

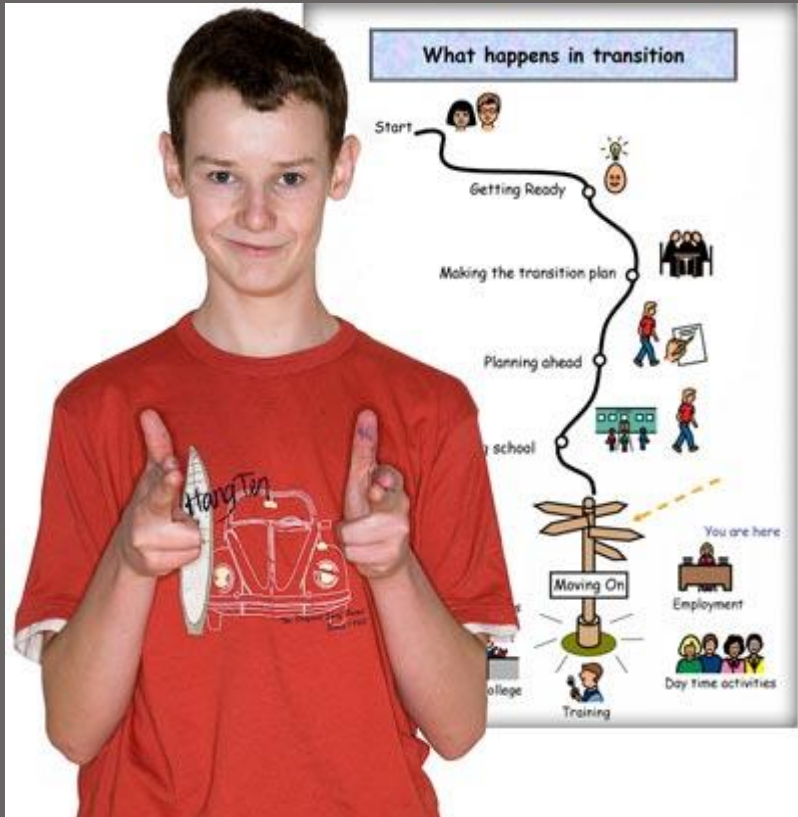
Onwards transitions from school for young people with learning disabilities

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About this study - method

- Study within a single English local authority
- Scoping interviews with stakeholders in (child and adult) education and social care
- Observed 'transition information' events
- Survey of school leavers with special educational needs
- Longitudinal case studies of 5 (initially 7) young people with learning disabilities and their families

Transition planning in Council X



- Transitions worker allocated when young person is 14
- Annual meetings
- Plans aim to ensure a smooth transition from child to adult services

