

Transition to Secondary with an EHC Plan in Wandsworth



by WIASS and SEND PARENT CARERS IN
WANDSWORTH

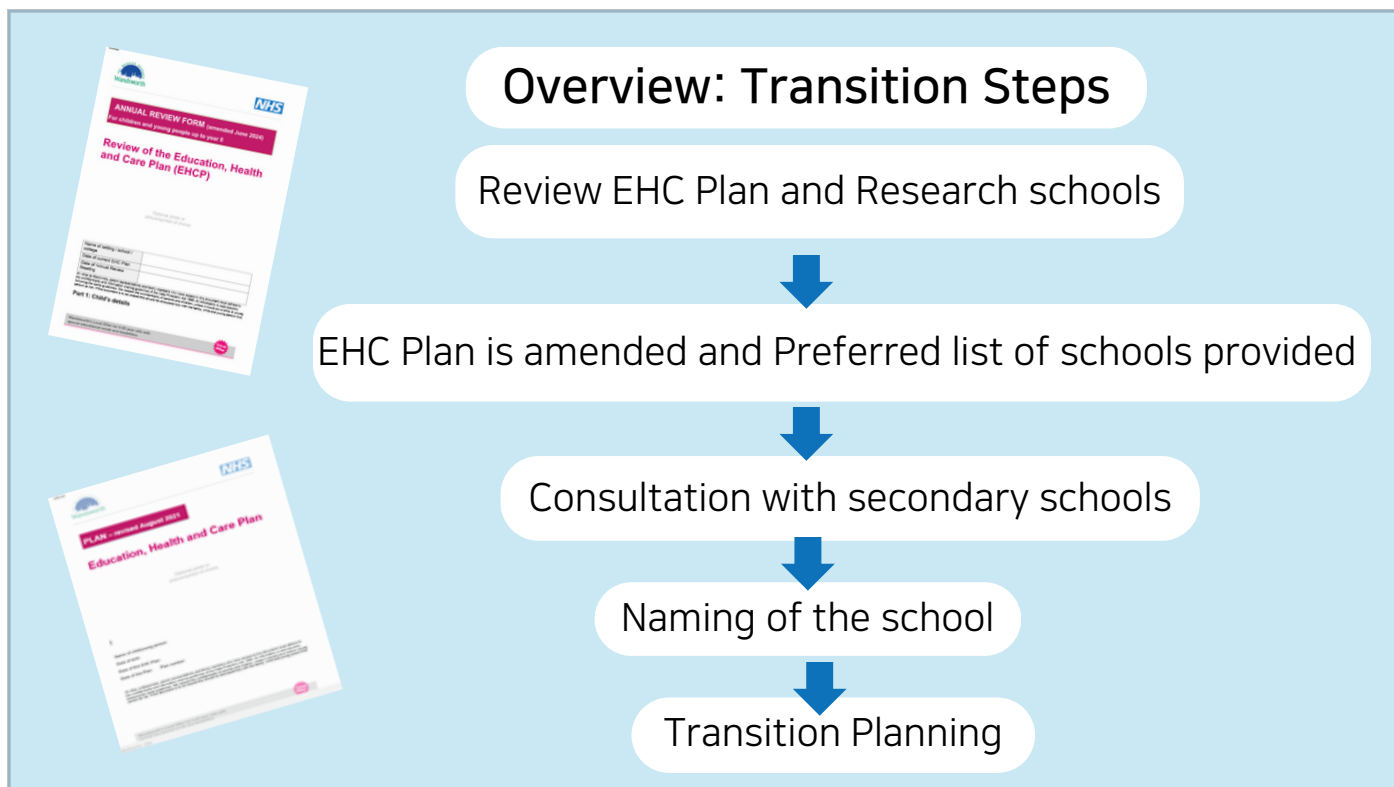
May 2025 - Correct at time of recording



This presentation gives an overview of the move to secondary school for your child with an EHC Plan in Wandsworth.

The presentation has been created by Wandsworth Information Advice and Support Service (WIASS) and SEND Parent Carers in Wandsworth (the local Parent Carer Forum). It is correct at the time of recording in May 2025. You may want to check any details with your EHC Plan Co-ordinator.

Please note that if your child does not have an EHC Plan in place, this presentation will not be relevant to you. The process for transition without an EHC Plan is outlined in the 'Choosing a Wandsworth Secondary School' Booklet, that can be found online.



We thought it would be helpful to start with a quick overview of the process of your child's move to secondary school.

