



Waltham Forest

Preparing for Adulthood Strategy

2021-2023

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1. Introduction

Transition into adulthood is a major life stage for all young people. Within Waltham Forest, health, education and social care professionals recognise the need for a planned and supported transition into adult life. Planning for the future, experiencing life changes and getting skills and knowledge for independence is an important time in any young person's life. Young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are no different. They have the same aims and hopes as everyone else: to be healthy, have fun, learn, work, make friends and be full participants in their community.

The Children and Families Act (2014) and the SEND Code of Practice (CoP) 2014 state that everyone working with children and young people with SEND across education, health and social care, should support them to prepare for adult life and help them go on to achieve the best outcomes in employment, independent living, health and community participation.

At their heart is a commitment to ensuring that children, young people and their families are at the centre of decision-making so that they achieve better outcomes.

“High aspirations are crucial to success – discussions about longer-term goals should start early and ideally well before Year 9 (age 13-14) at school. They should focus on the child or young person's strengths and capabilities and the outcomes they want to achieve.”

Waltham Forest Council, North East London Clinical Commissioning Group (NELCCG), North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT), Barts and the London, Education, Police, SENDIASS Youth Forum and Parent Forum have high ambitions for all young people, including those with SEND, focusing on preparing them for adulthood from age 14 years.

We want to ensure that young people are enabled to live as healthy a life as possible. To do this we want to enable them to understand their own health needs, and to make healthy choices wherever possible to support their physical, sexual and mental health. We want to ensure that children and their families understand the options available to them when they reach age 18 and are enabled to be as independent as possible. We know that not all young people with SEND will meet the threshold for adult social care services and where young people still need support, we want to make sure there is a range of alternative services and advice available to meet their needs including opportunities for education, community engagement and housing. For those young people who will go on to receive social care support as an adult, the SEND social work team will work closely with them from the age of 16 years to ensure a smooth transition.

The Preparation for Adulthood Strategy is a joint, co-produced health, education and social care strategy aligned with the SEND Vision.

This strategy outlines the intended outcomes, key priorities and implementation framework for all services in Waltham Forest working with children, young people and their families who are preparing for adulthood.

2. Vision and Outcomes

In Waltham Forest our Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) vision is: **To inspire and support our young people to be resilient and healthy, and lead fulfilling personal and professional lives.**

This supports the overarching vision of our Health and Wellbeing Board “that everyone who lives in Waltham Forest is happy, healthy, and thriving”.

The PFA strategic group will oversee and drive the strategy forward and we will work together with parent, carers, young people and partners to deliver the identified implementation plan.

Preparing for Adulthood is a cross cutting theme and is key element of many strategies including:

- WF SEND Vision 2020 – 2023 <https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/content/send-vision-2020-2023>
- Autism Strategy (in progress) <https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/content/waltham-forest-autism-strategy-consultation>
- A Strategy for Improving Employment Opportunities for Adults with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism in Waltham Forest (2021) <https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/content/waltham-forest-autism-strategy-consultation>
- Improving the Life Chances of Adults with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism in Waltham Forest (2020) <https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/content/our-work-improve-life-chances>
- The *Families at the Heart of Our Place* (2020)
- Inclusion Strategy
- Carers Strategy <https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/content/adult-carers>, <https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/content/young-carers>
- Post 16 Strategy (in progress) <https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/content/16-25-what%E2%80%99s-next>

3. PFA OUTCOMES

Our mission is to make a positive difference to Waltham Forest young people and their communities and have developed four outcomes that will be the focus of our work:

1. **Be ambitious and enable young people to reach meaningful occupation and/or employment**
2. **Be resilient and independent**
3. **To be as healthy as possible in adult life**
4. **Feel connected within community**

4. Principles

Waltham Forest's guiding principles for an effective transition to adulthood are:

- Co-production as a system-wide approach in the design and delivery of services
- Early identification and Planning
- A holistic, young person focused approach
- Active involvement of young people and their families
- Raising aspirations and focusing on key life chances and independence
- Provision of information and advocacy
- Working together to ensure integrated assessment and planning processes across all agencies
- Improved post 16 opportunities and outcomes with a greater number of young people with SEND gaining employment and having choices about how they achieve independence to stay in or near their family and local community
- Support to develop inclusive practices in mainstream schools and colleges

5. Legislation and Guidance

Our Principles are underpinned by the following legislation and guidance.

- SEND Code of Practice 2014 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>
- Children and Families Act 2014 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/contents/enacted>
- Children Act 1989 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/content>) amended by the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
- Care Act 2014 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted>
- NICE guidelines: Transition from children's to adults' services for young people using health or social care services, NICE guideline 2016 <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng43>
- Equality Act 2010 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>
- Mental Capacity Act 2005 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/9/contents>

6. Context

There are around 45,000 children and young people of school age in Waltham Forest and about 1 in 6 of them are identified as having SEND: a total of just over 7,000 pupils. Waltham Forest is one of London's growing boroughs, with the population expected to grow by 9.5% by 2025. The school-age population is projected to grow at a similar rate during this same period, rising to 48,500. It is likely this growth will result in as many as 100 more children and young people who need to be supported through an EHC plan. In Waltham Forest we are seeing an annual increase of EHCPs at 20% per year.

The largest groups by primary need with an EHC plan in Waltham Forest are those with autistic spectrum condition (ASC), at 43% followed by those with Speech, Language and Communications needs (SLCN), at 14%.

