**Checklist for Visiting Schools**

Visiting a school is an important step in deciding if it’s the right fit for your child. Here’s a helpful checklist to guide you before, during, and after your visit.

**Before Arranging Your Visit**

* **Research the school**: Visit the school’s website to gather information.
* **Prepare your questions**: Think about what you want to know and write a list of questions to ask during your visit.
* **Choose the best time**: Try to arrange your visit during school hours to see the school in action.
* **Decide who will attend**: Will you bring your child (especially if they’ve been offered a place)? Would you like someone else to accompany you?
* **Consider accessibility**: Is the school easy to get to? How will transport arrangements work?
* **Request specific meetings**: Would you like to speak with the **SENDCo (Special Educational Needs Coordinator)**, meet staff who would work with your child, or talk to other parents?
* **Tour the school**: Would you like a guided tour of the facilities?

**Questions to Ask During Your Visit**

**General Information**

* What is the structure and timetable for the school day?
* How many children will be in my child’s class?
* What extra activities are available at lunchtimes or after school?
* What is the school’s homework policy?

**Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)**

* How does the school support children with SEND?
* Has the school previously worked with children with similar needs to my child?
* If not, how willing is the school to learn about supporting my child’s needs?
* Are all areas of the school accessible to my child? Would adaptations be required?
* How will my child be supported during break times and lunchtimes?
* Does the school offer a **visual timetable** or a **buddy system**?

**Practical Considerations**

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**Additional Support**

* How will my child be helped to find their way around school?
* What support is available for carrying school bags or using the toilet if needed?
* Can the school arrange extra visits before my child starts?

**After the Visit**

Take time to reflect on the visit and discuss your impressions with someone else. Consider:

* Did you feel welcomed at the school?
* Were the children happy, friendly, and engaged?
* Did the school answer your questions fully?
* Do you think your child would be happy there?

If your child attended the visit, ask them:

* How did they feel about the school?
* Did they feel comfortable and welcomed?
* Can they imagine themselves attending the school?

**Keeping Organised**

If you’re visiting multiple schools, keep a file with notes, leaflets, and any information you gather. This will make it easier to compare schools and make an informed decision.

**Where to Get Support**

If you need further information, advice, or guidance about choosing a school or preparing for a visit, contact **Shropshire SENDIASS**.