point before you turn 18. If you need support to manage your money and you have capacity you may choose one of the options outlined above. However, it is important to remember that when you turn 18, your money becomes yours and should not be included in the household income. If you lack capacity, your parents or carers may consider applying for lasting power of attorney. There is more information on this in the legal section of this guide.



Money

Direct Payments

2

What is this about?

A direct payment (DP) is money given to you by social care and/or the NHS if they have assessed you need help. You can use it to buy services that meet your needs instead of receiving services directly from social care or the NHS. A direct payment can be used for services such as to buy a short break activity, to employ a personal assistant or buy services from an agency. You can receive DP:

- if you are a parent/carer for a disabled child under 16 who is eligible for social care support
- if you are a young person with a disability aged 16 years and over and assessed by the council as needing care and support to promote your independence.

A DP gives you choice and control over how your care and support is arranged and provided. You may be able to use your direct payment to pay for the same services you received as a child when you turn 18.

How does it work?

If you currently receive support from social care and would like to switch to direct payments, then you should contact your social worker. Your social worker should discuss the option of direct payments with you if you are being assessed for support for the first time.

The amount of money you receive for a direct payment will be decided once the social worker assesses you. This assessment will be used to calculate a personal budget and the amount of money required to meet your needs. Then you can decide whether to receive this as a direct payment.

A direct payment can be paid via:

- a pre-paid card (PPC) - this is a pre-loaded card which works in a similar way to a bank debit card, or
- through an agency - if you choose to use an agency, you will still have choice and control over who provides care and support. The agency will complete the forms on your behalf to show what they have spent money on.

Who is involved?

For more information about direct payments, you can speak to your social worker.

The role of parents and carers

If you are under 16, your parent/carer will receive and manage the direct payment. Once you have turned 16, provided you have capacity, you will receive the direct payment. However, parents/carers can support you in deciding what care and support you might wish to arrange.

Links

More information on DP can be found on the **Local Offer** if you under the age of 18. Or on the **Leicester City Council website** for those aged 18 and over.

Parental Responsibility



What is this about?

Parental responsibility means the legal rights, duties, powers, responsibilities and authority a person has for a child and their property. Legally, parental responsibility comes to an end when a young person reaches the age of 18.

As you approach adulthood, you are encouraged to become more involved in decisions about your life. It is important that you, your parent/carers and professionals working with you understand how your parent/carers' role will change as you become an adult.

How does it work?

When you turn 18 and legally become an adult, you have the right to make your own decisions. This is where you have capacity to do so and should be supported to do so wherever possible. These can be small decisions such as the activities you want to do on a given day or big decisions such as where you want to live or what medical treatment to receive.

The law also recognises that you may not be able to make your own decisions. If you are unable to make your own decision because you do not have the mental capacity to do so, other people have to decide what is in your 'best interests'. Family members can continue to be involved in making decisions about you in your best interests if you lack capacity.

However, this will not automatically be the case in all aspects of your life and parents/carers may need to apply to make decisions about specific aspects of your life.

There is more information about capacity and the way young people without capacity can be supported elsewhere in this guide in the sections on:

- Appointeeship
- Court of Protection
- Deputyship
- Lasting Power of Attorney
- Mental Capacity Act

When does this change?

Parental responsibility legally ends when you reach the age of 18, but you can continue to have your parents involved as much as you want.



Legal Mental Capacity Act

3

What is this about?

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 sets out what should happen when people are unable to make one or more decisions for themselves. It explains the roles that different people have for making decisions, including family or carers. Some decisions related to mental capacity may need to go to the Court of Protection. This is a court that specifically makes decisions in this area.

The Mental Capacity Act says that adults have the right to make decisions for themselves (even if other people don't agree with them). Unless they are not able to make that decision due to their illness or disability. It notes how professionals should decide whether someone can make a decision and what they should do if the person cannot make that decision.

Why is this important?

Every person has the right to make their own decisions unless it is assessed that they can't (when they 'lack capacity'). If you cannot make a decision, then a decision has to be made 'in your best interest'.

Some people will be able to make some decisions but not others. People working with you have to give you as much information and help as they can so you can make the decision.

How does it work?

If someone believes that you cannot make a decision, then a social worker has to assess whether you can:

- understand the important points that you need to in order to make the decision
- remember these important points
- balance the points to make a decision
- let other people know the decision.

If you cannot make the decision, then the people involved in this decision and the important people in your life should talk together and agree what would be the best thing to do for you. The decision should be in your best interest.

Who is involved?

