

Homework for parents: **CHOOSING THE RIGHT SCHOOL**

BY ADRIN SARWAR

As your child turns four and is ready for school, you are faced with a multitude of options and the significant challenge of choosing the perfect one. This decision is paramount, as a school is as important as family in being the first institution to play a vital role in your child's socialisation. You will surely leave no stone unturned in this search. While you can talk with other parents and read through school brochures, sometimes that isn't enough to find the most appropriate fit. There are several key features you need to look into before making a final choice. Selecting the right school is one of the most significant decisions you will make as a parent, as it lays the foundation for your child's future academic and personal success. With so many options available, the process can feel overwhelming, but focusing on the distinct features of each school can help guide your decision.

UNDERSTAND YOUR CHILD

Before looking into school brochures and websites, begin with understanding your child. Notice his individual learning style, strengths, and areas for improvement. Consider whether your child

thrives in a structured environment or a more flexible one. This can greatly influence with how your child enjoys learning. Reflect on their personality: are they independent learners or do they benefit from more collaborative work? Identifying your child's specific needs, interests, and talents will serve as your primary clue throughout the selection process. Hamidur Rahman, who is looking for schools to turn his child into also emphasises the importance of learning more about the child. He says, "Before parents did not focus much about what their children is like. It's no longer about finding a school and hoping my child fits in. But I look for strengths and areas for growth. I am looking for a school that are accommodating to these aspects of learning." Hamidur's approach highlights a timely and necessary shift in how parents select schools for their children.

CONSIDER THE CURRICULUM

While a school's curriculum is a critical component to evaluate, it's important to look

beyond mere academic subjects and consider the school's educational philosophy. Does the school emphasise rote learning, or does it foster critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity? Look for a curriculum that is well-rounded and focuses on the holistic development of the child, encompassing not just academics but also essential life skills.

Research board of education: Research the different boards available, such as Cambridge, Edexcel or IB, and determine which aligns best with your child's future academic goals.

Inquire about teaching methodologies: Inquire about the instructional methods used by teachers. Are they engaging and innovative? Do they cater to different learning styles?

Look into academic support: For children with special learning needs, it's crucial to ensure the school provides adequate support services, such as counselling and tutoring.

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