

Transition Guide for Parents & Carers

Information for parents and carers of teenagers
with learning difficulties and/or disabilities



Welcome

Transition Guide for Parents & Carers

This Dudley guide is for parents and carers of young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.



As parents and carers, you play a crucial role in supporting your son or daughter to make their choices. This booklet can help by:

- answering some of the questions you might have about your son or daughter's progression through school and beyond
- providing useful and important information, such as the main choices on offer at 16+, to help you become involved in your teenager's decision-making
- signposting you to the main local sources of help, information and advice available.

The information in this guide is divided into sections. You won't need to read all of the information straight away; different sections will come in handy at different stages of your son or daughter's move through school and beyond.

We have also given a brief explanation of some of the **important terms** that may be used when discussing your son or daughter's education or future – see the section starting on page 37.

TOP TIP

Look out for text boxes like this one throughout the booklet. These contain important or useful information such as websites or contact numbers.

Connexions supports young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities from age 13 years old or up until the age of 25 if it is needed.

Contents

Transition Planning for your son or daughter's future

Your part in transition planning (5); What happens when? (5); A picture guide to transition (7); The transition planning meeting (8); Young people with a learning difficulty and/or disability (without a Statement of Special Educational Needs) (9)

Options at 16+

What are the main options? (10); What is the compulsory school leaving age? (10); Where can my son or daughter go with their qualifications? (11)

Continue in education

What are the main options? (12); What can your son or daughter study? (12); How do I find out where 16+ courses are on offer locally? (13); How do I find out where 16+ courses are on offer further afield? (13); The Moving Forward Plan (14); Stay at school (15); Go to college (15); Before applying to college or sixth form (16); Go to a specialist school or college (17); What happens next – applying to college or sixth form (18); Higher education (18)

Education – money matters

Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit (20); Course/Tuition Fees (20); 16-19 Bursary Fund (20); Discretionary Learner Support (21); Travel expenses (22); Money for higher education (22); Disabled Students Allowance (23)

Work-based Learning

What are the main options in Dudley? (24); Kickstart Gold (24); Foundation Learning (24); Apprenticeships (25); Where can your son or daughter look for vacancies – for jobs or work-based training? (26)

Employment

Help from Connexions (27); Help from Jobcentre Plus (27)

Volunteering and free-time activities

Volunteering (28); Free-time (positive local activities) (29)

Benefits

Transition and benefits (30); Parents' or Carers' benefits (31); Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit (31); On benefits yourself? (31); Carers' Allowance and/or Carers' Premium (31); Help and advice (31)

Help and support for Parents and Carers

Connexions (32); Health Services (33); Parent Partnership Services (34); Adult Services (35)

Contents

Some important terms and what they mean

Advocate (37); Annual Review (37); Graduated Approach (37); Individual Education Plan (IEP) (37); Special Educational Needs (SEN) (38); Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (38); Statement of Special Educational Needs (38); School Action and School Action Plus (38); The Moving Forward Assessment and Plan (39); Transition Plan (39); Disability and the Law (39)

Where to find more help and advice

Benefits (40); Connexions (40); Colleges (40); Distance Learning (41); Health Services (41); Adult Support (Health and Social Services joint teams) (41); Local Authority (41); Parent Partnership (41); Social Services (42); Helping organisations including Voluntary Services and charities (43)

More about Connexions

Dudley Connexions office (47); Tell us what you think (47); Your Rights (47); The sort of information we keep (47); Confidentiality/Data Protection (47)

Please note:

The information in this booklet was correct at the time of going to print. However, information is liable to change. If you are unsure about anything, please don't hesitate to contact Dudley Connexions office. Our contact details are on page 47.



Transition - Planning for your son or daughter's future

Up until year 9, your teenager will have had an annual meeting in school to review their statement of special educational needs, and/or their individual education plan (IEP). This meeting, to which you are invited, takes place to make sure that their statement and/or individual education plan is still relevant to their needs.

In year 9 a transition plan will also be put together at this annual review meeting. The transition plan is about your son or daughters's future education or training plans and their related support needs.

Once agreed, copies of this transition plan will be sent to you, other professionals who work with the young person, and Dudley Local Authority.

This transition plan will then be reviewed and updated at each annual review meeting, until your son or daughter leaves school.

Your part in transition planning

You have a vital role to play in helping to put together your son or daughters's transition plan. It's important that you attend the annual review – **your views count**.

What happens when?

During year 9 (13 to 14 years old)

During the annual review meeting in year 9, a **transition plan is drawn up for your teenager**. This looks at their needs and possible options when they leave school. For some, this will be at the end of year 11. In other schools, e.g. Old Park and Pens Meadow it can be at the end of year 14. The Personal Adviser from Connexions also attends this review.

Sometimes the year 9 annual review may be known as the transition review. In some schools you may find that the meeting lasts longer so that there is more time to discuss transition options.

As in previous meetings, the statement/individual education plan will also be reviewed. Connexions manage the co-ordination of the transition plan. The school write and send out copies of the plan.



Transition - Planning for your son or daughter's future

During year 10 (14 to 15 years old)

Annual reviews continue. They are still called transition reviews. The meetings look at and change the transition plan if necessary.

If any changes need to be made to the transition plan, these should be agreed with you.

Your teenager's Personal Adviser from Connexions will work together with the school to make sure any action points are carried out.

During year 11 (15 to 16 years old)

If year 11 is your teenager's final year of school the statement of educational needs ceases the day they leave school.

If your son or daughter is going onto college or training the Personal Adviser will carry out an assessment of their needs and produce a document called a **Moving Forward Plan (see important terms)**. The Personal Adviser works closely with the school and your teenager to complete this assessment.

**TOP
TIP**

An example of a Moving Forward Plan can be seen on our website www.connexionsdudley.org

The Moving Forward Plan is signed by your son or daughter (and parent/carer where appropriate) and it is then sent to colleges and/or training providers in which they have expressed an interest. College and training providers will use this information to assess how they will be able to meet your teenager's support needs.

The Moving Forward Plan is reviewed by Connexions and the college/training provider to see that your son or daughter's support needs are being met.

During years 12, 13 and 14 (16 to 19 years old)

If your son or daughter has remained in school and has a statement of special educational needs, the statement and the transition plan will continue to be reviewed each year.

The **Moving Forward Plan** will be written in the year that they leave school.

A picture guide to your son or daughter's transition

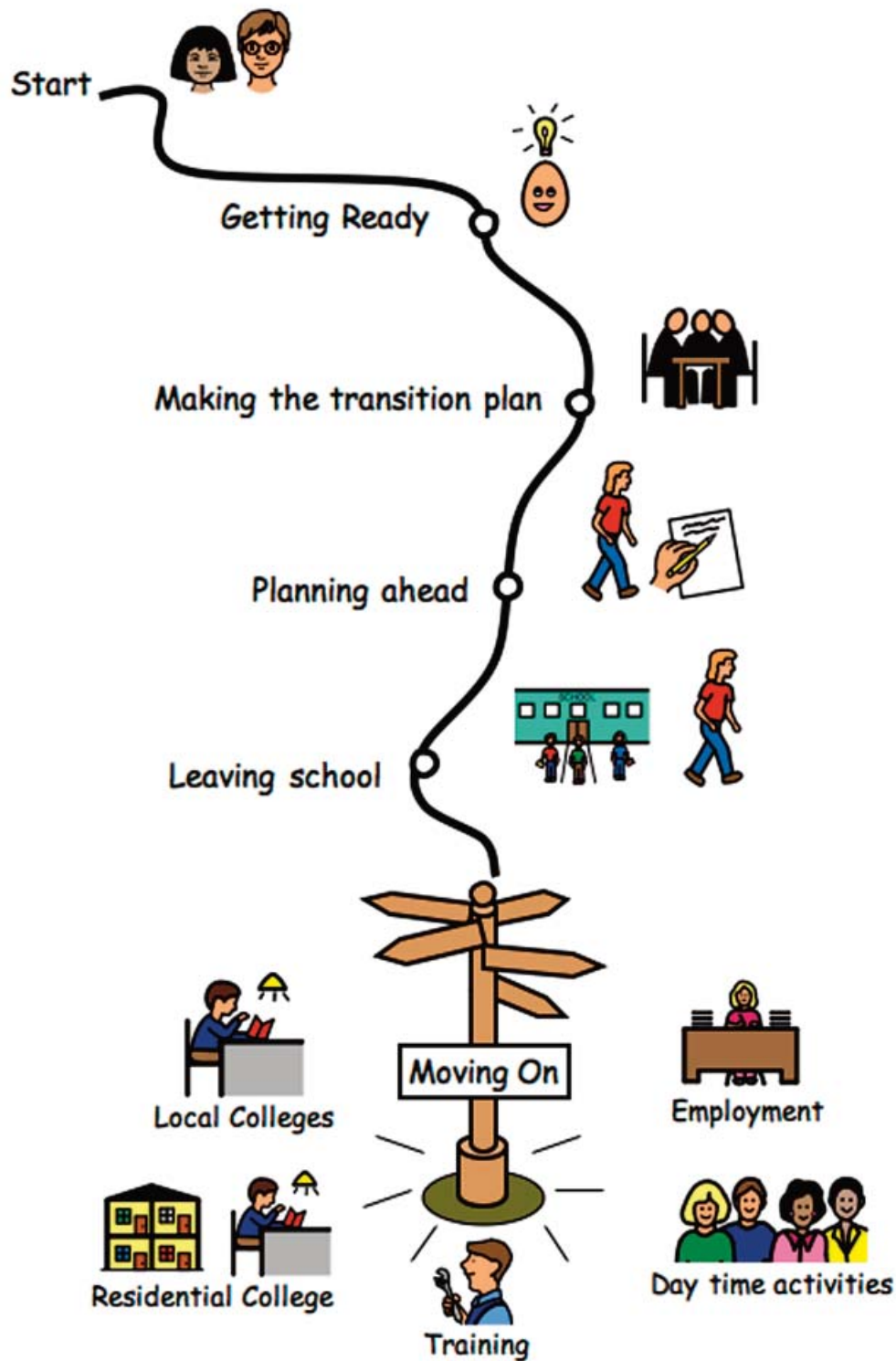


Image taken from 'The Big Picture – Your Guide to Transition' produced by the West Midlands Transition Pathway.

Transition - Planning for your son or daughter's future

The transition review meeting

You may be worried about what may happen at the transition review meeting – we've given some guidelines, below, to help you to prepare.

Who will be at the meeting?

- You, your teenager, their Personal Adviser, and school staff, will have been invited. A representative from other appropriate agencies may also have been invited such as Social Services, the Health Service and the Children's Services Directorate of Dudley Local Authority.
- You may also want to ask other people to support you at the meeting, for example a friend, an **advocate** (see important terms) or someone who helps your son or daughter now for example a support worker.

Before the meeting

Think about what your teenager:

- likes to do at home, school, and in their free time – it may be possible to include some of these activities in their future plans.
- would like to do in the future – how can you help them to say what is important to them?
- may need to help them, or you, to get your viewpoints across – for example do you need an interpreter, or a BSL communicator, at the meeting?

If you would like more help to prepare for this meeting you can ask your son or daughter's tutor, their school's SENCO, or Personal Adviser for advice. You can also ask for help from your local Parent Partnership Service – see page 41 for contact details.

After the meeting

You will get a copy of your teenager's transition plan which will outline what needs to be done next.

Get in touch with their Personal Adviser if you have any questions. Contact details for Dudley Connexions office are on page 47.

TOP TIP

To find out who the Personal Adviser is for your teenager, contact Connexions on 01384 811400 or email: connexions@dudley.gov.uk

Young people with a learning difficulty and/or disability (without a Statement of Special Educational Needs)

Your teenager may have additional needs and may be supported in school as **School Action** or **School Action Plus** (see important terms on page 38).

When your teenager leaves school a Moving Forward Plan may be written by a Connexions Personal Adviser so that they continue to have support if they go onto college or training.

For any young person who is defined as **School Action Plus** a Moving Forward Plan may be written for them.

TOP TIP

Contact Connexions if you think that your son or daughter is eligible for a Moving Forward Plan on 01384 811400 or email: connexions@dudley.gov.uk



Options at 16+

What are the main options?

The main options on offer for your teenager at 16+ are:

- **Continue in education** – see Continue in Education on page 12 of this booklet for more details.

After 18, they could go on to higher education. See Higher Education on page 18 of this booklet for more details.
- **Work-based Learning** – see Work-based Learning on page 24 of this booklet for more details.
- **Employment** – see Employment on page 27 of this booklet for more details.

What is the compulsory school leaving age?

There is currently a compulsory school leaving age of 16. This means your teenager is officially a school pupil (even if they are being home educated) until the end of the school year in which they become 16. This is normally up to the last Friday in June – they cannot start a full time option such as a job or training course until after this date.





Young people with moderate or severe learning difficulties often leave school at different ages – some stay until they are 19. When they leave will depend on their educational needs and the provision there is in place.

From June 2013 pupils who are of school leaving age will be expected to stay in learning until they are 17. This does not mean that they have to stay in school, but to progress onto a form of learning such as college, sixth form or work-based learning option. Exact details have yet to be announced so please check the Connexions website for updates at

www.connexionsdudley.org



Where can my son or daughter go with their qualifications?

Level	Examples of courses and qualifications
 Level 3 Advanced	A levels NVQ 3 BTEC National (Diploma or Certificates)
 Level 2 Higher	GCSEs grades A*-C NVQ 2 BTEC First (Diplomas or Certificates)
 Level 1 Foundation	GCSEs grades D-G NVQ 1 BTEC level 1 or equivalent courses
 Entry 3, 2, 1	For example – Entry level certificates in subjects such as English, maths and science, ASDAN, Foundation Learning, Step Up, Entrance to Success and ACE
Pre-entry level	P level courses

Continue in education

What are the main options?

If your son or daughter wants to continue in education at 16+ they could:

- **Stay at school (see page 15)**
- **Go to college (see page 15)**

It is also possible to take some courses by **distance learning**. (See page 41 for contact details).

What can your son or daughter study?

The level your teenager will study at next will depend on what level of course they are studying at school at the moment. For example if they are taking:

- **Pre-entry (P) level courses at school in year 11**, they may be ready to move on to other Pre-entry Level or Entry Level qualifications such as ASDAN (courses such as Bridging, Transition, Social and Life).
- **Entry level courses at school in year 11**, they may be ready to move on to Foundation Level qualifications such as ASDAN, City and Guilds, GCSEs, or BTEC level 1 courses (courses such as Step Up, Entrance to Success, Employability, Work Skills).
- **GCSE courses at school in year 11**, they may be ready to move on to Advanced Level qualifications such as A levels and BTEC National Diploma courses.

The type of course your teenager will decide to take next will depend on their plans for the future and their assessed needs at the moment. For example they could take a:

- **Life skills course** – if they need to gain more independent living skills. Examples include Bridging, ASDAN 'Working Towards Independence' course or Assisted Continuing Education (ACE) courses.
- **A general course** – if they need to gain more academic and/or general qualifications. Examples include Entry level Certificates, GCSEs or A levels.
- **A work-related course** – if they are keen to develop work-related skills. Examples include Entry level Certificates, City & Guilds qualifications, BTEC or an NVQ in a specific work-related subject like retail or motor vehicle studies.

For more information please see the 'Qualifications' section of the Connexions website at www.connexionsdudley.org

How do I find out where 16+ courses are on offer locally?

All schools and colleges produce a booklet called a prospectus. This booklet contains information about the courses on offer and some general information about the school or college. Most Dudley schools and colleges also have up to date websites with the same information.

Dudley school/college website addresses:

- Bishop Milner Catholic School – www.bmilner.dudley.sch.uk
- Ellowes Hall Sports College – www.ellowes.dudley.sch.uk
- Old Swinford Hospital – www.oshsch.com
- Windsor High School & Sixth Form – www.windsorhighschool.co.uk
- Dudley College – www.dudleycol.ac.uk
- Halesowen College – www.halesowen.ac.uk
- King Edward VI College – www.kedst.ac.uk
- Stourbridge College – www.stourbridge.ac.uk

How do I find out where 16+ courses are on offer further afield?

See the Directgov website <http://yp.direct.gov.uk/14-19prospectus> for details of courses in other parts of the Black Country as well as out of borough locations.

