

Q and A Session: Moving in to Adulthood/Transition  
Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> May 3.00 pm – 4.00 pm

**On the call:**

Robyn Noonan – Area Services Manager (North) Adult Social Care - OCC

Natalia Lachkou – Change and Programme Manager – OCC

Bianca Sankey – Senior Special Education Needs Officer – Planning for Adulthood - OCC

Kristine Neal – Special Education Needs Officer – Planning for Adulthood – OCC

Joanne Milsom – Assistant Principal – Abingdon & Witney College

Lori Granville – Autism Co-ordinator (A & W College) & Tier Three Lead for MLD & Autism (City of Oxford College)

Elaine North – Casework Manager, Youth Education, Employment

**Contributors:**

John Harrington - Service Development Manager – Oxfordshire Employment (OCC)

**KEY:** [OxFSN Notes](#)

[OCC/SEN/A&W College responses](#)

**Q.1** ‘My son is in Yr11 and although he has an EHCP there is currently no plan for his future. We haven't applied for any post 16 education and he refuses to engage on any conversations with me. Had he been at school, some of these conversations would have happened there and I'm sure peer pressure would have helped. I spoke to my SEN officer last week and emailed the base but am no further forward and I am feeling increasingly worried about his future. If we apply to college, without proper taster days, proper transition, and if we are still in lockdown, I'm worried that he won't go. He will not engage in online learning either. I am seriously worried that he is at risk of becoming NEET. I am sure I am not the only parent who has these worries. Can you tell me what the relevant organisations/departments are doing to address these potential issues?’

**A:** At Y11 YP are still on the school role. Would be happy to signpost for September and the best thing would be to contact their SEN officer. Usually case work referrals are picked up at the end of June and the teams work with them intensively. The Website <https://oxme.info/cms/> offers signposting, a webchat facility, registering for support as well as referring in for casework support. Another option would be **SMART** internship if the young person is ready however a conversation with the student re college and then our other Internship programme which would have at least one year in college would at least give the Parent a structure

**A:** **Special Educational Needs Team (SEN)** - Post 16 education – Activate and Abingdon and Witney College **Abingdon & Witney College (A&W college)** – people are usually invited to the Year 11 annual review where the school thinks what the next appropriate step for a young person would be, but it sounds like this hasn't happened in this instance. The College is currently putting together a range of materials which will be accessible online and will cover things like basic introduction to college, the courses available and how to choose, as well as some more specific materials related to individual curriculum areas and courses and introductory videos from staff members. We are also pulling all the video and photo footage we have of our buildings together so that we can try and create a sort of virtual tour. This is all work in progress, but we will let this network know when it's ready and how to access. We can also make our Careers Advisers available for online 1:1s, anyone who thinks they would be interested in one of those can email [careers@abingdon-witney.ac.uk](mailto:careers@abingdon-witney.ac.uk) and as soon as we can re-open we will get face to face meetings back up and running.

**ASC (Adult Social Care)** - Currently all young people known to children's services likely to need support as an adult should be referred by family, children's social care or the SEN team by their 17th birthday to the Social and Health Care Team at the County Council. Not all young people are known to children's services in Oxfordshire or are ready to consider their future at 17 so new 'Moving into Adulthood' referrals can be made any time between 17 and 25 years. The Education Health & Care Plan (EHCP) and the reviews should be identifying outcomes that will support someone becoming an adult.

**Q.2 At what point do OCC think transition should be starting for those leaving college in order to plan for their next steps.? My daughter is due to leave in two months' time and nothing is in place.**

The general agreement is that the Year 9 review is a good time to start planning and recording a young person's plans and aspirations for the future. Is very dependent on each individual person and their needs but if the young person has any questions they need to contact their SEN officer. If leaving college, planning ahead will take place at the last annual review. College will invite the young person's social worker to attend the meeting.

