

Secondary Transfer

We know the move to secondary school can be a stressful time for any child and parent. But the anxiety may be higher for parents and children with Special Educational Needs and/or a disability.

Choosing a secondary school for your child to attend can be a daunting and difficult decision. Only you as a parent/carer can make the decision about which school you would like your child to attend but having the right information can really help in making that choice.

Start Early-Yr 5

It is important that you start gathering information and putting together a profile of your child's needs. This will help you to identify what are the most important factors for you and your child when choosing a secondary school. It will also form a basis for the information that you might want to discuss with staff when visiting schools. Speak to other professionals involved in your child's education about any support that your child currently receives and what support they think your child might need when they move to secondary school.

Visiting schools

Most secondary schools will have open days/ evenings when you will have a chance to visit the school and find out what they can offer your child. These are normally held in September/October. These open days are for general admissions and therefore you might not have the chance to discuss your own child or speak to the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO).

After attending the open days, it is important that you visit schools again and meet the SENCO, so that you can discuss your child's individual needs and whether or not the school would be suitable for your child. Take notes about what you see and write down anything that you think would benefit your child attending that school, if you take notes you will have something to refer to when you have visited all the schools of your choice.

Admission to Secondary School

When your child goes into year 6 you will receive an admissions booklet and form about secondary schools in Lewisham, you will have an opportunity to list 6 schools from all boroughs, in order of preference, that you would like your child to attend. The closing date for applications is 23 October 2009.

You will also need to complete a supplementary information form, as well as naming the schools on your Common Application Form, for the following:

Bonus Pastor Catholic College, Haberdashers' Aske's Hatcharn Academy, Haberdashers' Aske's Knights Academy, Prendergast-Hilly Fields College, St Matthew Academy.

Forms are available from the schools concerned and should be returned direct to the school by 23 October 2009.

What happens next?

Once the Local Authority has received all the admissions forms, they will begin processing them based on the admissions criteria for each school. The Local Authority will then dispatch results on the 1 March 2010.

Appeals procedure

If you are not happy about the school your child has been allocated you can appeal this decision. The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) have produced a booklet called Primary and Secondary School Admissions and Appeals: This booklet can be obtained from the Parent Partnership Service or directly from the DCSF on: 0845 602 2260.

Planning your child's transition

If your child is allocated a place at the school of your choice, it is now important that you start planning your child's transition to this school and how this will be managed. Many schools provide a day when all children who will be transferring to this school will have the opportunity to visit for the day and meet staff prior to them

starting in September. For most children this is enough but for children with Special Educational Needs this might not be. It is important that you speak to the SENCO at your child's primary school about what support your child needs to prepare them for the transfer to secondary school. You might also want to ask the SENCO from your child's primary school to arrange a meeting with the SENCO from the new secondary school to discuss your child's needs further and what support they are going to need when they transfer.

If you would like further information on the Secondary/Primary Transfer process, please call the Parent Partnership Service.

Lewisham Parent Partnership Service

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