

Transition to middle school for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)



Thinking ahead...

It is worth visiting prospective schools the year before transition year (year 4).

Most middle schools hold their open evenings in the September or October of the year of transition. For children with an education, health and care plan (EHCP), it is better to visit schools in the previous year (year 3).

Choices...

There are four middle schools in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM):

- Dedworth Middle School
- Trevelyan Middle School
- St Peter's Middle School
- St Edward's Middle School

These schools take children from year 5 to year 8. Your child will then apply to go to an upper or secondary school from year 9 onwards.

Other options you may also want to consider:

- a primary school for years 5 and 6 (these can be found across Ascot, Windsor, Maidenhead, and Slough)
- private education (fee paying)

Before you decide...

You might want to consider:

- looking at the [RBWM school information](#) on the local offer
- looking on the website at the school's local offer and SEND policy
- asking for a tour for you and your child to see the school
- asking for a meeting with the school SENCo so you can discuss your child's needs and the support they may require. If your child has an EHCP it would be a good chance to be able to ask questions about how the provision will be implemented

If you are able to go to the school with your child, it is a good opportunity to see how they react to the environment and to see if you can notice any elements that they will enjoy and what parts they may find more challenging.



Children with an EHCP

- If your child has an EHCP, a transition annual review should take place in the summer term of year 3, in time to consult with prospective schools in the autumn term.
- This also applies to children of phase transfer age, but planning to continue at the same school (for example, all-through primary and secondary schools).
- Each section of the EHCP must be fully reviewed by the current school, with any proposed changes recorded in the annual review paperwork.
- The EHCP consultation will then be sent to the schools you and the local authority have chosen.

Once accepted...

- Your current school should send any professional reports that may help them in planning for your child's start at school and any adaptations that may need to be made.
- SEND support should include planning and preparation for transition before a child moves into another setting or school.
- If your child needs any specialist equipment, make sure this is in place before your child starts.
- Discuss with the current school what can be done to support the transition. This might involve additional transition dates, meeting the teacher or SENCo, extra transition lessons at school, or support from outside agencies such as SHINE.
- Speak to your child about any questions they have about starting school and make a list of these to ask when you visit the school or have a meeting with the SENCo.
- If your child has behavioural concerns, it is a good idea to look at the school's SEND policies on behaviour and explain to your child what is expected of them in the school. However, it is also important to speak to the school about these concerns and that the school makes allowances and adjustments where appropriate.
- Ensure you have a contact at the school who you can email directly or call with any queries or worries once your child has started at the school.



What you can do to help your child...

- Make social stories about moving around classrooms and making friends.
- Provide your child with a map of the school, colour code subject rooms and highlight rooms of importance such as the lunch hall, toilets, tutor room. If you don't have one, ask the school if they can provide you with one.
- Think about how you can make the timetable as easy as possible for your child to read. Speak to the school about any worries about your child being able to get to their different lessons and ensure adaptations are made if needed. Practise telling the time if this is a skill they may need.
- Organise peer support or speak to the school about a buddy system.
- If your child experiences anxiety around starting a new school, introduce a worry book where your child can write down their worries and concerns. Teach them some relaxation methods. You could introduce a social story regarding feeling anxious about school and include the relaxation methods they could use when they feel this way.

Before the start date...

- Buy the uniform and get your child to try it on so they know what to expect.
- Take the journey to the school with your child. If they are getting public transport, make sure they know how to get there.
- Make checklists for your child for each morning of the items they need to take to school that day based on their timetable.
- A visual timetable of the morning routine may help them adapt.
- Encourage as much independence as you can throughout the summer months.

Remember...

Try to remain positive: focus on the things that your child will enjoy at their new school.

This is their next step. Give them lots of praise and support to help them on their journey.