In year 5, your child's Education, Health Care(EHC)Plan will need to be reviewed. You can also start thinking about potential secondary schools for your child.

Following the review of the EHC plan, your child's EHC Plan Co-ordinator will update it to make sure that it reflects their needs for secondary school. Also, you will be asked by the EHC Plan Co-ordinator for a list of your preferred schools.

Next, the updated EHC Plan is sent by the EHC Co-Ordinator to secondary schools, to see if they can meet your child's needs. This is called the Consultation Process.

Following the consultation, a school is named in Section I of the final amended EHC Plan.

You must receive this final plan no later than the 15th February in year 6.

Lastly, you, your child's primary school and named secondary school should work together on a transition plan.



Terminology

EHC PLAN: Is a legal document that describes your child's needs and the support that they need in school.

EHC Plan Co-Ordinator: Is the person in the council who looks after your child's EHC Plan. Their team is called the Special Needs Assessment Service (or SNAS for short).

SENCO: Is the teacher who is responsible for ensuring that the needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are met in schools.

Sometimes they are called the Inclusion Lead.

Before we get started, let's go over some of the terminology that we will be using..



The main types of schools

The law says that all children with an EHC plan should be educated in a **mainstream school** unless you (parent /guardian) request a special school, or the Council decides that a mainstream school cannot meet all of their needs.

Mainstream schools

For children with SEND and without SEND. Some of which have specialist resource bases/units.

Special schools

Support children with a variety of needs, or support children with specific needs.

Now lets talk about the different types of school that may be suitable for your child.

The law says that all children with an EHC plan should be educated in a mainstream school. Unless you (parent/guardian) request a special school, or the Council decides that a mainstream school cannot give all the support your child needs. Later we will explain when a council may decide this.

There are 2 types of Secondary schools: mainstream or special.

Mainstream schools are for children with SEND and without SEND.

Some Mainstream schools have special bases or units which support children with certain types of needs where they can get all or some of their support.

In Wandsworth, there are bases/units that support children with Autism, hearing, language and social & emotional needs.

Whereas Special schools are only for children with Special Educational Needs. Some special schools support children with a variety of needs, and others support children with specific needs. For example, a school can have pupils with complex needs and autism, or some can just support children with autism, or speech and language needs, or moderate leaning needs.



Which types of mainstream or special schools can you request?

Academies
(government
funded
independent
school).

Maintained
schools (a
council school)

Section 41
schools*
(Approved
Independent
School)

Non-maintained
special schools**
(Approved
Independent
School)

*Government approved Independent schools:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-special-schools-and-colleges>

**usually an independent school run by a charity

You have the right to request that the following type of school is named in your child's EHC plan:

An academy is an independent school funded by the government. It can also be a mainstream or a special school too.

A maintained school, is funded by the council. It can be a mainstream or a special school.

Now we move on to Independent schools. An Independent (private) school charges fees to attend instead of being directly funded by the government.

A Section 41 school is an independent school which has been approved by the government for children with special educational needs. You can find a list of these schools on this website shown on the slide.

A non-maintained special school is an independent school usually run by a charity.

If you request any of these types of schools, the council has to consult with them.

Other Types of Independent Schools - not approved!

- Independent schools not on the governments list of approved schools
- If you ask for this type of school the council do need to consider your request.
- Note a school cannot be named in Section I of the EHC plan if it has not offered a place to your child.



There are also independent schools that are not on the governments list of approved schools, as we have spoken about on the previous slide.

You can also request this type of independent school and the council must consider your request.

When the LA is considering your request for this type of independent school, they will need to know that the school

- Has or can offer a place,
- Can meet your child's needs, and,
- Is not a lot more expensive than another school that can meet your child's needs too.

However, sometimes parents ask for this type of school because they believe no other school from the approved list of schools can meet all their child's needs.

Please note: If this type of independent school does not offer a place to your child- the school cannot be named in Section I of the EHC plan.

