

THURSDAY, 14 NOVEMBER 2024

Preparing for Adulthood (PFA)

Purpose of report:

This report outlines to the Select Committee the teams and the support they provide in relation to the preparing for adulthood (PFA) for Children with Disabilities (CWD), Children with additional needs and disabilities (AND) and Children Looked after (CLA)

This report outlines key strengths and areas of challenge to support the cohorts identified with the current preparing for adulthood arrangements and looks to outline future developments to improve the current working model for post-18 transition to one more aligned to a 16-25 model. It also highlights work underway to strengthen strategic oversight and governance of this key area.

Executive Summary

1. Preparing children and young people for adulthood, particularly those across the core pathways, is a challenging time for parents, carers and families and causes significant additional anxiety. SCC acknowledges that this can be a difficult time, and that removing this anxiety, and aspects of uncertainty is not always possible.
2. Adult Social Care has approximately 1,500 open transition cases in any given month. Of these, up to 30% relate to carers, while the remaining comprise around 50% young people aged 18 or over, and 20% who are under 18. The total budget for Transition for 2022/23 was approximately £24m.
3. The recent audit report completed on working arrangements between children's, and adults' services highlighted key strengths but identified further areas for improvement which are explored in depth further in the report.
4. In general, outcomes for young people in Surrey compare favourably to other local authorities. However, as identified in the audit report, a combination of growing demand, gaps in resource and system integration, mean that further work can be done to improve PFA arrangements.

5. As a result, new strategic governance arrangements for preparing for adulthood are being developed, with a focus on improving transitions from children's services to adult's services for those young people eligible which on average is about 11% of those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) Post-16.
6. A particular focus will be on developing the wider 16-25 working model and improving support – “the working younger” – approach, as well as further developing the PFA programme under the “pathways for independence pillar” in Additional Needs and disabilities (AND) for those transitioning to adult social care.
7. For those on the complex health pathway, approximately 5% and for those who are eligible for adult social care support there can be some expectation of lifelong support. However, for the vast majority, approximately 84% of that post-16 with an EHCP, their plan will cease at some point and all support will be withdrawn. We understand this will incredibly be challenging for families but is fundamentally embedded within the Children and Families Act 2014 legislation which extended support from aged 19 to aged 25 in some circumstances (**Appendix 1 and 2**)

Introduction

8. There are three key clear areas of work in relation to preparing for adulthood that SCC delivers, as well as the overarching preparing for Adulthood (PFA) programme. These three core pathways, cohort and the teams that support them are outlined in **Appendix 3**

Preparing for Adulthood Programme and principles

9. The Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) programme of work is embedded within practice across all pathways to adulthood.
10. Legislation in the Children and Families Act 2014 gives local authorities a legal responsibility to co-operate, and to ensure that all the correct people work together to get the transition right for a young person.
11. Although the national programme ended in 2022, much of the practice developed by the scheme continues to form the foundations of much of the PfA work across local authorities in England and is based across 4 key pathways outlined on the [NDTI page](#).

The Transitions team - Adults, Wellbeing and Health Partnerships (AWHP)

12. The Transition Team are a specialist service within Adults, Wellbeing and Health Partnerships (AWHP)

13. Young people that transition to Adult Social Care, currently experience different pathways depending on their level and type of need. The Transition Team are a specialist service within Adults, Wellbeing and Health Partnerships (AWHP), set up to discharge Care Act duties to young people, adults and their carers who have an active EHCP and a diagnosis of Learning Disability, Autism, Physical Disability or Sensory Impairment

Care leavers service.

14. Children Looked After (CLA) are supported by [the Care Leavers service](#). The service supports young people access education, training and employment and work closely with the 16+ specialist in the Surrey Virtual School to provide a successful transition to adulthood.

AWHP and CFLL working together arrangements (including sufficiency)
--

15. An internal audit report relating to transition of children into AWHP was conducted in June 2024, with a key focus on Children with existing care and/or Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) require support as they approach adulthood, and the duties of the Council with regards to this transition are set out in various legislation.
16. The audit found that early engagement with the transition planning process was found to be ineffective. This is an area of focus, to strengthen early engagement in a variety of ways.

Key areas of good practice

17. There are comprehensive commissioned Vocational pathways across PFA to meet growing demand for post-16 vocational pathways, though some gaps do remain (for example, the market would benefit from additional providers in the 16-25 space where there are gaps in services or identified unmet need)
18. Additional needs and disabilities commissioning have developed a post-16 lot on the new independent alternative provision Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) to increase the breadth and scope of options for young people with AND. AWHP have also created a DPS to support the development of additional providers in this area. The creation of the DPS provides a mechanism for local providers to deliver services to support preparing for adulthood pathways.

