

September 2026 – Phase Transfer Process for children and young people with an Education, Health, and Care Plan

The key phase transfers are:

- Early years provider to school (Reception phase)
- Infant school to junior school (Junior phase)
- Primary school to secondary school (Secondary phase)
- Secondary school to a post-16 institution (Key Stage 5 phase)

As your child is part of the phase transfer cohort (transferring to a new school in September 2026, and has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), their school allocation is administrated by the Birmingham Special Education Needs and Review (SENAR) Service.

This section aims to provide information on the process, such as next steps for parents/carers and young people and how they can submit their preferences for a new school for September 2026 and what happens.

Initial Steps for Parent/Carers

It is important that you start to consider which school you would like your child to attend.

If you have a specific school in mind, it would be advisable to contact them and arrange a visit to discuss your child's special educational needs - they will be able to help you make an informed decision when making your preferences. It is also advisable to involve the SENCO from your child's current school.

All schools have information that explains the curriculum, facilities and what they aim to achieve for their pupils, along with the school's local SEND offer to pupils with identified special educational needs. The school's website is the best place to find this information.

For more information on schools in the area, please use the link below which will take you to the Birmingham Schools directory. This link enables you to search schools by type and, if you enter your postcode, it will tell you how close the school is to your address - <https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/schools-directory>.

Further information and advice regarding the provision available to children and young people with SEND is available on this website - [Parents and Carers - Local Offer Birmingham](#).

Phase Transfer Preference Forms

As part of the process, you will be given a specific preference form to complete, known as the SENAR Phase Transfer Preference Form for children and young people with an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP).

Reception Phase Transfer

The letters and preference forms have been sent directly to parents/carers.

Junior Phase Transfer

The letters and preference forms have been sent directly to parents/carers.

Secondary Transfer

The letters and preference forms have been sent directly to parents/carers, and your child's current school.

Key Stage 5 Transfer

The preference forms will be issued to parents/carers and your child's current school.

Preference forms for newly finalised (not amended) EHC plans will be sent to parents/carers after the new EHC plan is issued.

The form will contain your child's information, such as their name, date of birth and address. It will also provide space for you, or the young person, to add up to two preferences for their choice of setting for September 2026.

Please note that, as your child has an EHCP, you **do not** need to complete the online preference form via the Admissions and Appeals process. Any preferences logged via the online process may not be counted, so it is important that you use the specific SENAR form provided instead.

The completed form should be returned to your child's current setting or directly to the SENAR address provided on the form.

If you would like to request a preference form, or would like to email your preferences directly to SENAR please send an email to [**senar.transfers@birmingham.gov.uk**](mailto:senar.transfers@birmingham.gov.uk). Please include your child's full name, date of birth and the school setting they are currently attending.

Preferences

As the parent/carer, you may express a preference for which maintained school, academy, or free school, (mainstream or special), non-maintained special school, or Section 41 approved independent school you would like your child to attend. You can also make representations for any other type of setting e.g., independent schools (not S.41 approved).

When you express a preference for the settings listed above, the local authority must name the setting in your child's EHCP unless:

- It would be unsuitable for age, ability, aptitude, or special educational needs. of the child or young person, education of others, or,
- The attendance of the child or young person would be incompatible with the efficient use of resources.

As part of the process, the local authority will also consult with settings it considers appropriate for your child. This is because the local authority must consult with any setting before naming it in an EHCP and, in the event we cannot name your preferred setting, the local authority will name a setting or type of setting which it considers appropriate for your child.

If we do not receive preferences, the local authority will also consult with local appropriate settings so we can name a setting or type of setting which we consider appropriate for your child by the statutory deadline - **15 February 2025**. For young people transferring to Post 16 provision (those in Year 11), the statutory deadline to name a setting or type of setting is **31 March 2025**.

Where a change of placement type is requested, for example, from mainstream to a resource base or special school, the local authority will require updated, triangulated, professional evidence regarding your child's needs and the provision they require. This would be gathered via your child's annual review, and we would advise you to discuss this with your child's current school. The requests for a change of type of placement will then be considered by a multi-agency and multi-professional panel.

Contact

If you have any queries in relation to the September 2026 Phase Transfer Process, you can send an email to senar.transfers@birmingham.gov.uk