The Moving Forward Plan

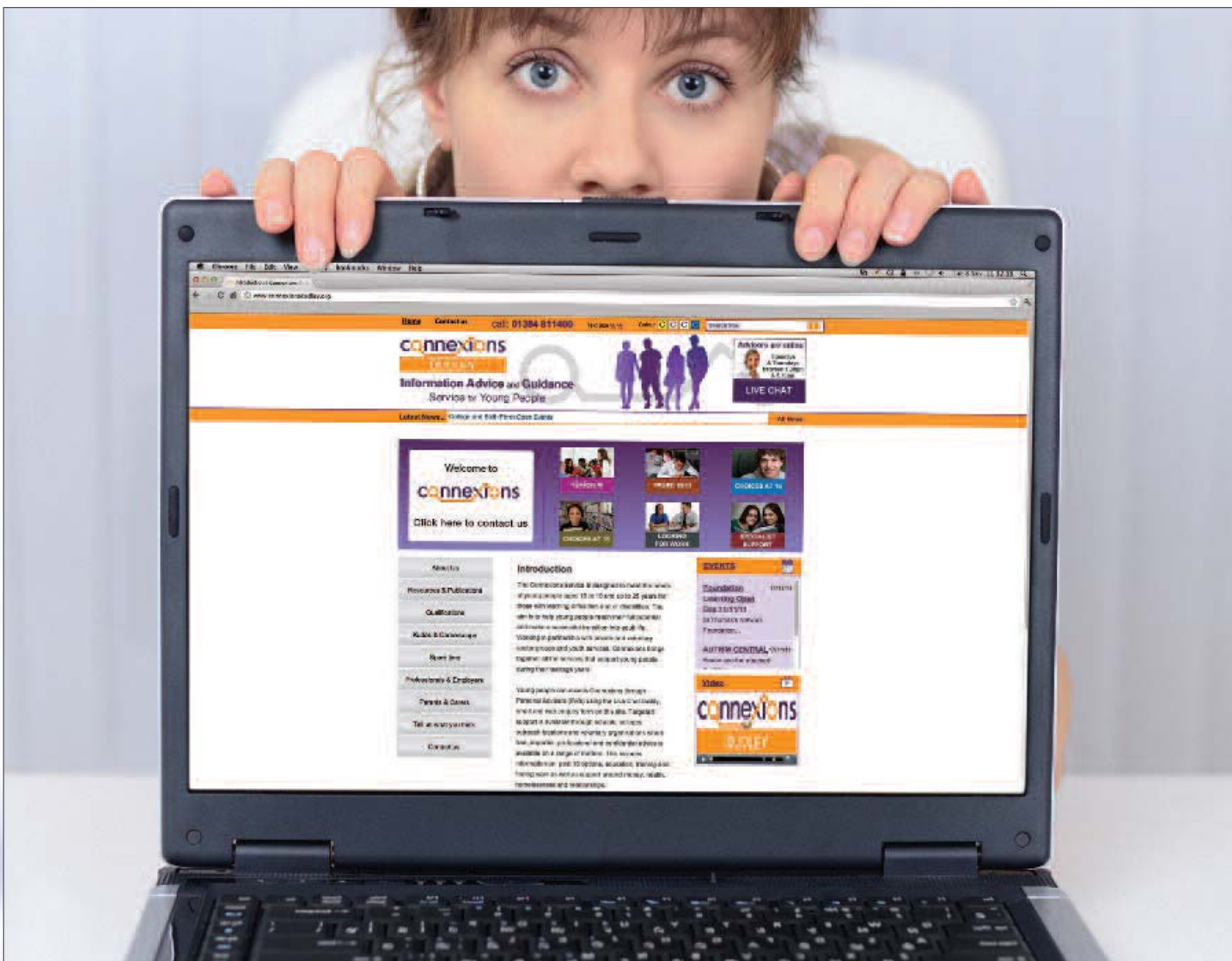
Once your teenager is ready to leave school their Personal Adviser will work with them to complete a Moving Forward Plan. See 'Some Important Terms' on page 39 for more information.

This support plan may be sent to the school, college or work-based training provider that they are interested in, in order for them to determine how they will meet your son or daughter's support needs.

Your teenager will not receive a Moving Forward Plan if they progress on to their school's sixth form.

Please also see the 'Specialist Support' section of the Connexions website for further information on Moving Forward Plans, including an example of what one could look like at:

www.connexionsdudley.org



Stay at school

If your teenager's school has a sixth form, they could choose to stay at school until the age of 19.

If they stay at school they will know the teachers and staff. They may have friends who also choose to stay on.

By staying on at school they will be able to:

- work towards more qualifications
- do work experience or work-related learning
- develop independence
- improve their basic skills in subjects like English and maths
- have more time to think about and decide what to do next
- get ready to move to college or work.

Going to another school's sixth form

Your teenager may also have the option of going on to a sixth form at another school. Your son or daughter may want a change of school but would still prefer to study in a smaller institution rather than going onto a larger college.



Going to college

Colleges offer a wide range of courses for all levels of ability. Your teenager may prefer to go on a college course because they would like to:

- take a course that is new to them and wasn't offered by their school
- try a range of courses not possible in their current school
- take up a course aimed at a chosen career that is not available in their current school
- have a change of surroundings and the chance to meet new people
- be able to develop their independence skills.

Continue in education

Before applying to college or sixth form

Before your teenager puts in an application to a college, you may find it helpful to consider the following:

- Can you attend college Open Days (see www.connexionsdudley.org for details). These are a good chance to see the facilities on offer and ask any questions you or your son or daughter may have.
- What are the entry requirements for the course they want to go on to, and can they meet them?
- What kind of support is available, and does it meet your son or daughter's needs?
- What have previous students from the course gone on to do? This might help you decide if the course is suitable for what your son or daughter wants to do. This information should be available from the college or sixth form.
- How easy is it to get to the college or sixth form? Some colleges have more than one site, so check to see where your teenager would be studying and whether or not this is easy for them to get to.
- Will your son or daughter will need help in getting to and from college or sixth form, what are the transport arrangements and is financial help available? (see page 22 in Money Matters for more information on transport costs).

When your teenager has decided

- Make an application as early as possible. Please note that sixth forms and some colleges have application deadline dates.
- Go with your son or daughter to their college/sixth form interview. Ensure that the college or sixth form are aware of any special arrangements that need to be made for your son or daughter's interview.
- Respond to acceptance letters in the time specified by the college or sixth form.
- Keep in touch with Personal Advisers who can help your teenager decide on which courses and colleges may be suitable.

TOP TIP

Support from Learning Support Co-ordinators (*Job titles may vary between institutions*). Every college and sixth form has a learning support department and a Learning Support Co-ordinator. As part of transition planning, contact will be made with the co-ordinator to help your son or daughter. They can explain more about courses and discuss particular learning support needs. Contact details for each college or sixth form are listed on page 40.

Specialist school or college

Most young people go onto a local college once they leave school.

There is also additional funding available to support your teenager if they will need additional support of equipment to access their course.

If you find that your teenager needs more support than your local colleges can offer, there may be the opportunity of applying for a specialist or residential college.

Applications for funding for this are looked at on an individual basis. Speak to your teenager's Personal Adviser for more information.



Continue in education

Higher education (HE) – 18+

One of the options on offer to your son or daughter, if they complete level 3 studies, is to go on into higher education.

Higher education study can be done at universities, higher education colleges or some further education colleges.

Applications are usually submitted to the **University and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS)** in the January* before the young person would hope to start at university. For example, to enter university in September 2013, applications would need to be in by January 2013. Planning for this should start round about January 2012.

Visit www.ucas.com for all the information your son or daughter will need about HE, from help with planning and course application, to student life, cash facts, taking a year out, and life after HE. The important thing to remember with higher education is to **start planning early**.

*There are three deadlines when applying to higher education courses starting in September 2013:

- **15th October 2012 for applications for Oxford and Cambridge or medical, dentistry and veterinary degrees;**
- **24th March 2013 is the deadline for some (but not all) art and design courses;**
- **all other higher education courses have the deadline of 15th January 2013 for entry in September 2013.**

