

The arrangements for finding a secondary school place for a child with a statement of special educational needs (SEN) are different to those for children without a statement. It is the responsibility of the Southwark Council's special educational needs team to consult with parents of children with statements and with schools to agree a suitable placement.

The schools

Most children will move from primary school onto a mainstream secondary school but Southwark Council and other local authorities also maintain special schools. Southwark Council's special schools are listed in the Secondary School booklet or on this website. If you feel that your child would benefit from special school provision you may express a preference for a special school place for your child in the same way as described below for a mainstream school.

The process

The process of identifying a suitable secondary school for your child will start at the child's annual review meeting. This is usually held at the child's primary school in year 5. The review meeting will discuss the secondary school options for your child. It is important that you attend this review to express your views.

School preference forms

The preference form for pupils with special educational needs will be sent direct to the parent's home address in August. This form gives the option of three school preferences. The form must be completed and returned to the SEN team. The SEN team will then consult with these schools to agree a placement that is suitable to meet your child's special educational needs. However, if the placement of your child at your preferred school meant that it would be prejudicial to the education of other children on the school roll, or that it would not be an efficient use of the council's funds to provide your child with a place at the school, or that the school is unsuitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude or to his/her special educational needs then the council would not be able to agree to the placement of your child at your preferred schools.

Please note that the council is not able to name an academy in the statement unless there is prior agreement by the governors of these academies to the placement.

Appealing the decision

If you are unhappy with the school named in your child's statement of special educational needs, you have the right to appeal to the special educational needs and disability tribunal. For more information on this procedure please contact the parent partnership team on 020 7525 2886 or 020 7525 2866

Further information on the admissions process for children with statements of special educational needs can be obtained by contacting the Southwark Council's special educational needs team directly.

Special educational needs team
Tel: 020 7525 4278
Email: sen@southwark.gov.uk

Parent partnership team
Information for parents and carers who have a child with special educational needs
Tel: 020 7525 2886 or 020 7525 2866, email parentpartnership@southwark.gov.uk

The parent partnership service is independent of the local authority and is available to any parent or carer who has a child with special educational needs, with or without a statement. The parent

partnership service provides parents or carers with information, help and support on any education related issue.

School preference adviser

The school preference adviser (SPA) is based in the parent partnership service and can give you impartial, independent advice about the school applications process for all children. The SPA will give you advice on how to fill in your forms and talk through the criteria for entry to different schools. Please call to find out how they can help you Tel: 020 7525 5211