Key findings

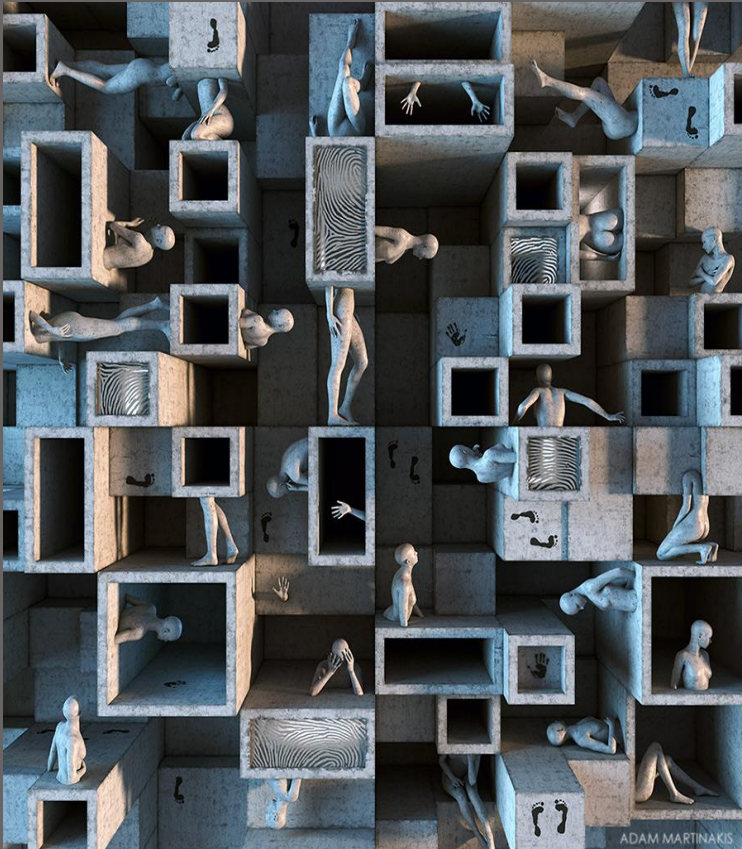
What? We found echoes other studies

1. Families fearful of 'what comes next'
2. Lack of joined-up provision
3. Professional awareness of the 'problem of transition'
4. Limited (insufficient) resources/services
5. Disruptions to family life

Why? We identified new causes of these difficulties

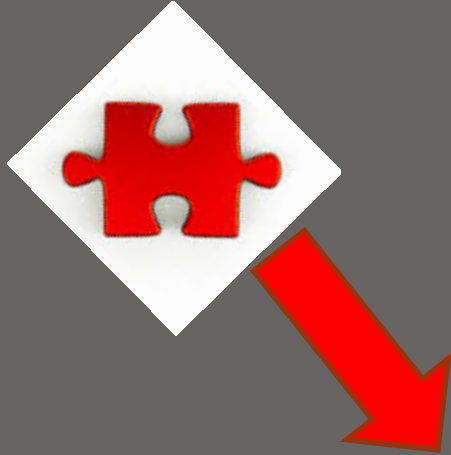
1. Fragmentation of services
2. No link between individual and strategic planning
3. Multiple and ongoing transitions
4. Some issues not considered within transition planning
5. Impact of transitions on whole family

1. Fragmented services



- No clear or automatic path after school
- Lots of 'choice', little information
- Few statutory (local authority) day services
- Voluntary sector services limited in scope
- Personal assistants hard to recruit

2. From individual to strategic planning



- No system exists by which data on individual needs can be aggregated
- This has significant consequences...

3. Multiple and ongoing transitions



- Transition planning focusses on leaving school, but this is only the start
- Transition plans focus on FE college, but this lasts only 3 years (max)
- Other transitions occur in health care, social care and benefit entitlement
- Families valued social workers (and other professionals) who they knew over the long-term

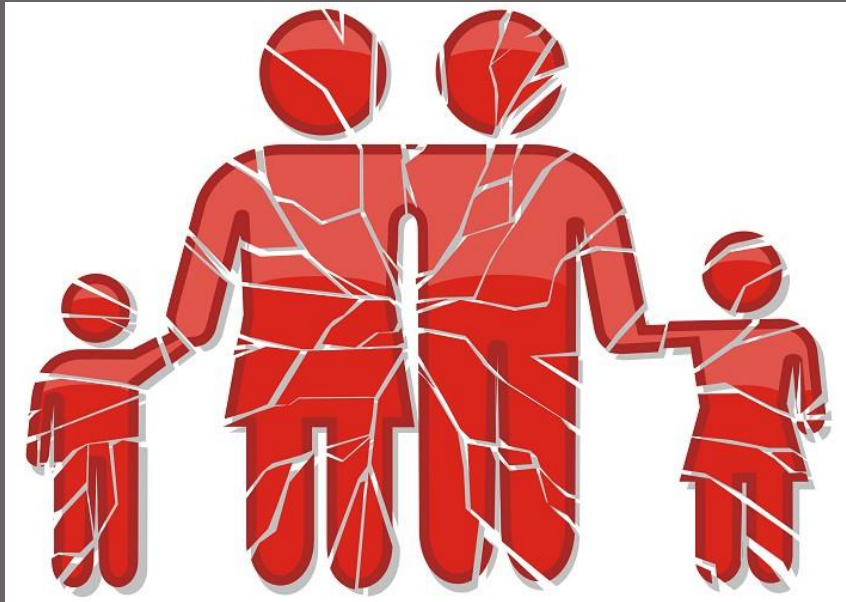
4. Overlooked issues



- Sex
- Relationships
- Loneliness
- Friendships
- Bullying
- Safeguarding
- Internet safety
- Mate crime

Personal transitions are not just about services, they are also social, biological and psychological

5. Impact on whole family



- Stresses on young person: changes in behaviour
- Stresses on parents (and siblings)
- Changes to patterns of family life and employment as 5 days per week (school) is lost

