



### Choosing a School

#### Checklist for parents and carers of children with Special Educational Needs

Choosing a school for your child can be a difficult process for parents, especially if your child has special educational needs. You may wish to consider the following list of questions when visiting a school.

#### Examples of questions you might want to ask:

##### School Organisation

1. How is the school organised? Into departments? By age? By ability? Subject Groups?
2. How might this change as my child gets older?
3. How often would my child change class or move around the school?
4. How many children would be in my child's class?
5. When and how often are children taught outside the classroom?
6. How does the school arrange extra support for children who need it?
7. Is the extra support usually provided in the classroom, individually or in small groups?
8. Is there a separate room for special needs? What equipment and resources are there?
9. What health or medical facilities does the school have?
10. (If your child has difficulty walking) Are all areas of the school accessible to my child, or would adaptations be necessary?

##### Staff knowledge & experience

11. Does the school have any experience of helping children who have similar difficulties to my child?
12. How many other children in the school have special educational needs? What kinds of needs do they have?
13. How many staff are there in school?

Teaching staff?

## Checklist 4

Non- teaching staff for supporting special needs?

14. What training have staff had about special educational needs?

15. What does the school do to make sure that all the staff would know about my child's individual needs?

### **Pastoral care/extra curricular activities**

16. How would the other children be helped to understand my child's special needs?

17. How would my child be helped to make friends?

18. How does the school help children to learn how to make the school a happy place? Does the behaviour system reward effort as well as success?

19. What is the school's experience of bullying? How would the school prevent my child from being bullied?

20. How would the school make sure my child has the chance to take part in all areas of the curriculum?

21. How do you make sure all children have equal opportunities to take part in school trips?

22. How would my child be encouraged to take part in out of school activities such as clubs and sports events?

### **Assessment and progress**

23. How is children's progress monitored and recorded?

24. How regularly would my child's progress be reviewed? Who is involved in this?

25. What happens if school staff feel my child is not making progress?

26. What would happen if I feel my child is not making progress or if I have any concerns?

27. What special arrangements are there for internal exams, tests and SATs?

28. (For older children) What public examinations are children able to take and what is the success rate?

### **Communication/support for parents**

29. How often are written reports sent home?

30. How would I be involved in the individual planning for my child's special educational needs?

31. How would I be kept up to date about what is happening in school?

## Checklist 4

32. How are parents involved in school life?
33. Does the school produce newsletters for parents?
34. What sort of support and guidance does the school offer for parents?
35. Is there a parents group?
36. What arrangements are usually made for transport to and from school?
37. How would you get to know my child before they start at your school?
38. How would my child get to know your school especially in the first few days after starting?

If you would like help, please contact:

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This information can be made available in other languages and formats upon request.