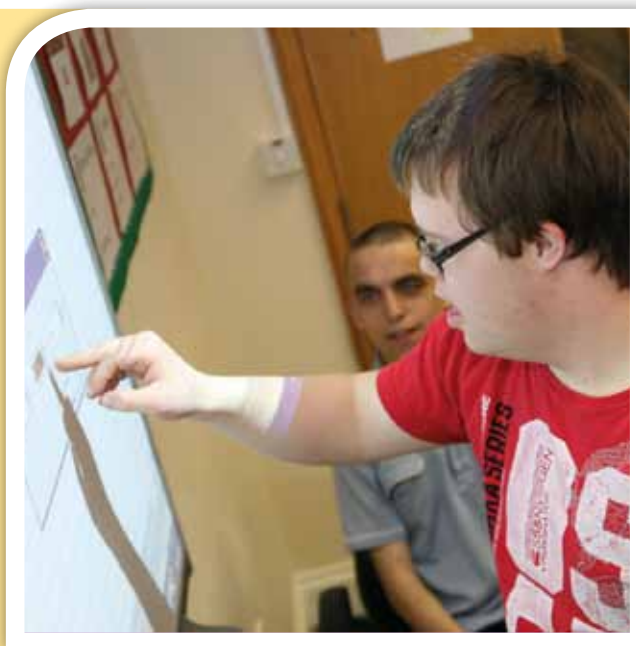


**Fundamental and far-reaching changes are taking place in how young people with special educational needs are supported into adulthood.**

The Children and Families Act 2014 brings into being a radical new Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for children and young people from birth to 25 years, which puts them and their parents/carers at the heart of all discussions and decisions about every aspect of SEN planning and provision.

The Act focuses on outcomes for the young person – including employment, independent living and community participation. The definition of SEN is extended to include young people up to the age of 25 and it includes 'learning difficulties' and 'disabilities'.



The changes include:

1. The replacement of SEN statements with a single 0-25 years co-ordinated Education, Health and Care (EHC) assessment and plan.
2. The availability of personal budgets.
3. The development by every local authority of a Local Offer of services across education, health and care.
4. Joint commissioning of services with the aim of supporting this holistic approach.

At the same time as these changes are occurring, new funding and study programme arrangements are being put in place for all Further Education Colleges, including Independent Specialist Colleges such as Linkage College.

For young people with high needs, the new Education, Health and Care plan will gradually replace the Section 139A Learning Difficulty Assessment which has, until now, been the key process that has to be undertaken by the local authority if the young person has a statement.

This has been the traditional route that enables young people to 'passport' into specialist further education if it is agreed that this best meets their needs.



# MORE DETAILS ON THE CHANGES

## 1. The replacement of SEN statements with a single 0-25 years co-ordinated Education, Health and Care (EHC) assessment and plan.

The aim of this is to put person-centred practice at the heart of effective planning with young people and their families. If there is a statement (or EHC plan), the young person's needs, provision and support are to be specified and the provision written into the plan is a legal entitlement.

If a particular provider, such as Linkage College, is written into the young person's plan, the institution concerned will have a duty to admit that student. All colleges will, along with other agencies and providers, be under a duty to co-operate with the local authority to identify and meet the needs of young people with SEN.

## 2. The availability of personal budgets.

Young people and parents have the right to ask the local authority to prepare a personal budget once their assessment is completed and it is confirmed that an EHC plan will be prepared. A personal budget is an amount of money identified by the local authority and health partners to deliver all or some of the provision set out in an EHC plan. By having a say in the way this budget is used, a parent or young person can control elements of their support.

## 3. The development by every local authority of a Local Offer of services across education, health and care.

Each local authority's Local Offer will set out what all local agencies, including schools and colleges, can provide for children and young people with SEN. The Local Offer includes:

- What Further Education Colleges and Independent Specialist Colleges, such as Linkage College, can provide.
- Services available to support young people in preparing for adulthood, including preparing for and finding employment such as Supported Internships, Apprenticeships and Traineeships.
- Sources of information, advice and support. There is a requirement for local authorities to include services that are local in origin and also services outside the local area that they expect are likely to be used by children and young people for whom they are responsible i.e. services that can respond to local need. As a national provider of independent specialist further education, Linkage College is pressing all local authorities to be included on their Local Offer so that it can be expressed as a preference for young people and their families.

There is also a requirement for local authorities to develop their Local Offer in consultation with children and young people with SEN and their parents, representative organisations such as Parent Carer Forums and other local organisations providing information, advice and support to parents, children and young people.

## 4. Joint commissioning of services with the aim of supporting this holistic approach.

The new legislation requires education providers (including FE colleges and Independent Specialist Colleges such as Linkage College) and health and social care agencies to co-operate at a local level to meet the needs of children and young people with SEN. Local authorities and education providers will be expected to work with other partners such as employment or housing agencies to help achieve good outcomes for young people with SEN. Local authorities and health commissioning groups will be required to commission services jointly for young people with SEN.

## Sources of information, advice and support

- Contact your local authority and Parent Carer Forum for local arrangements on the implementation of the new system, including the Local Offer and EHC plans.
- Support for parents and carers  
Linkage College  
[www.linkage.org.uk](http://www.linkage.org.uk)  
National Network of Parent Carer Forums:  
[www.nnpcof.org.uk](http://www.nnpcof.org.uk)  
National Parent Partnership Network:  
[www.parentpartnership.org.uk](http://www.parentpartnership.org.uk)  
Contact a Family:  
[www.cafamily.org.uk](http://www.cafamily.org.uk)  
Lincolnshire Parent Carer Council  
(shortly to be renamed Lincolnshire Parent Carer Forum):  
[www.lincolnshireparentcarercouncil.org.uk](http://www.lincolnshireparentcarercouncil.org.uk)  
Lincolnshire Parent Partnership Service:  
[lincolnshireparentpartnership.gov.uk](http://lincolnshireparentpartnership.gov.uk)
- Post-16 organisations  
Association of National Specialist Colleges – Natspec  
[www.natspec.org.uk](http://www.natspec.org.uk)
- Association of Colleges (AoC)  
[www.aoc.co.uk](http://www.aoc.co.uk)
- Specialist SEN organisations  
Preparing for Adulthood: Information on the SEN reforms  
[www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk](http://www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk)  
Nasen: National Association for Special Educational Needs  
[www.nasen.org.uk](http://www.nasen.org.uk)  
IPSEA – Independent Parental Special Education Advice  
Free legally-based advice on SEN/disability  
[www.ipsea.org.uk](http://www.ipsea.org.uk)