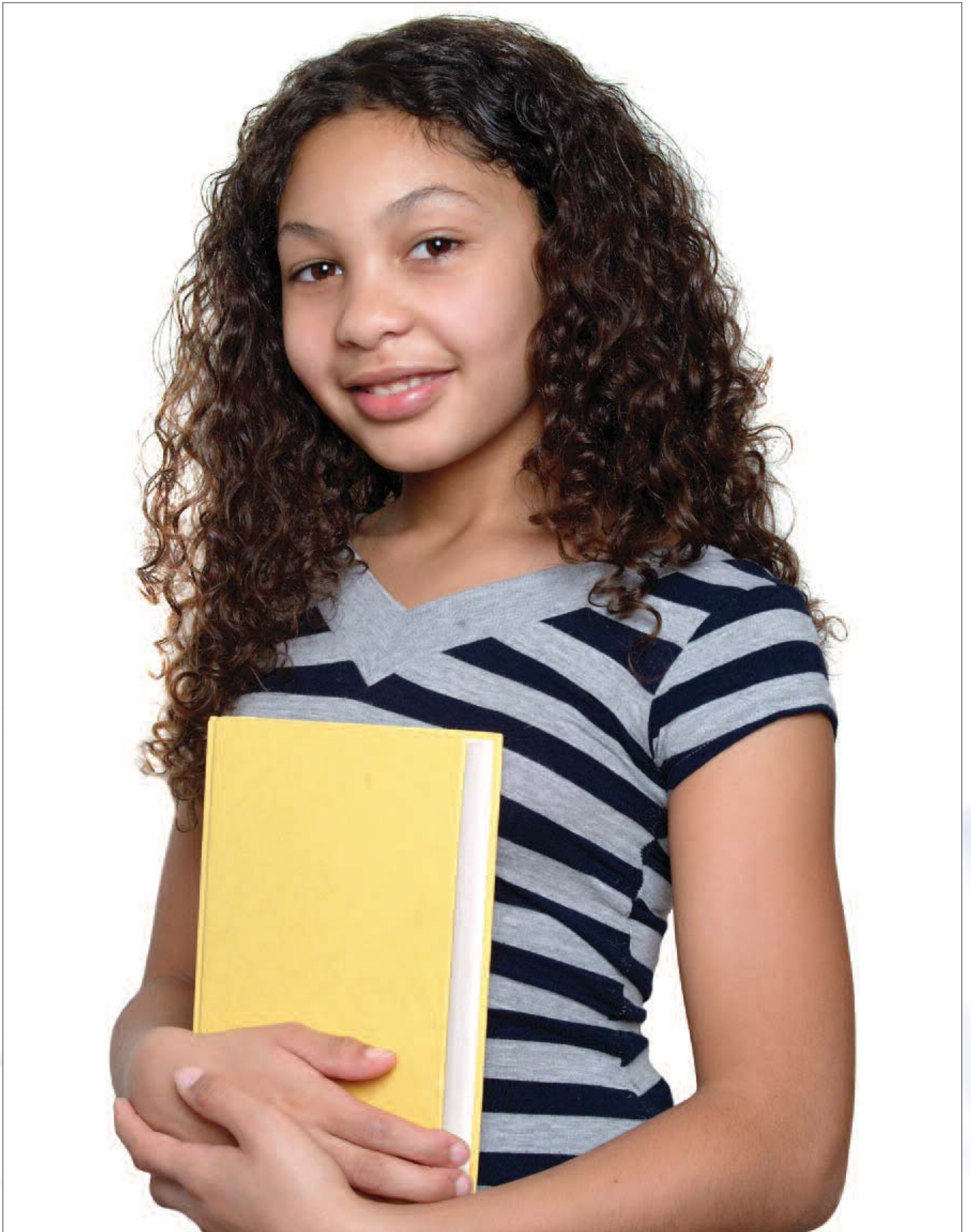
Support for students

All higher education institutions have designated staff (such as a Disability Co-ordinator or a Student Welfare Officer) who can advise students. They should be contacted before completion of the UCAS application form to discuss individual requirements.

**TOP
TIP**

Helpful information on higher education

For more information on all aspects of higher education, contact the Disability Alliance at www.disabilityalliance.org



Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit

You will still get Child Benefit, and Child Tax Credit, if eligible, while your son or daughter is under 19 and in full time education, unless they receive benefits in their own right. Under certain circumstances Child Benefit may be paid up to the age of 20.

Course/Tuition Fees

If your son or daughter is under 19, they won't need to pay for full-time school or further education college courses, but they may need to buy equipment for some courses, for example catering, hairdressing or photography.

Some independent schools may offer sixth form places, at reduced fees, to students with an excellent academic record.

16-19 Bursary Fund

The 16-19 Bursary Fund may help your son or daughter to stay in education or training if they need financial help to continue with learning after 16.

There is a bursary of £1,200 guaranteed for young people in most need who are:

- looked after or have left care
- on Income Support
- disabled and in receipt of Employment Support Allowance and Disability Living Allowance.

Schools, colleges and training providers may also be able to help with bursaries for transport, food or equipment to help students facing genuine financial difficulties.

Students will have to apply to their school, college or training provider for a 16-19 bursary. In most cases they decide on the amount they could receive, when it is paid, and what conditions they might attach. Schools, colleges and training providers may:

- provide specific items that students need rather than the cash, for example travel cards, or equipment for a course
- set conditions that students must meet to receive a bursary, for example linked to behaviour or attendance.



Discretionary Learner Support

This fund is available in colleges and school sixth forms to help with learning costs. Money is prioritised for those who face financial hardship. They can be used to help with:

- financial hardship and emergencies
- childcare costs (for Ofsted-registered childcare)
- accommodation costs, for those who have to study further than the maximum distance from home
- essential course-related equipment, materials and field trips
- travel costs (for over 19s).

Colleges and sixth forms will take into account whether there are alternative sources of help available.

Where to find out more

You can talk to:

- staff in school, college or training providers
- your son or daughter's Personal Adviser.

You can also find out more information on: <http://moneytolearn.direct.gov.uk>

Education – money matters

Travel expenses

Your teenager may be eligible for free, or subsidised, transport from their local authority if they are attending a suitable course of their choice at their nearest school or college. Independent travel training may also be available. Contact Dudley Local Authority to find out what help is on offer and how to apply. The number for the Transport Team is 01384 814301.



Money for higher education

From September 2012, universities will charge fees for new full-time students of up to £9,000 a year. Some universities will charge less but remember that you or your son or daughter won't have to pay up-front – there are loans and grants to cover the full cost of tuition as well as living expenses.

The Future Students website – <http://yourfuture.direct.gov.uk/> has all the latest information about student finance as well as an online calculator to work out what repayments may be at different levels of future earnings.

There is extra help on offer for students with special circumstances – for example students who have a disability, a mental health condition, specific learning difficulty or who have childcare or adult caring responsibilities. Find out more on www.direct.gov.uk

If you are from a lower income family (less than £25k a year) you may get help through the **National Scholarship Programme**. Each university will decide what they'll offer, so your teenager will need to check once they have a good idea where they want to study.

Disabled Students Allowance

Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs) provide extra financial help to study at a higher education course for those with a disability, ongoing health condition, mental health condition or specific learning difficulty like dyslexia. They are paid on top of the standard finance package and don't have to be paid back. Amounts payable do not depend on family income.

The amount of DSA your son or daughter may get depends on the course they are studying and their individual needs.

For full-time undergraduate courses, the 2011/2012 rates are:

- Specialist equipment allowance – up to £5,161 for the whole course
- Non-medical helpers allowance – up to £20,520 per year
- General allowance – up to £1,724 per year

For more information about DSA and other financial support for higher education students with disabilities, go to: www.direct.gov.uk

What are the main options in Dudley?

There are currently three main types of work-based learning opportunities available in the Dudley area:

1. Kickstart Gold
2. Foundation Learning
3. Apprenticeships and Advanced Apprenticeships.

Kickstart Gold

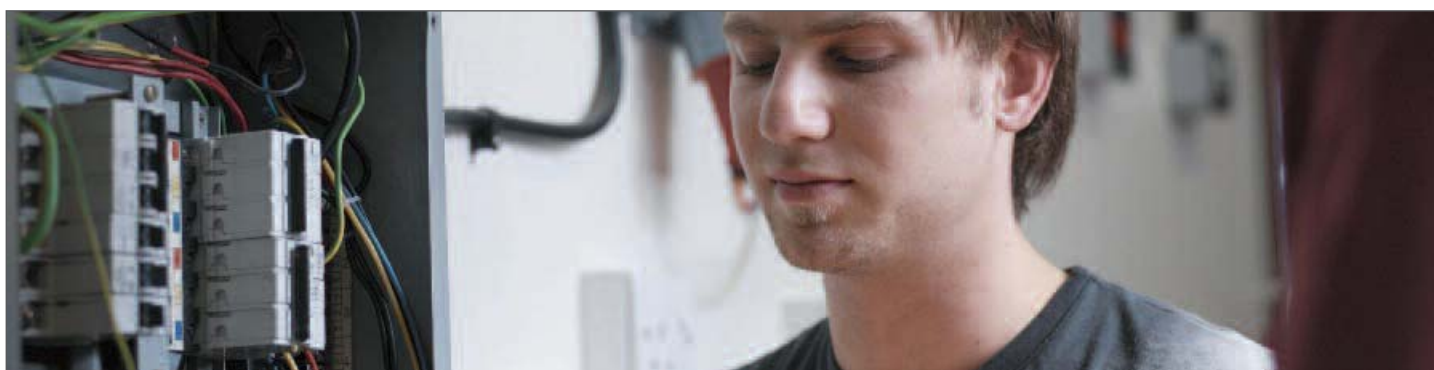
- Is often suitable, as a starting point, to help young people aged 16-25 move into a college course, a job, or training
- Can be done at local colleges and learning providers – see a Personal Adviser, or the Connexions Dudley website for up to date information
- Has a 'rolling' start date
- Is approximately 12 hours per week attendance for up to 20 weeks, and is tailored to meet the needs of each individual
- Incorporates the following; personal and social development skills, employability skills, basic and key skills, vocational experiences, and activity based learning experiences (e.g. trips out)
- Provides intensive pastoral support and a linked Personal Adviser to help support learners throughout the programme.

