

national transition support team

working together to improve transition
for disabled young people

Case Study: North East Lincolnshire

Introduction

Person centred planning is shaping services in North East Lincolnshire.

Overview

Person centred transition reviews and person planning for disabled young people in special schools in North East Lincolnshire were introduced a number of years ago to ensure that they had opportunities to shape their future pathways. They have become an important mechanism for gathering information about disabled young people in transition and are driving a more responsive approach to meeting the needs of disabled young people by informing the commissioning of a range of services.

When young disabled people are given a voice about their future, it emerges that they share the same aspirations for adulthood as many other young people. They want to enjoy local facilities, meet up with friends, prepare for work and live independently. Better data about their needs and wishes coming through the planning process means that access issues are being addressed enabling participation in a wider range of community based choices. Services in North East Lincolnshire are also better able to tailor their provision with a clearer idea of local need.

Main transferable learning points:

- Person centred transition reviews widen the scope of the traditional review to include employment, social and life opportunities for young people with statements.
- The person centred transition process is

driving a more responsive approach to meeting the needs of disabled young people by informing the commissioning of different services and support.

- Transition services can identify where reasonable adjustments or low level support to access community provision can be achieved, often at very low cost.

Introduction

Person centred planning is being established in North East Lincolnshire's schools. This is improving the transition process where personalisation has been a priority for around ten years.

People with a disability can request support to develop their own plan via the service they are involved with or through the Person Centred Planning Service of the NE Lincs Care Trust Plus (CTP).

North East Lincolnshire has a Children's Disability Service and small transition team consisting of a Co-ordinator and two Transition Workers who are jointly funded by Adults' and Children's Social Care. The two Transition Workers currently work with around 170 families and support the process of multi-agency, person centred planning across children's and adult services. The services work together and form an important mechanism for gathering information about disabled young people in transition, those likely to need a good deal of social care as adults and those who require a lower level of support to lead fulfilled

lives. The person centred transition process is driving a more responsive approach to meeting the needs of both groups and is informing the commissioning of a range of services.

Within NE Lincolnshire a Person Centred Transition Review (PCTR) Facilitator Group offers support and guidance and provides a network where facilitators can discuss issues and share experiences. Person Centred Approaches Training is ongoing and delivered in a single day to groups of parents and professionals; attendees can progress onto three or four days Person Centred Review Facilitator Training if they wish.

Background

Person centred transition reviews for young people in school were introduced over two years ago to ensure that disabled young people had opportunities to shape their future pathways. In particular, Cambridge Park School, a special school in Grimsby highly-rated by OFSTED, introduced person centred reviews for all its Year 9 pupils. These were carried out by PCTR Trained Facilitators, including Teachers and Teaching Assistants whose training has been funded by the Valuing People Support Team and the Aiming High programme.

Forward planning is important to the success of transition/person centred reviews. This starts when the statementing team sends a list of those Year 8s with statements to the Aiming High Programme Manager. She makes contact with SENCOs, and identifies those youngsters who have a disability and are likely to need support when they leave school. Some youngsters in mainstream schools without statements may also be considered for person centred planning and will be identified by school SENCOs. Connexions are also involved at this stage and begin gathering information for their own action planning.

All children with a disability, age 13+ and not currently receiving support from the Children's Disability Service are allocated a Transition Worker who attends the Year 9 review meeting and provides information and signposting as well as support in using local universal services. The meeting gives the Transition Workers the opportunity to provide low-level preventative

support to widen young people's experiences, for example they can identify simple interventions to improve access, such as making introductions for young people who may be anxious about taking the first step into a new social situation such as a youth club.

Young people welcome the opportunity to express their aspirations and see them fulfilled, whether they are everyday wishes to explore the town centre, go swimming or visit friends, or more long term goals such as independent living, further and higher education and employment.

The key points for action that emerge at the review meeting form the basis of a person centred Transition Plan. In addition an Essential Lifestyle Plan, a Person Centred Plan or a Health Action Plan may be drawn up, depending on the needs of each young person.

Aims and Objectives

- To inform commissioning for disabled young people in the area.
- To identify low-level adjustments which can make universal services accessible to disabled young people.
- To ensure that young people are fully involved in planning for their future.

