

The Really Useful Guide

For Parents and Carers of children (0-25) with additional needs



Find Your Way

with South Glos Parents and Carers

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Message from the CEO

Hi,

I'm a mum to two young lads who now are 18 and 16.

10 years ago, I found myself on a journey which, quite frankly, I didn't want to be on and I certainly didn't plan for it. I had to try and make sense of what I needed to do to help support my son and learn about the condition we suspected he had.

I had to work out what the process was about. How do I get him a diagnosis? How do I find out what my son's needs actually are? I tried to make sense of why my son was behaving the way he was, blaming myself and my husband for our parenting, despite reading thousands of books and websites. I signed myself up to every single course or event because I was desperate to learn more, to help my whole family.

I tried to find activities so that my children could experience clubs and social groups but every time I did, my son had extreme meltdowns. I felt guilty because, despite trying lots of things, something always went drastically wrong. I felt so alone, I lost my confidence and didn't want to go out because I was scared what would happen.

What I learned?

It wasn't my fault or my husband's.

Yes we had to change our parenting style to help my son.

No we couldn't do the same things that my friends could - so trips out as a group were limited.

I had to choose my battles.

It didn't matter if my son didn't want to go out.

Accessing services is difficult and the path is not clear as it could be.

In 2009, I helped co-found South Glos Parents and Carers with a couple of other mums. I wanted the council, health services and commissioners to really understand what it like for us Parent Carers. We all have different experiences and challenges, but we all want to do our best for our children.

We now have 600 families on our main database and access to many other families through social media.

We have approx. 40 volunteers who want to be part of our team and have been amazing at helping South Glos Parents and Carers to exist. Everything we do is because we want to try and make a difference to other families.

This is why we have put this guide together, using our collective knowledge, in the hope that you will find the information you need.

When I look back on the journey we have been on as a family I can honestly say there are bits of it I wish I hadn't experienced. However, I believe my children have made me see the world differently and I love them for who they are.

I hope that you find this guide useful. It is our first attempt and we intent to add to it and improve it on the way so any additional help, information or thoughts you would like to share we would love to hear from you.

Best Wishes Rachel

About our Guide

Parents and carers know their children best!

You are your child's advocate and expert. Parent carers know their children better than anyone else; they understand what their child's needs are, even if we sometimes need help understanding the sometimes complex reasons for these needs. As our children grow, needs will change and as they become more involved in their support, we might not always agree. Our children may face many challenges but they also bring us immense joy. We don't take the little things for granted, a smile, a cuddle, a spoken word or look of recognition can mean the world!

Some of us need to learn new ways to better support and help our children.

Some of us need more help from schools or various professionals either in the short term or from more specialist services over a longer term.

Some of us need help from birth whereas others may at a later stage.

Generally from our experience, parents just want to see their child as happy as possible and accessing experiences and typical things that any parent would want for any of their children to lead fulfilling lives.

Everything that we do is because we want it right for our children.

This guide is created, by parent carers on their journey with their own SEN children, is gifted in the hope that it will help other families feel more informed and less isolated.

As parents of children with Special

education needs and disabilities, the learning never stops but we want to share what we have learnt along the way.

Whatever age or stage you discover your child has a disability or need there are common themes to Parent Carers concerns

- 1) What do we need from health services?
- 2) What input do we need from education services?
- 3) What input might we need from more specialist services if all other areas haven't worked?
- 4) Finding out how my child can develop various skills socially through different leisure activities and Short Breaks
- 5) What support is available for parent carers?

Where do you see yourself at the moment?

We each begin our journey as parent carers at different stages but all of us find ourselves navigating unfamiliar lands.

We often begin seeking new information and learning all we can to try to understand and make sense of our new path, all the while carrying worries and anxieties about how best to help our children be the best they can be and achieve their goals.

We research services that may suit our family and try to negotiate our way through the services, learning about thresholds and criteria, encountering services that may excel at meeting needs but also services that could do so much better.

South Glos Parents and Carers is a

community of parents and carers who work to improve services and support for SEN children and young people and their families. Ever proactive, we attend council meetings, health service meetings and sit on various boards and panels, always working towards one goal; feeding back your views and experiences on what is working and what isn't so that services can be made more suited to the needs of families.

One of our parents quoted

'Unknown Land'

"it feels like being dropped from a plane without a parachute into a foreign country, with no map or guidebook and the UK Embassy is split into 10 different locations, none of which are on the map, even if you had one!!"

We hope this guide will help you as a starting point so that you are not in the unknown land.

Our members have made it known that they need support and we have listened. Starting with this informative guide, we have developed different options for support for families that we will explain further in this guide.

We will update this as and when we can, as we learn about new things that might be more helpful for you.





Parent Carer Journey

What questions do you have?

Where do you see yourself at the moment?

We want to hear your views and issues!

I have concerns?

Seeking help and getting answers?
Early Years (age birth-4)
School (age 5-16)
Post 16 (16-25)

Diagnosis

How can I get one?
What is the process?
How long will it take?
Do I need a label?

Team around the child

Who are they?
What do they do?
What do I have to do?

Acceptance and seeking support

How will I cope?
Who can I talk to?
How will this affect my family?
Self-care is important! Where can parent carers get support?
Who can I go to for help?
What if my child has life-limiting conditions?
Benefits advice ?
Bump in the road – when circumstances change.

This guide has been divided up into the themes of concern we so often encounter at SGPC, so whatever stage you are in your journey, or whatever route you take, it can act as a signpost, providing you with information and arming you with the knowledge you need, hopefully making the path much less daunting. You are not alone, we are on the same type of journey too and we are keen to make it better for all of us.

To help us improve and bring about positive changes we need your help and views on the different areas.

Maybe become a parent Rep and join one of our teams.

Understanding Education Needs

Help understanding complex SEN processes
What support educational settings will offer?
What is SEN support?
What is an EHC plan?
Planning for adulthood at school

Understanding Health Services

Who is the health team
and how do they support
our family?

Care in Hospital

Do they have the right info
about my child needs?
What can they do to help?
How can I get further support?

Preparing for adulthood/future

When should I start thinking about this?
What about the transitions between
child and adulthood services

Your life after caring

I feel lost, what can I do?
Is there somewhere I can talk to ?

Early Years

Often known as Early Years/Pre School/ 0-5

We have just put together a very basic starting point of who you might want to know about or contact.

WHO are the professionals parents could ask for help and guidance for this age group?

Your Health Visitor is a really good point of contact.

Health Visitors are qualified nurses or midwives with additional training in promoting child, family and community health. They have extensive knowledge about child development, child health, parenting strategies and community support. They work with families with children under 5.

Check out all the health roles from the Children's Community Health Service Partnership website <http://cchp.nhs.uk>

If you have concerns of worries and your child is at nursery /preschool other key roles

All Nursey /pre-school settings should have an identified SEND Coordinator sometimes called a SENCo or inclusion leader

Portage Worker.

Portage is a home education visiting service for preschool children and their families which aims to help children with SEND and their families –Learn together, Play together, Participate and be included in their community.

Our criteria is for a child to be aged under school age, have a South Glos.

address, and be significantly delayed in 2 or more developmental areas.

A range of professionals can refer and we accept self-referrals from parents. Referral is through South Glos. one point access ART formerly First point.

0-25 SEND team: This team manages the SEN and social care aspect for those children with complex support. They also will manage the statutory Education Health Care Plan process.

Children's Centres

South Gloucestershire has six main children's centres with eight additional 'link' centres operating alongside these. The six main centres offer support, assistance and advice to parents or carers of pre-school children (aged 0-5). They also provide an information service and outreach service across their catchment area.

Some of these centres do provide additional support to those families who have children with SEN&D so please do look them up.

The Children's Centres are:

- **Kingswood Children's Centre**
- **Cadbury Health Children's Centre**
- **Cranleigh Court Children's Centre**
- **Patchway Children's Centre**
- **Staple Hill Children's Centre**
- **Filton Children's Centre**

If you want to find out more you can look at the council website "The local offer" should display this information.

Google Children's Centers South Glos. We have provided a shorter link to their

site <http://tinyurl.com/h7pnp37>

You can call South Gloucestershire's Children and Young People Information Service on 01454 868008 and they will sign post you to the closest Centre.

We run **Little Treasures in Hanham** which is a stay and play group for pre-school children and their parents on Thursday mornings.



Little Treasures has been a really important part of the weekly routine for me & the boys for the past few years. Somewhere safe and friendly and the music therapy / drama therapy has all helped with confidence and

understanding routine. We've met some lovely families and volunteers who have given advice and help as we are often facing similar issues so can provide mutual support. We are very fortunate to have been a part of the group, thank you!

Want to make a difference and help Early Years?

South Glos Parents and Carers are looking for Parents and Carers to join our Early Years team so that we can represent families and find out how we can improve families experiences for preschool children.

Fancy joining us?
We would love to hear from you!

