

# Admissions to Schools in Suffolk 2021/2022

A guide for parents and carers on how to apply for your child's school place in the normal year of entry

## Application closing dates for the normal year of entry:

<b>Secondary (including high and upper) schools</b>
▶ Your application must reach us by <b>Saturday 31 October 2020</b>
<b>Primary (including infant, junior and middle) schools</b>
▶ Your application must reach us by <b>Friday 15 January 2021</b>

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# Introduction to admissions in Suffolk

This guide is designed to give you all the information you need to apply for your child to start at or transfer to another school in the 2021/2022 school year.

## Suffolk County Council (SCC) Funded School Travel

Please be aware: You **must** consider how your child will travel to and from school **before** you apply for a school place. The following information is very important:

1. We will provide SCC funded school travel to the **Nearest Suitable School** that would have had a place available for your child when they are: a) aged under 8 and live at least two miles from the school; or b) aged 8 or older and live at least three miles from the school. This would be whether or not an application was made for a place at that school. The nearest school might not be your catchment area school.
2. We strongly recommend that you check which school is your nearest suitable school on our **Nearest School Checker** because this might not be your catchment area school. You can find out which are your three nearest Suffolk schools (based on the statutory walking distance including Public Rights of Way) by putting your postcode into our [Nearest School Checker](https://nearestschool.suffolk.gov.uk). The Checker can be found at [nearestschool.suffolk.gov.uk](https://nearestschool.suffolk.gov.uk). We update this each year to include new roads and developments.
3. We would **only** provide SCC funded school travel to your **Catchment Area School** if it is the nearest school to your home that would have had a place available for your child.
4. Your **School Preferences** and the order you put them on your admissions application could affect your child's eligibility for SCC funded school travel. Our [School Travel Scenarios](#) can help you work out when your child might be eligible for SCC funded school travel to their school when the age and distance criteria are met. These can be found in Step 4 of the relevant 'Apply for a school place' page online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions).
5. **More school travel information** is available on [page 43](#) of this guide.
6. **Full details about SCC funded school travel**, including the School Travel Policy, additional arrangements for low income families and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), can be found at [www.suffolkonboard.com/schooltravel](https://www.suffolkonboard.com/schooltravel).

## School Admissions

You can decide which schools to apply for and you do not have to apply for your nearest suitable school. However, this could mean that your child would not be eligible for SCC funded school travel to any school, including your catchment area school.

**It is important that we receive your application by the relevant closing date**, otherwise it may not be dealt with until after places have been offered to those who applied on time. You should apply online and **must** submit your application by this date:

<b>Secondary (including high and upper) schools</b>
▶ Your application must reach us by <b>Saturday 31 October 2020</b>
<b>Primary (including infant, junior and middle) schools</b>
▶ Your application must reach us by <b>Friday 15 January 2021</b>

If for any reason you are unable to apply online, you should complete the paper application (CAF1) and send this to us so that we receive it by the closing date. If you do not apply by the closing date your application may not be dealt with until after places have been offered to those who applied on time. You cannot apply online after the closing date.

All of the information about applying for a school place can be found in this guide and online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions).

**Apply online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)**

# Important dates

	<b>Secondary (including high and upper) schools</b>	<b>Primary (including infant, junior and middle) schools</b>
You should apply online at <a href="http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions">www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions</a> or fill in a CAF1 paper application form.	From Saturday 12 September 2020	From Saturday 12 September 2020
<b>National closing date for applications (online and paper)</b>	<b>Saturday 31 October 2020</b>	<b>Friday 15 January 2021</b>
If you were unable to apply by the closing date, and we agree that there are very exceptional reasons for an application being late, we will consider it as on time if it is received by this date and evidence is provided with your application.  This only applies in circumstances outside your control which made it impossible for the application to have been made on time.  If you are moving house, this is the latest date for you to provide written evidence to the Admissions Team that you are legally committed to your move so that your new address can be considered in the on time allocation process.	Monday 4 January 2021	Friday 5 February 2021
<b>National Offer Day</b> If you applied online, we will send you an email to let you know which school has been offered.  If you applied on a paper application form, we will send you a letter by second class post to let you know which school has been offered.	Monday 1 March 2021	Friday 16 April 2021
We will consider late applications (see <a href="#">‘Applications received after the closing date – late applications’</a> ).	From Monday 1 March 2021 onwards	From Friday 16 April 2021 onwards
We will assume that you have accepted the place offered (if you applied on time) unless you let us know in writing by this date. This does not affect your right to appeal for any of the schools where you have been refused a place.	Monday 15 March 2021	Thursday 29 April 2021
Date by which you should register an appeal if you applied on time (see <a href="#">‘The appeals process for Suffolk schools’</a> ).	Tuesday 13 April 2021	Monday 17 May 2021
Appeals for on time applications to be heard by this date (see <a href="#">‘The appeals process for Suffolk schools’</a> ).	Wednesday 16 June 2021	Monday 19 July 2021

Apply online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)

# Your guide to applying for a school place

The information within this guide is for parents and carers of children living in Suffolk. It explains what you need to do to apply for a school place for your child in the normal year of entry from September 2021. It also sets out the steps to follow, the important closing dates that must be met, and what to do if you have any problems.

The normal years of entry for schools are shown below:

School Phase	Normal Year of entry
Primary	Reception Year*
Infant	Reception Year*
Junior	Year 3
Middle	Year 5
High	Year 7
Upper	Year 9

**\*You must apply for a school place if your child was born between 1 September 2016 and 31 August 2017.** You must make an application for a full-time school place even if your child is already attending a nursery class in an infant or primary school, a pre-school or a children's centre next to a school site. This is because a place in a nursery class, pre-school or children's centre does not guarantee your child a full-time place at that school.

**It is important that we receive your application by the relevant closing date.** You should apply online and submit your application by this date. If for any reason you are unable to apply online, you should complete the paper application (CAF1) and send this to us so that we receive it by the closing date.

If you do not apply by the closing date your application may not be dealt with until after places have been offered to those who applied on time. This means that all available places at your preferred school(s) may have been filled and it could be some time before you know the outcome of your application. You cannot apply online after the closing date.

<b>Secondary (including high and upper) schools</b>
▶ Your application must reach us by <b>Saturday 31 October 2020</b>
<b>Primary (including infant, junior and middle) schools</b>
▶ Your application must reach us by <b>Friday 15 January 2021</b>

All of the information about applying for a school place can be found online, including Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions).

**Or you can contact the Admissions Team:**

**By email:** [admissions@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:admissions@suffolk.gov.uk)      **By phone:** 0345 600 0981 (local rate)

**By post:** The Admissions Team, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP1 2BX

**For more information and to keep up to date with school admissions:**

Like us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/SuffolkCountyCouncil/](https://www.facebook.com/SuffolkCountyCouncil/)

Follow us on Twitter: [twitter.com/suffolkcc](https://twitter.com/suffolkcc)

If your child lives outside Suffolk, you must contact the local authority where they live for details on how to apply ([see page 55](#)). You should make your application to your child's home local authority, but you can name Suffolk schools on your application.

**Apply online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)**

Suffolk County Council co-ordinates the offer of school places to all community, voluntary controlled, voluntary aided, free schools and academies in Suffolk for the normal year of entry. Our aim is to make the process as simple as possible and to make sure it is fair and transparent for all. This guide explains:

- When your child will start school.
- How to decide which schools you would like to apply for.
- How to make an application.
- How places are offered if there are more applications than places available.
- What will happen if your child cannot be offered a place at your preferred school(s).

There are two Directories of Schools in Suffolk where you can find out more information about the schools you are interested in, including the criteria for how applications are ranked for each school. One directory is [for primary \(including infant, junior and middle\) schools](#) and one is for [secondary \(including high and upper\) schools](#). Both directories are available online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions) or you can request a paper copy by contacting us on 0345 600 0981 (local rate).

