

School transfer

**A guide for
parents/carers
of children with
a statement
of special
educational
needs**




Parent
PARTNERSHIPS

Introduction

Changing schools is a major event in a child's life. This booklet will tell you what will happen and how you can help your child move successfully to the next school.

The school transfer process is different for a pupil with a statement of special educational needs. Your child's statement is a legal document, which the Isle of Wight education authority is responsible for maintaining. Working together with parents and carers they will ask you for the school you would prefer your child to attend.

It is helpful to obtain the booklet 'Educating your child' from the admissions team before you consider any school for your child. It contains useful information on schools' admission policies, free school meals, etc. Each school also produces its own prospectus, please contact the school directly for a copy.

School admissions for pupils with statements are managed by the SEN assessment and review team, not by the admissions team, and you should contact your child's casework officer if you have any queries.

Sources of help

SEN assessment and review team

Tel: 823412

Fax: 826099

E-mail sen@iow.gov.uk

Parent Partnership

Tel/Fax: 825548

E-mail: parentpartnership@iow.gov.uk

Choice adviser

Tel: 825548

Mobile: 07807 159603

E-mail: choiceadviser@iow.gov.uk

School admissions

Tel: 823455

Fax: 826099

E-mail: school.admissions@iow.gov.uk

Visiting schools

Choosing a school for your child can be a daunting experience. You may have heard talk about your local schools or read reports in the local paper about league tables and Ofsted reports. One family's experiences of a school will vary from another's. Has the school got a good behavioural policy? How is bullying dealt with? What SEN provision is there? You may have many questions to ask, so where do you start?

Advance planning is essential and parents/carers of pupils with statements are encouraged to start thinking about school transfer in Years 3 and 7, as well as discuss possible choices at the annual review held towards the end of that school year.

You need to collect as much information as possible so you can make an informed decision about which school you would like your child to go to.

It is also a good idea to look at the latest Ofsted report for each school you are considering. Ofsted reports can tell you about the strengths and weaknesses of the school at the time of inspection.

All schools have their own prospectus which should tell you about the curriculum, times of the school's day, the uniform, out of school activities.

You can go to open evenings or you can contact the school direct and arrange a visit. Contact the schools you are interested in and find out who is the best person to talk to about your child's particular needs. This could be the headteacher or SENCO.

Before visiting a school make a note of all the things you want to talk about at the meeting. Take your child's statement and perhaps the last annual review report. The choice adviser can assist you and accompany you and your child on visits to schools to help you make an informed decision.

When visiting a school, think about how the school can meet your child's particular needs especially if you are considering a school based on its SEN policies or if you are looking for specialist provision.

Choosing a school

Early in the autumn term when your child is in year 4 or 8, the SEN assessment and review team will send you an application form together with a letter asking you to let them know which school you would like your child to go to. The choice adviser can help you with this.

Even if you would prefer your child to move to a special school, or one of the resourced centres within a maintained school, it is important that you complete the application form for your preferred maintained school. In this way, if your child does not meet the criteria for entry to a special school or resourced centre you will hopefully have secured a place at the school of your choice.

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

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

- The school is suitable for your child's age, educational needs, ability and skills.
- Your child being at the school does not mean a less efficient education for the other children who are educated with him or her.
- The LEA is using its resources (finances, staff, transport) efficiently by placing your child at the school.



The SEN assessment and review team will carefully consider the school you would prefer your child to go to. They will send a copy of your child's existing statement to your preferred school and will ask for the school's views, in relation to the three points listed above on whether the school can be named on the final statement. The school then has 15 days to give their views.

At the beginning of November you will receive an amendment notice and application form asking which school you wish the local authority to consider your child attending. You will need to check the amendment notice carefully and contact the SEN assessment and review team within 15 days if you have any questions or comments.

By 15 February you will receive your child's statement naming the school offered. A copy of the statement will also be sent to the school. If you want to discuss the school named, contact the SEN assessment and review team or Parent Partnership, who will be happy to talk to you about this.



Questions and answers

How will my child be involved?