Contact
leonie.pollinger@sglospc.org.uk

"Hi I am Gill and I run Little Treasures but I am also a Parent Rep on the early years team. I am so pleased to be the early years rep as I am passionate about support being available and accessible as soon as families need it. Having worked in early years for over ten years I have seen first-hand the benefits of early identification and intervention. I have also seen how isolated families can feel and so as a parent rep for SGPC. I want to help families feel supported and signposted to relevant groups from the start as well and the voice if these families needed to help impact change in this vital sector."



I have some concerns/ worries?

What do I do if my child is struggling at Nursery/School/College?

1. Talk to your child's class teacher, head of year, tutor – the person who has most contact with your child every day AND is responsible for your child's progress.

Ask them how they're viewing your child. How is s/he progressing compared to other similar-aged children?

Parent-to-parent advice

Although your child may see their Learning support assistant /Teacher assistant every day, remember it is their teacher/tutor/head of year who is responsible for planning to meet their needs.

2. See if the staff have concerns too. Perhaps your child's difficulties are things that all children may experience some time during their education.

If not, persist by asking for information on all types of progress – academic, social, and developmental.

Examples of your concerns

- Does your child play alongside other children, rather than with them?
- Does your child seem to have great difficulty completing their homework and can't tell you what the lesson was about - resulting in lots of detentions?
- Has your child become really anxious about going to their nursery/school/college?

3. If your child has a serious health and/ or care issue, discover how the setting is coping?

Does the setting have an individual health care plan for your child?

Top Tip

If a Health professional is already working with your child (health visitor, GP, paediatrician, physio, etc.), you may raise your initial concerns with them. Ask them to copy in the SEN Co-ordinator (SENCO) at your child's setting with any letters/advice to keep the communication lines open.

4. How is the setting sharing important information about your child amongst other staff – within the setting, and with other agencies?

Top Tip

Ask for copies of the records the setting is making about your child's progress, and the actions they are taking. You should be told if they are referring your child to another agency.

5. During any discussion, keep a record of agreed actions. Then, next time you meet, you can ask to see progress against these actions.

When will you meet again to review progress?

What are they going to do?

Who will do it?

When will it be done by?

6. The setting has to report to you on your child's progress at least once a year in a written report, as well as at parents' evening(s).

7. You may find the setting can address any needs using a wide range of usual interventions available for any child as a matter of course, using internal resources. These interventions will be covered by the standard budget that every setting has per pupil per year (up to £4000).

Top Tip

All settings in South Gloucestershire should be practising Quality First Teaching, which includes differentiation of tasks for pupils to meet their individual needs.

8. The setting should be able to tell you all the things they are doing to help your child, and if these are making a difference.

Top Tip

Ask the staff to share these ideas with you, so you can try them at home.

9. If these interventions don't enable your child to make progress, your child may have **Special Educational Needs (SEN)** - see next page.

It maybe that you child needs support in different ways and you need input from health services to look into other reasons please see our page on Understanding Health Services

Parent-to-parent advice

Be persistent!

If your gut feeling is that something is wrong, don't be put off by the "Everything's fine!" response

You know your child best!

Talk to other parents of children at the same setting to see if any others are having similar problems.

Take your concerns higher in the setting (e.g. the Nursery Manager, SENCO Head, Inclusion Manager)

*Contact Supportive Parents for Independent advice:
www.supportiveparents.org.uk*

Come along to one of South Glos Parents and Carers informal support meetings.



Understanding Health within the community

"When I first had a conversation with a professional about the possibility of my son having autism I thought my GP would be able to give a diagnosis, I wasn't prepared for what actually was the diagnosis process" Mum

The health teams:

The key professionals that you may meet through health in the first instances are:

Health Visitors (Early years 0-5)
Attached to your GP surgery

School Nurses ages 5-18 (speak to your school first)

GP's, tend not to have as much involvement with children regarding their additional needs /disabilities and often refer children to other specialists within the Children's Community Health Partnership if they feel this is required. (Often known as CCHP)

The CCHP service provides the various children's health services within the local community.

- **Community Paediatricians**
- **Children's Therapists i.e. Speech Language, Occupational Health, Physios**
- **Health Visitors**
- **School Health Nurses**
- **Children's Mental Health Teams (CAMHS)**

You can access more details about the service and the various teams that work

within the service on their website. Do check out their A-Z guide which also shows different conditions.

<http://cchp.nhs.uk>

Another very useful resource produced by the Children Community Health Partnership is Where to get help? Information for Children, Young People and their Families in South Gloucestershire

<http://www.southglos.gov.uk/documents/Families-book-ver-4.pdf>

Please note some things on the link above maybe out of date however we felt it was a useful booklet of information not to be included.

Barnardo's who are part of the Children's community health partnership have worked on the following family stories that you also may find useful.

<http://cchp.nhs.uk/cchp/your-say/cchp-family-stories>

Lifetime service is for families where a child has a life threatening, life limiting condition. The Lifetime Continuing Care Team also provide a service for families where a child has complex health needs that require specialist, often technology dependent support at home, provided through a care package. Please also look at the following charity who offer support to families 'Together For Short Lives'. www.togetherforshortlives.org.uk

If you have a service that you wish to advertise in our guide please get in touch for further details, fees etc. by emailing bookings@sglospc.org.uk

Your Advert could be here

Helping Families who have children with any additional need, with or without a diagnosis

SEN Support Group, Lending Library, Holiday Activities and more



www.jigsawthornbury.org.uk Tel: 07827322358



INNOVATING SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 16-25 WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES AND AUTISM

Focus on:

Independent Living Skills / Social Inclusion / Health and Fitness / Vocational Training



The Barton Hill Settlement
43 Ducie Rd
Barton Hill, Bristol, BS5 0AX



Tel: 0117 9667451 / 07702802679



sam@optionssupport.com
rocio@optionssupport.com



Team around my child

Most children will have their needs met within universal services i.e. education settings, GP, accessing leisure centres, services that are available for everyone. They will be required to make reasonable adjustments and use their resources to meet the needs of the child.

Sometimes though we may need some additional help from more services. Maybe in the short term or for the long term.

If you find your child's difficulties are really beginning to affect their wellbeing which maybe having an impact on their day to day life it's important we have a plan of action that is coordinated and evidenced.

Are you finding your child's difficulties is having such an effect on your family that you feel you need help from other services?

Are you seeing concerning behaviours at home or regression?

Maybe you need some additional help before things get worse!

If you are finding that you are needing to have additional support from other services as well as an education setting it might be worth asking about Early Help and the single assessment framework known as SAF.
<http://edocs.southglos.gov.uk/safeh-family>

Parent-to-parent advice

Always talk to your education setting first about any concerns or in case of early years your health visitor, if you find you are starting to see more than one professional and you are having to tell your story often then really you should be asking about Early Help and the single assessment framework known for short as a SAF (once also known as a CAF!)

SAF Early help is about working with children, young people and their families to offer the right support at an early stage before a small need becomes a bigger one. By working as a team around the child (TAC) or team around the family (TAF) rather than lots of different departments a clearer action plan can be formed.

Parent-to-parent advice

If you do have a number of professionals involved and no other plan in place we would strongly advise to ask the question why is there not a SAF in place? Having a SAF at an earlier stage is evidence regarding what has worked and what hasn't.

Top Tip

Need further guidance? Parents can also contact South Gloucestershire Access and Response Team (ART) 01454 866000 they will determine what support from a service your child may need and may help you get a SAF.

Who might be the professionals who work with my child?

Below is a very small introduction to some of the teams who might be involved along your journey, we may have missed some professionals/team but this is just an example and we will add to this in future updates of our guide:

Educational Psychologists, usually accessed through education settings however it is our understanding parents can phone the EP team. Teams are based at the Kingswood Hub and the Patchway Hub

Professionals from the health services (see our health page)

SENCO This is the dedicated person who is responsible in coordinating the SEN of those children who have been identified and to ensure the class teachers are delivering lessons in an inclusive way.

Family young people support service (FYPS) This service offers support to families who may need early intervention and preventative services in need of additional support. The focus of these services is targeted work. To find out if this is a service is for your family you could ask the school or phone the Access and response team (ART) based in Yate.

0-25 SEND Team

This service works with Children and young people with SEN and disability. This team does have a threshold to access them. They cover Special educational needs where a child requires additional support that a

education setting is not able to provide for based on their current funding.

They also run the social care side for disabled children and up until 25 if the criteria for social care is met. This team manages the Education health care process. Please read further about the EHC Process

Parent-to-parent advice

If you want or need some impartial advice about anything to do with SEND we encourage families to get in touch with Supportive Parents who have local knowledge and provide the SEND information service in South Gloucestershire.

Independent Support Kids for South Gloucestershire, Bristol and North Somerset

- Free and independent support for parents and young people throughout the Education, Health and Care Plan process.
- Guidance and assistance through new EHCP applications and conversions from Statements of SEN.
- Home visits, telephone support and advocacy during meetings.