We aim to make sure as many children as possible get the school place they want and, working with Suffolk schools, we try to make the process smooth and straightforward. Many schools in Suffolk are popular and oversubscribed so you should consider your preferences carefully. Suffolk has a good track record of meeting parental preferences for school places. Some of this success is because many parents make sure that at least one of their preferences has a good chance of success.

<b>Secondary (including high and upper) schools</b>
Last year 97.05% of children were offered a place at one of the high or upper schools their parents or carers applied for, with 91.40% getting their first preference when their application was on time.
<b>Primary (including infant, junior and middle) schools</b>
Last year 98.57% of children were offered a place at one of the primary or infant schools their parents or carers applied for, with 93.61% getting their first preference when they applied on time. 99.80% of children were offered one of the junior or middle schools their parents or carers applied for and 99.40% of those who applied on time were offered their first preference school.

All the information you need is available on our website.

You should apply online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions) as this is safe and simple to do. It is also secure and you will get an acknowledgement when your application is submitted. You can change and resubmit your preferences right up to the closing date.

Your online application must be completed and submitted before midnight on the closing date. You will be able to see the school place we have offered your child online on the national offer day. We will also email you on this date to confirm your offer.

Alternatively, if you are unable to apply online, you should complete the CAF1 application form. This is available on our website or you can contact the Admissions Team for a paper copy. We do not acknowledge paper application forms. A letter will be sent to you on the relevant offer day by second class post. We are unable to give you this information by telephone.

**Apply online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)**



# Key information about schools

## Suffolk's co-ordinated admissions scheme

There are different types of schools in Suffolk (maintained, academies and free schools) and we co-ordinate admissions to the normal year of entry for them all.

The [co-ordinated admissions scheme](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions) is set out in full on our website at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions). You can also request a paper copy by contacting us on 0345 600 0981 (local rate). This document provides the detailed admission arrangements for Suffolk and is in place to make sure all applications are handled fairly, consistently and efficiently. It applies to all schools in Suffolk to ensure that children across the county are offered a single school place on the same day.

The different types of schools that we co-ordinate admissions for are:

### Maintained schools

A maintained school is a state school funded by central government through the local authority and does not charge fees. These include community, voluntary controlled and voluntary aided schools.

### Community and Voluntary Controlled (VC) schools

We are the admissions authority for these schools, and we are responsible for setting the admissions arrangements and allocating places in accordance with Suffolk County Council's published oversubscription criteria.

### Voluntary Aided (VA) schools

These schools are run by the school governors, so the school's governing body is the admissions authority. They are responsible for setting the admissions arrangements and allocating places in accordance with their published oversubscription criteria.

### Academies and free schools

Academies and free schools receive their funding directly from central government and are outside of Suffolk County Council's control. These schools are run by the governing body or academy trust. They are the admissions authority responsible for setting the admissions arrangements and allocating places in accordance with the published oversubscription criteria. Some schools will become academies during the school year.

All maintained, academy and free schools must comply with the statutory guidance set out in the School Admissions Code.

We refer to voluntary aided, free schools and academies as 'own admission authority' schools, as the governing body or academy trust is the admission authority.

## School organisation in Suffolk

Suffolk schools are organised in two different ways. Across the majority of Suffolk there is a two-tier education system. However, in parts of Bury St Edmunds there is a three-tier system.

The table below explains the differences between the two education systems. Children can apply to move at any time between the two-tier and three-tier education systems.

<b>Two-tier education system</b>	<b>Three-tier education system</b>
In Suffolk most children are educated in a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Primary school from the Reception Year to Year 6, or</li><li>▪ An infant school from the Reception Year to Year 2 before moving on to a junior school until they are in Year 6, then</li><li>▪ A secondary (high) school from Year 7.</li></ul>	In parts of Bury St Edmunds children can go to a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Primary school from the Reception Year to Year 4 before moving to</li><li>▪ A middle school from Year 5, then to</li><li>▪ An upper school from Year 9.</li></ul>



# When will my child start school?

## Primary and infant schools

If your child was born between 1 September 2016 and 31 August 2017 you must apply for a Reception Year place at a primary or infant school by **Friday 15 January 2021**.

Children normally attend school full-time in the Reception Year in the September following their fourth birthday. All primary schools must offer children a full-time place at the start of the Autumn term in September. However, legally a child does not have to start full-time education until the term after their fifth birthday. Whatever you decide, it is important that you apply for an infant or primary school place by the closing date.

**You must make an application for a full-time place even if your child is already attending a nursery class in an infant or primary school, a pre-school, or a children's centre next to a school site. This is because a place in a nursery class, pre-school, or children's centre does not guarantee your child a full-time place at that school.**

Unfortunately, each year some children who have been going to a school's nursery class, pre-school, or children's centre do not get a place in the Reception Year class. This is because there were more applications than Reception Year places and other applicants had a higher priority for those places.

When you receive your offer of a school place you will be asked whether you want your child to start school full-time, part-time, or whether you want them to start the term after their fifth birthday. If you choose to defer entry for your child, they must start school before the beginning of the final term of the school year for which the offer was made. This means they must start school in the Reception Year.

## Summer born children

If your child was born between 1 April and 31 August ('summer born') you can choose not to send them to school until the September following their fifth birthday.

However, if your child has already been offered a full-time Reception Year place and you decide to delay them starting school until the following September, a place will not be held open for them in Year 1. If this is your choice you will need to complete an in-year application for them to start school in Year 1, but you should be aware that there might not be a place available for them in your preferred school(s). More information about the in-year application process is available online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions) or by contacting us on 0345 600 0981 (local rate).

If you wish to apply for a Reception Year place to start in the September following your child's fifth birthday, please see the '[Children out of year group](#)' section on [page 24](#).

## Infant class size

It is against the law for children in an infant class, which is defined as a class in which the majority of children will reach the age of five, six or seven during the school year (Reception Year, Year 1 and Year 2) to be taught in a class of over 30 pupils with one qualified teacher. We take this infant class size legislation into account when allocating school places and when appeals are heard (see '[The appeals process for Suffolk schools](#)' section on [page 36](#)). Additional children may be admitted under limited exceptional circumstances, these are outlined in the [School Admissions Code](#).

Apply online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)

## Junior schools

If your child was born between 1 September 2013 and 31 August 2014 and is currently in Year 2 at an infant school, you should apply for a place in Year 3 starting in September 2021 at another school by **Friday 15 January 2021**.

### Applications from Primary schools to Junior schools

If your child is currently in Year 2 at a primary school and you want them to change to a junior school for Year 3 you need to apply by **Friday 15 January 2021**.

### Applications from Infant schools to Primary schools

If your child is currently in Year 2 at an infant school and you want them to change to a primary school for Year 3 you must apply by **Friday 15 January 2021**.

If your child is in their final year at a Suffolk infant school, you will be sent a letter with details of how to apply for a school place in the September before it is time to move schools.

If you live in Suffolk and your child is not currently attending a Suffolk maintained school, academy, or free school we will not have your details and will be unable to send you a letter. You must make an application by the closing date above.

## Middle schools

If your child was born between 1 September 2011 and 31 August 2012 and is currently in Year 4 at Tollgate Primary School, you should apply for a place in Year 5 in a Middle or Primary school starting in September 2021 by **Friday 15 January 2021**.

### Applications from Primary schools to Middle schools

If your child is currently in Year 4 at a primary school and you want them to change to a middle school for Year 5 you need to apply by **Friday 15 January 2021**.

If your child is in Year 4 at Tollgate Primary School, you will be sent a letter with details of how to apply for a school place in the September before it is time to move schools.

If you live in Suffolk and your child is not currently at this school, we will not send you a letter. You must make an application by the closing date above.

## Secondary (including high and upper) schools

If your child was born between 1 September 2009 and 31 August 2010 and is currently in Year 6 at a primary or junior school, you must apply for a place in Year 7 starting in September 2021 at a secondary school by **Saturday 31 October 2020**.

