

national transition support team

working together to improve transition
for disabled young people

London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames Transition Case Study

The transition process

Developing a strategic transition protocol

The London Borough of Richmond upon Thames developed a new protocol, which was completed in December 2007, and this has recently been signed off by all agencies. It has also been seen by the councillors. It was developed by the Transition Coordinator, who was employed with a remit of developing the protocol as a process across service areas, for those likely to be eligible for adult services. To do this she spoke to other agencies that are involved in the transition process and asked what protocols they worked to. Each had its own protocol, although many believed that theirs was the protocol that every agency was working to. The Transition Coordinator gathered together all of the protocols to create a single one.

The Transition Steering Group were involved in drawing together the information, and were regularly consulted about the development of the multi-agency protocol. Young people were also asked about their experiences of transition, as were other professionals.

This protocol creation was one of the tasks on the annual transition action plan that the steering group develop and are responsible for overseeing. The plan includes priorities taken from other action plans including the Children and Young people's plan, which in 07-08 had a whole transition section, priority 13.

Post-16 options: education and employment

Young people in LB Richmond access work experience in year 10. It is organised by schools in conjunction with Connexions and Way to Work. For some young people it means accessing a study skills centre where they can learn skills such as construction, hair and beauty, and catering.

LB Richmond has been selected to participate in Valuing People's Getting a Life Programme, which focuses on getting disabled young people into employment opportunities. The project is due to launch in Richmond on the 3rd June 08, and will bring the transition agenda to the attention of people not yet committed to it. It is hoped that the project will draw together initiatives that have already started in Richmond, and give transition a focus in the authority. It will also provide a support network for the authorities involved, and a forum in which to learn from each other.

LB Richmond has no sixth form provision within schools, so young people often move on to further education establishments. There have been particular difficulties in ensuring that the needs of young people with challenging behaviour can be met in

mainstream colleges. 3-4 young people each year access residential colleges out of the approximately 25 each year who turn age 18 and are eligible for services for adults in the borough.

LB Richmond has several social enterprises being developed, and these will provide opportunities for young people to develop employment skills, and access employment. The social enterprises are being developed through the local college, with funding from the Quality Improvement Agency. There is currently a social enterprise that collects furniture, restores it and sells it on Ebay and through it's own shop. There is also some work going on with Farm Fresh Express and supporting the development of a "green shop." Richmond has a Transition into Employment Steering Group, which will look at the possibilities for further developing these opportunities.

One school in LB Richmond has arranged a one day a week link into the local college for young people in year 11 to participate in a level 1 course in floristry and horticulture.

Power employment support people with a learning disability in LB Richmond to enter employment. Reed in Partnership pathways to work team provide employment support to people with any disability. The Job Centre Plus generally refers people to the appropriate agency for support. Connexions Personal Advisers help young people under 18 and will go with a young person to interviews with employment agencies where necessary.

LB Richmond have a person tasked to ensure that the Local Authority employ a target number of people with a learning disability. There is a local authority action plan for employment.

Transition reviews and Person-centred approaches

In LB Richmond there are three people trained as Person-Centred Review, year 9 review Facilitators. There are two specialist education schools in Richmond, and they are both engaged in a steering group to try and roll out these new style reviews. This included the creation of a clear information flyer for parents and carers to explain the process of person-centred reviews. One school is already holding them for some young people each year.

For some young people with either Complex Needs, or who are Looked After, the child in need, or looked after review processes have been combined with the education review process, to ensure a joined up approach and prevent duplication.

To support the roll out of the new person centred review process and new protocol the SEN return form schools complete for the borough incorporates a person-centred approach and transition plan section. This section is the same as the transition referral used by children's services to transfer information to adults services at around age 16.

Statutory services – an overview

Children’s trust models and multi-agency working in the transition process

LB Richmond has a Multi-Agency Transition Group that tracks all young people with a statement of educational need from year 8. The tracking meeting includes the Specialist In and Out of borough Connexions personal advisers, Managers of Sensory Services, Learning Disability Team, and Adult Mental Health services, representatives from CAMHS, the Leaving Care Team, an SEN case worker, specialist health visitor, the Disabled Children’s Teams Manager and Transition Care Manager. The purpose of the meeting is to identify all young people who may require an adult service, and which adult service that is likely to be. The group also considers young people that professionals have asked to be added to the list because of concerns, but where there is no statement of special educational need.

The Transition Coordinator then takes the responsibility for ensuring that the list is up to date, with the details of who will be supporting them, and with progress made in transition planning.

If it is clear that a young person will be eligible for adult social care services, then a social worker from the adult’s team will attend the year 9 review. This gives them the opportunity to input into the transition planning at the review, to ensure that the young person and their family have an understanding of self directed support, and have realistic expectations. It also gives the young person and their family the opportunity to ask questions. Adult care managers are then involved with families and children’s social workers from year 11 to ensure that individual support plans are developed in time for transition. LB Richmond is a total transformation site so all people using adult services receive an individual budget. The plan is agreed in principle, when the young person is 17, to allow for the setting up of services. However it is not formally signed of and no money is paid until the adult services take responsibility for the person on their 18th birthday.

