

WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE



SPECIAL
EDUCATIONAL
NEEDS AND/OR
DISABILITIES
and
ALTERNATIVE PROVISION
STRATEGY

2023 – 2026



West
Northamptonshire
Council



Northamptonshire
Children's Trust

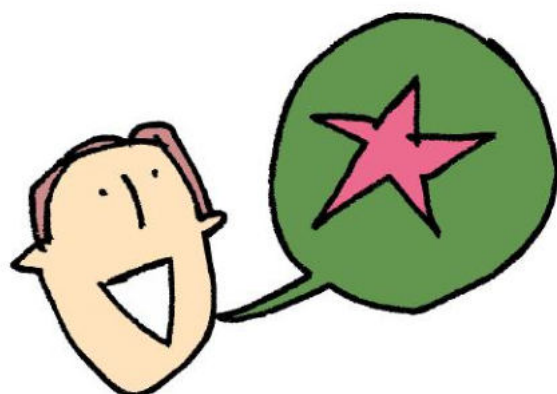
Integrated Care
Northamptonshire



NPFG
Northants Parent Forum Group

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FOREWORD

I am incredibly proud that we have taken the opportunity to work together to reimagine how Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) in West Northamptonshire will be, as this is a subject that is truly close to my heart.

Children are our future, and they deserve the very best that we can give them. We know that we have to get it right so that all children can flourish, thrive and live their best lives. We are committed to working with all our partners to improve outcomes; children, young people and their families, those across education, health, social care, the voluntary sector and our local employers.

We are all here because we care. We are all here because we are determined to make positive change happen. We are all here to make a difference to the lives of children and young people with SEND, those that are accessing Alternative Provision and their families.

We will all work with transparency, honesty, and openness and we will hold each other to account. We will all deliver the changes that need to be made to improve the lived experiences of our children, young people and their families.

I am pleased that this strategy has been created using the voices of children and young people themselves along with the rich feedback received from families and our other partners, gathered at co-production events. We are committed to developing and evolving detailed plans for each of the six priorities identified through co-production. This will be done together and will focus on the positive impact we have on children and young people's lives.

I want to personally thank everyone who has been part of developing this strategy and for your ongoing commitment to support our journey of improvement.

I look forward to meeting all our partners and businesses who will sign up to our Co-Production Charter and be part of delivering this strategy.

Fiona Baker

Cllr Fiona Baker,
Cabinet Member for Children, Families, Education and Skills



INTRODUCTION

West Northamptonshire Council, children, young people, families and our partners across Education, Health and Social Care, have co-produced a new SEND and Alternative Provision Strategy, and a new Co-Production Charter for 2023 – 2026. This strategy sets out our ambitious vision, aims and priorities to ensure that we effectively identify and meet the needs of the children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) age 0 to 25.

This strategy sets out what we will do to achieve this vision.

OUR VISION IS FOR ALL CHILDREN, INCLUDING THOSE WITH SEND TO THRIVE, FULFIL THEIR POTENTIAL, AND LIVE THEIR BEST LIFE.



That all children and young people are healthy, safe and part of inclusive communities.



That all children and young people, including those with SEND or in Alternative Provision thrive and achieve aspirational outcomes.

OUR VISION



That all children and young people have a good start in life, are curious, inspired to succeed and achieve their dreams and ambitions.



That all young people enjoy realistic adulthood outcomes as valued citizens.

OUR AIMS

‘IMPROVING THE LIVED EXPERIENCE’

We know that we need to improve and to do this we have to rethink the way we work. We have been listening to children, young people, families and our partners across Education, Health, and Social Care through co-production events, to find out exactly what needs to change.

We know that the lived experiences and outcomes of many children with SEND and their families in West Northamptonshire has simply not been good enough.

We are genuinely committed to working in equal partnership and together we will improve and provide high-quality services to achieve ambitious positive outcomes that improve the lived experiences for all children and young people in West Northamptonshire.

‘BUILDING TRUST AND CONFIDENCE TOGETHER’

We will use the best available evidence to inform all aspects of our work. We know that we still have a lot to do to ensure that children, young people, families, and our partners have trust and confidence that we can, and will, improve to embed positive change.



OUR AIMS

‘WE ARE COMMITTED TO MAKING POSITIVE CHANGE HAPPEN’

We are committed to making positive change happen. We know there is history where children and families have felt let down and feel that promises have not been fulfilled. We are determined to change this. We also know that this will take time, but we will work diligently, co-produce quickly and effectively to make positive change happen.