If your child was born between 1 September 2007 and 31 August 2008 and is currently in Year 8 at a middle school, you must apply for a place in Year 9 starting in September 2021 at a secondary school by **Saturday 31 October 2020**.

If your child is in their final year at a Suffolk junior, primary or middle school you will be sent a letter with details of how to apply for a school place in the September before it is time to move schools.

If you live in Suffolk and your child is not currently attending a Suffolk maintained school, academy, or free school we will not have your details and will be unable to send you a letter. You must make an application by the closing date above.

Apply online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)

# How to decide which schools you would like to apply for

In Suffolk, you can rank up to three preferences when you apply for a school place. You may want your child to go to your local school. This is called the catchment area school when that school uses a catchment area priority in its oversubscription criteria to rank applications. **A catchment area school may not be the nearest school to your home address.** Some voluntary aided, free schools and academies do not operate catchment areas. Information on School Travel eligibility is below as this may be affected.

Choosing your preferences is very important. You need to think realistically about how likely you are to be offered a place at one of your preferred schools before you make your application and how your child will get to and from school.

- You can rank up to three schools inside and/or outside Suffolk. However, if you only apply for one school your child will not be considered for any other schools, if we are unable to offer your child a place at that school, they will be offered a place at the next nearest suitable school with a place available after everyone else's preferences have been considered. Places may be limited, and a place may be offered some distance from your home. You should be aware that your child may not be eligible for SCC funded school travel to the school offered. Further information can be found below.
- Each of your preferences will be considered equally and separately. Listing second and third preferences will not affect your child's chance of being offered their first preference. Your first preference will be offered above your second or third preferences where possible.
- Schools do not know how you order your preferences or which other schools you have applied for when they are ranking your application because this information is not shared with them.

## Important – School Travel eligibility

The School Travel Policy is separate to admission policies and we would like to remind you to consider the following before submitting an application. Please be aware: You **must** consider how your child will travel to and from school **before** you apply for a school place. The following information is very important:

1. We will provide SCC funded school travel to the **Nearest Suitable School** that would have had a place available for your child when they are:
  - a) aged under 8 and live at least two miles from the school; or
  - b) aged 8 or older and live at least three miles from the school.This would be whether or not an application was made for a place at that school. The nearest school might not be your catchment area school.
2. We strongly recommend that you check which school is your nearest suitable school on our **Nearest School Checker** because this might not be your catchment area school. You can find out which are your three nearest Suffolk schools (based on the statutory walking distance including Public Rights of Way) by putting your postcode into our **Nearest School Checker**. The Checker can be found at [nearestschool.suffolk.gov.uk](http://nearestschool.suffolk.gov.uk). We update this each year to include new roads and developments.
3. We would **only** provide SCC funded school travel to your **Catchment Area School** if it is the nearest school to your home that would have had a place available for your child.

Apply online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)

4. Your **School Preferences** and the order you put them on your admissions application could affect your child's eligibility for SCC funded school travel. Our [School Travel Scenarios](#) can help you work out when your child might be eligible for SCC funded school travel to their school when the age and distance criteria are met. These can be found in Step 4 of the relevant 'Apply for a school place' page online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions).

Even though there are separate policies for School Admissions and School Travel, it is important that you understand how the school place your child is offered is used to assess their eligibility for SCC funded school travel. The key things to know are:

- The statutory walking distance (which includes Public Rights of Way) from your child's home address to the school offered, or extended rights criteria must be met as set out in the [School Travel section on page 43](#), and on [www.suffolkonboard.com/schooltravel](http://www.suffolkonboard.com/schooltravel).
- Eligibility is based on the nearest suitable school in Suffolk that would have had a place available for your child on the relevant national offer day, whether or not you applied for a place at that school.
- Travel eligibility for late applicants will be assessed when the application is decided.
- There is a separate Post-16 Travel Policy.
- If you make a second or subsequent application, we would only re-assess your eligibility to SCC funded school travel if you have moved house or your school place offer changes.

More information is provided in the [School Travel section on page 43](#) to help you consider your options if SCC funded school travel is important to you. Full details are online at [www.suffolkonboard.com/schooltravel](http://www.suffolkonboard.com/schooltravel).

## **Please think realistically**

It is a good idea to start by gathering as much information as you can about how places are prioritised at your preferred schools. You should:

- Read and understand the oversubscription criteria for each school you are interested in as they may be different from one another. Consider which oversubscription criterion applies to your child for each school.
- Be realistic about your preferences. **We recommend that you apply for more than one school. Please be aware that a place at any school, including your catchment area or nearest suitable school, cannot be guaranteed.**
- Consider how you will get your child to school. You are responsible for ensuring they attend school and this includes getting them there on time. However, in some cases we will help with your child's home to school travel. We will normally only provide SCC funded school travel if your child meets the criteria as set out in the School Travel Policy. See the [School Travel section](#) and online at [www.suffolkonboard.com/schooltravel](http://www.suffolkonboard.com/schooltravel).
- Do not make your decision based on other people's opinions or experiences. Every situation is different, and things change all the time. Find out as much as you can about the schools you are interested in to help you select your preferred schools.

If you live near the border with Cambridgeshire, Essex or Norfolk you may wish to apply for schools in these local authorities. The contact details for these authorities can be found in the '[Useful contacts](#)' section. Please visit their websites for details about the schools in their areas.

**Apply online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)**

If your child lives in Suffolk and you want to apply for a school in a neighbouring authority, you must still apply through Suffolk County Council. However, if you live outside Suffolk you must apply to your home local authority even if you are applying for a Suffolk school (see '[Additional information for applying for a school place](#)').

If your child has Special Educational Needs or a disability and you are having difficulties in making your school choices and would like to discuss this with someone, you can contact the Suffolk Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service (Suffolk SENDIASS) during term time (see the '[Useful contacts](#)' section). The SENDIASS team are independent of the local authority.

## How you can find out about the schools in your area and the schools you are interested in

If you are not sure where your nearest schools are, you can find this information from our new [Nearest School Checker](#) (which is based on the statutory walking distance including Public Rights of Way). The checker can be found at [nearestschool.suffolk.gov.uk](http://nearestschool.suffolk.gov.uk).

You can enter your postcode to find out your three nearest schools. This is a very useful tool if you are thinking about how your child will travel to and from school and how the [School Travel Policy](#) may affect your family.

If your child lives in Suffolk and your nearest suitable school is outside of the county, we would still provide SCC funded school travel to the nearest Suffolk school that would have had a place available for your child, subject to your child's age and meeting the statutory distance criteria.

You can also:

- Check the catchment area lists for Suffolk at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/school-catchment-areas](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/school-catchment-areas) or view the catchment area maps online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/schools](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/schools). If you would like a paper copy contact us on 0345 600 0981 (local rate). **A catchment area school may not be the nearest school to your home address. If this is the case, we would not provide SCC funded school travel for your child to their catchment area school.**

**Please note:** Some voluntary aided, free schools and academies do not have catchment areas.

- Look at the relevant Directory of Schools in Suffolk. There are two Directories, one for [primary \(including infant, junior and middle\) schools](#) and one for [secondary \(including high and upper\) schools](#). Each Directory includes:
  - Contact details for each school.
  - The number of places in the year group which is known as the Published Admission Number (PAN), and information relating to last year's on time applications.
  - The admissions policy which includes the oversubscription criteria used to rank applications.

Both directories are available online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions) or you can request a paper copy by contacting us on 0345 600 0981 (local rate).

- Visit the schools on their open day.

*continued on next page*

Apply online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)

- Look on the school’s website and read their prospectus.
- Visit the government funded website [www.gov.uk/find-school-in-england](http://www.gov.uk/find-school-in-england) which provides detailed information about schools, including links to school performance data and the school profile.