Start of Year 5
(or earlier)

Finding the right secondary school: Research

- Make a list of potentially suitable schools

Sources of information:

- Choosing a Wandsworth secondary school booklet.
- School SEN information Reports (on school website)
- Ofsted Reports



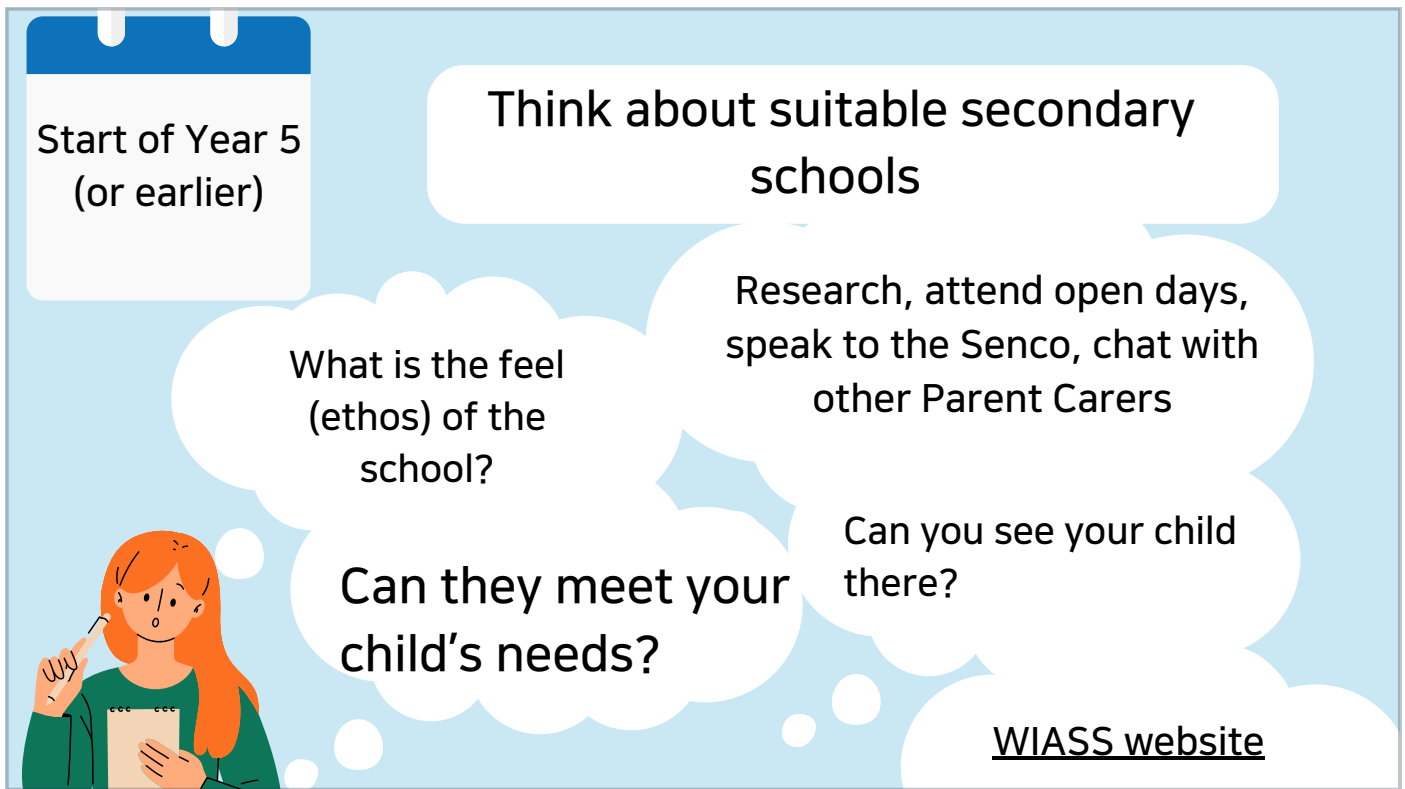
In year 5 (or even earlier if you wish), you will need to start thinking about which secondary schools will be suitable for your child.

If you are unsure about which type of school (Mainstream, Mainstream with a base or a Special school), we would suggest the following:

Make a list of the schools that you think may meet your child's needs, by looking at the choosing a Wandsworth secondary school booklet, school SEN Information reports (on each mainstream school's website) and any Ofsted reports. Please note that the council may be reluctant to name a school that Ofsted have rated as 'requires improvement' or 'inadequate'.

We recommend that you research the schools in the area, attend open days, speak to the Senco of your child's primary school.

Also you can try to speak to the Senco at the secondary schools that you are visiting.



Before visiting the schools make a list of questions that you want to find out about.

Questions that you may want to think about include:

Can the secondary school meet your child's needs?

Can you see your child going to that school?

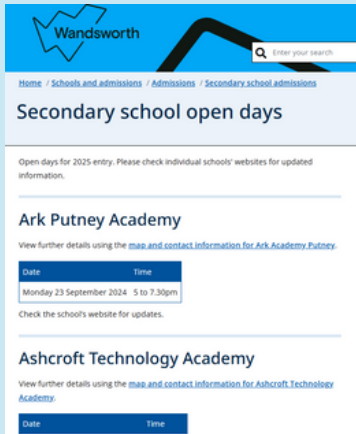
How does the school feel when you are visiting?