We know we need to address the following concerns:

- There is not a shared understanding of inclusion across all partners, and we need to co-produce an inclusion charter.
- Services are stretched.
- Some parents feel powerless and feel they do not have a voice.
- Families need better holistic, emotional support.
- Processes and systems are not clear enough.
- There has not been enough strategic joined up thinking from all partners to support schools to effectively meet a child's needs.
- We do not effectively use the current expertise of colleagues within education to support and network with each other.
- Educational Psychology advice, Occupational Therapy and Speech and Language Therapy are often not delivered in line with statutory requirements.
- Early support is not effective for all pupils and this results in suspensions, and permanent exclusions.
- There is a lack of options to meet the range of needs that children have.
- Partners do not have consistent knowledge of children who do not access education at all or who access on a part time basis. We need to work together better, to address the underlying reasons behind this and build inclusive communities that can support their reintegration holistically.

OUR AIMS

'CO-PRODUCTION IS AT THE HEART OF EVERYTHING WE DO'

As part of the initial co-production stages for the new SEND Strategy and Co-Production Charter, West Northamptonshire and partners have run a series of co-production events with children, young people with SEND or who are access Alternative Provision, parents, carers, Educational, Health and Social Care professionals to identify the key priorities for the strategy. We have run 20 engagement events with over 800 people, all of whom provided invaluable input to help co-produce our Charter and our Special Educational Needs and Alternative Provision Strategy. These events have included: children/young people events, face to face events across West Northamptonshire and online events and focus groups.



OUR CO-PRODUCTION CHARTER

At our co-production events, we collectively built a shared understanding of what co-production is. We used digital software to build live feedback, identifying the key values for co-production working. These have been used to create a Co-Production Charter, which outlines the principles for putting the approach into action. The Co-Production Charter outlines the shared values for everyone who works with or cares for children and young people, with SEND or those who are experiencing Alternative Provision, have agreed to adopt.

Whilst co-production is a statutory requirement for all agencies, this is not why we are doing it. We genuinely believe that co-production is one of the key golden threads that builds inclusive communities which wrap around our children, young people and their families and supports them to thrive.

Our Co-Production Charter has five agreed values:

• WORKING TOGETHER

• COMMUNICATION

• TRANSPARENCY

• RESPECT

• ACCOUNTABILITY



West Northants Co-production Charter

'Together we are stronger'

This Co-Production Charter outlines the shared values that all partners have agreed to adhere to when working with children, young people and their families.



What is Co-production?

Co-production means working with people who use services as equal partners, to make a decision or shape a service that works for them.

Why co-produce and how do we know it makes a difference?

- ✓ Everyone feels equally valued and listened to.
- ✓ It leads to better services that improve people's lives.
- ✓ It is a legal requirement for all agencies to co-produce with children, young people and families.

This co-production charter outlines the 5 values that all parties will use to work together.

Communication

We will make our communication clear, consistent informative and timely.



Transparency

We will be open and honest as we make decisions.

Accountability

We will take responsibility, find solutions and regularly review to ensure we make a real difference.

Respect

We will listen to and empower people and treat them as equal partners.

Working together

We will work together and recognise that everyone has valuable contributions to make.



OUR CO-PRODUCED STRATEGY

Our strategy has been co-produced through a series of events and discussions with children, young people and their families, and all our partners across Education, Health, and Social Care. This includes elected members, early years providers, mainstream and special schools, alternative providers, further education colleges and the University of Northampton. It also includes our strategic partners and frontline health colleagues, Northampton Children's Trust, adult social care colleagues, local voluntary/community organisations and employers. More than 50% of comments have come from children, young people and their parents, and supported by Northampton Parent Forum Group and other parent groups.

The strategy reflects the shared priorities and aspirations that come from these events and demonstrates our commitment to co-production.



