



The local SENDIASS, working in partnership with children and young people with SEND and their parents

Choosing a Primary School for Children with Special Educational needs (SEN) without an Education, Health Care (EHC) plan

This information sheet will give you,

- Basic information on the law when choosing a primary school
- Information on how to apply for a primary school
- Some questions that you might want to ask and points to consider when deciding on the primary school you would prefer your child to go to.

How to apply for a primary school and the law if your child has SEN and does not have an EHC plan:

There are two ways to apply for primary school

- **Applying for a primary school place for the first time**(your child is moving from nursery to reception year) or
- **In year transfer**(when you child is already attending or has a place at a primary school)

Applying for Reception place:

You will need to complete an application form via Wandsworth Pupil Services, please click on the link below

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[Primary school admissions - Wandsworth Borough Council](#)

All mainstream primary schools(*maintained(state), academies and free schools) have their own admission criteria, which you can find in Wandsworth Primary School booklet, by clicking on the link below:

[Choose a Wandsworth Primary School.](#)

The above booklet also explains

- How you can apply for a place
- How to apply for a mainstream school in neighbouring boroughs
- The deadline to complete the application form by
- When you will be told of the reception place offered to your child(usually 1st March of the year your child will be moving to Reception). **Please Note:** If you would like your child to attend the reception class at the school they are already attending for nursery, you will still need to apply for a reception class place at the school. The booklet will provide you with more information about this.

In year admissions(if you are new into the borough, country or want to your child to change school):

If you require a place in a Wandsworth primary school after the school year has begun(for example, you have moved into the borough from another borough or country), you will need to complete 'in-year' admission for primary school" form below:

[In-year admission to a primary school application form](#)

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Please Note: You should also contact the Pupil Services section to find out the availability of places in the schools listed in the [Choose a Wandsworth Primary School](#) booklet.

If your child already has a school place in a Wandsworth school:

If your child already has a place in a Wandsworth school but you want them to transfer to a different school in Wandsworth, you should discuss this with the Headteacher of their current school before making an application. **Please Note** If you decide to change the school, you should first find out if there are places available at other local schools by contacting the school or the Council's Pupil Services team.

You will also need to obtain an 'in-year' transfer application form from your child's current school. **The form has a section which must be completed by the school.**

The Law: It is unlawful for an admission authority (LA or school governing body) to refuse admission to your child if they have SEN, but has no EHC plan because:

- They have challenging behaviour (except in limited circumstances), or
- It believes your child requires an EHC Needs assessment or requires additional support and/or an EHC plan, or,
- Your child is not toilet trained

Information on School Admissions: For information on the law and school admission, for children without EHC plans please follow the link to the Child law advice website below

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[School admissions \(childlawadvice.org.uk\)](http://childlawadvice.org.uk)

*Types of schools:

Mainstream Schools:	Schools which provide an education for all children including those with SEN and a disability.
Maintained (state) Schools	Schools that are funded by the local authority (LA) which includes community, foundation, and voluntary aided schools
Academies/Free Schools	Schools which are state-funded independent schools. They are set up by sponsors from business, faith, or voluntary groups in partnership with the Department for Education (DfE). They receive money directly from the Government but are not maintained by LA

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Independent Schools:	Fee-paying schools that are not funded by LA or Government. Some are run by charities (and therefore, “not for profit”) whereas some are private “for-profit” owners
Non maintained schools	These are charitable foundations and are “not for profit.” These types of schools will admit children with or without EHC Plans

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Deciding on and visiting primary schools.

Visiting a primary school is usually the best way to find out if it's the right one for your child.

We have put a checklist of questions that you may want to consider where relevant before, during and after visiting schools.

Checklist

What type of school would you like your child to go to?

	Your Notes
The same school their sibling/s attend(brother/sister)	
Your local school?	

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Before visiting schools

Planning your visit	
Make a list of schools you want to know more about.	
Look at the schools' admission criteria	
Will your child meet the school's Admissions Criteria?	
Read the -SEN policy or Special Educational Needs (SEN) Information Report. All maintained, academies and free schools must publish information on their website about how they support children with SEN in their school. -School's Disability, behaviour, bullying, administering medicines, equal opportunities policies which should be on the school's website Ofsted information on SEN www.ofsted.gov.uk	
Will your child want to visit with you? Or you may want to visit on your own and if you like the school, visit again with your child.	
Do you want someone else to visit with you (for example, a relative or a friend)?	

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Do you want a guided tour of the school or a meeting with the Special Needs Coordinator (SENCO)/Inclusion Manager? (The SENCO is responsible for organising SEN provision for children in the school and liaising with parents about their children's SEN)	
You can contact the school to arrange a visit during a school open day/evening or to make an appointment to visit	
If the school has a specialist SEN resource base/unit check if you will also be provided a tour of this on the opening morning/evening, if not could you book in a separate time to visit the base/unit?	

Your child

Are there questions your child wants to ask about the schools?	
Your child's strengths How will the school build on these?	

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What does your child enjoy at school?

Will the school offer this to them?

Your child's needs

What support will your child need in school?

You could ask everyone who is working/advising about your child's education, what kind of support they feel they will need at primary school.

If your child has had an assessment of their needs and report is available, you may want to take this to share with the Senco/s at the school you are visiting.

Traveling: Home to school and back

What is the distance to the school from your house?

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Will you be able to walk to school or need use public transport with your child?

