Thurrock Transition Strategy 2013-2016

Thurrock Council's 5 priorities within the community are:

- Create a great place for learning and opportunity
- Encourage and promote job creation and economic prosperity
- Build pride, responsibility and respect
- Improve health and well-being
- Promote and protect our clean and green environment

Foreword by Chair of Thurrock Transition Support Group (TTSG) -Tracey Smith

I am so pleased to be endorsing this strategy on behalf of parents and carers who are involved in the work of TTSG

In 2011 we embarked on a journey with Thurrock Social Care to ensure that we all worked together to reduce the barriers our young people were facing when reaching adulthood. Since that time we have worked closely with officers of the Council to plan our services better and listen to the feelings and wishes of the people it affects most....our children and loved ones.

This Strategy presents us with the building blocks to help us provide the best services for our young people, where they can realise their dreams and fulfil their aspirations.

Thurrock's Adult Social Care Provider Servicers are run by disabled adults who know only too well what it is like for our young people, how scary and worrying it can be without the right support.

I believe the current work in the transitions service is both innovative and exciting and the action plan is ambitious and visionary.

And so it should be. We want the same for our young people as anyone else does and I welcome the introduction of this strategy.

Tracey Smith

1. Introduction

Becoming an adult is an important time in a young person's life; as independence increases they begin to make choices about the next steps in their lives. Although challenging it should be an exciting and positive time. Often, however it is also a time of uncertainty for young people, their parents/carers and families.

At the time of transition, young people must meet the challenge of making choices amidst a period of profound change, having to cope with decisions about their future, that include education/training, employment, friendships and leaving home. An additional challenge for our young people is the requirement to negotiate a 'policy maze' of different sets of legislation, assessment procedures, funding arrangements, personnel, styles of working and benefit entitlements. Parent/carers play a key role in this process having responsibility for providing support on a daily basis whilst also assisting with choice and managing the changes that transition brings.

It is the role of transition planning, and professionals involved in running and managing services, to be supportive in reducing the known stress and anxiety existing at the time of transition. The aim is to make the journey into adulthood a smooth and enjoyable one for young people and also their parent/carers.

The need is to provide exciting opportunities that allow young people to develop and realise their full potential. To do this we need to maximise the local offer, ensuring that more resources are used locally providing good outcomes for people involved in the process.

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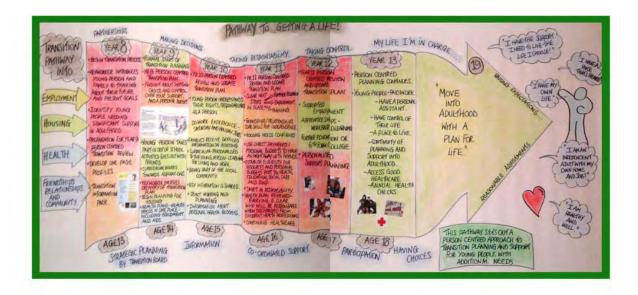
Some of the typical barriers which young people have told us they experience are that:

- Young people lose their established networks, moving on from friends, schools and environments where they have felt secure and safe
- Thresholds for adult services are often much "higher" than thresholds for children's services. This means that many young people need to look elsewhere for support once they become adults.
- Families may find it daunting as different services will have different approaches. They may be treated differently in adult services than in children's services and so their roles may change.

It is the responsibility of all agencies in Thurrock to work together to remove any barriers to make the transition from one service to another as smooth, seamless and person-centred as possible for every young person.

In developing this strategy we have consulted with a number of groups of young people. We would like to thank all of the young people who have

contributed to the development of this strategy as well as the parents, carers and families who have engaged with us throughout the process.



2. Timeframe

This is a 3 year strategy from 2013-2016, and is for all agencies and staff who work with disabled young people between the ages of 14 and 25 in Thurrock. With the changing pace of legislation, national policy and local area changes the strategy is subject to yearly reviews throughout that 3 year period

This Strategy will be reviewed every six months through the Transition Strategy Group.

3. Other Strategies

This strategy works alongside the following strategies in relation to disabled children and adults

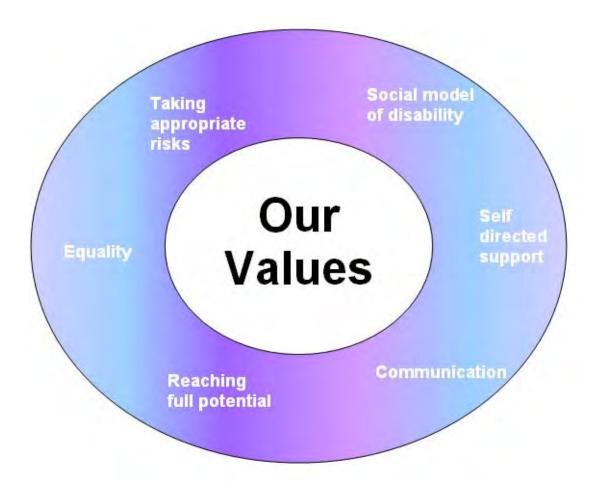
- Autism Strategy for Thurrock 2012-2015
- SENCO Strategy
- Sensory Strategy

4. Our Vision & Values

At the heart of this strategy is our Vision and Values statement

"Our vision is to help young people take their journey into adulthood with confidence, enabling them to achieve and reach their full potential, living lives they want to lead"

This vision statement is underpinned by the following values



The Social Model of Disability

Thurrock formally recognised the social model of disability in 2001. This means that we separate out impairment (something you are born with or acquire in later life) from Disability (which are barriers constructed by society).

For us people are simply people first. However, they are disabled as a result of only three reasons:

- Physical Barriers (e.g. buildings, stairs etc),
- Organisational Barriers (e.g. Application forms design excludes people with a Learning Difference)
- Attitudinal Barriers (e.g. A shopkeeper says' I can't employ that person they have Down Syndrome')

This strategy is designed to remove or lower disabling barriers so that young people in transition can achieve their maximum potential and live the dreams, aspirations and lifestyle that any other youngster would want.

Self Directed Support

The young person is at the centre of everything we do to support them. Each young person is an individual in their own right and we will listen to what they want and encourage them to make their own choices

Reaching Full Potential

Our young people will be helped to have a "can do" attitude. We believe that disabled young people can make the best progress in life if they are consistently and effectively supported.

Communication

We understand that disabled young people may need to communicate in a different way. We are committed to ensuring that all communication needs are taken into account and that every young person is entitled to have their say

Taking Appropriate Risks

We believe that young people cannot develop nor have quality of life without being allowed to take appropriate risks. Disabled young people are no exception

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.

5. Why are we writing this strategy?

The strategy captures the shared vision and aim to raise the standards of transition support and provision so a positive future for all young people within Thurrock becomes a reality.

Our work is based on the vision set out in 'Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People' (Cabinet Office 2005) to ensure that:

"a smooth transition into adulthood by putting in place Improved mechanisms for effective planning for the transition to adulthood and the support that goes with this; removing "cliff edges" in service provision; and giving disabled young people access to a more transparent and more appropriate menu of opportunities and choices."

More recently the proposals in the SEN and Disability Green Paper - Support and Aspiration: A New Approach to Special Educational Needs and Disability, reiterate that the focus will be on supporting better life outcomes for young people.

6. Who is the Strategy for?

Within this strategy when we talk of transition we are referring to a coordinated, person centred, multi-agency process of change in a young persons life.

This bridges the gap between childhood dependence and adult independence for young people with a Statement of Special Educational Needs and/or a disability or complex long term health condition. The transition process begins at age 14 and continues till age 25

The Transition Strategy applies to young people with a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) and/or a disability (learning disability, physical or sensory impairment and/or mental health issues) and young people with a complex long term health condition.

It is accepted the term 'disability' covers a wide spectrum of meaning; it is often interpreted in different ways by different people in different contexts. As a social model of disability authority, our aim is to support particularly vulnerable young people in transition who need significant provision of services or additional support due to the long term impact of their impairment. These young people will require significantly more support during transition and beyond than their peers.

For those young people who do not receive direct resources from Thurrock Council we will ensure they are still provided with information and advice service and supported in their pathway planning from age 14.



Sarbjeet and Frankie.

