

Thurrock Council

Preparing for Adulthood Strategy, 2022-2025



Artwork created by Beacon Hill Academy students based on the theme 'Moving Forward'.

The Preparing for Adulthood (PFA) vision recognises the overarching Thurrock Council priorities:

- People – a borough where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live and stay
- Place – a heritage-rich borough which is ambitious for its future
- Prosperity – a borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations



Thurrock – an ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future.

Advocating People, Place and Prosperity as its three key themes, these priorities will support our young people who are preparing for adulthood.

1. Introduction

Thurrock Council is committed to ensuring that all young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) have the best chances in life to achieve their full potential. Working closely with our partners we have developed a preparing for adulthood strategy to outline our commitment to supporting young people with additional needs as they enter adulthood.

2. Commitment

Thurrock Council acknowledges its responsibility to young people with SEND who are preparing for adulthood and recognises that positive outcomes will only be achieved with commitment from the council, with partners, young people and their families, and carers.

With the right support at transition, young people with SEND can build the confidence and independence they need to have choice and control over their own lives. For some young people with the most complex needs, it is about celebrating each small step towards greater independence.

Our Preparing for Adulthood strategy is about the aspirations and opportunities for the young person.

We know that as young people with SEND move towards adulthood, they experience many changes which can be challenging and we are committed to supporting young people during this transition to be at the centre of planning and decision-making, to ensure a good transition into adulthood.

3. Focus on four main areas

Working with our partners and young people, we have identified four main areas as our key priorities:

Independent living:

- young people should be supported to understand the full breadth of what is meant by independent living and receive timely information advice and support on how the social model of disability can have an empowering effect on their outlook, daily lives and future
- promote the work of the Evans Commission to further develop parent/carer/young person engagement in the Evans sessions, a termly event, co-produced with education, social care, schools and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS), which shares information and delivers training on all aspects of the PFA agenda

Employment and careers:

- offer free impartial Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) by Inspire, Thurrock Council, to all young people aged 16+ with an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plan – additionally, Careers Interviews will be offered to students with an EHC plan in Years 9 and 11
- introduce a focus on national and especially local labour market information in the school/college curriculum

- ensure that young people are supported and able to access job vacancies, identify and use any volunteering/employment/placement opportunities and that they are familiar with the location of the nearest Job Centre in their local area
- work with young people and all relevant stakeholders to develop an understanding and awareness of the value of having a purpose, be that education, volunteering, or employment; to have an understanding of money management, budgeting, and the implications of not being able to do so – that is, paying rent and buying food, and so on
- increase awareness of the free support available to all young people aged 16+ at the Inspire Youth Hub and via the SENDIASS service
- increase participation of young people with SEND in supported internships, traineeships and apprenticeships

Health and well-being:

- work with individuals, parents, carers, family members, and professionals in education, health and social care to increase awareness and understanding of the importance for young people to be registered with a GP, to be identified as having a disability and attend annual health checks to help them keep well
- work alongside health and voluntary sector partners to actively publicise the availability of annual health checks for disabled people in Thurrock, providing details of when, where, and how to go about obtaining an annual health check
- promote stopping over-medication of people with a learning disability, autism or both (STOMP) by ensuring that medication review is discussed during care and support reviews, annual health checks and other meetings with providers

Community inclusion:

- parent, carers and young people are aware of and access the Local Offer
- parent, carers and young people to be aware of Community Resources

4. Strategic approach

Preparing for Adulthood (PFA) is the umbrella term for ensuring that young people with special educational needs and disabilities can achieve the following as they transition into adulthood and adult services:

- employment and careers
- preparing for independent living
- health and wellbeing
- community inclusion

To implement this strategy Thurrock Council has set up a Preparing for Adulthood Strategy group, with agreed terms of reference, to monitor the overall progress of the strategy.

The aim of this strategy is for all stakeholders, partners, and organisations to embed it within their practice. This strategy is guided by the principles and outcomes identified later in this document. These are collective actions planned with young people, families, and carers.