If the young person is leaving this year (2020) and they have nothing in place they need to contact their course leader or student services to check where they are in the process. The City of Oxford College is linking up with agencies and the county to look at work opportunities for those with an EHCP. If someone has an EHCP the internship programmes may be an option.

Adult Social Care try to respond to a need's assessment in approx. six weeks. They meet monthly with the SEN department to look at which young people are coming up through the system and prefer someone to be referred by the age of 17. Not everyone is known to them. Those who have not previously needed support through children's services can do a self-referral on line or ring the Adult and Social Care and Health team and ask for an assessment.

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/social-and-health-care/adult-social-care/getting-needs-assessment/members-public>

If someone is starting at a college in September and needs transport they can apply through the OCC website or speak to their SEN Officer. It is not part of the EHC Plan. If aged over 19, not necessarily eligible for transport so will need to go through a referral process which will be part of the assessment. <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/children-education-and-families/education-and-learning/special-educational-needs-and-disability-local-offer/support-young-people-16-25-years-send/practical-help/transport>

With the new law families wanted to know what impact it was having on the time scale of current EHCP's. The Preparing for Adulthood team are keeping to deadlines as best as they can. The new guidance is in place until the 31<sup>st</sup> May so only have a 4 week extension.

**A: ASC** - ideally the discussion should begin at the year 9 review. As above young people known to children's services likely to need support as an adult should be referred by family, children's social care or the SEN team by their 17th birthday to the Social and Health Care Team at the County Council. The plan is that young people will have a finalised assessment and a plan looking towards the future and moving into adulthood mid-way between 17 and 18 years and ongoing until the young person no longer needs a specific young person service such as when a young person leaves education. This doesn't always happen, but this is what we would like to happen.

**SEN Team** - The transition for each young person will vary and should vary for every young person on an individual basis and this will be outlined in their EHC Plan and will be discussed at each review. If there is confusion around this regarding the EHC Plan, please do contact the SEN Officer or the college.

**A&W** college – at college this is a key agenda item in annual reviews and we will always ensure that referrals are started in a timely way – we know it can take several months for the necessary assessments so we will make sure this is in place at the annual review prior to leaving college, and we invite social workers to reviews to make sure there is a smooth transition. If transitions out of college are delayed due to Covid-19 and services being closed, we will review this on a case by case basis to make sure that each student is ok – in some cases we may need to review what provision looks like in September, but we definitely won't expect people to switch to adult services without proper transition. We are open to ideas about how else we can support families as well.

**Q.3 What advice do OCC have for families currently looking for Supported Living for their family member who is ready to move out of the family home or is currently out of county and about to leave residential college?**

OCC view 18 as a difficult time for someone to consider moving in to supported living if they have never lived away from home. Prefer to offer as much support at home as possible until the person is ready to move and then build it up gradually with overnights and weekends away. OCC also offer a shared lives option which is like a stepping stone for someone adjusting to living away from home. Their aim is to keep people as close to their local communities as possible. OCC currently have 700 supported living places in Oxfordshire with very few vacancies so the perfect option for families is not always available when they want it.

For families living out of Oxfordshire wanting their family member to live in Oxfordshire the local authority is responsible for the person's residence, however there is some confusion around families that live on the borders of a county. In these instances, it is best to speak to both local authorities.

**A: ASC** - our aim is to support young people to be as independent as possible for as long as possible at home as we know that young people mostly benefit from staying at home for as long as possible. Moving away from a nurturing family home to supported living is a very big step for many of our young people, particularly if they have not lived away from home before or not lived with people who are not of a similar age before. Our aim is to support a slow and supported move from the family home and offer some continuity. This might be by slowly increasing overnight stays away from home. We often suggest 'Shared Lives' as a first step as living within a familiar family environment that isn't family can be an effective stepping stone.

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/social-and-health-care/adult-social-care/housing-options-and-care-homes/shared-lives>. In addition, we want to be very person centred and focus on what someone's individual needs are relating to education, work, leisure and friendships at the same time. The important thing is to ensure that Adult Social Care are aware of your child so please refer via the Social and Health Care Team. The details are below.

