

School Admissions Guidance for children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

Guidance for admission in September 2022

Introduction

Dear Parent/Carer,

I know that moving to a new school can be an anxious time for families, so this booklet aims to help guide you through the school admissions process for children and young people with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs).

It provides you with information about how the admissions process for Reception, Junior and Secondary children works in Surrey, including key dates, how to request a school and other important information you need to be aware of and take into consideration.

There are more than 350 mainstream schools and academies in Surrey, all of which are able to meet the needs of the majority of children with SEND. Every state-funded school is allocated financial resources and can access specialist professional advice to support them in meeting the needs of pupils with SEND. Most children with an EHCP can be supported and have their needs met in a mainstream school, however we recognise that some children require more support in a specialist education setting.

When your child had his/her Transition Review meeting you may have discussed the type of school provision that would best suit his/her needs. It is important to visit any potential schools and speak to their special needs staff to help you make an informed decision. You can also speak to your child's SEND Case Officer for advice on schools, and the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) from your child's current school for advice.

I hope this booklet provides the guidance you need, however if you require further help or advice please contact your child's SEND Case Officer, the Surrey SEND Information and Advice Service (www.sendadvicesurrey.org.uk/) or the Surrey Local Offer (www.surreylocaloffer.org.uk).

I wish your child every success in their education.

Yours sincerely,



Liz Mills

Director for Education, Lifelong Learning and Culture

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Timetable

By the end of the Summer Term in the year preceding transfer- for example in the summer term of year 5 for transition to secondary school in September 2022

- Transition Reviews to be held by the current school or setting and the next placement type is discussed with children/young people and their families.
- EHCPs are amended following the review where applicable.

October

- Placements for children and young people already attending all through maintained special schools, which are still deemed suitable, will be considered for continuation.

November

- Consultations undertaken for current NCY 6 requiring mainstream and specialist provision.
Allocations of special school/centre places.

December

- Consultations undertaken for children going into reception/leaving an infant school or centre resource, requiring mainstream and specialist provision.
Allocations of special school/centre places.

By 15 February 2022

- Children and young people with existing EHCPs, will have their final EHCPs issued, with named placements for September or a type of provision confirmed in their EHCP, in line with the Code of Practice. Where a type of provision is named work will continue with parents to identify an appropriate school or provision ready for a transfer for the new academic year.

Key Points to note:

- At your child's Transition Review, you should discuss the type of provision that you and others feel will best meet your child's needs for the next key stage. Your child's SEND Case Officer and the SENCo at your child's current school/nursery can support you with this.

- You will be able to request a specific school by responding to the draft amended EHCP which will be issued in the Autumn Term preceding the transfer by your SEND Case Officer. This will be taken into consideration alongside the Local Authority's identified closest suitable school and a place will be allocated to your child in accordance to the SEND Code of Practice (2014):
 - the school is suitable to the child's age, ability, aptitude or SEN
 - the placement would be compatible with the efficient education of the other children with whom your child would be educated, and
 - the placement would be compatible with the efficient use of resources.

- If your child is currently in a mainstream school , and you are requesting a special school placement for the next key stage, the Local Authority would need to satisfy itself that this type of provision is appropriate in order to demonstrate that such a placement would be an efficient use of resources.

You will be given the opportunity to make representations and to discuss any queries you have with your child's SEND Case Officer about the school allocated or the content of the EHCP.

Who does this process apply to?

This process applies to all children who have an EHCP and are either starting school or approaching Key Stage Transfer (Year 2 in an infant school / Year 6). It does not apply to children who are Year 2 but attending an all-through primary school, as this is not considered a natural transition point. Any changes required to the EHCP and placement for a Year 2 child in a primary school should be requested as normal via the Annual Review process.

If your child attends an all through maintained special school, the placement will continue unless a change of placement has been agreed following the Annual Review of the EHCP. *The exception to this is the Learning and Additional Needs (LAN) schools, whereby the placement will be reviewed at secondary transition to ensure your child is accessing the most appropriate and closest school to your home address.

There will be many children who are starting or changing schools, but do not yet have an EHCP. You should follow this process only if your child currently has an EHCP. If your child is undergoing assessment, please follow the mainstream admissions process and your child's education setting will be considered when the EHCP is agreed.

Placement for Reception year:

Date of birth between 1 September 2017 - 31 August 2018

School start from- September 2022

Placement for Key Stage Two (only applicable to children attending an infant school or an infant resource unit, unless a change of placement has been agreed):

Date of birth between 1 September 2014 - 31 August 2015

School start from- September 2022

Placement for Key Stage Three (Secondary):

Date of birth between 1 September 2010 - 31 August 2011

School start from September 2022

Choosing a school for your child

The majority of children's needs can be met within mainstream schools in Surrey. However, for some children more specialist provision may be required. This should be discussed at your child's Annual Review along with your child's SEND Case Officer who can advise on types of provision within Surrey.

