



North West Local Authority Hub

**An opportunity for young people to share their experiences of the move from Child to Adult services**



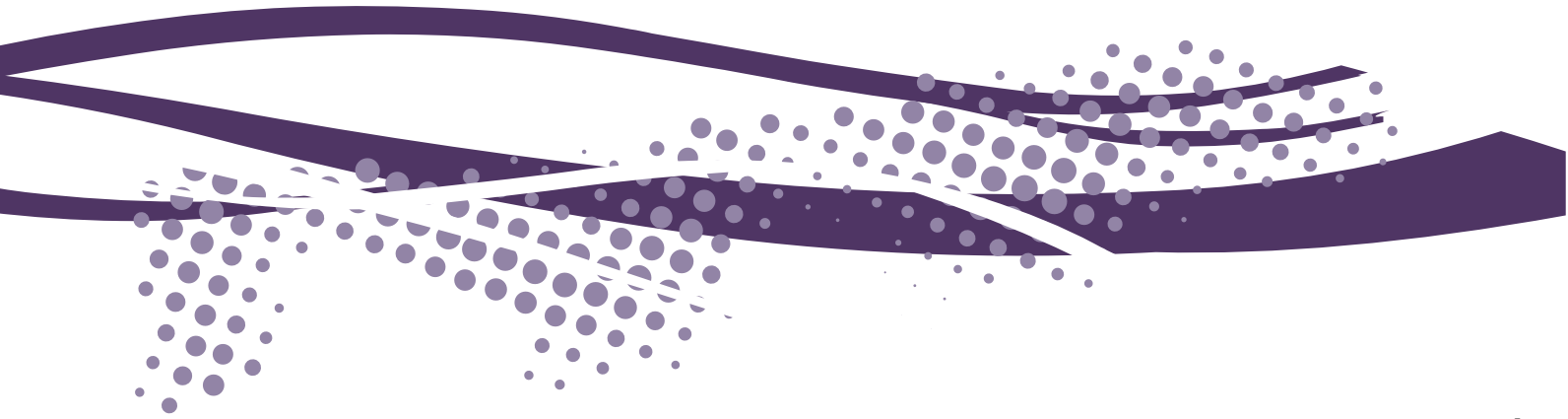
“Frustrations of Time” © Dylan Sharrock / Cheshire East / PhotoVoice

Final Report into the outcomes of the North West Transition Project  
October 2010



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## 1. National Context

The report *Aiming High for Disabled Children: better support for families* (DfES/HMT 2007) emphasised the Government's commitment to improving the life chances of disabled children and young people. To address this, the government announced the Transition Support Programme, which would aim to raise the standards of transition in all local areas.

The Transition Support Programme consists of two main elements:

- **The National Transition Support Team**, which coordinates the work with local authorities, Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and regional advisers and existing experts; and
- **Support for change at local level** through a combination of direct grants and regional adviser activity.

The aim of the Transition Support Programme is to change culture around transition and to raise aspirations of disabled young people, their families and everyone who works with them.

The transition to adulthood is a time of celebration, change and challenges for all young people. But, for many young people with disabilities and SEN and their families, it can be a frustrating and daunting process.

***“...it felt like merely being thrown over the fence from children's to adult services. My transition was a pretend process with a few bureaucratic milestones and I was expected to morph into an adult on my 18th birthday”***

*(A Transition Guide for All Services, DCSF 2007).*

The anticipated outcomes of the Transition Support Programme are that transition planning and transition services in local areas will better support disabled young people to move towards and on to a new stage of life. Local areas will be supported to meet minimum standards in transition provision. By the end of the programme, many areas will have developed outstanding innovative practice that will lead to improved outcomes for disabled young people. The national transition support team will raise the profile of transition across specialist and universal services to promote disabled young people having the same rights and opportunities as all young people.

### Participation

*'The views and aspirations of the people who use services are not yet at the heart of commissioning services for individuals. Councils need to pay more attention to what people say about the qualities that are important to them in services.'*

*(The state of social care in England 2004-05, Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI)*

According to the Transition Guide for all Services, DCSF 2007, disabled young people have the right to participate and be at the centre of the decision making process about their lives and be fully involved in actions and agreements which affect them. It is important for them to have a voice that is separate from that of their family. This is why the North West region decided to focus on the voice of the young person in their Transition project.

## 2. North West Regional Hub of Effective Practice in Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

LA Hubs of effective practice in SEND were introduced as part of the 07/08 National Strategies SEN programme to disseminate best practice between LAs. LA Hubs also support the interface between LAs and the DCSF in helping to meet the needs of children and young people with SEN.

The North West Regional Hub encompasses the 23 LAs in the region, namely: Blackburn with Darwen; Blackpool; Bolton; Bury; Cheshire East; Cheshire West and Chester; Cumbria; Halton; Knowsley; Lancashire; Liverpool; Manchester; Oldham; Rochdale; St. Helens; Salford; Sefton; Stockport; Tameside; Trafford; Warrington; Wigan and Wirral.

There are 10 regional hubs across the country and each one works on 3 national strands of work set out by DCSF via National Strategies.

They are:

- 1) Inclusion Development Programme – an e training programme for teachers and support staff on various aspects of SEND;
- 2) Narrowing attainment gaps, progression and evaluating progress – this work has culminated in the publication of guidance of what constitutes progress for pupils with SEND and,
- 3) Developing parental confidence in the SEN system, supporting Transition and Improving Provision Development.

Further information about each of these strands of work can be found on the Regional Hub website at [www.nwlahub.co.uk](http://www.nwlahub.co.uk)

## 3. The Project

The Northwest Regional SEN Hub Steering group decided to give a platform to the young people of the region to help them speak out about their experiences of the transition from child to adult services, and to encourage improvements to services based on their perceptions and their messages. The project also gave the young people taking part the opportunity to change the way they are seen by everyone around them.

The North West Hub commissioned the international charitable organisation PhotoVoice to run a 'participatory photographic project' with 8 groups of young people across the region from the following local authority areas: Bury, Cheshire East, Cumbria, Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, St. Helens and Warrington. This culminated in a regional event in April 2010 at the Reebok Stadium, Bolton. The event provided a platform for a representative group of young people with SEN and Disabilities to showcase their work and share their messages with decision makers and managers from the region and from the National Field force.

The aims of the project and the event in April 2010 were as follows:

- To give young disabled people a chance to speak out about their experience of their transition from child to adult services, and to inform the improvements to the way it is managed;
- To provide young disabled people at different stages of transition with a way to share and explore their fears, hopes and expectations with each other and with their families and carers;
- To encourage a more participatory approach to assessment and improvement of services by local authorities in the North West and beyond.

### 3.1 Photovoice



**PhotoVoice** is an award-winning international charity based in London. PhotoVoice projects enable those who are traditionally the subjects of photographs to become their creators. Through photography, these individuals find the confidence to speak out about their challenges, concerns, hopes and fears.

**PhotoVoice's vision** is for a world where disadvantaged and marginalised communities have a voice to represent themselves and to achieve positive social change.

**PhotoVoice's mission** is to build skills using innovative participatory photography and digital storytelling methods to create tools for advocacy.

**PhotoVoice's partners** are involved in every project – be they an international NGO or a local community organisation.

**PhotoVoice works in the UK and internationally, with projects spanning four continents.**

PhotoVoice works with a wide range of people who are marginalised, at risk and discriminated against because of factors including poverty, ethnicity, age, health, disability and HIV status. PhotoVoice provides an international platform for these groups to show their work and advocate for change.

## Why Photography

The power of photography lies in its dual role as an art form and a means to record facts. It provides an accessible way to define realities, communicate perspectives and raise awareness of important social and global issues. Photography crosses cultural and linguistic barriers for people of all ages and can be adapted to all abilities. Its relative low cost and ease of dissemination provides the potential to generate dialogue and discussion.

For further information please contact PhotoVoice on 0207 033 3878 or [info@PhotoVoice.org](mailto:info@PhotoVoice.org)

## 3.2 Project Methodology

Prior to the work beginning with the young people, a training and preparation session took place with Jane Martin, PhotoVoice's Programme Manager, the facilitators who would be working with the young people and LA colleagues from authorities involved in the project. There followed a series of 5 photography workshops with the identified group of young people in each of the LAs, each lasting between 2 to 3 hours. Participant numbers varied between local authorities and included young people with a wide range of special educational needs and disabilities. A total of 57 young people were involved in the project.

Each facilitator designed a programme of activities tailored to the needs of the specific group they were working with. At the Reebok presentation, facilitators and staff gave examples of different ways of working with young people at this stage in their lives. For example, at **St. Helens**, John Lafferty developed simple systems based on colour, shape and form to help participants communicate their likes and dislikes. These included arrows pointing up and down, and green and red for likes and dislikes. He focussed on the themes of home, school, work and vocation.

In **Bury**, the young people were introduced to the project with 'getting to know you' post-it games discussing likes and dislikes and this process was reintroduced later on for the captioning of their photographs. After the first session, discussions were focussed on interests, work experience and the school environment. They were guided through the main technical features on the camera (using large drawings of the symbols) and photo-shoots around the school enabled them to put this into practice. The young people were then able to take their cameras to document their interests over the next few weeks; work experience, trips and, for one young person, the huge life transition of moving home.