Do	Don't
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Make time to visit the schools you are interested in, if you can, before the closing date.</li> <li>▪ Ask questions about anything that worries you.</li> <li>▪ Talk to the headteacher about your child if you have any concerns.</li> <li>▪ Understand the impact of the School Travel Policy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Think that good exam results or an outstanding Ofsted report are the only things that matter.</li> <li>▪ Judge a school by what others say, go and see for yourself.</li> </ul>

Schools and preferences change over time and what has happened in the past is not always a reliable guide to what a school is like now.

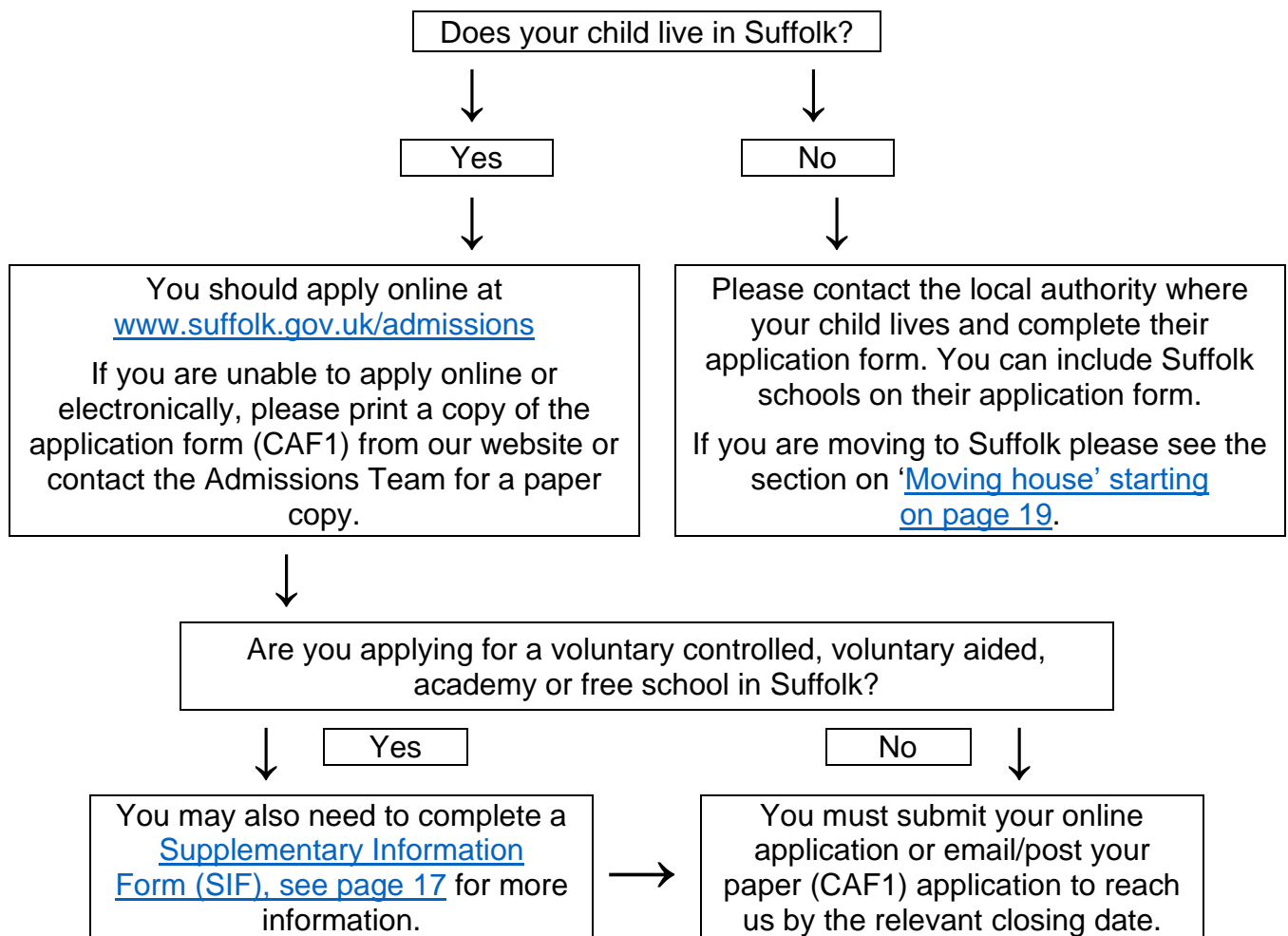


# How to make an application

It is very important that we receive your application on or before the closing date for applications. You cannot apply directly or return your application form to a school.

Last year, Suffolk County Council received 16,152 on time applications for pupils wishing to start at a primary or infant school, or to transfer to a junior, middle, high or upper school.

<b>Secondary (including high and upper) schools</b>
▶ Your application must reach us by <b>Saturday 31 October 2020</b>
<b>Primary (including infant, junior and middle) schools</b>
▶ Your application must reach us by <b>Friday 15 January 2021</b>



## Siblings

You must include the names and dates of birth of any siblings at your preferred schools. Please refer to the individual school policies for definitions of siblings at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions). If you do not provide this information on your application, it is likely to affect the offer of a school place.

## Reasons for each preference

You are able to add your reasons for each preference on your application, but you don't have to. The admissions authority is only able to take reasons into account if they have a direct bearing on how your application is ranked against the relevant published oversubscription criteria.

Apply online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)



## How to apply online

It's safe and simple to apply online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions).

By applying online:

- You will receive confirmation of your application by email
- You can check or change your application right up to the closing date
- You can view the outcome of your application online on the offer day
- You will receive an email with details of your school offer on the offer day.

If you do not have internet access, you can apply online from any Suffolk library.

**Your online application must be completed and submitted before midnight on the relevant closing date.**

Please note that when you apply online you must not submit a paper application (CAF1).

You cannot use the online facility to apply after the closing date.

If you are applying for a new school that has not yet received a unique number from the Department for Education, you will have to fill in a paper application form (CAF1) which should include all of your preferences. We regret that you will be unable to apply online.

<b>Step 1</b>	You will be asked to register, set up a password and add your child(ren)'s details to allow you to start the application process. However, if you have registered since 1 September 2016 you will not need to register again. We would strongly recommend you check 'my details' to ensure they are still accurate.
<b>Step 2</b>	Select the schools you want to apply for, these can be schools in Suffolk or in another local authority, and give reasons for your preferences if you want to.
<b>Step 3</b>	You must agree to the declaration that you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Have read the guide 'Admissions to Schools in Suffolk 2021/2022 and the relevant Directory of Schools in Suffolk.</li><li>▪ Have read and understand the School Travel Policy for 2021/2022 and how eligibility for SCC funded school travel will be decided.</li><li>▪ Have given information on the form which is true.</li><li>▪ Are the parent of the child under section 576 of the Education Act 1996, see <a href="#">page 23</a> for more information.</li></ul>
<b>Step 4</b>	Submit your application. Once you have submitted your application you will receive a confirmation email.

You are unable to attach evidence electronically to your online application. You will need to either [email](#) or post your evidence to the Admissions Team so that we receive it by the relevant closing date, making it clear who this evidence relates to by writing your child's name and date of birth on it. If you don't have access to a scanner, you can take photos of your evidence or supporting information and attach these to your email. If you send your information through the post, we strongly suggest you get proof of posting as we cannot be responsible for information lost in the post (see the '[Supporting evidence](#)' information on [page 18](#)).

**Apply online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)**

If your contact details change before the closing date you will need to update your details and your child's application in the case of an address change. Any change may set your application back to 'unsubmitted' and you may need to resubmit your application. If your contact details change after the closing date you will need to update your details and [email us](#) separately with the changes. You are unable to update your child's online application after the closing date. You do not need to let us know separately if you change your email address.

## **How to apply on paper**

If you are unable to apply online, you must apply using a paper application form. You should also apply using a paper application if you are applying for a new school that has not yet received a unique number from the Department for Education. Please print a copy of the [application form \(CAF1\)](#) from our website or you can request a paper copy by contacting us on 0345 600 0981 (local rate).

You must send your application directly to us. Do not hand it in at a school. Neither the school nor ourselves will accept responsibility for any lost application forms.

