

Preparing for Adulthood



Whole System Change: Learning Example

Halton have been working with Preparing for Adulthood to develop their employment outcomes for young people. They explored methods to improve the opportunities for young people to create a plan for transition into employment.

The day was opened by the Operational Director for Economy, Enterprise and Property, Wesley Rourke and the Elected Member Portfolio Holder responsible for Economic Development, Eddie Jones. It was facilitated by Linda Jordan from PfA.

Introduction

Halton requested support from the Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) Team, as part of the regional programme, to help develop an employment pathway for young disabled people moving into adulthood. The support has been offered as part of the North-West regional SEND programme.

Background

Halton Preparing for Adulthood Task and Finish group have identified a number of areas for development with employment being a key priority area. Nicola Gitsham from PfA joined the group in July to share what has been learned about Preparing for Adulthood and its 4 main outcomes.

The group identified the partners who would be critical to the success of developing the employment pathway project and realised that they are mostly part of the Halton Employment Partnership (HEP). A workshop was held on the 24th October bringing together the HEP, the Employment, Learning and Skills Specialist Strategic Partnership and representatives from the the Halton PfA Task and Finish group.



Aims and Objectives

The programme for the workshop was:

- Where do we want to be in five years' time?
- What is in place now to support our vision?
- What are the gaps in provision and support?
- What do we need to do to fill the gaps?
- How will we start?

Approach

Halton have been developing a strategic approach to the SEND Reforms since the publication of the Green Paper Support and Aspiration. The Local Offer is comprehensive and well developed and the new system of Education, Health and Care assessment and planning is in place. The strategy is now focusing on pathways into adulthood - and this particular project is on employment for those young people furthest from the labour market.

The vision is for five years, by which time there is an expectation that far more young people will be working and that there will be an aspiration of employment as the norm. The workshop identified the current situation, the gaps in provision and what needs to happen to develop provision and support.

Challenges

The identified challenges were mainly about the extent of the required change, how to re-commission services and re-allocate resources within the tight financial environment and how to deliver an extensive programme of workforce development.

Successes

The workshop included 35 people from adult and children's social care, SEN services, schools and colleges, families, young people with learning disabilities, training providers, voluntary sector and colleagues from departments across the Local Authority. Linda Jordan provided the context of the SEND Reforms, the key changes required by the Children and Families Act 2014 and what has been learned about pathways into employment for young disabled people. The group then worked on tables to identify what support for employment is in place at the moment, the gaps, what needs to happen to fill the gaps and the first steps that need to be taken.



Conclusion

The day concluded with actions identified and an agreement that these would be implemented and progress monitored by the Halton Preparing for Adulthood task group, the Halton Employment Partnership and the Learning Disability Partnership Board. It was also agreed that developing a supported internship locally would be a priority and that Preparing for Adulthood will continue to work with Halton to offer support for this. The critical success factors for this project have been:

- Strong and clear leadership at all levels and across agencies, including political and senior leadership
- A clear strategic vision
- High aspirations for and expectations of young disabled people
- Co-production with families and young disabled people
- Embedded person-centred practice
- An ongoing strategy for workforce development
- A decision to develop personalised study programmes, including supported internships.

This learning example was produced by the Preparing for Adulthood programme (PfA). PfA is a programme funded by the Department for Education as part of the delivery support for the SEND reforms. PfA is delivered by a partnership between the National Development Team for inclusion and the Council for Disabled Children.

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