The Local Authority will be identifying the closest suitable school and will inform you of this.

A draft amended EHCP will be sent to you for you to request any changes, and to request a school if you wish.

When deciding on schools, we recommend that you:

- Read the Surrey guides *Finding the right primary school in Surrey* and *Finding the right secondary school in Surrey*. These can be found on Surrey's [SEND admissions page](#).
- Visit any schools that are suitable for your child's age, ability, aptitude and SEN.
- Read school brochures.
- Look at school websites to find out their policies, especially their SEND policy and end of key stage results/achievements.
- Read the latest Ofsted reports at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>
- Consider how your child would get to and from the school. It is important to note that your child will normally only be eligible for travel assistance if they are attending the nearest appropriate education provider. There is more information regarding Travel Assistance in this guidance.
- Discuss any requests for specific schools with your child's SEND Case Officer, or other professionals.

How Surrey determines what your nearest school is:

Every child will have a nearest mainstream school. This is the school which is closest to your home address by straight line distance.

If there is evidence that your child requires the support provided in a special school or specialist provision, then the nearest appropriate specialist provision / school to your child's home address will also be calculated. The word 'appropriate' in this definition refers to the type of the school or specialist provision that can meet your child's needs, for example 'Communication and Interaction Needs'. For more information about the types of schools available in Surrey, please see read our "Finding the right school" guides on Surrey's [SEND admissions page](#). Please speak to your child's SEND Case Officer if you require further information.

Requests for a state-funded school outside Surrey:

You can request schools outside Surrey that are academies or are maintained by another Local Authority. You should find out as much about the school as you can, in the same way as you would for a Surrey school. We would also encourage you to discuss your request with your SEND Case Officer.

Surrey County Council is not responsible for admissions to schools that are maintained by another Local Authority; however, we will make an application to that school on your child's behalf.

Applying for a school place outside of your child's normal age group:

The Local Authority expects all children to be educated in their normal chronological year group but on a very few occasions there are exceptions to this. If you would like to request that your child is educated outside their normal age group, you should discuss this with your child's SEND Case Officer in the first instance.

How places are allocated

School places are allocated in accordance with the Children and Families Act 2014, which requires the Local Authority to take into account the child's special educational needs, parental request for schools, and the formal view of the schools requested before making a decision.

Places will be allocated based on parental requests wherever possible, unless:

- the school is unsuitable for the child's age, ability, aptitude or SEN
- the placement would be incompatible with the efficient education of the other children with whom your child would be educated, and
- the placement would be incompatible with the efficient use of resources.

If particular schools are oversubscribed, then places will be allocated based on and in order of the below criteria:

1. Suitability: Age, ability, aptitude or SEN.
2. Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children.
3. Siblings already attending (if criteria 1 is also satisfied)
4. Distance order to home address, measured as a straight line.

Child's home address:

This is your child's current permanent place of residence, usually the parents' address.

- If the parents do not live together, the address is where the child spends most of their time. If there is equal shared custody of the child, it is left to the parents to decide which address to use.
- You should not use a business or carer/childminder's address. Nor should you use a relative's address unless your child lives at that address as their normal place of residence.
- We will not accept a temporary address if the main carer of the child still owns or rents a property that has previously been used as a home address, nor if we believe it has been used to obtain a school place when an alternative address is still available to that child.
- If you move to a new house during the admissions process please inform your SEND Case Officer as soon as possible, with proof of your new address.

If a school is allocated on the basis of an address that is subsequently found to be different from the child's normal permanent home address, then that place may be withdrawn.

Siblings:

Please inform your SEND Case Officer if your child already has a sibling currently attending a school you have requested. Providing the school is also suitable for the SEND needs of your child approaching transition, this will be taken into account when the Local Authority allocates places.

Siblings are defined as:

- Brother or sister with the same parents whether living at the same address or not.
- Half brother or sister living as part of the same family unit at the same address, Monday to Friday.
- Adopted or fostered brother or sister living as part of the same family unit at the same address, Monday to Friday.
- Step brother or sister living as part of the same family unit at the same address, Monday to Friday.

Looked After and Previously Looked After Children:

Looked after children are those who are in the care of a Local Authority or provided with accommodation by a Local Authority in accordance with section 22 of the Children Act 1989 at the time a preference for a school is expressed, for example, children who are fostered or living in a children's home.