7. What are our young people telling us about transition?

In this strategy we want to focus on aspirations and not needs. Overwhelmingly young people tell us they want what everyone else wants, a relationship, a job, a home and a car. We recognise that there are many barriers in the way of achieving that but by working together and planning well we should strive to support our disabled young people to achieve their aspirations. In February 2012 the Thurrock Coalition, our user led organisation completed a series of workshops for us, consulting young people and their families about transition. (see Appendix 1)

When asked to think about the future and what they imagine themselves to be doing in 5 years, our young people identified the following possibilities:

- Having a job
- Seeing friends
- Lots of hobbies
- Living independently but still close to family for support when I need it Or living with parents but with some independence
- Managing my own money, shopping and buying and cooking for myself (with support)

When asked to think about their best hopes for the future, the group members discussed the following themes:

- Family, friends and support workers will all be there as well as teachers and personal assistance to allow each individual to maximise their full potential
- Attendees said that they would need support for independent living, finance, paying bills, cooking, travelling to get a job and to earn a wage, shopping, socialising. Finding a Personal Assistant, cleaning and personal hygiene.
- They want choice and control over their own lives, be part of their planning and not just the receivers of services
- Overwhelmingly the group emphasised the need to maintain existing networks, friendships for a smooth transition into adulthood.

8. What outcomes do we want from this strategy?

Our consultation with young people agreed that for this strategy to be successful they would want the following outcomes:

Outcome A

I feel I have a choice and am in control of services that meet my needs. I want to be recognised as an individual and contribute to society.

Outcome B

I feel I have been listened to and understood and am in control of the assessment process

Outcome C

I feel confident that social care staff know what they are doing Social care policies are clear and understood by everyone.

Outcome D

I feel all relevant information about me is shared appropriately and with my knowledge

Outcome E

I understand what is available to me both in my community and from health and social care.

These outcomes drive our strategy and are the golden thread throughout the document and the Action Plan.

8. Principles and Best Practice

The principles of best practice will be grouped into the following sections:

- A: Choice and control/ Person Centred
- B: Partnership with young people, their parents/carers and families
- C: Skilled Staff
- D: Information and advice
- E: Working Together

Choice and Control / Person Centred

Outcome A

I feel I have a choice and am in control of services that meet my needs I want to be recognised as an individual and contribute to society.

- 1. Services should be designed around the young people and their families, not around a menu of traditional offers.
- 2. Agencies should adopt a person-centred approach to ensure that the young person is always at the centre of the transition process. The transition pathway should be adopted by all schools
- 3. Young people want employment. We must encourage local businesses to provide them with the opportunity to work
- 4. Every young person should be considered able to express their feelings and wishes for education, training and employment and be supported in achieving their aims regardless of their communication skills.
- 5. Where appropriate young people should have access to advocacy and communication tools that can to assist in this complex process.
- 6. Young people should be at the heart of the design and review of services. Young people should be supported to attend forums where decisions are made



Image from a parent – transition as a growing tree

Partnership with young people and their carers

Outcome B

'I feel I have been listened to and understood and am in control of the assessment process'

- 1. Each young person with a SEN statement should start a transition plan with their school at age 14- year 9
- 2. Young people should be equal partners with agencies throughout the transitions process; including being actively engaged in the planning and development stages.
- 3. Agencies should ensure that there is an appropriate degree of communication with the parents/carers of a young person in a time of transition. Staff should agree communication channels with the parents/carers, ensuring that issues of confidentiality are discussed with the young person.
- 4. Young people should contribute to agencies' service plans and reviews and be regularly engaged through focus groups with their opinions being represented on decision making panels.
- 5. Agencies should consider developing a buddying/ mentoring scheme to allow young people to support and advise each other through the transition process.
- 6. All agencies should make sure that they have a sustainable and ongoing evaluation process which collects the views and opinions of young people in time to address any issues which may arise.
- 7. Resources should be considered at the earliest possible opportunity in the planning circle. Not as a barrier but as a way of ensuring there is an awareness of what can be provided; and in consequence an exploration of how any potential limitations may be overcome through a more creative approach.

8.



Treetops Sixth formers

Skilled Staff

Outcome C

I feel confident that social care staff know what they are doing Social care policies are clear and understood by everyone.

- Agencies should ensure that all staff working with young people in a time of transition have appropriate training to enable them to work in a person-centred way
- 2. All Agencies should be using Person Centred Pathway Planning
- 3. Staff should be aware of the inequalities faced by our young people and believe and sign up to the Social Model of Disability
- 4. Staff should receive the highest quality of training and be equipped to work with young people who have complex need
- 5. Staff should be trained so that they are able to communicate positively with young people
- 6. Staff across all agencies should be equipped to give information and advice to young people, their families and each other
- 7. Young people should be given advocacy support to become participating members of Boards and decision making forums
- 8. Agencies should ensure that assessments are timely, inclusive and self directed.