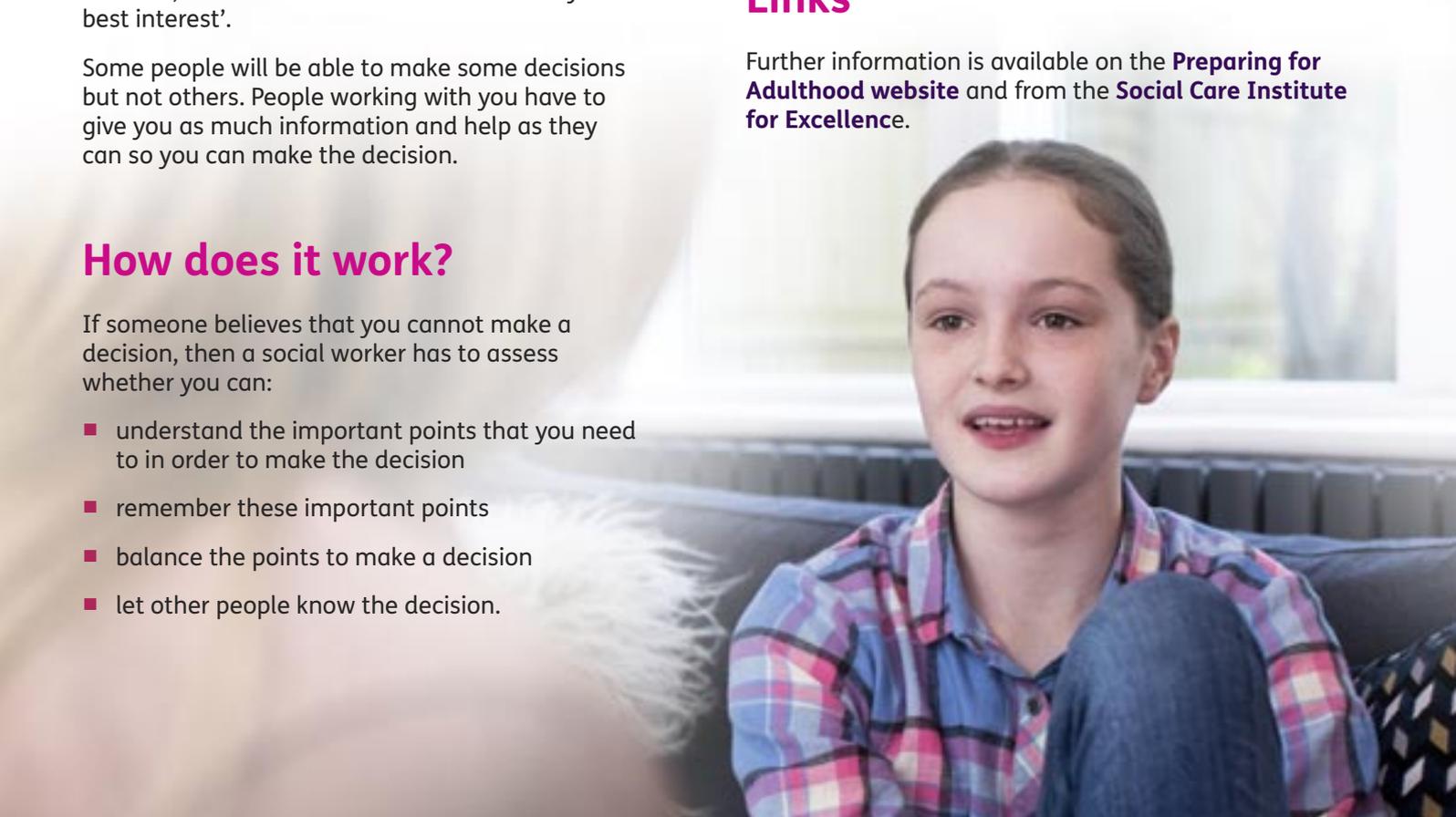
Anyone who is working with you who thinks that you may not be able to make a decision is responsible for assessing whether you can make that decision. They then work with other people who know you well to make a decision in your best interest.

The role of parents and carers

Parents can help you to understand the important points to make it easier for you to make a decision. If you cannot make the decision, then your parents will be very important in deciding what decision should be made and what is in your best interest.

Links

Further information is available on the **Preparing for Adulthood website** and from the **Social Care Institute for Excellence**.





Who is involved?

Everyone who comes into contact with children and families has a role to play. However, a range of individual organisations and agencies working with children and families have a legal responsibility to promote the wellbeing of children and protect them from harm. These include:

- council services such as children and adult social care services, public health, housing, sport, culture and leisure services, licensing authorities and youth services
- the police
- NHS organisations.

For adults, the Care Act 2014 places a duty on councils to have a system that aims to prevent abuse and neglect and stop it quickly when it happens. This can include NHS organisations and the police.

The role of parents and carers

Those with parental responsibility have a vital role in looking after the wellbeing of their child. They are often best placed to identify what is needed. Parents have an important role in helping their child stay safe.

Links

Safeguarding adults

<https://www.leicester.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/adult-social-care/what-support-do-you-need/safeguarding-adults-board/>

What is this about?

Safeguarding refers to the actions taken to protect vulnerable groups from harm. This applies to children as well as adults. The laws vary across different groups and change when a young person turns 18.

It is the responsibility of councils, health services and the police to make sure they are keeping vulnerable children and adults who may be at risk of abuse or neglect safe. Abuse can be physical, financial, emotional, sexual and institutional.

How does it work?

For children:

The Children Acts of 1989 and 2004 specify what services the council should provide to children who are identified as 'children in need'. They can make enquiries if they believe a child in their area has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm. A child-centred approach is fundamental to safeguarding and promoting the wellbeing of every child. Information on how organisations do this is available on the **Family Information Service website**.

For adults:

If the local authority believes an adult may have been abused, they will ask that person what they want to happen. They will assess whether the person has been harmed and work with them to agree how to protect them from being harmed again. They will consider the person's ability to agree to support and whether the harm could affect other people. There is more information about keeping adults safe from abuse and how organisations work to do this on the **Leicester City Council website**.

Legal Court of Protection

3

What is this about?

The Court of Protection is a specialist court which was set up under the Mental Capacity Act 2005 to help people who do not have the mental capacity to make certain decisions. It has the power to make decisions for people about their money, property, health or welfare.

The Court can also give these powers to someone else like a relative or close friend who can manage their loved one's affairs. This usually happens if there is a need to make decisions on a long-term basis. If the Court gives these powers to someone else, they are called a deputy.

How does it work?

The government makes decisions on financial or welfare matters for you if you cannot make decisions at the time they need to be made (when you 'lack mental capacity'). When making a decision for someone who lacks capacity, the Court should act in their best interest.

This isn't the same as deciding what you would have wanted. But it takes into account what your wishes were when you had capacity. It also considers the views of your close family or carers.

Who is involved?

Anyone can apply to the Court on behalf of someone who lacks capacity or who they think lacks capacity. Often it will be a family member, an NHS trust or a council.

When does this apply?

The Mental Capacity Act applies to anyone over the age of 16. Decisions about your capacity and best interests are made in the same way as for any adult. If legal proceedings concerning someone aged 16-17 are being heard in Court, the Court of Protection may refer the decision to the Family Courts. Or the Family Courts may refer the decision to the Court of Protection.

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLs)

The Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards aim to make sure that people in care homes and hospitals are looked after in a way that does not inappropriately restrict their freedom (legally this is called a Deprivation of Liberty).

The law sets out a process that hospitals and care homes must follow if they believe it is in the person's best interest to restrict their freedom. It is then the role of a social worker to assess whether the deprivation of liberty is in the person's best interest. They must then apply to the Court of Protections for a DoLS order.



Legal Appointeeship



out an application form with them. If DWP agrees with the application, the appointee will be informed that they have been formally appointed to act for you.

A social worker may also carry out a Mental Capacity Assessment to assess whether you have capacity to manage your own finances.

Who is involved?

Usually, a relative or friend will apply to become an appointee for you. If there is nobody available or suitable to become an appointee for you, the council's finance team may take on this role. Or they'd apply to the Court of Protection for a professional person to be appointed.

When will this happen?

A parent/carer can claim their child's benefits until they turn 16. Once you reach 16, you may be able to claim certain benefits in your own right. If you lack the capacity to manage your own finances, a parent/carer should become your appointee if possible. This should be discussed before your 16th birthday to make sure there is time to complete an application.

