



## **Transferring to the next school phase for children with an Education, Health and Care Plan** (A guide for parents and carers)

### **Introduction**

This booklet explains the process for parents and carers who have a child with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) with an Education Health and Care (EHC) Plan and who are going through a phased transfer.

That is:

- Starting school for the first time
- Transferring from infant to junior/primary school
- Transferring from junior/primary school to secondary school

If your child fits into any of the above, you will need to start thinking about which school you would like your child to go to.

The admissions procedures for children and young people with SEND are set out in the Children and Families Act 2014 and are slightly different from those of other children. The difference is that schools must give priority to applications for children and young people with EHC Plans. Most children and young people with EHC Plans are expected to attend their local mainstream school, where a mainstream school is identified as being appropriate to meet your child's needs.

If your child is under an EHC Assessment or does not have an EHC Plan, it is essential that you apply for a school place via Brent School Admissions. Go to [www.brent.gov.uk/services-for-residents/education-and-schools/apply-for-a-school-place](http://www.brent.gov.uk/services-for-residents/education-and-schools/apply-for-a-school-place)

If your child does have an EHC Plan and is due to start Reception, in Year 1 (due to start junior school in Year 3) or Year 5 (due to start secondary school in Year 7), the process is described below.

### **What do I need to do?**

During nursery, Year 1 and Year 5, you will be invited to a review meeting called a Transfer Review. At this meeting the school that you would like your child to attend in Reception, Year 3 or Year 7 will be discussed. This may seem very early, but it is essential that sufficient time is allowed for the support to be put into place for your child's new school to meet your child's needs fully.

You will need to start thinking about which school you would like your child to attend during the summer term.

If you have not been invited to an Annual Review for the summer term, please do contact the school with regards to when the review will take.

Before selecting a school, you may find it helpful to:

- Read their Ofsted report; this can be found at [www.ofsted.gov.uk/ofsted-home/inspection-reports](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/ofsted-home/inspection-reports).
- You can also ask a school to send you information relating to their SEND policy and SEND information report. These can also be found on the school's website.
- You can attend open days or evenings, or you can contact the school directly to arrange visits. Some schools may offer virtual tours.
- It will be helpful if you 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 will usually be the school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo).
- Think about talking to parents/carers of other children with SEND. For example, by getting in touch with Brent Carer Parent Forum (visit [www.brentpcf.org](http://www.brentpcf.org) for more information).

Choosing a school for your child, whatever their ability or specific set of needs, is incredibly hard and may feel a little overwhelming. It may be useful to take someone with you i.e. your partner or a friend to support you.

Before visiting the school, make a note of all the things you want to talk about at the meeting. You could also take a copy of your child's EHC Plan and the latest Annual Review paperwork. When visiting schools, think about how the school can meet your child's particular needs.

When making your preference for any school, you should consider how you will ensure that you will get your child to and from the school. **Please note that there is no automatic entitlement to transport assistance.**

### Questions you might ask on a school visit

- How will my child be helped in school?
- How will I be involved in my child's learning?
- How is support organised in school (in class, in a small unit, in groups)?
- What equipment and materials will be available?
- Is there a breakfast club or after school activities that my child can be involved in?
- Does the school specialise in a particular area such as science or sport?
- How will the school keep me informed of my child's progress?
- Do you offer a settling/induction process for children with SEND?
- What experience do you have working with and supporting children with language difficulties? What training does your staff have?
- How would you ensure that my child has access to the National Curriculum and also appropriate differentiation?
- What visual strategies do you use in school?
- What support do you get from outside agencies? How do you deliver/ follow through the advice/ programs from these professionals?

The most important factor is how you feel about the school. Can you picture your child there? It may not be the school your friend recommended or chose, but is it right for your child and your family? We often make these decisions based on a gut feeling, and as long as you have collected good evidence along the way, it will all help you make the right decision.

### What happens at the Transfer/Annual Review?

The Annual Review in nursery, Year 1 or Year 5 is called a Transfer Review. During this meeting, parents/carers can discuss their preferred school or the type of school they will be considering (special or mainstream). At these reviews, teachers and specialists will work with you and share ideas about the best way to meet your child's needs in the future. Your child's EHC Plan will be amended based on the information provided at this Transfer Review. This is part of the preparation for the move to a new school. Pupils going into school for the first time may not have an Annual Review if the EHC Plan has only been issued, and school preference will be asked at the time of finalising the EHC Plan with the nursery setting.