You must make sure that we receive your application form on or before the relevant closing date for applications. You should [email](#) or post your application to the Admissions Team. If you don't have access to a scanner, you can take photos of your application form, evidence or supporting information and attach these to your email.

If you [email](#) your paper application (CAF1) or evidence to the Admissions Team, you do not need to send us a copy in the post.

We do not acknowledge receipt of paper applications, so we strongly suggest that you get proof of postage as we cannot be responsible for forms lost in the post.

If you apply on paper you may not receive your letter with details of the school offered for two or three days after offers are emailed to all those parents and carers who have applied online. We cannot confirm the outcome of your application over the telephone or before you receive your letter.

## **Supplementary Information Form (SIF)**

Some schools also require a SIF to be completed. If one of your preferences is for a voluntary controlled, voluntary aided, free school or academy you may need to complete a SIF. A SIF is not an application form. It is used to provide extra information to help the admissions authority apply their oversubscription criteria to rank your application. You should submit this at the same time as your application. If you are applying for a voluntary controlled school based on religious grounds you should send your SIF to the Admissions Team to reach us by the relevant closing date. All other SIFs should be returned to the relevant school directly.

If a school requires you to complete a SIF but you choose not to, your application will still be considered but it may affect how your application is ranked. Check the oversubscription criteria for the schools you wish to apply for in the Directory of Schools in Suffolk to see whether you need to complete a SIF. SIFs are available to download from [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions) or can be requested from the voluntary aided, free school or academy.

## **Twins, triplets or multiple birth children**

If you are applying for twins, triplets or other multiple births you must make a separate application for each child.

**Apply online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)**

## Supporting evidence

If you want to provide any extra information with your application please include your child's name, date of birth, and the school it relates to on any additional paperwork. Sometimes we need evidence to support your application. This could include:

- An adoption certificate, child arrangements or special guardianship order for a child who was previously in care, immediately following having been in care.
- A Supplementary Information Form (SIF) to support an application based on religious grounds for a voluntary controlled school.
- Evidence to support your address (see the '[Additional information for applying for a school place](#)' section).

## Changing your mind before the closing date

We understand that for a number of reasons parents and carers may want to change the schools they originally listed on their application.

By applying online, you can change your school preferences at any time before midnight on the closing date. **Please note you must resubmit your application after you have made any changes or if you have viewed it and decided not to make any changes. If you do not resubmit your application, it will default to unsubmitted and may not be processed.**

If you have to apply using the paper application form (CAF1) you can change your school preferences at any time up until the closing date by submitting another paper application form. **You must make sure these changes are received by us before the closing date.** We will process the application received before and closest to the closing date.

# Additional information for applying for a school place

## Cross-county applications

	<b>Suffolk Resident</b>	<b>Non-Suffolk Resident</b>
<b>Applying for a place in a Suffolk school</b>	You should apply online using the Suffolk application process or, if you are unable to do so, by completing a paper application (CAF1).	You should contact the local authority where your child lives for information about how to apply. You can include Suffolk schools on your application to your home authority.
<b>Applying for a place at a school outside of Suffolk</b>	You should include any school(s) that you wish to apply for which are located outside of Suffolk using the Suffolk online application process, or if you are unable to do so by completing a paper application (CAF1).	

If one of your preferences is for a selective school in Essex you must:

- Put the school as a preference on your online or paper application (CAF1) and return this to the Admissions Team by the relevant closing date.
- Contact the Consortium of Selective Schools in Essex (CSSE) without delay if you are interested in these schools (see the '[Useful contacts](#)' section for details).

## Moving house

### Planning to move house before the closing date for applications

If you are moving to a new address and you want to use that address as your child's ordinarily resident address (see [page 27](#)) for your application, you must send us written evidence by the relevant closing date that you are legally committed to the move and that it will happen before the start of the school year you have applied for. The evidence must be one of the following:

- Proof of exchange of contracts for your new address.
- Signed letting/tenancy agreement confirming your new address.

Please note that a sale memorandum or an unsigned tenancy agreement will not be accepted.

Apply online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)

## Children of UK Service Personnel (UK Armed Forces) and Crown Servants

If you are a UK service personnel (UK Armed Forces) family with a confirmed posting to Suffolk, or a Crown Servant family returning from overseas to live in Suffolk, we will offer places in advance of the move provided the application is accompanied by:

- An assignment order that declares a relocation date and a unit postal address or quartering area address for UK service personnel or
- An official letter declaring a relocation date for crown servants. Evidence of a future address may also be required.

### Planning to move after the closing date for applications

If your new address cannot be confirmed by the closing date you should still apply by the relevant closing date using your current address. We recommend you apply for schools based on your current address in case your proposed move falls through. You can then make a further application once your plans have been confirmed. As long as we receive your further application and written evidence that you are legally committed to the move (acceptable evidence shown on [page 19](#)) by the relevant date below we will use your new address to allocate a school place.

<b>Secondary (including high and upper) schools</b>
▶ Your evidence must reach us by <b>Monday 4 January 2021</b>

<b>Primary (including infant, junior and middle) schools</b>
▶ Your evidence must reach us by <b>Friday 5 February 2021</b>

If you cannot provide evidence of your move by these dates, we will use your child's current address to allocate a school place.

If you own two properties and will be moving from one to the other, or you are moving in with a partner or family, so you cannot provide evidence that you are legally committed to the move then you must write to us explaining this and provide us with evidence to support this when you apply (acceptable evidence shown below). If your circumstances are unusual, please contact the Admissions Team for further advice.

You must provide us with evidence to confirm your new address before your child takes up a place at their new school. This evidence can be a copy of:

- A personal bill such as mobile phone
- A salary or wage slip
- A DVLA registration or driving licence
- A letter from HM Revenue and Customs.

There is no need to include financial information in any evidence you send us.

If you move address before the relevant closing date you must let us know. This is because this may change the oversubscription criterion that applies to your child and how they are ranked in priority order within it.

If we become aware that you moved house before the relevant closing date but you did not tell us, and your change of address would have affected how your application was considered for a school place, this may be fraud and we are entitled to withdraw the offer of a school place.

Apply online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)

## Applications from other countries

Applications can be made for a Suffolk school when your child is not living in the UK. **It is your responsibility as the parent or carer to check that your child has a right, under their visa entry conditions, to study at a state-funded school (maintained, free school or academy).**

We recommend that if you are entering the UK from overseas and wish to apply for a school place that you check your child has a [right of abode](#) or the conditions of their visas otherwise permits them to attend a maintained, free school or academy in England. Further information can be found at [www.gov.uk/right-of-abode](http://www.gov.uk/right-of-abode).

Until 31 December 2020, all [European Economic Area](#) ('EEA') and Swiss national children will continue to have the right, under UK immigration law, to enter the country to access a school. Any EEA or Swiss national arriving in the UK by 31 December 2020 is eligible to apply to the [EU Settlement Scheme](#), and continue to be able to study in schools in England as they do now if their application is successful. Irish citizens' right to live in the UK will not change.

Foreign nationals cannot use the six month visitor visa or a six month short-term study visa to enter the UK to enrol as a pupil at a school.

We will need evidence of your new address in Suffolk. If we do not receive this before we process your child's application, then your child's current address will be used. If this is in another country, it would give your child a lower priority for admission to most schools.

If we receive evidence of your new address by the relevant closing date or we receive this before the following dates, we will process your application from your new address as an on time application. You will need to either email or post your evidence to the Admissions Team making it clear who this evidence relates to by including your child's name and date of birth. If you send your information through the post, we strongly suggest you get proof of posting as we cannot be responsible for information lost in the post.

<b>Secondary (including high and upper) schools</b>
▶ Your evidence must reach us by <b>Monday 4 January 2021</b>

<b>Primary (including infant, junior and middle) schools</b>
▶ Your evidence must reach us by <b>Friday 5 February 2021</b>

If you cannot provide evidence of your move by these dates, we will use your child's current address to allocate a school place. You must provide us with evidence to confirm your new address before your child takes up a place at their new school. This evidence can be a copy of:

- A personal bill such as mobile phone
- A salary or wage slip
- A DVLA registration or driving licence
- A letter from HM Revenue and Customs.