For more questions when visiting secondary schools, please read WIIASS "Choosing a Secondary School for Children with an EHC plan document" which can be found on the WIIASS website page, "Looking for a School, if your child has an EHC plan."

You can also find lists of different types of special schools on this webpage too.

School Open Days

September/
October
of Year 5



When are they?:

- Usually in September/October, though some schools also hold them in July

How do we know when they are?:

- Council Website and school websites

Can I meet the senco?

- This varies between schools. The Senco may be available during open events, or you may need to make an appointment. Every school is different.

In Year 5 and also in year 6, you should consider attending secondary school open events usually held in September and October.

This will support you in making an informed decision about the secondary school.

There is a list of dates of open days on Wandsworth council's website or you can contact the schools directly.

Some open days are drop- in events and some need to be booked.

If you would like to meet the secondary senco, you may be able to do this during an open day or you may need to make an appointment. Every school is different.

**Location: How will your child get to
and from the school daily?**



Will they be able to travel on their
own or need help?
Your child may be entitled to
transport assistance from the
council



So you have found a school that you feel could meet your child's needs, you may then want to think about how your child will get there and back every day.

If you feel that your child may have difficulties getting to school, they may be eligible for transport assistance from the council.

Transport Assistance: Eligibility



Distance

- 2 miles - under 8 years old
- 3 miles - over 8 years old

Or

Route to school is unsafe

Or

Special educational needs (SEN), a disability, or mobility problems and could not be walk to school on their own or when accompanied.

Or

Low income family

So let's look at eligibility for transport assistance.

There are four reasons why the Council may agree to provide free transport assistance.

To begin with, children who live outside statutory walking distance (to the school and back home) are eligible to free transport.

For example, statutory distance is measured in the following way,

2 miles -if your child is under 8 years old or

3 miles if your child is over 8 years old, or

They live within the statutory walking distance of their school but their route is unsafe(i.e., busy roads/foot paths) and they could not be expected to walk to school in reasonable safety, even with you. And there is no other safer route, or

They live within the statutory walking distance of their school, but they could not reasonably be expected to walk there because of their special educational needs, disability or mobility need, even if they were accompanied by you.

However, for all above reasons your child will need to be attending their NEAREST suitable school.

Which means a school that is a *qualifying school (maintained/academy/non maintained special school) that is suitable for your child's age, ability, aptitude, and any

special educational needs they may have. It should also be suitable for their sex (i.e. male/female)

A independent school can be a qualifying school if it is proved that it is the nearest suitable school and is named in Section I of the EHC plan.

If your child does not meet one of the above reasons they may be eligible if your child is from a low income family.