In **Cheshire East**, the participants explored ideas of vocation, work experience, barriers to success and issues around leaving the security of Adelaide School.

In **Cumbria**, due to the communicative ability of the participants, Glynis Shaw focussed on the micro-transitions of moving around the school and explored the possible transitions from Morag's class next September. Lucinda and Jake C explored ideas of hairdressing and becoming a garage mechanic by taking photographs on the industrial estate near the school.

**Liverpool and Halton** worked on projects developed from notes taken during group discussions about change. Many of these projects had work that related directly to the themes of change, specifically in that of Simone and Danny from Halton and Gavin from Liverpool.

The project culminated in a conference held at the Reebok Stadium on 22nd April, 2010. Delegates from 19 of the 23 North West local authority areas were present with representation from a wide variety of agencies including education, health, social care, Connexions and charities. There were presentations from each of the 8 LAs involved in the project. 107 9 x 6 inch photographic prints and captions representing the work of all participants were produced and displayed at the event. All six facilitators attended with the lead facilitator from each group assisting the young people in presenting the work, producing a slideshow with them and talking through the process. Each of the attending groups presented their photographic work as a PowerPoint, some with music, and chose their own formats for the rest of their presentations. Some young people chose to present themselves; others chose to have the staff present on their behalf and in each case a representative from the local authority/school made a contribution. Multimedia outputs included video of groups singing, video of performances, videos made by participants. One of the participants also danced.

### 3.3 Evaluation of Conference

Responses from delegates to the conference were generally extremely positive, with 93% rating the event 1 (objectives totally achieved) or 2 (objectives partially achieved). A selection of the comments is given below:

*'The whole day, the dancing, the whole thing, has been fantastic and inspirational.'*

**(Jackie O'Carroll, NW Regional Adviser, National Transition Support Programme)**

*The photographs have really given a depth of opinion that we didn't know was there'. 'It's something they've benefited from. They've got a lot out of it, sharing their hopes and dreams through photography'. 'Always looking to develop new and innovative ways of working'.*

**(Pam Beaumont, Principal Officer, SEN, Halton)**

*'We particularly liked this project.. it seemed ideal for us and it has been. I attended two of the workshops. We will continue with this way of working to take this forward. We feel it's a really good method'.*

**(Barbara Logan, Strategy Implementation Manager, Aiming High for Disabled Children, Cheshire East)**

*'You get lots and lots of additional messages coming through photographs'.*

**(Christine Turner, Elms Bank School, Bury)**

*'I wanted to work with our group of visually impaired and hearing impaired young people ... the young people didn't know much about photography or know each other at all. Some had day jobs (school, university, college) but they all rose to the challenge. They want to stay together as friends and to keep taking photographs.'*

**Pauline Coulter, Children's Services Manager, Disabled Children, Knowsley)**

*'PhotoVoice's work will feed into a Transition pack that Warrington are making and ongoing work on Transition. One or two of the images will be used in that pack.' 'I can't speak highly enough of how much the young people enjoyed the project. They are thrilled to bits about the work and really enjoyed engaging with the PhotoVoice facilitators.' 'Today the young people are in Sefton Park doing photography. They've enjoyed themselves and will be presenting at a later stage. Thanks to the PhotoVoice facilitators'.*

**(Gill Baxby, Inclusion Service, Children and Young People's Services, Warrington)**

### 3.4 Summary of Outputs

- An interim and final report explaining the project, its outputs, outcomes and impact for distribution across the North West;
- A report produced by PhotoVoice detailing the activities undertaken in the project, lessons learned and recommendations for future projects;
- The design and production of a booklet aimed at young people showing the real experience of transition from those going through it;
- Design and production of postcards and posters carrying the photos and messages from the young people taking part to other young people, families and SEN professionals;
- Online gallery and mini website on the PhotoVoice website;
- 8 local events to be organised by LAs to disseminate and celebrate the work of the young people.

## 3.5 Lessons Learned

### 3.5.1 Role of support workers

The support workers and staff working with the young people were key to the project and it would not have been possible to run a project like this without their input. This is reflected in some of the comments made by facilitators:

*'The teaching assistants in all the sessions were invaluable for supporting communication during the sessions, from ensuring there was clarity of understanding for the activities to facilitating communication and involvement for the non-verbal young people. The presence of the support workers brings a familiarity which helps the young people to be at ease with new facilitators and working processes, and they also know more about the young people's lives so are able to feed into project ideas in practical ways.'* **(Bury)**

*'...the participants explored ideas of vocation, work experience, barriers to success and issues around leaving the security of Adelaide School. Sarah Evanson in Cheshire East put a huge amount of effort in finding suitable courses and work placements and offering post school support.'* **(Cheshire East)**

*'The members of staff are enormously enthusiastic and keen to assist wherever possible. Everything that they do is to help their pupils manage transition and change-often very small transitions throughout the school day and the week.'* **(Cumbria)**

*'Sarah and Angela were imperative to the success of the project. Because of the short time frame of the project, trusted support workers ensured that participants were comfortable and confident about sharing their concerns, thoughts and experiences, good and bad. The project would not have been as successful without them. It also illustrates the confidence the support workers have in the young people to start new projects, explore challenging subjects and in sharing and expressing their opinions'.* **(Knowsley)**

*'Having the participant's support workers present was a great help. As with other projects, these support workers know the participants very well and are able to put across the ideas we want to explore in a manner that each participant can understand. With a project of such a short nature, this support is essential to our goals. Some of the participants have specific needs that it may have been difficult to accommodate without such detailed, inside knowledge.'* **(Halton)**

*'Staff support of the group is just wonderful. The group is working really well as a team and the friendliness, level of care and attention are great. Everyone is doing what they can to support the young people in taking photographs that are important to them and express their lives, the atmosphere feels very positive. This creates a good environment to work in and will support the young people in being creative.'* **(Liverpool)**

*'Staff willingness to reaffirm the project themes and explain in more detail to those participants who have trouble with attention span. Staff also keen to assist facilitators in gathering information that will aid captioning and editing between sessions.'* **(St Helens)**

*'The introduction to the project and its themes was clearly outlined and was understood by the young people. Feedback from staff was very encouraging and the young people were engaged throughout. The staff (Val and Mandy) have really helped the clarity of introduction to the project (they are an excellent support/addition to the project) and created an excellent bridge between facilitators and young people which is invaluable in terms of delivery and engagement'.* **(Warrington)**

### 3.5.2 Number, length and frequency of sessions

Each facilitator felt there were not enough sessions. As well as the short number of sessions planned, some sessions had to be cut short, some participants had clashes with other scheduled activities and some groups did not have enough time to do all of the five sessions planned in the short timescale available. One facilitator's suggestion was that sessions of around three hours would be best and that the format of the sessions should be changed so that the first two sessions would be group work, discussion of topic and camera skills, the third could be a session in the gap between the initial and final two sessions to review work and the final two could then be made up of one-to-one individual mentoring sessions with each participant coming on their own for around 45 minutes. This would allow more focused work and better captions as each facilitator could give the participants undivided attention.

### 3.5.3 Facilitator scheduling

Each group was allocated a lead facilitator who attended each session. Because of the short lead in time and previous facilitator commitments, it was not possible to provide the same two facilitators for each session for each group but all sessions were delivered by an overall team of five. Ideally, groups should have the same facilitators throughout the project in order to provide the necessary consistency. It is also important that the facilitators are experienced in working with young people with learning difficulties and disabilities and have knowledge of the specific type of difficulties involved.

### 3.5.4 Increasing participation

Several suggestions were made throughout the workshops as to how to maximise the engagement of the young people involved.

These include:

*'Use recording device; some of the young people are really articulate but struggle with expressing themselves in writing ...for captioning sessions use recording and discussion where possible'. (Bury)*

*'Not all participants can take cameras home. Those who can did not really do much more than photograph pets etc. Will try to reword so that taking the camera home is like being given a mission – each participant having to capture a specific set of images'. (St. Helens)*

*The mixture of different abilities meant that some participants might have been able to develop more in the session, and equally some participants required greater support – working as a group might not be the best approach for activities – a solution to this would be to divide the group in two for practical exercises in the next session, and also be sure to be delivering one-to-one support where necessary. (Warrington)*

### 3.5.5 Small group sizes

For a project of this nature, small group sizes were found to be most effective. This is due to the individual nature of each person's experiences of change. To really address these experiences, one on one work is the most suitable tool. Group work can be appropriate for some activities but when it comes to building person centred projects, this has to be done on an individual basis. This may affect the numbers which can be involved in a project of this nature but is an important consideration. Similarly, working with smaller groups with less variation of ability would allow more issue focus.

### 3.5.6 Equipment

The following aspects of the use of equipment were found to work well:

- Immediate reaction to themed imagery used in presentations
- Use of white board and large art pads were very useful for reinforcing ideas through images, as well as being able to sketch storyboards
- The studio session was a great success. This was an invaluable way to explore important issues photographically during a limited time frame
- Having a choice of still and moving image equipment available to participants was effective as some engaged more with the moving image than the still image
- The use of storyboards was also found to be a very useful technique for this project. By working with the participants one on one, the facilitators were able to draw up 'briefs' related to the themes that came up during the discussions. Each group member could then work from the briefs in the period between the initial and final sessions. The participants could use these as a visual reminder of the shots they wanted and allowed them to build up coherent bodies of work.