0117 947 6111

www.kids.org.uk

Council for disabled children | independent support

Giving disabled children a brighter future

A support community for families with children (0-25) who have additional needs



South Glos Parents & Carers

Support Groups

for families who have children and young people with additional needs or a disability



Yate Coffee Morning
once a month on a Thursday
10 am - 12 noon
Poole Court, Yate BS37 5PP

Patchway Support Group
once a month on a Friday
10 am - 12 noon
Coniston Community Centre
The Parade, BS34 5LP

Stay and Play Support Group Little Treasures
Activities for pre school Children and their parents carers
Every Thursday
10 am - 12.00 noon
Hanham Baptist Church, High Street, Hanham, BS15 3QY

Time Out Support Group
Once a month on a Tuesday
9.30 - 11.30 am
Resound, Blackhorse Road, Mangotsfield, BS16 9BP

Bradley Stoke Evening Support Group
3rd Monday each month
time 6.30 - 8 pm
Christ The King Church, Mautravers Close, Bristol, BS32 8EE

6 week Free Counselling Service
please contact us for further details

Contact us to for more details and to check individual dates on:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/sglos Twitter: twitter.com/sglospandc
Phone: 01454 501009 (answerphone) Email: parents@sglospc.org.uk
Website: www.sglospc.org.uk

What Are Special Educational Needs?

1. Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can affect a child's ability to learn

They can affect their:

- behaviour or ability to socialise, e.g. they struggle to make and keep friends
- academic progress, e.g. reading, writing, and maths
- ability to understand things and follow instructions
- concentration levels and ability to remember things
- physical ability to join in all the activities with the other children
- ability to cope with a busy education environment.

The law says:

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

The SEND Code of Practice says:

A child must have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age, or has a disability which prevents use of what is normally available in mainstream settings.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

Top Tip

Not every diagnosis may be classed as a disability so please refer to the

following definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010. "You're disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities"

2. Some difficulties may NOT be because of Special Educational Needs

Your child may be responding in usual ways to difficult life events, for example:-

- They may display changes in behaviour due to bullying, bereavement, etc.
- They may be recovering from an operation or illness and need additional support for a time.
- Their first language is not English and they are struggling to learn and make friends
- They are acting as a carer for an adult or a sibling and may not be making consistent progress
- They may, for various reasons, show disruptive behaviour only with certain teachers or in certain lessons.

Examples of help available:

If your child's difficulties are not SEN – don't worry they should still get health, pastoral and personal care in the setting, and from other outside agencies, for example:-

Bereavement support / Medical and social support / Classroom support to enable learning, achievement, and social and personal development / Pastoral and emotional support to enable inclusion.

What might be causing the SEN?

Are there medical or physical issues?

Perhaps there is underlying condition at the root of the problems?

Parent-to-parent advice

Go and talk to a member of Health staff (such as your health visitor, GP, school nurse). Different Health services have different ways that children can be referred for help, or for an assessment for a health diagnosis. Usually a Health visitor, GP, or school nurse refer for an assessment to the Children Community Health Services. Search here alphabetically by service: <https://www.nbt.nhs.uk/cchp/explore-cchp?filter=a> Please see our section on Health in our guide.

Does your child have very complex difficulties which were identified or diagnosed at birth or soon after? Please note we will add more to this section in the future.

Top Tip

Ask the staff working with you (e.g. Consultant, Portage worker, community nurse what they think is needed at an early age) Look at the South Glos local offer for early Years to find out what help is available.

Help you can seek during this time

Are you struggling with coping with the practical aspects of life (e.g. understanding benefits, applying for Disability Living Allowance or Carer's Allowance, finding grants, dealing with your landlord)? Contact A Family details in the directory at the back of this guide Offer a benefits advice line.

Why not come along to one of South Glos Parents and Carers support groups we run for families across south Gloucestershire:

Patchway

Yate

Mangotsfield

Bradley Stoke Evening

Or our weekly Little treasures in Hanham

"Meeting other parents has been a great way for me to pick up tips and ideas"

Parent Quote

If you would like to help be part of support teams or would like to set up a group in Warmley/Longwell Green area we would love to hear from you.

Contact
leonie.pollinger@sglospc.org.uk

thank you to Bristol Parent Carers, Supportive Parents and Kids and Swindon Parent Carers Forum for sharing some resources with us. To help us make this guide for you.

What is SEN Support?

1. Once it has been decided that your child has SEN and their needs cannot be met by classroom differentiation a four step action process which is set out in the SEN Code of Practice should begin.

This is known as the graduated approach response which is based on the Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle.



Parent Advice

Make sure Outcomes have been identified so everyone knows what difference you are trying to make for the child and you must be involved in this process.

Assess What are the needs of the child?

Plan What actions and interventions will the school and others do to meet the needs identified.

Do: Put the actions into place to help the child and agree the next time there will be a review

Review What are the results of the interventions that have been put in place? Has progress been made? And then the cycle begins again.

2. The setting can use internal resources (their own staff and expertise) and external resources to

help your child.

These interventions will be covered by the setting's delegated SEN budget (money they already have in their budget to meet the needs of children with SEN – up to an extra £6000 per pupil per year).

The amount of help the external agencies can provide is detailed in their Core Offer to settings, which vary with each profession. Check out each setting for their local offer or core offer which shows how they support Children and young people with SEND.

Examples of external advice available, could be from

Educational psychologist (EP) School nurse Learning Improvement Support Behaviour Inclusion Team Health (e.g. speech & language, physio, and occupational therapists) Primary mental health specialist, Social care services.

3. The setting should be meeting with you at least 3 times a year to:

Review progress, agree outcomes, agree next steps, and draw up a new plan.

Parent-to-parent advice

It is well worth making some notes about what you want to say at the meeting – any concerns you have, what you think is working well and not so well. Collect evidence at all stages. You can take someone with you to the meeting. This could be a relative, friend or support worker. Another "pair of ears" is always useful and they can remind you about the things you want to say. WE ALWAYS MAKE NOTES!

4. This information will be recorded in some way that the school chooses. In South Glos, each setting can use their own paperwork, and templates to record how they support students however guidance is available on the Local offer regarding what the council expects from settings.

5. You and the setting can agree that there are periods of time when your child should not be at school. If your child has a part-time timetable agreed with you as part of their Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle - it should be for a short period only and constantly under review.

Top Tip

The setting can NOT ask you to take your child home because they cannot cope with them. This would be an illegal exclusion. They also cannot require you to come into school to support your child.

6. The setting will continue assessing your child's needs using a graduated response in order to find what sort of help makes a difference, and to which aspects of their needs. The setting may find:-

- ▶ The support helped, your child has overcome their problem, and they no longer need SEN Support
- ▶ The support is helping and your child will continue to need SEN Support
- ▶ Your child needs more/further support.

Parent-to-parent advice

It is common for a child with SEND to show different behaviour at the setting than they do at home. Some problems won't be resolved unless everybody looks at the whole child.

7. You can ask the setting at any time to see your child's records.

Examples of records you could ask for
Attendance record
Provision map
/Progress against any assess/plan/do/review outcomes
/Records of behaviour points over time
/Records of learning points over time
/Risk assessments used with your child

8. This support should only come to an end if the setting and you are in agreement that your child has reached all their outcomes, and has become an independent learner.

Parent-to-parent advice

There may come a time when the setting suggests that since your child is making progress, their level of support could be reduced. Any changes in levels of support should be agreed with you.

9. These interventions might be sufficient to enable your child to make progress.

They might be needed long-term to enable your child to continue making progress.

Parent-to-parent advice

Even if the setting has been very helpful and put in place a lot of support, it is okay to point out if your child is not making adequate progress.

10. If your child moves setting, SEN Support should still be provided, although it may be in a different format. The new setting might be able to meet your child's needs in a different way/using their resources differently.

Parent-to-parent advice

Meet the SENCO in the proposed new setting. Discuss your child's needs before they transfer there, and discover how they'll meet the needs.

If it feels like the right place for your child, make sure that a proper transition process is put in place between the existing setting and the new one.

Take part in the transition activities with your child.



Milestones Trust offers a range of services for young adults making their first steps towards independence. For any family, this is a scary time – we can all remember those teenage arguments with parents, feeling trapped and cosseted and misunderstood and wanting to be “free” (whatever THAT means). As a parent it is terrifying knowing how big, bad and frightening the world outside can be, wanting your son and daughter to grow and be independent but seeing all those traps and pitfalls they are oblivious to. We understand that supporting a child or young adult who needs some extra support can feel like that, but turned up to eleven!

Working closely with family and friends we aim to tailor individual packages of support, which offer reassurance to parents that whilst risks will be taken, they will be taken with thought and care, and which help the young person discover who they are and what is really important, whilst giving that freedom and independence they crave.

