



# Choosing a School

## Your Rights

The law says that children with special educational needs should be educated in mainstream school wherever possible. It is important to keep an open mind and consider several possibilities. There are advantages and disadvantages to most schools but you do have the right to ask for the school you would prefer.

## Checklist

- Ask the school for a copy of their prospectus/OFSTED report and read it.
- Write a list of questions to ask during your visit.
- Would you like someone to go with you?
- Allow plenty of time.
- Do you want to take your child?
- Arrange to speak to the SENCo (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator), class teacher etc.
- The location of the school - is it nearby, will you have to drive or take transport?

## Questions

- Don't feel awkward about asking questions, the more you know the easier it will be to make a decision.
- What would your child's class size be?
- How many members of staff would be in your child's class?
- Will you be involved in setting your child's IEP (Individual Education Plan) targets?
- How does the school support children with SEN? You could ask for a copy of their SEN Policy.
- How does the school deal with bullying?
- How does the school communicate with parents?
- Is there a home/school diary?
- Are there any lunchtime/after school clubs?
- What is the homework/uniform policy etc?

## After Visiting the School

- Did the school make you feel welcome?
- Were your questions properly answered?
- Were the school positive when discussing your child's additional needs?

## Special School

Remember if you would like your child to go to a special school or Learning Resource Base this would have to be agreed by the Provision Panel.

**Darlington SEND Information, Advice and Support Service** is based at:

13 Horsemarket  
Darlington  
DL1 5PW

**Telephone:** 01325 405878

**Email:** [iass@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:iass@darlington.gov.uk)

**Website:** [www.darlington.gov.uk/iass](http://www.darlington.gov.uk/iass)

The SEND Adviser (IASS) is Lorraine Holden.

**Darlington Special Educational Needs Team** is based at:

Town Hall  
Darlington  
DL1 5QT

**Telephone:** 01325 405891

The Special Educational Needs Team are Elaine Allison, Jacqui Robinson, Linda Peacock and Sarah Booth.

Other useful factsheets:

1. **Inclusion**
2. **Organising your Paperwork**
3. *Choosing a School*
4. **Primary to Secondary Transitions**
5. **Exclusions**

Alternative sources of information:

**Department for Education**

Website: [www.education.gov.uk](http://www.education.gov.uk)

**Independent Parental Special Education Advice (IPSEA)**

Advice Line : 0800 018 4016

Website: [www.ipsea.org.uk](http://www.ipsea.org.uk)