

Admission to Richmond's secondary schools for children with an education, health and care plan

Admission in September 2020

Starting in Year 7

Dear parents and carers,

This booklet is for parents and carers of children with an education, health and care plan (EHC plan) in Year 5. Moving to a new school can be an anxious time for families, so this brochure aims to help guide you through the school admissions process for children with an EHC plan as it is different to the usual admission process. All children with EHC plans have their phase transfer from primary school to secondary school dealt with by the special educational needs and disability (SEND) Team, who are here to help and support you through this important transition.

If your child is undergoing assessment please follow the mainstream admissions process and your child's education setting will be considered when the EHC plan is agreed. More information can be found at: www.richmond.gov.uk/secondary_school_admissions

This brochure provides details of the how the process works, key dates and advice in approaching this achievable yet daunting task.

For the majority of children with an EHC plan their needs can be met in their local mainstream secondary school. All our maintained mainstream secondary schools have a SEND department and have experience supporting children with a range of diverse special educational needs and disabilities.

Mainstream secondary schools SEND support will include but is not limited to:

- experienced and qualified teachers providing quality first teaching
- differentiated curriculum
- small group activities/learning opportunities
- targeted and specific interventions
- access to external agencies; EPS, SALT specialist outreach, etc
- a qualified special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)
- differentiated application of school policies in line with children's SEND

Some children's needs are more complex and they will require more support in mainstream or will need to be educated in a maintained specialist school. The type of provision the Local Authority believes would best suit your child's needs will be discussed through the Annual Review process.

Working in partnership I believe the correct placement can be secured for your child where they can make social, emotional and academic progress to move forward on their journey to reaching their aspirations and becoming more independent.

Whichever school your child transfers to in September 2020, I wish them every success in their future education.

Yours sincerely,



Charis Penfold
Director for Education Services

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Section 1

Types of school in Richmond and key dates

There are 11 secondary schools and three special schools in the Richmond Borough.

Voluntary aided schools

Christ's School and St Richard Reynolds Catholic High School are voluntary aided church schools. The governors are responsible for setting the admissions policy.

Academies

An academy is a state-funded school that is run by an academy trust, funded entirely by central government and sets its own admissions policy. There are nine secondary academies in the borough: Grey Court, Hampton High, Orleans Park, Richmond Park Academy, Teddington, Twickenham School and Waldegrave School (for girls).

Free schools

Like academies, free schools are independent of the local authority and are funded directly by central government. There are two free secondary schools in Richmond. Turing House School opened in September 2015. The Richmond upon Thames School opened in September 2017.

Specialist resourced provisions (SRP): only for children with an EHC plan

Within some maintained secondary schools there is a provision specialising in supporting children with particular special educational needs, for example, moderate learning difficulties and autism. Children have access to additional specialist staff, learning spaces and personalised times which may include small group and individual work. There are usually only a few places per year group.

Christ's is for children with specific learning difficulties with co-occurring difficulties.

Grey Court supports children with social communication needs including autism and mild to moderate learning needs.

The Gateway is for children with social communication needs, including autism.

Orleans Park is for children with specific learning difficulties with co-occurring difficulties.

Waldegrave (for girls) supports children with social communication needs, including autism and mild to moderate learning needs.

Academy special schools: only for children with an EHC plan

An academy special school is run by an academy trust and its governors. It is funded entirely by central government and specifically caters for children with more moderate to complex learning and/or physical and/or medical needs. Richmond has three special schools: Clarendon, Capella House, and Strathmore.

Section 2

The Year 5 annual review process

Before the review meeting

- The school must invite the local authority, parents, carers, your child and any other professionals (for example, speech and language therapist, occupational therapist, educational psychologist and physiotherapist, etc) currently working with your child. The local authority is prioritising its attendance at this review and will attend as many as possible.
- Everyone invited (including parents and carers) are asked for any advice and information to be given to school. The school should send this advice to everyone at least two weeks before the meeting.
- For children looked after, the social worker will also be invited. It may be appropriate for annual reviews to coincide with one of the reviews in their care plan. The personal education plan (PEP) meetings serve to drive forward academic progress and enable students to close their gaps in learning.

