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Information Advice and Support Kent

A service for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
Helping you to make informed choices



Special Educational Needs (SEN) Transfer to the next phase of education

This leaflet explains about phased transfer (also called transition) when a child moves from Early Years to primary school, primary to secondary and in to post 16. There are also some hints and tips about preparing for transition and visiting schools and colleges.

Children with special educational needs (SEN)

Good preparation for transition is important for all children who have been identified as having a special educational need

5.47 SEN support should include planning and preparing for transition, before a child moves into another setting or school. This can also include a review of the SEN support being provided or the EHC plan. To support the transition, information should be shared by the current setting with the receiving setting or school. The current setting should agree with parents the information to be shared as part of this planning process (SEND code of practice 2015)

Early Years transition to primary school

Reception class in primary school is still part of the early year's foundation stage. Compulsory school age starts the term after a child turns 5 years old. Children start primary school in the September following their fourth Birthday.

When should I start applying for primary schools?

You can apply for a mainstream primary school from the November before your child is due to start school. You can find out about when your child can start school and how to complete the on-line application form by visiting Kent County Council's website www.kent.gov.uk/primaryadmissions

If you require a paper application form or information booklet, please call 03000 41 21 21. Text relay: 18001 03000 41 21 or email: primaryadmissions@kent.gov.uk

You need to list three schools that you prefer. The application process **closes** mid-January. The National offer day is the 16th April, this is when you will find out which school your child has been offered for September.

Once a place has been offered, you can defer entry to school if you feel your child would benefit from starting later during the Reception school year, but not past the beginning of the term after they turn 5.

Children born between April and August are known as 'Summer born', which means you can defer their entry until the following September. Your child would join Year 1, unless special arrangements are agreed with the headteacher of the school that your child could start in Reception – please see further details about 'summer born' children and when to apply on KCC website: www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-age. Or contact our helpline.

Admission criteria

All schools have admission criteria to decide which children get places. The school or Local Authority usually set these.

All state-funded schools must give priority to admitting children who:

- are in care or being looked after
- have been in care

Admission criteria are different for each school.

They may give priority to children who:

- live close to the school
- have a brother or sister at the school already
- have a specific religion (for faith schools)
- are eligible for the pupil premium or the service personnel pupil premium

For children with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan: you will be asked to give your preference of school to the Local Authority who will name that school in the EHC plan unless there is a lawful reason for them not to do so. The school must give your child a place if it is named in an EHC plan.

The Education, Health and Care Plan will be amended to name the school by the 15th February in the year that your child is due to transition.

Primary to secondary transitions

Secondary schools hold open days/evenings during late September and October for you and your child to go and view.

The online application process closes on the 31st October during school year 6. The National release/offer date is the 1st March which is when you will find out which school your child has been allocated for September.

Admissions criteria

Admission criteria are different for each school. They may give priority to children who:

- live close to the school
- have a brother or sister at the school already
- have a specific religion (for faith schools)
- pass an entrance exam for selective schools (for instance Grammar school)
- went to a specific primary school (a 'feeder school')
- are eligible for the pupil premium or the service personnel pupil premium
- whose parent has worked at the school for 2 years or more

Your Local Authority can give you information about schools' criteria and how to apply.

For children with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, this will be amended to show the current school as well as the secondary school from September. This should be completed by the 15th February in the year your child is due to transition.

Secondary to post 16 transitions

All young people should receive careers advice in year 10 which should assist them in considering which college or 6th form they wish to apply to. Some young people choose to stay on in their current school.

To find out about support in mainstream colleges please see our leaflet [Types of special educational needs support in college](#).

Colleges start their open day/evenings from the October in school year 11.

Colleges will ask for the young person to register their interest in a specific course. An interview for that course will then be offered for a later date.

Courses are subject to meeting the course criteria of receiving specific GCSE grades.

GCSE results are released on a Thursday in the third week of August.

