

TRANSFER TO SECONDARY SCHOOL

A Guide for September 2016

For parents and carers of children with
a Statement of Special Educational Needs
or an Education, Health & Care Plan



This guide is produced by **SENDIASS**
Special Educational Needs & Disability Information Advice and Support Service

INDEX

Page	Content
3	What are my parental rights?
3	Who can help me with the transfer process?
4	Where can I find other guidance?
4	What do I need to know about visiting schools?
4	What do I need to think about before a visit?
4	What should I think about after a visit?
5	When I have decided on the school preference who should I inform?
5	What should I do if I disagree with the Local Authority decision?
6	What do I need to know about transport?
6	Sources of help
7	'Visit a School' Checklist

TRANSFER TO SECONDARY SCHOOL

The transfer from Primary to Secondary School is particularly important for children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs or an Educational Health & Care Plan (EHCP).

The process of deciding on a school for your child, whether it is mainstream or special school can seem daunting, so it is helpful for parents/ carers to plan ahead for secondary transfer. SENDIASS (Special Educational Needs information Advice and Support service) can support you with this process if you wish.

This booklet provides a helpful 'Visit a School' checklist of questions explaining what to look for when visiting a Secondary School. You may want to take the list with you to help you on your visit to a Secondary School. The list has been placed at the end of this leaflet so that you can detach it to take with you if you wish.

WHAT ARE MY PARENTAL RIGHTS?

You have the right to request a particular school to be named in your child's statement or EHCP and the local authority **must** comply with that preference and name the school in the EHCP **unless**:

- It would be unsuitable for the age, ability, aptitude or Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) of the child or young person, or;
- The attendance of the child or young person there would be incompatible with the efficient education of others, or the efficient use of resources

Efficient education means providing for each child or young person a suitable, appropriate education in terms of their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Where a local authority is considering the appropriateness of an individual education provider, 'others' is intended to mean the children with whom the child with an EHCP will directly come into contact on a regular day-to-day basis.

WHO CAN HELP ME WITH THE TRANSFER PROCESS?

SENDIASS can give you Information, Advice and Support about the local schools in your area and help you with your visit www.yor-ok.org.uk/SENDIASS.

- Your primary school Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) may be able to talk with you about the local secondary schools.
- You may consider talking with other professionals who work with your child.

WHERE CAN I FIND OTHER GUIDANCE?

- It is important to obtain the Guide for Parents from the School Admissions team, before you consider any secondary school. It contains information on York schools. The guidance for September 2015 is presently available at www.york.gov.uk/guideforparents and the guidance for September 2016 will be available in August 2015.
- Each secondary school also produces its own prospectus that you will find helpful. Please contact the school directly to obtain a copy or you may prefer to download a copy from the school's website.
- The York City Council www.yor-ok.org.uk.org/localoffer-secondaryschool provides helpful advice in 'Starting Secondary School 11-16 years'.

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT VISITING SCHOOLS?

Most parents prefer their local school, as recommended in the authority's admissions policy

- **When should I start looking at schools?** It is helpful to start looking at schools in the summer term 2015
- **Who should I contact to arrange a visit?** You can contact the SENCo at the Secondary Schools or SENDIASS can help you to arrange a visit
- **Who should I ask to see when I visit the school?** You are welcome to arrange a visit to meet the SEND/Inclusion Co-ordinator of any school that might be suitable for your child. This gives you the opportunity to talk about your child's individual needs and also for you to hear how the school can meet your child's needs.
- If you apply for a place at a faith school or Academy - All Saints RC School, Archbishop Holgate's CE Academy or Manor CE Academy - you are also asked to complete the school's own application form.

WHAT DO I NEED TO THINK ABOUT BEFORE A VISIT?

- Think about the questions that you would like to ask.
- When would you like to visit? (It is best to visit during school hours.)
- Will you be taking your child?(If so please inform the school)
- Do you want someone to go with you?
- Is the school easy to get to? (Think about future daily transport arrangements)

WHAT SHOULD I THINK ABOUT AFTER A VISIT?