Previously looked after children are those who have previously been in the care of a Local Authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989 and who have left that care through adoption, a child arrangement order (in accordance with section 8 of the Children Act 1989 and as amended by the Children and Families Act 2014) or special guardianship order (in accordance with section 14A of the Children Act 1989).

Notifying you of the school we are proposing to name

Your SEND Case Officer will be liaising with you throughout the process and you will be able to discuss the intended school to be named before the EHCP is finalised.

Issuing the final EHCP

Your child's final EHCP will be issued by 15 February and will include your child's provision for the next key stage in Section I.

If you disagree with your child's EHCP, you have the right to request independent mediation and subsequently appeal to a SEND tribunal. Details of this process will be provided to you with the final EHCP.

Travel Assistance

A large number of Surrey children with an EHCP do not receive, nor require specialised travel assistance from the Local Authority. Wherever possible parents of children with special educational needs should make arrangements for their child to attend school in the same way as parents of children without special educational needs. However, we recognise that some children will require more support and we will ensure that applications are assessed on an individual basis and that any decision about travel assistance is based on individual needs.

Surrey has published a [Travel Assistance Policy](#) which can be viewed online and gives details of how to apply.

If the Local Authority has complied with a parental request for a specific school which is not the nearest appropriate school to the home address, then it will normally be the responsibility of the parent/carer to ensure the child gets to school.

If you have any questions or would like further information on eligibility for travel assistance, please contact the SEND Travel Assistance Team:

- Email: sendtravel.assistance@surreycc.gov.uk
- Tel: 0300 200 1004

Children over the age of five with a disability who are living in Surrey may also be eligible for a free bus pass for disabled people. Please see [Eligibility for a free disabled bus pass](#) and for how to apply see [Free bus passes for disabled people](#)

Frequently asked questions

If your child has SEND but does not have an EHCP

If your child does not have an EHCP, but does have SEND, then you should apply for a mainstream school place through the Local Authority's Admissions and Transport Team. In line with legislation, mainstream schools are required to make reasonable adaptations to meet your child's SEND and to support them to fulfil their academic and wider potential. Further details of how to apply through the Admissions and Transport team can be found on the [mainstream admissions page](#).

If your child does not currently have an EHCP, but is going through a statutory assessment process, please apply in the way described in the above paragraph, but also speak to your SEND Case Officer for advice.

Can I appeal against the decision not to offer the school I requested?

If your child is not given a place at your requested school, you do have a right of appeal to an independent special educational needs and disability (SEND) tribunal after your child's final EHCP has been issued. Further information about this process will be given to you at the time.

Can I move my child to another school other than at the usual age of transfer?

If you are thinking about changing your child's school, you should consider this decision very carefully, bearing in mind that other schools may be full and that the upheaval may be damaging to your child's progress.

You should make sure that you discuss any concerns with your child's current head teacher, class teacher or special educational needs coordinator to try to sort out any issues of concern and to consider a referral to external specialist support services.

We would also encourage you to discuss the situation with your SEND Case Officer.

What if I have a complaint about my child's school?

In the event of a complaint it is in the best interests of everyone to deal with it as quickly and effectively as possible. You should approach the head teacher of your child's school in the first instance and follow the school's complaints procedure. If this does not resolve the issue, you can call us on 03456 009 009 for a copy of our complaints procedure leaflet.

Additional help

General information about schools in Surrey is available on the [Surrey website](#):

Your local authority SEND teams are responsible for the formal statutory assessment process, the issuing of EHCPs and appropriate educational placements. The teams each cover a specific area of Surrey, and look after arrangements for children living in that area. You can contact the relevant team for your child on:

South East team	(Mole Valley, Reigate and Banstead, Tandridge)	01737 737990
South West team	(Guildford, Waverley)	01483 517890
North East team	(Elmbridge, Epsom and Ewell, Spelthorne)	01737 737940
North West team	(Runnymede, Surrey Heath, Woking)	01483 518110

[SEND Advice Surrey](#) provides independent and impartial advice and support to parents/carers of children with special needs on issues concerning parents/centres in their dealings with the authority and with schools.

Telephone Number- 01737 737300

If you have a sight difficulty or any other support needs and need help reading this booklet or filling in the form, please phone:

Surrey Schools and Childcare Service
0300 200 1004

Minicom: 020 8541 9698 Fax: 020 8541 9575

If English is not your first language, and you have difficulty understanding this document and would like help translating it into any language, please contact the Woking Interpreting Translating Service Linkline on 01483 750970.