Those elements of equipment which were found not to be as effective include:

- Smaller, thinner compact cameras proved difficult with fingers getting in the way of lens and flash. The use of hybrid cameras such as Fuji S1500 would have been easier to handle. Two of the participants commented on how the cameras were hard for them to use because of the small buttons etc.

### 3.5.7 Time

The concept of the project was quite difficult for some of the young people to grasp due to its abstract nature and ideally, more time would have enabled them to fully appreciate what it was they trying to achieve through the medium of photography. Having the flexibility to work at the individual young person's pace would also have assisted them to engage more fully with the project. The Reebok event on 22nd April, 2010 gave the participants the opportunity to present their views about transition to a wider audience. It must be said, however, that for many of the young people involved, the experience of speaking or presenting to a large group of people in a formal setting was, understandably, daunting and more time to prepare for the event would have assisted greatly.

## 3.6 Themes Identified

Some of the themes identified by young people, facilitators and support staff during the project were:

- Considering the future
- Changes
- Moving on
- Role models
- Time passing
- Relationships
- Growing up
- Freedom
- Confidence
- Constancy
- Fears
- The role of the support worker
- Friends
- Teachers
- Family
- Pets
- Being listened to
- Confusion
- Frustrations

Feedback from the participating young people, supporting staff, LA representatives and delegates at the conference helped us learn more about the process and how it could be adapted for future projects. PhotoVoice's support in sharing their evaluation of the project proved invaluable.

## 4. Individual Projects

In the next section, each of the eight local authorities taking part in the initiative gives information about their transition practice and their individual project involving young people. At the end of each LA's section is a poster showing a selection of the photographs taken by the participants.



**Why did your local authority choose to be involved in the NW Regional Transition Project which uses Photovoice workshops as the vehicle?**

After listening to the presentation at the NW Hub meeting in November 09 by a representative of the Charity, it was felt that there would be great benefits to the individual LAs and the region as whole in securing some valuable feedback from students which could then be used to help develop provision.

**Why did you nominate the particular school/group/young people to be involved in the initiative?**

This is our only special school within the LA and is judged outstanding by Ofsted. The school is currently engaged in many activities around 14-19 development, not least with BEST in relation to transition into employment

**What do you all hope to gain from the experience?**

A greater insight as to the hopes and aspirations of these challenging groups of students and how best to support them in transition to adult services for them and their families.

**How will you build on what you have learned through this project within your LA?**

By linking in with our 14 -19 strategic group which is looking to develop Foundation Learning opportunities for students with SEN/LDD and the development of PCP (Person Centred Planning) at points of transition between Adult and Children's services with the potential development of individualised budgets.

**LA REPRESENTATIVE - BURY**



ELMS BANK is a Specialist Arts College for pupils with learning difficulties (11 - 19 years)

It provides education for students with a wide range of special educational needs, including autism and profound and multiple learning difficulties. One of the aims of Elms Bank School is: "To help pupils develop into good citizens, with minds ready to explore, question and challenge policies underpinning society."

The school gained specialist status for the visual and performing arts in September 2004 and an Applied Learning Specialism in 2009.

The school is currently engaged in many activities around 14-19 development and work related learning. The school has a partnership with Bury Employment Support and Training (BEST) to help secure work related opportunities for students.

Both Ofsted reports following inspections in July 2007 and February 2010 described the school as 'outstanding'.



### **The Bury PhotoVoice Project**

The young people who worked on the PhotoVoice workshop were a group of KS5 students from Elms Bank. This group was chosen because many of the students are due to leave school in the near future and it was felt that as well as gaining photographic skills, the project would also give the students a method of recording transition through the pictures that they took.

As well as taking photographs, the group discussed their feelings about change and transition using visual symbols and colours to describe whether a photograph that they had taken showed happiness, sadness, anger, fun etc. One pupil also drew cartoons to add to her views.

The Project ran from March 2010 to April 2010 and culminated in a presentation at The Reebok in Bolton on 22nd April 2010.

# Making the Change

Young people share their views of transition



**Pepper Plant**  
By Gadget Boy

Pepper plant grown from seed - it's started to grow peppers now.



**This is what I'm looking at**  
By Usma Afsan



**Flat**  
By Michaela Mahon

I was getting a bit nervous, as I do. I went to see my flat and it's really beautiful.



**Me and Thee**  
By Andy Kay

I catch the bus from Bury interchange to school everyday.



**Blue Sky Day**  
By Alex Austin

Through the clouds with the sun when the clouds are gone.



**Advert**  
By Nathan Holmes

I hate beans, they're hanging!



**Untitled**  
By Daniel Bamford



**Emma's Green Day**  
By Emma McCarthy



**Self portrait**  
By Sarah Jones

## Elms Bank School, Bury

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## The Bury Group

Dominic Pickering,  
Michaela Mahon,  
Nathan Holmes,  
Daniel Bamford,  
Alex Austin, Andy Kay,  
Saddif Azam, Sarah Jones

**PhotoVoice**  
www.photovoice.org



North West Local Authority Hub

**Why did your local authority choose to be involved in the NW Regional Transition Project which uses PhotoVoice workshops as the vehicle?**

We are always looking for new and varied ways of working with young people and for teenagers the use of photography seemed ideal. It is part of their digital world view and is a wonderful and appropriate means of communication for this age group.

**Why did you nominate the particular school/group/young people to be involved in the initiative?**

We have chosen a group of young men from our school for pupils with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties as this is a group which is often missed out when looking at 'disabilities'. We wanted to make sure that these young men had their voices heard and that planning for their future means that they are not socially excluded and that their hopes, dreams and aspirations are heard loud and clear. In Cheshire East we intend to include our SEBD pupils in our Transition Support Programme improvements and developments.

**What do you all hope to gain from the experience?**

- To gain an understanding of the hopes, dreams and aspirations of the SEBD population.
- To gain an understanding of their frustrations and problems when planning for their futures.
- To gain an understanding of how they want to work with the adults who are there to support them.
- To learn new methods of communication and adapt them into our core work.
- To make sure that the young people know that we will listen and we will act.

**Have you any other examples of effective practice in your LA which was developed to help improve transition support? Are there any processes that your LA currently uses to ensure the 'voice' of the young person is heard at transition?**

Adelaide School, which is the school used in the project, has a very effective Transition process in place. Young people are encouraged to stay in touch with the school on leaving and help is always available whether to fill in college forms or apply for employment.

**How will you build on what you have learned through this project within your LA?**

We will look to develop, alongside young people, methods of communication which are relevant to them. We will do this across the spectrum of disability. We will remember that young people live in a digital world and that our communication with them needs to reflect this. We will look to promote the use of photography as part of the young person's contribution to their Transition Plan. Not all input needs to be in the form of words. We will look to build trust with the young people by listening to them and working alongside them. We will develop Person Centred Thinking, Planning and Reviewing across the Authority. We will use the outcomes and products of this project to promote this way of working with other young people, parents and services. We will buy a lot of disposable cameras and encourage schools, young people and parents to document their own views on transition and develop a Cheshire East Transition feedback day. We will create a moveable display of photographs and comments which will be taken to all services who work with young people in transition so

## ADELAIDE SCHOOL Crewe

### School motto, 'helping young people to help themselves'

One of the aims of the school is: ***"To engender the capacity to live as independent self-motivated adults and develop their ability to function as contributing members of society."***

The Ofsted inspection (2007) agreed with the school's view that "this is an outstanding, vibrant and happy school. This is the result of the school's success in creating a welcoming, calm and purposeful atmosphere in which pupils are valued as individuals and treated with dignity and respect." The inspectors also found that the "outstanding curriculum is enhanced by exceptionally strong links with local schools, colleges and businesses, which helps the school respond well to pupils' individual learning needs and contributes to their excellent personal development. Parents express great confidence in the staff. "

The vocational curriculum at Adelaide School includes bricklaying, joinery and painting and decorating. These qualifications give learners the opportunity to acquire knowledge and understanding of a range of skills giving the learner a vocational experience of the world of work. They are designed as an introduction to the workplace and will enable progression to other qualifications, which can confirm work-based competence. In addition they provide a platform for the delivery and assessment of key and basic skills. Learners also have the opportunity to practice and develop the life skills needed to participate fully as members of their communities and as citizens in the wider community.

The school was recently awarded Investor in Careers Award Stage 2. This award is a quality standard for the management of careers education and guidance (CEG) in schools. It identifies good quality impartial CEG as a high priority for young people to make successful transitions through learning and into employment. It supports **Every Child Matters** by contributing significantly to at least three of the outcomes - Enjoy and achieve; Make a positive contribution; Achieve economic well being.



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### **The Cheshire East PhotoVoice Project**

The young people who worked on the PhotoVoice workshop were a group of five students from Adelaide School –one KS3 pupil and 4 KS4 pupils. Joining the group was one post 16 student who had previously attended Adelaide School. This group was chosen because it was felt that they would be able to share their views on transition, their fears and frustrations and their hopes and dreams for the future -through photography. The project would also give the students new skills and a method to record their abilities and life stories. Throughout the PhotoVoice workshops at Adelaide School, this group of young people have participated fully and have really appeared to understand what the project is about. The school staff said that the group have been ‘completely engaged in what they have been doing.’ One of the pupils said, “I thought a camera just turned on and took a picture. I didn’t know it did so many things. Until the project, I didn’t know photographers put so much thought and detail into their pictures.” Another student said that the project gave the group “Our say-our way.” He was also keen that information on transition and opportunities after school should be passed on using social networking sites - as this is the way many young people communicate and find things out these days.

