

Changing schools - advice to parents

Moving your child from one school to another school because you are dissatisfied with the current school your child is attending can be very stressful, affecting your child both socially and academically.

It is important that you consider whether a transfer is really the best option for your child. Having a conversation with your child and with staff at your child's current school may avoid the need to transfer to another school.

Why do you want your child to change schools?

If your request is for any of the reasons listed below, it is advised that the following steps should be taken before you complete an in-year application to transfer to another school:

Child not attending school/ Poor attendance

- Discuss with your child, and the staff at the school, the reason why they don't want to attend school.
- Explain to staff at the school if your child is worried about anything in particular and discuss how the situation can be resolved.

To avoid exclusion

- Discuss with staff at the school any reasons why your child's behaviour is non-compliant with the school's behaviour policy.
- Discuss with the school your child's 'Pastoral Support Plan'. If a plan is not in place, ask the school if it is possible to set one up.
- If your child has a plan in place, ask if it has been reviewed recently.

Special Educational Needs

- Discuss the situation with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) at the school. Contact the Special Educational Needs/Education Health and Care (EHC) Plan team at the council.
- You may wish to seek impartial advice from the [Information, Advice and Support Service \(IASS\)](#).

Bullying or friendship issues

- All schools have an anti-bullying policy. Talk to staff at the school about how the issue can be addressed and resolved.

You have a complaint about the school or unresolved issues

- Discuss your complaint with staff at the school to include your child's teacher, head of year, headteacher/principal. If you feel your complaint has not been dealt with satisfactorily, ask the school for their complaints procedure.
- Put your complaint in writing to the Chair of Governors at the school.

Returning to school from Home Education

If your child has been home educated following a period of time in a school you will be offered a place back at the school your child was most recently attending. If this is not deemed to be appropriate then the originating school can negotiate a managed move to another school if the other school is in agreement.

If your child attended a primary school and now needs a secondary school place you will be offered a place at your nearest school with spaces.

Important considerations before deciding to move your child to an alternative school

Teaching and school organisation

Each school teaches the National Curriculum in different ways and at different times of the year.

Have you thought about how will your child cope with learning new rules and doing things in different ways?

From year 9 onwards, children will have chosen their exam options (for GCSE) at their current school and you may find that:

- Your child is unable to continue to study the same subjects as the option groups are already full in the new school.
- The exam boards and course work for their chosen subjects are different, so your child may have to start course work again.
- Some schools start GCSE coursework in year 9 and some schools start coursework in year 10 and there is the potential that your child will miss out on crucial parts of the coursework.

Relationships

- Your child's emotional well-being may be affected.
- How does your child feel about leaving their current school and starting a fresh at a new school?
- How will your child cope being the new child in a class where friendship groups have already been formed?
- Does your child find it difficult to make new friends?

Uniform

- Have you thought about the cost involved in the purchase of new uniform including full PE kit?

School travel

- A change of school will usually be regarded as parental choice and as such you would be unlikely to be eligible for help with travel to the preferred school.
- How would your child travel to a new school?
- What would be the cost involved?

If you still want to apply to change schools

If your decision is to still to apply for your child to transfer to another school, you must inform either your child's head of year or headteacher/principal of your decision. You can do this by completing the in-year transfer form. The form should be taken into your child's current school for section 6 to be completed by the school.

There is no guarantee that your preferred school, or any other school in the area, will be able to offer your child an alternative school place as a high percentage of schools in the county are up to their published admission number (PAN) in all year groups.

It is expected that your child will continue to attend their current school until a school place at an alternative school is offered and a date has been arranged for admission.