



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

Choosing a School: Questions for Parents and Carers of Children with Special Educational Needs

Choosing a school for your child can be a complicated process for parents, especially if they have special educational needs and/or a disability (SEND). You may wish to consider asking the following questions when visiting a prospective school.

School Organisation

1. How is the school organised? Into departments? By age? By ability? Subject groups?
2. How might this change as my child gets older?
3. How often would my child change class or move around the school?
4. How many children would be in my child's class?
5. When (and how often) are children taught outside the classroom?
6. How does the school arrange extra support for children who need it?
7. Is the extra support usually provided in the classroom, individually or in small groups?
8. What health or medical facilities does the school have?
9. If your child has difficulty walking: Are all areas of the school accessible to my child, or would adaptations be necessary?

Staff Knowledge and Experience

10. Does the school have any experience of helping children who have similar needs?
11. How many other children in the school have special educational needs? What kinds of needs do they have?
12. How many staff are there in school? How many teaching and non-teaching special needs support staff?
13. What training have staff had about special educational needs?
14. What will the school do to ensure that all the staff know about my child's individual needs?

Pastoral Care and Extracurricular Activities

15. How would the other children be helped to understand my child's special needs?
16. How would my child be helped to make friends?
17. How does the school help children to learn how to make the school a happy place? Does the behaviour system reward effort as well as success?
18. What is the school's experience of bullying? How would the school prevent my child from being bullied?

19. How would the school make sure my child has the chance to take part in all areas of the curriculum?
20. How do you make sure all children have equal opportunities to take part in school trips?
21. How would my child be encouraged to participate in out-of-school activities (such as clubs and sports events)?

Assessment and Progress

22. How will my child's progress be monitored and recorded?
23. How regularly would my child's progress be reviewed? Who is involved in this?
24. What happens if school staff feel my child is not making progress?
25. What would happen if I feel my child is not making progress or if I have any concerns?
26. What special arrangements are there for internal exams, tests and SATs?
27. Older children: What public exams are children able to take, and what is the success rate?

Communication and Support for Parents

28. How often are written reports sent home?
29. How would I be involved in the individual planning for my child's special educational needs?
30. How would I be kept up-to-date about what is happening in school?
31. How are parents involved in school life?
32. Does the school produce newsletters for parents?
33. What sort of support and guidance does the school offer for parents?
34. Is there a parents group?
35. What arrangements are usually made for transport to and from school?
36. How would you get to know my child before they start at your school?
37. How would my child get to know your school, especially in the first few days after starting?

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