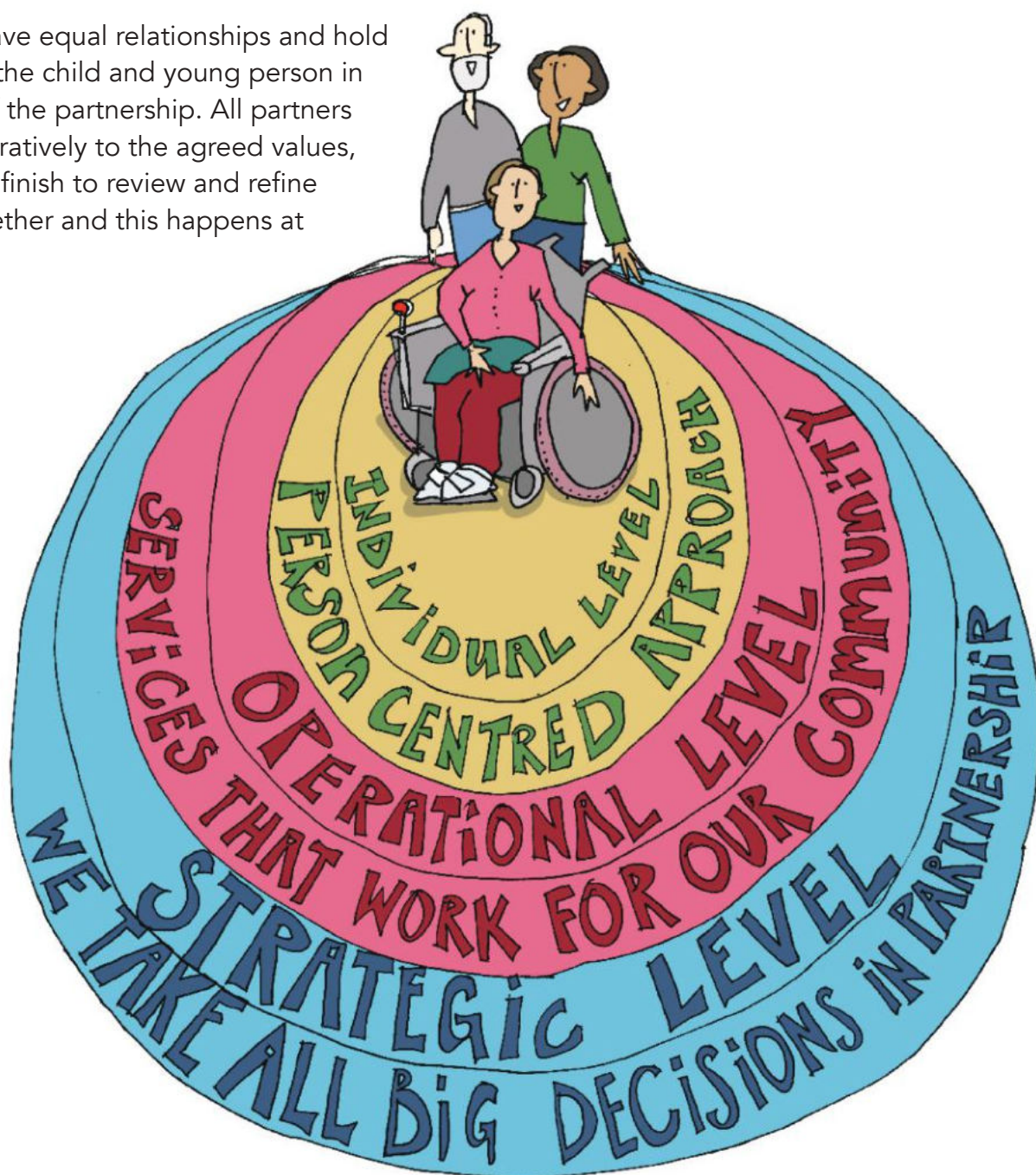
We are placing children, young people, and their families at the heart of our thinking. Our co-production work has identified golden threads and key priority areas which are at the heart of this strategy.

GOLDEN THREADS

GOLDEN THREAD ONE: CO-PRODUCTION

In West Northamptonshire this means having the same shared values when working together to plan and deliver support to improve the quality of life for people and communities in an honest, fair, and accountable way.

All parties have equal relationships and hold the voice of the child and young person in the centre of the partnership. All partners work collaboratively to the agreed values, from start to finish to review and refine services together and this happens at all levels.



GOLDEN THREADS

GOLDEN THREAD TWO: INCLUSION

In West Northamptonshire inclusion means that all children and all young people are welcomed and accepted in their local communities, schools and other services that support them. True inclusivity is where differences are seen as a benefit, and where perspectives and differences are shared, leading to better decisions, services and life experiences for children and young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities and their families. At the heart of inclusion is being and feeling included; ensuring everyone is treated with equity, dignity and has fair access to resources and opportunities.



GOLDEN THREAD THREE: THRIVE

TRUST

We are honest, fair, transparent and accountable. We can be trusted to do what we say we will.