Take Owen – Owen moved into a bungalow with other people his age, with corridors wide enough that he could easily get his wheelchair around with causing “too” much damage. With his housemates he planned the weekly shop, went out to get what he needed, took his turn cooking (with some help); he also carried on at college, went on an outwards bounds holiday where he tried abseiling (in his wheelchair!) and canoeing and did some voluntary work. Two years on he had proven to himself, and to his mum and dad, that he could be responsible and knew what he wanted, and with two other people from the house moved into his own place with staff to help... It's not all plain sailing – there are arguments about housework and Owen's musical taste and despite trying really hard, he still hasn't got the job or the girlfriend he wanted... but that's life. Real life. And that's what we help people achieve.

What are EHC assessments

Most children's needs can be met by their school or education setting, with the help of outside specialists sometimes needed. However, in some cases the local authority will be asked to make an assessment of a child's Education, Health and Care needs

1. EHC needs assessments and plans are processes governed by law. South Gloucestershire 0-25 SEND team has the responsibility for these statutory processes. They must follow the legal steps and timetable in the SEND Code of Practice.

Useful links

View the SEND Code of Practice here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

2. It is possible to request an EHC needs assessment from 0-25 SEND Team in the Council at any time of the year.

Your child's setting can apply.

Or you can apply as the parent/carer(s). And if over 16 the young person can apply

Parent-to-parent advice

In reality not all settings will have been recording evidence or putting in support. Or they may not support your application.

Seek free and impartial support from organisations, such as Supportive Parents (0117 989 7725) or KIDS (0117 947 6111).

3. The panel will expect to see what the setting has evidenced (gathered over about 6 months) showing:

- ▶ the interventions they've tried and what the outcomes were
- ▶ what other professionals are recommending
- ▶ that progress has not been made
- ▶ that the needs are beyond their ability to address.

Evidence will be expected

As parents, you must be asked for your opinions and views.

Useful links

South Gloucestershire Council is developing an E guide for schools of procedures, paperwork for staff at settings - look out for its launch.

4. When parent/carers request an EHC needs assessment, you can complete an assessment form explaining why you think that your child requires an EHC Needs Assessment, and you can send in any other evidence that you have which will help the Council make a decision. This could be reports from medical staff, an educational psychologist, speech and language therapist, social worker, etc.

Top Tip

Supportive Parents have developed a template letter that parents can use to request an EHC needs assessment
Email: support@supportiveparents.org.uk

KIDS use a Council for Disabled Children template which they are happy to adapt for you.
Email: IS.SouthWest@kids.org.uk

5. The Council has 6 weeks for their SEN Panel to make a decision about whether to carry out the assessment. The SEN Team will expect to see clear evidence of:

The actual support given, timescales of the support, progress made or not outcomes achieved and the team who has been involved in helping your child.

Top Tip

If your child's setting does not provide sufficient evidence, the application WILL be turned down. The panel really do look at what interventions have been put in place and the outcomes of the interventions.

6. If your application for an assessment is turned down, the SEND Team will write to you explaining their decision and the reasons for it. If you do not agree with the reasons given, you can:

- write to the SEN Team asking them to reconsider explaining why the reasons being given are wrong
- you or your child (16+) can appeal to the SEN and Disability Tribunal within 2 months of the date on the letter

Useful links

If you want to appeal the decision, you first need to consider Mediation <http://www.globalmediation.co.uk/our-services/special-educational-needs-and-disability>

If you go on to Tribunal, here is a shortened link that provides information about the process <http://tinyurl.com/qxlvleo>

7. If the application for an assessment is agreed, the Council has a further 6 weeks to carry out the assessment:

- A Council Lead Co-ordinator will write to you, as the parent/carer, asking you to complete a contribution form
- You can ask for help with the form from Supportive Parents or KIDS
- The Lead Coordinator will gather evidence from all key professionals and any others you would like involved and draw up a draft Plan
- The lead Coordinator will ensure that the Child and young person and the family views are included.
- The Plan and all evidence collected goes to the Council's Panel who undertake the assessment according to criteria laid out in the SEND Code of Practice, and will decide:-

- ▷ Either a Statutory EHC Plan IS required.
- ▷ Or a Statutory EHC Plan is NOT required.

Useful links

Supportive Parents is the SEND Information, Advice and Support Service in Bristol www.supportiveparents.org.uk
KIDS (Bristol) are the Independent Support Service <http://www.kids.org.uk/Event/independent-supporters-bristol>

8. If the 0-25 panel's decision is NOT to issue a Plan, they will inform you and the setting with the decision, the reasons, and the rights of appeal by letter within 6 weeks.

9. If the SEND Team DOES agree to issue an EHC Plan, the Assessment Co-ordinator has 4 weeks to send you the draft, and invite you to a multi-agency meeting to discuss it and agree any changes to the Plan. The Council should negotiate with parents and professionals about the date of the meeting where possible.

Parent-to-parent advice

*Even if you cannot attend, the meeting WILL go ahead.
Ask for help with the meeting from KIDS or Supportive Parents.*

10. After the consensus reached at the multi-agency meeting, the SEND Team issues a Final Draft EHC Plan

What is an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan?

1. If the assessment process and multi-agency meeting has led to the Council issuing you with a Final Draft Plan, your Assessment Co-ordinator will send it to you. With all evidence attached. You have 15 days to comment on it, and to name the setting you want.

If you think that they have missed out any needs or provisions from the evidence supplied, then ask for changes.

2. The Final Plan must be issued within 20 weeks of the date you asked for an assessment. It will name the setting, or type of setting, your child will attend. It will detail the long-term outcomes for your child until the end of their current Key Stage. If you do not agree with what the Plan says or the setting named, you can appeal (see Page 11).

Top Tip

Talk to your Lead Co-ordinator throughout this process to try to resolve any issues before having to go to appeal.

3. The Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle will continue in the setting.

You should be invited to meet your child's teacher/tutor at least 3 times a year, to agree and review progress with your child's 12 month short-term outcomes.

Top Tip

The Plan lists your child's needs, outcomes, and the provision to meet those outcomes from Education, Health and Social Care. See an example here: <http://www.findabilitybristol.org.uk/pages/education-city-wide-offer/ehcp/Other-documents>

Parent-to-parent advice

Meet up regularly with your child's health and social care professionals. Make sure they share their reports and strategies with the setting. Request they attend the Annual Reviews of the Plan.

4. Your child's EHC Plan must be reviewed annually at the setting in a meeting with the young person, parent/carers, other professionals involved with your child, and anyone else the parent/young person wishes to invite.

The setting will forward you a "Parental Contribution to Annual Review" form to complete.

5. This support should only come to an end if the setting and you are in agreement that your child has reached all their outcomes, and has become an independent learner. Thus the EHC Plan is in place until your child no longer needs it, they are no longer in education/training/apprenticeship, or until their Preparing for Adulthood outcomes have been met (see over).

6. Some children need more help than a mainstream setting can provide.

If your child does not make progress despite everything that the setting has tried, a move to a specialist setting might be required however local options will be considered first.

Top Tip

If you want your child to move to a specialist setting: -

- ▶ Talk to your child's Lead Co-ordinator in the SEN Team
- ▶ Make your request at an Annual review (or ask for an early review)
- ▶ Get agreement that different provision at a different setting is appropriate
- ▶ If this is agreed, go and look at possible settings.

7. Parents can request a Personal Budget (PB) is drawn up as part of the EHC Plan process - there is a section in the EHC Plan for this. PBs are offered to expand your choice and control over how a service is delivered. Every local authority is introducing PBs gradually between 2015 and 2018. Currently in South Glos PBs are available for short breaks, home to school travel, and continuing health care - the list will expand in due course. Currently only those children who are already in receipt of these 3 services will be assessed to see if they meet the criteria for a PB.

Useful Links

Read all about Personal Budgets from the South Glos local offer

8. To obtain an EHC Plan, there must be an education portion to your child's special needs/disability.

If your child only has health and/or social care issues, they are not eligible for an Education, Health and Care Plan. This is because the education portion is the part that Councils have to provide by law - the statutory part.

If your child is able to attend University the EHC plan process is not applicable for Higher Education.

Parent-to-parent advice

If your son or daughter is going into Higher Education please read up about Disability Student Allowance. You also will need to prove that your child has a disability and if they have a learning need.

Top Tip

If your child does not have an EHC Plan then:-
If the Health needs are high enough, a Health Care Plan is set up and taken forward by the School Health Nurse.
If Social Care Services agree some outcomes for your child, a short-term or targeted service will be agreed to meet them. If the needs of your family require the skills of a social worker, this may sometimes lead to a Child-In-Need Support Plan.

Supportive Parents run a service for young people SP16-25 and supports anyone with additional educational needs and/or disability, who is thinking about their future. www.supportiveparents.org.uk/what-is-sp16-25

9. For young people Post-19, the education element refers to education, training, and apprenticeships. Under Preparing for Adulthood, independent living skills are also an outcome. These education activities should be leading the young person towards more independence (in skills and living) or to employability.