The Project ran from March 2010 to April 2010 and culminated in a presentation at The Reebok in Bolton on 22nd April 2010.

# Making the Change

Young people share their views of transition



**One step at a time**  
By John Murray



**Grey Areas**  
By Jack Wainwright  
There are many grey areas involving transition



**Locked out**  
By John Murray  
What are the barriers?



**On the Verge**  
By Jack Wainwright



**Everything in Order**  
By Shawn Calderley

*Shawn wants to do an IT course but must first do a FEAT Foundation course.*



**Bound by time**  
By Dylan Sharrock

*Dylan has to wait till he can leave school to do what he wants.*

**Off the Rails**  
By Dylan Sharrock



**ASE F.M school radio**  
By Christopher Gentile  
*Chris developed skills on the school Adelaide and Springfield Radio station.*



**Look for the silver lining**  
By Shawn Calderley



**Washing water down the drain**  
By Jack Wainwright  
*Jack wants to clean up society. He wants to join the police.*

## Adelaide School, Cheshire East

*School motto 'Helping young people to help themselves'*

The vocational curriculum at Adelaide School includes bricklaying, joinery and painting and decorating. These qualifications give learners the opportunity to gain vocational experience of the world of work, and to practice and develop the life skills needed to participate fully as members of their communities and beyond.

The young people who worked on the PhotoVoice workshop were a group of five students from Adelaide School – one KS3 and four KS4 pupils. Joining the group was one post 16 student who had previously attended Adelaide School. One of the pupils said "I thought a camera just turned on and took a picture, I didn't know it did so many things. Until the project, I didn't know photographers put so much thought and detail into their pictures."

## The Cheshire East Group

Christopher Gentile,  
Dylan Sharrock,  
Jack Wainwright,  
Jon Murray,  
Shawn Calderley

**PhotoVoice**   
www.photovoice.org



North West Local Authority Hub

**Why did your local authority choose to be involved in the NW Regional Transition Project which uses PhotoVoice workshops as the vehicle?**

An opportunity to be able to hear the fears/concerns/issues around transition direct from young people in a creative manner.  
A chance for young people with disabilities to meet other young people from out of the county who have similar if not the same issues.

**Why did you nominate the particular school/group/young people to be involved in the initiative?**

It is difficult in a large rural county to work with larger sustainable groups of young people with disabilities especially as so many of these young people are educated in mainstream schools due to the education policy here in Cumbria. It was therefore obvious to choose one of the special schools and James Rennie expressed an interest.

**What do you all hope to gain from the experience?**

New skills being both practical (photography) and secondary (team work, problem solving, planning) for the young people and staff involved in the project. An opportunity to voice any fears or concerns on transition (this group are in year 9 upwards). Experience of a professional exhibition and meeting other young people from out of county.

**Have you any other examples of effective practice in your LA which was developed to help improve transition support?  
Are there any processes that your LA currently uses to ensure the 'voice' of the young person is heard at transition?**

Effective practice is still being developed on an ongoing basis however the joint funding of Transition Workers' posts through Children's Services and Adult Social Care has enabled a smoother transition for some.  
The voice of the young person is very important and a mapping process is currently underway to see what real participation is happening across Cumbria. In addition another Cumbrian special school has recently launched a DVD giving a voice to young people on short breaks.  
(see <http://www.prismarts.org.uk/projects/d-art/index.php>)

**How will you build on what you have learned through this project within your LA?**

At the time of writing the project is still underway. An assessment with the young people involved and staff will be undertaken after the launch event at Bolton. Lessons learnt will be incorporated into the Transition Protocol currently under review

**LA REPRESENTATIVE - CUMBRIA**

## JAMES RENNIE SCHOOL Carlisle

**James Rennie School** in Carlisle is an all age (3-19) school for pupils with severe, profound or multiple learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It is a designated full service extended school. The school is a specialist Communication and Interaction College and this provides a focus for all its work.

A smooth transition for their senior students is extremely important to the staff at James Rennie School. Following an inspection in March 2008, Ofsted gave the following report on the James Rennie School's sixth form:

“The exceptional provision enables students to make outstanding progress. It greatly helps them to take the enormous leap towards life after school and the implications of greater independence. A clear agenda to prepare students for leaving school has been prepared and they are helped towards securing successful futures by following courses leading to nationally recognised qualifications, which can help them secure meaningful work and contribute to the community.

Teaching is exceptionally sensitive to students' needs and strongly promotes the need for them to take responsibility for themselves in the big wide world they are about to enter. The work based curriculum is excellent, allowing all students to gain experience of adult life. Promotion of independence includes sensitive and wise guidance about the perils and pitfalls of adult life and helps students to make prudent choices about how they choose to live it.”



## The Cumbria PhotoVoice Project

The young people who worked on the PhotoVoice workshop were a group of pupils with a range of learning and physical needs at the end of Key Stage 3 (approximately 14 years old). This group was chosen because this is where the transition process to life 'post-James Rennie' begins. The idea of transition is gently introduced to the young people at James Rennie as a word meaning the movement from one thing to another. In their school-life this could mean travelling from home to school –or moving from one lesson to another in different parts of the school or moving from one playground to another. Gradually they look at how transition can describe the change from one phase of their life to another. The school felt that this group would both be highly motivated by and at the same time would grow through the project. The Project ran from March 2010 to April 2010 and culminated in a presentation at The Reebok in Bolton on 22nd April 2010.

# Making the Change

Young people share their views of transition



By Ben Wellbourn

Craig and Scott with their van  
Successful transition from James Rennie School.  
By Jake Coates



Thinking about working in a garage  
By Jake Coates



By Jake Kenny

These are the old chairs which were changed in class 6. they now have new chairs.

## Playground Transition Series, By Jake Coates

Infants Playground, Junior Playground, Senior Playground, Post-Sixteen Common Room



Exploring being a hairdresser  
By Lucinda Breck-McKye



By Ben Wellbourn



By Jake Kenny

The digger is working on the development of a new sensory garden at the school.



Cooking Class  
By Lucinda Breck-McKye  
Lucinda wants to learn to cook next year.



Going Riding  
By Ryan Graham

Objects of reference help Ryan understand where he is going.

Ben's Bush  
By Ben Wellbourn  
This is where Ben feels safe in the playground.



## James Rennie School, Cumbria

James Rennie School in Carlisle is an all age (3-19) school for pupils with severe, profound or multiple learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It is a designated full service extended school. The school is a specialist Communication and Interaction College and this provides a focus for all its work.

The young people who took part in the PhotoVoice workshops were in a group of pupils with a range of learning and physical needs at the age of KS3 (approximately 14 years old). This group was chosen because this is where the transition process to life post-James Rennie begins. The idea of transition is gently introduced to the young people at James Rennie as a word meaning the movement from one thing to another. In their school-life this could mean travelling from home to school – or moving from one lesson to another in different parts of the school or moving from one playground to another. Gradually they look at how transition can describe the change from one phase of their life to another.

## The Cumbria Group

Jake Kenny,  
Jake Coates,  
Ben Wellbourn,  
Ryan Graham,  
Lucinda Breck-McKye

PhotoVoice   
www.photovoice.org



North West Local Authority Hub

**Why did your local authority choose to be involved in the NW Regional Transition Project which uses PhotoVoice workshops as the vehicle?**

It is identified as a key strategic area, directly affecting the work of our Directorate.

We attended the SEN hub meeting and it was raised within that forum. Halton are very committed to hearing the voice of the learner and working with learners to enjoy and achieve.

**Why did you nominate the particular school/group/young people to be involved in the initiative?**

We nominated the particular group as we felt this was a group that was not routinely/regularly touched by some of the person centred work we have going on in Halton.

**What do you all hope to gain from the experience?**

The opportunity to see young people charting their views and opinions in a unique way.

We hope to get an insight into the needs of this group and their hopes and dreams for their future

**Have you any other examples of effective practice in your LA which was developed to help improve transition support?**

The Transitions Co-ordinator has established robust systems around person-centred planning for key groups.

**Are there any processes that your LA currently uses to ensure the 'voice' of the young person is heard at transition?**

We have utilised LSC monies to develop a transition brokerage pilot and offer bespoke packages to young people who wish to remain in Halton to access further education.

We also carry out all our CIN meetings, for those children open to the Children with Disabilities team, in a person centred way and each young person is offered a Person Centred Plan. All people with a learning disability in Halton are able to request a PCP.

**How will you build on what you have learned through this project within your LA?**

There will be an internal evaluation and it is possible that we would want to continue the activity as one choice from a suite of options to build pupil advocacy and voice long-term.

We hope it will inform future working practices.

**LA REPRESENTATIVE - HALTON**

## The Halton PhotoVoice Project



The Halton Project included young people at different stages of transition. In this PhotoVoice Project, each young person has worked as an individual. During the project workshops, however, they enjoyed finding out about each other and how transition and change impacted on their lives.

The youngest participant in the NW project is facing the transition from primary to secondary. Another participant has experienced moving from special school into a mainstream college. A third is on a quest to become a professional table-tennis player.