As part of the transition protocol a referral form has been developed that is used by all children’s services to make a referral to adult social care services. The form is completed with the young person and their family, and incorporates person-centred approaches. The form is completed when a young person is 16, and provides the opportunity for Children’s Teams to re-engage with the young person, and to ensure that transition planning is on track. The Adult Social Care Team will already be aware of the young person, and the team manager will allocate the case to a care manager, who will do a joint visit with the referrer.

Disabled Children who are looked-after will continue to be supported by the Leaving Care Team, up to the age 21 or 25 if in full-time education unless otherwise agreed on a case by case basis with adult services. They continue to be tracked during this time, so that if they require support after the leaving care team this can be planned for.

LB Richmond has a Transition Coordinator who is responsible for the development of processes and protocols in the borough. There is also a Children's Transition Care Manager who holds a caseload, and supports young people through the transition process, however all social workers and adult care managers take some responsibility for transition cases.

In LB Richmond the Children's and Adults services operate on different computer services. The Transition Coordinator is currently working with the IT department to try and get a specific transition section on the adult's system.

Health services

Health services in LB Richmond are involved in both the Transition Steering Group and the Tracking Group. This means that they can be involved in the continuous development of processes, and that they can raise awareness of young people that they are working with who may need support as adults. The transition coordinator is currently building links with the continuing care panels to improve access to assessment for this funding.

Connexions, information, advice and guidance arrangements

LB Richmond have two specialist advisers from Connexions, one that works with all young people in the borough, and another who works with young people in out of borough placements. The adviser who supports young people in LB Richmond works with the special schools to support transition planning and work experience for young people.

The out of borough worker coordinates activities for young people during the holidays, so that when they move back into borough they already have a network of friends. The out of borough worker also liaises with local Connexions services, to ensure that the young person is getting the support that they need and the information they need about options back in their home borough. The Connexions worker ensures that all young people are clear about the support available to move back into borough, and ensures that planning is started early enough.

Participation and further support

Participation of disabled young people in the transition process

Young people are encouraged to engage in their own transition planning, through the introduction of person-centred approaches, and self-directed support.

A consultation comparing the experience of families who have been through transition over the last few years has started. The Transition Coordinator has visited 5 young people and their families to talk about their experience of transition in 2008, and will visit more families next year. The findings will be available in 2010.

Planning live sessions are being planned for young people and will start in 2009 with interested families.

Participation of families in the transition process

The Transition Coordinator runs drop in sessions every month, where parents can come and get advice about different elements of transition. It runs at the same time as a specialist youth club, so that parents can attend without the young people if they wish. The Transition Coordinator keeps a record of issues that come up regularly so that they can be addressed strategically.

LB Richmond run an annual event for young people and their families, usually in November, to gather feedback from them, and learn about their experiences during the transition process. The Transition Coordinator is also visiting 5 families this year to gather their feedback about their experiences, and hopes to increase the number of families spoken to next year.

Supporting disabled young people and their families:

- ***key workers and lead professionals***
- ***direct payments and individual budgets***

LB Richmond is a Total Transformation site for Individual Budgets in adult services. All young people eligible for adult social care services therefore receive this in the form of an individual budget. All young people complete a self-assessment questionnaire to give an indicative budget. A support plan will then be completed shortly after a young person's 17th birthday. At this stage it is agreed in principal by the adult services manager, so that processes such as employing PA's can begin, although the plan is not officially signed off until the young person's 18th birthday. The young person's transition plan feeds into their self-directed support plan – these are not two separate documents. Although some people also choose to have a separate person centred plan, many individuals have the single SDS support plan which has all the detail and personal things in it, a summary of which is shared with the local authority for panel agreement and to be held on file.

Information for disabled young people and their families about the transition process

LB Richmond have produced a series of 6 booklets that provide information to families about the transition process, including information on what transition is, leaving school, moving towards independence, health and relationships, money, and sport a leisure. There is a single accessible transition process information leaflet for individuals.

The Transition Coordinator attends many year 9 reviews, where it is likely that the young person will require a care service as an adult and provide information to the family, and answer any questions that they might have.

LB Richmond also has a Transition Information event in November for young people and their families to gather information. Each school, social work team, voluntary

group, advice centre has copies of the information available. They are also available on www.richmond.gov.uk

Youth and Leisure services and activities

Every Thursday evening there is a Transition Club for disabled young people, which is run in partnership with the youth services, at Crofters. Young people are also welcome at all mainstream youth clubs and other specialist Crofters club nights. A partnership between the youth services and Crofters is looking at improving access to mainstream clubs. Crofters also have a Transition Worker who runs a range of social activities for disabled young people in transition on other days/ evenings including at weekends.

There are many voluntary agencies locally providing support to this group through extended schools, Mencap, Richmond Homes for Life, PHAB, CORLD and many more.

Housing

Housing will be addressed as part of the Getting a Life Programme.

Transport

Transport issues in LB Richmond will be addressed on the Getting a Life Programme. It is hoped that it will be agreed who will take responsibility for developing transport services.

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