Jimmy and Nick

Working Together

Outcome D

I feel all relevant information about me is shared appropriately and with my knowledge

- 1. Agencies should all work closely together, sharing information in the interest of the young person
- 2. Agencies should be aware of what each other can and can not do, so that help and support is offered in an efficient way, and people are redirected quickly and effectively
- 3. Agencies should have a shared transition pathway with accessible arrangements for transitions that are known by all staff, young people their parents/carers and families.
- 4. That young people give consent to sharing information, whether it be with professionals or family members
- 5. Agencies should make sure that they have a robust system in place for the timely transfer of appropriate information about the young person before the transition takes place.



Lauren

Information and Advice

Outcome E

I understand what is available to me both in my community and from health and social care.

- 1. Agencies should ensure that young people, their parents/carers and families are provided with high quality, accurate and timely information to enable them to make informed decisions about their future and the way that they receive support from services.
- 2. Links to be made with local businesses so that meaningful work experience and employment can be developed.
- 3. Young people should be informed of the date that their time with one service will end and what service provision will be available to them as an adult, well in advance of the formal transition. If the young person will not be eligible for adult services, they should be made aware of this as early as possible.
- 4. We will work with the Thurrock Transition Support Group (TTSG), Young people, their parents/carers and families to ensure they have a full understanding of the transition process.
- 5. Agencies will work together to ensure there is a clear detailed plan for such students and ensure their medical needs are understood well and that staff are appropriately trained".
- 6. Young people should be at the core of developing and reviewing the format of information produced by agencies to make sure that it is age appropriate and accessible.
- 7. Every agency should identify a chosen means of communication with the young people they work with, and make sure that wherever possible that information is given to them in this way.





10. Health and Wellbeing- involving Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

The following priorities from our health partners:

Strategic Areas	Outline of Key Issues
Transition from Children to Adult Services	Joined up Pathways and individual Planning
Access to mainstream Health Services	Acute Hospitals Community Health Services Palliative / end of life care Dementia and mental health services
Improving health services through primary care	GP LD registers Delivering Health checks and Health Action Plans Health facilitation Access to screening and tests
Specialist Learning Disability Services	Social Worker Expert support / advice to other services Linking Health action Plans (HAP's) with support plans. Intensive support / challenging behaviour services Parents with a Learning Disability.
5. Choice and Control	Personal Health budgets. Being Safe.
6. Support for Carers	Support planning, including emergency plans.
7. Partnerships	Partnership Boards H&WB Boards Healthwatch
8. Planning	JSNA and Joint strategic plan.
9. Engagement	Link to transition plan Advocacy groups Healthwatch Self Advocacy groups

Thurrock Transition Strategy Action Plan



11. Action Planning- SO What Happens Next?

This strategy will not be meaningful if it does not become imbedded in practice across all agencies who work with disabled young people. We therefore collectively, with young people and their families and carer produced the following action plan. The plan will be monitored by The Transition Strategy Group, a work stream of the Joint Disability Strategy Group. Throughout its 3 year lifecycle, the action plan will be updated to include progress every 6 months by all accountable parties.

The following agencies have been involved in developing this strategy and will signed up to it:

- Adult Social Care
- Children's Social Care
- Thurrock Education Services
- Thurrock SEN network
- Connexions/Career Services
- Thurrock and Basildon College
- Treetops School
- Beacon Hill school
- SEPT specialist nursing
- Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Group
- Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions
- Thurrock Coalition of Disabled people
- Adult Community College
- Thurrock Transition Support Group

Outcome A

I feel I have a choice and am in control of services that meet my needs. I want to be recognised as an individual and contribute to society

Key Principle	Action Needed	Who will do this?	When will they do it by?	6 monthly update
1. Services should be designed around the young people and their families, not around a menu of traditional offers	 The young person to be listened too Plans to involve their local community and not just be service driven Joint working by third sector and ASC and Health. Outcome focussed assessment with the individual family and carers ABCD awareness sessions-pulling on community resources 	All people involved in the process will ensure the young persons voice is heard.	From now 03/13 until 2016	