Foundation Learning

- Is suitable for learners who have less than 5 GCSEs at grades A*-C
- Is tailored to individual need and lasts approximately 22 weeks
- Has 3 main elements:
 - personal and social development
 - vocational qualifications
 - Functional Skills e.g. maths, English and ICT
- Is designed to focus on transferable employability skills
- May have regular, flexible monthly start dates if the course is running in a training provider.

More about Foundation Learning:

- Some training providers specialise in certain vocational areas – for example hairdressing, construction, motor vehicle work
- Some providers will pay ‘bonuses’ and/or travel costs
- Providers are based across the Dudley area – see a Personal Adviser, or the Connexions Dudley website for up to date information on local providers.
- Learners receive pastoral support and a linked Personal Adviser to help them throughout the programme.



Apprenticeships

Work-based learning, where you son or daughter can ‘earn while they learn’ – usually spending 4 out of 5 days a week in a work placement:

- Available throughout the UK in more than 180 different job areas.
- Usually day or block release to a college or training provider to study NVQ Level 2 (Apprenticeship) or NVQ Level 3 (Advanced Apprenticeship) and a Technical Certificate and Key Skills
- Earn at least £2.60 an hour (new wage was introduced Oct 2011)
- Apprenticeships are exempt from the National Minimum Wage while under the age of 19
- Local colleges and other independent organisations also offer Apprenticeships, and can be approached directly
- Certain vocational areas – for example construction, childcare and hairdressing are very competitive and opportunities are few. Areas such as plumbing and electrical work will ask for GCSEs at C grade or above in English, maths and science
- A Personal Adviser can give your son/daughter further help in searching for, and applying for Apprenticeships.

Where can your son or daughter look for vacancies – for jobs or work-based training?

- Local and national Apprenticeship vacancies are available at: www.apprenticeships.org.uk. Applicants can search, apply, and track their applications on this site. However, they MUST have an email address to register
- Jobcentre Plus Centres (specialist help is available from Disability Employment Advisers (DEAs)
- Local and national newspapers
- Employment agencies (under 18s must have a letter from Connexions to say that they have had advice from a Personal Adviser)
- On-line recruitment sites (such as www.reed.co.uk)
- For further information on getting a job, see the Connexions Dudley Website: www.connexionsdudley.org

Your son or daughter's Personal Adviser (PA) will be able to help them look for a suitable work-based learning programme or a job with training. If they apply through Connexions, their PA will be able to give advice and offer help with their application if they need it.



Help from Connexions

If your teenager decides that they would like to start work, Connexions can provide advice and help on a range of issues. Young people are given support in this choice before they leave school by Personal Advisers who help them to prepare for and deal with the change from school to employment.

Many young people need further training before they start work, and in today's tough financial climate, jobs are getting harder to come by.

Help from Jobcentre Plus

Your son or daughter can be referred to the Disability Employment Adviser (DEA) at their local Jobcentre if their particular needs make it more difficult for them to find employment or work-based learning.

Services provided by Disability Employment Advisers include:

- an employment assessment to help identify what type of work or training suits your son or daughter best
- a referral, if needed, for a specialist employment assessment with a Work Psychologist to help teenagers prepare to find and stay in work
- a job-matching and referral service – match experience and skills and provide advice about the Access to Work scheme
- a referral, where appropriate, to a programme for disabled people – for example Work Choice or Residential Training
- information on employers in the area who have adopted the 'two ticks' disability symbol – indicating that they have positive policies to encourage better practice.



To see a DEA, contact your local Jobcentre. Further information can be found on:

www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/EmploymentSupport

Volunteering and free-time activities

Volunteering

Whatever route your teenager chooses, they can also choose to do some volunteering. This is a great way for them to develop confidence and decision-making skills. Although voluntary work is unpaid, expenses may be offered to cover travel costs.

Many volunteering organisations have their own award and certificate scheme built into their programmes.

These are some of the things your son or daughter could do as a volunteer:

- help out with community or church groups, environmental projects, play schemes, or hospital radio work
- become active in politics with the Youth Parliament. Aimed at 11-18 year olds, the Youth Parliament has more than 600 representatives and 230 elected members and works just like the real parliament
- get involved in development programmes made up of many different activities, for example the Prince's Trust
- get involved with Dudley Youth Service; where young people can volunteer, set up committees and make an impact on local decisions.

To find out more:

- talk to your son or daughter's Personal Adviser
- check out the **'Spare time'** section of our website. See www.connexionsdudley.org for information and local contact details.

If they are interested in volunteering, they can also visit the websites below for more information:

- **'Vinspired'** – the national youth volunteering programme for 16-25 year olds. www.vinspired.com
- **Duke of Edinburgh Award** – for young people aged 14-25. www.theaward.org
- **Community Service Volunteers** – www.csv.org.uk
- **The Prince's Trust** – www.princes-trust.org.uk
- **Youth Parliament** – www.youthparliament.org.uk
- **Dudley Volunteer Centre** – www.volunteeringcounts.org.uk
- **Dudley Youth Service** (search the Dudley local authority site) – www.dudley.gov.uk

Free-time (Positive Local Activities)

Even if your son or daughter isn't keen to volunteer at this stage, it is a good idea to look at ways in which they can spend their free-time in a positive way.

Encourage your son or daughter to check out local activities listed on www.connexionsdudley.org

There are many Youth Clubs in Dudley – please check for up to date times, dates and costs.

- **The Source 4 Us Project**

The Source, Barnett Lane, Dudley DY8 5PY

Email: Abdul.hamed@dudley.gov.uk

Wednesday 6.00pm-9.00pm

- **Valley Road Disabled Young People In Partnership with Kids Orchard**

Province Street, Dudley, DY9 8HH

Email: Moammer.nasser@dudley.gov.uk

Wednesday 6.00pm-9.00pm

- **Russells Hall Neighbourhood Centre – Rockies Disability Group**

Overfield Road, Dudley, DY1 2NX

Email: Sajid.rehman@dudley.gov.uk

Tuesday 6.00pm-9.30pm

- **Russells Hall Neighbourhood Centre – Russells Hall Dudley Deaf Group Youth Club**

Overfield Road, Dudley, DY1 2NX

Email: Sajid.rehman@dudley.gov.uk

Thursday 6.00pm-9.00pm

- **Lower Gornal YC – Autistic Group Youth Club – Me & U Project Youth Club**

Temple Street, Dudley, DY3 2PE

Email: Sajid.rehman@dudley.gov.uk

Wednesday 5.00pm-8.00pm

- **Green Hill Youth Club Halesowen – Moderate Learning Disability**

221 Long Lane, Halesowen, B62 9JT

Email: Sajid.rehman@dudley.gov.uk

Monday 6.00pm-9.00pm

Transition and benefits

Young people with disabilities can claim benefits in their own right from the age of 16. However if they do, you, as their parent or carer, may lose some of the benefits you currently receive for your child as a dependent, for example Child Benefit. It is important to get advice and check that, if your son or daughter claims, this will not make the family worse off.

Also, when a child becomes 16, **Disability Living Allowance (DLA)** may be paid to them directly unless they are unable to handle their own affairs. In this situation the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) will nominate someone, usually the parent, to act as an 'appointee' and become responsible for the claim.

Note – if a young person is living away from home, this can affect benefits – do seek further advice if this is likely to affect you, as the rules are quite complex.

Employment and Support Allowance

Your son or daughter may be able to get **Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)** if they have an illness or disability that affects their ability to work.

There are two types of Employment and Support Allowance:

- contribution-based (if they have paid enough National Insurance contributions)
- income-related (if they do not have enough money coming in to meet their needs).

For more information about ESA, please see www.direct.gov.uk or talk to a Personal Adviser.

TOP TIP

The government has announced that the benefits system is going to change quite a lot over the next few years. Keep up to date with how this could affect anyone with a learning difficulty or disability – see www.direct.gov.uk (Money, Tax and Benefits section).

Parents' or carers' benefits

Generally, whilst a child is a dependent, parents or carers can claim benefits and tax credits for them. For benefit purposes the term 'dependent child' applies when a child is under 16, or under 19 if they remain in full-time, non-advanced education. However, in most cases, when a young person claims benefit(s) in their own right, the child will no longer be treated as a dependent.

Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit

You will still get Child Benefit, and Child Tax Credit, if you are eligible, while your son or daughter is under 19 and in full time education, unless they are in receipt of benefits in their own right. Under certain circumstances, Child Benefit may be paid up to the age of 20.

On benefits yourself?

If you receive benefits yourself, and your child starts to claim benefit in their own right, then you will no longer be entitled to any relevant allowances and premiums currently paid to you, for your son or daughter.

Carers' Allowance and/or Carers' Premium

If you receive a Carers' Allowance and/or Carers' Premium, these will still be paid, provided the qualifying criteria are met.

