

PfA Forum - Week 5

Personalisation & Person Centred Practice



The Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) team would like to thank everyone who posted on this week's forum. One of the reasons we have established this forum is to share information and direct young people, families and professionals to resources that will help them to understand the changes and to get involved in the developments in local areas. If there is anything that you feel we have not covered sufficiently or you have any further questions please contact us at info@preparingforadulthood.co.uk.

Person-centred practice is becoming more widely understood as being a critical element of effectively planning with young people and their families. Our work has included a lot of training for local areas both in terms of plan co-ordination, facilitation, key working and strategy. The pathfinders (and now other areas) have assumed person-centred practice as the starting point for developing EHC plans and have built person-centred, outcomes focused planning into their workforce development strategies.

Person-centred practice is something that will take time to embed as it is a very different way of working. However, we know that for young people to move into adulthood with employment, good health, independence and friends, relationships and community participation, person-centred practice and planning are essential.

We would advise any parents or young people who have concerns that things are not progressing in their area or would like to find out more about how to get involved to contact their local Parent Carer Forum www.nnpcf.org.uk and/or their local Parent Partnership Service www.parentpartnership.org.uk.

For examples of good practice please see the Preparing for Adulthood website: www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk and sign up for our e-bulletin: www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/ebulletin.

There are further resources on personalisation and person-centred practice available here: The Better Lives Project (www.ndti.org.uk) and Helen Sanderson Associates website (www.helensandersonassociates.co.uk).

Q • I'd love to know whether a child has a right to have all aspects of their curriculum differentiated into a personalised context. My sons retained for life aspects ~ reading, writing, maths, ICT, geography that were practical, meaningful to their daily lives

A A child has a right to have their special educational needs identified and met. If there is a statement (or EHC plan) the needs, provision and support are specified. The important issue is for the child, young person and family to be at the centre of planning the arrangements to meet the needs. Clearly a child or young person with a statement has significant difficulties in learning and will need a personalised and differentiated approach. If only some aspects of the curriculum are differentiated, and the child or young person's needs are not being met in other areas, this needs to be taken up with the school, college and/or the local authority.

Q • Do you know whether, under new RPA to 18, local authorities have a legal obligation to ensure provision of education till 18?

A No, they will have a duty to ensure that the young person is in education, training or employment with training. It is not clear at this stage what the legal response will be if this is not in place. If a young person has a statement or EHC plan, the provision written into the plan is a legal entitlement.

Q • One of the challenges is ensuring that the personalised programme for each individual young person adds up to a financially viable programme, department and/or college. How have colleges managed this within the Pathfinders?

A By planning with young people and their families, identifying their aspirations, skills and planned outcomes and then working with commissioners and colleges to plan study programmes and support. A good example is in Manchester at Lancasterian school and Manchester college. This work is featured on the Preparing for Adulthood website here: www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/manchester. It is critical that planning takes place in good time for colleges to put programmes in place.

Q • Person centred planning approach is widely spoken of but not so evident in practice. It is particularly challenging at the point of transitions planning. How have other areas approached this and what has worked well in ensuring that all educational settings adopt this principle and use it effectively? What has been the experience of colleges and FE providers within the pathfinder setting?

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Colleges face challenges in implementing the reforms, one of which is enabling staff to have time to plan with young people and their families and to engage with all of the relevant professionals and agencies. It is really important that colleges and other post-16 providers link up with the Local Authority, at a strategic level, in developing the local offer and the integrated assessment and planning process. That will mean that the challenges and opportunities can be looked at in the round and new ways of working can be put in place.

As well as supporting local areas, the Preparing for Adulthood Team is working with the Association of Colleges (www.aoc.co.uk) and the National Association of Specialist Colleges (www.natspec.org.uk) to support colleges to implement the reforms.

Q • For a child with SEN who might not get the GCSE grades - how can a person centred approach be guaranteed quickly and efficiently when the young person may not get the college place due to lack of predicted grades. The said child may have practical experience but present with a learning difficulty to achieve academic results.

For a child on the Spectrum - a number of parents are concerned about the lack of 'certainty of a place' as this is starting to stress out families now. Especially if the college placement is out of borough and there isn't a local alternative on offer to meet the young person's interests or aspirations.

A If a young person has a statement of special educational needs, their plan (or at the moment their transition plan) should include these considerations. A young person's aspirations should be clearly identified and outcomes set. If the outcomes are thought to be best met by a particular study programme that requires the achievement of particular grades, then alternative routes should be discussed at the same time.

Many colleges of FE provide excellent student support services that are able to advise young people of the alternative ways to achieve their outcomes. The SEND reforms are intended to improve this process by using person-centred approaches throughout the age span and by regularly reviewing progress against outcomes and what provision and support needs to be put in place. Colleges are also developing more personalised approaches to curriculum developments so that more young people will be able to study locally if that is their choice.

Q • What are your views on how person centred practice can help with completing and Education, Health and Care plan? Can you do a good enough job without incorporating person centred approaches? The plans can look very different from Authority to Authority and some lend themselves to including person centred practices more than others which makes it more challenging to keep the young person at the centre of the process and decision making as they move into adulthood.

A The PfA team have promoted person-centred practice in developing EHC plans. The critical ingredient is to collect person-centred information such as what is important to the young person now and for the future, what is important for them in order to keep them healthy and safe, what is working well now and not so well. This information helps to set outcomes that are based on the young person's aspirations, taking account of what is important for them and building on what is working well and reducing what is not working so well.

Once there are clear outcomes, we can think about the support a young person needs to achieve them, what that support will look like in practice, how it will be delivered, what additional resources will be allocated and whether some will be taken as a direct payment. This approach needs cultural change and workforce development but fulfils what is at the heart of the reforms. Local areas have been testing a range of approaches and are sharing their learning so that good practice will be recognised and built on. For examples of good practice see the PfA website: www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk.

Between Monday 10th and Wednesday 19th March 2014 we would like people to submit their questions on Joint Commissioning and Multi-Agency Working. To submit a question visit our forum and register for an account at: www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/forum.

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Thanks

We would like to say a big thank you to everyone who took the time to submit questions and answer them.

The Preparing for Adulthood programme is delivered by:

