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Picture images supplied by Changes Picture Bank.

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Planning your future

We hope this workbook will help you to make choices about your future.

Every young person has to choose what they want to do when they leave Year 11. You may also have to think about the help and support you will need when you leave school.

There are lots of things you need to think about - but don't worry. There are lots of people who will help you choose.

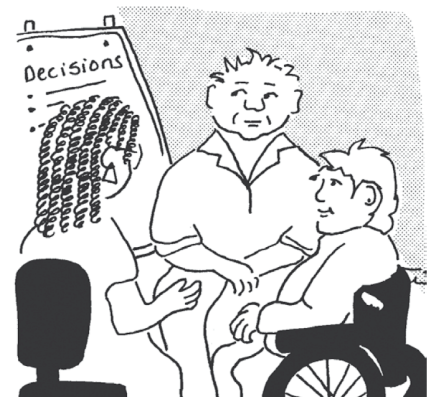
This workbook has:

- information on people who can help you make choices
- information about what you can do after Year 11.

It is your workbook - so you can add any information to it that you want to.

Remember - planning your future is very important, and the most important person to think about when making your choices is YOU!

Good luck!



What you need to think about

Before making a choice about what you want to do after Year 11, think about the questions below.



Write your **answers** on the lines.

- What lessons do you like at school?

.....
.....

- What lessons do you not like at school?

.....
.....

- What are you good at in school?

.....
.....

- What things do you find hard in school?

.....
.....

- What do you enjoy doing outside of school?

.....
.....

- What would you like to do in the future?

.....
.....

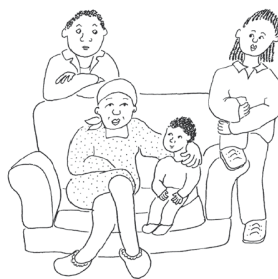
People who can help

There are different people who will be able to help you make decisions about your future.

Family, Carers and Friends

Family, carers and friends will know you very well. They will be able to help you think about your future and help you to make plans. They will be able to talk to you about what you are good at. They will also know what help and support you may need in the future.

You may have some family, carers or friends that you would like to talk to about your future.



Which **family members or carers** would you like to talk to about your future?

① Name

② Name



Which **friends** would you like to talk to about your future?

① Name

② Name

Teachers

Teachers get to know pupils very well. Some of your teachers may have known you for a long time. This means they will be able to talk to you about what you are good at. They will also be able to talk to you about what sort of support you may need when you leave school.

Teachers can also help you to get ready for your move from school into adult life.

You may want to talk to some teachers about your future plans.



Which **teachers** would you like to talk to about your future?

❶ Name

.....

❷ Name

.....

❸ Name

.....

Connexions Personal Advisers

Connexions is a service that supports all young people from the age of 13 to 19. You can use the service up to the age of 25 if you have a learning difficulty or disability.

A Connexions Personal Adviser (known as a Connexions PA) can talk to you about the things you can do at the end of Year 11 and afterwards. They can give you support and information on planning your future.

You can see your Connexions PA at school, in a Connexions Centre and sometimes at your home. You will first meet your Connexions PA when you are in Year 9.

You may see them in:

- an assembly
- a group session
- an interview
- a Parents' evening.



Ask your teacher if you are not sure who your Connexions PA is. You can find more information about Connexions at www.cxstaffs.co.uk



Who is your **Connexions PA**?
How can you contact them?

My Connexions PA is

 Telephone number

Email address

Connexions Centre

Social Workers

Some young people have a Social Worker. Social Workers can help you to get extra support you may need. They do this by talking to you and others about your needs.

Social Workers can help with things like:

- finding out what help you need
- going on outings or activities (short breaks)
- arranging things for you to do in the daytime after you have left school
- looking at where you might like to live in the future.



Who is your **Social Worker**?
How can you contact them?

My Social Worker is

 Telephone number

Email address

Advocates

Some young people can get support from an Advocate. Advocates can help you to get your thoughts and feelings across to other people who need to know about them.

Advocates can help you to find information. They can give you support when you are thinking about what to do in the future. They can help you to take part in meetings, and tell other people what you want. They will always be on your side.




Do you need help to put your thoughts or feelings across?




Talk about it...

If you live or go to school in Stoke-on-Trent, you can get help from '**ASIST**'. This stands for **A**dvocacy **S**ervices in **S**taffordshire.

 Their telephone number is 01782 845584.

If you are looked after and you live in Staffordshire, you can get help from '**CARS**'. This stands for **C**hildren's **A**dvice and **R**epresentation **S**ervice.

 Their telephone number is 01785 228888.

Transition Review

In Year 9, if you have a Statement of Special Educational Needs, you will have a meeting called a **Transition Review**.

This meeting is a **chance for you to start thinking about your future**. At the meeting you will be able to talk about your hopes for the future and the support you will need over the next few years.

The following people may be invited to your Transition Review:

- You
- Your Parents or Carers
- Your Connexions PA
- Your Social Worker
- Your Teacher
- An Advocate
- Other people who can help you.



Is there anyone else you would like invited to your Transition Review?

After the meeting, the school will write a **Transition Plan**. The Plan will list the things that were talked about at the meeting.

The Plan will say **what you would like to do in the future and any support you may need**. You will get a copy of your Plan.

You will have a **Review meeting each year** at school. This is a chance to make any changes to your Transition Plan.

Your choices after you are 16

School Sixth Form

Specialist College

Jobs and Training

College

Work-based Learning

Volunteering



Which of these choices interests YOU?
Put a tick ✓ by the choices you would like to find out more about.

The following pages tell you a bit more about each of these choices.

Choices - School Sixth Form

You can carry on with your education at school after Year 11. If you stay at school you can go into Year 12, Year 13 and in some schools, Year 14. This is sometimes called the 'sixth form.' If your own school does not have a sixth form, you may be able to go to a school where there is a sixth form.

If you choose to stay at your school sixth form after Year 11, you will know the place and the people. You may be able to choose courses where you can:

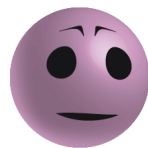
- get better at speaking, reading, writing and number skills
- work towards a qualification such as Functional Skills, GCSEs, a Diploma or A Levels
- learn practical skills that will help you get a job
- learn independence skills, like cooking for yourself or travelling on your own
- try work experience
- link to a college course.



What do you think about going into your school sixth form after Year 11?



I like this idea



I'm not sure



I don't like this idea



Talk about it...

Different schools offer different courses. Ask your Connexions PA or your teacher to tell you more about sixth form courses. Or visit www.way2go.me.uk

Choices - College

You can go to college when you are 16 or you can go when you are older. At college you will meet people from other schools in the area. There are lots of courses you can choose from. You can choose courses where you can:

- get better at speaking, reading, writing and number skills
- work towards a qualification such as Functional Skills, GCSEs, a Diploma or A Levels
- take a practical course, which gets you ready for jobs like hairdressing, motor mechanics or catering
- learn independence skills, like cooking for yourself or travelling on your own
- try work experience
- link to a college course.

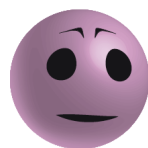
You can get extra help at college if you need it. You might have a personal tutor, a support worker, or a basic skills tutor to help with your English and Maths.



What do you think about going to college after Year 11?



I like this idea



I'm not sure



I don't like this idea



Talk about it...

Ask your Connexions PA to tell you more about college courses.
Or visit www.way2go.me.uk

Choices - Specialist College

Very few people who are under 19 years old go to a specialist college. A specialist college is only an option if your school or local college cannot offer you a course that is suitable.

Specialist colleges are in different parts of the country. There are two in Staffordshire. The courses can be residential, which means some young people live at the college while studying.

On a course at a specialist college you might:

- learn independence skills, like getting washed and dressed, cooking for yourself and travelling on your own
- get support with health needs
- get better at speaking, reading, writing and number skills
- try work experience
- learn practical skills that can help you get a job or training
- work towards a qualification.



What do you think about going to a specialist college after Year 11?



I like this idea



I'm not sure



I don't like this idea



Talk about it...

Ask your Connexions PA to tell you more about specialist colleges. Or visit www.natspec.org.uk

Choices - Work-based Learning

Work-based learning gives you the chance to gain work experience with an employer and get some qualifications. There are different sorts of programme:

Foundation Learning

On a Foundation Learning programme you can **build your confidence**, try **work experience** and **get skills** you will need for work, college, an Apprenticeship or independent living. The programme is made especially for you and has qualifications at Entry Level 1, 2 or 3.

Apprenticeships

On an apprenticeship you have a **real job** and **get training**. You spend most of your time at work doing a job. You also study for a qualification, usually on day release at college.

Your Connexions PA can tell you about work-based learning in your area.



What do you think about doing work-based learning after Year 11?



I like this idea



I'm not sure



I don't like this idea



Talk about it...