2. Agencies should adopt a person-centred approach to ensure that the young person is always at the centre of the transition process. The transition pathway should be adopted by all schools	Awareness across Thurrock Council not just ASC. Transition should be everyone's business. Promote pathways in mainstream schools. Training and awareness for staff.	Transition Team Head Teachers Health Colleagues	By Feb 2014 transition pathway adopted for all	
3. Young people want employment. We must encourage local businesses to provide them with the opportunity to work.	More WOW / ESF projects and apprenticeships. Employment CPPS – within the council Incentives for employers. Awareness and advice/information.	Provider Services	Feb 2014	
4. Every young person should be considered able to express their feelings and wishes for education, training and employment and be supported in achieving their aims regardless of their communication	 Promote Empowerment – confidence building increasing. Preparedness for work, improving communication skills. Involvement of education/staff 	Provider Services and Transition Team	Feb 2014	

skills.	 included in outcomes of support plan. Build relationships with local business Produce a directory of available work experiences 			
5. Where appropriate young people should have access to advocacy and communication tools that can assist in this complex process.	 Provide information regarding advocacy support For individual practitioners across all sectors to be aware of advocacy within their roles 	Transition Team LD health nurses Thurrock Coalition Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions	Ongoing	
6. Young people should be at the heart of the design and review of services. Young people should be supported to attend forums where decisions are made.	 More opportunities/forums to discuss. Increase awareness and engagement by regular young people events 	Transition Strategy Group	Ongoing	

Outcome B I feel I have been listened to and understood and am in control of the assessment process

Key Principle	Action Needed	Who will do this?	When will they do it by?	6 monthly update
1. Each young person with a SEN statement should start a transition plan with their school at age 14 – year 9	 Transition team hold a list of all young people with a SEN statement. Schools need to initiate and sign up to the above action. One document for the transition plan that includes all agencies, ensure that every child has a transition meeting and there is consistency across the schools, parents and young people need to have relevant information 	 Adult Social Care. Education. Children's/Adults Social Care 	One plan to be implemented Feb 2014	

	and children's services need to let parents know transition will be involved.			
	 Understanding each individual and if they cant express themselves, listen to parents who know them best, have a realistic approach to planning. Statutory services need to understand that people change their minds and opinions not set inn stone. 			
2. Young people should be equal partners with agencies throughout the transition process; including being actively engaged in the planning and development stages	 Ensure that independent advocacy is available. Set up a self advocacy group for support. Person centred plans are adopted 	Commissioning Team Third sector. Staff across the schools. Adult Social Care/Education. CWD	Current and ongoing Plans to be adopted by schools for march 2014	

	 by all schools and are accessible. Set up peer support to help guide young people through the transition process. 			
3. Agencies should ensure that there is an appropriate degree of communication with the parents/carers of a young person in a time of transition. Staff should agree communication channels with the parent/carers, ensuring that issues of confidentiality are discussed with the young person.	 Young people, parents should be informed of the process during transition during school reviews. Connexions advisors should be independent from the school. Everyone has a transition log to record all the actions in health/Social Care all in one place. 	All agencies	Ongoing	
4. Young people should contribute to agencies service plans and reviews and be regularly engaged through focus groups with their opinions being	 Young people should be involved with the work around designing the assessment process. Staff and young 	Third sector Thurrock Coalition. Education. Adult Social Care. CWD	Annually via Transition strategy Group	

represented on decision making panels.	people should be involved in focus groups. • Ensure that young people's news are involved in a focus group and have advocacy to support them.			
5. Agencies should consider developing a buddying/mentoring scheme to allow young people to support and advise each other through the transition process.	 Young people should have access to advocacy to help with the mentoring/buddying scheme. Set up a self advocacy group for young people to support their peers. Young people should be involved as buddies, they should be provided with training to support them to do this. 	Education/ASC. TLS, Coalition TTSG Shadow Strategy group	Outline of scheme in place by January 2014	
6. All agencies should make sure that they	Young people's views should be	All agencies	Each agency should audit plans annually	
have a sustainable and	taken into		and implement own	

on going evaluation process which collects the views and opinions of young people in time to address any issues which may arise.	consideration and be at the heart of the review • All agencies should get together with one document for all which is reviewed.		evaluation process to report back to Strategy group	
7. Resources should be considered at the earliest possible opportunity in the planning circle. Local community solutions also to be considered	 Talk to other young people /carers /parents, share knowledge. Have a resource pack available for parents long before the first review. Transition website should be set up that shows what resources are available. Transition parents website to be set up to inform parents of resources available. To hold workshops for parents to inform of up to date resources. 	Education. ASC. CWD Thurrock Transition Strategy Group (TTSG). TTSG with funding from ASC. Adult Social Care.	Ongoing Website dates to be confirmed	

Outcome C

I feel confident that social care staff know what they are doing Social care policies are clear and understood by everyone.