If the young person is not participating in these types of activity, they will not be eligible for an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Please note if your child is able to attend University the EHC plan process is not applicable for Higher Education.

Please google Disability Student Allowance for more information.

Useful links

The Preparing for Adulthood website
www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/
Mencap's advice
<https://www.mencap.org.uk/about-learning-disability/transition-and-further-education/transition>
Or do a web search for Mencap transition into adulthood

FACE is a developing Youth & Community charity based at Elm Park in Filton.

We run a wide range of youth activities and those for adults.



THE FOUNDATION FOR ACTIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



Ignite Thursdays is our evening specifically targeted for those with learning, social and physical disabilities and ASD. (It costs just £1 entry and there is a tuck shop)

Sensory Sparklers: 4.30-5.30pm is a group for people aged 11+ with complex sensory needs. This small group follows a revolving programme exploring the senses. Most of the group come with 1-2-1 support workers.

Bright Sparks: 6-7pm is a group for young people aged 11-15 years who do not require 1-2-1 support. This group explores a youth work curriculum including crafts, sports, IT & media, cooking, and issue-based topics and focuses on building social skills, confidence, independence, having fun, and learning new skills.

Illuminators: 7.30-9.30pm is a group for people aged 16+ which explores a youth & community-wide curriculum including crafts, IT & media, leisure activities, cooking, and issue-based topics and focuses on building independence, confidence, trying new things, meeting new people, and learning skills for the future.

Please contact our Disabilities Development Worker Emma at: emma@faceilton.org.uk or on 07562 666005 for more details or to arrange a visit. FACE, Elm Park, Filton, BS34 7PS - 0117 9891938 - www.faceilton.org.uk



Support for young people about SEND

My Child has a Statement/Learning Difficulties Assessment (LDA)

How will it be converted into an EHC Plan?

1. All children who currently have a Statement of Special Educational Needs or a Learning Difficulties Assessment (139a) are having a Conversion Review (nationally known as a Transfer Review).

2. These conversions are taking place in stages, and will be completed by

The Conversion stages are:-

By Sept 2016 – All Learning Difficulties Assessments

By Sept 2017 – Statements for all those at Key Stage transfer points

By Sept 2018 – Statements for everyone else

3. The conversion process in total should take 20 weeks, and involves:-

- A multi-agency meeting with you and your child
- Reports from professionals
- An EHC needs assessment

4. The setting should:-

- Call a meeting with you, any other professionals involved, and anyone else you want to be there, providing at least 2 weeks' notice. This may coincide with your Annual Review meeting.
- Gather the latest reports from professionals, to submit as

- appendices to the Plan
- Ask you to complete a Parental Contribution Form
- Distribute the papers/reports to all attendees before the meeting, if possible
- Pre-populate the Plan with suitable text - i.e. still relevant portions cut and pasted from the Statement
- Write the outcomes collectively at the meeting
- Submit this first draft to the SEN Team as soon as possible.

Parent-to-parent advice

Even if you cannot attend, the meeting WILL go ahead.

Ask for help with the conversion meeting from KIDS or Supportive Parents.

Parent-to-parent advice

If the setting does not carry out all these actions, the Plan you end up with will be less than useful. The draft you receive will require you, and any advice agencies helping you, to put in much more work and time to make it a good Plan that adequately describes your child and their needs.

5. As part of the EHC needs assessment, the SEN Team has to:-

- Gather any further evidence which is needed. They will look at the reports submitted, determine if you and the professionals agree that they are adequate, and if not ask for more current ones.

- Undertake an EHC Assessment using this evidence and the draft submitted by the setting
- Issue a Final Draft EHC Plan, and send it to you with all evidence attached.

Useful links

Supportive Parents is the SEND Information, Advice and Support Service in Bristol
www.supportiveparents.org.uk
 KIDS (Bristol) are the Independent Support Service
<http://www.kids.org.uk/Event/independent-supporters-bristol>

6. A Draft Plan should NOT:-

- have been developed without input from you or your child
- Look like it's simply a cut and

past Statement/Learning Difficulties Assessment

- omit your child's health and social care needs
- have poor descriptions of outcomes
- have insufficient up-to-date evidence from professionals attached.

7. The SEN Team will ask the setting if they can meet your child's needs, then will issue the Final EHC Plan within 18 weeks of the Conversion Review meeting.

Top Tip

It would be unusual for a setting to say it couldn't meet the needs of a child already with them.



A New Free School for children with autism

SGS Academy Trust are delighted to announce that we have received approval to form a new school in South Gloucestershire for children with autism.

The school will focus on providing intensive support to children aged between 4 and 19 in South Gloucestershire with a statement or EHCIP with autism as the primary need. We welcome exposure of interest in the school which opens in December 2017 from parents and carers of children with autism.

We will be forming a group of Parents and Carers Ambassadors who will be consulted with and influence the creation of the school. FOR MORE DETAILS AND SUBMITTING AN INTEREST FORM: www.sgspegasusschool.co.uk twitter.com/sgspegasus www.facebook.com/sgspegasusschool email: admin@sgspegasusschool.co.uk

Parent Information

Parent Carer Contributions to Planning/Review Meetings

Things to think about before a meeting

Planning

1. Understand the type of meeting you're attending

What sort of meeting is this?

- ▶ Is it part of the Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle?
- ▶ Is it an Individual Education Plan meeting, looking at short-term goals and progress over a term or two?
- ▶ Is it an Annual Review meeting looking at the last year and the year ahead?
- ▶ Is it an EHC Planning meeting looking at long-term goals until the next Key Stage?

2. Get the right people to the meeting

Who would you like to attend the meeting?

- ▶ Is there someone you'd like to take with you?
- ▶ Which professionals would be valuable at the meeting?

Preparing

3. Read other people's opinions

Do you receive reports about your child?

- ▶ Has the setting sent you any reports to read?
- ▶ Have other professionals involved with your child sent you reports?

- ▶ Have these other professionals copied their reports to the setting? If you have some new information – remember to take it with you to the meeting.

Writing your Contribution

4. Think about your child's progress in four main areas of special need:-

a) Cognition and Learning

(How much your child understands. How well your child remembers things. What skills they have. How motivated s/he is. What their attention span is like)

b) Communication and Interaction

(How your child tells people what s/he wants. How well your child listens and takes in what is said to them. How your child relates to adults, other family members, friends and peers)

c) Social, Emotional and Mental Health

(How your child copes in social situations. How your child copes with his/her emotions. How anxious and fearful s/he is. What their self-esteem is like)

d) Sensory and Physical

(How your child is affected by any hearing or sight loss. How your child is affected by any sensory processing disorder. How your child is affected by any physical impairment. How self-sufficient they are)

For each area of special need, you should write down:

- ▶ What has gone well, since the last review?
- ▶ What has not gone so well, since the last review? Continued:-

5. Think about what should happen next (over a term, a year, a Key Stage -

depending on the type of meeting)

Before the meeting write down the following so that you are ready for the discussions at the meeting:-

- ▶ What your child wants to do – the Aspiration

(For example: go to the corner shop by themselves, and buy something)

- ▶ The skills/steps needed to make this happen – the Outcomes

(For example: be able to - understand & use money; cross the road safely; talk to strangers; know what conversation to have; use a mobile phone; remember the way home)

- ▶ The sort of help to put in place to reach the outcomes (from Education, Health and Care) – the Provision

(For example: lessons about handling money; training on road safety; opportunities to practice; learning the route)

#6. Think of any changes you need to tell the setting

- ▶ Have any of your/your child's personal details changed (e.g. address, phone number)?
- ▶ Have there been any changes at home / in family life / with your child



Supportive Parents offers:

- Information, Advice and Support Line: **0117 989 7725**
10am – 2pm Monday, Wednesday and Friday during term time
(answerphone at all other times)
- Help with paperwork and preparation for meetings
- Monthly support group meetings
- Parent courses
- Termly newsletter

For further information about our free, confidential service please visit our website at www.supportiveparents.org.uk



Registered Charity No: 1079761

Providing the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIAS) for Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire



Care in Hospital

If your child needs to go to hospital you need to inform them of your child's needs.

Have you heard of the hospital passport?

The aim of the Hospital Passport is to provide hospital staff with information about disabled children during their visits to hospital. The information submitted helps staff work in partnership with parents/carers to meet the child's needs.

The Hospital Passport uses a traffic light system. This means that all essential information



about your child must be written in the red section, this will alert staff to any extremely

important information or specific requirements your child might have.

The amber section is for important information about your child's day-to-day activities.

Preferable information about your child's like and dislikes can be documented in the green section.

This was co designed with our colleagues at Bristol Parent Carers and the Hospital.

