

STARTING SCHOOL WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN)

Open evenings – October – November

Some matters that might be helpful to consider/ask the SENCo/teachers/pupil guides at open evenings

- Prior to visit, discuss with your child any questions they might have and put them forward to the school representatives.
- Where can my child go if they are struggling/anxious?
- What support will be given if my child has a meltdown?
- What happens at breaks and lunch times?
- How are children that need support with reading/spelling/maths/homework supported?
- Does the school access support from any specialist services?
- Does the school have any on site counselling or therapeutic services
- What strategies does the school use to support children with SEN
- What is the schools standard/universal offer
- Does the school have experience with children with similar needs to...

Some matters to be considering at the open evenings

- Consider how the school will meet any accessibility needs
- Discuss the school's strategy on transition between early years setting/home and starting school
- Seek schools view on parental involvement
- Some schools run transition days/mornings/sessions usually in July, discuss impact and support for your child

General application phase advice – September-January

- Apply between 14 September – 15 January
- Share information on needs on the application form, so that schools are aware well ahead of time. Information is confidential and cannot be used to decide on the outcome of your application.
- Once you have the offer in April, the school will, over the course of a few months discuss transition with the primary school. You can reach out to the allocated school to discuss the transition, your child's needs and support that the school can offer. You can explore phased, or delayed start to the January or April depending on your child's age.
- Keep an open dialogue with your child on schools and try not to focus on one school being the 'only school' to try keep a positive outlook as no school can be guaranteed during the process.
- Work with the school to prepare your child for the transition sessions in July, some tips:-
 - o Ask the school for pictures of the school and key areas (their classroom, dinner hall, toilets etc) so that you can prepare your child on what to expect and familiarise them with their new environment
 - o Ask the school how your child will be supported and if there is a named support person who your child can reach out to if they are struggling and is best for you to liaise with if you have any worries
 - o Ask the school for details of the SENCo, Inclusion Lead or Mental Health Lead and how best to contact them

Helpful links

[Southend School Admissions – Information, Booklets and Application](#)

[Southend's Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Local Offer](#)

[Special Education Needs \(SEN\) Southend](#)

[Southend School Nursing Service](#)

[DfE guidance supporting pupils with medical needs](#)

[Southend's Interim Tuition Service](#)

[SEND Guidance for Schools](#)