Help and advice

Qualifying rules for benefits are very complex. If you, or your son or daughter needs advice about entitlement, many of the organisations listed on pages 43-46 will be able to help. In particular try:

- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Contact a Family
- Disability Alliance

You can also use the Benefits Enquiry Line. This is a free and confidential telephone advice and information service, for disabled people and their carers about the range of benefits available.

Tel: 0800 882 200. Textphone: 0800 243 355. Helpline open Monday-Friday 8.30am – 6.30pm.
Email: BEL-Customer-Services@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Help and support for parents and carers

As the parent or carer of a young person with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, there is a range of help and support available to you.

Connexions

Connexions is a support service for young people aged 13-19 (up to 25 years old for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities).

Young people with special educational needs have access to a Personal Adviser through their school or college, home visits, Connexions office, community centres and other agencies across the community, and the Connexions website. PAs offer young people information, advice and practical help on a range of issues, including education, employment, work-based learning, housing, health, transport, free time and benefits.

Personal Advisers also offer information and support to parents and carers of these young people. This may be at one-to-one meetings and during transition planning meetings. See 'The transition planning meeting' on page 8 of this booklet for more information.

Contacting Connexions

If you have a question or would like help with something, you can contact Connexions.

Telephone: [01384 811400](tel:01384811400)

E-mail: connexions@dudley.gov.uk

Website: www.connexionsdudley.org/parents-carers

Live Chat: [is available on our website](#)

Address: [Connexions Dudley, Saltwells EDC, Bowling Green Road, Netherton, DY2 9LY](#)

Health Services

In addition to the general health services such as General Practitioners (GPs) and hospitals, there are a range of specialist health professionals to meet the health needs of young adults with a disability.

Who can receive support from specialist health services?

Health services are available to all. However many of the specialist health services will have criteria for who is a priority to receive their support. GPs can refer people with disabilities to the service that they require, and ask for a health assessment to be completed.

What services are available and is there a charge?

Some of the commonly available services are physiotherapy, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, community nursing and wheelchair services. Health services are provided free of charge.

Who do I contact for support?

Your GP will be able to put you in contact with the relevant services.

- You may also want to contact your local Primary Care Trust (PCT contact details on page 41) who will be able to tell you what services are available in your local area.
- Each area will also have specialist teams to support adults with a learning disability (these are often based with the social care staff) – contact details on page 41.

Parent Partnership Service

There is a Parent Partnership Service in Dudley. This is a statutory service, responsible for providing information, advice and support to parents and carers of children with special educational needs, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The aim of the Parent Partnership Service is to help parents or carers to become more actively involved in their child's education. For example, the Service can offer support for parents or carers throughout the annual review process or transition planning, by answering any questions you may have before, during or after the review meetings. A representative from the Service can even be present at the review meeting.

If you would like to know more about the Parent Partnership Service or have any questions about your child's education, you can contact the Service using the details listed in our contacts section on page 41.

**TOP
TIP**

National Parent Partnership Network (NPPN)

If you would like more information about Parent Partnerships, you can contact the National network on: 020 7843 6058 or visit the website:
www.parentpartnership.org.uk



Adult Services

Social Care

Adult Service Departments can provide a range of services to meet the social care needs of young people with a disability, and their families. Children's services provide support up to 18 years old, and adult services begin to provide support when the young person is 18 years old.

Who can get support from Adult Services?

If it seems that your son or daughter may have social care needs, then Adult Services will arrange for an assessment of need to be completed to decide what support should be provided and if so, what kind of support. As part of this assessment your son or daughter will be asked about what they can do for themselves, what they need help with, and what support their informal networks (such as family and friends) can provide. From this assessment, their needs will be identified.

So that everyone is treated fairly, the Department of Health has drawn up guidelines which all Adult Service Departments must follow. These guidelines are known as Fairer Access to Care Services. If your son or daughter's needs are substantial or critical, then Adult Services will work with you to provide support.

This support will be offered as a Direct Payment. The assessment will decide on approximately what level the Direct Payment will be. For more detail on how Direct Payments work, see next page, or contact your local Adult Services Department.

To contact your local Social Services, use the contact details on page 42 to find your nearest office.



Direct Payments

Adult Services can arrange for agencies to provide support to the person with a disability, or make a direct payment towards the cost of care, if they meet the criteria for social care services and direct payments. This eligibility is assessed by a social worker.

Direct payments may be paid to disabled people aged 16 and over (or in some cases their parent or carer) including people with:

- learning disabilities
- physical disabilities
- hearing or visual impairments
- mental health issues (in some cases).

Direct payment means that you or your son or daughter can employ someone to meet identified support and care needs, or purchase services from a care agency of their choice. Direct payments can also be used to fund day opportunities. People can be supported in managing their direct payment by specialist support agencies.

Speak to your local Adult Services if you would like to discuss direct payments – see page 41 for contact details of Adult Services.

Will there be any charges for the services?

There is generally a charge for services provided, or funded by, Adult Services to people over the age of 18. The adult receiving the service will have a financial assessment to decide if they are able to pay a charge and if so, how much the charge will be.

Support for carers

Adult Services can also provide support for carers, to enable them to continue for a young person with a disability. A separate assessment of the carer's needs will be completed, similar to the process described above.

Some important terms and what they mean

We have listed below some of the terms professionals may use, and given a brief explanation of what they mean. Do not hesitate to ask if you do not understand words that are being used.

Advocate

An advocate is a person who can support you and your son or daughter to help to explain and say what they want. They can help you make sure that the young person's views are heard for example at meetings such as the annual review.

An advocate can be someone who is specifically trained to provide such a service, for example someone from an organisation such as the Parents Partnership Service, or can be a member of the family, a friend or someone you feel comfortable with. For more information go to:

www.dudleyadvocacy.net78.net

Annual Review

Every year there is a meeting to review the statement of special educational needs – this is called the annual review meeting. The review meeting looks at your son or daughter's progress, and examines whether any changes need to be made to the statement.

Graduated Approach

This is the way that organisations have to work with children and young people with special educational needs – as set out in the SEN Code of Practice (see next page). It means that help should be offered by a step-by-step approach. This approach recognises that children learn in different ways and can have different levels of SEN. So increasingly, step by step, specialist expertise can be brought in to help the school with the difficulties that a child may have.

Individual Education Plan

Young people with a statement of special educational needs, or who are in School Action or School Action Plus groups (see below), may have a written Individual Educational Plan (IEP). This is written by the school. The Plan includes information on the special arrangements made by the school, and how your son or daughter's progress is to be monitored and assessed.

The Individual Education Plan will usually be linked to the main areas of language, literacy, mathematics, and behaviour and social skills and should be discussed with the pupil and parents or carers if possible.

Some important terms and what they mean

Special Educational Needs (SEN)

The term 'special educational needs' has a legal definition. Children with special educational needs all have learning difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn than most children of the same age.

Special Educational Needs Code of Practice

This code offers guidance to early education settings, state schools and local authorities, to help them to identify, assess and provide help for children with special educational needs.

You can get a free copy of the SEN Code of Practice from the Department of Education, on www.education.gov.uk (search 'Publications' and then SEN Code of Practice) or call 0370 000 2288.

Statement of Special Educational Needs

Your son or daughter may have a statement of special educational needs, which is put together by the local authority. The statement describes what your child's needs are and how best they can be met.

Not every young person with learning difficulties and/or disabilities will have a statement.

The school's SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) along with the young person's teacher and parents or carers may decide that **School Action** or **School Action Plus** would be more appropriate (see below to find out what these terms mean).

School Action and School Action Plus

Young people without statements may be on School Action or School Action Plus. Help given under **School Action** could include extra teaching or extra support. Help given under **School Action Plus** includes advice from specialists outside the school, such as psychologists, speech and language therapists or social workers.

The Moving Forward Assessment and Plan

In your son or daughter's final year of school, a Personal Adviser carries out an assessment of their needs on leaving school.

The Personal Adviser will then work closely with your son or daughter to produce a plan from this assessment. This is called a moving forward plan. The plan looks at what the options are for your son or daughter after school and identifies their future support needs.

With the young person's permission (and parent/carer's where appropriate), the moving forward action plan will be sent to colleges or training providers in which they have expressed an interest. They will use this information to assess how they will need to meet your child's support needs.

Transition Plan

A transition plan is drawn up for your son or daughter during year 9. This looks at their needs over the next two to three years, including possible options at 16. The plan is then used by the school and local authority to put in place the support needed for your son or daughter.

Connexions manages the co-ordination of the transition plan. The school are responsible for writing and sending out the plan. For more information about transition plans and the transition process, see 'The Transition Review Meeting' on page 8.

