

Information about Changing School

How might it affect your child?

If you want to change your child's school you should consider this decision very carefully. It is generally in a child's interest to stay at the same school, as changing schools can cause an unnecessary break in a child's education. If you are considering changing school it is important to research it properly. Where possible you should try to visit the school (s) you have an interest in before you make the application. This visit may influence your decision about which school (s) to apply for.

There are many reasons why you may feel you wish to change your child's school. Many of them can be overcome. The Authority recognises that transfers outside the normal year of transfer are nearly always disruptive to a child's education. It is very important that parents discuss any problems with the school to try to resolve them. **Moving school without confronting the issue may help in the short term but in the long term may not help your child.**

Please note that formal interviews are not permitted within the admissions process, but it is important that you discuss honestly with school staff any issues you feel are significant or that your child may need support with. This shouldn't prevent a place being offered if there is one available, but you need to understand how the new school will be able to support your child if a place is offered.

Below are some of the issues and suggestions

It is important for parents to be aware that the school you would like your child to move to may be full or the new school may not be able to start your child until the beginning of the next half term.

- **Is your child finding the work hard?** The school needs to know this so that they can decide how to support your child. It is very likely that the work will still be hard at the new school.
- **It may be that your child is unhappy because they have fallen out with their friends or feel they are being bullied.** You need to discuss strategies to resolve this with the class teacher or the pastoral staff.
- **Does your child think they have been in trouble in school and feel they cannot sort it out?** It is important that the school are able to sort out the problem and to resolve it where possible.
- **Are you dissatisfied with how something has been managed?** Ask to meet with the Headteacher, and if you are still not happy you can use the school's own complaints process.
- **Is your child not attending school for some reason?** Think about how that what would need to change if they had a new school.

Whatever the reason we advise that you:

- Talk about any concerns that you have with your child's teacher and the pastoral staff first.
- Raise your concerns with the Headteacher.
- Contact the school you would like your child to move to and discuss your intentions with them.

By talking to teachers most problems can be resolved easily. Staff in schools are always happy to work with parents and pupils to improve a child's chances of success.



What are the issues you need to think about before you decide?

The curriculum – Each school organises their curriculum differently. Different things are taught in different stages and at different times of the year. It is likely to mean that your child will miss out on important work or find themselves repeating work.

Options – Moving school can have an impact on your child's achievements. Your child may well not be able to take the same options and this will have a negative impact on their achievement and grades. There is no guarantee that the new school will be covering the same syllabus or using the same examination boards. Some secondary schools start GCSE courses in Y9, placing your child at an even further disadvantage if they have not been able to start the course.

Achievements – On average statistics show that children who move school achieve lower examination results.

Friends – Making friends can be hard. Friendship groups are established and it can be difficult to fit in. It may be that your child knows children at the new school. It does not mean that the new school will be able to place your child in the same class as their friend or that they will see them at break and lunch time.

If your child is moving school because there have been difficulties with friends think carefully about whether that would really be resolved by a school move. There could be similar issues in the new school. It is often better to work with the existing school to address matters.

Behaviour – It can be helpful for a child who is presenting challenging behaviour to move to a new school and have a fresh start. However, this is normally only successful where the behaviour is linked to the school and where it is planned and supported. If strategies are already in place to help a child these can be disrupted by a school move, leading to even further problems.

Costs – New uniform is expensive.

Transport – You need to think how your child will get to school. The journey may take longer. Schools set their own start and finish times. You may be planning to take them initially. Consider what will happen if your work patterns change. Your child is unlikely to get travel assistance.

Timing – A change of school during the school year is very disruptive to a child's education. This is particularly the case if they are in the middle of a piece of course work.

Stress – Moving schools can be difficult and it will often take time to settle in. During that time learning is often lost.

It is expected that parents and schools have had an opportunity to work together to resolve any request is made to move school.

If you still wish to go ahead then you will need to make your application through My Telford and once the school place is allocated you will go to your child's current school to complete the supplementary form. Your child will not be able to start at the new school until the form has been completed.

Fair Access Panel

All schools in Telford and Wrekin are required to take part in the Fair Access Protocol. The protocol seeks to ensure that access to education is secured swiftly for children with no school place but for whom a place at a mainstream school or alternative provision is appropriate. It also aims to ensure all schools in the area admit their share of children who are deemed to be 'hard to place'. Or who have challenging behaviour or who have been excluded from other schools.

If a pupils is identified under the protocol they will be considered by a panel who may decide to offer a place at the requested school or an alternative school or access to an alternative curriculum.