Will you need *travel assistance from the council?
* **For more information about travel assistance, please contact WIASS**

The Visit

(Highlight Key Areas on this sheet, that you want to observe and ask about during the school visit)

Class and school environment	Your Notes
Were the school corridors and classrooms calm - how were the children supported to move around school?	
What were the acoustics (sound quality) like?	
How noisy was the school/classes?	
Size of the classrooms– was there space on/between tables, space for small group activities or quieter area?	

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Was the school/classroom space and equipment clearly organised?	
Was the school accessible for your child's physical needs? (e.g. easy wheelchair access, lifts, wide doors, ramps)	
Was there a place for movement breaks, specific small groups?(e.g. social skills) and movement at break-times?	
Was the main entrance (Reception area) and all exits secure?	
Were there visuals that would help your child (e.g. symbols, now and next boards, visual timetables)?	
The size of the school – distance between areas, easy layout/	
Where did children have lunch or their breaktime?	
What was the size of hall or playground?	

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Where there quiet areas and use of calming/sensory rooms? Anything else?	
SEN Provision(support) at School (this information must be available on the school's SEN Information Report-which can be found on their website)	
Where there other children who have similar needs to your child? How are school supporting them? What specialist SEN approaches do the school use?	
What expertise does the school already have in meeting children's SEND (e.g. Hearing impairment (HI) Visual Impairment (VI), Autism (ASD), Attention Deficit & Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Dyslexia)?	

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How does the school work with support services (e.g., Wandsworth ASD Advisory Service, Literacy & Numeracy Support Service), to meet the needs of children with SEND?	
Are there other professionals based at or coming into school? (e.g. Speech and Language therapist, Occupational therapist, Educational Psychologist) How do they work with the school?	
What additional SEN provision(support) does school already offer? e.g. social skills groups, nurture groups, learning mentors, play therapy?	
Did the school have a buddy/mentoring system?	
What training have school staff received on SEND?	
What teaching methods and strategies are used to help children's learning in class?	

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How does the school differentiate the work to support children within class?	
Does the school use small group or individual teaching? Will your child miss certain lessons for specific SEN interventions/support?	
How do Teaching/Learning Assistants support children in school and class? Are they subject related(Numeracy/Literacy) or can they support specific children? Will there be other school staff will be involved in supporting your child? How do the class teachers and teaching assistants work together?	

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How do the school go about adjustments your child will require, i.e., movement breaks, assembly, P.E, leave 5 minutes before end of lesson for transition)?	
Will your child be assessed when they start at school? What assessments are used for children with SEN(i.e., reading, writing and numeracy)?	
How will the school 'assess, plan, do, review' your child's needs and progress? What would happen if your child were not making enough progress?	
Anything else?	

Moving into primary school	Your Notes
How will the school get to know your child and prepare for their admission into reception class(will	

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they have a staggered entry, i.e. build them up to full time over a couple of weeks?

Will staff come and visit them in their nursery class and or at home?

School organisation

What time does school start and finish?

Is there a breakfast club?

Are there any after school clubs (e.g. homework, sports, dance, art)

How many children per class?

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How many children are there in school? Do they go into the same playground at the same time/	
Do the children learn a foreign language or British Sign Language(BSL)?	
What supervision (adult support) is there at lunchtime/break-time?	
Can children have packed lunches or restrict the type of food they can bring in, i.e., nut free?	
How will the school include your child on school trips?	
Anything else?	

Communication between Staff	
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<p>How does the Senco oversee your child's SEN provision in school?</p>	
<p>How will all staff be informed about your child's SEN, outcomes, and provision? (e.g. sharing SEN information from their nursery school/class, Pupil profile/passport, discussion with SENCO?)</p>	
<p>Who advises teaching staff on the best ways to teach your child?</p>	
<p>How will teaching staff class teacher/teaching assistant feedback on your child's SEN progress/needs?</p>	

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Anything else?	
Communication between Staff and Children	
Were the children happy and/or interested in what they are doing?	
Were you and your made to feel welcome?	
How did the staff and children engage with each other?	

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Supporting children's social emotional wellbeing and behaviour	
How does the school ensure that all children are welcome, and differences are respected?	
How does the school adapt its discipline policy to take a child's SEN into account?	
How is positive behaviour praised?	
How does the behaviour lead and Senco work together to support behaviour?	

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<p>Are all staff talked about potential triggers for difficult behaviour?</p> <p>What plans are in place if behaviour happens?</p>	
<p>How does the school manage difficult behaviour?</p>	
<p>What space or room is available for a child to have time out or to calm down?</p>	
<p>Anything else?</p>	

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Home School Communication	Your Notes
How will the school communicate relevant information and encourage you to communicate with them?	
Who is the best person for you to communicate with about your child's SEN, learning and behaviour? (Class teacher/SENCO?)	
When can you talk/get in contact with class teacher and other staff working with your child	
How are parents involved in their child's learning?	
How will you be told if there are concerns about your child's progress?	
Does the school hold parent coffee mornings or workshops?	

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After the visit:	Your Notes
Did you feel welcome at the school?	
Would your child be happy in this school?	
Did you get answers to all your questions? – if you still have questions then you can contact the school again.	

If you want to talk to somebody about choosing a school and/or have any questions about this sheet, please ring/email **WIASS** on:

- Our Helpline number: 020 8871 8065 (24 hours answering message)
Or
- Email us: wiaass@wandsworth.gov.uk

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