Links

Find your pension centre

<https://www.gov.uk/find-pension-centre>

What is this about?

If you cannot manage your finances, for example due to a learning disability or mental ill health – another person can become an appointee to look after your financial affairs.

An appointee is responsible for managing a person's benefits, paying bills and managing a small and limited amount of savings in case of unforeseen circumstances. They must also spend the benefit (which is paid directly to them) in your best interest. Appointeeship may be the best course of action if you don't have a lot of savings, you are in receipt of benefits and do not have any other sources of income.

How does this work?

To become an appointee, it is necessary to complete an application. Who you contact to apply to depends on the benefit.

- Attendance Allowance – contact the **attendance allowance helpline**
- Disability Living Allowance – contact the **disability benefits helpline**
- State Pension – contact your local **pension centre**
- Personal Independence Payment (PIP) – contact the **PIP new claims line**
- All other benefits – contact **Jobcentre Plus**

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) will then visit you to assess if an appointee is needed. They will also assess whether the appointee is suitable and will fill

Legal Deputyship

3

What is this about?

If you 'lack mental capacity', someone can apply to be your deputy. This may be because you cannot make a decision for yourself at the time it needs to be made. You may still be able to make decisions for yourself at certain times. You may lack mental capacity because, for example:

- you have had a serious brain injury or illness
- you have severe learning disabilities.

The Court of Protection will authorise a deputy to make decisions on your behalf. Anyone over 18 can apply to be your Court of Protection deputy. Deputies are usually your relatives or friends but if no one is able to act as a deputy, the Court can appoint a panel deputy.

How does it work?

Anyone considering applying to be a deputy should first check they fit the requirements to be a deputy. They can then send the application forms to the Court of Protection and pay the application fee.

There are two types of deputy:

- Property and financial affairs deputy – who will do things like pay your bills or organise your pension
- Personal welfare deputy – who will make decisions about medical treatment and how you are looked after

You can apply to be just one type of deputy or both. If appointed, the deputy will get a court order saying **what they can and cannot do**. The Court of Protection will check:

- whether you need a deputy or **some other kind of help**
- there are no objections to the appointment.

Who is involved?

Your social worker can support with applying for deputyship. Once a deputy is appointed, the Office of the Public Guardian advises and supports deputies and protects people who lack mental capacity from abuse or exploitation.

When will this happen?

You can have a deputy from the age of 16. The Mental Capacity Act states that from 16 a young person is assumed to have capacity to make their own decisions. Therefore, if it is appropriate a parent or carer may wish to consider applying for deputyship before you turn 16.

The role of parents and carers

Parents and carers can support you to make a decision about whether to apply for deputyship. Should you decide to apply, parents or carers may become your deputy.

Links

Deputy responsibilities

<https://www.gov.uk/become-deputy/responsibilities>

Make decisions for someone

<https://www.gov.uk/make-decisions-for-someone>



Lasting Power of Attorney



Who is involved?

If you wish to grant someone lasting power of attorney, you need to choose who your attorney will be. The attorney needs to be 18 or over and could be a relative, a friend or a professional, such as a solicitor. When applying for power of attorney, you may need support from a family member or a solicitor to complete the application.

When will this happen?

To apply for LPA, you must be 18 or over and have mental capacity (the ability to make your own decisions).

LPA is generally used when you are facing an illness or believe your mental capacity might deteriorate and want to make sure you have someone that you trust in place to handle your affairs.

The role of parents and carers

Parents and carers can support you in deciding whether LPA is an appropriate choice. If you decide to apply for LPA, your parents or carers may be the person you choose to be your attorney(s).

What is this about?

A lasting power of attorney (LPA) is a legal document that lets you (the 'donor') appoint one or more people (known as 'attorneys') to help you make decisions or to make decisions on your behalf.

There are two types of LPA:

- Property and affairs LPA – this gives the attorney(s) the power to make decisions about your financial and property matters, such as selling a house or managing a bank account. The attorney(s) can make a decision on your behalf, even if you have the mental capacity to do so, unless you have stated otherwise.
- Personal welfare LPA – this gives the attorney(s) the power to make decisions about your health and personal welfare, such as day-to-day care, medical treatment, or where you should live. The attorney(s) can only make a decision if you lack the mental capacity to do so at the time the decision needs to be made.

LPA is different from deputyship because an attorney is appointed by an individual while they have capacity in preparation for when they lose capacity. A deputy is appointed by the Court of Protection once an individual lacks capacity.

How does it work?

You can only set up a power of attorney while you still have the ability to evaluate information and make decisions for yourself, known as 'mental capacity'.

It is an ongoing arrangement with no expiry date that will allow another person to make decisions on your behalf. An LPA has to be registered with the government, through the Office of the Public Guardian.



Legal Marriage - Capacity and Consent

3

What is this about?

Before a marriage is recognised by the government, there must be consent or agreement between two people to be married. For consent to exist, both must agree to the marriage and neither should be forced into it.

Capacity generally refers to the mental ability of one or both of the people to agree to become spouses. Both must be of 'sound' mind and have capacity to agree to the marriage. Not all forms of mental illness or disability stop someone from marriage.

How does it work?

If you have a learning disability and have the capacity to make decisions, you have the same right to have the opportunity as anyone else.

It is important that you are supported to get married if you wish to do so and are not put under any pressure to marry. For consent to be legally valid, you must have the capacity to make the decision and have been given enough information to make the decision. And not have been under any pressure or threat of harm.

A marriage of someone with a learning disability who has capacity to consent and gives that consent freely is recognised as a valid marriage. This includes marriages arranged with the support of the family.

Who is involved?

Family or professionals who support you can ask for a Mental Capacity Assessment to be done. This may happen if there is a 'reasonable belief' that you do not have the capacity at the present time, to make a decision about specific and important matters in your life. The assessment is usually done by a social worker, or by a clinical psychologist or psychiatrist in the local community learning disability team.

Why is this important?

The professionals will want to protect you if there are concerns about vulnerability and safety.





If you have a disability, the GP practice must make it as easy for you to use health services as it is for people who are not disabled. This is called making reasonable adjustments. These could be things like:

- making sure there is wheelchair access
- providing easy read appointment letters
- giving you a priority appointment if you find it difficult waiting in your GP surgery or hospital
- longer appointments if you need more time with a doctor or nurse to make sure you understand the information you are given.

What is this about?