Here is the main link for the Bristol Children's Hospital

<http://www.uhbristol.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/your-hospitals/bristol-royal-hospital-for-children/>

When searching Look for the Parent Support Services or children hospital passport on the website of The Bristol Royal Hospital for Children (BRHC)

A useful team to know about is also **LIAISE**

LIAISE is a dedicated patient and family support service for Bristol Children's Hospital and for women's and children's services based at St Michael's Hospital which includes maternity, gynaecology, neonatal care and children's audiology.

You can visit on site during the following times:

Bristol Royal Hospital for Children - Family Information Room, Level 2 (main reception)

Monday to Thursday - 10am to 12 noon and 2pm to 4pm

The service is currently closed on Fridays

Outside of these times and locations you can contact on: Telephone: 0117 342 8065 or 0117 342 8158



Talk Speech & Language Therapy Ltd

admin@talkspeechtherapy.co.uk

www.talkspeechtherapy.co.uk

0772519718

We are an Independent Practice providing support across Bristol and the surrounding areas. We run a clinic directly supporting families and work in over 30 settings including mainstream primary and secondary schools, specialist provisions and local charity groups. We also offer a range of training packages.

Examples of the successful intervention packages we offer in our clinic and outreach service:

- * Bespoke packages of intervention based on each families individual needs
- * Detailed case history, full assessment and detailed reports
- * Direct 1:1 therapy for a block of intervention
- * Setting targets and providing a package of activities and resources for families to carry out at home
- * Regular reviews
- * Liaison with school/nursery and other professionals
- * School visits

Examples of the successful intervention that we currently provide in schools include:

- * Detailed assessment and speech and language goals written to feed into school based targets
- * Direct 1:1 and small group intervention
- * Working with alternative communication systems (from signing to high tech communication aids)
- * Supporting schools to become communication friendly, inclusive environments
- * Involvement in the EHCP and annual review process.
- * Liaison with parents / guardians and other professionals
- * Running whole class attention, listening and language groups
- * Supporting school staff to incorporate speech & language activities across the school day
- * Supporting social communication skills through interventions such as Lego Therapy
- * Supporting non-verbal children to improve their functional communication skills

Training Courses

Makaton, ELKLAN, Attention Autism, TalkBoost
A wide range of bespoke training packages

Preparing for Adulthood

OUR POST 16 team

We have a Post 16 team who are all Parent Carer volunteers who have an interest in improving Post 16 options /information for families in South Glos.

Meet Annette one of the team

"I have been volunteering for SGPC for about 6 months now and am really enjoying it. I have found the organisation to be extremely professional and the team to be very welcoming. I have gained a sense of being me again, in addition to wife, mother, daughter, carer, friend, taxi..."

I have a particular interest in the 'Post 16 journey', which our family has found hard work. I can relate to those who describe it as 'falling off a cliff' where little information comes to you - however with time/effort/perseverance in research there is support/information/groups available. I enjoy networking (quite appropriate as some friends call me 'Nett'!) and my hope is that, in some small way, I can use this to help families access the support/knowledge that will help them on their journey. Earlier this year I co-ordinated the Employment event in partnership with 'Preparing 4 Adulthood' - the growing 'post 16' team hope to bring more events like this to you in the future"



We have a fab group of parents who volunteer with our Post 16 team and we

are always looking for more parents who would like to get involved.

Interested?

Please do get in touch by emailing us post16@sglospc.org.uk

Thinking about the future?

Top Tip

Remember if your son or daughter has an EHC plan and there is still an educational need the plan can go up until they are 25. Annual reviews will still be expected to measure progress and outcomes.

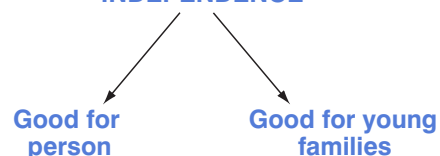
Please also read the following Post 16 Guide that can be found on the Council Local offer.

If your son or daughter has SEN you might find this useful to read.
<http://www.southglos.gov.uk/education-and-learning/schools-and-colleges/post-16-education-training/>

If your son or daughter is interested in attending University /Higher Education make sure you apply for Disability Student Allowance. A recent assessment will be completed so that the necessary support can be put in place. Please note that an EHC plan does not cover higher education.

Q: WHAT MAKES A SUCCESSFUL ADULT?

A: Many families would answer INDEPENDENCE



The ability to cope make decisions about their own future with support if required.

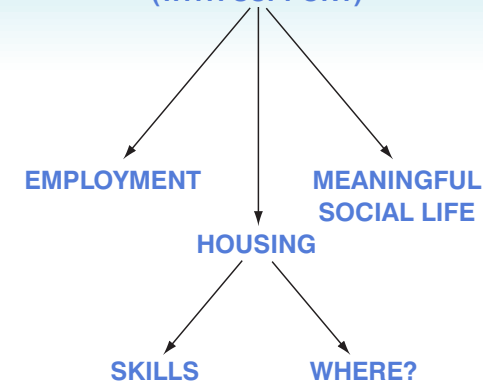
Other families will require more support from other agencies as they help their son or daughter to prepare for their future. We also have to prepare as parents when our children become 18 as services tend to address the young person now and not the parents. Overnight we become the carer instead of the parent.

Q: WHO's GOING TO BE THERE TO GUIDE ME WITH MY CHILD?

A: Over the new few additions of our magazine we will start recording different areas for you to think about. So that you start researching and collecting the different information yourself ready to support your son or daughter.

INDEPENDENCE

(WITH SUPPORT)



Please look in the directory at the back of our guide for some info re POST 16 support. The council's local offer in time will also be showing more details about POST 16 /preparing for adulthood.

A very useful website to look at is *Preparing For Adulthood*
www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk



Parent information

Top tips transition from different education settings

Some useful questions you might want to ask any new school when your child moves on (transitions) from Nursery > Primary > Secondary School

Settings should display on their websites what their core offer is to support Children and young people with SEND. So always check out their websites.



Questions you might want to ask the Professionals involved with your child:-

- What schools are available to us that would be appropriate for our child? I.e. schools with a Resource Base or Nurture Unit attached.
- Will our child cope in a mainstream setting? You may already know the answer to this!
- Is there a Specialist school that we could visit? If so, would our child qualify for a place?

Questions you could ask the different schools:-

- How many children in the school have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and what range of

needs do they have?

- How many children are there in each class? How many staff - Teachers, TA's?
- I understand in secondary school children do not have a one-to-one TA. What are the teaching ratios per TA to SEND children?
- What experience do you have working with and supporting children with *language difficulties? (*replace with what is specific to your child)
- What SEND training does your staff have?
- How much time is spent in the classroom vs. removal for group or 1:1 sessions?
- Do lunchtime staffs carry symbols to help support behaviour on the playground?
- Does the school have experience of using Makaton or a signing system? Do they use symbols around the school?
- How is progress measured and how frequently? Who tracks this? How do children with SEND progress in your school? Reviews should take place each term, even more frequently if there is concerns around your child's progress.
- What support do you get from outside agencies? How do you deliver/ follow through the advice/ programs from these professionals?
- If the school does have onsite support from other agencies, how much input is your child likely to receive? What are the criteria for accessing the service? How is therapy delivered – on class groups, smaller groups, pairs or 1:1?
- What post 16 provisions are in place?

What are the options available?

Outside Agencies / Pastoral Care

- Who provides extra support for children with SEND?
- My child may have difficulties recounting what has happened to them and they will need time and visual supports to be able to do this. Is your staff familiar with helping children with significant speech and language needs?
- Is there a Speech Therapist or Occupational Therapist on site, if so, how much time do they spend at the school? Is it weekly, once per term? Which children qualify to be seen? Not all children in the school may qualify for these services. What speech and language input will your child need i.e. vocabulary and social skills? Can the OT help my child if they are struggling with fine / gross motor skills / relaxation / sensory needs / anxiety?
- My child will need to work that much harder in school and may get tired due to the amount of effort they are putting in. Do you have timetabled sessions for my child to go over work he may not have understood in class or to complete some homework within school?
- What other courses can you offer i.e. ASDAN courses?

Timetables

- Do you modify the timetable for children who need extra time to go over work or practice their literacy skills? I.e. my child may find it difficult trying to learn another language, so this time could be better spent improving their literacy and maths skills.

YEAR 6

TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
8:00 - 8:45	Assembly	Assembly	Assembly	Assembly	Assembly	Assembly	Assembly
8:45 - 9:30	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths
9:30 - 10:15	English	English	English	English	English	English	English
10:15 - 11:00	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science	Science
11:00 - 11:45	History	History	History	History	History	History	History
11:45 - 12:30	PE	PE	PE	PE	PE	PE	PE
12:30 - 1:15	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1:15 - 2:00	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art
2:00 - 2:45	Music	Music	Music	Music	Music	Music	Music
2:45 - 3:30	PSHE	PSHE	PSHE	PSHE	PSHE	PSHE	PSHE
3:30 - 4:15	Homework	Homework	Homework	Homework	Homework	Homework	Homework

Does the school have different levels of visual timetables e.g. a now/ next rather than a whole day planner? Some children have difficulties telling the time and working out what time of day it is.