Working Younger

19. The audit report identified strengths in the “working younger” project in Children with Disabilities (CWD) service. Core to the principle of this pilot was early engagement from age 16, and this approach has been trialled for CWD to enable better understanding and commissioning of care,

Areas where improvements and being made to support 'working younger' principles across the whole of children's social care

- 28 To support stronger working relationships between services, a drop in space is held every three weeks for any staff member to come and discuss a young person, a challenge or area of practice. This is contributing to not only a greater oversight of cases but provides clarity on young people's individual needs, including on complex transitions by meeting weekly as a professional network.
- 29 Looked After practitioners are now utilising the CWD Transition drop in and Each Looked After Team now has a Transition Tracker to support with early identification of those who may require a Transition Service and referral at 14. The Looked after Children's team and CWD also have their own trackers for earlier identification for children who may need adult social care and tracking meetings are attended by Transition Managers.
- 30 Moreover, additional focussed work is underway with Children's Legal services to develop Mental Capacity Act (MCA) and Deprivation of Liberty (DOL) practice guidance to ensure social workers can make good applications to court within timescales

Identified areas for improvement.

20. Whilst national good practice indicates that transition planning should begin at ages 14 (National Curriculum Year 9), analysis indicates referrals to the transition team occur between the ages of 16 and 17.
21. This means significant gaps can occur between the planning of transition at Age 14 (NCY 9) to a referral occurring to the AWHP transitions team. This limits early engagement and may jeopardise the benefits of early interventions, one of which is to obtain cost effective commissioning and developing long-term pathways for children as they become adults. However, there is a reality that meaningful care planning for an individual's needs can often not be effective until they are 16/17 years old.
22. This is underpinned by poor integration which exists between the AWHP case management system, Liquid logic Adult Social Care System (LAS) and LCS, and prevents effective data sharing and exchange of key information. Information governance (IG) issues also prevent LCS and LAS from integrating transitions related data, which is considered good practice and applied at other local authorities. However, both children's and adult workers have read only access to LCS and LAS.
23. Additional practice development is required particularly around Care Act preparation and Mental Capacity Act application across the service. This is particularly relevant to the development of a 16 –25 service.

Sufficiency and increased demand

- 31 Increased demand is also contributing to gaps in the current service offer for AWHP Transitions team. On average, there are approximately 1,500 open transition cases in any given month. On average, around 45% come from CWD and 55% come from wider CFLL, including AND.
- 32 There is likely to be an increase in demand across the Additional Needs and Disabilities (AND) system in line with CFLL's multi-agency EHCP Recovery Plan, as new EHCPs are issued, or as support requirements are reviewed (via annual reviews) that will likely feed into the transitions work. Whilst the work to resolve the out of date needs assessments has been largely completed, we are now seeing an average of 246 needs assessments request per month and the total population of children and young people in Surrey with an EHCP has risen to 15,632, of which 7,539 are children and young people who are in year 9 or above, meaning they could be in scope of the transitions work. Of this number a total of 4,209 young people with an Education, Health and Care plan are aged 16-25.
- 33 To support future demand, SCC has developed 44 units of Supported Independent Living, comprising a mix of shared and self-contained housing. The accommodation will be in Horley (Reigate & Banstead), Cobham (Elmbridge) and Byfleet (Woking)
- 34 Market Position Statements (MPS) and wider sufficiency strategies are updated regularly to review emerging demand and are published on the [Shaping Adult Social Care's care market page](#) on the SCC website.

Annual Reviews (EHCPs) and ceasing EHCPs.

- 35 The Participation of Young People in Education, Employment or Training (2024) guidance places a duty on local authorities to pay particular attention to children and young people with additional needs and disabilities (AND).
- 36 In AND, the post 14 team support young people in their Preparation for Adulthood within each quadrant team. A core part of this role is to conduct an annual review held in NCY 9. This typically explores aspirations and pathways for the child based on the PfA principles. An annual review at this stage also ensures a multi-agency view is taken for input across all services.
- 37 Training for PFA Case Officers will be implemented during the Autumn term. A key area of focus is to ensure that Case Officers are well equipped to conduct a PFA focussed year 9 review, identifying appropriate pathways utilising the PFA brochures (one with a focus on [employment pathways](#) and the other for [support and guidance](#) for those not able to pursue employment as an appropriate outcome primarily in the complex health or adult social care pathways.

