

## Moving your child during the school year

Moving your child to another school is a very serious step to take. It can affect your child in many ways. It is important that you consider whether a transfer is really the best option. Before deciding to move your child to another school, please read this information carefully.

Many things that worry parents and pupils can be sorted out without the need to move schools. Talking to your child and staff at your child's present school should avoid a transfer between schools in almost all circumstances.

- **If you child is unhappy at school:**  
Speak to their class teacher or make an appointment to see the Head Teacher.
- **If you have a complaint about the school, the teachers or the work your child is doing:**  
If it cannot be resolved by the teaching staff, put your complaint in writing to the school's Governors.
- **If your child is not attending school:**  
Talk to your child about why they do not want to attend and speak to their teachers. You can also talk to an Education Welfare Officer.
- **If your child has special educational needs:**  
Speak to the teacher in charge of special needs (SENCO) or contact the Special Educational Needs Team.
- **If you child is about to be excluded:**  
Speak to your child's class teacher or make an appointment to see the Head Teacher for advice.

**There are strict regulations about the transfer of children between schools and the circumstances under which they can be taken off the school's register.**

In the majority of cases children may not be taken **off** the schools register until they have been taken **on** to the roll of another school.

If parents are concerned that their child has been taken off the school's register inappropriately the Attendance Service can provide advice.

Staff may be contacted on **0845 352 7558**.

**If you suspect that your child may be being bullied:**

- Talk to your child – ask them how they are – if there is anything worrying them.
- If they report an incident – write it down.
- Has this happened before?
- It is very important they know that it is not their fault.

- If it happened at school – tell your child's teacher.
- Keep a record.
- Encourage your child to tell someone straight away.

If you believe your child is being bullied at school, it is very important to keep school informed of any incidents so that they can deal with the situation effectively.

If, after speaking to your child's teacher and allowing time for actions to be taken, you are not satisfied with the way the matter was dealt with, contact the Head Teacher and arrange a meeting. The Head Teacher should investigate the matter and action should be taken.

However, if after speaking with the Head Teacher you are still not satisfied with the outcome and you still feel your child is being bullied, your next action should be to contact the Chair of Governors and ask them to investigate.

Finally, if after speaking to the Head Teacher and the Chair of Governors, you are still unhappy put your complaint in writing. You may view the Council's complaints procedure at Customer Services  
PO Box 2374  
Oldbury  
West Midlands  
B69 3DE

**Tel:** 0845 359 7510

**Email:** [contact@sandwell.gov.uk](mailto:contact@sandwell.gov.uk)

If you feel that a change of school is unavoidable **and you live in Sandwell** you should ask your current Sandwell school for an application to transfer school. If your child does not currently attend a Sandwell school you should obtain your form from the Admissions and Appeals Service. **If you live in an adjacent LA you should apply to that LA for a place even though your preferred school may be in Sandwell.**

When you have completed the first part of the form please ask your child's current school to add the appropriate information to the second half of the form. You do not have to share your application form with your child's current school if you do not wish to do so but if the second part of the form is not completed this may delay the processing of your application.

All application forms must be sent to the Admissions and Appeals Service unless you live outside of Sandwell in which case they should be sent to the LA in which you live.

### **How applications are processed**

The Admissions and Appeals Service receive applications from parents on a daily basis. We receive information about pupil numbers in schools on a weekly basis. To ensure that we consider applications for places fairly we will

collect any applications received during a particular week and consider them against the pupil numbers which we receive from the school. If there is more than one application for a single vacancy in a Community or Controlled School we will apply the admission priorities to work out which applicant can be offered a place. If your application is for a Sandwell Community or Controlled school only we will attempt to process your application within 5 working days after the week in which the application is considered. If we are unable to meet any of your preferences your letter will contain a formal refusal, a statement about parents rights of appeal and, if possible, a list of schools with places available in the appropriate year group.

If it is not possible to offer a place at your preferred school you may appeal against this decision (see [appeals section](#)).

If the application includes a Voluntary Aided, Trust school, Academy or a school outside Sandwell this will need to be considered by the appropriate LA or Governing Body.

If you have requested a place in a Sandwell Voluntary Aided or Trust school or Academy or a school outside Sandwell or it is necessary to consider an application under the Fair Access protocol (see below), the time limits are likely to be different.

The Council is not the Admissions Authority for all schools in Sandwell. This means that we must consult the Governors of Voluntary Aided, Trust and Foundation Schools and Academies about vacancies and this can sometimes take some time to complete. We also have to consult other Local Authorities about vacancies in their area if we receive applications for schools outside Sandwell. This process can significantly affect the time taken to process an application.

### **Fair Access**

Although we hope that all children can start at school and continue until they transfer to secondary education there are some circumstances when this progression through school is interrupted. This could be because of a change of address to another part of the Borough or country, where children have especially challenging behaviour or who have been permanently excluded and cannot find another school place.

All LA's are required to have a "Fair Access" Protocol in place. This ensures that education placements can be made for vulnerable, excluded or "Hard to Place" pupils as quickly as possible. It also ensures that pupils are placed fairly and equitably across the education establishments in the LA.

In Sandwell these arrangements are overseen through "panels" that have been set up especially for this purpose. These meet throughout the academic year.

Children subject to the Fair Access Protocol take precedence over children who may already be included in the waiting list for a particular school.

All Schools in Sandwell belong to these panels, with Head Teachers or other senior members of staff in attendance. They use their expertise to determine the most appropriate education placement to meet the needs of young people, taking into account parental preferences. Parents/Carers have the right to Independent Appeal if the panel does not allocate a preference made. The rationale behind this decision is shared with the Independent Appeal Panel and will be taken into account as part of their decision-making.

Occasionally, and only in exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary to refuse an application made during the term for a place at a particular school even though there are places available because the school has a particular concentration of children with challenging behaviour AND the school:

- Requires Special Measures or has, within the last 2 years, come out of them.
- Has been identified by Ofsted as requiring significant improvement and given a “notice to improve”.
- Is subject to a formal warning notice by the Local Authority.

In the event of these circumstances applying, and when the child is felt to be “challenging” we will follow the Fair Access protocol.