

READING ROOM

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Person centred transition reviews - a parent's perspective

My son, Danny took part in a person-centred review during Year 11 just before his 16th birthday. His school had piloted two Year 9 reviews and extended this to two students in Year 11.

Danny was actively involved in the preparation starting with a meeting at school with the Connexions worker where he planned the drinks and snacks for the review and thought about who to invite. He chose his friend from the post-16 department and also a family friend. She was not able to attend but the family wrote about the things Danny does when he visits them and the holidays we go on together. I read this out at the review and it gave everyone a picture of Danny beyond school.

At home we prepared for the review by completing some of the 'Listen to me' book. We talked about the things he enjoys most and made a pictorial flow diagram of these things with a photo of Danny in the middle to take to the review. Danny chose some music to play and took the DVD of a performance he took part in with other students from school as part of a regional 'Song for Christmas' competition. Being involved in the preparation meant Danny was more engaged on the day. At the review Danny proudly put on his music and shared out the crisps and drinks. He sat next to his friend and throughout they were both supported by a teaching assistant from Danny's class. This was central to him making a contribution on the day. While everyone was busy putting post-its on the flip charts Danny and his friend were also adding their thoughts with the support of the teaching assistant.

The outcomes for Danny:

The things which are important in his life at school and beyond were discussed and celebrated. Recognising and feeling proud of his achievements e.g. his increasing confidence in the swimming pool. Feeling good about himself. He glowed as positive comments were read out and as everyone watched the DVD.

Thinking about the future – this process had begun but the review took it on a step further and he now talks about the future - and is excited about it.

Danny is now walking out of school, crossing the road into the car park and meeting me at the school gate. This will be gradually extended. Planning some independent travel on the bus from our village to the next village during the summer holidays. We had a trip to the cinema with one of his school friends and are planning some meetings with school friends for the summer holidays.

“Issues wider than immediate educational ones were raised and built into the action plan. Interestingly, his class teacher and I raised several similar issues without prior discussion.”

The outcomes for me as parent

Hearing and reading all the positive comments people made about Danny and feeling confident that they know him well – and now know him even better. His personality shone through the comments people had written on the post-its.

Issues wider than immediate educational ones were raised and built into the action plan. Interestingly, his class teacher and I raised several similar issues without any prior discussion.

The review was very much part of a process which had begun but which helped me move along the path – seeing Danny as a young person who is growing up and will one day leave home. Since the review, I’ve talked about it more with friends and family and begun to consider some of the options.

Becoming aware that there are lots of people who will support Danny and myself through the next few years. Because of the person centered nature of the review this was more apparent than it would have been in a more traditional annual review.

Rose Davies

Who knows what the future holds? I would love to get some paid work but see this as an ideal opportunity for preparation in the right direction.

