

# Moving to secondary school – children with Education Health and Care plans

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## Choosing a secondary school

Choosing a secondary school for your child to attend can be a daunting and difficult decision for any parent, but for parents of children with special educational needs the decision can be even more difficult as there are so many other things to consider.

Parents often ask 'Where do I start?' or 'Which is the best school?' Only you as parents can make the decision about which school you would like your child to attend, but this leaflet aims to provide information and helpful hints about the transition to secondary school for your child.

## Children with Education Health and Care plans

If your child has an Education Health and Care plan then the transfer to secondary school will be coordinated by the Special Educational Needs department.

## Start Early

At your child's Annual Review in Year 5 you should start discussing which type of school you would like your child to attend. The professionals involved in your child's education might feel that there are important factors you need to consider when choosing a secondary school for your child and they may even make recommendations about the type of school your child needs.

If you have concerns about secondary schools for your child you should use this opportunity to discuss them and speak to the professionals involved about any concerns or questions you have.

## Visiting schools

Most secondary schools will have Open Days/Evenings when you will have a chance to visit the school and find out what they can offer for your child.

These Open Days are for general admission and therefore you might not have chance to discuss your individual child or speak to the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO).

After attending the Open Days it is important that you visits schools again and meet with the SENCO, so that you can discuss your child's individual needs and whether or not the school would be suitable for your child. You should not let the experiences of

other people you know influence your decision. What worked for another child might not be suitable for your child and because another child had a bad experience does not mean that it will be the same for your child.

When meeting with the SENCO you can take a copy of your child's EHC plan and any other information that you think would be useful.

When you visit schools be sure to take notes about what you see and write down anything that you think would benefit your child if attending that school. If you take notes you will have something to refer back to when you have visited all the schools of your choice.

## **Which School?**

When you have finished visiting schools you should then look at each school and your notes about what would be suitable for your child.

If you would like your child to attend a Local Authority maintained school then you should inform the SEN department as soon as possible of your preference.

The SEN Code of Practice states:

'Parents may express a preference for the maintained school (but not a PRU or hospital special school) they wish their child to attend, or make representations for a placement in any other school.

LAs must comply with a parental preference unless the school is unsuitable to the child's age, ability, aptitude or special educational needs, or the placement would be incompatible with the efficient education of the other children with whom the child would be educated, or with the efficient use of resources.

LAs must consider parental representations and arrange any meeting(s) with LA advisers or officers the parents seek, before issuing the final plan.'

This simply means that if you want your child to attend a Local Authority Maintained Secondary School, the SEN department must name this school in your child's Education Health and Care Plan as long as the school can meet your child's needs and will not be an inefficient use of resources i.e. does not cost more than another school that would also meet your child's needs.

If your child is allocated a place at the school of your choice it is now important that you start planning your child's transition to this school and how this will be managed.

## **Year 6 Annual Review**

The Year 6 Annual Review should review your child's EHC plan and also look at your child's transition to secondary school and any changes in support that might be needed. The SENCO from the secondary school your child will be attending should be invited; this will be an opportunity for the SENCO to meet the professionals involved in your child's education and to start the transition to secondary school for your child.

Following this meeting you might want to prepare a plan of action or agreed action for your child's transfer to secondary school including details about support to be provided and opportunities for your child to visit his/her new school before the transfer in September.

Following the Year 6 Annual Review the Education Officer must amend your child's Education Health and Care plan to name the school that they will transfer to. The SEN Code of Practice states that your child's Plan must be amended by 15<sup>th</sup> February during the year in which they transfer. For example, if your child will start Secondary School in September 2017 then their Plan must be amended to name the new Secondary School by 15<sup>th</sup> February 2016.

## **Appealing for a school**

If your child is not allocated a place at the school of your choice then you can appeal to the First-Tier Tribunal, Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND). This is different from the Admissions Appeal Panel and you can only appeal to SEND about the choice of school if your child has a Statement.

**If your child has a EHC plan you must not appeal to the Admissions Appeal Panel. SEND Tribunal deal with all appeals for children with Statements.**

For further information about Tribunal and how to appeal you can contact Tower Hamlets & City SEND IASS or the Tribunal directly on 01325 392 555 to request a 'How to Appeal' booklet.

## **Further Contacts**

If you need any further information, advice or support please contact:

Tower Hamlets & City SEND IASS  
Parents advice Centre  
30 Greatorex St  
Whitechapel  
London E1 5NP

020 7364 6489

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