At this annual review meeting

- The end of Key Stage 2 outcomes from the EHC plan should be reviewed. If any are no longer appropriate or have been met, suggestions and amendments can be made.
- Key Stage 3 outcomes should be agreed.
- The targets from the past 12 months should be reviewed and new ones set for the next 12 months.
- If you did not submit information, when requested, your views of the year, progress. etc can be recorded from the meeting.
- The meeting should centre on your child. The child must contribute, their views must be sought and they may attend the meeting if appropriate.
- Review any health and social care provision and its effectiveness in good progress towards outcomes.
- A discussion should be held about what type of secondary school could meet the needs of your child.
- It should be discussed what preparation can be done to support your child be more independent learner to begin preparing for secondary school and make a successful transition.

Following the review meeting

- The school must send a report of the annual review meeting within two weeks of the meeting. Parents or carers should see and sign this before it is sent to everyone invited to the meeting.
- The local authority must send parents or carers a letter to say whether it proposes to amend, cease or maintain the EHC plan, within four weeks of the annual review meeting.
- Parents and carers should continue to research secondary schools (see further advice in this booklet).

Primary to Secondary School Phase Transfer for children with an EHC plan

Timeline for September 2020 (Kingston and Richmond)

September 2018 to July 2019 (ideally January to May)	January 2019	May to July 2019	September 2019	October 2019	18 November 2019 to 15 February 2020 (Statutory deadline when all EHC plans must be final)	September 2019 to July 2020 (ideally January to May)
<p>Year 5 annual reviews</p> <p>At this meeting you will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review progress towards end of Key Stage 2 outcomes Review 12 month targets and write new 12 month targets Write end of Key Stage 3 outcomes Discuss type of secondary schools to explore. <p>Local authority to send decision letter we do not intend to amend, unless an increase of support necessary or an immediate change of placement, but the EHC plan will be amended later in the year to take account of secondary transfer. Unless an increase of support is necessary or there is an immediate change of placement or the plan doesn't reflect your child's current needs then the EHC plan will be amended in Year 5.</p>	<p>Phase transfer (Primary to secondary school) information sessions for parents and carers of children in Year 5 with an EHC plan</p> <p>Kingston:</p> <p>Tuesday 29 January 2019 @ The Kingston Academy 9.30 to 10.30am</p> <p>Thursday 24 January 2019 @ King Charles Centre 6.30 to 7.30pm</p> <p>Richmond:</p> <p>Thursday 10 January 2019 @ Teddington School 9.30 to 10.30am</p> <p>Wednesday 23 January 2019 @ Twickenham Training Centre 6.30 to 7.30pm</p>	<p>Secondary school showcase (parents, carers and children)</p> <p>A chance to meet secondary schools and to ask questions about the provision they provide.</p> <p>Kingston: May 2019</p> <p>Richmond: May 2019</p> <p>Secondary school open days and one-to-one visits</p> <p>A chance to ask questions, 'get a feel' for the schools, ask about areas of needs, etc</p> <p>(Contact the school directly to arrange)</p>	<p>Preferences for Secondary Schools</p> <p>The local authority will send an amendment notice or proposed amended EHC plan to you and seek your preferences.</p> <p>From the date of the letter parents and carers have two weeks to submit three preferences</p>	<p>Consultations sent to secondary school</p> <p>The child's papers will be sent to all the schools that you expressed a preference for (not independent not in section 41). The local authority may also approach the child's nearest appropriate school for a decision on whether they can meet the child's needs.</p> <p>Secondary school decisions</p> <p>In consultation with headteachers, the SEND team will make decisions on which secondary school will be named on the child's EHC plan taking into account parent or carer preferences.</p>	<p>Final EHC plan issued</p> <p>The amended final EHC plan sent to parents or carers with secondary school place named and any amendments from the Year 5 review.</p> <p>Please note: This is the only notification parents or carers will receive of their child's secondary school place.</p> <p>Primary schools will know placement through the plan being final.</p> <p>Secondary schools will be sent a list of all placements.</p>	<p>Year 6 annual reviews</p> <p>At this meeting you will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review progress towards end of Key Stage 2 outcomes Review 12 month targets and write new 12 month targets Plan transition with secondary school. <p>Primary schools to send annual review paperwork to local authority and everyone invited within two weeks of the meeting.</p> <p>Local authority to send decision letter not to amend unless an increase of support necessary.</p>

