



Partnership with Parents
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Information Sheet: 16

TRANSFER TO SECONDARY SCHOOL For pupils with statements of Special Education Needs

Leaving primary school for secondary school is an important stage in your child's life. To help with the decision of choosing a secondary school we recommend visiting schools that interest you and your child. Schools arrange open days in September/October to enable you and your child to find out more about the school. In Surrey all maintained secondary, aided and foundation schools provide help for children with special educational needs. Advance planning is essential in order for all the necessary arrangements to be made in good time.

School admissions for statemented pupils are managed by SEN Administration, not by Pupil services and you should contact your child's Case Officer if you have any queries. (See list at the end of this information sheet).

Some common questions about secondary transfer for children with statements of special educational needs

1. When do I choose a Secondary school?

Parents/carers are encouraged to start thinking about secondary schools in Year 5, and discuss possible choices at the annual review held towards the end of that school year. This Year 5 Annual Review is an important one for pupils with statements who might require a place at a special school or unit. (see also question 7)

In Year 6, at the start of the Autumn Term, parents/carers of all children due to move on at the end of the year are sent a 'preference form' together with an explanatory letter and a booklet. Parents/carers of pupils with statements will receive a specific form through the post

from the SEN Administration team. This will provide details of all state funded secondary schools in your area and will tell you:

- the times and dates of open days
- the location of the schools together with travel arrangements
- the number of pupils on roll and class sizes
- the admissions arrangements including information parents are required to submit confirming religious affiliations/commitment
- information about the organisation of the school, the curriculum and how pupils and parents are involved

2. Do I complete the preference form for my son/daughter?

Even if you expect that your son or daughter will move to a special school for their secondary education, it is important that you complete the preference form for your preferred mainstream secondary school. You should also tick the box that says that your child has a Statement of special educational needs. In this way, if your son or daughter does not meet criteria for entry to a special school or unit, you will hopefully have secured a place at the mainstream school of your choice. (see also question 7)

3. Are the arrangements the same for all children?

The arrangements for the secondary transfer of pupils with a statement of special educational needs are different. Your child's statement is a legal document, which Surrey Education Authority is responsible for maintaining. Working together with parents and carers they will ask for details of the school you would prefer your child to attend. An annual review will be arranged in the Summer Term of Year 5 to discuss secondary transfer.

4. How are the procedures different?

The SEN Code of Practice 2001 provides guidance to schools and education authorities about school transfer, which they must have regard to.

You are able to express a preference for a school for your child, subject to certain conditions.

If the placement is agreed, your child's statement will be amended. A copy of the draft together with a copy of the annual review will be sent to you for your views. Parents/carers have fifteen days to send their responses back to Special Needs Administration.

The SEN Code of Practice 2001 says that from January 2001 statements for pupils moving from primary to secondary school should be amended by 15 February of the chronological year in which they are due to move.

5. Can I choose any school?

Parents/carers of children with statements can express a preference for a particular maintained school for their child subject to certain conditions.

SCHOOL PREFERENCE

The LA must agree to the preference if two conditions apply:

- 1 The School is suitable for your child's age, ability and special educational needs, and your child fulfils the admission criteria of voluntary and foundation schools
- 2 Your child's presence there will not affect the efficient education of other children at the school

6. How will my child be involved?

It is important to know your child's views about which school they would like to attend. Usually for the annual review meeting children are encouraged and helped to put in writing their views of their progress and achievements. Children will have their own concerns about secondary transfer, and will want to feel heard and understood and that their views are being listened to.

7. Are the arrangements different for special schools?

Parents/carers are able to express a preference for a special school place in the same way. Parents/carers are encouraged to visit both mainstream and special schools to be able to make an informed choice about the provision available.

Places at special schools or units are allocated by special admissions panels, which meet in the Autumn term of Year 6, and consider all the

children who might be candidates for the individual schools and units. If your child is a candidate for a special school place the school must arrange for the relevant paperwork to be with the LA by a set date in early July. You will receive a letter from the LA two weeks after the panel date in November, advising you of the outcome.

If your child is attending a primary special school, all year 6 pupils will have an annual review early in the Summer Term of Year 5 to discuss secondary transfer.

8. What information should I ask for about Special Educational Needs in Secondary Schools?

- information about the special needs policy
- the name of the teacher with overall responsibility for special educational needs (usually called the SENCO)
- details of the arrangements of how additional help is given e.g. will my child be supported in the classroom or will he/she receive individual support out of the classroom?
- information about how the school works closely with parents

9. How will the school know about my child's special educational needs?

The LA will send to your child's new school a copy of the finalised amended statement, setting out the objectives of the provision.

The secondary school SENCO could be invited to the Annual Review in Year 6

The LA will also send a copy of the latest annual review report, together with the latest reports provided by professionals working with your child.

10. What happens if my child does not obtain a place at our preferred school?

A school can NOT refuse to accept a child just because they may have special educational needs. The school could say they were unable to meet the child's needs without additional resources.

If the LA agrees with your preference and if the school does not accept your child, the LA is able to name the school.

If the LA does not agree to name your school preference you are able to appeal against the decision to the Special Educational Needs & Disability Tribunal (SENDIST).

Parents/carers are offered the opportunity to meet with LA representatives to discuss the reasons for the SEN Panel decision, and to consider identifying another school.

11. What happens if my child has special educational needs but does not have a statement?

You must apply in the usual way as all other children without statements. Applications will be considered on the basis of the school's published admissions criteria. They cannot refuse to admit a child on the grounds that he or she has special educational needs or does not have a statement of special educational needs. Once you know which school your child will be going to, it is good practice for the SENCO of the new school to contact the SENCO of the current school to find out about the pupil's needs.

12. What about transport?

If your child has a statement of SEN they may or may not currently receive transport to school. You will probably have been sent a transport assessment form. If, on the basis of the assessment, your child qualifies for transport and they attend a special school or unit then it will almost certainly be provided. If your child attends a mainstream school then again the criteria applies. However, if your child attends your preferred school and this is not the nearest appropriate school to your home then you will be responsible for transport, not the LA.

In other words, if the LA agrees to a parental preference of school they do not have to provide transport.

East Local Education Area Office	
<p>Address: Omnibus, Lesbourne Road, Reigate, RH2 7JA Tel : 01737 737600 Area Special Needs Manager : Carol Bennett (acting)</p>	
<p>North East Elmbridge, Epsom & Ewell, Spelthorne</p>	<p>South East Reigate & Banstead, Tandridge, Mole Valley</p>
West Local Education Area Office	
<p>Address: Grosvenor House, London Square, Cross Lanes Guildford, GU1 1FA Tel: 01483 517900/901 Area Special Needs Manager: Carole Gill</p>	
<p>North West Runnymede, Woking, Surrey Heath</p>	<p>South West Guildford & Waverley</p>