- Are the timetables colour coded or symbolized? You may want to consider using a similar timetable for home in order for your child to get used to using them.

Class Support



- Will my child have the same TA for specific lessons (i.e. the same TA for English)?
- How do you inform each teacher of my child's needs? Do you have a simple profile of what strategies to use with each child?
- What visual strategies do you use in class to help my child follow instruction?

- Writing is difficult for my child and does not always reflect what they know. Do you use other means so that they can demonstrate what they have learnt? I.e. would they be able to use other resources i.e. PowerPoint/drawings/video recordings/talking tins/typing on a computer instead of handwritten assignments?
- My child will need ongoing support to help with developing their reading and spelling. What programs do you use in school? I.e. Phonics?
- Can children access these programs in Year 7?
- Is there certain clubs available? In school or after school clubs i.e. ICT, Library?
- Is the teaching carried out in small groups?
- Do you offer weekly one-to-one speech and language / friendship groups / Occupational Therapy?
- How would you ensure that my child has access to the National Curriculum and also appropriate differentiation?

Transition plan

- Do you offer an induction package for children with SEND?
- Do you have a Buddy system? How long are they with your child for? How does it work?
- Do you have a mentor system? An adult your child can go to if they are struggling?
- Is there a 'Safe place' children can go if they are feeling overwhelmed or if something is bothering them?

How the settings communicate with Parents

- How do you involve parents in the

monitoring and planning for children with SEND? What support do you offer families?

- How does the school communicate with their families; do they have communication books or email?
- Is there a key person who will know my child well and who will liaise with me regularly?
- How regularly do they have meetings? – parents evening, reviews, progress meetings.
- Do they provide any information or training to parents or can they signpost you to people who can help?

Homework

- My child will need to work that much harder in school and may get tired due to the amount of effort they are putting in. Do you have timetabled sessions for my child to go over work he may not have understood in class or to complete some homework within school?
- Do you have a computer based homework system e.g. Moodle? My child may have some difficulties filling in their planner and writing down what homework they needs to complete.

Finally The most important factor is how you and your child feels about the setting.

- Can you picture your child there?
- It may not be the school your friend recommended or chose, but is it right for your child and your family?

I think we often make these decisions on a gut feeling, and as long as you have collected good evidence along the way, hopefully it will be the right decision.



South Glos Parents and Carers working with schools

Out in the field our wonderful work with schools has continued with several more parent group meetings taking place. Informal, informative and inspiring, the response to these meetings is overwhelmingly positive. Parent carers appreciate meeting each other and schools benefit from hearing how it is from the parent carer perspective. In short, everyone benefits.

There is still more to do in this area, and we would encourage you to encourage your school to participate. In the long term, we hope that

these groups will run themselves, with established parent carers being there to support new parent carers as they join the school, or for those parent carers whose children have just received a diagnosis. I always leave the groups feeling inspired and impressed that parent carers show such empathy and understanding for each other in a short space of time. We have to convey our thanks to the schools who have participated – they are going out of their way to facilitate these meetings, and it has been reassuring to have met with so many staff whose hearts are in the right place, and who genuinely care.



Wellbeing projects in schools

We were also fortunate to receive funding from South Glos Council Public Health for a wellbeing project for parent carers. This took the form of four weekly sessions, in schools, and a wellbeing event where parent carers could enjoy a creative activity and have some enjoyable respite from their cares and concerns.

Some groups talked about their families and swapped stories, others talked about new subjects and ideas. Lots of local advice is exchanged and, most importantly, new friendships formed. One chatty group spent 40 minutes in complete silence as each concentrated on their own paintings! Some amazing work was produced by people who began by saying 'I'm not at all creative.....' It was a pleasure to prove them wrong!

Our wellbeing event was run in partnership with Make It Mentoring and had a selection of lots of different strategies to help you relax.





Make it Mentoring

Make it Mentoring is a youth work organisation working in collaboration with young people, parents, social care, the police and parish councils. We tailor specific programmes of mentoring and youth work to meet the need of young people and aim to support them to move forward positively in their lives and reach their full potential.

We offer

- Mentoring and Youth Services based on the needs of young people
- Services for young people during the daytime, evenings and weekends
- Help young people identify and meet their goals
- Improve young people's self-esteem and confidence
- Support to achieve a readiness for life and independent living



MIM is working closely with the 0-25 team to offer mentoring packages for young people with additional needs, typically working with young people who have ASD or learning difficulties. We work with young people and families to overcome social isolation, anxiety and work towards personal goals.

This could be making steps towards independent living, developing confidence, trying new things like the going gym, digital photography, or going to a youth group.

We are really privileged to be part of some amazing journeys, from helping young people we work with to make their first bus trip independently to taking part in activities they never thought they could do; we have even managed to support someone through their first 10K race.

We pride ourselves in working holistically and understand that each individual is part of a wider family unit - so we offer services to families through our parenting work and counselling if they too need support to cope or enable change for their young person

For more information on Make It Mentoring see our website or give us a call 07722 911 902



OUR DIRECTORY to signpost you

We have quickly put together a list of groups or services that help families.

We know there will be many more to add.

This is just to start you off. Have a look at their websites see if you think they will be of help.



Our Directory

Directory of useful groups in South Glos

Collated by South Glos Parents and Carers

please note details may change and should be checked with the relevant organisations

These groups are contacts we have learnt about on our journey or groups who have been involved at our events. We are not able to make personal recommendations. If you know of any groups please do let us know.

Local Groups/Activities/Places to visit/ Things to Do



South Glos Parents and Carers We run various support groups across South Glos for any family with a child with any additional need. We produce magazines, run info events and also run training sessions for parents and carers . Sign up to our database on our website www.sglospc.org.uk Our Little Treasures group runs activities for pre school children and their families.



Sing, sign & story-time

Better communication Bristol Sing, Sign and story time is an inclusive group for children of all ages who enjoy singing and stories; run by licensed regional Makaton tutors. www.bettercommunicationbristol.com



Bournstream activities is a unique outdoor adventure play site dedicated for children and young people with disabilities or special needs www.bournstream.org.uk



Brandon Trust run children's play link holiday play scheme and the buddy scheme. They also support people with learning disabilities and autism from the age of 5 upwards into adulthood. www.brandontrust.org Tel: 0117 9341530



Buds and Suds Disability Sports Check out Directory of Local Opportunities. Select the sport you're interested in to see the details of clubs and organisations that are on offer close to you. www.bettercommunicationbristol.com



Charlottes Tandems We lend, at no cost tandems and tag-alongs to (and only to) people with disabilities or additional needs, who are unable to ride a bike safely on their own, so that they can enjoy the wonders of cycling. www.charlottetandems.co.uk



Hop Skip & Jump providing flexible and immediate respite care to children and young adults with complex needs. www.hopskipandjump.org.uk Tel: 0117 967 7282



Incredible Kids Play sessions for families with special needs and disabilities. The group is looking for a new venue so please contact them for further details Please check the website for dates. www.incrediblekids.org.uk



Jigsaw is a parent led group based in Thornbury. Weekly support group on Mondays / Monthly Lending Library and activities and trips Email: hello@jigsawthornbury.org.uk www.jigsawthornbury.org.uk



KIDS Run short breaks, Russell House overnight respite, Sexuality and relationship group and the Independent Supporters service in S Glos. Please visit our website www.kids.org.uk phone 0117 9476111 Email: IS.SouthWest@kids.org.uk



Leisure Centers 1-1 swimming lessons are available from your local swimming baths, simply enquire at reception.



National Autistic Society Out of School Clubs between ages 8-18. Tel: 01179 748400 Email: oosc@nas.org.uk



Safe Space Join them for tea, coffee and home made cakes as well as a welcoming atmosphere for you and your children to play. All are welcome check website for more details www.safespacefamily.co.uk



Special Friends Club

A local parent volunteer led charity which offers support to families in the local area with a disabled child or children, by providing days out and activities for the whole family to enjoy.
www.specialfriendsclub.org.uk



Sense for deafblind children, young people and their families Woodside Family Centre Kingswood. Provides a range of services for children who are deafblind or have a multi-sensory impairment.
Phone: 0117 967 0008 www.sense.org.uk



SportsPound Do you live in South Glos? Aged between 14 & 100? Do less than 30 mins exercise a week (not including walking)? Then you can apply for SportsPound vouchers
<http://tinyurl.com/z236gbj>



Warmley Wheelers is a cycle scheme that enables those who have additional needs to feel the excitement and empowerment of using a specially adapted bicycle. To register your interest or make a booking please call Patrick Dewar on 07587 034 366 or email warmleywheelers@milestonetrust.org.uk

Information / Support / Help



Bourne Family Project families and individuals can seek emotional, practical, social support based in Kingswood.
<http://www.bournefamilyproject.org/>
Tel: 0117 9478441



Bristol Autism provides support and information to autism families in Bristol and surrounding areas. <http://www.bristolautismsupport.com/>



Carers Support Centre Bristol and South Gloucestershire

Carers Support Centre provides support, information and advice to carers of any age living in the Bristol and South Gloucestershire areas. CarersLine: 0117 965 2200
Web www.carerssupportcentre.org.uk



Carers' Choir South Gloucestershire Sing your cares away with the South Gloucestershire Carers' Choir. For more information on how to join the choir contact Douglas Watts on 07909 118 949 Yate and Kingswood



Cerebra support help improve the lives of children with brain related conditions directly supporting children and their carers. Help children 16 or under with a wide range of neurodevelopmental disorders and conditions. Contact local Kath Fryer Email KathF@cerebra.org.uk <http://w3.cerebra.org.uk>



ChildSpeech is an independent speech and language therapy service which aims to support and supplement services which are provided by the NHS. <http://www.childspeech.co.uk/>



Contact A Family is the leading UK-wide charity providing advice, information and support to all families with disabled children, regardless of disability. National and local
Open Monday - Friday 09.30 - 5.00pm.
Tel: 0808 808 3555 www.cafamily.org.uk
Local SW Parent Advisor
sarah.king@cafamily.org.uk Tel: 07920 654866 for more information on local workshops and events.



