



Information, Advice, and Support Service (IASS) for SEND in Northamptonshire

Choosing a School: Checklist for Visiting Specialist Provisions

The list below outlines areas you may wish to discuss (or look for) when visiting specialist provisions.

Good Parent Involvement and Support:

- Tolerant, respects diversity
- Good communication, genuine partnership with parents
- Good routines for sharing information
- Parent training and support groups
- Interested in family's needs, helps access services

Individual Education Plan (IEP) Development and Implementation:

- Goals specific and measurable
- Based on both academic and developmental needs
- Use of a variety of interventions, e.g. parent training, classroom environment, assistive technology, and peer interaction
- Team approach, with good routines for sharing info

Review and Monitoring of Progress and Outcomes:

- Use of trial periods
- Collaborative, ongoing, and systematic
- Scheduled and as-needed meetings
- Leading to changes in goals and methods

Management of Challenging Behaviours:

- Proactive – staff training, crisis planning, clear rules
- Positive – supports, rewards, and skill-building



Travel:

- Travel time from home: _____
- Safe and reliable transport arrangements

Personnel:

- Good pupil : teacher ratio (_____ : _____)
- Qualified, knowledgeable, skilled and experienced staff
- Ongoing training and support for teachers and support staff

Staff Interaction and Communication with the Parents/Carers:

- Good interpersonal skills
- Meetings held at regular intervals
- Good daily/weekly communication, e.g. home/school book/phone/e-mail

Staff Interaction and Communication with the Child:

- Positive focus, using reinforcers and promoting success
- Response if the child struggles with a task?
- Response if a child behaves inappropriately?
- Response to a conflict situation?
- Interacts, doesn't just give orders

Classroom Environment:

- Clean, safe, spacious and pleasant
- Structured and organised
- Sensory-friendly equipped for fine/gross motor, sensory and language stimulation

Daily Routine and Curriculum:

Will my child have a predictable routine which is challenging and goal-oriented?

- Covers academic and communication/social/life skills
- Variety of structured and unstructured activities
- Variety of independent, small- and large-group activities
- Predictable routines, use of visual schedules and supports



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Instructional Methods, Activities, and Materials:

- Customised and adapted to the individual
- Appealing, interesting, and actively engaging
- At the appropriate level of difficulty
- Emphasises interaction and communication
- Promotes independence and generalisation of skills

Inclusion:

Will my child be actively encouraged to interact with peers and given adequate support?

- Informal and planned interaction with peers
- Supports, accommodations & social training for the child
- Peer training
- Training and support for the mainstream teacher(s)

Supervision and Safety:

- Safe physical environment
- Adequate supervision (break times, lunch, field trips, transitions)
- SEN training for all staff

Related Therapies:

- Does the school work closely with other professionals?

Information, Advice, and Support Service (IASS) for SEND in Northamptonshire

Web: <http://www.iassnorthants.co.uk/>

Email: contact@iassnorthants.co.uk

Tel: 01604 364772



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