This plan will be monitored by the Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) Strategy Group. Throughout its 3-year life cycle, all accountable parties will update the action plan to include progress every year. The PfA Strategy Group will report on their work to the Operational and Development SEND Boards in Thurrock Council Children's Services.

This is a 3-year strategy from 2022-2025, for all agencies and staff who work with young people with SEND between the ages of 14-25 in Thurrock. With the changing pace of legislation, national policy and local area changes, the strategy is subject to yearly reviews by the PFA Strategy group throughout the three years.

5. Legal and national context

The statutory and regulatory framework within which this strategy has been developed is outlined in the Children & Families Act 2014 (Part 3) and associated SEN Code of Practice 2015 (CoP), The Care Act 2014, SCIE Guidelines (2016), NICE Guidelines (2016), and the Autism Act 2009.

This legislation highlights the need to take an outcome-based approach, promote well-being and for the following to take place:

- young people to be involved in discussions and decisions about their support during transition, and a person-centred strength-based approach to be taken
- provision of information and advice to indicate what support young people can expect and what can be done to meet or reduce the needs they may have or develop, as well as what they can do to stay well and prevent or delay the development of future needs
- young people to have good social relationships, stay healthy, have access to good quality education, employment opportunities and are supported in their aspirations
- young people are supported to access and be a productive part of their community
- a 'transition' assessment must take place if it is considered that there is 'significant benefit' in doing so for the young person, young carer or adult caring for a child – these individuals also have the right to request an assessment of their needs as a carer
- approaches that actively promote well-being and independence as well as prevent or delay the development of care and support needs
- improving multi-agency co-ordination and cooperation across education, health, and care to promote well-being and joint commissioning during transitions

The strategy sets out a shared vision of how positive outcomes can be achieved. It describes the partnership between agencies and providers to deliver person-centred support and offer young people choice and control to live a good life.

It establishes a framework for the measurement of progress based on what matters to our young people, clearly linked to outcomes and a young person's strengths, incorporating regular feedback from individuals and families on what works and what needs to be improved.

A key part of Preparing for Adulthood is about how young people, families and carers are prepared for adulthood, and how services are coordinated. Our vision helps ensure everyone is achieving and thriving.

Education, employment and careers

We encourage and support young people to remain in education as much as possible.

We will provide clear, evidence-based employment pathways with volunteering opportunities, supported internships, traineeships, apprenticeships, job opportunities and good career advice and guidance to help young people with their decision-making during transition.

We will provide young people with opportunities to learn about the value of work and earning money so that they can live as independently as they are able. We also signpost individual for

support with benefit maximisation and financial assessment. We offer information and advice around Court of Protection Deputyship applications

We will ensure all young people are supported to locate, identify, and access volunteering and employment opportunities.

We will support young people to access supported employment and provide support to those that want to become self-employed or set up mini enterprises.

Inspire, Thurrock Council, pledge to all young people in Thurrock, support during their transition to independence. We aim to support in the areas of education, employment and training. As with any Thurrock resident, young people with SEND can access a range of services and provisions offered by Inspire.

All young people with an EHCP in Thurrock can access support from a dedicated PFA team including Personal Advisers who understand the challenges that SEND young people face in education and when entering the workforce. They will help young people to make informed choices to move in to further and higher education, training and work; planning long-term goals and providing individually tailored support to identify their next steps.

Preparing for independent living

We will support young people to gain the skills and knowledge they need to live as independently as they are able.

We will support young people to make their own decisions around accommodation, finances, relationships, health as well as understating their care and support needs. We complete Mental Capacity assessment where necessary to ensure that decisions are made in the individual's best interest where they lack capacity to make any specific decisions.

We will empower young people and adults to have freedom, choice and control over their lives, their support, and their accommodation and living arrangements, including supported living.

We will provide young people and their families with information about the various housing options in Thurrock and provide them with the tools and resources to fully understand what is available and how it is accessed.