Approach

An important aspect of person centred planning is the gathering of better data to inform commissioning. Data from transition reviews has enabled a more strategic approach to commissioning. Not only is there more accurate information about the numbers of young people becoming adults and the different levels of need, but the information is of a higher quality as it is recorded by the people who know the youngsters well in children's services. Adult Services are now able to look to Children's Services for robust data to inform their strategic management. This improves medium term planning as well as reducing uncertainty for families and young people. Previously adult services would have to pitch for a slice of the funding rather than being able to rely on the information coming through transition reviews in order to be able to accurately predict the level of emerging need.

Better data enables senior management to consider the implications, not just for health, social care and education, but for other services like housing, transport, leisure and youth services. Each service will be able to link in to the process and undertake long term planning in a way which is responsive to local need.

Challenges

There remains a need for better continuity for those disabled young people who move to further education rather than remaining in school post 16. Person centred planning for this group can end abruptly when the requirement for annual review ends when their statement lapses if they leave school. Funding through the Getting a Life initiative is enabling training for person centred planning for further education (FE) staff which started in March 2011. The aim is to bridge the gap between school and adult services for those young people with high level needs, and help all disabled young people prepare their exit strategy, given the relatively short stay in FE. A review of all the practitioners who would fulfil the key worker role at this time is underway bearing in mind the overlapping roles of Connexions Personal Advisers and Transition Workers.

Continuity of planning and support is essential, so workers continue to attend progress reviews even though the young person no longer has a Statement of SEN once they leave school.

Successes

Examples follow of how planning is affecting commissioning in a wide range of services:

Housing

The person centred approach means that decisions about housing can be considered well in advance of the need for accommodation. For example, a housing needs database has been created to include those in transition aged 13 upwards with current or future housing needs. When groups of young people are identified, providers are commissioned to provide a service specific to that group, matching their needs and wishes. Young people and their families are involved at all stages, particularly in the drawing up of the service specification.

In one case, a young person in a £200,000 pa

out of borough residential placement, will be able to return to a local house and plans are underway to determine the support that will be needed.

This approach affords the time to accurately assess need and to recruit and train staff with the appropriate skills. It has been possible to effect smooth transitions by allowing a transfer which sees the staff from the first provider spending time in the new setting.

Education and training

Instead of a one-size-fits-all approach, disabled young people are increasingly able to pursue education and training that matches their interests and needs. For example training for independence and personal development, including travel confidence, understanding money, anger management and personal learning and thinking skills, can be undertaken alongside skills and academic courses. However, young people can experience a lack of continuity in person centred planning when they leave school and move into further education. (see Challenges above).

Employment

Many disabled young people say they want to work when asked about the future. A range of work experience opportunities, some leading to part-time jobs, are provided via a local voluntary organisation, Foresight. In addition, North East Lincolnshire has several social enterprises, such as Jobs4All which provide and support employment for young disabled people. Exciting examples include the use of Aiming High funding of £140, 000 to purchase and refurbish a chalet in a local Holiday Park, which will result in jobs for disabled young people. This project, delivered in partnership with Jobs4All, will provide paid work ranging from dealing with bookings to cleaning, maintenance and gardening. The nearby adapted cycle scheme will also provide paid work for disabled young people utilising the income generated from the cycle hire fee.

Leisure

Disabled young people say they want the same opportunities to take part in leisure activities as their non disabled peers.

Improvements have been made to access arrangements at local leisure facilities. An

adapted cycle scheme has been introduced, poolside changing rooms refurbished and a waterside hoist fitted. Local providers have accessed training offered by a local school in order to develop workforce skills.

Reasonable adjustments to existing community provision means that lives can be enhanced, sometimes at very low cost.

Transport

Following the successful introduction of the passenger responsive bus service, Phone 'n' Ride, work is underway regarding the potential to extend the operating hours to enable young people to access youth, social and leisure activities independently.

Participation

As well as around 70+ transition reviews which have been supported at Cambridge Park, detailed person centred planning has resulted in Essential Life Style plans for five young people with complex needs from North East Lincolnshire's other special school, Humberston Park, taking up opportunities locally. For example, they are being enabled to develop a mixed package of community & centred based activities. New community health schemes and projects including swimming, ice skating and walking are enabling people to get out and about and be included.

Young people's voices are also being heard through the multi-agency Getting Heard programme. This involves training for young people delivered by and to young people with professional support. The programme has recently been extended to one of the area's academy schools and a youth centre and includes training on how to be a representative on forums such as school councils. Young people that have gone through the training are co-facilitating and delivering the training to new groups of young people.

A Getting Heard group of young people reviewed the existing Transition DVD pointing out new areas they wanted to cover. The training gave them the experience of developing their views and the confidence to express concrete ideas.