GP practices are the first point of contact with the NHS for most patients. A GP practice is a team of health professionals led by doctors called GPs, who look after the physical, mental and social aspects of your health. Registering with a GP practice will allow you to access a wide range of services, including:

- consultations and advice about your health
- prescriptions for medicines
- tests to diagnose what is wrong with you
- a referral to a specialist service
- monitoring and care for any long-term health problems
- screening, vaccinations and advice to help prevent health problems or diagnosing them as early as possible.

If you have a learning disability, you can ask to be put on your GP's learning disability register. From age 14, you can have an annual health check with your GP.

How does it work?

You may need to consider changing GP if you move home, for example if you move out from your parents' or carers' home when you become an adult. To register for a new GP, you should find a practice in your local area and contact them to ask permission to join. They will usually ask for details such as your name and address, date of birth, NHS number (if you know it) and other information, such as the name and address of your previous GP.

Who is involved?

At the GP practice, you may see a variety of health professionals depending on the medical problem. These include a GP, a practice nurse, an advanced nurse practitioner, a healthcare assistant or a clinical pharmacist.

The role of parents and carers

Parents and carers can support you by making sure you are registered with a GP practice. They can support you with filling forms if you need to transfer to a different practice. They may also support you by attending appointments with you if you wish.



Health Continuing Healthcare (CHC)

4

What is this about?

Some people with long-term complex health needs can receive free social care arranged and funded by the NHS instead of being funded by the council. This is known as NHS continuing healthcare or CHC.

Before you turn 18, you may be receiving a continuing care package from the NHS. This works in a similar way to CHC but there is a difference in how needs are assessed. This means that just because you are receiving a continuing care package as a child, it does not mean you will automatically receive CHC as an adult.

If you have additional needs caused by a long-term health condition, you may qualify for CHC. This means that the NHS will be responsible for arranging your care. And your care will be fully funded by the NHS. This means that the local authority will not fund your care and that you will not be asked to contribute towards the cost of your care.

How does it work?

To receive NHS continuing healthcare, you must be assessed by a team of healthcare professionals (a multidisciplinary team). First, a nurse, doctor, other healthcare professional or social worker will

complete an initial checklist assessment. This checklist decides whether you meet the criteria for a full CHC assessment.

A multidisciplinary team (MDT) then undertake a full assessment. The team is made up of a minimum of two professionals from different healthcare professions. The MDT should usually include both health and social care professionals who are already involved in your care. The team will look at all your care needs and relate them to:

- what help you need
- how complex your needs are
- how intense your needs can be
- how unpredictable your needs are, including any risks to your health if the right care isn't provided at the right time.

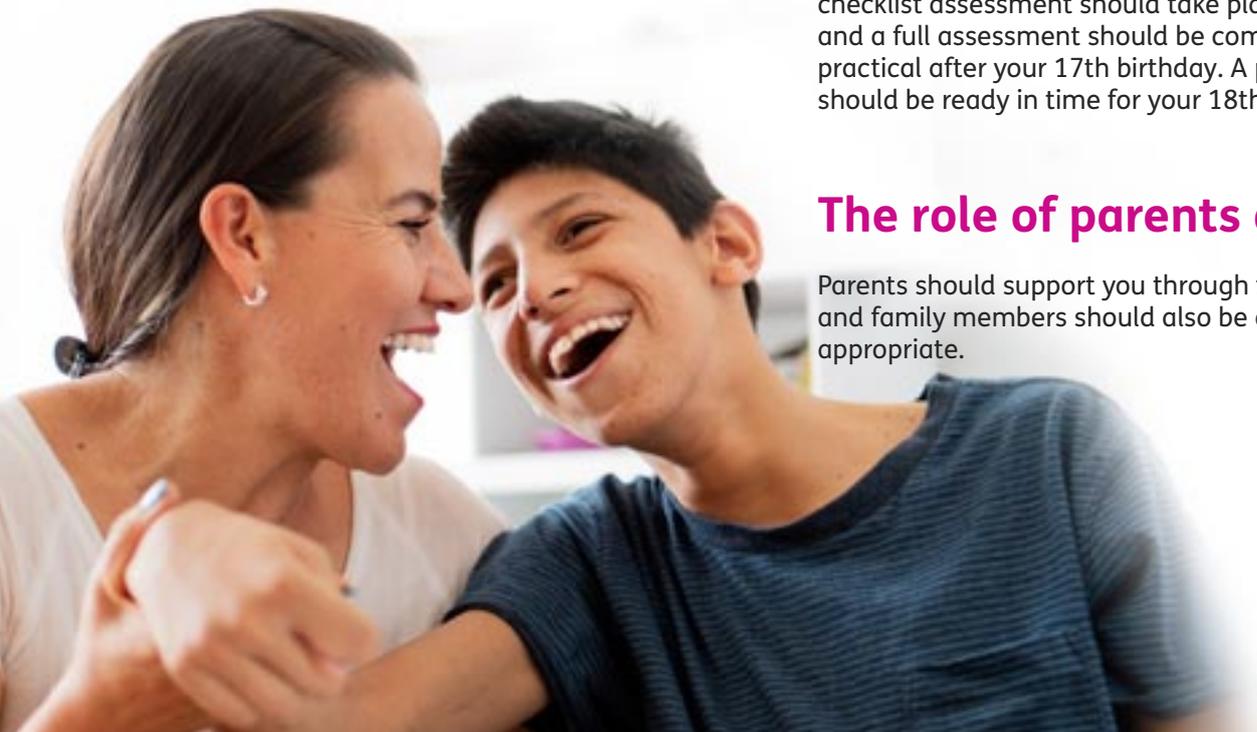
You should be fully involved in the assessment process, kept informed throughout and have your views about your needs and support considered. Carers and family members should also be consulted where appropriate.

When should this happen?

NHS continuing healthcare is for adults so you can only receive CHC when over the age of 18. Where it is likely that you will need continuing healthcare as an adult, children's health services should make the relevant people aware from age 14. A formal referral for an initial checklist assessment should take place when you are 16 and a full assessment should be completed as soon as is practical after your 17th birthday. A package of care should be ready in time for your 18th birthday.

The role of parents and carers

Parents should support you through this process. Carers and family members should also be consulted where appropriate.



Health – Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)



If you qualify for referral to AMH services, the CAMHS clinician will complete the referral to AMH. They will also complete a 'Transition to Adult Services' plan with your input, to help prepare you for transition into AMH services. You will be invited to a joint-transition appointment with your carer, CAMHS clinician and a clinician from AMH services before your 18th birthday. CAMHS may see you once or twice more, then discharge you to AMH services.

