

# Early Years and Transition into Nursery or School

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# Transition into nursery

## Today's workshop will cover;

- What happens about starting playgroup, nursery or school?
- How do I choose? What should I consider?
- When and how do I apply?
- Is there extra help available for my child?
- I'm worried about...?
- How do I make the transition easier for my child

# Choices at Three

- 3 & 4 year old funding is available for 15 hours for all children the term after their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday
- 30 hours funding is available for some children, dependent on working parent criteria

# Where can my child attend nursery?

- Private nurseries, playgroups and pre-schools are known collectively as PVI settings (private, voluntary and independent settings)
- Some mainstream and special schools have nurseries attached to them
- You can obtain a list of local PVI settings from Informed Families. Their link is one the Local Offer. Local school information is also on the Local Offer

# When can my child go to nursery?

- All children can attend a PVI setting from the term after their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday
- Some children are funded to attend from the term after their 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday if they meet certain criteria, including being in receipt of DLA
- School entry is annual, the September after their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday
- Many children go to both; they attend a PVI first, and then transfer to a school nursery the September after their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday, or they can stay in the PVI until the age of 5 if you prefer

# Different types of school nursery

In Enfield, the options include;

- mainstream schools, which include;
  - maintained schools
  - faith schools
  - academies
  - free schools
- special schools

All of these may have a school nursery

# What's the difference? Things to consider

- Parental choice dependent on your own family circumstances
- Both teach the same curriculum; a national curriculum for young children 0-5 called the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum
- Flexible hours; you may be able to use your 15 hours more flexibly in a PVI or pay for extra hours
- Siblings – do you have other children at school
- Being part of the school from the start
- Facilities, access, size and number of pupils and staff

# Application process

- For PVI applications; contact the setting directly
- For local authority schools, apply through online Admissions on the local authority website, or for all other schools, e.g., church or free school, contact them directly for their admissions procedure
- For special schools; discuss with the professionals involved with your child or SEN Services for more information

# Can I visit?

It is a very good idea to visit and see the nursery yourself.

You can;

- ask to visit individually and be shown around
- attend an Open Morning for prospective parents

# A word about the law:

- The law states that all providers of early education or childcare must promote equality of opportunity for all children with SEND so that they make the best possible progress. They must not discriminate against a child with SEND and they must make reasonable adjustments to include children with SEND. For more information, you can refer to the government SEND guide for parents and carers.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/417435/Special\\_educational\\_needs\\_and\\_disabilities\\_guide\\_for\\_parents\\_and\\_carers.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417435/Special_educational_needs_and_disabilities_guide_for_parents_and_carers.pdf)

# Some things to consider when looking around a nursery:

- How are you welcomed
- Attitude and level of interest in your child's individual needs
- Knowledge and experience with regard to your child's needs; important but not vital – willingness to learn and an inclusive attitude is also important
- What help and support might they offer your child
- Accessibility, safety and cleanliness
- Changing facilities and policy? (Your child cannot be excluded because they are wear nappies)

# Some more things to look out for:

- What are the staff doing in the classroom and outside? Are they interacting with the children and observing their play, or talking amongst themselves?
- How do they communicate with non-verbal children? Do they use Makaton, pictures, symbols?
- Are the children busy and happy?
- What is the environment like for your child? Will they prefer somewhere big or small? Is it clean?
- Are there any quiet spaces?
- How many children and staff ratios?
- How will the staff communicate with you?

# Once a place is confirmed;

The school/setting will advise you what will happen next;

- Usually a meeting will be held to plan for your child's entry. Professionals who know your child may be invited
- Schools often do a home visit so you can talk in a relaxed atmosphere and the staff can meet your child
- You can also ask for an appointment with the SENCO (the special educational needs co-ordinator) or the Inclusion Manager to discuss your child's entry

# What information to share:

You can help to make your child's transition into nursery smoother by sharing as much information as possible, for example, your child's;

- Likes – favourite toys, games, special interests
- Dislikes – things that scare your child
- Special people – who is important to your child
- Ways of communicating – words, sounds, gestures, body language, how your child lets you know what she/she wants, doesn't want, how he/she is feeling
- How do you know when he/she is happy/sad/scared?
- How to comfort your child if they are upset
- Food – likes and dislikes, any allergies
- Medical needs
- Sensory needs – does your child love/hate loud noises, bright lights/messy play/being inside/outside
- Toileting routines – do they let you know if they are wet/soiled and how. Do they mind being changed
- Names of professionals who know your child and reports

# Teaching my child with additional needs

- Just like every child in the setting, your child should have access to quality teaching, stimulating play experiences and opportunities to interact with other children.
- The teaching staff will follow a process called 'Assess-Plan-Do-Review' which means they think carefully about how to best teach your child new skills, plan their teaching activities in advance and monitor your child's progress.