Ask your Connexions PA to tell you more about work-based learning. Or visit www.apprenticeships.org.uk

Choices - Jobs and Training

You can choose to start work after Year 11.

Employers want their workers to have qualifications and skills. If you get a job before you are 18, it is best to do some part-time learning or part-time training **at the same time**.

When you decide you are ready to get a job, your Connexions PA is there to help you. They can help you with:

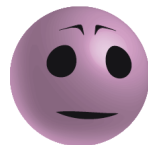
- finding a job
- filling in application forms
- getting ready for job interviews.



What do you think about getting a job after Year 11?



I like this idea



I'm not sure



I don't like this idea



Talk about it...

What jobs might you like to do? Talk to your Connexions PA about your job ideas.

Choices - Volunteering

Volunteering is about doing something nice for others. It is a way that you can help people, or animals or the local area. You can choose the type of help you want to give.

You do not get paid for volunteering. It is rewarding in different ways. You can:

- get some new skills
- meet new people
- practice using your skills
- have fun.

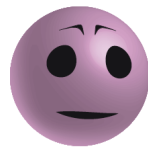
You can do volunteering in lots of different places. It can be indoors or it can be outdoors. You can choose how much time you give. It can be a couple of hours during the week. Or it can be at the weekend or during college holidays.



What do you think about doing some volunteering after Year 11?



I like this idea



I'm not sure



I don't like this idea



Talk about it...

If you would like to do some volunteering, talk to your Connexions PA. They can put you in touch with people who would like to have your help.

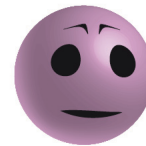
Your Choices

Now you have seen the different choices, what do you think about those choices?

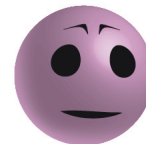
Tick your choices below.
Put one tick on each row.



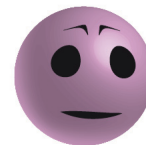
School Sixth Form:



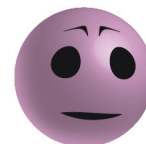
College:



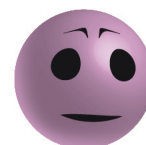
Specialist College:



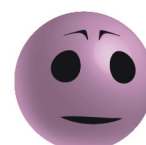
Work-based Learning:



Jobs and Training:



Volunteering:



More Choices

Help to find and keep a job

- **Jobcentre Plus Services**
There are people called Disability Employment Advisers (DEAs). They work at Jobcentre Plus. DEAs give support to people with disabilities to help them find and keep a job. You can go into your local Jobcentre Plus to see a DEA, or you can phone them. Ask your Connexions PA for more details.
- **Supported Employment Programmes**
These programmes help prepare you for work or can support you when you are in a job. Your Connexions PA and the DEA at Jobcentre Plus can tell you more about supported employment programmes.

Day Opportunities

Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Social Care run day opportunities for people aged 18 and above. People at day opportunities may do work experience, have supported employment, try different social activities or go to college.

Day opportunities are changing. Less people will be attending day opportunities in the future and more people will be offered Self Directed Support. Your Connexions PA and Social Worker can tell you more about day opportunities and other options.

Self Directed Support

People with disabilities can now have more choice and control over the services they get. You may be able to get an Individual Budget. This is an amount of money which you can choose how to spend to get the support you need. A Social Worker will do an assessment to see if you can get an Individual Budget. Ask your Social Worker for more details.

Money

Money for Study



If you go to school sixth form or college, you may get some money. This is called an Education Maintenance Allowance (or EMA). The money will help you to buy books and other things.

Not everybody gets EMA. It depends on the course that you choose. It can also depend on how much money your parents or carers get.

Your Connexions PA can tell you if the course you want to do is eligible for EMA. They can help you with your application for EMA.

Wages



When you get a job, your employer will pay you a wage. A wage is the money you get for working. Your employer will give you a wage slip that shows how many hours you have worked. It will show how much money you have been paid. If you do an Apprenticeship you will also get a wage.

Direct Payments and Individual Budgets



This is money you may be able to get from Social Services to buy the support you want. Social Services give you the money instead of a service. A Social Worker will do an assessment to see if you can get this money. Ask your Social Worker for more details.

Benefits



The government pays money called benefits to help people in certain situations. If you have a disability, you may be able to get benefits. If you don't earn much money or you don't have a job or you cannot work, you may be able to claim benefits. There may be other benefits that you can claim to help you live independently. Your Connexions PA can tell you where to find out more about benefits.