Who is involved?

You will be supported by doctors, nurses and therapists who specialise in child or adult mental health.

What is this about?

CAMHS stands for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. They are an NHS service that aim to treat young people who suffer with emotional, behavioural or mental health difficulties. In Leicester these services are provided by Leicestershire Partnership NHS Trust (often known as LPT).

CAMHS are provided until you are 18, after that you will be discharged from CAMHS. Some young people may move into Adult Mental Health (AMH) services while others will be well enough to not require services as an adult.

How does it work?

As you approach 17½ years of age, conversations will take place regarding transition from CAMHS to Adult Mental Health (AMH) services. The CAMHS clinician will make an initial phone call to the AMH clinician to discuss whether you are likely to qualify for AMH services.

If you don't qualify for referral to AMH services, you will complete your care with the CAMHS team and be discharged to the care of your GP around your 18th birthday. You may be referred to low level mental support that is available for everyone. More information on this is included in the section called non-statutory mental health services.

The role of parents and carers

Parents and carers can support you by attending appointments with you if you wish.



Health

Non-Statutory Mental Health Services

What is this about?

If you receive Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), it is not always likely that you will have an adult mental health worker when you turn 18. But there are other services that could help. There are several organisations in Leicester that can support people who have mental health problems.

What services are available?

Let's Talk – Wellbeing or Open Mind

Your GP can refer you to a counselling service called Let's Talk – Wellbeing or Open Mind. They can help if you have stress, anxiety or depression. This is available to young people aged 16 or over.

Life Links

The Richmond Fellowship provide a service called Life Links. They run peer support groups, provide 1-1 advice, signpost to other services that may be useful, and can support you to start going out into the community.

Life Links work with people aged 18 and over and anyone can contact them to ask for support. Their website is <https://www.rflifelinks.co.uk> and their free phone is 0800 0234 575.

Turning Point

Turning Point is an organisation that anyone can use if they are upset and want to talk. This service is available day and night. You can also arrange to meet and talk face to face if required. They work with people age 18 and over. Their website is <http://wellbeing.turning-point.co.uk/leicestershirementalhealth/our-services> and their phone number is 0808 8003 302.



Health Sexual Health Services



If you are between the ages of 13 and 16, your details will be treated confidentially, and nobody in your household will be contacted without your permission. However, staff may encourage you to talk to your parents, guardian or another trusted adult.

Who is involved?

The CHOICES team consists of dedicated professionals with experience of supporting you through your sexual health journey. You can also speak to your GP and some pharmacies about sexual health.

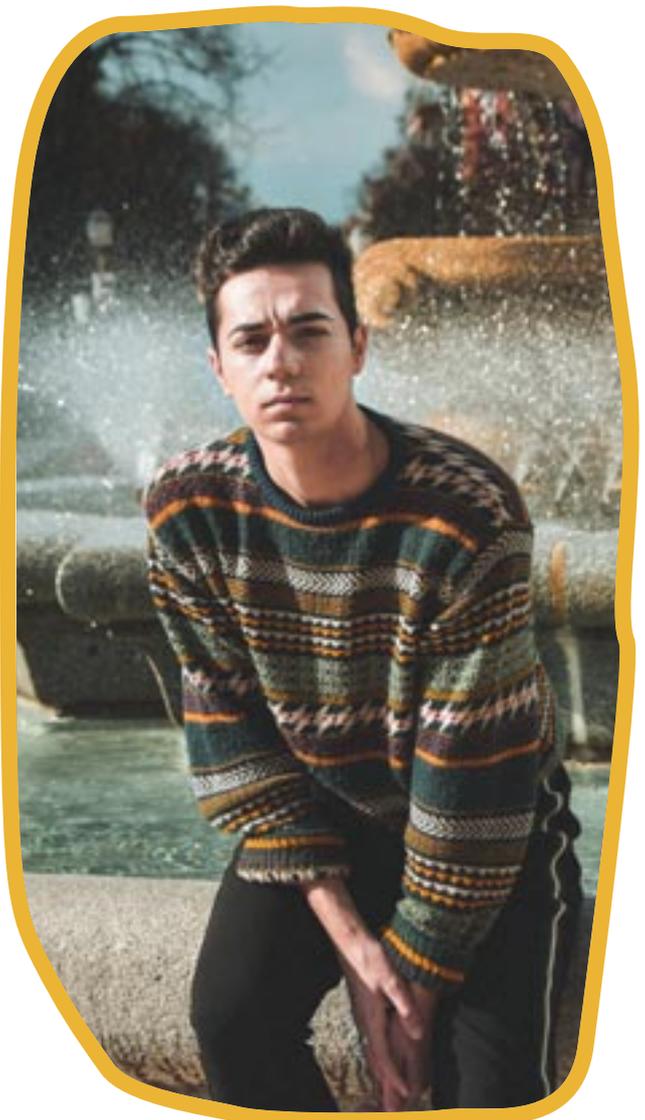
What is this about?

It is important young people understand what services are available to them to ensure they take care of their sexual health. Sexual health services are free and available to everyone, regardless of sex, age, ethnicity and sexual orientation. In Leicester, these services are provided by the Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust. They provide a free, confidential and friendly service for young people aged 24 and under, called CHOICES. The service offers:

- Testing and treatment for sexual infections
- Contraceptive pills
- Contraceptive injection
- Contraceptive implant
- Emergency contraceptive pill (morning after pill)
- Free pregnancy testing, and referral for abortion (or to a midwife)
- Free condoms

How does it work?

CHOICES offer a number of clinics in and around Leicester at different locations through the week including at colleges and universities. Sometimes it is possible to book appointments, but you can also drop in and wait to be seen. You can also phone in to discuss your sexual health. More information about the service is available on the **CHOICES website**.



What is this about?

Moving home is a significant life event and can cause a lot of stress and anxiety. To ensure a smooth move into new accommodation, it is always important to plan in advance, with support.

There are many options available for when you need accommodation. These include: independent accommodation, supported living, Shared Lives and residential care. More information on each of these options is available below.

What options are available?

Supported living

Supported living is accommodation with extra support for people with eligible adult social care needs. It provides more opportunities for independence and choice compared to residential care. You would have a tenancy agreement for the accommodation and choose a support provider.