Key Principle	Action Needed	Who will do this?	When will they do it by?	6 monthly update
1. Agencies should ensure that all staff working with young people in a time of transition have appropriate training to enable them to work in a person centred way.	 Joint Training. Commitment from all agencies. Person centred practice needs to be embedded in all agencies involved. 	Lead: Transition Strategy Group	As soon as possible	
2. All Agencies should be using Person Centred Pathway Planning.	Need a common document for all agencies.	Lead: Transition strategy group	Feb 2014	
3. Staff should be aware of the inequalities faced by our young people and believe and sign up to the Social Model of Disability.	Joint training and sign up to social model	All agencies	New training roll out from Sept 2013	

4. Staff should receive the highest quality of training and be equipped to work with young people who have complex needs.	 Joint training and sign up Young people to be Supported by people who "experts" in communication, ASD speech therapy / connexions, sign along courses 	All agencies	New training roll out from Sept 2013	
6. Staff across all agencies should be equipped to give information and advice to young people, their families and each other.	 Agencies need a better way to share information Directory to be updated regularly so that information on local provision can be found 	Transition team	Update and check twice yearly	
7. Young people should be given advocacy support to become participating members of boards and decision making forums.	 Create Shadow Transition Steering Group young people only Invite young people onto relevant Boards 	TLS to lead this, create transition champions/set up group CWD Transition Team	Sept 2013	
8. Agencies should ensure that assessments are timely; inclusive and self	People are clear on when an assessment starts and finishes	Connexions/Careers Transition Team	Ongoing	

	directed.					
İ	Outcome D					
	I feel all relevant information about me is shared appropriately and with my knowledge					

Key Principle	Action Needed	Who will do this?	When will they do it by?	6 monthly update
Protocol in Place to enable effective sharing of information between Disabled Children's Services and Transition Team	Ensure current sharing information principles are working well	CWD and Transitions Service	Sept 2013	
There are clear lines of communication between organisations, ensuring timely responses where needed.	Names professionals in all organisations to be alerted when there may be an issue re sharing of information.	All agencies to nominate key people via Transitions Strategy group	June 2103	
Young people consent to their information being shared	Decision to share should always be sought from young	All agencies	Ongoing	

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Outcome E

I understand what is available to me both in my community and from health and social care.

Key Principle	Action Needed	Who will do this?	When will they do it by?	6 monthly update
1. Agencies should ensure that young people, their parents/carers and families are provided with high quality, accurate and timely information to enable them to make informed decisions about their future and the way that they receive support from services.	 Develop a resource pack. Develop a personal Transitions log book. Develop a Transition website. 	Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions Thurrock Coalition	Oct 2013	
2. Links to be made with local businesses so that meaningful work experience and employment can be developed.	Attend business forums	Transition Team Thurrock Lifestyle Solution WOW and TDN	By January 2014	

3. Young people be informed about annual health checks and are reminded in advance of them	Health colleagues to develop a clear transition process and identify key people to provide support	GP's SEPT Specialist nurses Thurrock Lifestyle Solutions Transition Team	Before 18 th Birthday	
4. We will work with the Thurrock Transition Support Group (TTSG), young people, their parents/carers and families to ensure they have a full understanding of the transition process.	Attendance and engagement at meetings Provide the group with information as necessary	Thurrock Transition Support group CWD Transitions Team	Quarterly meetings with TTSG	
5. Agencies will work together to ensure that medical needs are understood well and that staff are appropriately trained.	Health Action Plan to be available to all 999 cards to be made available	GP's CCG SEPT Specialist nurses	Annual audit	
6. Young people should be at the core of developing and reviewing the format of information produced by agencies to make sure	Set up a group via TLS to ensure information is accessible and Easy Read	Transition Team and TLS	Sept 2013	

that it is age appropriate and accessible.			
7. Every agency should identify a chosen means of communication with the young people they work with and make sure that wherever possible that information is given to them in this way.	Workers need awareness raising on forms of communication. TLS, Thurrock Coalition Thurrock Sensory Leads to advise on this out come	Ongoing	

This strategy was developed in partnership with our young people and their families. We would like to thanks them for their involvement and for the use of their images and words in this document.

For further information regarding this Strategy please contact:

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