Local

There are approximately 5000+ adults with a learning disability in Waltham Forest as noted in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2018/2019). Of these residents, approximately 630 are recorded as accessing adult social care services as of January 2021 within the age groups outlined below.

Age Group	Numbers
18-25	95
26-49	308
50-64	150
65-74	53
75-84	21
85-94	5
Total 18+	630

According to the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework, pre-pandemic figures show that across England only 5.6% of working age adults with a learning disability and receiving support from local councils are in paid employment. Within London, the figure is slightly higher at 7% although still far from acceptable. For adults with autism, there is less recorded data, however the National Autistic Society conducted research in 2016 that told us approximately 32% are in a form of paid work. In comparison, the employment rate of the general population remains above 75% both during and pre-pandemic according to the Office for National Statistics.

In Waltham Forest, the employment rate for working age adults with a learning disability and/or autism is significantly low at 1.6%, as shown by data collated for the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework.

A recent survey was completed by people with learning disabilities and/or autism as well as families/carers and those that work with them to understand their views in respect of employment support. The outcome informed the development of a Strategy for Improving Employment Opportunities for Adults with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism in Waltham Forest (2021). 31% of respondents that participated declared an interest in employment or employment related activity, showing that, despite difficulties in finding work, people with learning disabilities and/or autism do want to work and engage in the economy.

Employment survey received over 70 responses with key highlights:

- 2 people are in employment
- 43 never had a job
- 16 said they would be interested in getting a job
- 17 said they would be interested in volunteer work
- 10 said they would be interested in an employment training course
- 22 completed a college course
- 8 completed employment course
- 10 completed other training
- 7 had work experience

Our vision is to normalise employment as an achievable outcome for adults with learning disabilities and/or autism in Waltham Forest. We want to maximise employment opportunities and increase the number of people in employment. To measure our progress, we aim to increase the rate of employment for adults with learning disabilities and/or autism to 15% by 2031.

We will create an action plan to achieve this which will be adaptable based on the success of our actions. We will listen and learn as we progress by continuously working with our communities, including through regular engagement with service users that have learning disabilities and/or autism, their families and carers and people that work with service users.

7. Existing programmes in Waltham Forest

In Waltham Forest, we are always developing our offer for young people who wish to access training or employment support and the following pre-internships/ internships are currently available (Further details in Appendix C):

- **Tottenham Hotspur**
- **Interns and Outturns with MENCAP**

- **Project Search**
- **Ellingham**

8. Implementation Plan

In order to enable us to realise our vision and fulfil the aims of this strategy, as a partnership, we make the set of commitments outlined in the implementation plan. The plan underpins this strategy and full details can be found as Appendix A.

Co-production with parents, families and young people is a key principle that runs through all these **commitments and continuous** upskilling of our workforce by providing access to

Governance, Reporting and Review

The SEND service in Waltham Forest is governed by the Strategic SEND Board chaired by the director and attended by strategic leads.

PFA strategy will be governed by the PFA Strategic Group chaired by the director and represented by partnership outlined below. The PFA Strategic Group meets monthly to provide strategic direction and leadership and quality assuring the local area’s effectiveness in preparing all children for adulthood.

PFA Strategic Group membership (Appendix B for full detail):

Agency
SEND
Education business effectiveness and links to post 14 strategy (Voluntary sector/ social prescribers, local employers/education)
Parent Forum
SENDIASS Youth Forum
Waltham Forest College
Sixth forms – Leyton
Special schools with Sixth Forms (study programs)
Mainstream Secondary 2x
ASC
CSC
Health, DCO, public health, adult health
Commissioning
YOS
Education Psychology
Police
Housing
Early Help

REPORTING:

Health and Well-Being Board
Chair: Councillor

Representation on Board from: Councillors, Public Health, CCG, Education/SEND, Planning & Development, Children's Social care, Community Sector Health Services, Early Help, Legal, Safeguarding, Parks and Leisure, Housing



Children's Health and Well-being Board
Chair: Director of Public Health

Representation on Board from: to be confirmed



SEND Strategic Board 0-25
Chair: LBWF Director of Learning

Representation on Board from: LBWF SEND Service, Public Health, NELFT, CCG, LBWF Early years and Childcare, Children's Social Care, Early Help/Children and Family Centres, Schools rep, Waltham Forest Parent Forum, LBWF Data Team, LBWF Finance, LBWF Corporate commissioning



PFA Strategic Group
Chair: LBWF Service- Strategic level

Representation on Group from: SEND AD, Parent Forum, Youth Forum, Waltham Forest College Sixth forms – Leyton, Special schools with Sixth Forms (study programs), Mainstream Secondary 2x ASC, CSC, Health DCO, public health, adult health, Commissioning, YOS, EdPsych, Police, Local employers, job centre, Housing, Voluntary sector/ social prescribers

REVIEW

How we will know we are making progress

We have developed an outcome focused PFA Implementation Plan (Appendix A) based on our commitments in partnership with parents/carers. This will set out the priorities with lead officers and expected timescales. We will track our progress at the SEND strategic board, Executive Board where all partners come together on a regular basis. We will continue to develop our relationship with parents/carers and young people and with our Parent Forum to implement our shared priorities, progress in meeting them and to update all stakeholders through regular communications.

This Strategy will be refreshed on an annual basis to ensure it remains relevant to the needs of our residents and we will conduct a full review in 2023.