This service would encourage you to gain or maintain as much independence as possible. Support can involve prompting or enabling you to carry out activities such as:

- household tasks including laundry, budgeting, food shopping, cleaning, cooking
- developing social skills and maintaining relationships
- accessing employment, volunteering or other community groups
- accessing the community through traveling with support or independently, including planning travel
- tasks related to your health, support and benefits including contacting other agencies, doctors, landlord
- taking medicine as prescribed by health professionals
- maintaining safety and security and preparing for any emergencies
- trying new activities and encouraging independence.

Support plans are individualised to ensure that your needs are supported adequately. Support is described as 'onsite' or 'floating'. Onsite support is provided by a provider who is onsite (usually working out of a staff office) and provides individual support. Floating support is provided by workers who arrives at the property to supply individual hours. There are many different types of supported living accommodation, these include:

- Self-contained flats with shared access to a communal space and onsite support, in addition to individual support. These schemes can have provision for daytime only support, sleep-in support or waking night support.
- Self-contained flats with individual floating support that are stand alone, in a cluster or near a scheme with onsite support.
- A shared house with communal facilities, onsite and/or individual floating support.

Shared lives

Shared lives is a service offering young people the choice to live with a family that will provide their care and support. There are also opportunities for long term respite and day care/community support from the home of a shared lives carer.

Shared lives is a regulated service registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and the carers undergo rigorous assessments before becoming self-employed shared lives carers. The carers come from all walks of life – they may be individuals, couples or families in the local community. They are supported in their roles by the dedicated shared lives team.

The shared lives team is responsible for assessing, monitoring, offering support, and providing training to all carers.

Residential care

Some young people may require a level of support that cannot be delivered in their own home or in a supported living setting. Residential care homes provide long-term care to adults who require a high level of continuous support within a care setting. Residential care homes provide accommodation and support with tasks of daily living such as washing, dressing, meals, taking medicines, going to the toilet.

We are committed to supporting people to stay in independent accommodation wherever possible but recognise that in some cases residential care may be more appropriate.

Independent accommodation

This is accommodation for people who may not have support needs. This can include accommodation that is:

- purchased and owned by you
- owned/rented by a family member
- rented from the council or a housing association
- rented from a private landlord.

If you move into independent accommodation, you may be able to have support provided to you in your home. Currently, if you live in independent accommodation you can:

- receive a direct payment so that you can choose the support provider
- choose a support provider from the current Supported Living Framework (your social worker can help you choose a provider).

Who is involved?

The following may be able to help you consider your options.

- Children's services
- Adult services – transition team
- Supported living team
- Shared lives team



When will this happen?

It is important to think about and discuss housing needs from age 14 onwards so you can start to think about what is best for you and what skills you will need. Remember that to take on a housing tenancy, you must be 18 years old or above. Also, adult residential care placements are only available to those aged 18 or above.

How does it work?

A social worker would work with you to assess which is the most appropriate accommodation to meet your needs. Specialist supported living or shared lives team members may also support you with the transition to these types of accommodation.

If you would like to live in independent accommodation, you will need to complete a housing application for Leicester City Council (or for another local council if you are living outside of Leicester) or for a housing association. You could also look for privately rented accommodation. Your family, social worker or other professionals working with you can support you in this.

What are the costs of moving into new accommodation?

Depending on the type of accommodation that you move in to, you are likely to have costs that you may not have had previously.

If you move into independent accommodation, supported living and shared lives where you take on a tenancy or license agreement, you will need to pay rent and utility bills. These could include gas, water, electricity and council tax. You may also have other costs such as for assistive technology, furniture, appliances, gardening and maintenance services or other service charges. You may also have to pay towards the cost of your care and support.

You may be eligible for housing benefit to help towards the cost of rent so consider this when thinking about finding your own home.





Links:

Apply for housing

<https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-community/housing/apply-for-housing>

HomeChoice housing portal

https://housingportal.leicester.gov.uk/pls/houlive_se/fserv/f?p=SSRVCL:200

Tour of HomeChoice video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y6KaopW8D1E>

List of housing associations

<https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-community/housing/apply-for-housing/housing-associations>

Adult Social Care MyChoice directory

<https://mychoice.leicester.gov.uk>



The role of parents and carers

Preparation and planning are key to a smooth transition so parents can support you with some of the following before you turn 18. This will help you to be ready and feel more confident about moving home.

- Get photographic identification – this will be needed to apply for accommodation
- Maximise independence living skills – knowing how to cook, clean, decorate and maintain your home and respond to emergencies
- Supporting choice – ask questions and have discussions with family, friends and any professionals
- Develop money skills – learning how to budget is key to managing your own home
- Prepare to move – acquiring items for your new house, however small, will help to make your new accommodation feel like a home

Education, Employment and Training Education and Training Options

6

What is this about?

You must be in education or training until at least your 18th birthday. There is information below on the options available. After the age of 18, you may decide to continue your education or you may choose options that help you develop independence, life or work skills.

How does it work?

A Connexions adviser will work with you to identify your interests and ideas for the future and talk about the options that you might like to explore further. They will support you with information, advice and guidance about options and practical support to make important decisions. You will probably have several meetings with your Connexions adviser to ensure that the plan for transition is appropriate to your needs.

Who is involved?

Connexions SEND advisers are trained to work with young people with learning difficulties and disabilities. If you have an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan), Connexions may be able to support you until you are 25. Connexions work together with a range of partners in education, social care, health and the voluntary sector to identify opportunities and pathways that will support your transition from school into adulthood.

When will this happen?

It is important for you to start to consider your options a few years before you leave school. A Connexions adviser will arrange meetings with you and your parents/carers and may attend EHCP reviews from Year 9 to find out more about you and to answer any questions.



What options are available?

Going to college

There are a range of courses available at college which include A-levels, vocational options and learning for independence. There are many different types of vocational qualifications in a wide range of subjects from entry level to Level 3 (equivalent to an A-level). You may need additional support at college and might benefit from learning to become more independent by learning life skills as well as gaining some work skills.

Apprenticeships

If you have a career in mind, then it may be worth considering if an apprenticeship is the right pathway for you. You will need to be able to work at Level 1 in English and Maths to qualify for an apprenticeship. The benefits of an apprenticeship include gaining an insight into the job you may be interested in, developing skills and

Traineeship

If you don't feel ready for an apprenticeship, you could consider a traineeship. Traineeships are designed to help young people who want to get an apprenticeship or job, but don't have the appropriate skills, experience or qualifications. Traineeships aim to prepare you for your future careers by helping you to become 'work ready'.

