

Information Guides

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CONSIDERING A NEW EDUCATIONAL SETTING FOR YOUR CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON

When considering a school for your child, wherever possible, look at the information schools produce on their website including their prospectus, their SEND information and their Ofsted report if relevant. This will help prompt some questions and give you a general impression of the school.

Usually, you will need to make an appointment with the Headteacher to view the school, although some schools hold open evenings and open days when you can informally visit the school and see it in action. These are usually advertised.

The Local Authority produces booklets which list all secondary, primary and special schools in their area. The booklet can be viewed at <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/school-admissions> or contact the Admissions and Transport team, telephone 01225 394312 or email admissions_transport@bathnes.gov.uk.

Visiting a school

- Take a written list of questions with you.
- Take a moment to write down the answers as you go. (You may find this helpful afterwards).
- You may find that having a friend or family member with you can be very helpful.
- Note any feelings you have as you look around and get answers to your questions.

Some suggested questions to ask. (Only use those that apply to you and your child):

General

- How many children will be in my child's class?
- What are the arrangements for my child and I to meet with the class teacher before they start at school?
- How does the teacher manage the different needs of all the individual children?
- If my child has several different teachers, how will they all know what their SEND is and how to support them?

Helping children who have similar needs

- How do you welcome children with difficulties like those of my child? Do you have other children in your school with similar needs?
- If so, what kind of help have you been able to give? And do you feel that you have been successful in helping these children?
- If not, what can you change to make sure my child is helped effectively?

Helping my child

- What help will my child receive?
- If my child needs a Teaching Assistant (TA) to help them for all/part of the time in school, how will you organise this before they start at the school?
- Will we be able to meet the TA beforehand? And what training will the TA have received?
- What arrangements will be in place to support my child if the TA is not in school for any reason?
- How will the school cater for my child's needs in relation to physical/ personal hygiene/therapies/ medication?

Homework

- Will my child have homework?
- Will they have to do the same homework as everyone else?
- Will they get help in making sure they have it written down properly and understand what is required?

Including all children

- How are children encouraged to help each other here?
- What will you do to ensure that my child feels that they belong here and is involved?
- How will you ensure my child is able to take part in all activities?
- How do you make children feel good about themselves and build their confidence?
- How does the school manage challenging behaviour?
- What if my child is bullied/bullies others?

Break and lunchtimes

- Are hot meals available, or do all children bring a packed lunch?
- My child has a food allergy, what is in place to ensure the well-being of children with allergies?
- What is the school policy regarding snacks?
- What happens at break and lunchtimes – do children go out/stay in/play games?
- What if my child cannot cope with this?
- Will my child get help to make friends? How will you do this?

The start and end of the day

- Where do I drop off my child in the morning?
- Will this be different on the first day?
- Can you make special arrangements for my child as they find this particularly difficult?
- What happens at the end of the day?

Parent/Carer contact with school

- How do I contact the school in an emergency?
- How do I contact the school to make an appointment to talk with someone?
- How will you measure my child's progress and keep me up to date with how they are getting on?
- Who should I talk to if I have any concerns?
- If I want regular communication, can that be by email, text or communication book?
- Do you have regular parents' evenings? When would the first one be?
- How do you involve parents in setting targets for their child?
- In what ways are parents involved in the school?
- Is there a parents' association I could join?

Beginning at the school

- How do you help children to settle in to a new school?
- How do you liaise with my child's current school?

Preparing to move on

- How do you prepare children for the next stage in their education?

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