

Gateshead Choice Advice Service Helping Parents make the Right School Choices

Parents that live in Gateshead have access to the help of a dedicated school choice adviser to offer expert advice in choosing the right school for your child(ren).

Starting or changing school can be a daunting time for children and parents so impartial, independent advice on the whole process of applying for school places can be a huge asset.

Many parents across the country are now aware of the pressures to apply to the right school for their child and this makes it even more important that people apply to the Local Authority in the right way and in good time. Particularly if you are applying because your child has special needs or your school choice is for a popular oversubscribed school.

Funded by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) the choice advice service is totally independent of the Local Authority and offers a range of guidance to parents.

Sandra Arkless provides the Choice Advice Service in Gateshead. Sandra offers assistance on a wide range of issues on everything from information about schools to help with filling out the application form. Sandra can help empower parents to make an informed and realistic choice about schools in Gateshead and she is totally independent of the council, which is responsible for co-ordinating the allocation of school places.

The choice adviser is here to help parents understand the process and make the best choices.

The choice adviser can help and advise parents on:

- School admissions policy.
- School performance and how they are rated by inspectors.
- Term times.
- Filling out forms.
- Transport policy.
- School uniforms.
- The refusal and appeals process.

The service is now in its third year and is proving to be an invaluable tool for both parents and Gateshead Council.

Quotes from Parents

"A brilliant service – I was amazed how quickly the Choice Adviser responded to my query."

"The service was great for us and it helped us make the final decision. Without this service we would have struggled and my daughter felt really happy after the Choice Adviser arranged for us to go on a visit to her new school."

"A good service which is independent of the Council – very helpful."

To contact Sandra Arkless, Gateshead's Choice Adviser call 0191 4332446 or email Sandra direct at sandraarkless@gateshead.gov.uk