To find out more about post 16 options see Kent County Council's website: www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/college-sixth-form-employment-and-training

Young People with an Education, Health and Care plan

The Annual Review held prior to the year the young person is due to transition, is when you need to notify the Local Authority of the young person's preference. The plan will be amended to show the post 16 placement for September, by the 31st March alongside the current placement.

What to consider when choosing a school or post 16 provider

To help make your decision you can look at the school or college website to find out:

- admission arrangements, including how to apply
- details of the curriculum
- SEN Policy/SEN Report
- behaviour policy
- links to Ofsted reports
- links to performance data
- the school's latest key stage 2 and 4 attainment and progress measures
- their policies for children with special educational needs and disabilities
- the amount of money they get for taking underprivileged children (the 'pupil premium'), what they do with it and the effect it has had.

You can also get advice about choosing state-funded schools on Kent County Council's Local Offer: <https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/special-educational-needs/support-for-school-age-children/apply-for-and-choose-a-school>

You may wish to visit the schools, colleges or post 16 providers before making your decision (this could be in person or a virtual visit).

Visiting Schools, Colleges and Post 16 Providers

Contact the education provider that you are interested in, to find out your options to view.

Visiting the education provider in the day may give you an idea of how lessons are conducted and the working environment. If you are not able to physically visit a setting; you may like to talk to them about a virtual tour.

Attending school/college open days may also give you an idea of the resources, and an opportunity to talk to other parents.

You may find it helpful to speak with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) or Head Teacher, in school, to discuss your child's needs and how your child will be supported within the classroom and at social break times. It is also important to discuss your involvement in your child's progress and how the teaching staff will tell you about your child's development throughout the year. This may be through reports, provision maps, a communication book, face to face, by phone or email.

You may also wish to consider:

Special Educational Needs

- does the education provider have experience of children with similar needs, and what strategies have been effective?
- how do staff pass information about individual pupils to all staff who will teach your child?
- how does the education provider communicate with parents?
- is there a designated 'safe place' for pupils who are particularly vulnerable?

School building:

- find out about the Key stage area/building your child will be accessing
- how many children are there in a class?
- where are the toilets located?
- what facilities are available e.g. library, computer rooms?
- what is your impression of the classroom environment?

Accessibility:

- is there a disabled toilet, how far is this, can it be accessed by a child or does a teacher need to support?
- are their stairs, do they have handrails or a ramp?
- if there is lift access, does a member of staff have to support?
- if your child has medical requirements how will they be supported to remain independent?

Breaktime:

- how big is the playground and how many year groups access the area at the same time?
- are there any activities during breaktimes?
- where, or who can your child go to for help?

Lunchtime:

- dinner hall: how many children/year groups are accessing the hall at one time?
- what are the seating arrangements like?
- are there quiet areas for children to eat?
- are there school dinner menus, what are the packed lunch arrangements?
- if your child has dietary requirements, how will this be accommodated?
- is there specific lunchtime staff or do the teaching staff/assistants cover lunch supervision?
- are there any lunchtime clubs?

Medical needs:

- if your child has a medical condition, it will be important to discuss any special arrangements that need to be put in place for your child. You may wish to discuss this further with the School Nurse.
- if your child needs to take medication during the day where will this be held?

Social and emotional needs:

- how does the school feel to you?
- if you have taken your child, ask them what they felt about the school.

Transport

- when thinking about your child's journey to school you can look at Kent County Council's Local Offer for information about transport for children with SEND <https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-transport/school-transport-for-children-with-special-educational-needs>

Preparation for transition

Once a placement has been confirmed, you may wish to discuss a transition plan with your current school and the new school/college, to prepare your child for the transition. Some options are:

- taster days
- an introduction to new teachers, classrooms, and layout of the school or college
- being provided with a visual plan of the school or college

You may also wish to meet with the class teacher, and/or SENCo a few weeks into the term to discuss how your child has settled in and the progress your child is making.

Where to get further information and advice.

You can contact **IASK Helpline** see below.

For information about SEND services and Kent County Council's process and procedures see **Kent County Council's SEND Information Hub (Local Offer)** link:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/special-educational-needs>

On request, this information can be provided in alternative formats.

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