

national transition support team

working together to improve transition
for disabled young people

Leicester City Transition Case Study

The transition process

Developing a strategic transition protocol

Leicester has a Transition policy statement that has agreement at elected member level. This policy is about to be updated to reflect the Aiming High for Disabled Children and Valuing People Now guidance and recommendations.

Developing a local transition pathway

A multi-disciplinary group has mapped where Leicester is now in relation to Transition Services. This work was the starting point for developing a Transition Pathway. The work also informed the Transitions Working Group Action Plan. More work on the Pathway is needed in order to be clear about the responsibilities of all partner agencies in the process. Efforts are being made to engage both Children's and Adults Health Services in this work.

A group of young people, supported by the Connexions Service, shared their experiences of Transition – what worked and what needs to change to make Transition a more positive experience for other young people.

As a result of the young people's recommendations, a DVD was produced about 'Going to College' based on what young people told us was important for them to know.

The pathway, when completed will identify what roles people play in transition, through each stage from the age of 14 into adult life.

Post-16 options: education and employment

Leicester has a range of college provision with one large college of further education and three 6th form colleges. A range of 'post 16' provision is offered across the sector to meet the needs of young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The Leicestershire Learning and Skills Council have recently carried out an audit of provision to meet the needs of Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

There is also a range of pre and post 16 link courses between schools and the Post 16 further education sector. One special school has a post 16 programme in place where students spend some of their week in school and other days at Leicester College.

West Gate School are developing a programme to provide work experience for as many of their young people as possible. This will begin at Key Stage 3 with a mini enterprise based in the classroom, such as making and selling cakes to the class, moving on to a mini enterprise based in the school in Key Stage 4, such as washing cars, with the hope that most young people will access a work based placement in Key Stage 5. Some young people in Key Stage 3 are now accessing a gardening project, in which they are developing the school environment, to develop their skills. There are many other examples of work experience programmes in Leicester schools.

Leicester College have been working with Adult Social Care Services and Remploy on a 3-year programme, which enables young people who attend the college to have work tasters throughout their college life, to smooth the transition into employment after college. This is based on an American model that has been proven to have positive outcomes there. Remploy work with students to set up work placements in the local authority or the college. This programme is called the Project Search Programme.

The Learning Disability Partnership Board in Leicester has an employment sub-group to look at the employment of people with learning disabilities. The chair of this group led on negotiations with the local authority. As a result, 18 people with learning disabilities are now employed by the council in various roles including administration, person-centred planning training assistants, and co-chair of the partnership board.

Transition reviews and Person-centred approaches

In Leicester there are two best practice schools involved in Valuing Peoples Person Centred Review programme. These schools were selected as best practice sites for the programme and have since been working to implement person centred approaches. Leicester has only engaged two schools in the programme so far. This is to ensure that they can build up evidence based practice around 'what works' before extending the programme to other schools.

West Gate School in Leicester have been working to embed person-centred thinking and approaches throughout the school. They had an away day for all staff in the school, including the administration staff and premises officers, and spent the day looking at person-centred approaches. It was important to the head teacher that all contact with children is conducted in a person-centred way, and that a complete change in staffs understanding of Person Centred Approaches was needed to accomplish this.

A Person Centred Review project team was established consisting of the Policy and Planning Officer in Transition, the two special school head teachers, the senior education psychologist, two teachers from the specialist teaching service, a representative of the Vocational Educational Support Agency and the Person Centred Planning Co-ordinator. All seven people on the project group have received

the Person-Centred Review facilitator training from Helen Sanderson Associates, through the Valuing People Person-Centred Review initiative.

The person-centred reviews project group are looking at ways of developing person-centred practices in school, however they are attempting to develop the infrastructure before rolling the programme out further. The policy and planning officer (transition) and the person-centred planning co-ordinator are in the process of completing the training to gain accreditation to enable them to train other people to facilitate reviews. They are also working with partner agencies to identify a champion who will move this agenda forward within their organisation, particularly with 'Looked after' children and service co-ordination.

In West Gate school the curriculum has been developed throughout the school, and all subjects now include a person-centred approach. This is documented in the daily curriculum plan, and is the responsibility of all staff.

All young people in the school with communication needs have a communication passport, and one-page profiles are now being developed to replace Individual Education Plans. These profiles are person-centred, although targets are included in them. The targets are selected on the basis of what is important to the young person, both academically and personally and then an action plan is created. The class teacher then regularly reviews the targets and the profile with the student during class time. The action plan will have three key points – What would I like to do? Who is going to help? Have I done it? How will I know?

The actions identified in the one page profile will also be reflected in the annual review. Each young person will also have a pupil profile containing essential information about the young person. Kept in the booklet is a memory stick containing evidence of a young person's achievements and work. Copies of the young person's communication passport, where appropriate, one page profile and action plan are also kept on the memory stick, as are videos of the young person engaging in activities, and information about what people like and admire about the young person. The memory stick will replace the record of achievement, and the school are considering ways in which families can contribute, and how it can move on with the young person. The school are also looking at inviting families 10 minutes earlier to reviews, to enable them to look through the work that the young people have been doing, in the classroom, with the young person before the review.

The school are working to a Work-Life Balance programme to ensure that teachers in the school are able to manage the new ways of working. It is important to the Leadership Team of the school that school staff embrace Person-Centred approaches as the way of working and that they replace old approaches.

The school continues to use person-centred reviews for some young people from year 9. This year seventeen young people have participated in person-centred reviews and it is hoped that by 2010 forty young people will be involved in the process.

