

Checklist when visiting schools

Before arranging a visit

- Visit the school's website to gather information
- Carefully think about and write a list of questions that you would like to ask the school
- When would you like to visit? (It is best during school hours)
- Will you be taking your child? (Consider whether a place at the school been offered)
- Do you want someone else to accompany you?
- Is the school easy to get to? (Think about transport arrangements)
- Would you like to talk to the SENDCo? (Special Educational Needs Co coordinator)
- Do you want a guided tour?
- Will you be able to meet staff who would be involved with your child?
- Will you be able to talk to other parents who have children at the school?

Questions to ask

- What is the structure and timetable for the school day?
- How many children would be in your child's class?
- How do the school support children with special educational needs & disability?
- Do the school know anything about your child's special educational needs?
- Have the school ever taught any other children with similar special educational needs?
- If the school hasn't taught any other children with similar special educational needs, what is the school's attitude to learning about how to support your child?
- Are all areas of the school accessible to your child? (Are adaptations required?)
- How will your child be supported outside lesson time – break time, lunchtime?

- What is the school's homework policy?
- How does the school deal with disruptive or challenging behaviour?
- How is bullying dealt with at the school?
- How does the school help children to mix and make friends?
- What extra activities does the school provide at lunchtime and after school?
- What will you have to provide for your child? (Uniform/stationery/money for trips, events, extra activities, etc.)
- How does the school communicate with parents and when can the parents talk to their child's teacher?
- How will you be involved with their learning?
- What arrangements are there for parents to get involved with the school and what opportunities are there to meet other parents? (E.g. PTA, organised events, etc.)

It might be appropriate to ask:

- How will my child find their way around school and will there be help coping with different rooms and classes?
- What can be done if my child has difficulties carrying their bag?
- What happens when my child needs the toilet?
- Can my child have a visual timetable?
- Does the school have a buddy system?
- Can the school arrange additional visits before my child starts?

After the visit

Discuss your thoughts and feelings about the school with someone else:

- Did you feel welcomed at the school?
- Did the children seem happy, friendly and helpful?
- Do you think your child would be happy at that school?
- Did the school answer all your questions?

If your child accompanied you on the visit, discuss it with them:

- What were their perceptions?
- Did they feel comfortable in the school?
- Is it somewhere they would like to attend?

If you are planning to visit more than one school, it is a good idea to open a file and store the information for each school to help you consider your decision.

Where can I get further information, advice or support?

Contact **Telford and Wrekin SENDIASS** for information, advice and support:

Phone: 01952 457176

Email: info@iass.org.uk