Conclusion

Systematic planning is now fundamental to meeting the needs of young people in North East Lincolnshire, with oversight of the delivery of transition plans and the outcomes for young people built into the process. Linking disabled young people up with relevant services as they become needed means that there is much better continuity of provision and young people feel they are progressing along a pathway they have chosen.

With better data coming through the planning process, this means that access issues are being addressed enabling participation in a wider range of community based choices. In addition services are able to plan more tailored provision whether in housing, education, employment, transport or health etc.

Why is it good practice to develop commissioning informed by person centred planning?

The person centred transition process provides a rich information stream about each cohort of disabled young people. This in turn is capable of driving a more responsive approach to commissioning of different services and support to match identified needs. In North East Lincolnshire this process has demonstrated outcomes that enable the authority:

- to alert services to future needs
- to signpost disabled young people to appropriate services either immediately or in the future
- to identify where reasonable adjustments will open up opportunities to participate or enhance a young person's experience
- to highlight gaps in provision and areas for improvement
- To focus resources on new and existing services which more closely match identified needs.
- To ensure that the services developed are the services people want

Tips

- Have a Transition Co-ordinator in post to liaise at all levels with all partners
- Keep everybody informed of the developments and information being gathered through multi agency transition meetings; senior management briefings; special events and professional practice groups such as SENCO Forums etc.
- Keep asking what can be improved and allow users and providers to raise issues.
- Extend the work to mainstream schools by demonstrating how person centred planning is working through multi-agency co-operation and a supportive framework.
- Build up relationships on the ground e.g. by engaging with SENCOs as well as head teachers.
- Ensure senior management commitment and oversight across all partners
- Identify champions in all services

Key policy and legislation

The Equality Act 2010 aims to protect disabled people and prevent disability discrimination. It provides legal rights for disabled people in a number of areas including access to local authority services and facilities.

Equality Act 2010 Statutory Code of Practice Services, public functions and associations

www.equalityhumanrights.com

The **Aiming High for Disabled Children** programme has sought to improve transition processes for young disabled people moving into adult life. In particular, that early planning should ensure services provide a continuity of support focused on individual need and that disabled young people should be fully consulted in accessing their preferred services, and the services they need to respond to get the lives they want.

Participation has been a key element of the Disabled Children's Core Offer made under the Aiming High programme. This sets out a national statement of expectations for how disabled

children and their families will be informed and involved in assessments and services. The Core offer covers:

- Information
- Transparency
- Assessment
- Participation
- Feedback

Organisations and websites

Equality and Human Rights Commission

www.equalityhumanrights.com

Aiming High for Disabled Children

www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/healthandwellbeing/

Following the publication in 2005 of **Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People**, the [Office for Disability Issues](http://www.odionline.org) (ODI) was set up to work with government, disabled people and others to deliver the vision that by 2025, disabled people in Britain should have the same opportunities and choices as non-disabled people to improve their quality of life and be respected and included as equal members of society.

[Getting A Life](http://www.gettingalife.org) is a project for young people with severe learning disabilities operating in 12 LA areas, including NE Lincolnshire. It is about raising aspirations, making changes to the system and creating a clear path to paid employment.

Valuing People and Valuing People Now

Personalisation described on:

<http://www.valuingpeoplenow.dh.gov.uk/valuing-people-now/personalising>

Useful resources

[Person Centred Planning: schools and transition](#) This is part of a series of good practice guides on person centred planning published by the Putting People First and

Valuing People Now teams. It is intended to show how person-centred thinking, planning and reviews can be useful in schools and in transition. (DH, April 2010)

Making Ourselves Heard: exploring disabled children's participation,²Kate Martin, CDC, 2009.

Based on a series of 8 seminars with local authorities, this book sets out the current policy context for disabled children and young people's participation, outlines the barriers and challenges to effective participation and highlights what is working well.

Transition guide² CDC, 2007.

A transition guide for all services: key information for professionals about the transition process for disabled young people

The Welcome Workbook: a self review framework for expanding inclusive provision in your local authority (2009), CSIE, www.csie.org.uk/publications

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National Transition Support Team (NTST)

NTST is working alongside the National Strategies and the Child Health and Maternity Partnership to coordinate the delivery of the Transition Support Programme.

NTST is based at the Council for Disabled Children (CDC), the umbrella body for the disabled children's sector in England. CDC is hosted by NCB. www.ncb.org.uk/cdc

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