

School Visit Guide

What to do before, during and after an open day or school tour.

1 BEFORE YOU GO

- 
Check eligibility and entry year
 Some schools only admit certain passports or residence documents. Confirm your child's year group for the intake you want.
- 
Shortlist three to five schools
 Filter by curriculum, age range and area on the NovaEd directory. Ten visits tend to blur together.
- 
Register early and read the rules
 Sessions fill fast. Some are parents only, some need an inquiry form first, some run in more than one language.
- 
Test the journey
 Try the route at school-run time, and ask which areas the school bus covers.
- 
Decide whether your child comes
 Older children's impressions matter. Bring them if the school welcomes children.
- 
Write down your top questions
 Pick the five that matter most to your family. The next page has a full list.

WHICH VISIT IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

Open day or open house	A first proper look: talk, tour, meet staff
Early years or discovery session	Seeing how teachers work with young children
Private tour	A second, slower look at your top schools
Online information session	Ruling schools in or out before you travel
Education fair	Comparing many schools quickly, not judging culture

2 DURING THE VISIT

- ☐ **How adults speak to students**
 In corridors and at lunch, not only on stage.
- ☐ **Whose work is on the walls**
 The children's own, showing their thinking?
- ☐ **An ordinary classroom**
 Ask to see a regular lesson for your child's age.
- ☐ **How students talk about learning**
 Are they confident and curious when they explain?
- ☐ **Current parents**
 Ask what they wish they'd known before joining.
- ☐ **The everyday spaces**
 Library, play areas, lunch, and the gate at pick-up.

WHAT TO BRING

- ☐ Your question list
- ☐ The Campus Culture Check
- ☐ A notebook or phone for notes
- ☐ Your child's latest school report
- ☐ Any learning-support or medical notes
- ☐ Water and a snack for younger children

Tip: take the NovaEd Campus Culture Check with you. It gives you eight things to rate as you walk around.



Campus Culture Check
 Eight things to look for on campus

Questions Worth Asking

Tick the ones that matter to your family before you go.

Teaching and Learning

- ☐ How big are classes in my child's year?
- ☐ How many adults support each class?
- ☐ How long do teachers usually stay?
- ☐ Which curriculum and exams lie ahead?

Support and Wellbeing

- ☐ What support is there for learning English?
- ☐ How are home languages and Chinese taught?
- ☐ Who does a child go to if something's wrong?
- ☐ How do new students settle in mid-year?

Admissions

- ☐ What does the process involve: test, interview, reports?
- ☐ What are the deadlines for my intake?
- ☐ Is there a waiting list for my child's year?
- ☐ When will we hear back?

Costs

- ☐ Application fee and deposit?
- ☐ Building or development fee?
- ☐ Bus, lunch, uniform, trips, exam fees?
- ☐ How often do fees rise?

Daily Life

- ☐ What are the school hours?
- ☐ Which bus routes serve our area?
- ☐ Which clubs and sports run after school?
- ☐ How do teachers keep parents informed?

My Own Questions

3 AFTER THE VISIT

Write it down the same day

Impressions fade fast, and schools start to blur together.

Follow up

Email admissions with anything left unanswered.

Compare on the same points

Use the grid below rather than overall feeling alone.

Check deadlines

Popular year groups can fill months before the intake.

	School A	School B	School C
Curriculum fit			
Culture fit (Culture Check)			
Support for my child			
Journey time			
Total yearly cost			
My child's reaction			