Extended Eligibility Rights: Low Income

If your child is from a low income family and the following applies

Aged 8 or over but under 11

Attend their nearest suitable school

It is more than 2 miles from their home

Aged 11 to 16 years

Attend one of their three nearest suitable schools

The school is between 2 and 6 miles from their home

Aged 11 to 16 years

Attend a school that is between 2 and 15 miles from their home

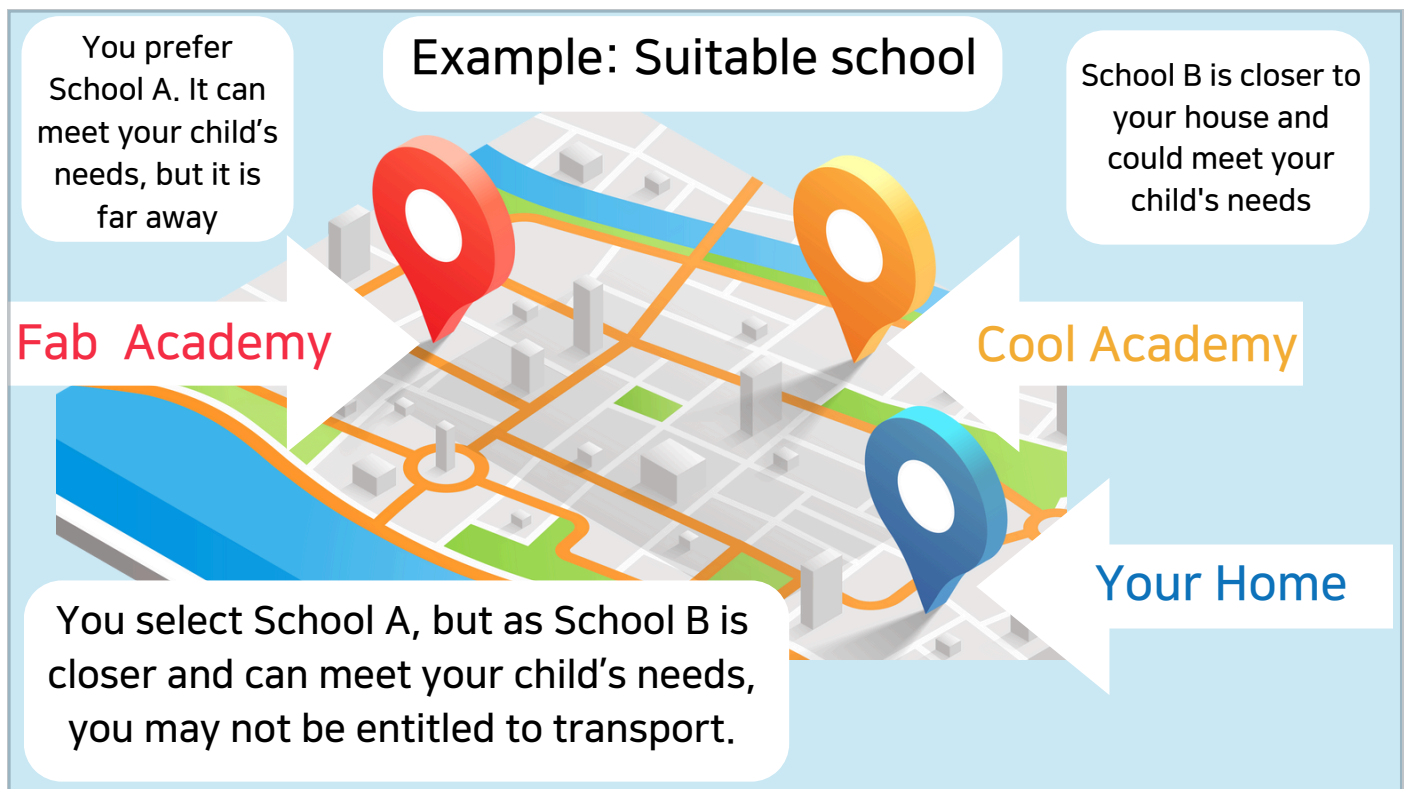
Chosen on religious or belief grounds by the parents and there is no suitable school nearer to their home

If your child is from a low income family, this means, they are eligible for free school meals or they live with a parent who receives maximum Working Tax Credit and they are ,

A child aged 8 or over but under 11, attend their nearest suitable school and it is more than 2 miles from their home; Or

- Aged 11 to 16 years, and attend one of their three nearest suitable schools provided it is more than 2 miles but not more than 6 miles from their home; Or
- Aged 11 to 16 years, attend a school that is more than 2 but not more than 15 miles from their home that their parents have chosen on the grounds of their religion or belief if, having regard to that religion or belief, there is no suitable school nearer to their home.

Now we have looked at eligibility criteria, lets look at a practical example of when distance and non-distance eligibility applies.



For example, when we are looking at the distance eligibility.....

You want your child to go to Fab Academy, as the school can meet your child's needs, but the school is a long way from your house (more than 3 miles) and your child would need travel assistance.

However, Cool Academy is closer (less than 3 miles) and can also meet your child's needs.

If you choose for your child to go to Fab Academy, your child might not be eligible for transport assistance, because a closer school was available.

If your child would find it difficult to walk to school even with you because of their SEND, regardless of distance you would request transport assistance under the SEND criteria and not distance.

Or because the walking route is not safe, for example, there are lots of crossings, bridges and footpaths.

Please note: the council is required to look at each child's circumstances on a case by case basis.



There are several ways that the council may provide free school transport assistance to your child.

It is for the LA to decide how they will arrange free school travel for children who meet the eligibility criteria,
For example:

- A bus pass to travel on a public bus
- A dedicated school bus provided by the LA
- A taxi

The council can also provide free school transport assistance in other ways, but with your consent (agreement). For example, they may provide you with

- A travel assistance budget: a set amount of money to help pay for your car mileage or taxis
- Or
- A Travel Escort (buddy), Someone who escorts your child to school
- Or
- Independent travel training - someone who will train your child to travel to school and back home on their own.