There is no need to include financial information in any evidence you send us.

Apply online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)



## Children living at more than one address

If your child lives at two or more addresses, each for part of the week, only one address can be used in the admissions application process. The address you must use for your application is the child's ordinarily resident address. This is the address where the child sleeps overnight the majority of the time on weeknights (Monday to Friday, and excluding weekends and school holidays).

In cases where your child spends an equal proportion of the school week at two or more different addresses, evidence of which is to be considered the main contact address will be required to support the application. You will be required to agree and state in writing which address is to be used as the ordinarily resident address (see [page 27](#)). This address will then be used when processing all school preferences expressed. You cannot use one address for one school preference and another address for another school preference.

Evidence must include the nights the child spends at each address, whether it is a weekly or fortnightly arrangement, or something else. For example, an equal shared care arrangement could be: week one is Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday nights at father's address, with Thursday and Friday nights at mother's address, and week two is Monday and Tuesday nights at father's address, with Wednesday, Thursday and Friday nights at mother's address.

We can only accept and process one application for each child, so it is important that you agree who will make the application and agree the school(s) being applied for.

## Parental disputes

We will process an application from a parent of a child, in education law as defined by section 576 Education Act 1996 (see definition below), unless we are aware of a parental dispute.

Once an application is processed, and a school place has been offered, there are only three lawful reasons to withdraw the offer. If none of these reasons apply, then the offer must stand. These reasons are:

- the school place has been offered in error
- a parent has not responded to an offer within a reasonable period of time or,
- it is established that the offer was obtained through a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application.

If you are a parent objecting to an application and/or a change of school, after an offer has been made and there are no lawful reasons to withdraw that offer, then if you wish to pursue the matter further you will need to seek your own independent legal advice. We will not be able to intervene in this process.

If we are aware of a parental dispute before we process an application, we will put the application on hold and will not process it until we receive either:

- a joint agreement, signed and returned separately by each parent, confirming all the details that we should use for the school admission application
- a Family Court order specifically indicating which parent's views we should follow (for example, a Specific Issues Order or a Prohibited Steps Order) or,
- evidence from one parent that the right of the other parent to have a say in the children's education has been removed.



If we receive an application for the normal year of entry and we are aware of a parental dispute, you will be advised of any important dates when the evidence set out above will need to be provided to ensure your child is allocated a school place. It is in your child's best interests to agree on an application before the relevant closing date for applications for a place in the normal year of entry. This is because if you don't, all the places at your preferred school(s) may have been filled.

In cases of dispute, if your child lives at two or more addresses, each for part of the week, then we would expect separate evidence from every parent to indicate the nights the child spends at each address, so that the ordinarily resident address can be confirmed (see [page 27](#)). We will not be able to intervene or mediate throughout this process.

## **Definition of parent**

Section 576 Education Act 1996 states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes:

- all biological parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person – this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative
- any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person.

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

Every parent, as defined above, has an equal right to make decisions about the child's education.

You may be asked to provide evidence that you are the 'parent' of a child as we will need to be satisfied that you have a right to this information before sharing it with you. We may ask for this evidence even if you reside with the child or not.

## **Fraudulent applications**

You must let us know if you have any change in circumstances (for example change of address). If information is deliberately withheld or untrue, your application may be invalid and could result in the offer of a school place being withdrawn.

We may check application addresses with current schools. We may also carry out address checks randomly for a school's full allocation to confirm that all of the children offered places at that school live at the address given as their ordinarily resident address on their application or subsequent evidence. However, if you have any concerns or information about the use of fraudulent information, please contact us as soon as possible. We will check allegations of false addresses or other false information given on an application form or Supplementary Information Form (SIF) and will withdraw offers of places if we find that details were deliberately false or misleading. Any information you provide will be strictly confidential.

We do not have a significant issue in Suffolk of fraudulent addresses being used. However, we do investigate cases as necessary and as a result we have had to withdraw places because applications were found to have been made fraudulently, this can be particularly distressing for all concerned.

## **Children out of year group**

It is expected that children will normally be educated within their chronological year group. However, admission authorities will make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned in line with the School Admissions Code. There are different ways of making a request for delayed or accelerated transfer depending on what type of school you intend to apply for:

### **Community and voluntary controlled schools**

You can make a request in writing for a delayed or accelerated transfer to the Admissions Team. This will need to include, where relevant, any supporting evidence. An application for your child's normal transfer year group should be made at the same time for delayed transfer requests. The request with a CAF1 application form must be sent to the Admissions Team by the relevant national closing dates (see the ['Important dates'](#) section).

Officers at Suffolk County Council will make a decision on the request, taking into account the views of the headteacher of the school(s) concerned. The Admissions Team will write to you with the outcome including the reasons for the decision. If the request is refused you will be given details of how to complain. Even if the request is agreed there is no guarantee there will be a place available at your preferred school(s).

### **Voluntary aided, free schools and academies**

You can make a request to the admission authority for each school in writing. This will need to include, where relevant, any supporting evidence. The governing body or academy trust will make a decision on the request, taking into account the views of the headteacher.

The school will write to you with the outcome including the reasons for the decision. If the request is refused, you should be given the details of how to complain to the school.

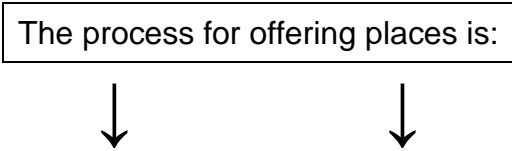
A CAF1 application form must be sent to Suffolk County Council along with the decision letter(s) from the own admissions authority school(s) and other relevant evidence by the national closing dates (see the ['Important dates'](#) section). Even if the request is agreed there is no guarantee there will be a place available.

Further information regarding [Summer born children is available on page 9](#).

# How places are offered

Each school offers a set number of places in any one year. This number is known as the Published Admission Number (PAN). Although the PAN applies to the year of entry, this number would normally be applied across all year groups in the school. However, sometimes there are situations when this is not possible. If the number of applicants is less than the PAN all applicants will normally be admitted.

There is an example of how places are offered using Suffolk County Council’s admissions oversubscription criteria on [page 29](#).



<b>Step 1</b>	If we can meet your first preference, we will offer your child a place at that school.
<b>Step 2</b>	If we cannot meet your first preference but can meet your second preference, we will offer your child a place at that school. We will place your child’s name on the waiting list for your first preference school and you will be given the right of appeal.
<b>Step 3</b>	If we cannot meet your second preference but can meet your third preference, we will offer your child a place at that school. We will place your child’s name on the waiting list for your first and second preference schools and you will be given the right of appeal.
<b>Step 4</b>	<p>If we cannot meet any of your preferences, we will offer your child a place at the next nearest suitable school which has a place available. The nearest school could be a community, voluntary controlled, voluntary aided, free school or academy. The nearest school will be measured by walking distance.*</p> <p>*We measure distances by the shortest available route along which a child may walk, accompanied as necessary. Routes are calculated using a network comprised of the Ordnance Survey MasterMap Highways Network, which includes all roads and urban paths, and Public Rights of Way as shown on the Definitive Map. Distances are measured from the point of the network that is closest to the address point of the child’s home to the nearest gate or access to the school.</p> <p>We will also place your child’s name on the waiting lists for your first, second and third preference schools and you will be given the right of appeal.</p>

## How places are offered if there are more applications than places available

If a school receives more applications than it has places available (‘oversubscribed’) then the school’s published oversubscription criteria are used to decide which applicants will be offered a place. We will offer your child a place at the highest ranked school where possible.

Depending on the type of school, these decisions are either made by Suffolk County Council, the school’s governing body or by the academy trust. You can find the oversubscription criteria for all schools online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions).