HIGH PERFORMANCE

We get the basics right and what we do, we do well. We manage our business efficiently.



RESPECT

We respect each other and our customers in a diverse, professional and supportive environment.



INNOVATE

We encourage curiosity, we are creative and seize opportunities to grow individually as an organisation and as an area.



VALUE

We continually strive for best practice and ways of improving existing procedures, practices and systems and thereby promoting efficiency and cost effectiveness.



EMPOWER

We believe in people, will listen, learn and trust them to make decisions. We help people to realise their ambitions.



OUR SIX PRIORITIES

The feedback from the co-production events has been collated and has identified **six priorities**.

PRIORITY 1	ACCESSIBILITY
PRIORITY 2	RESOURCES
PRIORITY 3	IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT
PRIORITY 4	TRAINING
PRIORITY 5	ALTERNATIVE PROVISION
PRIORITY 6	PREPARING FOR ADULTHOOD

We will develop detailed and specific delivery plans for each priority that cover the three years of the strategy. These are being co-produced through the SEND Improvement Board, which provides multi-agency governance, including senior leaders from Education, Health, Social Care, parent/carers and the Department of Education.

There will be many layers of delivery plans that sit underneath this strategy. Some of the specific actions that will be achieved in year 1 (2023/24) are;

PRIORITY 1 ACCESSIBILITY

We will launch a new effective co-produced Local Offer.

PRIORITY 2 RESOURCES

We will open 75 new SEND places.

PRIORITY 3 IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT

We will commission a new Educational Psychology service to clear the backlog of cases.

PRIORITY 4 TRAINING

We will work with our partners to develop and publish a centralised training offer.

