

CHOOSING A SCHOOL (SECONDARY)

Choosing a school for your child is a difficult decision for any parent. When your child has a disability or additional needs the decision can be even harder. The Information, Advice and Support Service (IASS) is here to help you make an informed decision.

Which type of school?

There are many different types of schools to consider. If your child has a Statement of SEN or an Education Health and Care Plan you might want to consider special schools as well as mainstream schools. Finding the most suitable school for your child might mean looking at schools outside of Southampton, boarding/residential schools or independent schools. Information about schools in Southampton and surrounding areas (and eligibility criteria for school transport) can be found on the Local Offer website: www.southampton.gov.uk/localoffer

How to use this grid:

This grid has been designed by the Southampton Information, Advice and Support Service to help parents/carers who are choosing a school for their secondary age child. Every child is unique and some of the suggested questions below might not be relevant so you can ignore/delete any that you don't need to ask. Blank spaces have been left at the end for you to add other questions that might be relevant to your child specifically e.g. if your child has a physical disability you will probably want to find out about the layout of the building and what reasonable adjustments a school would make to include your child in all parts of school life (including school trips). Once you have found a few schools to consider and decided what questions you need to ask you can find the answers by either looking on the school website, calling them or arranging a visit at the school.

What if I need more help?

The Information, Advice and Support Service (IASS) can give you free impartial information and advice. Please call our helpline **0300 303 2677** or send us an email southamptoniass@roseroad.org.uk and we would be happy to help.

Question	School 1	School 2	School 3
How many pupils are in each class? How many support staff?			
How are classes organised (by age or ability, how many classes per year)?			

How is the timetable organised?			
What are the teaching approaches?			
What subjects are offered?			
What opportunities are there for qualifications in years 10/11?			
How do you help pupils find the right College/Apprenticeship/Training when they are about to leave school?			
How do you monitor progress? And how do you inform parents?			
How do you manage 'melt downs'? Is there a separate 'chill out' area?			
What are your rewards and sanctions?			

What extra-curricular opportunities do you offer? (Lunch time and after school)			
What other agencies/professionals do you work with?			