- 38 There is a current backlog of annual reviews. The backlog of overdue annual reviews is being addressed through dedicated weekly time by each quadrant which prioritises the upcoming annual reviews for all cohorts within the next 2 months as well as the reduction of the backlog. Time allocated to this activity is dependent on the number of overdue and upcoming reviews, however the expectation is that 1 day per week is required with additional time considered where needed.
- 39 There is a combined total of 3427 overdue annual reviews across the recovery team and 4 quadrants for completion. Of this overdue, 342 are Children in Need (CIN)/Child Protection Plan (CP)/Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) requiring the highest priority review.
- 40 Significant progress is however being made, and 7893 annual reviews are now up to date with 908 upcoming within the next month.
- 41 From December 2024, there is an expectation that for those children who CLA, their annual reviews will align with the termly Pupil Education Plan (PEP), the Local Offer is being updated to reflect that this is best practice.
- 42 AND Teams have dedicated priority time to focus on the annual reviews upcoming within the next two months whilst ensuring the backlog of overdue reviews is consistently decreasing.
- 43 An area for improvement is the case officer attendance at the key stage transition reviews to sign post parents along with schools in considering a new setting within the local area.

Ceasing of EHCPs

- 44 In line with the SEN Code of Practice (2014), Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) may be ceased once a young person aged 18 or over leaves education and no longer wishes to engage in further learning.
- 45 In the academic year of 2023/24 1,583 plans were ceased. A summary for reasons ceased is attached at **Appendix 4**
- 46 Local Authorities must write to families to inform them that they are considering ceasing an EHCP. In some situations, families may wish to confirm (by responding to the notification) that the young person requires the EHCP to continue to access identified vocational, employment or educational opportunities.

Working with families

- 47 For many children and young people with AND, EHCPs will cease at age 25 by default. This means that, unless a young person is on a complex health or adult social care pathway, funded provision or support by the LA is ceased at this point.
- 48 Significant progress has been made in strengthening the partnership with Family Voice Surrey (FVS), several post-16 events have been held for example, East Surrey College to raise awareness of post-16 pathways and the finite nature of EHCP support. However we recognise that more needs to be done to embed PFA thinking and pathways much earlier into the AND system so that whenever a new EHCP is agreed or reviewed there is a clear understanding that the support that an EHCP provides can only be temporary in its nature and therefore that the tapering of support linked to the acquisition of increased skills and independence is essential in preparing child and young person for the end of the EHCP and all the associated support that it provides which includes many cases, therapies.

Development work

- 49 Following the 16-25 working together audit, additional development work is underway to refresh the terms of reference for the PFA programme and develop additional oversight on all transition's activity in the council, with some of this work already being taken forward with an active Task and Finish Group.
- 50 Development of this refreshed governance will provide additional strategic oversight for this key area of work, ensuring identified strengths are embedded and weaknesses addressed as part of a new work plan. This strategic governance Board would also oversee the audit improvement actions .
- 51 Additional work will focus on ensuring any future working practice or model aligns to any proposal or statutory change in law. One such emerging change is the current consultation on [Children's Disabled Law](#). The consultation is looking to review the legal framework governing social care for disabled children in England to ensure that the law is fair, modern and accessible, allowing children with disabilities to access the support they need.

16-25 proposed working model for social care

- 52 To better align transition services, and improving preparing for adulthood pathways, proposals are being developed to improve the 16-25 working model
- 53 Consultation with other local authorities has identified that the challenges of transition across Children's and Adult services are common to many Local

Authorities. In responding to this challenge, a number have created a specific service for the 16–25-year-old cohort.

- 54 Building on the successful “working younger” pilot, identified in Section 26, the working model would look to commence a transition earlier than 18 years of age. This could be resultant in a service that works across the 16-25 age span creates the opportunity to develop staff who have skills and knowledge across the Children Act, Children and Families Act and the Care Act, as well as developing information management systems around pathways to improve data integration.
- 55 In creating a dedicated 16-25 working model, it would also be hoped that longer term pathway planning for the young person can occur through enhanced share planning/brokerage processes. At present, transitions team inherit the existing placement arrangement, which can lead to fragmented conversations around costs of care and pathway planning.
- 56 Moreover, a shared 16-25 model can support bridge the skills gap between childrens and adults’ services, being able to work across the Children’s Act, Children and Families Act 2014 and the Care Act.

Outcomes

- 57 In terms of local and national benchmarking, a specific dataset isn’t readily available that details the numbers open to local authority transition teams or can be used to compare numbers accurately.
- 58 However, SCC compares favourably compared to the national picture for young people with additional needs and disabilities, particularly in terms of not in education, employment or training (NEET) as outlined in section 65 and 66.
- 59 In addition, Surrey has a robust further education (FE) sector that means a higher percentage of young people with an EHCP are in FE (14.8%) compared to the national picture (14.6%) and regional in the Southeast (14.7%) (SEN2 2024)

Vocational Pathways for AND

- 60 Vocational Pathways support young people to a career, an area of employment or to further study/education.
- 61 In 2019, 37% of young people with an EHCP aged 16+ were in a vocational pathway. This increased to 73.42% in 2023 (a small increase compared to 73% in 2022). However, this this is in the context of the number of EHCPs for post-16 since 2022 increasing by 638 (22%) (**Appendix 5**)

