

Transfer to Secondary School Q&As Oct 2021

Application process

- Up to how many preferences of schools are permitted? Is it 6 as per the normal standardised process?
Two schools. The LA will also consult with your most local should it not be one of your preferences. Under the Children & Families Act 2014, Section 39, families have the right to express a preference for a school to be named. Rather than only give the one preference, we like to give families the opportunity to express two, should they wish to.
- How do the current Primary schools ensure that the ongoing secondary school has all of the required information regarding the child's specific needs?
All the required support and the child's needs should be specified in the EHC Plan as that is the purpose of an EHC Plan. However, to support during transition, a transition meeting / review will be held by the Primary school in the summer term, to which the new school will be invited. In addition, / alternatively, there can be school visits, where children may be accompanied by their Primary staff, or the Secondary school will visit the Primary school to observe and chat with staff. Each school has their own preferred method, and this will ensure a smooth transition between settings.
- Will the specific provisions be in place from day 1 of starting secondary school?
Yes, the final placement decisions are communicated by 15th February which gives ample of time for schools to make arrangements. In borough therapies will automatically transfer from Primary to Secondary. However, if a child is attending an Out of Borough school, we have to commission independent therapists to deliver the provision outlined on the plan and although we try to ensure this is seamless, there is a national shortage of therapists and so it could take longer to source one.
- If you don't get the preferred choice of school, what are the next steps in the process in terms of securing a school place?
Unlike mainstream admissions, there is a legal test that schools are required to consider when responding to our consultations for your preferred school. SEN will review the responses to determine if they are lawful. If their response is deemed lawful and they are unable to meet your child's needs, we will discuss the school's concerns with you and see if you have any alternative preferences. We will also discuss the response with the Secondary school and address this, as well as encourage the secondary schools to talk with your current SENCo / class teacher to gain a better understanding of your child's needs and presentation. In exceptional circumstances we may direct the secondary school to take your child.

Choosing a secondary school for a child with SEND

- What schools in Enfield are best for children with a speech problem?
SEN cannot comment on "best schools". However, we are committed as a borough to ensuring all children have access to a good mainstream education and so resource all schools accordingly. This means that each school will be able to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate a child with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) and deliver the provision outlined in the plan.
- My child has DLD (development language disorder). I'm confused about applying for a secondary school for her. What I need to do?
If your child has an EHCP, please follow the application process for children with SEND. If not already received, you will shortly receive a proposed plan and nomination form to return with your preferences. If no EHCP is in place, or your child is currently undergoing assessment, then apply online through the normal PAN London process.

- We would like to know what the best performing schools are for SEN children.
Each child has individual needs, and their needs may be best met at one school, whereas that school may not be suitable for another. Visit the school, speak with other parents / your school teacher or SENCo and discuss which schools may be suitable.
- How do you decide between a unit or mainstream education?
See above

Accessibility and support in schools

- Why is there such a gap in support between primary and secondary? It feels like our children are being told they are included and accommodated at primary then suddenly their needs are too great, and they are relegated to special schools regardless of ability
Enfield Secondary Schools are also able to meet the needs of young people with SEN. A child has the right to mainstream education regardless of their age or stage of education. If you are finding there to be an issue with a particular school, please speak to the SEN team.
- What happens if a child cannot access a full curriculum due to lack of appropriate access to all floors of the school?
In this instance the school may be deemed unsuitable and a school that is fully accessible will need to be sought but this is a very specific query and will apply to a very limited number of pupils.
- What if my daughter wants to attend a secondary school which requires her to have a certain grade in her SATS that she didn't meet? Would there be support for her so she can get through?
For a grammar school, they would need to sit an 11+ and you would need to apply for exam access arrangements from the exam board. Maintained Enfield schools will not have this requirement. If your child needs support in their SATs, you will need to contact the exam boards for access arrangements. This is set out in the Equalities Act and is not at discretion of the LA.

EHCP queries

- Can we use EHCP funding towards fees at an independent school, if the independent school (like a theatre school) can meet our child's needs better than a mainstream state school?
If you mean you want a direct payment, the Personal Budget requirements are very clear -that it cannot be used for school placements.
If you want the independent school named as your preference, you need to express this. It would be considered under the Education Act 1996 for the duty to be educated in accordance with parents' wishes and provided it was suitable, would then have the total costs considered against the nearest suitable school. If the costs are not deemed an 'unreasonable public expenditure' your preferred school can be named. However, because there are placement fees at independent schools but not with maintained schools, very often the costs are higher and therefore is deemed an unreasonable expenditure. We cannot pre-empt this however and so would have to go through the consultation process to determine. There is always a risk that by doing so, your preferred maintained school is then no longer able to support your child where it is taking multiple other children and you then have named the nearest school that is able to do so.
- Can you transfer the EHCP to another borough to suit your child's requirements stated on EHCP as schools in our own borough are not suitable for your child?
The borough where you live is responsible for maintaining your plan. You can give a preference for an out of borough school. However, we would not recommend it as we have limited information on the quality of provision where our own teams of professionals are not regularly working in those schools. You may also not be eligible for transport.