

# A Step by Step Guide to Choosing the Right Secondary School for Children with SEND

Deciding on a secondary school for your child is probably one of the most important decisions that you will make as a parent/carer. This guide will enable you to be confident in making a choice with which you and your child are happy.



## Step 1: Think about what is important for you and your child.

Things parents have told us they want from a Secondary School

- A good SEND department who will give my child the right level of support
- A good academic profile
- A behaviour policy that works for their child
- A school their child can get into
- A manageable journey
- A school their child can find their way around
- Teachers who know about their child
- A school their child can keep up with the learning in
- Good home school communication

Things children have told us they want from a Secondary School

- To be with my friends/ brothers and sisters
- To be able to get there easily
- Not a strict school
- Not to get lost
- Not to get bullied
- A nice uniform or no uniform at all
- Good sports field/ studio/technology equipment
- Not too much homework
- Interesting clubs to make friends like me

*Top Tip - When looking at each school, imagine your child there and think about what he/she will need to make a successful transition to secondary school.*

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## Weigh it Up

Identify priorities for you and your child – there is no perfect school and the best school for one child is not the best school for another. Be clear on what you **MUST** have and what you **WOULD LIKE** to have.

*Top Tip – You may want to talk to other people who know your child well. Their teachers may have noticed different things about what is important to your child as they see them in the school environment.*

A great time to discuss this is at the Year 5 annual review or SEN progress meeting where the professionals who work with your child will all be together

## Step 2: Make a shortlist of possible schools

A useful place to start is the **Haringey Secondary School Admissions Booklet**. The guide contains information on Haringey schools and their admission arrangements. You can also look on the **Haringey Local Offer** to find out about the Special schools in Haringey

*Top Tip – Start planning the move to secondary school in year 4 or 5 so that you can talk about your preferences and ask questions at the year 5 annual review or school planning meeting.*

Do some research on the schools you are interested in. This folder contains a summary of how the schools support children with SEND – you can look at this and then look at the school website to find out more. You can also want to look at the school's Ofsted report, which will tell you about what the school does well. [www.Ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.Ofsted.gov.uk)

You may also want to talk to other parents or older children about their experiences. Teachers, the school SENDCO or the professionals who work with your child may also be able to tell you more.

## Step 3: Visit the schools on your shortlist.

All mainstream secondary schools have an open evening during the autumn term, which is open to all. You may benefit from attending a number of the open evenings to look at different schools.

You can also contact a school and ask for an individual visit to discuss your child's needs and the support the school can offer. Try to ask the same questions in each school so that you can compare the answers. At the back of this booklet is a list of how to contact each school and a selection of questions you may wish to ask. Members of staff in schools are used to

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having parents visiting and will be happy to answer any questions you may have. Schools organise support for young people with special educational needs in different ways so it is important to discuss how the school would support your child and their individual needs.

*Top Tip - General open evenings can be very busy and overwhelming for some children with SEND. You may want to arrange to visit at another time with your child, once you have narrowed the choice down*

*Top Tip - Look at the whole school not just the special educational needs aspects and try to imagine your child there as he/she gets older.*

*"I think it is really important that you find a SENCo that you can get along with, who understands your child and your concerns. My son's SENCo is wonderful. We had a number of conversations and meetings before Calum finished year 6. We were given a school floor plan, photos of the teaching assistants that would be working with him and key words for each of his subjects so he could feel prepared". Parent*

### **Step 4: Choose the schools you like in order of preference.**

Once you have chosen the schools you want you will need to complete your application form. It is important that you complete your application by 31st October 2022 otherwise your preference will not be considered with everyone else's

If your child is at SEN Support, you complete the Haringey admissions form as the booklet explained. You will receive your offer on March 1st, 2023

If your child has an EHCP, you will be contacted by the SEN Department in September and asked to express a preference for two schools. If you are worried that you have not heard, then contact them on (Tel: 020 8489 1913, Email [SENDPhaseTransfers@haringey.gov.uk](mailto:SENDPhaseTransfers@haringey.gov.uk)). You will receive your offer on February 15th, 2023.

*Top Tip - it is important to express a preference for more than one school as your top choice is not guaranteed. Schools prioritise children with EHCPs but need to consider everyone who applies to be sure they can meet everyone's needs.*