Not in Education, Employment or training (NEET) Outcomes

- 62 9.5% of young people aged 16-18 with an EHCP were NEET or their current situation was unknown in June 2024. This is below the average seen nationally for this cohort (10.7%) **(Appendix 6)**
- 63 When looking at those aged 16-25 with an EHCP performance far exceeds that seen nationally as at June 2024, with 16.3% of Surrey young people NEET or with an unknown activity compares to 39.1% nationally **(Appendix 7)**

Attainment Outcomes at KS4

- 64 Compared to statistical neighbour authorities (**outlined in Appendix 8**), Surrey compares well for academic achievement for pupils with EHCPs achieving English/Maths GCSEs. Education is often linked with the employment status of individuals, which in turn correlates with their financial independence.
- 65 Surrey had the most pupils with an EHCP in state funded schools¹ at the end of KS4 when compared to our statistical neighbour authorities. 55.6% pupils, the highest number of students across the statistical neighbours, were entered for English and Mathematics GCSEs. 10.4% of pupils achieved grades 5 or above and 20.1% achieved grade 4 and above in English and Maths GCSEs.
- 66 Surrey had the second highest number of pupils entering the English Baccalaureate², with 2.5% achieving the English Baccalaureate with grade 4 or above (A*-C in unreformed subjects).
- 67 This translates into a high proportion of learners with additional needs and disabilities accessing education, employment or wider vocational pathways, with some young people accessing university.

Conclusions:

- 68 SCC continues to support transitions from children's services to one of the three core pathways (to adult's social care, to complex health care or to a vocational pathway)
- 69 As set out in the report, the changes to legislation in 2008 makes it clear that information, advice and careers guidance is a statutory duty for schools,

¹ All state-funded schools include local authority maintained mainstream schools, academies, free schools, city technology colleges, further education colleges with provision for 14 to 16 year-olds and state-funded special schools. They exclude independent schools, independent special schools, non-maintained special schools, hospital schools, pupil referral units and alternative provision. Alternative provision includes academy and free school alternative provision. Local Authority Characteristics Data Footnote. [Key stage 4 performance, Academic year 2022/23 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK](#)

²The five EBacc components are English, maths, a science, a language, and either history or geography. Ebacc entry and subjects entered. [Key stage 4 performance, Academic year 2022/23 - Explore education statistics - GOV.UK](#)

colleges and providers rather than the local authority and we will be working with our providers to reinforce this and to ensure that this offer is in place.

- 70 An audit report was concluded in June 2024 on transitions from children's services to AWHP (predominately AWHP transitions). Several areas for improvement were identified, particularly around transition timeliness and integration of case manage systems, as well as strengths such as commissioning arrangements and the “working younger” principle
- 71 As a result, a wider programme of improvement has been established, with development of strategic governance and refreshed programmes of work. One such programme is to look at the development of a 16-25 social care working model to directly address areas identified for improvement, whilst building on the good practice highlighted through the “working younger” principle.

Recommendations:

That the Select Committee notes

- 72 The focus on this area to ensure transition works well for all those young people transitioning between children’s social care and adults social care and those with AND who may be eligible for adult social care.
- 73 The ongoing activity focus on AND, NEET to ensure that young people with an EHCP are supported appropriately in post-16.
- 74 The commitment from CFLL and AWHP to ensure the necessary governance arrangements are in place to review, refresh and drive forward improvements to the 16-25 working model.

Next steps:

- 78. To continue to update select committee on SCCs progress in addressing the areas noted in the recent transitions audit report, including aligning children’s social care and adults social care transitions through a proposed 16-25 practice model.
- 79. Finalise the updated joint funding protocol between AWHP and CFLL as regard joint funded residential placements for those young people who have turned 18 and are eligible for adult social care.
- 80. Refresh governance for preparing for adulthood to provide additional strategic oversight to ensure sufficient scrutiny and oversight of this complex area of work.
- 81. Work with key stakeholders to increase awareness of PFA pathways and the finite nature of support delivered through an EHCP which must, as set out in the

legislation, end at age 25 but in most cases will end much sooner due to having achieved their education and training outcomes at an earlier age.