Some additional teachers in the Special Needs Teaching service will be trained in person-centred review facilitation, with a view to trialling a small number of reviews in mainstream schools.

Leicester are also exploring how Person Centred approaches could be developed by Independent Chairs in Looked after children's reviews. This work will also explore if it is feasible to combine the Looked After Child review and the transition review, using person-centred approaches.

Statutory services – an overview

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

The Policy and Planning Officer for Transition is responsible for developing the transition processes in the city. The post is currently funded by the Leicestershire Learning and Skills Council and the Learning Disability Partnership Board. It is hosted by Children's Services, but is a resource to all services. The post is managed by the Disabled Children's Service Manager, who leads on the implementation of the Aiming High for Disabled Children agenda. Leicester also has four transition social worker posts in Adult Services.

Leicester has a Transition Data Group to encourage joint working and to ensure that all of a young person's needs are being addressed. The Learning and Skills Council, the Disabled Children's Team, Adult Care Services, SEN department and Connexions sit on this group. The SEN service provide a list in September to social care services of all young people of transition age with a statement. The Disabled Children's Team use this to decide which transition reviews they need to attend.

Procedures have been set up between the Disabled Children's Team, and the Adult Social Care transitions team to ensure the identification and subsequent offer of assessment under section 5/6 of Disabled Person Act. These procedures also link with advice given to schools by the Local Authority to ensure that schools are linking with the Disabled Children's Team to ensure that those young people who are likely to meet the criteria for assessment under section 5/6 of the Disabled Persons act are identified.

In addition, there is also a 'Complex Cases' forum where partners come together to jointly identify those young people with high support needs moving into Adult Services.

Education – schools in strategic planning

Two Special school Heads are members of the Transition Steering Group, and also represented on the Project Team for Person-Centred Approaches in Leicester.

Health services

Leicester PCT has signed up to the Every Disabled Child Matter campaign charter, as has the local authority.

Connexions, information, advice and guidance arrangements

The Leicestershire Connexions Service employ Personal Advisors who work with a range of young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. They have also been engaged in discussions about the development of a 'transition broker' role. Consultants from the National Youth Agency are currently looking at the youth offer and will be reporting back to Children's Services on plans for the Integrated Youth Support Service.

Participation and further support

Participation of disabled young people in the transition process

In Leicester six process mapping sessions were held. The sessions involved four young people, selected with the support of Connexions, with a range of needs, aged 19 and 20, who had already left school and were now in further education. The young people shared their experiences of Transition and preparing for moving on from school. They explained what worked for them and what they think needed to change. They told the group that information about preparing for college and choosing a course was not always in a format that helped them to make informed decisions.

The policy and planning officer (transition) lead met with the young people and their Personal Advisor after the sessions, to ensure that their views were addressed and actioned where appropriate. As a result of their recommendations, funding was supplied by the Learning and Skills Council to produce an interactive DVD about going to college. Over one hundred young people were involved in the production of the DVD, which was produced by the Leicester Disability and Communication Information Network based on the recommendations of the young people.

Participation of families in the transition process

Parent/Carers are represented on the Transitions Working Group. A Parents Forum is being developed as part of the Aiming High programme and there is a Carers Forum as part of the Learning Disability Partnership Board sub groups who report directly to the board.

Supporting disabled young people and their families:

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

In Leicester the policy and planning officer (transition) is currently putting together a proposal for Transition Brokers. This model of working has already been discussed with the Connexions LLDD lead manager and the proposal has been informed by roles in the Person Centred Review programme. In the Person Centred Review

Programme the Connexions Personal Advisor has been overseeing the actions agreed in the Transition Plan.

Mencap have been commissioned by the local authority to act as support brokers for the development of individual budgets. Eligible young people in transition can access individual budgets if they wish to. The Individual Budgets programme is evolving and there are plans to dovetail the Transition Planning processes into the programme as young people who are eligible leave school.

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

The young people who were involved in mapping the transition process identified that they wanted clearer information about what provisions were available at college for them. This led to them being commissioned to produce a DVD looking at what young people could expect when they came to college. The DVD involved more than 100 young people in the production, and is now available to anyone considering college as an option.

The LSC have also provided funding for a DVD to be produced that details the transition process. The DVD is aimed at the Parents/Carers of young adults who are likely to be eligible for support from Adult Services. It is anticipated that it will show the transition pathway in a clear and accessible way. Parents/Carers will be able to click on the age range or their young person and be introduced to everyone that can help them and what they do.

Youth services and activities

Children and Young People's Services have commissioned the National Youth Agency to review how they can prepare to meet the youth offer. The policy and planning officer in transition and the Children's services resource manager have met with the consultant to ensure that the needs of disabled children are addressed in the review.

The policy and planning officer in transition and the Children's services resource manager are currently liaising with the Head of Youth Services regarding the needs of disabled young people. The youth services already provide funding for specialist youth clubs, however they are now considering increasing the opportunities for disabled young people to access mainstream services. They are currently looking at how budgets can be merged to allow for this. They will create a joint strategy and plan, and will look at staffing and workforce development. It is anticipated that the short breaks provision will be increased through the use of universal youth services.

Transport

The deputy head teacher of West Gate School is currently working with the transport department to ensure that all young people travelling to and from school have a positive experience. Teachers have been asked to provide additional information about young people, and the transport department will endeavour to match the children and young people more appropriately. Escorts and drivers can then be

offered more appropriate training around the needs of the young people that they are supporting. The school will also be providing information about communication strategies that work and don't work for the young people. With young people's permission they may in the future share one page profiles with the drivers and escorts.

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