Section 3

Applying for a secondary school place

Step 1: Collecting information on schools

We recommend that you:

- read the SEND information report for parents and carers. All schools are required to publish, a SEND information report outlining their approach to SEND on their website
- read school brochures
- look at school websites to find out their policies
- read the latest Ofsted reports at www.ofsted.gov.uk
- from May onwards visit secondary schools (for more details check the Local Offer: www.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/local-offer/information-and-advice/assessment-and-education-health-and-care-planning/phase-transfer/primary-to-secondary-school)
- gather your child's view and consider your child's particular interests and abilities

You can find links to information on all Richmond schools here: www.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/local-offer/information-and-advice/education/information-on-richmond-schools

Step 2: Consider how your child will get to school

Starting secondary school is a time when children are keen to develop their independence and would like to travel to school with their friends, if they can. The proximity and availability of travel plans is also an important consideration.

A large number of children with an EHC plan do not receive, nor require specialised travel assistance from the local authority. Wherever possible parents of children with special educational needs should make arrangements for their child to attend school in the same way as parents of children without special educational needs.

The local authority recognise that a few children will require more support and we will ensure that travel needs are assessed on an individual basis and that any decision about travel assistance is based on the needs identified. If you express a preference for your child to attend a school which is located further away than the nearest school that can meet your child's needs then there is no legal requirement for Achieving for Children (AfC) acting on behalf of the local authority to offer transport assistance and it reserves the right to refuse transport assistance to that child.

If you think your child may qualify for travel assistance please read the AfC SEN Transport Policy: www.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/local-offer/information-and-advice/education/sen-transport

Transport for London has a useful website for travel routes and times www.tfl.gov.uk/plan-a-journey. You can also phone their 24 hour travel information line on 020 7222 1234.

Step 3: Deciding which school best fits the needs of your child detailed in the EHC plan

The majority of children's needs can be met within maintained (academy, free and community) schools in Richmond. It is much better for your child's social, emotional and educational needs to attend the nearest local school so they understand and access their local community, maintain friendships out of school and limit the time spent travelling. For a small number of children with an EHC plan more specialist provision may be required. This might be a specialist resourced provision or enhanced specialist teaching arrangement in a mainstream school or special school. This will have been discussed at the Year 5 annual review meeting.

Step 4: Parental preference for secondary school

Parents and carers of children who have an EHC plan have a right to express a preference for:

- a maintained school and any form of academy or free school (mainstream and special)
- non-maintained special school
- an independent school (where it has been approved, for this purpose, by the Secretary of State and is on the Section 41 list)

Step 5: Submitting your parental preferences

The local authority will write to you from Monday 2 September 2019 with a copy of a draft amended EHC plan. You will have 15 days from the date you received the letter to consider the content of the amended EHC plan and submit your preferences either via email to senteam@achievingforchildren.org.uk or via post returned to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Team, 1st Floor, Guildhall 2, High Street, Richmond Upon Thames KT1 1EU.

You will be asked to submit three preferences. You must list the schools in the order that you prefer them. We encourage you to submit all three as there is a high demand for secondary places and we cannot always offer your first preference. If your preferences do not include a local maintained school or you do not express three preferences we may consult other local maintained schools which we believe could meet your child's needs.

Please make sure you are clear what place you are asking, for example, The Richmond Academy or The Richmond Academy Specialist Resourced Provision (SRP).

Current school continues into secondary age

If your child attends a school that continues into secondary age you will still be asked for your secondary school preference, which may be the school that your child currently attends. However, in some circumstances the local authority may also consult with alternative schools.

Looked after Children

Children who are being accommodated, or who have been taken into care, by a local authority under Section 20, or Section 31 or Section 38 of the children Act 1989) are legally defined as being 'looked after' by the local authority. Where you have a child who is looked after with an EHC plan it is important to liaise with the social worker and/or the Virtual School, in addition to the EHC coordinator.

If you do not submit a completed preference form

The local authority will consult with your child's nearest appropriate school.

Section 4

The local authority process

Step 1: Consulting the secondary schools

Once all preferences have been received from parents and carers the local authority will consult with all maintained schools and independent special schools approved by the Secretary of State (Section 41 of the Children's and Families Act 2014) you have listed.