Suitable Transport Assistance

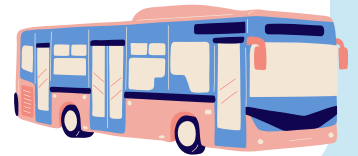
Councils must take account of the needs of the child concerned.

- E.g. A pass for free travel on a public bus for a child who is unable to travel on a public bus due to their special educational needs would be an inappropriate arrangement.

The arrangements should enable the child to travel in

- reasonable safety and comfort,
- without undue stress, strain or difficulty,

....so they arrive at school ready to learn.



Councils must make transport assistance arrangements that are appropriate for your child's needs.

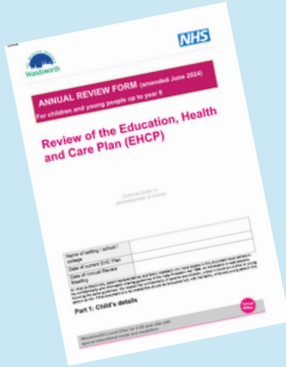
An example of an inappropriate arrangement is:

- A free bus pass for travel on a public bus for a child who is unable to travel on a public bus due to their special educational or physical needs.

The arrangements should enable your child to travel in reasonable safety and comfort, and without undue stress, strain or difficulty, so that wherever possible they arrive at school ready to learn.

Year 5

The Secondary Transition Process



The Year 5 Annual review:

- Your child's EHC Plan needs to be reviewed and updated to reflect their current needs.
- You also need to think about their needs at secondary school.



Now that we have looked at types of schools and transport assistance, let's now look at each step of the secondary transition process in more detail;

To start the process off, at some point during Year 5, you will have an Annual Review of your child's EHC Plan.

SNAS asks the primary school to hold the actual annual review meeting by the summer term of Year 5.

At the Annual review, you, your child, their school and any professionals involved (who are able to attend) will meet to discuss their progress over the year and what support your child may need at secondary school. New outcomes and targets will be set.

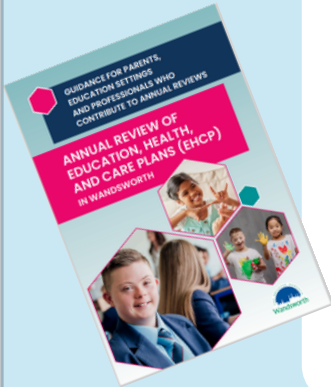
This is done to ensure the EHC plan is ready for consultation with secondary schools.

Now let's talk about getting ready for the Year 5 Annual Review.

Year 5

Points to Consider: Now

- How has your child been getting on?
- Where are they in meeting their outcomes/ the short and long term targets?
- What has helped them?
- What hasn't helped?
- Your child's views on what is helping them and what is not?
- Any new information and advice from professionals?




To prepare for the annual review meeting it would be helpful to consider the following points,

Starting with where they are now...

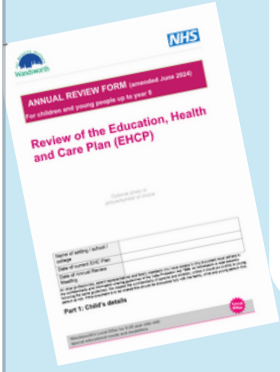
- How has your child been getting on - since their EHC plan was finalised or their last annual review?
- Where are they in meeting the outcomes listed in Section E (usually broken down into short term targets for each year?)
- What has helped them to meet their targets?
- Has anything got in the way within or outside of school?
- What are your child's views (observations) on their progress so far and what is helping them and what is not?

Compare your views with the information and advice you receive from the professionals



Year 5

Points to Consider: Future



- What targets would you like your child to work on, in and outside of school?
- What are your child's views on what they would like to work on?
- Is there anything that needs to be updated and or taken out?
- Does the plan include the most recent advice from professionals (Teachers, SLT, OT etc) and details of any therapy packages that your child needs?

Sections E: Outcomes

This section sets out the outcomes that have been identified for [insert child's name]

Outcomes should be holistic, can cross areas of different need and should be set to the end of the next Key Stage. They should reference the CYP's views and aspirations and be discussed with the CYP and their family as appropriate.

(An Outcome is described as 'the benefit or difference made to an individual as a result of an intervention'.)

Followed by thinking about their future, especially for when they move on to secondary school...