Disability and the Law

People with learning difficulties and disabilities have their rights to equality. If you would like to find out more about:

- your son or daughter's legal rights or
- the legislation such as the Disability Discrimination Act

contact the: **Equality and Human Rights Commission**
For advice and information on disability rights
Tel: **0845 604 6610**
Textphone: **0845 604 6620**
E-mail: **info@equalityhumanrights.com**
Web: **www.equalityhumanrights.com**

Where to find more help and advice

Benefits

Local Jobcentre Plus centres

(Please ask to speak to the Disability Employment Adviser – DEA)

- **Dudley Jobcentre**

32 Alexander House, Wolverhampton Street
Dudley, DY1 1JR
Tel: 01384 554554

- **Halesowen Jobcentre**

Maybrook House, Queensway
Halesowen, B63 4AH
Tel: 0121 585 2200

- **Stourbridge Jobcentre**

Scotland House, 169 Lower High Street
Stourbridge, DY8 1ES
Tel: 01384 554700

Benefits advice

Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB)

Free, impartial, independent and confidential advice on a range of subjects.

- **Dudley CAB**

Marlborough House
11 St. James's Road, Dudley, DY1 1JG
Tel: 01384 816222
Web: www.adviceguide.org.uk

Welfare Advisory Service

- **Dudley Carers' Network**

Directorate of Social Services
Ednam House, St. James's Road
Dudley, DY1 3JJ
Tel: 01384 818723
Minicom: 01384 818723
Fax: 01384 815637

Connexions

- **Connexions Office**

Connexions Dudley
Saltwells EDC, Bowling Green Road
Netherton, Dudley, DY2 9LY

Tel: **01384 811400**

Email: connexions@dudley.gov.uk

Web: www.connexionsdudley.gov.uk

Colleges

DUDLEY

- **Dudley College**

The Broadway
Dudley, DY1 4AS
Tel: 01384 363000 for course enquiries
Tel: 01384 363180 for general enquiries
Web: www.dudleycol.ac.uk

- **Halesowen College**

Whittingham Road
Halesowen, B63 3NA
Tel: 0121 602 7777 for general enquiries
Web: www.halesowen.ac.uk

- **Stourbridge College**

Hagley Road
Stourbridge, DY8 1QU
Tel: 012384 344244 for general enquiries
Web: www.stourbridge.ac.uk

SANDWELL

Sandwell College

- **Smethwick Campus**

Crocketts Lane, Smethwick, B66 3BU

- **West Bromwich Campus**

High Street, West Bromwich, B70 8DW
Tel: 0800 622006 for course enquiries
Web: www.sandwell.ac.uk

Distance Learning

- **National Extension College**

The National Extension College is a national charity, which organises home study courses for people of all ages and abilities.

The National Extension College
The Michael Young Centre
Purbeck Road
Cambridge, BC2 2HN
Tel: 01223 400200
Fax: 01223 400399
Email: info@nec.ac.uk
Web: www.nec.ac.uk

- **Open University (OU)**

The Open University offers access to Higher Education level courses through distance learning.

The Open University
PO Box 724
Milton Keynes, MK7 6ZS
Tel: 0845 300 6090
Web: www.open.ac.uk

- **Open College of the Arts (OCA)**

Specialists in distance learning arts-related courses at higher education level (e.g. painting, creative writing, music and interior design).

Open College of the Arts
Michael Young Arts Centre
Redbrook Business Park
Wilthorpe Road
Barnsley, S74 1JN
Tel: 0800 731 2116
Email: enquiries@oca-uk.com
Web: www.oca-uk.com

Health Services

- **Dudley PCT**

St. John's House
Union Street
Dudley, DY2 8PP
Tel: 01384 322002

Local Authority

- **Dudley Council**

Tel: 01384 818181
Web: www.dudley.gov.uk

Adult Support

(Health and Social Services joint teams) –

- **North Community Team**

(Learning Disabilities) –

Dudley and Sedgley

Ladies Walk Centre
Ladies Walk, Sedgley
Dudley, DY3 3UA
Tel: 01384 813363

- **South Community Team**

(Learning Disabilities) –

Brierley Hill, Stourbridge and Halesowen

John Corbett Drive
Stourbridge, DY8 4JB
Tel: 01384 813925

Parent Partnership

- **Dudley Parent Partnership Service**

Trafalgar House
47-49 King Street
Dudley, DY2 8PS
Tel: 01384 236677
Email: parent@dudleycvs.org.uk
Web: www.dudley.gov.uk/dpp

Where to find more help and advice

Social Services

- **Dudley Area Office**

Ednam House
St James's Rd
Dudley, DY1 3JJ
Tel: 01384 815822

- **Brierley Hill Area Office**

Venture Way
Brierley Hill, DY5 1RU
Tel: 01384 811321

- **Netherton Area Office**

Falcon House
7th Floor
The Minories
Netherton, DY2 8PG
Tel: 01384 811320

- **Halesowen Area Office**

Halesowen Library
Great Cornbow
Halesowen, B63 3AZ
Tel: 01384 811322

- **Sedgley Area Office**

The Ladies Walk Centre
Ladies Walk
Sedgley, DY3 3AU
Tel: 01384 813250

- **Stourbridge Area Office**

Wollescote Hall
Wollescote Road
Stourbridge, DY9 7JG
Tel: 01384 812836



Helping organisations including voluntary services and charities

The organisations listed in this section cover a range of disabilities and special educational needs. In each case, we have provided a brief summary of the services they offer to give an idea of how that organisation can help your or your child.

These summaries in no way show all of the services each organisation offers, and we would recommend that you call, e-mail or visit individual websites if you have any queries relating to that organisation.

AFASIC - Overcoming Speech Impairment

Afasic is the UK charity, established in 1968, to help children and young people with speech, language and communication impairments and their families.

Open 10.30am to 2.30pm Monday to Friday.

Helpline 08453 555 577. **www.afasic.org.uk**

Action on Hearing Loss (formerly RNID)

Free, confidential support and advice for people with hearing difficulties.

Tel: Free and confidential Helpline on 0808 808 0123.

Textphone: 0808 808 9000 (freephone).

E-mail: information@rnid.org.uk

Web: www.rnid.org.uk

Ataxia UK

Ataxia is a UK charity set up to support all people affected by ataxia; people with the condition, their families, carers and friends. Helpline 0845 644 0606.

www.ataxia.org.uk

Autism Helpline

This Helpline is run by the National Autistic Society, and offers support and advice to all those affected by autistic spectrum disorders.

Tel: Helpline on 0845 070 4004 (available Monday-Friday, 10.00am – 4.00pm).

Minicom: 0845 070 4003.

E-mail: autismhelpline@nas.org.uk

Web: www.nas.org.uk

Autism West Midlands

Autism West Midlands is a regional centre for autism – providing services for people with autistic spectrum disorders. Telephone: 0121 450 7582.

Email: info@autismwestmidlands.org.uk

Web: www.autismwestmidlands.org.uk

British Deaf Association

Largest UK Deaf organisation run by Deaf people for Deaf people. Tel: 02476 550936.

Textphone: 02476 550393.

Email: midlands@bda.org.uk

www.britishdeafassociation.org.uk

British Dyslexia Association

Information for people with dyslexia and parents and carers of dyslexic children (factsheets are also available). Tel: Helpline on 0845 251 9003.

E-mail: admin@bdadyslexia.org.uk

Web: www.bdadyslexia.org.uk

CARERS UK

Provides information, advice and support to carers in the UK (also has local branches; see the website or phone for details).

Tel: Freephone Carers Line on 0808 808 7777.

E-mail: info@ukcarers.org

Web: www.carersonline.org.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

Free, impartial, independent and confidential advice on a range of subjects.

Telephone numbers:

Dudley CAB: 01384 816222

Sandwell CAB: 0121 552 2022

Walsall CAB: 01922 700600

Wolverhampton CAB: 01902 572200

Web: www.adviceguide.org.uk

All information correct at time of going to print (January 2012).

Where to find more help and advice

Contact a Family

A national charity offering support to families who care for children with any disability or special needs.

Tel: 0808 808 3556.

E-mail: helpline@cafamily.org.uk

Web: www.cafamily.org.uk

Department of Work and Pensions - Disability Unit

For information on rights for the disabled.

E-mail: enquire-disability@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Web: www.disability.gov.uk

DIAL UK (Disability Information Lines)

Local branches offer information and advice to disabled people and others on all aspects of living with a disability.

Tel: 01302 310 123

Textphone: 01302 310 123

E-mail: informationenquiries@dialuk.org.uk

Web: www.dialuk.org.uk

Disability Alliance

Aims to improve the standard of living of disabled people. Offers information and advice to disabled people, their families and carers on benefits and welfare rights. Tel and Minicom: 020 7247 8776.

E-mail: office.da@dial.pipex.com

Web: www.disabilityalliance.org

Disability Law Service

Provides free and confidential legal advice to people with disabilities, their families and carers.

