



## Planning for post 16: Choosing an education provider

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### Summary

This factsheet is designed to give you information on things to think about before choosing an education or training provider for a young person with Special Educational Needs/ Disability (SEND).



## Types of providers

The law requires all young people in England to continue in education or training until they are 18. There are several education or training options available to young people when they leave school at 16.

### College

Colleges offer a range of academic, vocational, technical and professional courses. Further Education colleges are attended by people of all ages from 16, although most students are between 16 and 18 years old.

Some colleges are very large, with several sites or campuses and some are specialist, such as those offering agricultural or marine courses.

Further Education colleges offer courses at every level from entry level courses (foundation courses) that do not require GCSE grades at entry, through to higher level qualifications and degree courses.

### Sixth form

Sixth form refers to school years 12 and 13 and sometimes year 14. Many schools offer a sixth form but there are also sixth form colleges. These offer courses which are designed to follow on from GCSEs, but some sixth forms are specialist and are aimed towards young people with SEND.

### Apprenticeships

An apprenticeship is a job, with hands-on experience, a salary, and the chance to train while you work. Some time is spent in off the job training, often at a college or with a training provider. These are often aimed towards young people with four or more grade 4 GCSEs or higher.

### Traineeships

A traineeship is an education and training programme which incorporates work experience, preparing young people for their future careers by helping them to become 'work ready'. A traineeship has three core elements: a work experience placement with



an employer, work preparation training provided by the training organisation and English and maths support, if required, provided by the training organisation.

Traineeships last anything up to a maximum of 6 months with the content tailored to the needs of the business and the individual.

Employers are not required to pay trainees for the work placement and traineeships are exempt from the Minimum Wage. Young people taking part in traineeships will be undertaking education and training and some may qualify for financial support, including the [16-19 Bursary Fund](#).

### Supported internships

Supported internships are structured study programmes based primarily at an employer. They enable young people aged 16-24 with an Education, Health and Care plan to achieve sustainable paid employment by equipping them with the skills they need for work, through learning in the workplace. Supported internships are unpaid, and last for a minimum of six months.

Wherever possible, they support the young person to move into paid employment at the end of the programme. Alongside their time at the employer, young people complete a personalised study programme which includes the chance to study for relevant substantial qualifications, if appropriate, and English and Maths.

### Things to think about before choosing a provider

All schools should offer careers advice and guidance and should support young people to research the courses or training that interests them.

It is a good idea to attend open day events to get a feel for the different settings and to ask questions.

You can look up information about different providers on their websites. This might include information about their SEND provision or policy. You will need to find out the course criteria and entry level requirements, that your young person will need to meet, to be accepted on to the course/training that they are interested in. Most providers will



produce a prospectus with this information in. You can often find these on their websites or at their open day events.

All providers will have a learning support team or a named person with oversight of SEN provision (similar to the role of the SEN Coordinator (SENCO) in schools). You can request to speak with them about your young person at an open day event or over the phone.

Different colleges and providers will have different application processes which will be detailed on their websites. Most providers will have an admissions helpline which you can contact for support. If they don't have a specific admissions helpline you will still be able to contact the provider. You may be put through to the department or faculty of the course that you are interested in and they will answer your questions.

All providers will have an interview process. This may be different at different settings. If your young person is invited to interview, the setting will provide information about what is expected of the young person during this process.

### Questions to ask

- What would a typical week look like for my young person? (Full time courses are not always 5 days a week)
- Ask any specific questions you have about the course/training that your young person is interested in, including entry requirements.
- What are the requirements for young people to complete functional skills (English and Maths)?
- How big is the campus and does it have different sites?
- What is the average number of students per class for this course?
- Are all areas of the setting accessible for your young person? Are any adaptations required (wheelchair access, ramps, wide doors, hearing loops etc.)?
- How will the setting ensure that your young person's views and wishes on how best to support them are heard?



- Will your young person be supported by the same people? What happens if their teacher or teaching assistant is absent?
- What happens during non-timetabled periods?
- If your young person needs help with things like collecting lunch at lunchtime, how will the setting provide this help?
- Do the classes change for every lesson?
- Does your young person require medical support? If so, how would this be managed?
- What social or enrichment opportunities are available to young people?
- What about pastoral care? Who can your young person talk to if they have a problem?
- What are the expectations for studying at home?
- How do we arrange an appointment to speak to teaching staff?
- How will the setting communicate with you as a parent?
- Are there any curricular trips for this course?
- How will your young person travel to and from the setting?
- Ask for a copy of the setting prospectus and policies such as SEND, Anti-Bullying, Behaviour & Discipline.
- How will the transition between the two settings be managed?

### **Questions to ask if your young person has an Education, Health and Care Plan**

- How will your young person's special educational provision be met?
- Do any of the staff have specialist training linked to your young person's needs?
- Does your young person require any therapy e.g., physiotherapy? If so, how would this be managed?

### **If your young person has an Education, Health and Care Plan**

The Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) can remain in place for full-time courses or training at college or with training providers. Colleges and training providers are required to make reasonable adjustments, to enable students with SEND to access learning.



Colleges and training providers are also required to regularly review the effectiveness of the support provided and its impact on the young person's progress. They must also cooperate with the local authority in the EHCP annual review process.

If your young person has an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) any setting transitions will be managed by your Local Authority's SEND Team.

Make sure that you are familiar with section F (special educational provision) of your young person's EHCP and discuss how this will be met with your young person's Casework Officer.

When you have visited all the settings that you are interested in, discuss your preferences with your Casework Officer. It is important that you check with your Casework Officer if transport is likely to be a problem, because access to transport can be very limited and you may not be eligible for Local Authority (LA) assistance.

You can find more information here:

[Herefordshire- Transport for 16–19-year-olds](#)

[Worcestershire- Post 16 travel assistance](#)

### Post 16 fees

Some courses or training may have fees, and often there will be course material costs for things like textbooks. Some vocational courses will also have equipment costs and you need to consider transport fees. There are different bursaries or benefits available for young people to help with these education related costs and you can find out more about these on the [Help with Money page of our website](#).

### Timeline

Below are general guidelines for the time frame that you should be thinking about taking certain steps during your young person's final year of school.

The time frame might differ depending on which course you chose as each provider will have their own schedule.



Information, Advice  
and Support Service  
**Herefordshire &  
Worcestershire**

Date	
October- November	Look out for open day/evening events at local settings
November - February	Follow the provider's applications process (the time frame for this will depend on the provider you choose)
November – February	Interviews may be held
March- July	Conditional offers may be sent
July	Some settings may hold transition events
August	GCSE results day
August-September	Young people will be invited to enrol to formalise their place

V1 January 2022



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