- What targets would you like your child to work on, in and outside of school?
 - What are your child's views on what they would like to work on in the future?
 - Is there anything within the EHC plan that you and your child feel needs to be changed, because it is no longer relevant or correct based on yours and the professionals' views)?
 - Does the plan include up to date information, including the most recent advice from professionals (Teachers, Speech and Language therapists, Occupational therapist, etc)? And details of any therapy packages that your child needs?
 - Will your child's needs be the same in a secondary school?
- For example, will they need support to get all their books and equipment for each subject and getting to different classes.

Your School Preference

July in Year
5



You will receive a preference form. You will be asked to list up to 3 secondary schools that you feel are suitable for your child.

Your EHC Plan Coordinator will tell you when it needs to be returned (usually end of July in Year 5).

In Wandsworth, you will be asked as part of the year 5 annual review to share your secondary school preference, if you are not sure don't worry you will also be asked to provide your preference through the 'school preference form'; this is usually sent out in May of year 5.

You will need to list on the form, the schools that you would like your child to go to.

List the schools in the order that you prefer, so putting your favourite school first and so on.

You are asked for 3 preferred schools, but you can put down more than 3 or less than 3.

It's okay to only put down one school, however SNAS may consult with other schools too.

Your child's EHC Plan Co-ordinator will tell you when the form needs to be returned.

They currently ask for it to be returned by the end of July in Year 5.


If you need longer to decide on your preferred school/s, you should discuss this with the EHC Plan Co-ordinator.

WASS would advise you not to put down a school you are not sure of or do not want.



Year 6

Consultation with Secondary Schools



The EHC Plan Coordinator must send your child's EHC Plan to:

- Your preferred schools (if from the list of approved list of schools)
- And possibly other schools that the local authority thinks may be suitable.

The schools have 15 calendar days to respond.

From the start of Year 6, Your EHC Plan Co-ordinator will start consulting with secondary schools to see if they can meet your child's needs and whether they will be able to offer them a place.

The schools you have listed as preferences must be consulted with (provided they are from the approved list of school's that we mentioned earlier).

The schools being consulted will be sent a copy of your child's updated EHC Plan, to help them to decide whether the school will be able to provide all the support your child needs.

The schools have 15 calendar days to respond to the EHC Co-ordinator.

If there is a problem with naming your preferred school, your EHC Co-ordinator will contact you to discuss further.



Year 6

Consultation with Secondary Schools

The council has to try and name your preferred school if it is from the approved list. Unless they can prove that the school you have requested either,

- Cannot meet all of your child's needs or
- The support your child needs will impact the learning of other children at the school
- The school you have asked for is a lot more expensive than another school that can also meet your child's needs

The council has to try and name your preferred school if it is from the approved list.

Unless they can prove that the school you have requested either,

Cannot meet all of your child's needs, or

The support your child needs will impact the learning of other children at the school, or

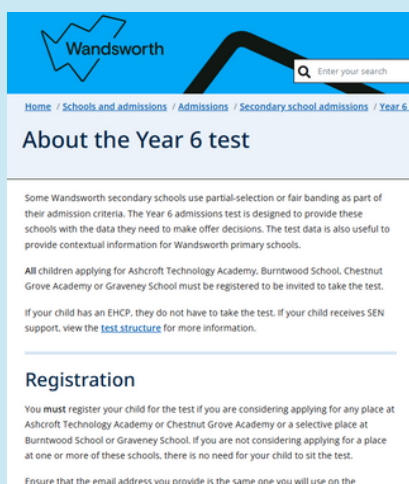
The school you have asked for is a lot more *expensive than another school that can also meet your child's needs

*Please note: If your first preference is for a school that is not the nearest qualifying school, and you think your child may need transport assistance, the council may only agree to name it if you make your own travel arrangements for your child.

This is because, if they add the cost of the travel assistance with the cost of the school, it could make the cost significantly more than if your child went to the nearest qualifying school.

Please contact WIASS if you would like to discuss further.

In
Year 6



The Wandsworth Test

What is it?

- A test of a pupil's verbal and non-verbal reasoning

When is it?: Autumn Term of Year 6

Does your child have to sit it?

- No, but they can.

For more information:

- [Council's website](#)
- Speak to your child's senco.

The Wandsworth Year 6 Test.

This test, tests a pupil's verbal and non-verbal reasoning, which takes place in the autumn term of year 6 and the result of which is used by some Wandsworth mainstream secondary schools to offer places to pupils.

As your child has an EHC Plan, they do not have to sit the Wandsworth Year 6 Test, because as we have explained in this presentation, their secondary school application process is different from children without EHC plans.

However, if you want your child to be registered to sit the test, speak to your child's school.

For more information, please look at the council's website and speak to your child's Senco.