All these 'transitions' are important milestones in their lives and can often be very difficult to understand and cope with. They are also 'stepping stones' or sometimes 'huge leaps' to their hopes and dreams for the future.

The young people had all learned many photographic skills during the project and used their new vocabulary comfortably as they talked about macro setting, freezing the movement, shutter speeds, self-timer, clamps and tripods. They also had stories of how challenging it can be to take some of their photographs:

*"I tell my gerbil to 'stay' and he just does-but my hamster doesn't, he just does his own thing!"*

*"It's hard to choose which photographs are the best for my album-I like them all!"*

As well as the practical skills, the group really understood how to portray feelings and situations through photographs.

*"I took a picture of my three medals, bronze, silver and gold which I won over three years. I took the photograph to represent change as each year I was getting better at my sport."*

Halton nominated this 'group' as they felt these particular young people were not routinely/regularly touched by some of the person centred work that is going on in Halton. They hope to get an insight into the needs of this group and their hopes and dreams for their future.

# Making the Change

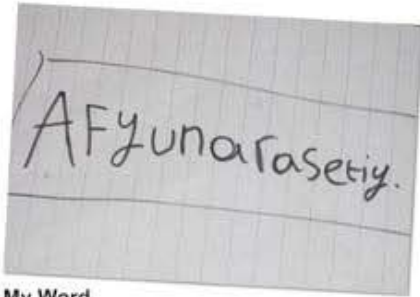
Young people share their views of transition



**Hanging in the Balance**

**By Jack Hunter-Spivey**

This represents the point in the match when the result hangs in the balance.



**My Word**

**By Simone McDermott**

When I go to secondary school there might be some big words and they could be hard to spell.



**By Daniel O'Brian**

This is one of the engines at the workshop at college. I want to work as a mechanic when I leave college.



**Getting too Big for Your Boots.**

**By Jack Hunter-Spivey**

This shows how we progress through life, growing bigger and changing.

**My Pet Jerry**

**By Simone McDermott**

My pet Jerry likes to sleep a lot.



**My College**

**By Daniel O'Brian**

This is my college. It is very big compared to my old school; you can get lost it's so big. There are so many people at my college.



**By Daniel O'Brian**

I get hot after taking my medication so the teacher lets me sit by the window to cool off. When I was at my old school they wouldn't let me do this. It made me mad.



**Full Collection**

**By Jack Hunter-Spivey**

This is my full collection of UK School Games medals. This shows change: Bronze 2007, Silver 2008, GOLD 2009.



**By Daniel O'Brian**

This is me with my headphones on. I can't hear people talking to me. People don't always listen for different reasons.



**The Spokesman**

**By Jack Hunter-Spivey**

There's more to me than just a wheelchair.

## Halton

The Halton Project included young people at different stages of transition. In this PhotoVoice Project each young person had worked as an individual. During the project workshops, however, they enjoyed finding out about each other and how transition and change impacted on their lives.

The youngest participant is facing the transition from primary to secondary. Another participant has experienced moving from a special school into a mainstream college. A third is on a quest to become a professional table-tennis player. All these 'transitions' are milestones in their lives and can often be very difficult to understand and cope with. They are also stepping stones, or sometimes huge leaps, towards their hopes and dreams for the future.

## The Halton Group

Daniel O'Brien,  
Jack Hunter-Spivey,  
Simone McDermott

**PhotoVoice**   
www.photovoice.org



North West Local Authority Hub



*Knowsley Council*

**Why did your local authority choose to be involved in the NW Regional Transition Project which uses PhotoVoice workshops as the vehicle?**

Knowsley thought this was too good an opportunity for our young people to miss out on and it would give a different perspective in addition to other methods of consultation.

**Why did you nominate the particular school/group/young people to be involved in the initiative?**

We felt that the group of visually impaired and hearing impaired (VI/HI) young people would rise to the challenge and they are a 'group' who could be invited to join in the initiative and be supported by our Sensory Impairment Service staff.

**What do you all hope to gain from the experience?**

A greater understanding of this particular group of young peoples' requirements/feelings about Transition. We hope the young people enjoy the new experiences.

**Have you any other examples of effective practice in your LA which was developed to help improve transition support?**

We have piloted Person Centred Reviews and are moving to implementation from year 6 onwards. We work closely with Adult Services. We are setting up a specific young people's Transition Steering group which will inform newly formed strategic and practice groups of staff across agencies.

**Are there any processes that your LA currently uses to ensure the 'voice' of the young person is heard at transition?**

**How will you build on what you have learned through this project within your LA?**

The project work will be exhibited in the Borough – if possible at a Transition information event late April 2010– it will give the voice of young people at that event. The information is to impact on Transition Strategic/Operational/Parents groups and Extended Leadership Teams – Adults and Children's – ultimately impacting on staff/parents/other children/Adult Services.

**LA REPRESENTATIVE - KNOWSLEY**

## The Knowsley PhotoVoice Project



The Knowsley group of young people were brought together for the PhotoVoice Project. Two of the young people were at school but attended a day release at college, another was at college and one was at university. Knowsley hoped that this group of young people with visual impairment/hearing impairment (VI/HI) would 'rise to the challenge' and they did. Supported by Knowsley's Sensory Impairment Service staff they learned many photographic skills and produced some interesting photographs. They were also involved in a photo shoot during one of their workshops. They hope to get their messages across using pictures from this session and also by using the photographs they have taken throughout their project. They are keen to voice their views and opinions and hope that it will help other young people who are going through transition.

# Making the Change

Young people share their views of transition



**Own home**  
By Stuart Whitehead



**Sister**  
By Kelly Blackburn



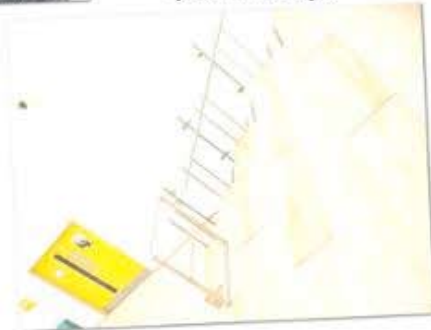
**The Future**  
By Stuart Whitehead

Frustrated because I couldn't go to college  
By Thomas



**Training to be a chef**  
By Thomas Williams  
I am happy to be going to college – at last!

**Art**  
By Dominic Boyle



**Confusion**  
By Dominic Boyle



**I like hair and beauty...  
...but I wasn't allowed.**  
By Kelly Blackburn



**Listen to me!**  
By Stuart Whitehead



**Waiting**  
By Dominic Boyle

## Knowsley

The Knowsley group of young people were brought together especially for the PhotoVoice Project. Two of the young people were at school but attended a day release college, another was at college and one was at university. Knowsley hoped that this group of young people with Visual/Hearing Impairment would rise to the challenge, and they did. Supported by Knowsley's Sensory Impairment Service staff, they learned many photographic skills and produced some interesting photographs. They were also involved in a photoshoot during one of their workshops. They hope to get their messages across using pictures from this session and also by using the photographs they have taken throughout their project. They are keen to voice their views and opinions and hope that it will help other young people who are going through transition.

## The Knowsley Group

Claire, Dominic Boyle,  
Kelly Blackburn,  
Stuart Whitehead,  
Thomas Williams



**Why did your local authority choose to be involved in the NW Regional Transition Project which uses PhotoVoice workshops as the vehicle?**

One of the priorities for Liverpool that emerged from the TSP Self – Assessment Questionnaire was the engagement of disabled young people and their families in contributing to strategic planning and review in relation to transition. Liverpool and PhotoVoice worked together on the My City, My World Project (2009) which evidenced that the methodology used in workshops puts the young person’s voice at the heart of the project. We welcomed the opportunity to become involved in the NW Regional Transition Project to support our priorities.

**Why did you nominate the particular school/group/young people to be involved in the initiative?**

Liverpool’s Transformation Team support young people with LDD into post 19 provision using Person Centred Plans to ensure that each young person has the opportunity to realise their full potential. We nominated a group of young people at different stages of the planning process to try and ‘get a glimpse’ of their feelings about the process and their individual journey towards a valued adult life style.

**What do you all hope to gain from the experience?**

We hope that the young people participating in the workshops enjoy the experience of using photography to capture their world. We hope that the messages from young people will help us to improve services and remind us that there are many different ways of putting young people in ‘the driving seat’ and empowering them to share their thoughts and feelings.

**Have you any other examples of effective practice in your LA which was developed to help improve transition support?  
Are there any processes that your LA currently uses to ensure the ‘voice’ of the young person is heard at transition?**

Liverpool is currently working with mainstream secondary schools and special schools to ensure that all young people on SEN registers benefit from a person centred annual review in years 9/10. Our vision is to have at least one person in each school trained as a person centred reviewer. We currently have five trainers (one in each neighbourhood area) and a coach supporting this piece of work. Liverpool has a new team of Key Workers to co-ordinate and implement bespoke plans with young disabled people to ensure that they have access to community based facilities and services.

**How will you build on what you have learned through this project within your LA?**

We will continue to look at new ways of working with young people to ensure that they have opportunities to contribute to strategic plans that improve their experience of the transition process.

