

Visiting a new school

Name of School: _____

Address: _____

Tel number: _____

Headteacher: _____

SENCO: _____

Date of your visit: _____

Always contact the school and make an appointment to visit so that the appropriate staff will have time to talk to you and show you around. Visit when the children are in school so you can get a feel for the place and see what happens on a normal school day.

Questions you need to ask the school

General

How do I get a copy of the school prospectus?

What size are the classes and how are they organised? For example, in a primary school - are there mixed year groups? In a secondary school – are all classes mixed ability or are some of them set?

Does the school have a 'buddy' system? (This is when an older child tells the new child about the school and shows them round.)

What are the school hours, including lunchtimes and break times?

How is the supervision for lunchtimes and break-times arranged?

What activities are available during break-times?

Is there a breakfast club or an after-schools club?

Are there any school activity clubs?

How does the school keep me informed about my child's progress?

How does the school keep me informed about any other matters? (e.g. if my child was truanting school)

How long will my child be expected to spend on homework each night?

How does the school help parents to help their child? (e.g. with reading or maths)

What should I do if I feel my child is being bullied?

How does the school deal with bullying?

Who do I contact if I have concerns about my child or the school?

Special Educational Needs

How can I get a copy of the school's SEN Policy?

Does the school have a medical room?

Does the school have a school nurse on the premises and for how long each week?
(e.g. full-time, once a day, once a week)

Can the school give my child prescribed medication if required?

If not, what arrangements will I have to make to ensure my child receives their medication?

How flexible is the school about variations to the uniform?
(Particularly if your child has physical difficulties and may need to adapt some items of uniform)

How does the school help to make transfer or admission arrangements as easy as possible?

What selection of meals is available?

Does the school canteen cater for specific dietary requirements?

Can my child bring their own lunch?

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Special Educational Needs

Is the school barrier free?

(This means that it is accessible to children in wheelchairs or with walking difficulties and has in place appropriate ramps, wide doors and corridors, lifts etc.)

Does the school have a special educational needs room?

What percentage of the school population have special educational needs?

How many staff are there to support children with special educational needs?

Has the school any experience of working with children with similar special educational needs to my child?

Are there any specialist teachers who would come into school to support my child?

Does the school have a system for a child to rest/calm down/ have 'time out'?

Is there a specific area children can go to rest or calm down?

How does the school deal with discrimination?

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Questions school may want to ask you

If you are moving into the area the school will want some information from you, this is likely to include:

Your address and date of moving, Service families can provide their unit address and the school are required to accept this along with a posting notice;

A list of previous schools your child has attended;

Information about what your child is good at and enjoys doing;

Your child's last school report;

If in KS4, the options your child is taking;

If your child has any difficulties settling into school;

If your child on the SEN register at their current school. If so, at what stage are they?
(If you are not sure, check with your child's current school before the visit. They will either be at Early Years/School Action, Early Years / School Action Plus, or have a Statement)

What support your child currently receives in school;

If any other services are involved with your child;

If your child have any medical needs and if they require regular medication;

If your child has any specific dietary needs;

If your child requires any additional support on school trips

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