We will deliver a person centred, strength-based approach to assessment and care/support planning that meets individual needs, with clearly defined aspirational outcomes.

We will develop and create opportunities for young people to live more independently in local communities and access community activities whilst promoting social interaction, inclusion and enhance their emotional wellbeing.

We will develop links to local resources to create opportunities for young people to maximise skills and abilities towards independence, including travel training.

We will ensure young people receive information, advice, and support on how the social model of disability can have an empowering effect on their outlook, daily lives, and future. To help further this way of working we will continue to work collaboratively with our community partners and internal colleagues to ensure best outcomes for individuals. We will also signpost individuals to relevant agencies for specific support, information, and advice

Health and wellbeing

We will support young people to become as independent as they are able in looking after their own health and ensure they can access doctors, dentists, and hospitals with reasonable adjustments in place to support the process.

We will work alongside health partners to ensure all young people with a disability are registered with a GP and attend annual health checks from age 14 onwards.

We will work alongside health partners to ensure we actively publicise the availability of annual health checks and ensure that all eligible young people are accessing these.

We will promote the use of clear health action plans and ensure, advice, information and support are available to promote and maximise health and wellbeing.

We will promote and provide support as necessary to access exercise and healthy eating.

We will work closely with our health partners to enhance joint commissioning opportunities.

We will promote the STOMP agenda by ensuring that a medication review is discussed during care and support reviews, annual health checks and other meetings with providers.

We will make sure that Health assessments and health action plans will form a key part of student transition planning, including personal health passports.

Community inclusion

We will provide young people with opportunities to access social activities in the community.

We will support young people in learning about healthy relationships, having friends, going out, being part of their local community, being able to pursue hobbies and interests.

We will build understanding and awareness of Community Resources for Individuals, parents, carers, and family members.

We will equip young people with the understanding of how to keep themselves safe and to know what to do in the event they do not.

We will procure mental health services for young people and encourage them to self-refer to our partners.

We will prioritise young people with an EHCP to access targeted youth activities in the borough delivered by Inspire Youth Team, i.e., football, art classes, and music groups.

We will enhance our digital offer and for it to be shared with all young people to understand what is available via our digital platforms: Local Offer and Thurrock Opportunities.

We will promote access to travel training for young people to be able to travel independently for their leisure activities and to develop and maintain social contacts.

We will support young people to travel independently to college and training courses and access vocational opportunities.