Supported internship

A supported internship (SI) may be suitable if you want to work but need support in the workplace and won't be able to achieve the qualifications needed for an apprenticeship. In an SI you will spend most of the time in a work placement and some of the time gaining qualifications in English, Maths and employability. Some of the colleges in Leicester and Leicestershire offer SIs and there is a plan to make some available through Leicester City Council if you are still at school.

Higher education

If a young person is 18+ and has gained Level 3 or equivalent qualifications, you may consider going to university. There are a range of courses and qualifications at university that you may be interested in finding out about, as well as what support is available if you have additional needs.



Education, Employment and Training

Employment Options

What is this about?

As you plan your transition into adulthood, you could consider various types of employment. Taking on paid employment is an important step towards adulthood and independence. Employment can help develop your skills and confidence. Through employment you will gain confidence in your abilities for future career progression and a better quality of life.

How does this work?

You can receive support tailored to your needs and interests to help you reach your preferred employment goals. To reach your goals some of the things to consider are:

- Confidence building
- Travel training
- Further training and education
- Volunteering/work experience

- CV writing
- Interview training
- Apprenticeships
- In work support

Who is involved?

Your school will provide you with contact information or arrange for a representative to visit you at school to help you consider your best options.

Your family and those who support you can help you plan and consider your options.

Organisations that you may get help from include:

- The Enablement service at Leicester City Council (if referred by an adult social worker)
- Connexions
- Local Job Centre
- Schools and colleges

When will this happen?

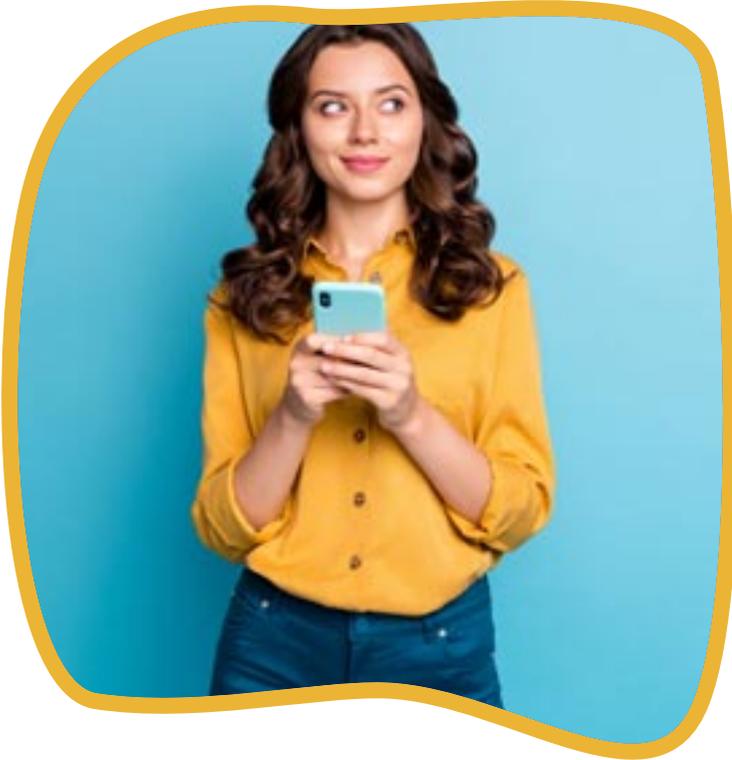
Year 9 and above is the best time for you to start looking at your options. Focus on your preferences and interests to help plan your future goals. You can begin working from 16 but must still be in education or training. Once you are 18, you can work full time.

The role of parents and carers

Parents and carers' support regarding the employment process is an important part of planning ahead. The people who support you may be vital in supporting the choices you wish to make and the opportunities available to you. They can support you by ensuring that your wishes are listened to and that you are at the centre of the planning and decision making.



Preparing for Independence Leaving Home



Who is involved?

Besides your family, teachers or social worker, there are also voluntary agencies that can help you develop independence skills, such as:

- **Flat 108** at the YMCA
- **Voluntary Action Leicester**
- **The Princes Trust**

When will this happen?

When considering independent living it is important to start having conversations about it early, usually from age 14. This allows time to explore the options available to you. Also, to identify the skills and learning you will need to be able to live independently.

The role of parents and carers

Families can help you learn the skills that you need to be able to live independently from a young age. These can be things like cleaning, planning and cooking meals and washing clothes. It is important that parents and carers are included in the conversations as they are often most familiar with your aspirations, skills and abilities.

Links

Flat 108

<https://www.leicesterymca.co.uk/youth-community/our-work/young-people-with-disabilities>

Voluntary Action Leicester home and life skills

<https://valonline.org.uk/valuesactivity/home-and-life-skills>

The Princes Trust budget planner

<https://www.princes-trust.org.uk/help-for-young-people/tools-resources/money-management/budget-planner>

What is this about?

As you approach adulthood, you may start to think about leaving home to live independently. This does not mean that you must live on your own. For the different housing options available see the accommodation section in this guide. To live independently, you and those working with you should consider the skills you will need to learn to live independently.

How does it work?

You can develop these skills in several ways. Special schools and colleges offer independent living skills courses, and these can be included in your EHCP as outcomes. There are also other agencies that can support you to learn these skills such as **Flat 108 at the YMCA**.

Preparing for Independence Travel and Transport

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What is this about?

When you move into adulthood, you may want to involve yourself in other activities. These could include further education and learning, voluntary, apprenticeship or work opportunities. Or even exploring social opportunities around the city. You will need to consider what travel options you can use to reach these.

You can travel as safely and independently as possible in different ways. This may include public transport such as trains or buses, learning to ride a bicycle or drive a car.

How does it work?

Your school will support you to explore what options are best for you and what you need to think about. So you and your family can make an informed and attainable choice. Topics to cover include personal safety and stranger danger, assessing risk, insurance, Motability schemes, the Highway Code and independent travel training.

Who is involved?

Your school will provide you with contact information or arrange for a representative to visit you at school to help you consider your best options.

You may choose to plan ahead with your family and with those who support you such as Connexions or the transitions team. The Employment-Enablement service has a range of contacts. They may also provide travel training to those who need it.

When will this happen?

Year 6 and above is the best time to begin looking at what the options are. Being able to travel to a destination will impact on the choices you make and the locations you look to for new opportunities.



Preparing for Independence

Social Life

What is this about?

Making friends and building relationships is an important part of planning your future. Having a network of support helps as you work towards your goals. Staying in touch with people as you move on is important.

