Key considerations in Education 0-16 years of age

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Looking at a new educational setting?

- Visit a range of settings
  - Source of lighting – where is it? Can it be moved/adapted. Considerations re task lighting?
  - How are the acoustics in the different spaces? Can unnecessary background noise be reduced?
  - Are corridors/classrooms open, organised with clear walkways?
  - How flexible is the setting in making physical adaptations to meet need? Eg: outdoor lighting for darker mornings/afternoons; fixing uneven paving; implementing one- way systems in crowded corridors etc.
  - Consider class sizes – this will impact on noise levels, staffing ratios etc.

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- Speak to the SENCO
    - Do they support children with sensory impairments currently? Have they in the past?
    - What provisions were put in place for those children if so?
    - How will they support the assessment process for an EHCP, or the review of one already in place?
    - Is there a space in the setting to safely store and charge equipment? Eg hearing aid batteries, radio mic charging etc.
    - Is there flexibility within the timetable to allow for visits from professionals, sensory breaks, pre/post teaching time, reduced timetable etc.
    - Is there provision for children who need to leave class early to avoid the busy corridors?
    - Are they able to provide a key person role – someone who your child can build a strong relationship with, who they can seek out and talk to if needed.
    - How do they feel they can support your child in living with a changing condition?
    - How do they support the formation of friendships?

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- Does the setting as a whole seem open to advice and training from outside agencies?

- Has it been easy to make contact with the setting? Has communication been good? Have you been happy with how quickly they have responded to your enquiries?

- How do they liaise and work with other professionals to ensure consistency of approach?

- Don’t be afraid to consider settings out of area – have this discussion with your LA.

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You've found a setting...now what?

- Environmental audit by a Registered Qualified Habilitation Specialist (and travel training to and from the setting when appropriate).

- Extended transition

- Training carried out before your child or young person starts – Deafblind Awareness, Vision Impairment Awareness, Deaf Awareness, Mobility etc.

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Remember… you know your child the best

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