**LA REPRESENTATIVE - LIVERPOOL**

## The Liverpool PhotoVoice Project



The four young people in the Liverpool Project were supported by person centred planners and other support staff throughout the project. Careful person centred planning clearly assisted the young people in making big decisions for their future and the use of pictures, symbols and photographs played a vital part in this process. The young men were attending - or had attended - two special schools in Liverpool. Three were in their last year of school and one had left school and was attending college. One of the group moved into a house (supported living) during the project and was able to record this big event in his life using his camera and sharing the event with the project group. Different methods were used by the PhotoVoice facilitators to help the students to select photographs, describe their feelings and give their views.

One student from the Liverpool group said that he could now pick up any camera and know how to use it. After the project he said that he would like to try filming and directing. Another had enjoyed making new friends at the Project. A third student said that he had enjoyed himself on the course. His mum said that he hadn't stopped talking about it. She asked if the project could continue.

# Making the Change

Young people share their views of transition



## The Eye of the Future By Gavin Lee Constable

I am looking forward to the future and not scared about what is to come. The picture is in Southport. I went there on my own the day after I moved into my new house. I met some old friends along the way...



## Mum's Cooking By Ishaq Mohammed Great Cook!



**Old House**  
By Gavin Lee Constable  
This is my old house. This is a picture of the past. I feel emotional about moving out and now I feel happy that I have moved to my new house.



**Moving Out**  
By Gavin Lee Constable  
Second to last trip with my stuff to the new house. I was saying goodbye to my old house for the last time. The future looked good and I'd finally got my keys. Next to come was the mobile phone...



**By Gavin Lee Constable**  
My new house represents freedom: it is joyful, happy, excitement, new experiences and the food is nice.



**By Joel Solomon**



## Les's Favourite Drink By Leslie Boyd



## The Family Dog By Leslie Boyd



**Leslie's Nan and Grandad**  
By Leslie Boyd  
Leslie's grandparents look after him and do everything for him. He likes this very much.

**What I would like my personal assistant to have**  
By Ishaq Mohammed  
Happy, wears make up, brave, must be blonde, listen to me, be a good laugh, care about me, older than me, be a good time keeper, can drive.



**Leslie**  
By Ishaq Mohammed  
Leslie from Palmerston who was on the photo course with me and I know him from my old school.



**Unpacking**  
By Gavin Lee Constable  
This is me sorting my things out. First I put them into piles, then into my cupboard. Next I listened to some music and danced around my room. It was nice to be able to do this without getting moaned at.



**By Joel Solomon**  
Hydro looks nice but I don't like going in.

## Liverpool

The four young people in the Liverpool Project were supported by person centred planners and other support staff throughout the project. Careful person centred planning clearly assisted the young people in making big decisions from their future and the use of pictures, symbols and photographs played a vital part in this process.

The young men were attending – or had attended – two special schools in Liverpool. Three were in their last year of school and one had left school and was attending college. One of the group moved into a house (supported living) during the project and was able to record this big event in his life using his camera and sharing the event with the project group.

## The Liverpool Group

Gavin Lee Constable,  
Ishaq Mohammed,  
Joel Solomon,  
Leslie Boyd

**PhotoVoice**   
www.photovoice.org



North West Local Authority Hub



Mill Green is a school for learners aged 8-19 with severe, complex, profound and multiple learning difficulties including Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD). It is an all-age special school providing Primary, Secondary and College provision.

**One of Mill Green's vision and aims is:**

*"To enhance the learners' skills for life by developing their individuality, confidence and ability to make choices in preparation for their future."*

*"Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance are an essential part of every young person's curriculum. It plays an integral role in the preparation for, and motivation of, young people for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life. At Mill Green School/College it is our central concern to prepare all students for their choices, changes and transitions affecting their future education, training, career and life as an adult member of society and to raise achievement and expectations throughout".*

**Transition at Mill Green College:**

- In year 13 annual reviews for all learners/parents/carers take place in the spring term where planning for the future is a strong focus.
- In September all young people in year 14 and their parents/carers are invited to participate in a transition review where their plans for the future are discussed further.
- The transition review is minuted with a range of actions identified for the next two terms.
- A Connexions Personal Advisor visits College on a weekly basis to support staff, students and parents/carers.
- A follow up meeting takes place with key workers identified for each young person.
- Leading up to October half term young people and their families/carers make initial visits to the colleges of their choice. Assessments take place.
- In most cases, decisions regarding destination providers are made by the beginning of November.
- During the latter half of the autumn term and into the spring and summer terms, transition link work begins with local colleges and other local providers. For those young people attending residential colleges, a block visit (3/4 days) will often be offered.
- Colleges and other local providers offer a gradual build up of supported link work for our students. This starts as half day sessions and leads to full day supported/unsupported visits.

## Mill Green College - Newton-Le-Willows

Mill Green's uniqueness... *'is our commitment to encourage and celebrate every step as a success'.*

Each KS4 student has a personalised transition plan to gradually introduce them to and prepare them for Mill Green College and then the college works hard to prepare their students for post 19 transition.

"High quality extended transitional link programmes are developed to meet individual needs when moving between key stages and moving onto new destinations to ensure that students and all parties concerned feel knowledgeable, confident and comfortable with the forthcoming change."  
(Taken from Mill Green's Careers Education Advice and Guidance Policy)

At present students can access a number of different routes once they leave the college at 19. The process of transition to whichever provision has been identified is supported by the college staff in every way possible. This includes building up visits to the identified provision and inviting staff from the receiving organisations into college to work with the students.

Students and parents/carers are consulted at every stage regarding future aspirations and wishes within the local and national community. Where appropriate - other agencies, particularly CONNEXIONS, are involved. Transition workers from Adult Services also play a role, particularly if parents/carers are looking at residential options including supported independent living.

## The St. Helens PhotoVoice Project



The young people who worked on the PhotoVoice workshop were a group of KS5 students. This group was chosen because the students are due to leave college in the near future and it was felt that they would be able to give their views on transition and their hopes and dreams for the future through photography. The project would also give the students new skills and a method to record their abilities and life stories. The Project ran from March 2010 to April 2010 and culminated in a presentation at The Reebok in Bolton on 22nd April 2010. The workshops were based in Mill Green College, Newton-le-Willows.

*"To embed the use of technology to support, innovate and extend learning."*  
(from Mill Green School Vision & Aims)

# Making the Change

Young people share their views of transition



**Big Shoes to Fill**  
By Katie Langley



**By Chelsea Vizard**  
I can't wait to be able to go to the Pub!



**By Chelsea Vizard**  
I will miss the playground



**Let's Get Things Started**  
By Stacey Dutton

**A New Perspective**  
By Katie Langley



**I Like Hairdressing**  
By Stacey Dutton



**Friends**  
By Katie Langley



**By the Pond**  
By Katie Langley

## Mill Green School, St Helens

Mill Green School provides a quality education for learners aged 6-19 with severe, complex, profound and multiple learning difficulties including Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD).

In the College department, during October, transition meetings are held in year 14 with students, parents, staff and external agencies. There is a follow up meeting later in the year. Transition links and activities include Connexions, work related learning, vocational learning, CAEIG, life skills and visits to and from post 19 placements.

Mill Green School, Mill Lane, Newton Le Willows, Merseyside WA12 8BG

Telephone: 01744 678760 Fax: 01744 678761 Email: millgreen@sthelens.org.uk

## The St Helens Group

Stacey Dutton, Craig Griffin, Nicola Burke, Katie Langley, Mark O'Donnell, Jen Twist, Chelsea Vizard

**PhotoVoice**   
www.photovoice.org



North West Local Authority Hub

**Why did your local authority choose to be involved in the NW Regional Transition Project which uses PhotoVoice workshops as the vehicle?**

It provides a unique opportunity to work with young people in a very different and creative way.

**Why did you nominate the particular school/group/young people to be involved in the initiative?**

The group of young people have been through transition and would like to share their experience for the benefit of others who may be coming up to Transition.

**What do you all hope to gain from the experience?**

It is hoped that the project will provide a wealth of good practice material which can be shared and used to improve transition for young people. It is hoped that the young people involved will have had a very positive experience and enjoyed completing the project.

**Have you any other examples of effective practice in your LA which was developed to help improve transition support?**

Person Centred Planning was piloted.

**Are there any processes that your LA currently uses to ensure the 'voice' of the young person is heard at transition?**

**How will you build on what you have learned through this project within your LA?**

The report findings will be incorporated into work being carried out on transition through the Aiming High for Disabled Children Transition Support Programme. There are a number of small working groups being set up and the project report will be shared with them.

**LA REPRESENTATIVE - WARRINGTON**

## The Warrington PhotoVoice Project



The young people who took part in the PhotoVoice workshops were all members of a Warrington initiative called Oi Listen. Their workshops were based at The Gateway in Warrington.

Oi Listen is a self advocacy group for disabled young people aged 14 – 19 in Warrington. The group is all about disabled young people speaking up for themselves. The group is funded by Children and Young People's Services and supported by Changingtogether, an independent consultancy based in Warrington.

Oi Listen is currently working with young people from the local college Warrington Collegiate but actively encourage any interested young person to come along and take part.

The aim of the group is to support young people to:-

- Build self confidence
- Practise speaking up
- Understand and practice their rights and responsibilities
- Make friends and have fun

We believe that what young people say can make a difference!

