

## Specialist SEND Colleges info 2023-24

If you want to continue in education (Further Education FE) you can also look at ISPs (Independent Specialist Providers).

Please note, you may not get funding for this from your SEND team if your local college can meet your course and therapy needs (this includes Shaftesbury Millie College).

You could research and contact: Treloars College (Hampshire), National Star College (Cheltenham), and Sheiling College (Ringwood - ambulant students only), to see if they offer a suitable course.

These colleges are a lot like Victoria, as they have small teaching groups with differentiated learning (work broken down, and taught more slowly), additional learning support staff, therapies, specialist equipment and adapted facilities.

Most Victoria School students go on to a specialist college after Year 14, and study up to 2-4 years (or the length of the course) **if** funding is agreed by their Local Authority (usually the council responsible for their EHCP).

However, most specialist colleges offer education from 16 to 25 years of age.

Some of these colleges offer day-time courses (if students live close enough) and residential courses if it is too far to travel daily.

Courses tend to be for a maximum of 38 weeks (so you may need extra holiday housing options), although a few colleges let you live-in for up to 50 weeks of the year.

**Students must be ready to leave home before applying to these colleges as a residential student.**

The **NATSPEC** (National Association of Specialist Colleges) website offers information on all the ISPs/ specialist colleges available nationally, and explains the process for moving on to these, as well as the application process for each college. Their website is: [www.natspec.org.uk](http://www.natspec.org.uk)

The **Natspec Colleges Directory** offers a **college finder tool**, where you can select the support needs of the student e.g. physical support needs and/or autism etc. It then recommends colleges that can meet these needs. You can look at the college websites, and see if you would like to arrange a visit.

**It is advised that you look at more than one college**, so you can decide which you like best (usually once you have visited them).

You are advised to plan early e.g. start looking at colleges early in Year 12 (to leave school in year 14) as some colleges have 1-2 year waiting lists for places.

**Colleges funded** under **section 41** of this legislation have the **s41 symbol** alongside them, and could be funded from the Approved List of funded colleges (by your Local Authority SEND team following the guidance below).

Under law, **students** (or a representative e.g. parent/carer if the student cannot do this themselves) **can name s41 funded colleges on their Education & Health Care Plan**, and:

“The local authority must comply with your preference and name the school or college in the EHC plan unless provision there is considered to not meet their needs, not represent good value for money or would impact negatively on the education of others”

[Special Educational Needs and Disability - A guide for parents and carers, Department for Education, August 2014].

**Please note** the post-19 provision at Shaftesbury Millie College, based at Holton Lee, enables students to continue their Further Education within Dorset. Therefore, choosing a placement outside Dorset may not be seen to ‘represent good value for money’ and your SEND team may not authorise funding.

Your local SENDIASS team will be able to help with any challenges to this decision:

For BCP students: [SENDIASS BCP](#)

For Dorset students: [Dorset SENDIASS](#)

For Wiltshire students: [Wiltshire SENDIASS](#)

For Hampshire students: [Hampshire SENDIASS](#)

**It is important to involve other agencies in your planning, particularly in your Post-16 Annual Reviews.**

e.g. Social Services and Health (if you are eligible for these), for funding care support outside education hours e.g. weekends, mornings and evenings, and holiday care packages).