As part of the consultation process, the secondary school may get in contact with you and your child's current school to request that they visit your child in that school. If you have not already visited the school, they may request that you and your child visit. This request is most likely to come from maintained special schools and SRPs but some other maintained mainstreams schools may also get in contact.

Step 2: The paperwork sent to secondary schools

The current EHC plan, appendices that were used to draft this EHC plan and the most recent annual review documentation are all sent to secondary schools.

If there are any additional documents that you feel should be included then you must let the coordinator assistant know before the consultations are sent. It is strongly advised that you submit these additional documents when you submit your preferences however if you submit documents at a separate point, please email them to the SEND Team by no later Tuesday 1 October 2019. The local authority starts consulting with secondary schools from the Wednesday 9 October 2019.

Step 3: How places are allocated

School places are allocated in accordance with the Children and Families Act 2014, which requires the local authority to take into account the child's special educational needs, parental preference and the formal view of the schools requested before making a decision.

Places will be allocated based on parents' preference wherever possible, unless:

- the school is unsuitable for the child's age, ability, aptitude or SEN
- the placement would be incompatible with the efficient education of the others or the efficient use of resources

If there are more applications than a certain school can accommodate a number of factors will be taken into account when deciding on placements.

Step 4: Finding out what school your child has been given

Once a decision has been made about which secondary school your child will attend in September 2020 a final amended EHC plan with this school named in Section I will be sent to you. This is confirmation of the secondary school place and you will not receive further notification of this. Where possible the local authority will start issuing final amended EHC plans from end of November 2019 but must have issued them all by Saturday **15 February 2020**.

Step 5: Appeals

The local authority tries to comply with parental preference as well as taking the Children and Families Act 2014 into account so it hopes you will be satisfied with the school that is named in your child's final amended EHC plan. When you receive the plan, if you disagree with the school named in Section I, or the content in Sections B and F you can appeal to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal. If you decide to appeal you must do so within **two months** of the final amended EHC plan being sent. More details will be given in the letter you are sent with the EHC plan. However, we strongly advise you continue to talk with your EHC coordinator before you submit an appeal.

Section 5

Secondary schools in other local authorities

You can express a preference for schools outside the Richmond area that are academies or are maintained by another local authority and we will consult with these schools as well as the authority that maintains them. You should find out as much about the school as you can, in the same way you would for a Richmond school. We would also encourage you to discuss your preference with your EHC coordinator. Please note the timescale for this process may differ if you express a preference for a school in another authority, although it must be concluded by Saturday 15 February 2020.

If you do decide to express preferences for schools that are maintained by another local Authority we will also consult with appropriate maintained schools in Richmond. This is because there is no guarantee that a place will be offered at the school of your choice that is maintained by another local authority.

Section 6

Independent schools and non-maintained special schools

You have the right to express a preference for:

- an independent school which has been approved, for this purpose, by the Secretary of State (Section 41 of the Children's and Families Act 2014). Parents and carers can access these lists online: www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-special-schools-and-colleges
- a non-maintained special school

The local authority must consult with this school and comply with this preference unless:

- the school is unsuitable for the child's age, ability, aptitude or SEN
- the placement would be incompatible with the efficient education of the others or the efficient use of resources

You can also make representations for a place at an independent school that is not on the approved by the Secretary of State (Section 41 of the Children's and Families Act 2014). The local authority must consider your preference but it is not under the same conditional duty to name this school.

However, the local authority must have regard to the general principle that children should be educated in accordance with their parents' wishes so long as the school is suitable and does not mean unreasonable public expenditure.

The local authority will consider your preference for an independent school but will also consider other maintained schools. In line with the SEND Code of Practice (2015), any decision about whether to place a child at an independent school will be made with consideration of the local authority's efficient use of resources.

If you express a preference for an independent school, they may wish to invite your child for a visit or assessment to decide whether they would be able to meet your child's needs and send parents or carers a letter offering a place. **Please note that this does not guarantee that the local authority will name this school in Section I of your child's EHC plan.**

If you submit any preferences for an independent school please attach a letter naming the school, stating its address and why you feel this school can meet your child's needs.