Report contact

Jenny Brickell

Eamonn Gilbert

Fadzai Tande

Tracey Sanders

Contact details

jenny.brickell@surreycc.gov.uk

fadzai.tande@surreycc.gov.uk

Eamonn.gilbert@surreycc.gov.uk

tracey.sanders@surreycc.gov.uk

Sources/background papers

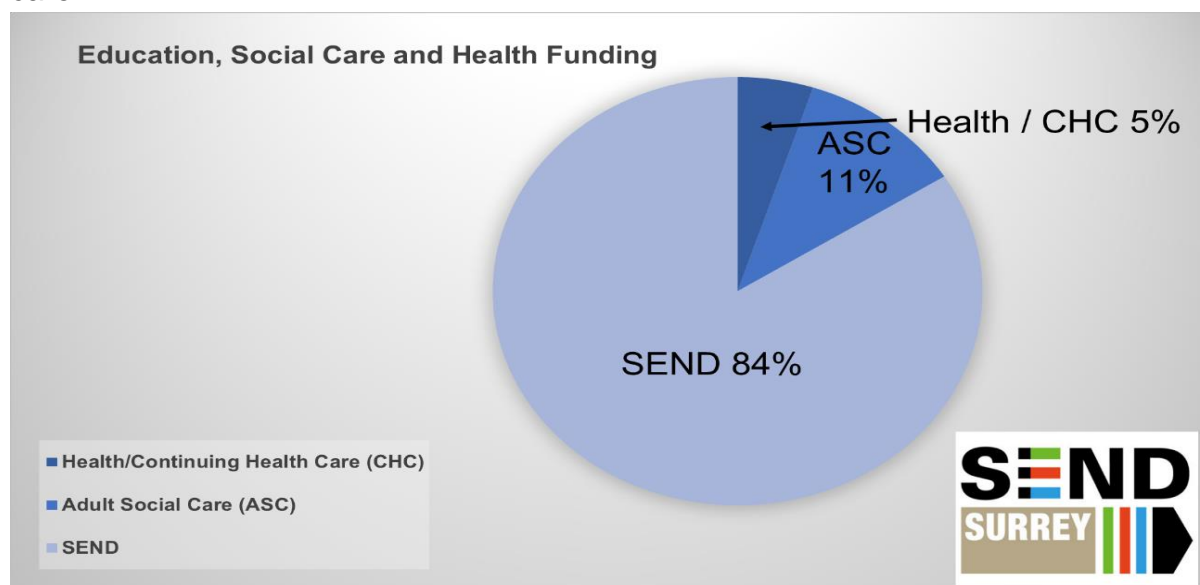
1. Surrey Local Area AND Partnership Improvement Plan (January 2024)
2. [Preparing for adulthood: a guide for young people in Surrey with additional needs or disabilities](#)
3. Education and Skills Act 2008
4. [Children and Families Act 2014](#)
5. [Preparing for Adulthood Programme \(NDTI\)](#)

Appendices

Appendix 1: SCC POST 16 EHCP Data 2022/23 showing the age EHCPs cease in Surrey, this will vary year to year but as outlined very few young people retain an EHCP pp to the age of 25.

Number of EHCP's	School Year	Age of Young Person
715	11	15-16
646	12	16-17
554	13	17-18
427	14	18-19
298	15	19-20
203	16	20-21
112	17	21-22
78	18	22-23
37	19	23-24
13	20	24-25

Appendix 2: Post-16 Transition pathways by continuing health care, additional needs and disabilities (AND) and adult social care



