

STARTING TO PREPARE FOR ADULTHOOD



Preparing for adulthood in the Year 9 annual review

Every young person who has an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan must be given help to plan for their future. During Year 9 there is a meeting for you and your family, and the professionals who work with you to help you to start thinking about your future. This is called your Year 9 annual review.

What is the Year 9 annual review?

The Year 9 annual review is a meeting all about your future. It will take place at your school and the school will organise the meeting, send out invitations and get all the paperwork that they need.

The meeting will include you, your family, a teacher or someone who knows you from school and your assessment and planning officer from the council's special educational needs team. If you have health needs, there may also be someone from health services there, and someone from social care if you have had or may need support from social care services. You can also ask anyone you trust to go with you.

At the meeting, the professionals will listen to you and offer advice about the kinds of help you can get now and in the future with health, education, care and more.

Preparing for the meeting

Make sure the meeting is in a place that's accessible and familiar and at a time that suits you.

Ask your parent carer or teacher to help you prepare for the meeting. You could also ask your local Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIAS) for their help (see 'Ask about' below).

Spend some time thinking about your future and what you'd like it to look like. You could use the 10 questions below to help you think or ask someone you trust to go through the questions with you and write down your answers.

- What am I good at?
- What do I find difficult?
- What do I like doing?
- What is going well in my life?
- What is not going so well?
- What can I see myself doing as an adult?
- What support will I need to help me achieve my dreams?
- What needs to happen to keep me healthy and safe in future?
- Can I get around by myself? Would I like help to learn how?
- Where would I like to live when I grow up?

If you haven't looked at EHC plan for a while, get your parent or carer or trusted adviser to look at it with you before the meeting and think about whether anything has changed.

If you want someone else to represent your views at the meeting – an advocate or trusted adviser – make time to share your views and ideas with them beforehand.





At the meeting

Paying attention to some practical things will help the meeting go more smoothly:

- Agree whether you will be there for some or all of the meeting and, if it's only for a part of it, which part it is.
- Make sure you can choose where you sit and know what will happen if you need to take a break.
- Ask to be introduced to anyone you haven't met before (or get your parents to ask for you).
- Have some written notes to remind you what to talk about and what's important. If you prefer to have pictures to show people, you could take them to the meeting too.
- Make use of your friend or trusted adviser. They can help put your point across or remember stuff that's been said.
- If there's anything you don't understand, ask people to explain or get your friend to ask for you. It's your life so don't be afraid to speak up.

After the meeting

The assessment and planning officer who comes to your Year 9 review meeting writes your information into your Education Health and Care (EHC) plan. This is a document that says what is important to you and what you want to do in the future. It also says what support and help you should have. Your EHC plan can go with you to college if you choose to go onto college.

You will be sent a copy of the EHC plan afterwards and it should be in a format that you can understand. If you don't think the new EHC plan reflects what you said in the meeting, tell the assessment and planning officer. You need to agree on what it says about your future.

At every annual review meeting after your Year 9 meeting, everyone should continue to help you to plan for your future.

Ask about

- **SENDIASS** - Amaze provides Information, Advice and Support (IAS) to children and young people with SEND in East Sussex and their parent carers. Our helpline advisers can talk you through the EHC assessment and planning process and SENDIASS advisers may be able to give you more targeted support. Call **01273 772289**, email sendiass@amazesussex.org.uk or visit amazesussex.org.uk
- **Advocacy services** - can help disabled children and young people be heard. POHwER East Sussex (0300 456 2370 or www.pohwer.net/east-sussex) or Speak Out! (0808 808 1001 or www.changegrowlive.org/young-people/speak-out) provide support for young people aged 7-19 with SEN or are looked after children.

Further reading and useful links

- **Involving Young People fact sheet** - Amaze produces a companion fact sheet called 'Involving Young People'. This is all about planning for adulthood and aimed at parents and carers. Visit www.amazesussex.org.uk/resources/publications/fact-sheets
- **East Sussex Local Offer** - The council's comprehensive online listing of all services for children and young people with SEND in East Sussex includes lots of information about services for young people. See www.eastsussex.gov.uk/localoffer



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- **'My Kind of a Future'** - this workbook from the **Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities** can help you think about what you want and what you need to know about after you leave school or college. You can download it from www.learningdisabilities.org.uk/publications/my-kind-of-a-future. They have lots more information and resources related to preparing for adulthood and person-centred planning.
- **Preparing for Adulthood** - useful website resource that includes information on employment, independent living, friends relationships and community and health. (01225 789135 or info@preparingforadulthood.org.uk or www.preparingfordulthood.org.uk)