15th
February
in Year 6

The School is named

Your child's secondary school must be named in the Final EHC Plan by the 15th February of Year 6.

SECTION I: Placement

(to be completed by the Local Authority on final agreement of the Plan)

Education Placement (name and type of school/setting/Post 16 establishment)	
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When will you be told the outcome of the consultation?

On or before the 15th February of Year 6, you will be issued with a final amended EHC Plan and it will name the secondary school that your child will be going to in Year 7.

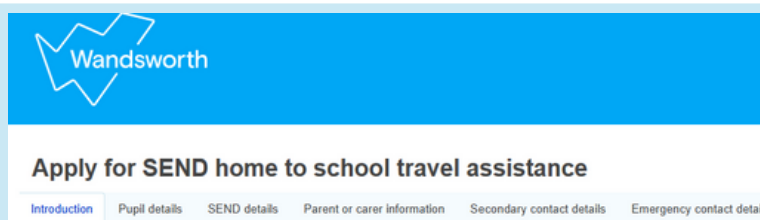
If there will be a problem with naming your preferred school your child's EHC Co-ordinator will contact you before the 15th February to discuss further.



Happy with the school named?

You can now:

- Apply for transport assistance (if applicable). For support in applying see [WIASS website](#)
- Think about transition planning e.g.
 - Induction days at the secondary school
 - The Secondary Senco attending the Year 6 annual review.



Hopefully, you will be happy with the secondary school place that your child has been given.

If you think that you may need transport assistance from the local authority, you can now begin the process of applying for travel assistance. Please note that you can only apply for transport assistance once the school has been named in your child's EHC Plan. If applying for transport assistance, put your application in as soon as you can. For support with completing the form, please look at the [WIASS TRANSPORT PAGE](#).

You can now start to think about transition planning;

- Check if the named school offer induction days, so that your child can get to know their way around.
- You can request that the secondary Senco attends your child's Year 6 annual review, so that your child's needs can be fully understood.



Not happy with the school named?

You have the right to appeal if you do not agree with:

- the named school
- and/or what is written in the EHC plan.

You can get information about challenging decisions, appealing and other options from WIASS, Wandsworth Information Advice and Support Service.



If you are not happy with the school that has been named in the EHC Plan, you have the right to appeal.

You can also appeal if you are not happy with what is written in the final EHC Plan.

Your appeal is made to the SEND Tribunal Service, who are independent from the Council.

You also have other options.

You can get information about challenging decisions, appealing and other options from Wandsworth Information Advice and Support Service (WIASS).



Need further advice or support?

- The Primary school Senco
- Professionals working with your child
- EHC Plan Co-ordinator
- WIASS, Wandsworth Information Advice and Support Service

So we have come to the end of the presentation:

If you feel that you need more support and advice with the transition, perhaps you could approach.

- Your school Senco, and professionals working with your child, who may be able to give advice about the type of support needed.
- Or Wandsworth Information Advice and support Service(WIASS) and your EHC Plan Co-ordinator, who can talk you through the process.

More information about:



Secondary schools:

- [Wandsworth Secondary School Booklet](#)
- [WIASS Finding a school if your child has an EHC Plan](#)

School transport:

- [IPSEA WEBSITE](#)
- [WIASS Transport Frequently Asked Questions](#)



If you would like more in-depth information, you may find the following resources useful.

Information about the different schools in the area can be found in the 'Choosing a Wandsworth secondary school booklet' and school lists on the WIASS website.

Additional information about transport assistance can be found on the WIASS and Independent Provider of Special Educational Advice (IPSEA) websites.

Transition to Secondary with an EHCP - Check list

- ☐ 1. Start to think about suitable secondary schools from the start of year 5 or earlier: Research and attend open days.
- ☐ 2. Think about your input into the revised EHCP. The EHCP will be reviewed and updated as part of the Year 5 Annual review to reflect the child's current needs. This is the version that will be sent to prospective Secondary schools
- ☐ 3. Fill in your school preference form and return to your EHC Co-ordinator. Ideally, this should be returned by the end of July in Year 5, but if you are not able to list preferences at this time, let your EHC Plan Coordinator know.
- ☐ 4. Look out for your final EHC Plan. Your child's secondary school should be named in the Final EHC Plan on or before the 15th February of Year 6.
- ☐ 5. You can apply for transport assistance (if this is applicable) once the school has been named.
- ☐ 6. Transition planning to prepare your child for the change of school - e.g. induction days at the secondary school and/or the Senco from the secondary school attending any upcoming annual review.