Appendix 3: Flowchart of pathways for core groups

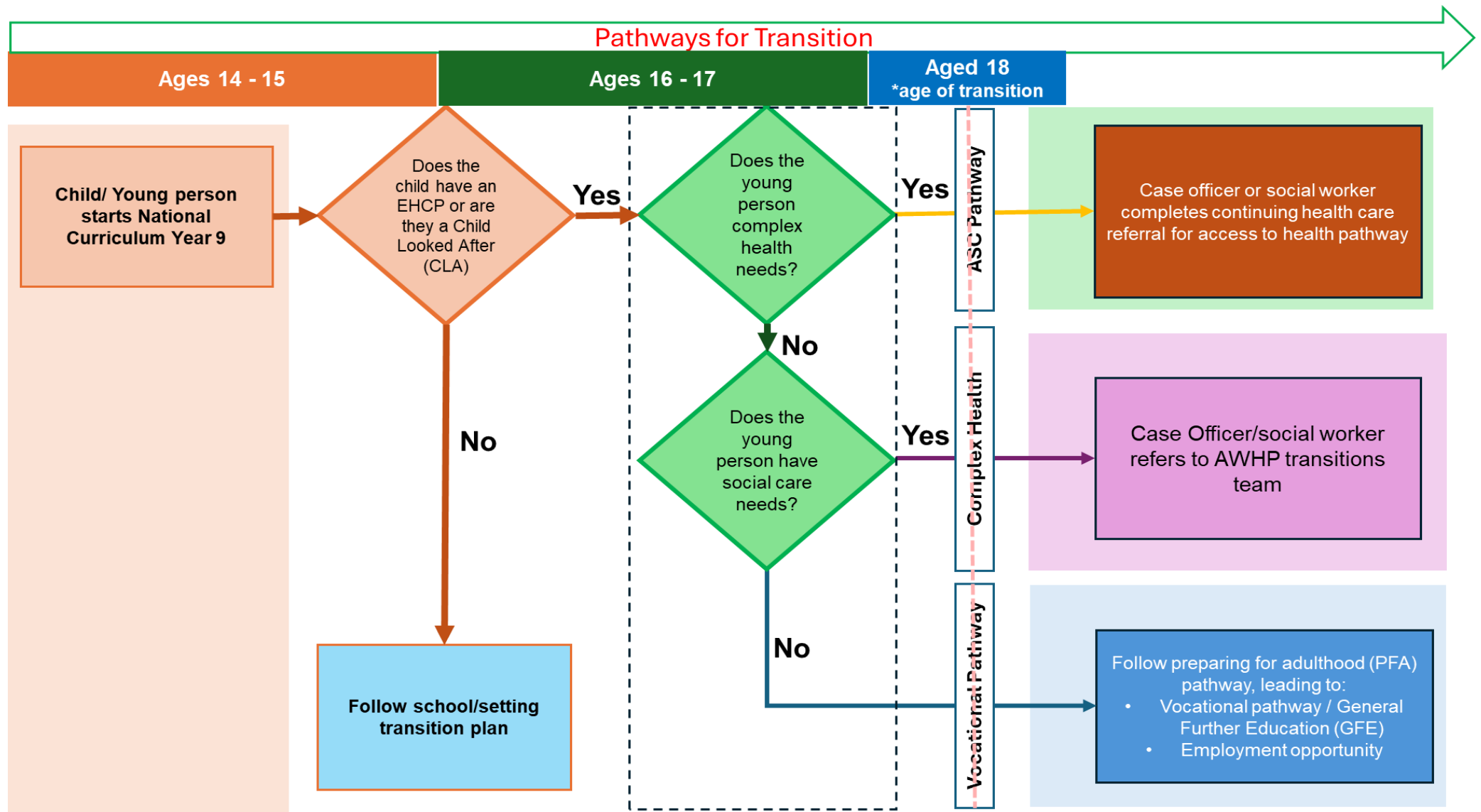
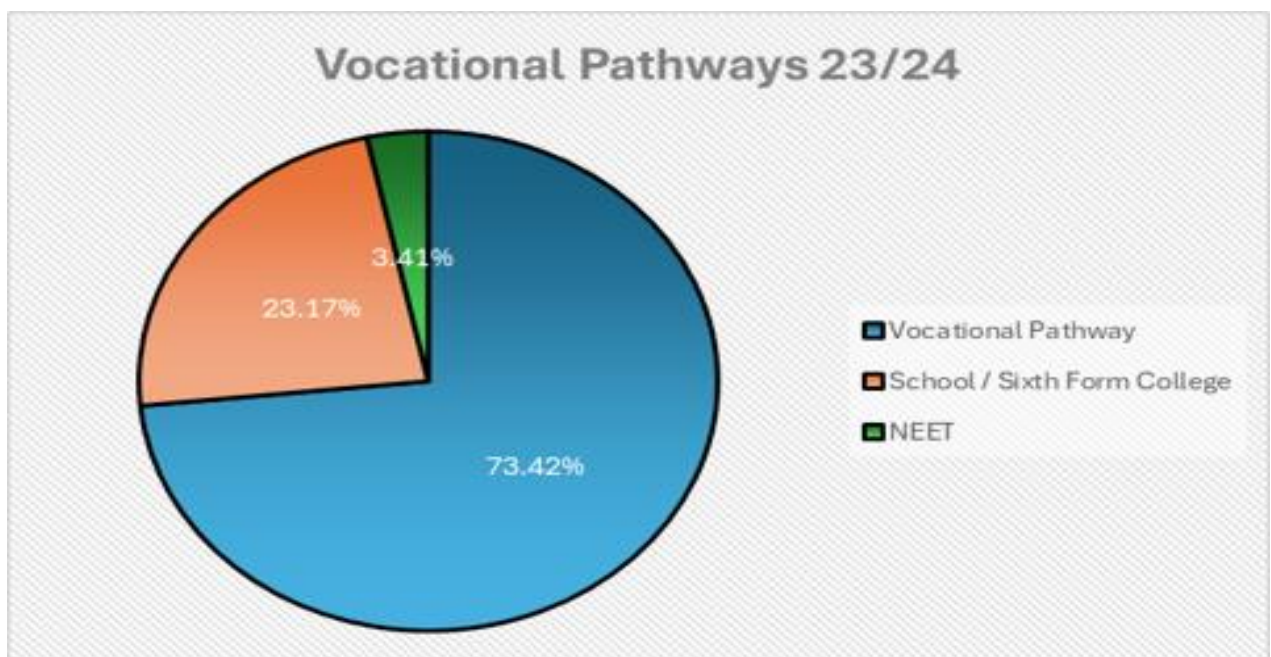