# What else can I do to help my child settle in nursery:

Settings and schools will guide you but here are some ideas;

- Talk to your child about nursery, using very simple language; walk past the building and say 'nursery'
- See if your nursery offers orientation visits for short play sessions
- Ask if your child can have a familiar object, toy or beaker with them if it will calm them
- Practise trying on uniform and check it is comfortable for your child, no itchy labels etc
- Take a few clear photos of the nursery to use as a prompt 'going to nursery'. If you use the car/buggy/bus, take those photos too
- Try to establish a bedtime routine in the weeks before starting, especially if your child is in Morning nursery, so your child is well rested

# Your child may also benefit from input from:

- **SENCO:** a special educational needs coordinator is a senior member of staff who can take a lead on planning for your child's individual needs and monitoring and reviewing your child's progress during their time at the setting and liaising with other professionals involved with your child.
- **Qualified early years staff in the school or setting with additional training in SEND:** staff at schools and settings in Enfield can access additional training run by Enfield Council and their partners, for example, Makaton training, and training to work effectively with children with speech, language, social and communication difficulties and autism.

# What other help is available for my child in a setting

- **Area SENCO:** All the settings in Enfield can ask for advice from the Area SENCO, a senior specialist teacher with skills and knowledge in a wide range of different special educational needs
- **Educational Psychologist:** Settings can make referrals to request input from an educational psychologist.
- **Other professionals:** Settings can ask other professionals who already know your child to come and share their knowledge and offer specialist advice, for example a speech and language therapist.
- These referrals will only be done with your permission.

# Further support

- There are some sources of extra funding for your child's childminder, setting or school nursery, which can be used to support your child's individual needs, perhaps by providing some extra adult input, purchasing specific resources to extend your child's learning or to pay for specific staff training linked to your child's particular needs.

# 1) Early Years Inclusion Fund

- **Early Years Inclusion Fund:** childminders, early years providers and school nurseries can apply for additional funding to support your child's individual needs. This funding is only available to 3 and 4 year olds in receipt of a funded place, and who do not have an Education, Health and Care Plan

## 2) Disability Access Fund

- **Disability Access Fund:** A single annual payment to the setting of £615. This can only be issued if you are receiving Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for your child and they are claiming their funded early education entitlement. Four year olds in reception classes are not eligible. If you are receiving DLA for your child, give a copy of your award letter to your setting, and they will be able to claim the funding from the local authority.

# Education Health and Care Plan

- **Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan:** Most children's needs are met by their setting or school, but sometimes children who have more significant longer-term special educational needs or disabilities may need more intensive level of specialist help. In these circumstances, you can ask the local authority for an Education, Health and Care needs assessment for your child. This assessment could lead to your child getting an EHC plan. If the local authority decides to go ahead with this assessment, they will work closely with you, your child and all the professionals involved. To find out more about the EHC process, look on the Local Offer

# Who to speak to if there is a problem;

If you have a concern about any aspect of your child's early education, start by speaking to the class teacher, SENCO or nursery manager. They know you and your child best and will want to help resolve the problem.

- Class teacher
- SENCO
- Headteacher/Nursery Manager
- Governors
- SENDIASS (local independent advisory service)
- Local Authority
- Ofsted

# Links

All information is on the Local Offer in more detail;

<https://new.enfield.gov.uk/services/children-and-education/local-offer/>

- <https://new.enfield.gov.uk/services/children-and-education/school-admissions-and-information/>
- [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/417435/Special\\_educational\\_needs\\_and\\_disabilites\\_guide\\_for\\_parents\\_and\\_carers.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/417435/Special_educational_needs_and_disabilites_guide_for_parents_and_carers.pdf)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS) is a charity in Enfield which can provide you with independent advice and guidance on a range of school based inclusion issues. <https://www.epandc.org.uk/>

**ANY QUESTIONS?**