## Suffolk County Council’s admissions oversubscription criteria for community and voluntary controlled schools

Where there are more applications than places available we will rank your application using Suffolk County Council’s admissions oversubscription criteria below.

**Children who have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan which names the school must by law be offered a place at that school.**

The following admissions oversubscription criteria show the order of priority for places at community and voluntary controlled schools and at those voluntary aided schools and academies where they have agreed to operate the same policy as Suffolk County Council. These are identified in the relevant Directory of Schools in Suffolk online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions).

These criteria may also be used to allocate places at schools that were community or voluntary controlled schools when their admissions arrangements were determined for 2021 but have since converted to academy status.

For applications to the normal year of entry at a school, these criteria will be applied according to the circumstances existing before midnight at the end of the closing date.

<b>1</b>	<p>Children in care (looked after children) and children who were previously in care (children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order, immediately following having been in care).</p>
<b>2</b>	<p>Sibling: where the child has a sibling in the school or a sibling has already been offered a place at the school, and where the sibling will still be attending the school at the time of admission but not in a specialist unit or a specialist resource base for Hearing Impaired provision, a nursery or in the sixth form. Priority will be given, where necessary, to applications where there is the smallest age gap.</p> <p>The term ‘sibling’ includes: natural, half, step, and adopted brothers and sisters; a child of the partner of the parent; and children who are fostered into the family. In all these cases, the child and their sibling will both be living at the same address (that is where the child is ordinarily resident) in a single family unit. This means that children from different family units, where those separate families are living together at the same address, are not considered siblings under this criterion.</p> <p>The sibling criterion will also apply to applications to the three-paired infant and junior schools in Suffolk:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ SET Maidstone Infant and SET Causton Junior Schools, Felixstowe</li> <li>▪ Fairfield Infant and Colneis Junior Schools, Felixstowe</li> <li>▪ Springfield Infant and Springfield Junior Schools, Ipswich.</li> </ul> <p>We will treat these applicants as siblings when the older child is already attending the junior school or will be offered a junior school place in the normal year of entry. In cases where the younger child is about to start in the Reception Year group in the infant school and the older child is due to transfer to the paired junior school, we will treat both applicants as siblings. Similarly, we will use the sibling criterion for an application to a junior school if the younger child is already attending or has been offered a place at the paired infant school.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>continued on next page</i></p>

<b>3</b>	<p>Children who are <b>ordinarily resident</b> in the catchment area.</p> <p>Places will be allocated in the following priority order:</p> <p>a) If the school is voluntary controlled, children whose parents/carers are applying on the grounds that the child and/or the family are practising members of the Church of England (or other church within the Worldwide Anglican Communion). You must complete a Suffolk County Council Supplementary Information Form (SIF). This SIF must specifically state that you and/or your child are a practising member of the Church of England (or other church within the Worldwide Anglican Communion), which means you and/or your child go to an Anglican church regularly, that is to say at least once a month.</p> <p>b) Children who live nearest to the school. We will measure the distance by a straight line ('as the crow flies'). All straight line distances are calculated electronically by Suffolk County Council using data provided jointly by the Post Office and Ordnance Survey. The data plots the co-ordinates of each property and provides the address-point between which the straight line distance is measured and reported to three decimal places. Where there is more than one home within a single building (for example apartments) we will measure to a single point within that building irrespective of where those homes are located.</p>
<b>4</b>	<p>Children who live outside the school's catchment area in the same priority order as set out in (a) and (b) above.</p>

## Notes to Suffolk County Council's admissions oversubscription criteria

### Parent

For the purposes of education law, section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines a 'parent' as:

- all natural (biological) parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person (this could be a step-parent, guardian or other relative)
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.

A person has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child.

### Children in care (looked after children)

A 'child in care' or a 'looked after child' is a child who is (a) in the care of a local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see the definition in Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

### Children previously in care (previously looked after children)

Children previously in care (previously looked after children) includes children who were adopted under the Adoption Act 1976 (section 12 adoption orders) and children who were adopted under the Adoption and Children's Act 2002 (section 46 adoption orders). Child arrangements orders are defined in section 8 of the Children Act 1989, as amended by section 12 of the Children and Families Act 2014. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order.

## **Religious grounds criterion**

The website used to confirm membership of the Church of England is [www.churchofengland.org](http://www.churchofengland.org). For families moving to Suffolk from other countries, the website to confirm membership of churches within the Worldwide Anglican Community is [www.anglicancommunion.org](http://www.anglicancommunion.org).

## **Distance tie-breaker**

It is possible that the PAN of the school will be reached in any one of the categories. For this reason, all applications will be prioritised according to the criteria described. Decisions will be made about the offer of places in accordance with those priorities. If it is necessary to use a tie-breaker to distinguish between two or more applications, a distance criterion will be used. We will give priority to the applicants who live nearest to the school as measured by a straight line. In the unlikely event that two applicants competing for a single place at a school live the same distance from the school, the place will be offered to one applicant on the basis of lots drawn by an officer of Suffolk County Council not involved with admissions.

## **Twins, triplets and other multiple births**

If the final place available at a school is offered to a twin, triplet or other multiple birth and the remaining sibling(s) would ordinarily be refused, Suffolk County Council will offer places to the remaining sibling(s) at the same school. The law requires that this will apply even in those primary schools where this would mean that more than 30 pupils would be admitted to an infant class with a single qualified teacher.

## **Ordinarily resident**

By ordinarily resident we mean the place where your child usually lives. We consider this to be where they sleep overnight. We may need proof of this address. If you use another address to give the impression that your child lives at a different address to where they are ordinarily resident, such as a second home or a grandparent's address, so that you have a higher priority for a place at that school; we consider this to be a fraudulent application. Where a child lives at two or more addresses, each for part of the week, the address at which the child is ordinarily resident will be considered to be the address that the child lives at for most of the week (excluding weekends and school holidays). Separate evidence in writing from each parent must be provided to confirm the child's living arrangements at the time of application.

In cases where the child spends an equal proportion of the school week at two or more different addresses, evidence of which is to be considered the main contact address will be required to support the application. Agreement in writing by the parents will be required to state which address is to be used as the ordinarily resident address. This address will then be used when processing all school preferences expressed. It is not acceptable to use one address for one school preference and another address for another school preference.

If we are aware of a parental dispute affecting the application, we may not be able to deal with the application and you may need to seek independent legal advice in order to resolve the matter.



## Example of how places are offered using Suffolk County Council's admissions oversubscription criteria

Jack does not have an Education, Health and Care plan and he is not a child in care or a child who was previously in care. His parents apply for the following three maintained schools.

First preference	Second preference	Third preference
<p><b>School A</b></p> <p>A popular and oversubscribed school. Jack does not have a sibling already at the school who will still be there next year, or a sibling who has been offered a place. Although the school is near to Jack's home he lives outside of the catchment area.</p>	<p><b>School B</b></p> <p>The school is some distance away and Jack lives outside of the school's catchment area. However, Jack's sister Chloe attends and will still be at the school next year.</p>	<p><b>School C</b></p> <p>Jack's catchment area school.</p>
↓ ↓	↓ ↓	↓ ↓
<p>Jack <b>meets priority 4b)</b> of the oversubscription criteria for this school.</p>	<p>Jack <b>meets priority 2</b> of the oversubscription criteria for this school.</p>	<p>Jack <b>meets priority 3b)</b> of the oversubscription criteria for this school.</p>
↓ ↓	↓ ↓	↓ ↓
<p>Jack is not offered a place at this school because all the places at the school were offered to other children who had a higher priority when the oversubscription criteria were applied.</p> <p>Jack's name is added to the waiting list and the right of appeal is given.</p>	<p>Jack is offered a place because he had a higher priority than other children when the oversubscription criteria were applied.</p> <p><b>As he has ranked this school above his third preference he is offered a place here.</b></p>	<p>Jack would be offered a place because he had a high priority for a catchment area place in the oversubscription criteria.</p> <p>As Jack could be offered more than one school place, we offered him a place at the highest ranked school on his application that could offer a place (his second preference school).</p> <p>This place is not required.</p>



# Applications received after the closing date – late applications

## Applications received after the closing date

You cannot make an online application after the closing date. To apply after the closing date, you must complete a [paper application form \(CAF1\)](#). Any paper application received after the closing date will normally be treated as a late application.

