

CHECKLIST FOR VISITING SCHOOLS

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

- How does the school handle challenging behaviour or bullying?
- How does the school help children make friends and mix with others?
- What will I need to provide (e.g., uniform, stationery, trip money)?
- How does the school communicate with parents? When can I speak to my child's teacher?
- What opportunities are there for parents to get involved, such as PTAs or school events?

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.