- Did I feel welcome at the school?
- Do I think my child would be happy there?
- Will my child get the support they need?
- Did I find it easy to talk to the SENCo/Headteacher/Form Tutor?
- Did the children around the school seem to have a good relationship with staff?
- Do I think the staff will encourage my child to be as independent as possible?
- Would I feel able to talk to staff about any concerns or issues?
- Will I be able to speak to the SENCo if I need to?
- Will the work be presented in a way my child would understand?
- Did the school show me what they do to help children with a variety of needs?
- Is the school accessible and can my child move around safely?
- Do I think the staff will be comfortable and confident in managing my child's behaviour and directing learning?

WHEN I HAVE DECIDED ON THE SCHOOL PREFERENCE WHO SHOULD I INFORM?

- Your child's primary school will arrange an Annual or Interim Review meeting before July of Year 5. You, and the professionals working with your child, are invited to attend and you can discuss your secondary school preferences at this meeting. SENDIASS is available if you would like to speak to an independent, impartial person. The Secondary School SENCo will be at the Year 6 review.
- If you cannot attend the Review meeting, please speak to the headteacher about your child's needs and the secondary school you prefer.
- Your primary school and Dave McCormick, the Education, SEND and Transport Officer will need to know your Secondary School preference by **July 2015**.
- The Local Authority considers parental preference to make sure it is compatible with your child's SEND. This is especially important if you are requesting a special school or Enhanced Resource Provision (ERP). Consultations between the Local Authority and school will need to take place.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I DISAGREE WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITY DECISION?

- The Local Authority issues an EHCP naming the secondary school. If you do not agree with the contents of the EHCP or the school named you have the right of appeal to the First Tier Tribunal. You must do this within two months of the Local Authority's decision.
- Tribunal appeals can take up to 3-4 months to be heard, although secondary transfer is given priority. The Local Authority will continue to liaise with parents and carers during the appeal period and take all reasonable steps to resolve the disagreement.
- SENDIASS can offer you advice and support about mediation and the appeals process.

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT TRANSPORT?

- Transport costs are only paid in certain circumstances. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/331654/Home_to_school_travel_and_transport_statutory_guidance.pdf In some cases, you may have to pay for transport if the SEND Panel considers a nearer school could meet your child's needs.
- If it is agreed that your child is eligible for school transport you may wish to apply for a personal budget. This would give you funding based on the number of miles you travel to and from school. It can be used flexibly by yourself to drive your child to school/share lifts/get a bus/cycle to school/any creative way to get to and from school. Please contact Sarah Kingston: sarahkingston@york.gov.uk if you would like to know more.

SOURCES OF HELP

SENDIASS

Gillian Bucklow Service Manager
01904 554312 / 07920 185325

PART-TIME CASEWORKERS:

Pam Bullivant
01904 554319 / 07943 846203

Janet MacGladrie
01904 555698 / 07826 890107

Steve Conway
01904555349/07943593487

David McCormick, Education Officer
(SEN and Transport)

01904 554306

School Admissions Team

01904 551554

The above services are based at :

City of York Council

West Offices

York

YO1 6GA

'VISIT A SCHOOL' CHECKLIST

Questions you may wish to ask on your visit to school. This discussion with school should be a two way process. You might like to take with you a pen portrait that you have put together with your child. There is a good example of one on the website 'Special Needs Jungle': <http://www.specialneedsjungle.com/>

- What support is there for children with SEN and/or disabilities?
- Do the teachers have experience of children with similar needs to my child?
- How would the school make all teachers and staff aware of my child's needs?
- What lunchtime and after-school activities are there? Is there a homework club?
- How does the school involve parents and communicate with them?
- How will school review my child's progress and communicate with me?
- How many children will be in my child's class?
- How does the school use its Teaching Assistants to support pupils?
- Can my child get to all areas of the school?
- How will my child be supported outside lesson time if appropriate?
- How does the school deal with difficult behaviour?
- How is bullying dealt with; can I take a copy of the school's policy?
- How does the school help children mix and make friends?
- When can I talk to my child's teacher/s?
- Can I take a copy of the school's policy, SEN and inclusion?
- Will my child be able to have extra visits to the school before transfer and what arrangements will be made to help them settle in?
- Please ask for a copy of the school prospectus if you do not already have one. It is OK to make return visits to schools if you wish.

Don't forget to ask your child his/her feelings! If your child feels comfortable visiting with you then it is a good idea to take him/her for a visit so you can share views on the school.