### **What happens next?**

You will receive a parental preference form by post in July to be completed and returned no later than October half term. In the event that you do not return the form by the date shown, the local authority will consult with the most appropriate school nearest your home address. When your completed application form has been received, the council's SENAS team will consult with the school or contact you directly to discuss your preference further.

If you make a preference or there is a recommendation from the Transfer Review for your child to attend a school with a specialist provision or a special school, the local authority will consider the evidence and make a decision.

You may want your child to go to a school that is not run by Brent Council. For example:

- A non-maintained special school (usually run by charities)
- An independent school that can meet your child's needs
- A school maintained (run) by another local authority

However, if there is a suitable local (state) school that can meet your child's needs, the local authority has no legal duty to send your child to a non-maintained or independent school.

The local authority makes the application to the school, sending a copy of the amended EHC Plan and the appendices, including the Transfer Review paperwork. The school has 15 calendar days to reply. Once a placement has been secured, you will be notified and receive a Proposed Amended EHC Plan, which names the school in Section F and indicates what level of support is recommended. Please check the Proposed Amended EHC Plan carefully and contact the SEND team (Special Educational Needs Team?) within 15 days if you have any questions or comments.

For junior and secondary transfers, the local authority has a duty to specify the name of the school to which they will transfer on their EHC Plan by 15 February. If you would like to discuss the school that has been named, please contact the SENAS Team

Under the SEN Code of Practice Section 9:79, the local authority (LA) must comply with parental preference wherever possible, as long as:

- The school you choose is suitable for your child's age, ability, skills and SEND
- Your child's presence will not have a negative impact on the education of the other children already at the school
- Placing your child in the school will be an efficient use of the local authority's resources

Once a school is named on your child's EHC Plan, the current placement can start to organise a transfer plan, working very closely with you and your child.

### **What happens if I disagree with the school named by the local authority?**

If you disagree with the local authority's decision of the school named on your child's EHC Plan you have the right to appeal to the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Tribunal.

This is an independent tribunal which hears and decides parents/carers appeals against the decisions of the local authority about children's special educational needs, where parents/carers are unable to reach an agreement with the local authority. If you wish to appeal you must do so within two months of receiving the Amended Final EHC Plan. For further information or advice you can contact the SEND Tribunal on 01325 389350 or email [sendistqueries@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:sendistqueries@hmcts.gsi.gov.uk).

There is also a disagreement resolution service available to you called KIDS London SEN Mediation Service which can be contacted on 03330 062 835. If you decide to use this service it will not affect your right to appeal to the SEND Tribunal.

You may also find it helpful to contact Brent SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) for independent advice and support. Telephone 020 8937 3434 or email [sendias@brent.gov.uk](mailto:sendias@brent.gov.uk).

### **Preparing your child for moving school**

Many children and young people can be anxious about moving from one school to another, particularly to a secondary school, but there are lots of ways in which you can help them prepare for this change.

- Remind them that all children in their year will be going through the same thing and will have similar worries.
- Get them into routines. Work out with them when they need to get up in the morning to get to school on time.
- Go through the journey to school with them, so they know how long it takes and are familiar with the route. If there is a friend going to the same school, they could do this together.
- Get school things ready the night before.
- Be clear about what will happen after each school day.
- Agree when and where homework will be done.
- Share social stories.
- Look at videos of the schools.

### **Sharing what you know about your child**

You know your child best and you will have important information that you can pass on to the new form teacher or Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) who will help your child settle. You can prepare information about:

- Your child's strengths and interests.
- How you know when your child is sad, happy.
- How your child communicates and how adults can best communicate with your child.

- What your child likes and dislikes.
- Strategies that have worked in the past.
- How you have been able to help your child.
- Who else is involved with your child, for example, medical professionals/social workers.
- Any other useful information you would like teachers or staff to know about.