It is important to know your child's views about which school they would like to attend. Children will have their own concerns about transferring to a different school and will want to feel heard and understood and that their views are listened to. Your child will be encouraged and helped to put in writing their views of their progress through the annual review process.

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

A school **cannot** refuse to accept a child just because the child has special educational needs. The school could say that they were unable to meet a child's needs without additional resources.

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



Are the arrangements different for special schools?

Parents/carers are able to express a preference for one of the special schools in the same way as for mainstream schools. You should visit both mainstream and special schools to be able to make an informed choice about the provision available. If your child is in Medina House School, your child will transfer at the end of Year 7.

I would like my child to attend one of the specialist resourced provisions – how do I apply?

Places at the resourced provisions are allocated by special admissions panels which meet in the autumn term and consider all the children who might be candidates. If you would like your child to be considered for a place at one of the resource provision, your request must be supported by a professional involved with your child.

It is advisable that you do not name the school where the center is sited as your preference unless you are happy for your child to attend the mainstream school where the center is sited, without a place in the center.

If your child is not allocated a place at a resourced provision, and you are unhappy with this decision, please contact the SEN assessment and review team or Parent Partnership.

What about transport?

Generally parents are responsible for their child's journey to and from school however transport can be provided in certain circumstances. School transport may be provided to children with Statements only where appropriate. A copy of the school transport policy can be obtained from County Hall (Tel: 821000) or is on the local authority education website: www.eduwight.gov.uk

If you feel your child should receive transport, you should write to your casework officer in the SEN assessment and review team, outlining your reasons and this will be considered by the SEN panel on an individual basis.

Special schools

Medina House

School Lane,
Newport,
Isle of Wight
PO30 2HS

Tel: (01983) 522917

Headteacher: Mr R. Goodfellow

A special school for children with severe and complex learning difficulties for children aged up to age 11 (Reception to Year 6).

St. Georges School

Watergate Road,
Newport,
Isle of Wight
PO30 5TA

Tel: (01983) 524634

Headteacher: Ms S. Holman

A special school for young people with severe and complex learning difficulties from the age of 11 years upwards (Year 7 to 14).

Mainstream schools with resourced provision on the Isle of Wight:

Nodehill Middle School

Upper St. James Street,
Newport,
Isle of Wight
PO30 1LJ

Tel: (01983) 522886

Headteacher: Mr D. Morris

Resourced provision for pupils with communication and interaction difficulties.

Carisbrooke High School

Mountbatten Drive,
Newport,
Isle of Wight
PO30 2DX

Tel: (01983) 524651

Headteacher: Ms M. Hoather

Resourced provision for pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

Terms used in this booklet

Annual review	A review of the statement held once a year to ensure that the provision continues to meet the child's needs.
Choice adviser	Gives parents/carers impartial and neutral advice about choosing schools.
LEA	Local education authority.
Maintained school	A school with is maintained by a local authority – any community, foundation, voluntary schools.
Ofsted	Inspection team that visit and inspects schools.
Parent Partnership	Provide advice and information to parents whose children have special educational needs. It provides impartial and factual support on all aspects of the SEN provision to help parents play an active and informed role in their child's education.
Resourced provision	A centre or unit for special educational needs attached to a mainstream school.

SEN

Special educational needs.

SEN code of practice

A guide to schools and local education authorities about the help to be given to children with special educational needs. Schools and local authorities must have regard to the code when working with a child with special educational needs.

SENCO

The teacher responsible for special educational needs within a school.

SENDIST

An independent body that hears appeals lodged by parents/carers against SEN decisions made by the local authority. SENDIST also hears most claims of unlawful discrimination in admissions exclusions and education and associated services.

Special school

A school which is resourced and organised to provide for the education of pupils with a statement who need a high degree of support in the learning situation and in some cases specialist facilities, equipment and teaching.

This publication is available on request in large print, audiotape or Braille and in other languages. For further details please contact the Isle of Wight Council on (01983) 821000 (Typetalk available)

Parent Partnerships

11 Orchard Street

Newport

Isle of Wight PO30 1JZ

Telephone/Fax: 01983 825548

E-mail: choiceadviser@iow.gov.uk



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