Oi Listen has been sharing their ideas and views with Children's Services. We hope listening to the important things we have to say will help them get services right in Warrington.

# Making the Change

Young people share their views of transition



Self Portrait  
By Liam Riley



"Change is confusing"  
Michael Dully



Travelling into the Future  
By Liam Riley



Self Portrait  
By Caroline Davies



Stairs to the Future  
By Joshua Jones



I Want to Work With Animals  
By Jade Davies



My Hand  
My Head  
By Michael Dully



By Caroline Davies



Self Portrait  
By Keith Spencer



Self Portrait  
By Jade Davies



By Keith Spencer  
I want to be in their shoes.



Self Portrait  
By Dean Morris



Travel  
Me and My Brother  
By James Parfitt



About Our Lives  
By Dean Morris



My Dad  
By Joshua Jones



Self Portrait  
By Bethan McDermott



By Bethan McDermott  
Where I work on a Monday



By Alex Knight



Self Portrait  
By Alex Knight



Self Portrait with Liam  
By Caroline Davies



## Oi Listen Warrington

Oi Listen is a fun and lively self advocacy group for disabled young people aged 14-19 in Warrington. We are all students at Warrington Collegiate and meet together every Wednesday morning at The Gateway. Our group is all about building confidence and skills, learning and about our rights and responsibilities, making friends and having fun!

We believe disabled young people have the right to be in control of their lives and have important things to say about what works for them. We want to share our ideas and views with Children's Services to help them get things right for young people in Warrington.

Oi Listen is commissioned by Children's and Young People's Services and facilitated by Changingtogether Consultancy.

## The Warrington Group

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PhotoVoice   
www.photovoice.org






North West Local Authority Hub

## 5. Outcomes and Impact

All delegates at the conference in April, 2010 were given a pledge postcard on which to record their pledges regarding transition. Below is a copy of the format used.

This project aims to give staff involved in transition a better understanding of what the experience is like for young people, and to help them apply learning from this in their approach, planning and policies.

If you have any ideas for future transition planning in your area, please complete all or part of the sections below with pledges for action. You may choose to complete the postcard with others from your local authority/service or as an individual.



Is there something that isn't working well for our young people in transition that needs to **stop**?

**Stop**

Could we **change** something to improve transition for our young people?

**Change**

What is working well in transition for our young people that needs to **continue**?

**Go**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
LA/organisation: \_\_\_\_\_ Job title: \_\_\_\_\_

### 5.1 Postcard pledges

Some worked together on their pledges although most worked as individuals. They were asked to write down what they would try to stop, change or continue as a result of what they had learned from the young people's presentations. The postcards were then collected in. The information on the pledge postcards was emailed back to the delegates in May to remind them of the pledges they had made. Delegates were asked to keep the email as they would be contacted in summer 2010 to see if any of the pledges had been acted upon. Realistically, it is acknowledged that delegates will need more time to work on their pledges. Other pledge postcards were distributed to colleagues and returned by post or email or used to initiate discussion at strategy meetings. The pledges reflected several of the issues brought up by some of the young people throughout their workshops or during the presentations at the Reebok. It would appear that the pledges could be grouped into 5 key themes.

### 5.2 Five Key Themes

- The need to listen to young people
- The need to start work with the young people at a much earlier stage
- Transition is "Everyone's business." The need to work together to support the young people in transition
- The need for the development of quality local education/provision/training/work opportunities
- The need for better information

Pledges given across the region are included below: they have not been attributed to specific local authorities. The vast majority of responses have been listed using the delegates' actual pledges.

### 5.2.1 We need to listen to the young people

#### Is there something that isn't working well for our young people in transition that needs to stop?

- Managers and carers not listening to young people and making plans for them, not necessarily with them. Young people not having a voice.
- We need to stop using language that doesn't work for young people and simplify our language.
- Not listening to young people and their families. Imposing services rather than listening to needs and aspirations.
- The young person's views are not always included in the transition process.
- Stop assuming children can't do something.
- People not listening to them.
- Stop the practice of young people and parents not getting access to an annual review.
- Just stop and listen.

### 5.2.2 Could we change something to improve transition for our young people?

- We need to engage with the young people more in decisions.
- The young person's views are not always included in the transition process.
- There are young people who are not being reached during key transition stages of their life. We need to listen more to the young person and not the voice of their parents/families.
- Ensure that we build on the PhotoVoice project to develop new, innovative ways of ensuring that the young person's voice is heard, by building into One Page Profiles, promotion tool to other young people, services, college, employers.
- Person centred plans/transition plans must be revisited at every review. Secure funding for more projects like PhotoVoice.
- Where a setting for a meeting does not work for the young people efforts to make alternative arrangements would be put in place.
- More personalised approaches – Person Centred Planning (PCP) and Person Centred Review (PCR) training being rolled out across range of agencies.
- Develop more opportunities for PCP across the whole aspect of the young person's life.
- Provide advocates who are trained in diverse communication skills.
- Focused advocacy for young people with more complex needs and adopt person centred approach.
- Even more positive, individualised approaches.
- Become more person centred.
- Roll out person centred planning.
- Listen and act on young people's views. Support and access to information re transition for disabled children from all organisations including Connexions.
- Make sure planning is holistic.
- Listen to views of young people/families
- Establish a new easy read transition protocol covering learning difficulties and disabilities, signed up to by all partners.
- Young people need chances to change their minds too.

## **5.2.2 We need to start to work with the young people at a much earlier stage**

**Is there something that isn't working well for our young people in transition that needs to stop?**

- We need to stop seeing transition as a surprise.
- Need to stop ceasing Children's Services on the 18th birthday and work in partnership to agree transition period.
- We need to stop thinking 16+ and start much earlier with young people.
- The lack of opportunity for adult social care to become involved until 16.
- Rigid age of service position.
- Developing pathways too late and too close to 18th birthday. PCP needs developing to ensure continuous and smooth transition.
- Some agencies/services believing that transition starts at 16 years old.
- We need to stop 'transition' being an excuse to refuse access to services like Short Break – residential care to 16 + year olds.

**Could we change something to improve transition for our young people?**

- Recognise that transition is something all young people face.
- Start it earlier, make it person centred for everyone.
- Flexibility and hand over to Adult Social Care when young people leave school beyond age 18 (special schools). This ensures continuity of support e.g. short breaks, shared care etc.
- Capture employment aspiration at an early stage so that employment and training pathways can be developed rather than just placing young people into whatever there is.

## **5.2.3 Transition is “everyone's business.” We need to work together to support the young people in transition**

**Is there something that isn't working well for our young people in transition that needs to stop?**

- Stop working in silos.
- Stop working in budget silos.
- All of the agencies keep reinventing the wheel. We know what needs to be done – some of us work very hard at listening to young people and families.
- Lack of effective communication and joined assessment especially between Children and Adult Services.
- Lack of understanding of roles and responsibilities between different professionals involved - if we are not clear no wonder young people are confused. (Housing, Health, Education, Social Services, Adult & Children, Connexions and colleges.)
- Stop the 'can't do' attitude and change to 'can do'.
- Perceptions of the differences between children's services and adult services that don't reflect reality.
- Inequalities in transfer from child health care to adult.
- Professionals working in isolation. More team-joint working.
- Allowing children with complex health needs to fall out of primary care services.

Continued over

## Could we **change something** to improve transition for our young people?

- Follow up of actions from Person Centred Planning is not working for all young people. Fewer resources in Adult Services.
- Involve more staff in the transition process, improve the quality.
- We will work with our adult services, now a combined service from 14-16 to enable more fit for purpose, especially physical disability, visual impairment and hearing impairment.
- Being able to support young people in transition on an on-going basis, i.e. same PA continuing to work with the young person through future transitions at 19-25.
- Work more as a team and encourage education to participate, not leaving it to social care.
- To engage health care reps fully in the transition process, especially where the young person has a continuing care need. Protocol to be raised to strengthen this.
- More frequent access to Connexions Personal Assistant (PA) and Transition Coordinators as young people move through transition.
- Clear pathways.
- Agree protocol based on universal, targeted and specialist requirements.
- Engage GPs and Adult Physicians.
- More joint working – agencies listening to young people. Develop appropriate Further Education (FE) courses for young people post school, Develop appropriate employment/ social opportunities.
- Use a person centred approach within transition process. Co-ordinator for Children's Services. Better links with adult services.
- Share 'media' approaches used at primary in secondary schools. Better identify gaps in transition process. Better identify who will take responsibility for and/or monitoring agreed actions.
- Lead professional. Clear pathways.
- Restructuring funding for Further Education/Work Based Learning. Departure from academic output led funding.
- Requires pathway with agencies signed up and involvement of identified lead practitioners within agencies to implement change.
- One key worker to follow up plans and make sure actions happen. More involvement with schools. School to take lead as they see children most.
- Identify lead professional who has capacity to undertake role. Young people's hopes/dreams/ likes/dislikes/should form part of their curriculum.
- Provide more Transition Planners.

#### **5.2.4 The need for the development of quality local education/ provision/ training / work opportunities**

**Is there something that isn't working well for our young people in transition that needs to stop?**

- Lack of provision in college and training.
- Lack of post 16 vocational opportunities and inclusion.
- Placement breakdown after a relatively short period for some young people.
- Lack of services for young people on autistic spectrum

**Could we change something to improve transition for our young people?**

- Development of quality local education/ provision/ training 16-19 (25).
- Maintain support for a longer period to form a 'bridge' between school and the next setting.
- Emphasise use of mainstream facilities where possible – transport, education.
- Supported sheltered work placements as part of Further Education which needs to meet the needs of interested young people.