<https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/contact-social-and-health-care>

**Other ways to contact us**



Tel: 0345 050 7666  
8.30am - 5pm Monday - Thursday  
8.30am - 4pm Friday



Out of hours emergency number: 0800 833408  
(freephone)



Social and Health Care team  
PO Box 780  
Oxford  
OX1 9GX

**Q.4 What are specialist schools and colleges putting in place for those children/young adults who are currently transitioning from school to college or from college to make it a smooth and easy process for the individuals and their families, bearing in mind there is no social contact or face to face interaction allowed.**

See Question 10

A. **SEN Team** – schools and colleges will be working with parent/carers to discuss what can be delivered in terms of their EHC Plan.

**A&W college** – Virtual transition sessions with either Carly, our Transitions Worker, the course leader and/or a member of our Study Support team and in some cases with other new students in their class. If these work well and are popular there is the potential to schedule them more regularly through the summer. In addition if we can't open the buildings before September then we will plan some transition days at the very beginning of September, and the college is also currently considering what other steps it might need to take to ensure that term can start as smoothly as possible, but much of that will depend on if/how guidance changes over the coming weeks, so it's a work in progress. Again, we are very open to ideas.

**Q.5 How are OCC children social care and education departments working with specialist schools and colleges to ensure that families whose children are going through transition are being supported? What has been put in place to keep families informed?**

See Question 10

A: **SEN team** - are having regular catch ups meetings with the colleges who are updating us on their plans and thoughts around support for transition. Colleges can provide details around transitioning **Children's Social Care (CSC)** - will work with specialist schools and colleges to ensure children and their families are supported throughout the transition process when a child has a Child in Need Plan, is Looked After or is the subject of a Child Protection Plan. Transition Planning will be discussed at a child's regular review and is an agenda item of reviews. Social Workers will attend EHCP reviews to ensure a child's social care needs are identified when transition plans are discussed. Reviews are recorded and minutes written, these will be shared with families following the review. The support that Children's Social Care offers to families moving through the transition process centres around ensuring the needs of the child are clearly articulated and that the child's voice is heard throughout the process. Social Workers will support family members and young people to make sure their thoughts about the future are heard by those planning for the future.

**Q.6 Can OCC Adult Social Care put together a clear and transparent guidance for the steps involved for someone with a learning disability moving in to supported living?**

OCC are currently planning a new model which will start in October 2020 to support children and young people from the age of 15 through to 25 which will consist of a single team. The aim is for each person to have a named social worker who will help them and their families navigate the system and prevent what many families describe as facing a cliff edge when their family member turns 18. OCC hope that this will lead to better planning for the future and more focus on what the young person needs.

A: **ASC** - yes. This is something we would prefer to coproduce as the experience of young people and families would be critical in this.

**Q.7 If our son/daughter who has a learning disability moves in to post 16 education do they get transport? We hear so many mixed messages from different people?**

Lack of clarity around transport and who is eligible which OCC will address. If the YP is moving settings then they will need to reapply for transport. Transport offer stops at 19, so a YP needs to be eligible under the Care Act to receive transport which means they will need to have a full care assessment. Up to 18 a YP is entitled if they meet the criteria. Transport does not need to be mentioned in the EHCP as eligibility is covered under general education law. It was recommended that OxFSN run a session on Transport and Eligibility.

Clarity around travel training is also needed as to how it works and how it is funded. For parents who work full time and whose YP is not eligible for transport travel training can be too complicated. My Life My Choice offer mentoring travel training through the Travel Buddy Scheme <https://www.mylifemychoice.org.uk/pages/14-travel-buddy> The transport department are also looking in to it. For many YP travelling independently gives them a lot of pleasure. It is possible for a PA and possibly a family member to be used to help do travel training. Travel Training should be part of the EHCP.