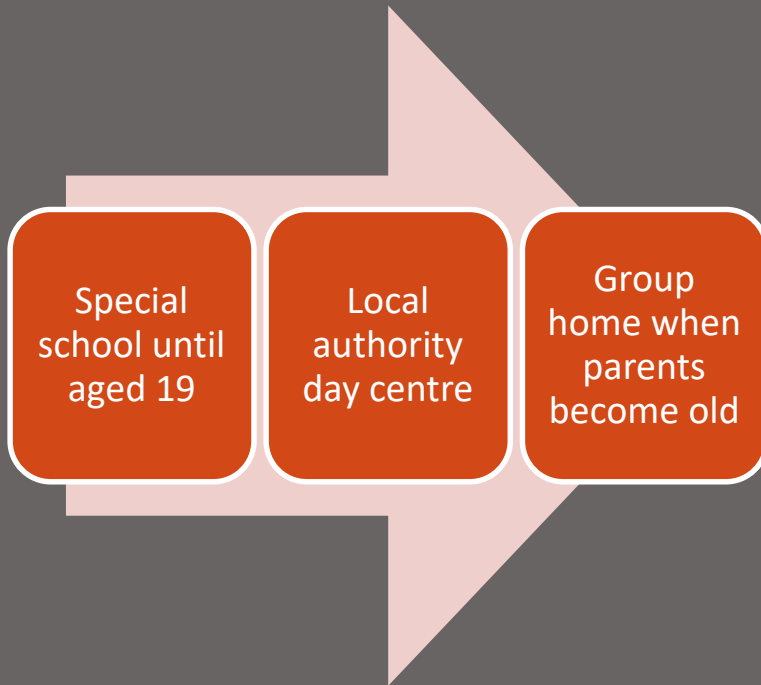
So what conclusions can be drawn?



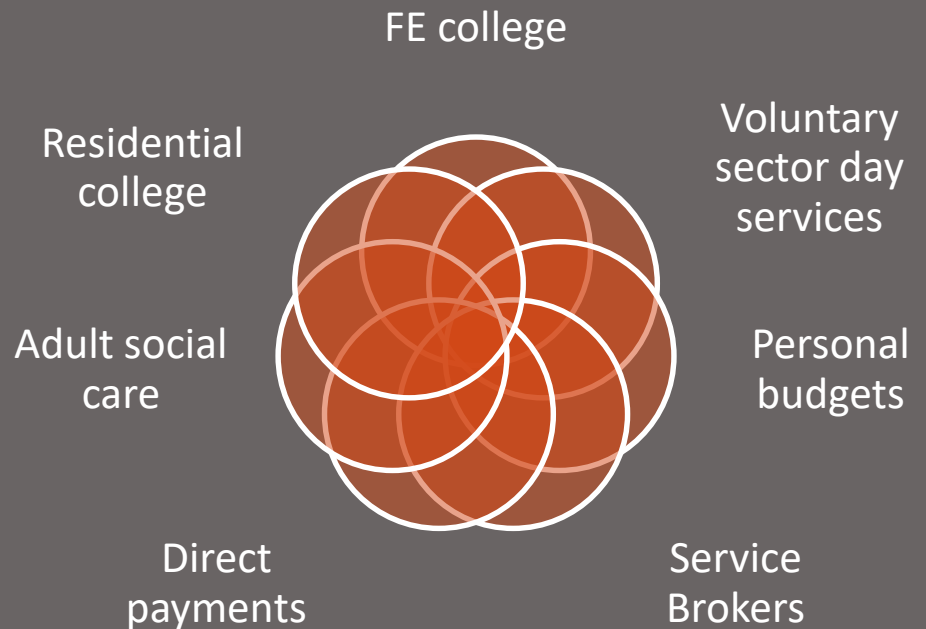
- Small scale study
- One local authority
- **BUT...** the key findings do echo those of earlier studies
- **AND...** the study is rare in being longitudinal

Transitions are changing

'Traditional' transitions



Current transitions



How services need to change



- Link individual transitions plans and local authority strategic plans
- Better information for young people with learning disabilities and their families
- Recognition of personal transitions and transformations that take place during this period

Social work needs to adapt



- Not all aspects of 'transition' are the responsibility of social workers
- But social workers need to understand how their role fits within the wider picture