

Transition to Primary school



Information, advice and support for children and young people with a disability or special educational needs and their parents/carers

Moving from an early years provider or foundation stage unit into school is an exciting but sometimes challenging step for most young children. It is important that your child's needs are met and they are able to grow in confidence and feel they are listened to. For example, staying with current friendship groups may be very important to some young children but not to all. Parents may be anxious about their child's transition into school, but where there is partnership between families, the previous provision and the new school most children settle down well and enjoy their time at school.

Can I choose which primary school I would like my child to attend?

All parents, including those of children with SEND, have the right to inform the LA (Local Authority) which primary schools they would like to apply to. This is called 'expressing a preference for a school' and is done by completing an application. You can do this online, over the phone or by completing a paper form.

You should consider early on which primary school you want your child to attend, which might be most suitable school for your child's needs and check out the waiting list and admission arrangements for the schools you are most interested in. Admission arrangements may vary from school to school so it is important to check your child meets the criteria for admission where possible.

If there are more applications than places available, schools will allocate places in order of their published admission arrangements. For example, some schools may allocate places to children who live within their catchment area. If you have already approached a school or you have put your child's name down at a school, you still need to make an application. Attendance at a particular nursery does not guarantee a place at the linked infant school.

Starting school

All children can start school full time in reception in the September following their fourth birthday. If you do not wish your child to start school in September you can request to defer taking up the school place until later in the school year. You should contact the school directly to discuss this.

Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County Council provide information about their schools, the admission policies and procedures in detail; these are available online :

<http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/learning/schools/admissions/> and
<http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/schooladmissions>

Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City have a co-ordinated admissions policy. This means that you apply to the Local Authority (LA) in which you live regardless of the school you wish your child to attend. Your LA will then process your application and pass it on to the other LA if you have nominated a school outside of their area. You should list up to 4 preferences if you live in Nottinghamshire and up to 6 preferences if you live in Nottingham City, and include your reasons for your preferred school along with any professional or special evidence at the time of application. If your preferences include Voluntary Aided, Foundation or Academy schools, you may also need to complete a 'supplementary form' available from the individual school. If your child has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) it is important to mention this on the application form and give a short description of your child's needs.

Which school?

All schools, including academies, provide support for pupils with special educational needs, and can access Local Authority specialist services and resources. However, schools vary in the way they organise and manage this support. The design of the buildings and grounds can also be important in deciding whether a school is suitable for a particular child eg. some schools have already been adapted to become more suitable for children with significant mobility difficulties. You may wish to consider other aspects such as how the school works in partnership with parents, whether the general atmosphere is welcoming, how SEN children are reflected in the school's most recent Ofsted report, how positive behavior is promoted etc.

You can find out how each school supports children with special educational needs by looking at the School Information Report; this should be on the school's website or you can view it via the LA's Local Offer.

For Nottingham City Local Offer :

<http://fis.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/kb5/nottingham/fsd/localoffer.page?familychannel=8>

For Nottinghamshire Local Offer :

<http://nottinghamshire.sendlocaloffer.org.uk>

Talking it over



It's important to keep an open mind and consider several possibilities before making a decision. Talk to staff at your child's present provision and other involved professionals who understand your child's needs, before you make up your mind. You can do this informally within your early years provision and check what transition support will be in place. If your child has an EHCP then this discussion may take place at the Annual Review meeting or can be brought forward if necessary. You will be able to give your own views and listen to professionals' views at any of these meetings, and discuss the schools you have considered.

Who else can help?

The admissions process can sometimes seem a little daunting! You may find it helpful to speak to Ask Us Nottinghamshire (details below), for impartial advice, information and support relating to transition into school for children with special educational needs.



Transport



Pupils with Special Transport Needs

Although your child may have a special educational need, it does not automatically mean they will have a special transport need. Special transport needs are assessed on the ability of a child to walk to and from school, taking into account their age and appropriate support expected from parents generally for a child of that age.

A special transport need may be where the child:

- is unable to walk or cannot walk without help
- lives within walking distance of the school (2 miles for children under 8 years old) but cannot walk safely to and from school, even if accompanied by parent/carer
- cannot use public transport even with appropriate support from parents

If your child is assessed as having a special transport need, the LA will provide travel assistance or may pay you a mileage allowance to get your child to the nearest (catchment) school, or the school designated by the LA as the most appropriate school for the child.

Special transport arrangements will usually be one of the following: bus, minibus, taxi, ambulance or mileage allowance. The LA may ask you to accompany your child on the transport to and from school if they are travelling alone, or may provide an escort to travel on the transport depending on the age and needs of the children on board. Transport is normally provided from the home address to school and back at the appropriate school times, but it may be possible to discuss a different arrangement if there is a particular need.

For further information call Ask Us Nottinghamshire on 0115 8041740

If you think your child has a special transport need, please contact the appropriate Transport team to ask about special transport arrangements from home to school.

☎ 0300 500 8080 if you live in the County

☎ 0115 876 4300 if you live in the City.

Once your child has started at school

Some children settle down quickly at their new school while others will take longer to adjust to new surroundings. The first term will be a period of children and staff getting to know each other and settling into school life. During the first term there will be a parents' evening for parents, which is important for children with additional needs. You will be able to share information about how your child has settled an opportunity to pick up on any concerns that you or the school may have.

Further information and admissions booklets are available from:-

Nottingham City: School Admission and Exclusion Team

☎ 0115 8415568

<http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/schooladmissions>

Nottinghamshire County Council :

☎ 01623 433499

<http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/learning/schools/admissions/>

Support from Ask Us Nottinghamshire

You can contact Ask Us Nottinghamshire to talk to a member of staff about any concerns you may have, including issues around transition in to school.

Postal address :
57 Maid Marian Way,
Nottingham,
NG1 6GE

Tel : 0800 1217772

E-mail: askus@futuresforyou.com

Checklist for Visiting Primary Schools



Listed below and on the diagram attached are some examples of questions you might want to ask regarding transition for your child's move into their first school.

Some can be answered through the written information you have about a school e.g. school brochure, SEN policy, behaviour policy, recent OFSTED report. Others might be answered through discussion with school staff on a visit to the school, or with your present provider. Not all the questions will be appropriate for your child, and you may like to add questions of your own too.

How will my present early years childcare provider plan for successful transition into primary school, and are links already in place with this school?

Will all the present information gathered regarding my child be effectively shared, when and how?

Does school have experience of helping children with similar needs to my child, and will other professionals be welcome and called upon?

How is support organised for children with special needs? What support is usually available?

How will specialist SEN staff ensure that everyone is familiar with my child's individual needs and liaise with all people required?

What opportunities do staff have for training on SEN issues?

How will school support my child to settle in?

How will meeting the needs of my child be incorporated into the school?

How does the school make sure that children with special needs are included in after school activities, trips, sports and other opportunities?

What would the school do to ensure my child has full access across the curriculum?

Are all areas of the school accessible to my child? If not, could adaptations be made or would other arrangements be necessary?

Every school has a behavior-management and an anti-bullying policy. Where can I view these policies?

How does the school promote and manage a positive behaviour system, taking into account the needs of the individual child?

Does the school offer any extra support to parents of children with SEND?

How does the school communicate with parents? Telephone/e-mail/letters etc

How often would I be involved in progress review meetings?

What should I do if I have concerns about my child?

How would other pupils be helped to understand my child's individual needs?

What support could be in place for unstructured times - play times/lunch times etc?

How does the school celebrate the success of pupils with special needs and different cultures?



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