Section 7

Advice or support

You may wish to seek advice or support from the Special Educational Needs and Disability Information and Advice Support Service (SENDIASS)/ KIDS 020 8831 6179 or any other independent parent/carers advocacy group. Further information can be found on the Local Offer: www.afcinfo.org.uk/pages/local-offer/information-and-advice/assessment-and-education-health-and-care-planning/information-advice-and-support-ias

Section 8

The Year 6 annual review process

Before the review meeting

- The school must invite the local authority, parents, carers, your child and any other professionals (for example, speech and language therapist, occupational therapist, educational psychologist and physiotherapist, etc) currently working with your child. If placement is agreed the secondary school should be invited too.
- Everyone invited (including parents and carers) are asked for any advice and information to be given to school. The school should send it to everyone at least two weeks before the meeting.
- For children looked after, the social worker will also be invited. It may be appropriate for annual reviews to coincide with one of the reviews in their care plan. The personal education plan (PEP) meetings serve to drive forward academic progress and enable students to close their gaps in learning.

At this review meeting

- The end of Key Stage 2 outcomes in the EHC plan should be reviewed.
- The targets from the past 12 months should be reviewed and new ones set for the next 12 months. These will then be appended to the EHC plan.

- Your views on the progress your child has made over the past year can be recorded from the meeting or you can write a report which will be appended
- The meeting should centre on your child. The child must contribute, their views must be sought and they may attend the meeting if appropriate.
- Review any health and social care provision and its effectiveness in good progress towards outcomes
- A discussion should be held about what needs to be put in place to support a successful transition to secondary school.

Following the review meeting

- The school must send a report of the annual review meeting within two weeks of the meeting. Parents and carers should see and sign a copy before it is sent to everyone invited to the meeting.
- The local authority must send parents or carers a letter stating whether they will amend, cease or maintain the EHC plan within four weeks of the annual review meeting. As the EHC plan would have been recently amended to take account of your child's transfer to the secondary phase of their education, it is likely that further amendments will not be necessary
- The planned transition to the secondary phase of education will be take place.

Section 9

Frequently asked questions

Q Do I need to complete an online admissions form as well?

A No, the SEND Team will write to families of children with an EHC plan and request parent's preferences. If you do not have an EHC plan but are undergoing an EHC needs assessment, you will need to apply through the general school admissions through their online application. If a draft EHC plan is then issued to you the SEND Team will write to you regarding your secondary options.

Q What happens if I want my child to move from a mainstream primary school to a special school?

A If your child is currently in a mainstream school setting and you are requesting a special school placement for secondary, the local authority would need to be satisfied that there is evidence this type of provision is appropriate in order to demonstrate that such a placement would be an efficient use of resources. This evidence should be discussed at the Year 5 annual review meeting. The reasons why a special school placement might be necessary should be recorded and the evidence to support this should be appended.

Q What happens if you only state one or two preferences?

A The local authority will also consult other local schools which it believes will meet the needs of your child.

Q What happens if my only preferences are for independent schools, approved or not?

A The local authority has a legal duty to ensure that your preferred school can meet the special educational needs of your child and that the placement would be a reasonable use of public expenditure. In order to determine this the local authority will explore and consult all other schools which could potentially meet your child's special educational needs and in doing so it will also take account of any additional costs, such as travel assistance, therapies, etc.

Q Who should I contact if I have queries about the consultations that will be or have been sent to my preferred schools?

A The consultations will be sent by the coordinator assistant (CA), so in most cases they should be able to answer your query in the first instance. However, if they are not able to answer your query they will refer it to your EHC Coordinator or Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 transition teacher. Contact details of CAs, EHC coordinators and the transition teacher can be found on the Local Offer.

Q Can I find out all the schools the local authority has consulted?

A For a variety of reasons the local authority may choose to consult with schools other than those for which you have expressed a preference. In these situations you will be informed of all the schools that are being consulted and the reasons why.

Q How does the local authority make decisions about independent schools?

A Once the consultation responses have been received all information (including any costs associated with the placement) and parental views will be considered by a panel of professionals who will make a decision on which school your child should attend. Each request is looked at on an individual basis but within the context and cohort of all the children who are transferring to secondary school. This is to ensure that every child has a suitable secondary school that can meet their special educational needs.

Contact details

SEN Team

E: senteam@achievingforchildren.org.uk

A: Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Team

1st Floor, Guildhall 2, High Street, Kingston upon Thames KT1 1EU