

Changing Schools in Cumbria 2015/2016



Applying for an In
Year school place
– a guide for
parents/carers

Introduction

The in-year application process is for children seeking to change schools during the academic year, rather than at the usual transfer time (starting infant/primary school, moving to junior or secondary school).

Sometimes a change of school is unavoidable, such as when a family moves house. However, if you are considering changing your child's school for other reasons, there are a few issues that you should consider.

Changing schools is a very important step. This can be unsettling for a child, as it involves leaving existing friendship groups, making new friends, settling with new teachers and getting used to a new environment. It may also affect the progress that they are making at school.

If you are thinking about transferring your child to another school for reasons other than moving house, you should:

- Talk through any issues or concerns you may have with the current school.
- Bear in mind that, if your child already has a local school place, the new school would not need to accept him/her on roll until the start of the next term.
- Be aware that, although there is a National curriculum that every child is expected to follow, each school delivers parts of this curriculum at different stages and times during the school year. If you transfer your child's school mid-year, they might miss out or repeat a part of the scheme of work at the new school. Secondary schools may follow a different curriculum, use different examination boards or offer different options that could present difficulties for your child. Transferring a child in Year 10 or 11, when children have

commenced their GCSE coursework can be particularly problematic. Some secondary schools start their GCSE modules in Year 9.

- Consider any transport implications. If you transfer your child to another school, you may be responsible for transporting your child to and from school and any costs involved. (The transport policy is explained in the leaflet "School/College transport policy and how to apply for the 2015/2016 Academic Year"). You can find out more information at cumbria.gov.uk/schooltransport.

How to apply for an in-year school place?

If, you would like your child to change schools, there are two ways you can do this:

1. By contacting your preferred school/s direct

The Local Authority is no longer required to be involved in changes of school during the academic year, and schools and academies can now offer places direct. You can contact your preferred school/s to find out what you need to do to apply.

If you are applying for a place at a voluntary aided, foundation or free school or academy, you do not need to apply via the Local Authority and can contact the school direct. If your application is refused by the school you should still be given the right of appeal and schools should let us know that you have not been offered a place in case we need to follow your application up.

If you are applying for a place at a community or voluntary controlled school you need to apply to the Local Authority on form SA8.

- To find out whether the school you are applying for is a community or voluntary controlled school, or a voluntary aided, foundation or free school or academy please follow the 'find a school' link on cumbria.gov.uk/schooladmissions or contact the School Admissions Team on **01228 221582** or by emailing school.admissions@cumbria.gov.uk.

2. Via the School Admissions and Appeals Team

- Download the application form SA8 at cumbria.gov.uk/schooladmissions or, if you need a paper copy, you should contact the School Admissions Team on: **01228 221582**.
- Complete the form, giving up to three preferences of schools. We cannot guarantee that you will get your first preference so it is important that you provide other options, if possible.
- Return the completed form to the School Admissions Team by email or post.

What happens next?

The School Admissions Team will process your application and contact the current school and other professionals if appropriate. We will confirm in writing whether a place is available at one of your preferred schools. This may not be until the beginning of the following term. If the requested school does not have places available, you will have the right to appeal. Further information about the appeals process is available on our website

and will be included in the letter we send to you. Your child should stay at their current school until they have formally been offered a place and a confirmed start date at another school.

How long will it take?

The length of time it takes to process an application varies in each individual case. Please remember that if a child already has a local school place the new school would not be required to accept your child on roll until the start of a new term.

Important points to note

- All children between the ages of 5 and 18 **must** receive full-time education. This may be through attending school regularly or by some other arrangement. This is a legal duty and it is your responsibility as a parent/carer to ensure regular, prompt attendance. If you do not, it could result in the LA taking action against you.
- Infant class size legislation limits class sizes to a maximum of 30 pupils by law in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, which may cause difficulty in moving children in these year groups.
- Non-attendance at the current school will be recorded as unauthorised absence and can lead to prosecution.

How do I find a new school?

The online schools directory, available on our website (cumbria.gov.uk/childrensservices or the 'find a school' link on cumbria.gov.uk/schooladmissions), gives details of all Cumbrian schools, including details on age ranges, links to Ofsted reports, admission criteria etc. It is important that you arrange visits to the schools that you are considering.

Remember, every child's needs are different, so a school which may be suitable for your friend's children may not offer the support your child requires. You should contact the head teacher of the school to arrange a visit and to get a copy of the school prospectus.

Further advice and information:

If you require any further advice or information contact the School Admissions Team at: school.admissions@cumbria.gov.uk or telephone: **01228 221582**

Advice and support for parents of children with **Special Educational Needs**:

Allerdale and Copeland	01946 506211
Barrow and South Lakeland	01229 407403
Carlisle and Eden	01228 226843