Tel: 020 7791 9800. Minicom: 020 7791 9801.

E-mail: advice@dls.org.uk

Web: www.dls.org.uk

Equality and Human Rights Commission

For advice and information on disability rights.

Tel: 0845 604 6610.

Textphone: 0845 604 6620.

E-mail: info@equalityhumanrights.com

Web: www.equalityhumanrights.com

Disabled Living Foundation

Offers information and advice on disability equipment for day-to-day living, and information on where to find the right kind of equipment.

Tel: Helpline on 0845 130 9177

(available Monday-Friday, 10.00am – 1.00pm).

Tel: Switchboard on 020 7289 6111

(available Monday-Friday, 9.00am – 5.00pm).

Textphone: 020 7432 8009.

E-mail: info@dlf.org.uk

Web: www.dlf.org.uk

Dyspraxia Foundation

UK charity offering support and advice to people with Dyspraxia and their families.

Helpline: 01462 454 986 (10.00am – 1.00pm)

Monday - Friday.

E-mail: dyspraxia@dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk

Web: www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk

Epilepsy Action

Epilepsy Action is the largest member-led epilepsy organisation in Britain, acting as the voice for the UK's estimated 456,000 people with epilepsy, as well as their friends, families, carers, health professionals and the many other people on whose lives the condition has an impact. Helpline 0808 800 5050.

E-mail: helpline@epilepsy.org.uk

Web: www.epilepsy.org.uk

Family Fund Trust

Helps families of disabled and seriously ill children under the age of 16 (see choice of websites below).

Provide grants and information related to the care of a child (information includes careers, money, housing, transport and more) with an impairment or disability.

Tel: 0845 130 4542/01904 6212115 (if you need an interpreter, call this line and say which language you require – the Family Fund will arrange an interpreter for you). Textphone: 01904 658085.

E-mail: info@familyfund.org.uk

Web: www.familyfund.org.uk

All information correct at time of going to print (January 2012).

Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities

Works with people with learning disabilities and their families to help them make effective use of services and enjoy equal rights. Tel: 020 7803 1100

E-mail: fpld@fpld.org.uk

Web: www.learningdisabilities.org.uk

Independent Panel for Special Education

Advice (IPSEA)

Provides support for parents of children with special education needs in securing proper education provision. Tel: Advice Line on 0800 018 4016.

Web: www.ipsea.org.uk

Insight for Carers

Run by carers, for carers, in Dudley. Please call for address details.

Tel: 07758 566299

E-mail: talk@insightforcarers.org

Web: www.insightforcarers.org

Livability (Formerly John Grooms)

An organisation that works with disabled people to help them improve their quality of life and live as independently as possible. Also provides information and help on a range of topics, including care and nursing homes, training opportunities and holidays. Tel: 020 7452 2000.

E-mail: info@livability.org.uk

Web: www.livability.org.uk

MENCAP

Mental health charity providing information and support for people with a learning disability, their families and carers. Tel: Helpline 0808 808 1111 (freephone). Typetalk: 18001 0808 808 1111.

E-mail: help@mencap.org.uk

Web: www.mencap.org.uk

Mind

Mental health charity offering support and advice. Tel: 0845 766 0163. Textphone: 0845 766 0163 (if using BT Textdirect, please add the prefix 18001).

E-mail: contact@mind.org.uk

Web: www.mind.org.uk

MOVE

A programme of practical help, teaching and support for young people with learning difficulties and/or physical difficulties to prepare for employment and higher education. Tel: 0207 403 6382.

E-mail: office@disabilitypartnership.org.uk

Web: www.move-europe.co.uk

Muscular Dystrophy Group of GB

The Muscular Dystrophy Campaign is the only UK charity focusing on all muscle disease. It provides practical, medical and emotional support to people affected by the conditions.

Information and Support line 0800 652 6352.

Web: www.muscular-dystrophy.org

National Children's Bureau – Guide to Residential Special Schools Standards.

A website aimed at young people, to help explain the standards that residential special schools must meet. Tel: 020 7843 6000.

Web: www.rssinfo.org.uk

National Blind Childrens Society

The Family Support service offers families emotional support, advice, information and practical help at and around the time of diagnosis and at other stages. They are also able to help parents and carers with issues and concerns that may arise during various stages of their Childs development. Tel: 01278 764 770.

E-mail: familysupport@nbcs.org.uk

Web: www.nbcs.org.uk

National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS)

National charity dedicated to creating a world without barriers for deaf children and young people.

Tel/Minicom: 020 7490 8656

Birmingham office – Tel/Minicom: 0121 234 9820

E-mail: events@ndcs.org.uk

Web: www.ndcs.org.uk

Where to find more help and advice

National Society for Epilepsy

Provides information and support to people with epilepsy, their families and friends. Also provide care for people with epilepsy through medical and residential services.

Tel: 01494 601300 (general office) or Helpline on 01494 601400.

Web: www.epilepsynse.org.uk

Rathbone Special Education Advice Line

Offers assistance to people with limited access to services who have moderate learning difficulties and other special needs. Provide training and vocational education opportunities.

Tel: 0161 236 5358.

Freephone: 0800 731 5321.

Minicom: 0161 238 6345.

Web: www.rathboneuk.org

RETHINK Severe Mental Illness (Formerly the National Schizophrenia Fellowship)

Offers a range of services to help people affected by mental illness, including families, parents and carers.

Tel: National Advice Line on 0207 840 3188.

Tel: General enquiries 0845 456 0455.

E-mail: info@rethink.org or advice@rethink.org

Web: www.rethink.org

Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB)

Confidential support and advice for people with sight problems.

Tel: Confidential Helpline on 0845 766 9999.

E-mail: helpline@rnib.org.uk

Web: www.rnib.org.uk

Scope

Offers free, confidential information, advice and counselling to people affected by cerebral palsy.

Tel: Helpline on 0808 800 3333 (available Mon-Fri, 9.00am – 9.00pm and Sat-Sun, 2.00pm – 6.00pm).

E-mail: response@scope.org.uk

Web: www.scope.org.uk

SENSE

Sense is the leading national charity that supports and campaigns for children and adults who are deafblind. They provide expert advice and information as well as specialist services to deafblind people, their families, carers and the professionals who work with them.

Telephone 0845 127 0060.

Textphone 0845 127 0062.

E-mail: response@scope.org.uk

Web www.sense.org.uk

Sibs

Sibs is a national charity, dedicated to supporting people who grow up with a brother or sister who has special needs, disability or chronic illness. They offer information, advice and support to these 'siblings', right into adult life.

Tel: Helpline on 01535 645453

E-mail: info@sibs.org.uk

Web: www.sibs.org.uk

The Shaw Trust

A national charity providing assistance for people who are disadvantaged in the workplace due to disability, ill-health, or other social circumstances.

Tel: 01225 716300

Minicom: 08457 697288

E-mail: stir@shaw-trust.org.uk

Web: www.shaw-trust.org.uk

Young Minds

Children's mental health organisation, providing advice and information on a wide range of issues.

Tel: Parents Information Service on 0800 018 2138

E-mail: info@youngminds.org.uk

Web: www.youngminds.org.uk

All information correct at time of going to print (January 2012).

More about Connexions

Dudley Connexions Office

Connexions Dudley

Saltwells EDC, Bowling Green Road

Netherton, Dudley, DY2 9LY

Tel: **01384 811400**

Email: connexions@dudley.gov.uk

Web: www.connexionsdudley.org



What about when our office is not open?

Help is also available 7 days a week between 8am and 10pm. You can contact the national careers service:

- Phone **0800 100 900**
- Text **07766 4 13 2 19**
- Textphone **08000 968 336** (for those who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech difficulties)
- You can also use web chat or email: <https://www2.cxdirect.com>

Tell us what you think

We at Connexions are continually looking to develop our services to young people. We are keen to hear your feedback and any comments or suggestions for ways that we can improve our service. Please take the time to complete our 'Tell Us What You Think' section of our website www.connexionsdudley.org

Your Rights

You have the right to see the information we keep about you. You can:

- see your computer record at any reasonable time
- request a paper copy of your record – we will supply this to you within 40 working days (there may be a small charge for this service)
- ask for your record to be changed if it is incorrect
- complain to us if you are unhappy about the way we deal with information about you.

Confidentiality/Data Protection

Connexions holds some data on you which can be seen by your Personal Adviser.

Your data won't normally be shared with anyone without your agreement, unless you are at risk of personal harm. To get a full explanation about data protection ask your Personal Adviser.

We're here to help...



01384 811400



www.connexionsdudley.org



connexions@dudley.gov.uk

Using our information

If you need any of our information in a different format, such as large print, Braille, audio or another language, please let a Personal Adviser at Dudley Connexions office know.