Discovery at Horse world therapy for vulnerable children and young people with additional learning needs.
www.discovery@horseworld.org.uk



Down's Syndrome Association
A Registered Charity No. 1061474

Downs Syndrome an active parent led support group of people with Down's syndrome, their families and care givers in Bristol, Bath and surrounding area. Affiliated to the Down's Syndrome Association. www.dsa-bristol.org.uk



ERIC dedicated to improving the lives of children and young people with ongoing continence problems. Helpline on 0845 370 8008 to speak to one of our Helpline & Information Specialists. Email helpline@eric.org.uk www.eric.org.uk



FACE is a developing Youth & Community charity based at Elm Park in Filton. We run a wide range of youth activities and those for adults. www.faceilton.org.uk



Make it Mentoring
Provide quality Mentoring and Youth Provision Services. Website: www.makeitmentoring.co.uk
Tel: 01454 880229



National Autistic Society South Glos Branch ~ Support groups for families.
Email: southgloucestershire@nas.org.uk
www.nassouthgloucestershirebranch.webeden.co.uk



OFF THE RECORD helping young people to promote and improve mental health and wellbeing. Google Off the record south glos
Tel: 0808 808 9120 www.otrbristol.org.uk



Remap design and make, or adapt, custom aids for people with a disability, where there is no suitable aid commercially available.
www.remap.org.uk Tel: 01275 460288



Resound Providing parenting courses & parent buddies for parents living in and around BS16 area. For more information contact Resound on Tel: 0117 3050969 www.resoundbristol.co.uk



South Glos Local Offer local authorities must publish information about services they expect to be available for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. This is called the "local offer". The local offer must be published on the council website, and information and advice must be accessible, open to everyone who would benefit from it, and proportionate to need. <http://www.southglos.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/care-and-support-childrenfamilies/local-offer/>



Southern Brooks Community Partnerships
Our Family Support Team work with families where there are children 0-18 across the North of South Gloucestershire on a wide range of issues. www.southernbrooks.org.uk
Email: office@southernbrooks.org.uk



Supportive Parents providing information, advice and support to parents, children and young people about any type of special educational need or disability from 0-25 years Information & support line: 0117 989 7725
www.supportiveparents.org.uk



Talking therapies in South Gloucestershire
We are the gateway for the NHS talking therapy services within South Gloucestershire. We provide access to a range of therapeutic interventions in line with people's differing emotional needs.
Website <https://iapt-sglos.awp.nhs.uk/>



The Pink Card The Network register held by S Glos Council. Contact Maureen Goodfield 0-25 team. Helps to get carers into activities and outings and can be used as proof of disability
Web link <http://tinyurl.com/jp49783>



Well Aware is a free online health, well-being and community services database. Search the Well Aware guide here: <http://www.wellaware.org.uk>

Preparing for adulthood

Choices 4 U

Choices 4 U provide day service opportunities for people with learning difficulties from age 16+. Employment Support, Advocacy, Education and Housing support. choices4u@southglos.gov.uk
Tel: 01454 864440



Freeways aim is to help people to become as independent as possible by helping them make choices, learn new skills and make links with their local community through supported living and support within the community.
<http://www.freeways.org.uk/>



LDA Offers Learning Disability & Autism Awareness sessions and a bespoke Employment Support & job coaching service to people with learning disabilities and/or autism.
www.ldawareness.co.uk



Milestones Trust Supporting people to live the lives they choose offering safe, person-centered support to vulnerable people. Website
www.milestonetrust.org.uk Tel 0117 970 9300



Options have been supporting people in Bristol and its surrounding areas since 2004, and offer a variety of person centred services to adults with learning disabilities which focus on meeting people's needs and achieving outcomes
www.optionssupport.com



Pluss supports people with disabilities and other disadvantages move towards and into employment each year. <http://www.pluss.org.uk/>



Severnplus The vision of Severn Plus is to develop inclusive social enterprise so that those with learning difficulties can access a range of vocational activity and training that will improve well being and enhance employability opportunities. www.severnplus.org



SGS College Preparation for Work and Life Department. Running a range of courses for 16-25 year olds, and courses for aged 26+, for students with learning difficulties.
<http://www.sgscol.ac.uk/filton/access-to-college-education-filton>

Sixteen¹⁶

Sixteen offers supported Employment Services to help people with a disability get a job by matching the skills, interests and aspirations of the individual with the needs of local employers; providing the right support by the right person at the right time www.sixteencoop.co.uk

Your Voice / views / your say / participation



South Glos Parents and Carers We run the parent and carer participation service across education, health and social care. We are the parents in South Glos who uses the services join our network and help us feedback about services.
www.sglospc.org.uk



Local views participation info Healthwatch South Gloucestershire are listening to and engaging with people who use local Health and Social Care Services to help improve the design and delivery of services now and in the future
<http://www.healthwatchsouthglos.co.uk>



Local views Barnardos HYPE which stands for Helping Young People (and children and families) to Engage across the children's community health partnership. <http://cchp.nhs.uk>

National / Regional Groups



Action for Blind People provides practical and emotional advice and support across England to people who are blind or partially sighted and their friends and family
www.actionforblindpeople.org.uk



Afasic supports parents with children who have difficulties talking and understanding language. Afasic Parents' Helpline 0300669410 www.afasic.org.uk



Attention Deficit Disorder We provide support and raise awareness to improve the lives of people with ADHD <http://www.addiss.co.uk>



Box of Ideas Practical advice & downloads for professionals and parents on topics such as dyspraxia, dyslexia, autism www.boxofideas.org



Changing places
Toilet map find facilities to help you on the following site and download the app. <http://changingplaces.uktoiletmap.org>



Disability Grants
Are you a parent or carer of a Disabled child or adult? If so, use this website to save time finding Disability Grants. www.disability-grants.org



Family Fund provide grants to low-income families raising disabled and seriously ill children and young people. www.familyfund.org.uk
Tel: 01904 621115



I can provide a range of information services that provide help and advice to parents and practitioners about speech, language and communication. www.ican.org.uk



IPSEA Legally based (free) information and advice and support to help get right education for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities www.ipsea.org.uk



Mind Advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. www.mind.org.uk



National Deaf Children's Society is the leading charity dedicated to creating a world without barriers for deaf children and young people. <http://www.ndcs.org.uk/>
Call 0808 800 8880



Parent Info provides high quality information to parents and carers about their children's wellbeing and resilience and very useful info about staying safe online <http://parentinfo.org>



Scope national helpline provides free information and advice on any aspect of living with disability. Call 0808 800 3333 www.scope.org.uk



The Challenging Behaviour Foundation is a charity for people with severe learning disabilities whose behaviour challenges. We're making a difference to the lives of children and adults across the UK website www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk



Ups and Downs South West is a Down Syndrome support organisation, supplying information, advice and support to parents, carers, families, friends and professionals throughout the South West region. <http://upsanddowns.net/>
Tel: 01278 691100



YoungMinds is the UK's leading charity committed to improving the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people <http://www.youngminds.org.uk/>



Contact us and your thoughts and concerns could be printed in the next issue of our magazine.

Email us: parents@sglospc.org.uk

Website: www.sglospc.org.uk

Office Address: Poole Court, Poole Court Drive, Yate, South Gloucestershire, BS37 5PP

Call us: Landline: 01454 501009 (please leave a message)



Disclaimer: Information, views or opinions expressed in the 'Find Your Way' originate from many different sources and contributors throughout the general community. Please note that content does not necessarily represent or reflect the views and opinions of SGPC or their affiliates.

Any feedback or contributions are most welcome.

Community interest company (not for profit) 8364673