Figure 1: Pathways for transition for core cohorts

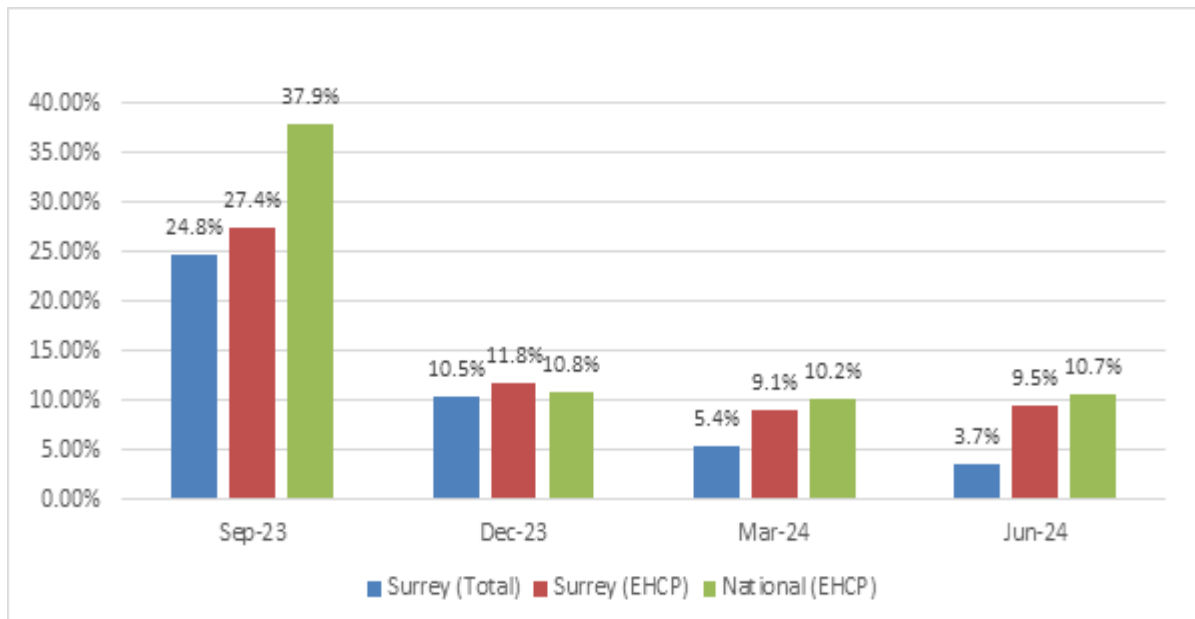
Appendix 4: Reasons for ceased EHCPs (2023/2024)

- 40.4% of plans ceased were due to a young person aged 18 or over leaving education and no longer wishing to engage in further learning.
- 6.7% of plans ceased were due to a young person moving into higher education.
- 5.5% of plans ceased were due to a young person moving into paid employment.
- 30.2% of plans ceased were due to a child or young person moving out of the county.
- The average age of pupils at the date their plan ended was 20 years old.

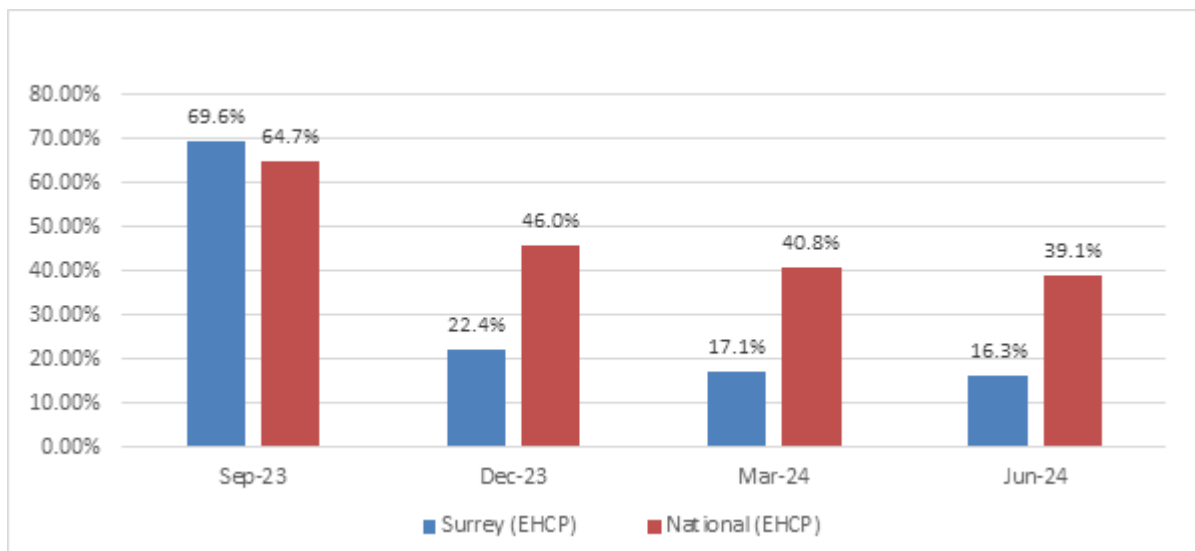
Appendix 5: Proportion(s) of pupils with an EHCP on a vocational pathway (excluding those on a complex health or adult social care pathway)