### **Early Years children transitioning into school for the first time**

- Include your child in the 'starting school' experience. Let them choose their snack bag/accessories and feel ownership.
- Be as organised as you can and prepare early. In the weeks leading up to starting school make sure you have the correct uniform, and all forms are completed and returned to school.
- Get into a routine. Routines are an important part of school life and it is helpful to get young children used to them at home beforehand. Earlier bedtimes are key.
- Arrange any after school or before school care in good time.
- Meet the teachers - attend any planned (onsite or virtual) open days and a transition meeting if one is planned - this will help the schools know about your child's specific needs.
- Keep calm! When a child starts school for the first time it can be an anxious time for all but the calmer you are the calmer your child will be.
- Organise everything the night before - making sure everything is washed, ready, packed up and laid out the night before will help reduce stress in the mornings.
- Be on time. Leave as much extra time as needed to ensure you are on time to get to school with your child once they start and also to try and be early to pick your child up from school - this will reduce their anxiety levels (and yours).
- Plan some fun! Arrange some fun things to do with your child after school together based on their interests and needs.
- Attend a transition meeting with your child's nursery and receiving school if offered.
- Make use of visuals including transition photo books and videos.
- <https://ican.org.uk/i-cans-talking-point/parents/questions-to-ask-your-childs-school/>
- <https://www.annafreud.org/schools-and-colleges/resources/managing-unexpected-endings-and-transitions/>
- <https://www.care.com/c/stories/3196/11-tips-for-having-a-great-first-day-of-school/>

### **Home to school transport**

Children and young people with a EHC Plan are entitled to transport if they meet the criteria set out in the Home to School Transport Policy and are attending their nearest suitable school.

To be eligible for transport:

- For children under eight:

Transport is provided only if you live more than two miles walking distance by the shortest route from the school named on the EHC Plan as the appropriate school for your child. Your child would normally be expected to attend the local defined area school or the nearest school that can offer the special help your child needs.

- For children aged eight and over:

Transport is provided only if you live more than three miles walking distance by the shortest route from the school named on the EHC Plan as the appropriate school for your child. Your child would normally be expected to attend the local defined area school or the nearest school, which can offer the special help your child needs.

You will be responsible for costs and arrangement of transport in the following circumstances:

- If you live less than two miles from the appropriate school and your child is under eight.
- If you live less than three miles from the appropriate school and your child is eight or over.
- If you state a preference for your child for a place in a school which is not the local school or the appropriate nearest school that can offer the special help your child needs.

Generally, distance will be calculated by the local authority using the shortest available walking route from the child's house to the school.

If your child has a medical or a physical condition that prevents them walking or using public transport, special transport arrangements may be made. Transport may also be provided in exceptional cases depending on the child's individual needs.

Further details of the council's transport policy can be found on the Local Offer at [www.brent.gov.uk/services-for-residents/children-and-family-support/the-brent-local-offer/travel-transport-and-getting-around](http://www.brent.gov.uk/services-for-residents/children-and-family-support/the-brent-local-offer/travel-transport-and-getting-around)

### **Useful contacts**

#### **School Admissions Team**

Brent Civic Centre  
Engineers Way  
Wembley  
HA9 0FJ

Tel: 020 8937 3110

Email: [school.admissions@brent.gov.uk](mailto:school.admissions@brent.gov.uk)

Website: [www.brent.gov.uk/services-for-residents/education-and-schools](http://www.brent.gov.uk/services-for-residents/education-and-schools)

#### **Special Educational Needs Assessment Service**

Brent Civic Centre  
Engineers Way  
Wembley  
HA9 0FJ

Tel: 020 8937 3229

Email: [sen.reviews@brent.gov.uk](mailto:sen.reviews@brent.gov.uk)

Website: [www.brent.gov.uk/services-for-residents/children-and-family-support/the-brent-local-offer](http://www.brent.gov.uk/services-for-residents/children-and-family-support/the-brent-local-offer)

Brent SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) offers information and advice to parents of pupils with SEND and can give you support during the transfer process. For more information on how this service can help you, please use the details below.

Brent SENDIASS  
Brent Civic Centre  
Engineers Way  
Wembley  
HA9 0FJ

Tel: 020 8937 3434  
Email: [sendias@brent.gov.uk](mailto:sendias@brent.gov.uk)

Here is a useful table that shows the different key stages, the different year groups and the ages children are in each of them:

Key Stage	Year Group	Age (Years)
EYFS	-	0 - 4
	Reception	4 - 5
Key Stage 1	Year 1	5 - 6
	Year 2	6 - 7
Key Stage 2	Year 3	7 - 8
	Year 4	8 - 9
	Year 5	9 - 10
	Year 6	10 - 11

**Phase Transfer for pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP)**

Year 5 Annual Review is forwarded from school to Brent Special Educational Needs Assessment Service (SENAS)



SENAS will send a letter to all parents/carers of young people with an EHC Plan asking for two preferences to be returned by the October half term.



The local authority makes the application to a school sending a copy of the amended EHC Plan and the appendices, including the Transfer Review paperwork.



Once a placement has been secured, you will be notified and receive a Proposed Amended EHC Plan.



The Local Authority has a duty to specify the name of the school to which they will transfer on their EHC Plan by the 15<sup>th</sup> February