



School admissions

This guide will explain the different options available for securing a school place for a child with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND).

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1. Moving into Reception (Mainstream school) – children with SEND

When a child has SEND needs, but does not have an EHCP (Education, Health and Care Plan) you will need to apply for a mainstream school place through the usual [Admissions](#) Process.

We would suggest looking at the primary schools in your local area, including their websites and OFSTED reports. It is also a good idea to contact the schools and ask to speak to the SENCos to discuss whether they think your child's needs can be met at their school, as this may help you decide on which schools to name. SENDIASS have guides to visiting schools available on request.

If you think that your child has exceptional educational needs that can only be met at one school and that your child should get a school place due to specific admissions criterion, you can apply for priority - however not all schools offer this, so you will need to check their admissions policy.

You can apply for priority at a school if your child does not have an EHCP but has either:

- Special Educational Needs; or
- exceptional medical; or
- mobility needs.

To apply, you should attach two documents to your online application.

The first should be a letter written by yourself, to explain why you are requesting priority. The Admissions website will tell you what to include in the letter and also gives examples of successful and unsuccessful applications, which will be useful to look at.

The second should be any supporting evidence from an independent professional, such as a doctor, nurse or teacher, to explain what your child's needs are and why only one school can meet that need.

2. Delaying your child starting school

You can request for your child to delay starting primary school, start part time or go to school early. Most children start in Reception at primary school in the September after they turn 4. If you think your child is not ready to start school in the September after they turn 4, they could delay starting school or start part time.

Children must start full time education after they reach compulsory school age. Children reach compulsory school age on 31 December, 31 March or 31 August after turning 5 (whichever comes first). Your child would need to start full time from the first day of the next term after this date.

To delay starting school, you will still need to apply for a Reception place in their normal age group, in case you do not get permission.

You will need to attach a letter to each school you apply for in your online application. The letter should explain:

- why you want your child to start school early or late
- the year group you would like your child to start school in

You can also choose to attach evidence that supports your request if you have any. More information on this can be found [here](#).

3. Admission out of chronological age

If your child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems like ill health and has missed a lot of school, they might be able to move up or down a year at school. This is called an admission out of chronological age.

If your child is already attending school, and you feel they may benefit from moving to a different year group, you should talk to the headteacher about this.

If you're applying for your child to move schools and want them to start in another year group, you need to apply for a place based on their normal age group and attach a letter requesting that they start in a different year. The letter must include:

- why you think your child should start out of their normal year group
- the year group you wish your child to start in

Each school you apply for will make its own decision on whether your child can start in the year you request. Asking for your child to start in a different year will not affect whether they are offered a place.

3. Applying for a specialist setting

If you are wishing to preference a specialist setting for your child, there must be an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in place.

Where a child has an EHCP, then the usual admissions process no longer applies. You request a school or setting as part of the EHCP process, and the local authority will name one in section I of a finalised plan.

If you are wanting a change of placement then this can be discussed at the next EHCP review meeting, or you can call an early review.

If your child does not have an EHCP, then you will need to apply for an [EHC needs assessment](#). You should still follow the usual admissions process in the meantime, as it is a 20 week process and a plan is not guaranteed.

If you have made an application for an EHC Needs Assessment, and you are waiting for a decision as to whether the LA will be agreeing to an assessment or issuing a plan, you may not

have this decision before the admissions deadline so you will still need to go down the ordinary admissions route.

If the LA do decide to assess or produce a plan after an assessment, this will supersede any ordinary admissions offer.

4. Moving schools

If you want to change schools in Leeds, you need to complete an application form.

Find out which schools have places by checking the vacancy lists to see which schools have available places. You will need to contact the school to confirm that the place is still available. If you want your child to transfer from one school to another, you will need to apply online.

If the school is unable to offer you a place, your child will automatically be added to the waiting list. The admissions team will contact you in writing to confirm you child has been placed on the school waiting list. <https://www.leeds.gov.uk/schools-and-education/school-admissions/moving-schools>

The local authority has a policy to find a school for vulnerable children who do not have one. Vulnerable children include children with SEND needs (without an EHCP) and those who have been out of education for four or more weeks and there are no places available at any school within a reasonable distance of their home.

The policy applies to all schools and is known as the fair access protocol. If you think the policy applies to your child, let the Admissions team know when you complete your application online. They will then contact you if your application is being considered for the fair access protocol, for more information.

5. Children new to the country

If you and your child are new to the country, then you will need to contact the Admissions Team.

If you would like your child to attend a mainstream school, you can go through the normal admissions route to find a place at a mainstream school. The school would be able to claim funding for any SEND needs your child may have and they can consider applying for an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) if they feel it may be needed.

If the Admissions team feel your child would need a specialist setting, rather than mainstream school they will then contact an Education Psychologist (EP). Their role is to make a professional recommendation of where a child should be placed for their initial assessment. Children arriving new to the country can be placed in a specialist setting for their assessment.

Those attending a Specialist Inclusive Learning Centre (SILC) provision would then have further assessment of their learning needs and the school would work with parents to request an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs assessment further down the line.

6. Contact details

Email: education.admissions@leeds.gov.uk

Telephone: 0113 2224414