

## Information for parents

### Choosing a school for your child

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Schools come in all shapes and sizes and academic results are not the only thing to consider.

The following are some points to consider when choosing a school.

- Make a list of possible schools. Look for the names and addresses of schools near to where you live. You can find addresses in the telephone book or you can contact the Department of Education and Training, the Catholic Education Office and the Independent Schools Association.
- Consider transport to the school. How close is the school to your home? What schools will you choose for other family members? What schools do family friends and neighbours attend?
- What type of (secondary) school are you after? Do you want a co-educational school or a single sex school, a private school or a state school, a boarding school, a special school, a church school or a non-denominational school?
- You need to ask questions about the quality of the education the school provides. To find this out you can talk to the Head or Principal or the School's Director of Studies. You can look at the school web site and obtain a prospectus about the school.
- Make an appointment to visit the school. Most schools advertise open days during the year when prospective students and their families can visit and look around and see teachers and students at work. During such a visit, look at the interactions between students and teachers. The students should appear happy, polite, interested and there should be a purposeful buzz of activity. Talk to some of the students if they are on a recess or lunch break.
- Make a list of questions you want to ask a member of the school staff? These questions could include: Do you have a place for my child? What is special about this school? What values and social skills will my child learn at this school? What homework does the school expect? What is the school's attitude to drugs, alcohol and smoking? What sort of music, sports activities and drama are available at the school? What is the school's policy towards bullying?
- Look at or find out about past students who have attended the school.
- Does the school have an active Parents' and Friends' Association? Does the school encourage or expect parental involvement?
- Does the school have a Five Year Plan? Has it a vision for the future?

Selecting a school for your child is a tough decision. Mostly you will get it right, but on occasions you will get it wrong. If the latter is the case you need to be prepared to make a move rather than leave your child in a situation where he or she is unhappy and not succeeding to his or her potential.

### For more Information

If you require further information please contact:

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