A: **SEN and ASC teams** - if transport has already been agreed for a new learning setting then that would continue. If transitioning the young person is moving to a new setting, then there is no change to the eligibility criteria for this. Please take a look at the Local Offer on the County Council website the link is below

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/children-education-and-families/education-and-learning/special-educational-needs-and-disability-local-offer>

The specific reference in the Local Offer to transport is here -

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/children-education-and-families/education-and-learning/special-educational-needs-and-disability-local-offer/support-young-people-16-25>

with a link to here

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/schools/travelling-school/eligibility-free-and-paid-travel-school/free-home-school-travel>

This needs to include the process for when someone reaches 19 years of age and work has already started on integrating information into a single resource. In the meantime, if transport to college is needed beyond 19 years of age then please complete a referral to the Social and Health Care Team at the County Council via the link <https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/contact-social-and-health-care>

I mentioned in our discussion about the requirement adult services has to financially assess people receiving support from adult social care. In this situation it is a financial assessment of the young person not the family. I have included a link to the details below.

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/social-and-health-care/legal-and-money-issues/paying-care>

### **The Local Offer**

We share the Local Offer information at most meetings we attend but we are aware that we don't always manage to reach everyone. We would welcome you sharing the link with all the people you

know as it is full of very useful information. <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/children-education-and-families/education-and-learning/special-educational-needs-and-disability-local-offer>

**Q.8 What are families supposed to do if they do not know what is happening. Where do we get the information from? Its so confusing and there is so much uncertainty?**

A: this is difficult to respond to as we need more information. However, we would advise that in the first instance to check the Oxfordshire County Council website and/or Local Offer page.

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/> <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/children-education-and-families/education-and-learning/special-educational-needs-and-disability-local-offer>

**Q.9 I've been trying to contact my social worker as my son leaves residential college in two months' time. We have looked at the options out there for him and know what will work best but my social worker isn't returning my calls or emails. I know everyone is busy but it is making planning for his future really hard to do and I feel totally abandoned.**

A: **ASC** - not returning calls is not ok, particularly at such an important time of change. Please send the details to Robyn Noonan via OxFSN.

**Q.10 If College doesn't reopen before the summer holidays begin, what support will College be able to offer my young person to help with the transition to her future programme of activities?**

Colleges are still developing ideas and have a range of things planned including some virtual transition sessions at A & W College. Some colleges are looking at doing open days on line. Different faculties are putting videos and photos on line to highlight their programmes. Anyone who will be attending any of the Pathways Programmes from September will receive an invite for an online transition session. For those students already at college course tutors are contacting parents but as having to wait for government guidelines which will influence planning, colleges are finding it quite challenging. Colleges are very open to ideas from parents. Please contact Joanne Milsom on [joanne.milsom@abingdon-witney.ac.uk](mailto:joanne.milsom@abingdon-witney.ac.uk) if you have any suggestions.

A: **A&W college** - As above for Q4: Virtual transition sessions with either Carly, our Transitions Worker, the course leader and/or a member of our Study Support team and in some cases with other new students in their class. If these work well and are popular there is the potential to schedule them more regularly through the summer. In addition, if we can't open the buildings before September then we will plan some transition days at the very beginning of September, and the college is also currently considering what other steps it might need to take to ensure that term can start as smoothly as possible, but much of that will depend on if/how guidance changes over the coming weeks, so it's a work in progress. Again, we are very open to ideas and as per Q1 we are in the middle of creating a range of online materials to support with transition. Obviously we are hoping that we can open in some format before the summer – even if we are only allowed small numbers in and restricted access, but it's too early to say if that will be possible.



**Q. 11 What steps are Education Department and College taking to liaise with Adult Social Care to support students through transition?**

See question 10

A: **ASC/ CSC/SEN** - Children's Social Care, Adult Social Care and the SEN team meet regularly to plan for young people moving into adulthood. This is for young people known to children's services. Currently all young people who are likely to have support needs, as outlined by the Care Act, when they become adults and are known should have a named adult team, they can contact from 18 years of age. The new support model for preparing and moving into adulthood that we are beginning to implement will be in place from January 2021. The new model aims to have a named team member for young people moving from a children's service to an adult service.

