




# Applying for a School Place

AN INFORMATION SHEET BY THE TRAVELLER MOVEMENT

To secure a place for your child in a school, you must apply to schools near where you live. It is recommended that you apply to three local schools to ensure your child gets a place. It's important to remember that the decision on which school your child attends will be made by your local council and the schools themselves. For more information about appealing a school placement decision, visit the Find Help section of The Traveller Movement's Education Microsite.



Every child between the ages of 5 and 16 in the UK must be in school (This means your child should be in school before their 5th birthday.

School places are not allocated automatically—every place in every school must be applied for.

Almost all applications are handled by your local council.

School places are allocated to children differently by each council. Councils will consider a few factors when allocating a school place, including:

- How near you live to the school
- Whether your child has a sibling at the school
- Any religious beliefs held by the school or family

You should always check your local council's website for guidance on how to apply for both primary and secondary school places.

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## MAKING SECONDARY SCHOOL APPLICATIONS

You can apply for a place at a state secondary school online or by using your council's application form. You must apply through your local council, even if you're applying for schools in another council area. You can use the Gov website to find schools.

The deadline for applications is 31st October. If you miss the deadline, your child is less likely to be offered a place at their chosen schools.

## SCHOOL PLACES FOR CHILDREN WITH SEND

It is normal for parents of children with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) to be selective and concerned about a school's ability to meet their child's needs. This is especially true when applying for school places, as parents will be sending their child to a new environment with new people. This process can be daunting for most children and parents, even without SEND.

Children with SEND fall into two categories when applying to school:

1. Children with special educational needs who will need to join the SEN register at school.
2. Children with an EHCP (Education Health Care Plan).

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### **SCHOOL PLACES FOR CHILDREN WITH SEND**

Parents of children without an EHCP should apply through the usual admissions process at each school. There will be a section in the application asking for information about any special educational needs. It is very important to complete this section accurately so the school is aware of any SEND and can provide the appropriate support for your child.

Parents of children with an existing EHCP (or statement of special needs) applying to schools should have had the opportunity to 'name' an appropriate school during the EHCP process. If this has not been done, or if you wish to reconsider the 'named' school, or if your child is moving to a different level of education, you must request an 'Annual Review'. Typically, it is through an Annual Review that a 'named' school may be changed.

This usually means there is no need for parents of children with an EHCP to apply separately for a school, as the school will have already been consulted and agreed to offer a place. It is recommended that you confirm this in advance with the school and still take the opportunity to visit.

Children with disabilities must not be prevented from attending school, and it is unlawful for a school to refuse a place for this reason. To find out more, please visit the [Learn More: Special Education](#) page. This page can be found on The Traveller Movement's Education Microsite.