Appendix 6: NEET & Activity Not Known rate for 16-18 year olds (23/24)



Appendix 7: NEET & Activity Not Known rate for 16-25 year olds (23/24)



Appendix 8: Key stage 4 performance published by the Department of Education.

This statistical release focuses on the GCSE results of pupils at the end of Key stage 4 (KS4) attending state-funded schools in England. Table below shows performance for Surrey and its statistical neighbours

State Funded Schools (LA)	Bracknell Forest	West Berkshire	Windsor and Maidenhead	Wokingham	Central Bedfordshire	Buckinghamshire	Cambridgeshire	Hertfordshire	Oxfordshire	Surrey
Total number of schools	8	12	12	12	15	39	43	96	48	77
Total number of pupils at the end of key stage 4	70	81	61	93	156	312	346	524	290	556
Total sum of pupils Attainment 8 scores	1229.75	1228	998	1659.75	2405	4773.25	5318.5	8229.75	3986.25	9637
Average Attainment 8 score of all pupils	17.6	15.2	16.4	17.8	15.4	15.3	15.4	15.7	13.7	17.3
Total number of pupils entering English and mathematics GCSEs	38	41	34	57	85	144	186	260	117	309
Percentage of pupils entering English and mathematics GCSEs	54.3%	50.6%	55.7%	61.3%	54.5%	46.2%	53.8%	49.6%	40.3%	55.6%
Total number of pupils achieving grades 5 or above in English and mathematics GCSEs	7	6	5	10	7	33	34	47	24	58
Percentage of pupils achieving grades 5 or above in English and mathematics GCSEs	10.0%	7.4%	8.2%	10.8%	4.5%	10.6%	9.8%	9.0%	8.3%	10.4%

State Funded Schools (LA)	Bracknell Forest	West Berkshire	Windsor and Maidenhead	Wokingham	Central Bedfordshire	Buckinghamshire	Cambridgeshire	Hertfordshire	Oxfordshire	Surrey
Total number of pupils achieving grades 4 or above in English and mathematics GCSEs	11	12	10	19	22	50	55	86	40	112
Percentage of pupils achieving grades 4 or above in English and mathematics GCSEs	15.7%	14.8%	16.4%	20.4%	14.1%	16.0%	15.9%	16.4%	13.8%	20.1%
Total number of pupils entering the English Baccalaureate	0	7	5	3	10	15	16	27	11	23
Percentage of pupils entering the English Baccalaureate	0.0%	8.6%	8.2%	3.2%	6.4%	4.8%	4.6%	5.2%	3.8%	4.1%
Total number of pupils achieving the English Baccalaureate grades 5 or above (A*-C in unreformed subjects)	0	3	2	0	2	5	6	11	4	5
Percentage of pupils achieving the English Baccalaureate grades 5 or above (A*-C in unreformed subjects)	0.0%	3.7%	3.3%	0.0%	1.3%	1.6%	1.7%	2.1%	1.4%	0.9%
Total number of pupils achieving the English Baccalaureate grades 4 or above (A*-C in unreformed subjects)	0	3	2	1	3	10	12	14	5	9
Percentage of pupils achieving the English Baccalaureate grades 4 or above (A*-C in unreformed subjects)	0.0%	3.7%	3.3%	1.1%	1.9%	3.2%	3.5%	2.7%	1.7%	1.6%
Total EBacc APS score of pupils	101.82	105.83	81.67	133.99	193.83	390.46	445.37	650.14	332.83	746.99

State Funded Schools (LA)	Bracknell Forest	West Berkshire	Windsor and Maidenhead	Wokingham	Central Bedfordshire	Buckinghamshire	Cambridgeshire	Hertfordshire	Oxfordshire	Surrey
Average EBacc APS score per pupil	1.45	1.31	1.34	1.44	1.24	1.25	1.29	1.24	1.15	1.34

Key: Red: Low attainment, **Amber:** Medium **Green:** High Attainment



2022 / 23

NEXT STEPS

Your guide to Surrey's post 16 training, employment and vocational pathways for young people with additional needs



This page is intentionally left blank