6. Equality

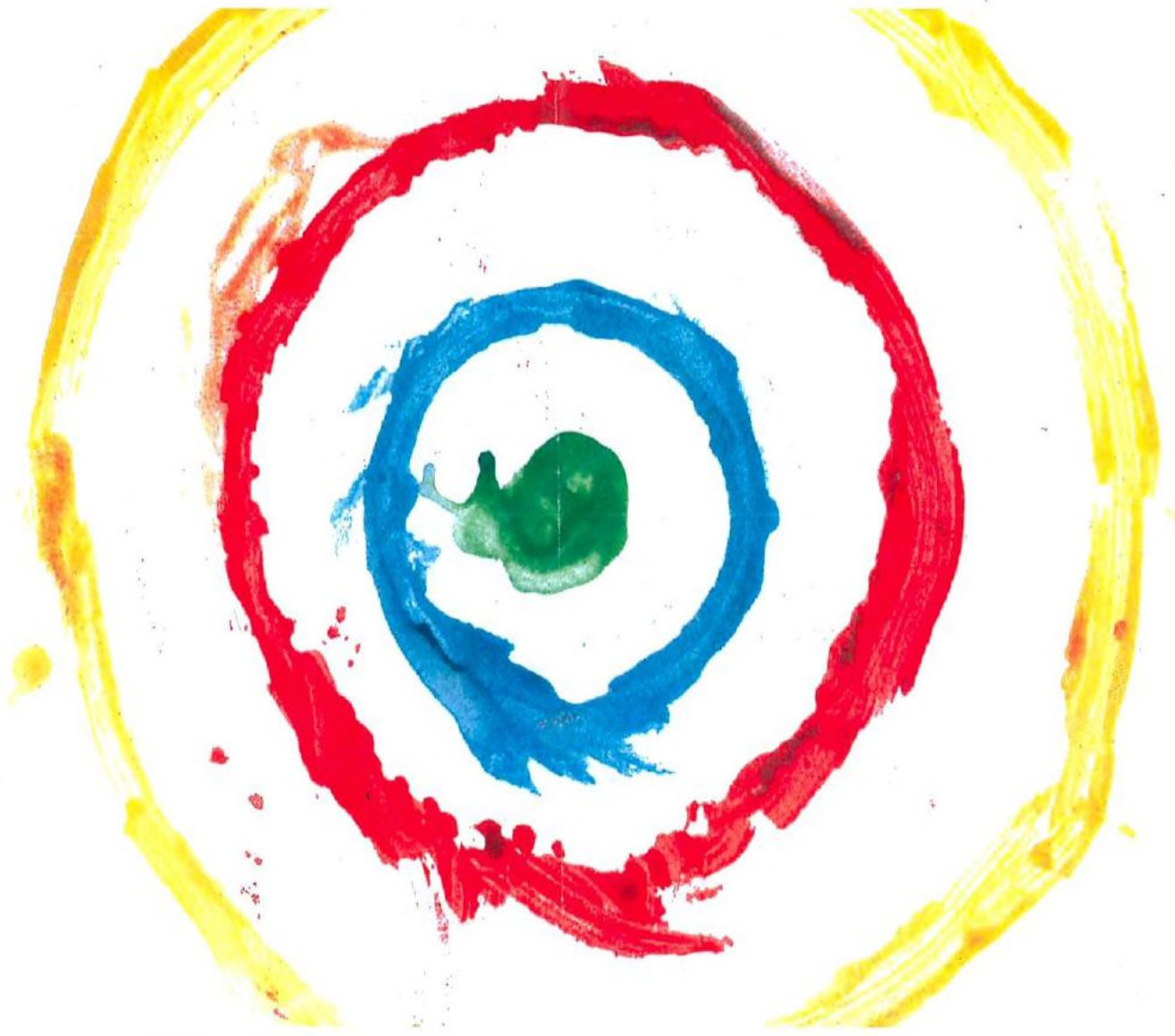
Every young person and their family will be treated with respect and equity, irrespective of their disability, diagnosis, racial background, sexual orientation, gender, or social circumstances.

It is important that young people with SEND are given the support that meets their individual need rather than what is routinely available to others.

7. How we will measure success

Young people transitioning into adulthood and the people supporting them:

- are receiving the services they need when they need them
- have an EHC plan if required, which they understand and contribute to
- take part in the planning of their transition and understand what will happen and when
- able to voice their views, wishes, aspirations and opinions and are listened to
- aware of who to ask for help if they are not sure of something and they get a timely response
- aware of changes to their benefits and what else they may be entitled to as they transition to adulthood
- aware that they can make choices about their future, including where they will live, where they will go to college and what courses they can access
- aware that they can access an advocate to support them and to make sure their views are heard and listened to



Artwork created by Beacon Hill Academy students based on the theme 'Moving Forward'.

The following agencies have been involved in developing this strategy (logos, followed by stakeholder names):



Stakeholders:

- Adult Social Care
- Beacon Hill Academy
- Children's Social Care
- Community Led Support
- EPUT specialist nursing
- Harris Academy Sixth Forms
- Health Watch Thurrock
- Inspire Thurrock Careers
- Mid and South Essex ICB
- NCS
- Parents Advisory Team Thurrock (PATT SENDIASS)
- Preparing For Adulthood Team
- South Essex College
- Stanford Sixth Form Centre
- Sunnyside House
- TACC
- TCHC
- Thurrock Coalition
- Thurrock CVS
- Thurrock Education Services
- Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions
- Thurrock SEND Family Forum
- Thurrock SEND Team
- Treetops School
- USP College