You can consider what types of friendships and relationships you may want in the future. These could be employers, colleagues, a partner or new people in new environments. It is important to understand how these different relationships work. And to understand the different ways friendships can be sustained. This includes the safe use of social media and attending activities with others who enjoy the same things.

It is important to define boundaries and limits within different relationships. For example, you would not necessarily expect to socialise with your employer. But you may expect to socialise with a fellow learner or a colleague. It is also important for you to understand what a healthy relationship looks like and how you can remain safe when meeting new people.

How does it work?

You can make plans to stay in touch to maintain existing friendships. This can be done before transitioning into adulthood. You can make new friends through social groups, community activities or social gatherings and by understanding social boundaries. There are many activities that take place within community centres, local churches or other religious establishments across the city.

Think about the support you will have to travel to and from activities and what support you will need when there. A friend or family member who has an interest in the activity, or a personal assistant could support you. The Enablement service at Leicester City Council may also be able to provide support for a period of time to help you integrate and settle in.

When will this happen?

Arrangements to stay in touch with existing friends and the people you care about should be done in the last year of school. You should consider other social opportunities as part of planning for the future so that the activities you choose to do are available and accessible.

Who can help?

Once you have decided on the goals you want to achieve, there are various options of support available. For example, the Employment-Enablement service could help you understand relationships at work while supporting you to seek training, paid or voluntary employment. Family members or friends may enjoy supporting you to socialise and meet new people. Your school may also provide information and guidance around relationships, and what personal boundaries need to be in place to keep you safe and secure.

The role of parents and carers

Parents and carers play a vital role in supporting the development of healthy relationships and friendships. They may also be key to helping you sustain these. They can help you understand the barriers that you may face, communication and accessibility issues, and positively challenge where necessary – all important both in school and after leaving school. Vigilance around use of the internet and IT where used socially in and out of the home, may also fall to a parent or carer.



Preparing for Independence Getting Identification

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What is this about?

Forms of identity are required at different points in time and are an important part of planning for your future. Many of the options and opportunities you may wish to explore will require some form of identification. These provide evidence of who you are, when you were born and where you live. These can include a passport, birth certificate, driver's licence, National Insurance Number and national health number.

You may already have some forms of identification. It is important to find out what other documents you may need to get and when these might be needed. Such as for benefits, employment, education, training, accommodation and travel. If you were born abroad, it is important that you have the correct documentation to ensure you have the right to remain in the UK.

How does it work?

The people supporting you can help you find out what identification you may need in the future. Also, where their application forms can be located. Parents and carers or those who currently work with you can help you fill in the forms. You can work towards doing this independently using a range of tools. Such as tools that allow forms to be completed by voice control or by pre-populating an original secure format.

Who is involved?

Your school, your transition social worker if you have one or Connexions support worker will all be able to provide current templates of the different forms you may encounter.

The role of parents and carers

It is vital that parents and carers are aware of what forms might be required at each stage as you progress and develop. Be aware of how each option may impact on entitlements and benefits. Also, how the process of completing forms is made accessible.

Parents and carers could also be vital in promoting independence by utilising online applications and programmes or IT adaptations and support.

Links

Disability Identification Card

<https://www.did-card.co.uk/index.php>

UK passport service

<https://www.gov.uk/passport-services-disabled>

Acceptable documents for UK citizens

<http://wiki.cacert.org/AcceptableDocuments/UnitedKingdom>



The Transition Process

Marriage and Independence



The role of parents and carers

Your parents and carers can support you to explore the different elements of marriage. They can advise you and give you all the information you need. But once you reach the age of 18, it is your choice whether you want to get married.

Links

Sexuality and relationships FAQs

<https://www.mencap.org.uk/advice-and-support/relationships-and-sex/sexuality-and-relationships-faqs>

Marriage and disability benefits

<https://www.disability-benefits-help.org/blog/marriage-social-security-disability>

Marriage and married couple's allowance

<https://www.moneyadvice.service.org.uk/en/article/s/marriage-and-married-couples-allowance>

What is this about?

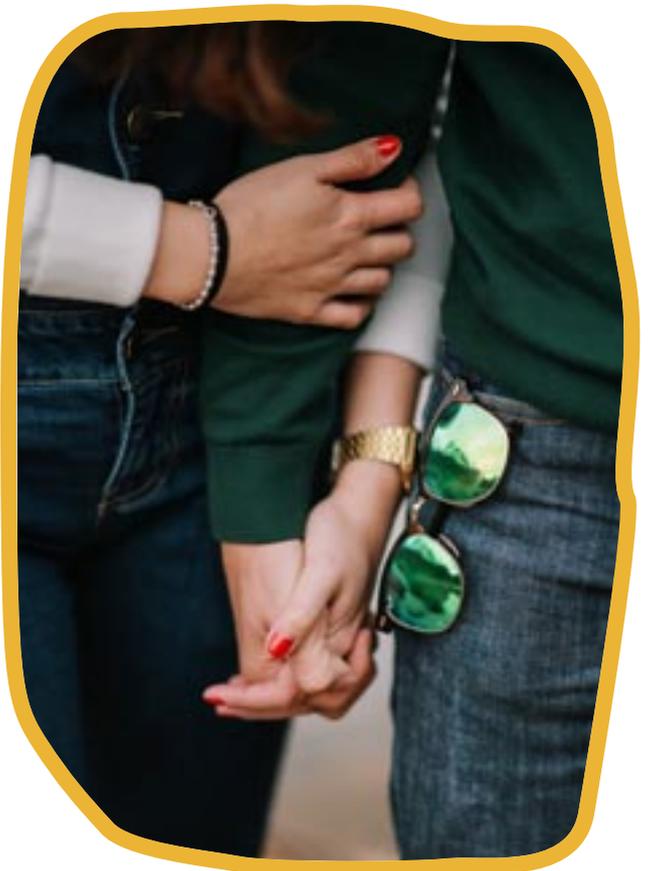
As you grow older, you may see friends and relatives enter a marriage. If you would like to get married, it is important that you understand what a marriage means and involves. Being married may change your benefits and you will be entitled to a marriage allowance. This can be discussed with an adviser. If you decide to get married, you will need proof of identification.

How does it work?

There is a process that needs to be followed when getting married. The couple getting married must give notice to the registry office in the area where they live. There is a cost involved and identification documents such as a passport, birth certificate and evidence of your address will be required.

When will this happen?

The topic can be discussed and taught as part of the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education part of the curriculum. It helps ensure that you are aware of your rights and feel safe and comfortable in relationships. The legal minimum age for marriage in the UK is 18.



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Published September 2020