

Things to consider before moving to a new school

Changing your child's school can affect your child in many ways and the decision should not be taken without thought and planning:

You should consider the following:

- Have you visited the school you are planning to apply for? If you haven't, can you really know that this is the right school for your child? Go to school website – where you can download a copy of the school prospectus and find general information regarding curriculum and organisation.
- How will your child cope with learning new rules and having to do things differently, or possibly having missed important work?
- How will your child cope with having to make new friends and to fit in with new friendship groups?
- How will your child cope with working with a new teacher?
- Will the school your child is moving to be studying the same timetable of termly topic areas?
- Children who transfer schools after their exam subjects have been chosen in Year 9 are likely to find that they cannot do the same subjects, or that the exam board and courses are different.
- If your child has special educational needs and received support, the support will not transfer to the new school and there may be a delay in accessing new support.
- It may take time for your child's file to transfer to their new school, but previous attendance/exclusion information will be shared with the new school at the point of admission;
- Will the new school be able to meet any breakfast, or after school requirements you may have?
- Does the new school have the same extra-curricular hobbies and interests clubs?
- If your child has brothers or sisters at the same school, transferring one child may affect the others.
- Will it be difficult for you to have children attending different schools?
- How will you manage different start and finish times?

Changing school

Any gaps in education between changing schools can lead to children missing key learning which may have significant impact on their future learning.

We ask you to think very carefully about the following points before you proceed

The higher the level of sessions missed at school, the lower the likely level of attainment at the end of KS2. Pupils with no absence are 1.6 times more likely to be working within expected levels or above, and 4.7 times more likely to achieve above expected levels or above.

Teaching

Each school teaches the National Curriculum in different ways and at different times of the academic year. This means your child may repeat some parts of the curriculum and completely miss others which may have previously been taught earlier in the year. Your child's learning may be disadvantaged by the move.

Family link

If your child has brothers and sisters at the same school, transferring one child may affect the others:

- If you have other children attending the same school, will it be difficult for you to have children attending different schools? Your other children will have no automatic right to transfer to the new school either now or in the future.
- Will you be able to transport your children to different schools at the appropriate start times?

Uniform

You might need to buy a completely new uniform, including PE kit, if your child changes school. Have you thought about the cost involved?

Transport

Your child needs to be able to travel to school easily, safely and on-time.

- How would your child get to a new school?
- What will be the cost involved? A change of school will usually be regarded as parental choice. In most circumstances your child is unlikely to be eligible for travel assistance to their preferred school.

GCSE years

Older children, who transfer school after exam subjects have been chosen in Year 9, may find:

- That they cannot do the same subjects in a new school; or
- That the exam boards and courses are different
- That some schools start GCSE curriculum courses in Year 9.

Have you thought whether or not:

- Your child can take the same subjects at a new school?
- The courses will be the same?
- Your child will be comfortable taking new subjects or exam courses?

Other things to think about

Many issues that worry parents/carers and children can be put right without the need to move schools. Moving schools may not resolve your concerns and may even have a negative effect on your child's education. Before you consider changing your child's school, we recommend that you reflect and discuss your concerns with your child's current school.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Have I sat down with my child to talk about the points raised here to find out how he/she really feels about moving to a new school?
- Have I found out the real reason why he/she wants to move schools?
- If he/she is worried about certain subjects or there are concerns about teaching, have I spoken to the teachers who teach my child to find out how he/she is getting on and to raise any concerns?
- If I think my child needs extra help or has needs that aren't being recognised, have I spoken to the teacher in charge of special needs?
- If there are concerns about bullying or friendship issues, have I spoken to my child's class teacher/Head of Year or pastoral Head?

- If my concerns don't appear to have been addressed, have I made an appointment to speak to the Headteacher?