



**Transfer to
Secondary School for
children with EHCPs**

Introduction

Choosing a new school for any child can be stressful. If your child has an EHC Plan then the process can be more complicated and it pays to start early. We have produced this guide to help you through the process and give you some tips to help make your decisions easier.

Choosing a school

It is important to remember that **all children are different** and what works for one child may not be the best for another, even if they have the same type of special educational need. You know your child best and understand what is important to your child. All children will learn best if they are happy.

Think about your child's needs and what is important to them. Will it be important for them to attend a local school with friends or will the expertise within the school and the school environment be more important?

Sources of information

There are many ways to find out about what different schools can offer:

- Open evenings: most mainstream schools will hold open evenings in September/October. Some hold them in the summer term. It is worth going along to these in year 5 if you can as discussions about secondary school will start at the year 5 annual review.
- School website and prospectus
- The Local Offer. Each school publishes details of what they can offer for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities on the Local Offer <http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/our-local-offer-for-children-and-young-people-with-additional-needs/find-services-for-children-with-additional-needs/find-special-educational-needs-services/>
- Ofsted reports
- Other documents that may be useful:
 - SEN Policy
 - Behaviour Policy
 - Governor's Annual Report
 - Accessibility Plan

School visits

There is no substitute for visiting a school and seeing it for yourself. You can attend general open evenings or arrange a personal visit during the day so that you can see the school in action. It would be a good idea to arrange to speak with the SENCO to discuss your child's particular needs and how they might meet these needs.

Prepare yourself with a list of questions

- How does the school arrange extra support and how is it delivered?
- How will school communicate with you about progress?
- How will they help to ensure your child has a successful transition from primary to secondary school?

You can find more information about questions to ask schools in our leaflet **What to Look for in a School**, which can be found here:

https://search3.openobjects.com/mediamanager/wokingham/info/files/what_to_look_for_in_a_school_and_checklist_for_visiting_schools_2017_.pdf

School Options

- The majority of children transfer to their local mainstream school, although parents may request any school, either within Wokingham or in another authority.
- A small number of children will need more specialist support at either a resource school or special school. The following are available within Wokingham:
 - The Oaks Resource, St Crispins for children with ASD
 - Northern House for children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties
 - Addington School for children with severe learning difficulties
- Parents may also request another authority maintained mainstream school with a resource or special school.
- A very small number of children will have needs that cannot be met by local maintained schools. Parents may also express a preference for an Independent, non-maintained or free special school.

If you need more information about school choices please contact us so we can talk through suitable options for you to consider.

School Transport

Some children with SEN may qualify for free home to school transport. As a simple guide, secondary children will qualify for school transport if

- They live more than 3 miles from their nearest suitable school
- OR
- They are unable to walk to school because of their Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

AND

- They are attending their nearest suitable school. This may be a consideration for you if you think you would like your child to attend a mainstream school that is not your closest school.

Please see the local offer for more details <http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-information-and-services/school-and-college-transport/>

Secondary Transfer Timeline

YEAR 5	
Year 5 Autumn term	Attend secondary school open evenings (please note, Maiden Erlegh hold their open evenings in June).
	Arrange to visit schools on a normal working day.
Year 5 Annual Review	Start discussions about suitable secondary placements. Review EHC plan for any changes needed ready for secondary school.
YEAR 6	
Autumn term	Admission information distributed. Please tick the box to say that your child has an EHCP, complete your preferences and return to admissions by 31 October, either electronically or hard copy. Please note that if you are requesting a resource or special school you will not be able to do this online and will need to submit a hard copy.
	Attend secondary school open evenings.
November	SEN receive parental preferences from admissions team.
Mid November	SEN issue draft amended EHC plan. Parents have 15 days to check this and request amendments and to fill in the EHC Plan Preference Form stating their choice of school.
	Admissions panels for special school and resource placements.
15 February	Final EHC plans issued with school named.
Summer Term	Transport requests are submitted by SEN where needed. You will be asked to check the details on the application form are correct.
Summer term	Most schools will arrange transition visits during the last half term to enable children to become familiar with their new surroundings. Many mainstream schools will arrange extra visits for their SEN children.
	Parents of children with autism may find the Autism Toolkit is useful. This is on the local offer: http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/our-local-offer-for-children-and-young-people-with-additional-needs/disabilities-and-conditions-support/support-for-autism/

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