**Q.12. General observation. Many families feel they are in the dark about what is happening as they have had no contact from their social worker even though they are at a crucial stage. As one parent said "A phone call goes a long way". There is a feeling of being kept in the dark.**

A: We are currently experiencing unforeseen events and we are having to ensure people who are the most at risk of not being in contact with the Council are prioritised. We do understand that the move from being a child into being an adult is a big and important change for both the young person and their family. This is why we have prioritised the development of the new model below. At the moment if we haven't been in touch when you thought we should can we ask that the young person or their family gets in contact with their social worker or team or alternatively ring the Social and Health Care Team on 0345 0507666.

**Adult Social Care & Children's Social Care (ASC & CSC) Moving into Adulthood Model** - we are setting up a coproduced new 'Moving into Adulthood' model for social care in Oxfordshire. The model aims to improve the experience and outcomes of young people and families when young people move from children to adult's services. The plan is for a single Preparing for Adulthood/ Moving into Adulthood social care pathway that is person centred and enabling and independence focused. We will be sharing more information about this as soon as we can.

**Questions that came in after the deadline:**

**Q.13 What is the best way to look up alternative housing for our child?**

There is a wealth of information on the internet about different types of housing opportunities for someone wanting to move out of the home. This in itself can be very confusing. OxFSN Family Support can always help families work out what type of housing situation will work best for their family member. Dimensions also provide some useful information on Supported Living and Residential Care. <https://www.dimensions-uk.org/what-we-do/supported-living/>

**Q.14 What do you suggest we need to do from a legal perspective as our child approaches adulthood?**

You can apply to become your child's deputy if they lack mental capacity which means they cannot make a decision for themselves at the time it needs to be made. They may still be able to make decisions for themselves at certain times. There are 2 types of deputy – **Property and financial affairs deputy** (you pay the persons bills etc) and **personal welfare** deputy (you make decisions

about medical treatment and how someone is looked after). You can become a deputy for one or both. Once you become a deputy you send an annual report to the Office of the Public Guardian each year explaining the decisions you have made. Further details on how to apply to become a deputy can be found on the government website. <https://www.gov.uk/become-deputy>

You may also want to set up a discretionary trust: The trustees manage the assets held in the **trust** and decide how to use them for the benefit of the beneficiaries. **Discretionary trusts** and **disabled person's trusts** are the types of **trust** used most often for supporting **people with learning disabilities**.

**Q.15 What happens to our child after we die if our child has no siblings?**

OxFSN recommend that families plan ahead and where possible make their wishes for their family member known. The Foundation for people with Learning Disabilities have a guide [\*\*Thinking Ahead\*\*](#) which helps families plan for the future. Sense, have also produced a guide to long term planning for families and the people they support. <https://www.sense.org.uk/support-us/campaigns/when-im-gone/>

**Q.16. “My daughter has a place at Henley College to start in September, confirmed by education. But they have said adult social care should fund transport - since lockdown then happened, I have heard nothing further. I wondered what the process is for decisions by social care in relation to transport, whether I need to do anything else, & when we might hear about the decision”**

If the YP is 19 and above you can do an online referral (also see answers to Q.7)

**Q.17 Why do some people access Adult Social Care at 18 and others at 25?**

**It is** based on individual need and personal choice. A looked after child will need immediate support once they turn 18 whereas someone living at home may not want or need an assessment until later. Some people prefer not to have anything to do with ASC. If someone has not had support as a child, they still may need support as an adult.

**NOTE:**

At 18, if a young person receives care from Adult Social care they will be asked to contribute towards the cost of their care. This is called Client Contribution. The cost they contribute is determined by a separate financial assessment and takes in to consideration any disability related expenditure (DRE). The cost comes out of the Young person’s income and not the families. Information about DRE can be found in the following link <https://www.independentlives.org/disability-related-expenses-explained>