

Quick Guide for Parents and Carers

Every year in Lincolnshire, children and young people successfully make the transition from special to mainstream school. With the appropriate support, they go on to thrive academically, learn important life skills, and develop their independence in preparation for their adulthood.

As a parent or carer, you may decide your child is ready to make the step to mainstream school because of the progress they have made and being ready for a wider educational experience. The school, or another professional, may suggest a move following regular review of your child's needs and outcomes.

In Lincolnshire, we are committed to making sure that when a step into mainstream school is planned, the experience is as positive as possible, without ever putting pressure on a family to make this move.

There are 5 key steps involved in planning for your child to step into mainstream:

1 Considering a move

Either you or your child's special school can suggest a step into mainstream when it is felt your child is ready for a wider educational experience. This plan can be raised at your child's **Annual Review** as something that could happen in the future, or you or your child's school can suggest a **transition** by raising this outside the Annual Review.

Through these discussions, your child's special school **SENDCo** will refer to any relevant **assessment** information, for example, supported by the '**Valuing SEND**' tool, to help you make an informed decision about a move to mainstream. Your **child's views** will also be very important.

In addition, your child's **SEND caseworker**, or a caseworker from the **Pupil Reintegration Team**, will offer you more advice about how your child's needs could be best met in a **mainstream school**.

2 Identifying a mainstream

Once you and your child have decided on a step into mainstream, your child's special school SENDCo or headteacher will contact the Pupil Reintegration Team at Lincolnshire County Council. They will invite a Pupil Reintegration Team Officer to come out to the school to meet with you and discuss what sort of **mainstream school** you are looking for, for the support that will need to be in place and any other relevant information to support the transition.

No consult paperwork will be sent at this point. The **Pupil Reintegration Team** will contact the mainstream school that you have in mind to confirm availability and the next steps for your child's enrolment. They will also be able to support with identifying any other mainstream schools that you may not be aware of or thought about. The Pupil Reintegration Team will confirm with you once a mainstream school place has been agreed, at first just for a **trial period**.

3 Planning a smooth transition

To ensure the move to mainstream school is as positive as possible, the Pupil Reintegration Team will organise a **transitions meeting**. This can be held at either the mainstream school or the special school, whichever you prefer.

The purpose of the transition meeting will be to set out some agreements so that everyone knows what everyone else is doing to ensure the move is a success. Everything, from the new uniform and how to get to the school, to what support will be provided so that your child feels **safe and supported** at their mainstream school, will be planned out.

You may also wish to do your **own research**, such as visiting the school or speaking to other families with children who attend the school to better understand their experience.

4 Progress reviews and dual registration

Once your child has started their move to mainstream, the **Pupil Reintegration Team** will regularly check-in on how things are going and will arrange a **review** of the transition plan **every six weeks**.

At any point, you have the option for your child to return to their special school. Equally, you may want to try another mainstream school and the Pupil Reintegration Team will support this as well.

For up to the **first six months**, your child will be **dual registered** at both the special and mainstream schools, which means that your child's place at the special school will remain, and they can return if necessary. When you are fully confident that your child's needs are being met in mainstream, your child will be removed from the special school's register.

5 A successful transition

At the end of the transition period, the special school will hold a **review** of the current situation to ensure all parties, and importantly you and your child, are happy with the arrangement. This review will be supported by your child's **SEND Caseworker** along with the **Pupil Reintegration Team**, to confirm the ongoing support provision needed to meet your child's needs in their new mainstream school, or agree a return to special school, if necessary.

If a permanent move to mainstream is agreed, your child's **Education, Health and Care plan** will be updated to reflect the change in school and the support that is needed within this setting. The headteacher of the mainstream school will receive the **consult paperwork** so that the mainstream setting can now be **named in Section F**. By this point, we will know exactly what support your child needs to thrive and the revised plan and resourcing will reflect that.

Over the longer term, we will continue to monitor your child's progress to reach their full potential and desired outcomes as part of the **Annual Review** cycle.

For more information about moving on from special school, please contact your child's special school or:

Pupil Reintegration Team at: PRT@lincolnshire.gov.uk
or by calling: 01522 555798 (North) or 01522 555816 (South)

Alternatively, you can contact Lincolnshire Parent Carer Forum at admin@lincspcf.org.uk