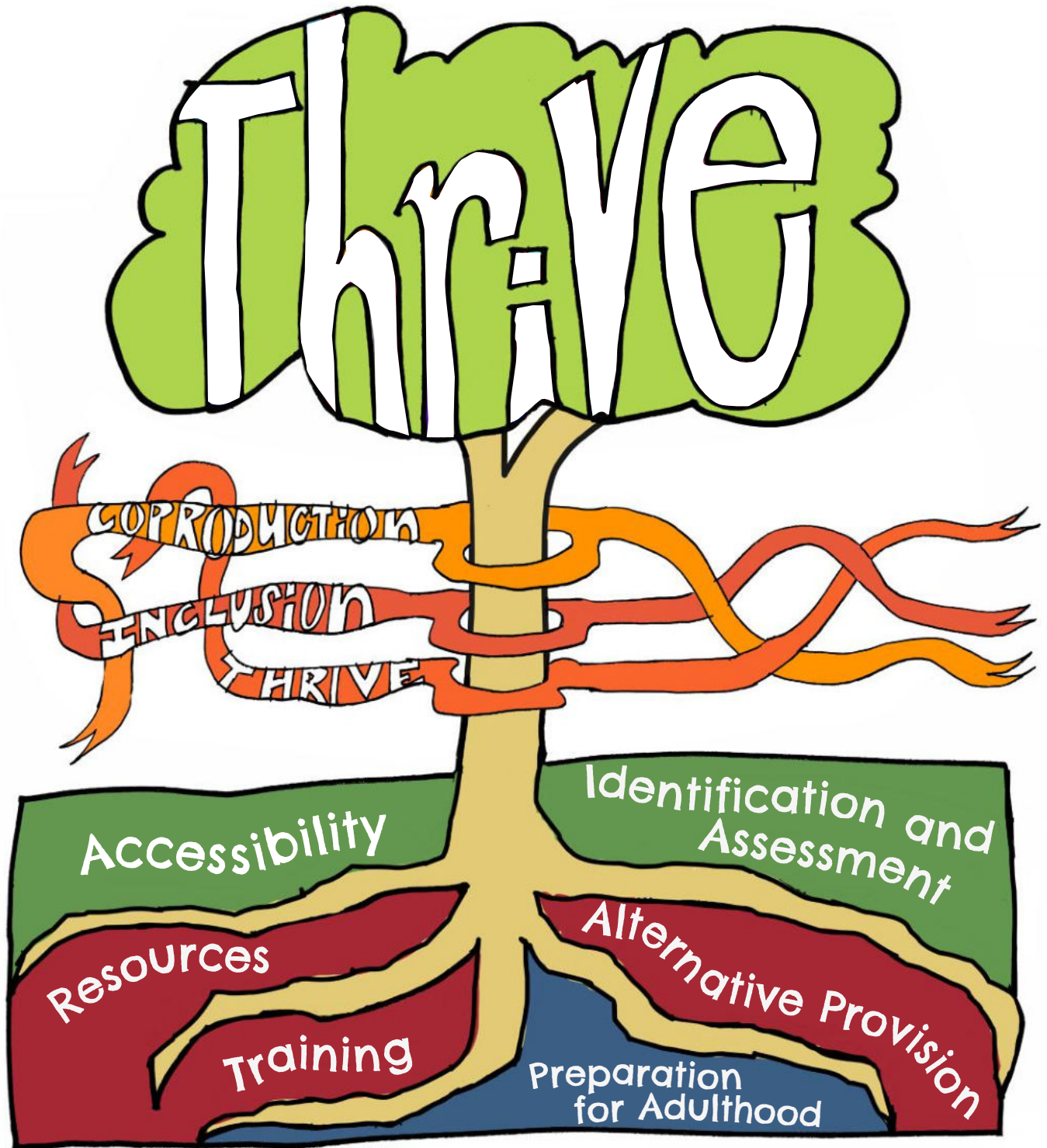
PRIORITY 5 ALTERNATIVE PROVISION

We will co-produce and publish our Alternative Provision plan.

PRIORITY 6 PREPARING FOR ADULTHOOD

We will develop and promote a programme of supported Internships, Traineeships and Apprenticeships.

OUR THRIVE TREE



THE PRIORITIES

1 ACCESSIBILITY



ACCESSIBILITY

- Consistently use straight forward language to communicate clearly using all available channels to support effective two-way communication.
- Review, develop and refine processes together in an open and honest way, to make sure all partners are consistent.
- Develop an effective Local Offer that is easy to use and meets the needs and wants of the local community.
- Provide travel assistance, including home to school transport for children and young people who are eligible for support.
- Ensure admission for specialist units and special schools are based upon need and location.
- Work with provisions to reduce the number of suspensions and permanent exclusions.

2 RESOURCES



RESOURCES

- Ensure there are enough high-quality services and provisions, which are jointly planned and delivered, so children and young people can stay within their local communities wherever possible.
- Use the expertise across all partners to develop best practice.
- Use funding efficiently in a needs-led way and make this process transparent.
- Use evidenced-based best practice, with clear outcomes, to build and monitor the effectiveness of our actions.

THE PRIORITIES



IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT

- Provide support and training in line with the SEND Ranges to ensure a consistency of approach from all partners for SEN Support and EHC processes, in accordance with the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice.
- Continually improve the timeliness and quality of assessment and reviews in line with statutory requirements.
- Work collaboratively to provide joined-up support so that children and young people can effectively transition between settings.
- Ensure that services effectively work together to provide support.



TRAINING

- Identify, invest, and provide a rolling program of evidence-based training for everyone, including practitioners, families and carers, so that children and young people with SEND receive the right support, in the right place and at the right time within their community.
- Use evidence about supporting children who have had traumatic experiences to ensure effective support.
- All partners have an accurate and shared understanding of SEND.
- All partners are equipped to identify needs as early as possible.
- All partners understand appropriate strategies to support and meet needs.

THE PRIORITIES

5 ALTERNATIVE PROVISION



ALTERNATIVE PROVISION

- Ensure the needs are met for young people in Alternative Provision and support reintegration into mainstream schools, where possible.
- Co-produce and implement an Alternative Provision strategy with transparent decision-making, funding, planning, purchasing and monitoring of provision.
- Reduce the number of suspensions and permanent exclusions.

6 PREPARATION FOR ADULTHOOD



PREPARATION FOR ADULTHOOD

- Ensure all partners have a rolling programme of evidence-based training to secure a shared understanding of what is needed for young people as they prepare for adulthood.
- Ensure that Preparation for Adulthood pathways are clear and accessible.
- Support successful well-planned transitions from the earliest stages through to transitioning to adult services.
- Ensure that young people and families can access clear information about services and support available, including post-16 education options along with building independence, housing, good health, developing friends and family relationships and participating in society.
- Support young people to successfully prepare for employment by developing and delivering Supported Internships, Traineeships and improving accessibility of Apprenticeships.

Governance

Our SEND and Alternative Provision Strategy will be monitored by the SEND Improvement Board. It will be reviewed annually so that we can assure that it is effective and has the desired impact.



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