#### **5.2.5 The need for better information**

**Is there something that isn't working well for our young people in transition that needs to stop?**

- Patchy information
- Lack of choice and lack of information about housing options.

**Could we change something to improve transition for our young people?**

- Clear information given at key points in the process about choices of what action is required and by whom.
- Improve the quality of our information.
- Young people need information about 'change' earlier, in a way that works for them. It needs to be not in a paper format or adult format but in a way that they can access. They also need support from people that they already know as well as new people.
- Provide better information and support so people know what is available and are helped/ supported through the housing process.
- Strive to improve our communication with parents in the process as they generally feel all is going well until we discuss post 19 year.

**The third section of the pledge postcards gave delegates and others the opportunity to celebrate what is going well and to share their successes**

**What is working well in transition for our young people that needs to continue?**

- Some fantastic practice, some very committed staff, some great ideas from parents and young people – need to share them all.
- Transition Coordinators are working with those with complex needs.
- Continued multi-agency steering group.
- Continue key worker role into adulthood.
- Exploration of activity to maintain young people alongside their peers
- The raising of the issue and developing access, making the gaps visible so we can do something about them.
- Building a more integrated service for people.
- Involvement of transition workers with young people and families to support them through the move to adulthood.

- The transition Coordinators and Connexions staff are very effective in supporting young people – but they are very thinly spread!!
- Having transition workers (but only 3 for whole county) helps guide and inform through various processes etc.
- Multi-agency steering group with parent involvement.
- Pockets of good practice where individuals get good experience - look at what works and build on this for all.
- Improved integrated working across agencies – information sharing, joined up working etc
- Links to local colleges, taster days / links courses and summer schools which help prepare young people for transition to local FE.
- Some young people have good plans which work.
- Planning with people and moving away from what has happened after school, i.e. going to day services, to more positive things.
- Some people (those who shout loudest) get a reasonable transition service. We need to continue to empower young people/families.
- Experience of young people and their families has generally been positive.
- Joined up working between services – seamless transition.
- Good links between Connexions, transitions social workers, carers and schools in making Transition plans for Looked After young people with complex/disability needs.
- Joint multi-agency approach in managing the transition process.
- Communication between our services at an operational level.
- Good working relationships at operational level across different agencies.
- Support to some families by transitions’ workers. Transition work at special schools is very good.
- We begin at year 9 with our transition process so will be continuing with this.
- Continued work with transition projects and develop them, e.g. projects with BEST etc.
- Person centred reviews. Health action planning.
- Links with other agencies/stakeholders – social services/health/local colleges etc.
- Start assuming young people will achieve great things.
- For those who obtain person centred planning, that really makes a positive difference.
- Participation.
- Team around the young person and person centred planning.
- Help to share the achievements of ‘TSP Making the Change’ with a wider audience.
- Special schools working in a very individual way.
- Creative approaches like PhotoVoice. Person centred reviews.
- Services up to 19 are generally successful – keep this going and build more to 25+.
- The principles of Person Centred Planning are an integral part of our ongoing work around transition.
- PCP (Person Centred Planning) introduction.
- A commitment to improving transition across Adults, Children’s Services and Primary Care Trust (PCT).

## 6. Next Steps

Each of the 8 local authorities involved in the Transition Project has been asked to host an event within their local area for the young people who took part, their families, friends and siblings. This will give an opportunity for the young people to exhibit their photographs to those who are close to them. In addition, each LA has been asked to hold an event for a multi-agency group of professionals in their local area who work with disabled children and are involved with transition. This will enable all the messages from the young people to be conveyed to those people in positions of influence. Each participating LA has been given copies of posters depicting a sample of the photographs taken by the young people and booklets designed for young people containing photographs and captions. All of the photographs in the booklets were taken by the young people who took part in the photography workshops run by the charity PhotoVoice. They used their cameras to explore what Transition meant to them and how they felt about the future.

### Bury

Elms Bank School held a presentation event in July which formed part of the school summer concert. There was a short presentation by a couple of the members of the group during the concert. The photos from each student were displayed in the school gallery for parents and other guests to look at during the interval.

### Cheshire East

Adelaide School held a celebration event at the school for the young people, their families, school staff and LA representatives. The photographs were displayed on exhibition boards in two rooms of the school and the presentation used at the conference in April was shown, including music. The young people were thanked for all their hard work throughout the project.

As part of their project, some of the young people took photographs of litter in the area near their school and, as a result, the Council undertook a clean-up operation of the area. According to PhotoVoice, this shows the power of photography to communicate a message and stimulate change

### Cumbria

Following the Regional Transition Conference in April, the Transition Lead Officer for Cumbria fed back to the Transition Steering Group the aspirations of children from James Rennie School and how their thoughts differed from older children who had experienced transition. In addition, each of the members of the Steering Group was asked to complete a pledge postcard, the results of which are to be fed into the LA protocol and will inform the TSP Action Plan.

The celebration event is taking place in the third week in September at Connexions Carlisle Office, and will entail the photos being displayed in Connexions main meeting room and in the 'shop window' of the office.

Press, parents and most importantly the pupils will be in attendance for the event.

One of the pupils from James Rennie School is a wheelchair user with very limited mobility. Through the workshops, the staff learned of the severe visual limitations she had when the position of her chair was altered in the afternoons. They are now using the series of her photographs as a staff training aid.

## Halton

Halton have held their first celebration event for parents, young people and headteachers at Halton Stadium. They called the event 'PhotoVoice finale' and the Stadium made one of their executive boxes available so everyone had a wonderful view of the rugby pitch. Feedback was very positive and families were impressed with the outcomes and appreciated the way the young people were able to talk about the project themselves.

A local authority event is planned in combination with the SENCO network meeting after Christmas as there are plans to embed this approach within Transition planning on a regular basis. The event will also be publicised in the Children's Trust materials and an article will go into the Council 'IN Touch' magazine. In the meantime, they are seeking to work with their City Learning Centre to organise the IT and digital facilities to produce the work that any young people may complete. They will be rolling out the option to schools on a pilot basis from September and then, hopefully, as a regular transition feature thereafter. They will be displaying a stand at the Inclusion Conference in March 2011 which is exclusively for headteachers and SENCOs.

## Knowsley

Knowsley LA has arranged an exhibition of their group's work in Kirkby Library entitled 'Eyes Wide Open'. This is scheduled to run from 21st July to 29th July and may be taken to other libraries after that date. They held an event to which the young people and their families were invited as well as the staff who had supported them throughout the workshops, one of the PhotoVoice facilitators and LA representatives. As a result of the hard work by the young people involved in the project, the local authority has pledged that in order to support disabled young people as they make the transition into adulthood, they will:

- Assume that disabled children will achieve great things
- Develop even more positive, personalised approaches to support young people

The group of young people are keen to stay together as a group of new friends and inspired the Aiming High for Disabled Children programme to set aside a fund to which young disabled people can apply to enable social activities as friends.

## Liverpool

The Transition Lead Officer took his pledges to a Transition strategy meeting. A celebratory event is planned for September where the work will be exhibited. The purpose of the event is for the individuals to display the work they produced to show their families, friends and professionals. They plan to present the four young people with certificates and hopefully some mementoes of the occasion. They also plan to produce a feature for the Aiming High for Disabled Children newsletter.

The local authority is holding a Transition event at the end of September. As part of this, they plan to display the posters and booklets produced during the project.

## Warrington

Warrington LA are planning an event for the autumn term. The messages from the young people have been shared with the Assistant Director for Children's Services and the products/reports/posters have been shared with the Steering Group for Aiming High for Disabled Children which oversees transition as well as short breaks. Planning is currently underway for an event which will be targeted at the Strategic Leads as well as sharing and celebrating the PhotoVoice project with the participants and their families.

## North West Regional Hub TSP Events

The North West Regional Hub, in conjunction with colleagues from National Strategies and the Child and Maternal Health Partnership (CHaMP) are hosting a series of events over the next six months.

These are as follows:

### **Friday, 8th October, 2010 – 10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. at Leigh Sports Village**

Event to showcase regional practice around Transition Teams, Person Centred Planning and Health Transition. 3 reps per local authority area.

### **Monday, 29th November, 2010 – 10.00 a.m. to 12 noon at Room 4, Golborne, Warrington**

Meeting to review feedback/outcomes from October event, to inform the programme for the remainder of the year and to begin to develop a 'legacy' model. For Transition Support Programme (TSP) leads only.

### **Friday, 4th February, 2011 – 10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. at Haydock Park Racecourse**

Event to showcase the early learning from the Innovation and Outcomes projects and issues identified from the November meeting. 3 reps per local authority area.

### **Thursday, 17th March, 2011 – 10.00 a.m. to 12 noon at Room 4, Golborne, Warrington**

Meeting to review feedback/outcomes from February event and to cement arrangements for on-going transition networking and 'legacy'. For TSP leads only.



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- Their parents/carers and families
- All of the staff who supported the young people throughout their workshops and during the celebration events following the workshops and presentation
- LA representatives and partners from the participating areas
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