Leaving school and starting further education

- Ensure the person is central to the process: Time should be spent using person centred planning techniques to understand what is important. Their wants, wishes, feelings and aspirations should be respected.
- Start research early together: This allows time to be able to explore all options fully.
- Consider all options in full: There may be provisions that you are not aware of. It is likely that there will be different options available for the person once they leave school. This may include college, an apprenticeship or day services.
- Consider what support is available within the setting: If the person has an EHC plan talk to the transitioning setting about what their support will look like. If they don't have an EHC plan discuss what support is available. Colleges can sometimes arrange reasonable adjustments such as a note-taker, mentor, or access to specific equipment.
- Arrange meetings and visits: You may have several different meetings and visits with several different further education placements before making a final decision, this is ok. If you feel you need extra information request it.
- Information sharing: It is vital that information is shared from the current setting to the transitioning setting. Talk in depth with contacts at the current provision who know the person well.
- Create a personal profile together: This can be given to the person's tutors, so that they are able to understand and provide the best support. Consider including things specific to education such as learning needs and academic achievements.
- Consider transition plans: Once you have decided on a placement arrange another meeting with the key contact to discuss more in depth transition plans. Consider putting together a list of questions with the person, sometimes it can be hard to think of questions when in the moment.

- Be prepared: Think specifically about all the changes that will be happening. Understand that sometimes these changes may be very small and insignificant to you, but they may be huge for the person. Changes to consider could include uniform, transport, start and finish times. Explore these changes together and compile a list of worries and possible solutions.
- Use visuals: You may use countdowns to indicate the run-up to the person's first day at their new setting. You may want to use:

1. Photos of the outside of the building.
2. Photos of the inside of the building.
3. Maps of the routes needed to walk.
4. Checklists of the equipment needed.
5. Photos of the staff.

- Put together a timetable: Once moving to further education there is a lot more independence expected. Create a daily or weekly timetable together with the person for them to use whilst they are in college, so they know what lesson they have, what time the lesson is, where it is and who is teaching the lesson.
- Identify a consistent contact at the new setting: It may be useful to make links with a person at the new setting who both you and the person can link in with, this can provide much needed consistency and a sense of safety.
- Establish a system for homework and assignment deadlines: With further education comes more homework and deadlines. This could create a lot of anxiety for the person; create a system which works for the person. This may be a set day a week where they sit down and do homework, or it may be breaking the task down into smaller steps and completing bits each night. Calendars, apps, and planners can also be useful.
- Begin developing skills for adulthood in the run up to the person leaving school: Examples of this include developing social skills, self-care skills and independence skills.
- Consider funding options: Some people doing higher education courses may be eligible for Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA). This can be used to pay for things such as equipment, travel costs and additional support.