

## Checklist when visiting schools

### Before arranging a visit

- Visit the school's website to gather information
- Carefully think about and write a list of questions that you would like to ask the school
- When would you like to visit? (it is best during school hours)
- Will you be taking your child? (consider whether a place at the school been offered)
- Do you want someone else to accompany you?
- Is the school easy to get to? (think about transport arrangements)
- Would you like to talk to the SENDCo? (Special Educational Needs Co coordinator)
- Do you want a guided tour?
- Will you be able to meet staff who would be involved with your child?
- Will you be able to talk to other parents who have children at the school?

### Questions to ask

- What is the structure and timetable for the school day?
- How many children would be in your child's class?
- How do the school support children with special educational needs & disability?
- Do the school know anything about your child's special educational needs?
- Have the school ever taught any other children with similar special educational needs?
- If the school hasn't taught any other children with similar special educational needs, what is the school's attitude to learning about how to support your child?
- Are all areas of the school accessible to your child? (Are adaptations required?)
- How will your child be supported outside lesson time – break time, lunchtime?

- What is the school's homework policy?
- How does the school deal with disruptive or challenging behaviour?
- How is bullying dealt with at the school?
- How does the school help children to mix and make friends?
- What extra activities does the school provide at lunchtime and after school?
- What will you have to provide for your child? (Uniform/stationery/money for trips, events, extra activities, etc.)
- How does the school communicate with parents and when can the parents talk to their child's teacher?
- How will you be involved with their learning?
- What arrangements are there for parents to get involved with the school and what opportunities are there to meet other parents? (e.g. PTA, organised events, etc.)

### **It might be appropriate to ask:**

- How will my child find their way around school and will there be help coping with different rooms and classes?
- What can be done if my child has difficulties carrying their bag?
- What happens when my child needs the toilet?
- Can my child have a visual timetable?
- Does the school have a buddy system?
- Can the school arrange additional visits before my child starts?

### **After the visit**

Discuss your thoughts and feelings about the school with someone else:

- Did you feel welcomed at the school?
- Did the children seem happy, friendly and helpful?
- Do you think your child would be happy at that school?
- Did the school answer all your questions?

If your child accompanied you on the visit, discuss it with them:

- What were their perceptions?
- Did they feel comfortable in the school?
- Is it somewhere they would like to attend?

If you are planning to visit more than one school, it is a good idea to open a file and store the information for each school to help you consider your decision.

### **Where can I get further information, advice or support?**

Contact the IASS team on:

**Phone:** 01743 280019 (Open 10am-4pm Monday—Friday)

**Web:** [www.cabshropshire.org.uk](http://www.cabshropshire.org.uk)

[www.facebook.com/IASSShropshire](https://www.facebook.com/IASSShropshire)

**Email:** [iass@cabshropshire.org.uk](mailto:iass@cabshropshire.org.uk)

**Address:** Fletcher House, 15 College Hill, Shrewsbury, SY1 1LY