You reduce your chances of being offered a place at one of your preferred schools if you apply late. Late applications are not dealt with until all on time applications have been considered. This can cause great upset especially if your child's friends all apply by the closing date and have confirmation of their school place.

## Exceptional circumstances

Sometimes there are very exceptional reasons why an application cannot be made by the closing date. This only applies in circumstances outside your control which made it impossible for the application to have been made on time. If you feel that this applies to you, please write to us giving all your reasons and include as much supporting evidence with your application as you can by the dates given below.

<b>Secondary (including high and upper) schools</b>
▶ Your evidence must reach us by <b>Monday 4 January 2021</b>
<b>Primary (including infant, junior and middle) schools</b>
▶ Your evidence must reach us by <b>Friday 5 February 2021</b>

Your evidence will be considered by a panel and each case will be decided individually. You will receive a letter telling you whether your application will be treated as late or on time.

Late applications will continue to be accepted after the dates shown above but they will not be considered 'on time', regardless of the circumstances. This means that we will process your application after we have offered school places to all the applicants who applied on time.

## Changing your mind after the closing date

If you want to change any of your school preferences after the closing date, but you have not had any change in circumstances (for example you have not moved house), you should submit a [paper application form \(CAF1\)](#). We will still process your original application and offer a place based on this on national offer day unless you request in writing for it to be withdrawn. However, we will then replace your earlier application with the new one and this will supersede all your previous preferences.

This means that you must include any schools from your first application above your new preferences on your second or subsequent application if you would like them to remain as a live preference. **Further information on how this affects your previous offer is available on the next page.**

## When you make a new application, you will be agreeing to the following:

- That any previous offer of a school place that may have been made will be withdrawn if we can offer a place at any school from your second or subsequent applications.
- That you will no longer have the right to appeal against a refusal for a school that is not included on your most recent application.
- That your child's name will be removed from any waiting list for that school.

We will process your second or subsequent applications as soon as we can, and we will do our best to let you know the outcome before the end of the summer term. Please also be aware that we are unable to confirm the status or outcome of your application over the telephone. You will be informed of the outcome in writing.

**Please note that if you submit a second or subsequent application then this will override any previous application. This is because you can only have up to three 'live' preferences at any one time.**

## Processing late applications

If you apply late this could mean that all the places at your preferred school(s) may have been offered already. If we cannot offer your child a place at any of the schools you have applied for, we will offer your child a place at the next nearest suitable school which has a place available. The nearest school will be measured by walking distance.

## Secondary (including high and upper) schools

Application received between	How and when we will deal with your application
12 September 2020 and 31 October 2020	On time application: if you applied online, we will send you an email on Monday 1 March 2021 to let you know which school has been offered. If you applied on a paper application form (CAF1), we will send you a letter by second class post on Monday 1 March 2021 to let you know which school has been offered.
1 November 2020 and 4 January 2021	If we did not receive any evidence as to why your application was late, or we did not agree your reasons were very exceptional, then your application will be processed in the second round of allocations and you will be notified of the outcome by the end of March 2021.
5 January 2021 and 28 February 2021	Your application will be processed in the second round of allocations and you will be notified of the outcome by the end of March 2021.  We will only process a second or subsequent application made during this period, in the second round of allocations, if you provide and we agree your reasons for the change are exceptional. You will be notified of the outcome by the end of March 2021.  If we do not agree the reasons for your application being late are exceptional, we will deal with your application after we have processed the second round of allocations.
1 March 2021 and 31 August 2021	We will process your application after the second round of allocations, and you will be notified of the outcome as soon as we can.

## Primary (including infant, junior and middle) schools

Application received between	How and when we will deal with your application
12 September 2020 and 15 January 2021	On time application: if you applied online, we will send you an email on Friday 16 April 2021 to let you know which school has been offered. If you applied on a paper application form, we will send you a letter by second class post on Friday 16 April 2021 to let you know which school has been offered.
16 January 2021 and 5 February 2021	If we did not receive any evidence as to why your application was late, or we did not agree your reasons were very exceptional, then your application will be processed in the second round of allocations and you will be notified of the outcome by the middle of May 2021.
6 February 2021 and 15 April 2021	<p>Your application will be processed in the second round of allocations and you will be notified of the outcome by the middle of May 2021.</p> <p>We will only process a second or subsequent application made during this period, in the second round of allocations, if you provide and we agree your reasons for the change are exceptional. You will be notified of the outcome by the middle of May 2021.</p> <p>If we do not agree the reasons for your application being late are exceptional, we will deal with your application after we have processed the second round of allocations.</p>
16 April 2021 and 31 August 2021	We will process your application after the second round of allocations, and you will be notified of the outcome as soon as we can.

If your child is starting school for the first time and you do not make an application for a full-time place in the Reception Year at a primary or infant school, we will be unable to allocate a place to them.

If you do not make an application for a place at a junior, middle or secondary school we will allocate a school place for your child if you live in Suffolk and are attending a Suffolk maintained school, academy, or free school and we have your child's details. We will offer them a place at the nearest suitable school with a place available. This will be once all on time applications and late applications have been processed. It may be late in the summer term when we write to you with the school we can offer.

# Offer of a school place

## Online applications

If you applied online, you will receive an email with details of your child's offer of a school place on the national offer day below. If you have not been offered a place at your preferred school(s), this email will give you more information about what to do next. You may also find the [waiting list](#) and [appeals process](#) sections in this guide useful.

## Paper applications

If you applied on a paper application (CAF1), we will send you a letter by second class post on the national offer day below with the offer of a school place. If you have not been offered a place at your preferred school(s), this letter will give you more information about what to do next. You may also find the [waiting list](#) and [appeals process](#) sections in this guide useful.

<b>Secondary (including high and upper) schools</b>
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- |   |
|---|
| ▶ An offer of a school place will be sent out on <b>Monday 1 March 2021</b> |
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<b>Primary (including infant, junior and middle) schools</b>
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- |  |
|--|
| ▶ An offer of a school place will be sent out on <b>Friday 16 April 2021</b> |
|--|

If we have not heard from you by the relevant date below, we will assume you have accepted the school place that has been offered to your child. If you accept the school place offered this will not affect your chances of getting a place from the waiting list or through an appeal for any of your preferred schools that your child has been refused a place at.

<b>Secondary (including high and upper) schools</b>
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- |   |
|---|
| ▶ If you do not want to accept the place offered for your child, please let us know in writing by <b>Monday 15 March 2021</b> |
|---|

<b>Primary (including infant, junior and middle) schools</b>
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- |   |
|---|
| ▶ If you do not want to accept the place offered for your child, please let us know in writing by <b>Thursday 29 April 2021</b> |
|---|

Even if your circumstances change after the dates set out above and you no longer need the school place offered, please let us know by email or by writing to us as soon as possible, as we may have a waiting list for that school and may be able to reallocate the place to another child.

**Please note:** we will not withdraw an offer of a school place unless your child has another school place or education provision in place.

# What happens when your child cannot be offered a place at your preferred school(s)

## Waiting lists

If we are unable to offer your child a place at your preferred school(s), we will automatically add their name to the waiting list for that school(s). Names are placed on the waiting list in the priority order set out in the school's admissions oversubscription criteria.

The order of the waiting list can change each time a child's name is added or the circumstances of a child already on the list changes. As a result, a child's place on the list can go up or down (for example due to withdrawals or late applications).

If you change your address while your child is on a waiting list, you must let us know. Please be aware that this may change your child's position on the waiting list. Written evidence of this will be required.

Having your child's name on a waiting list will not affect your right to appeal for any of the schools your child has been refused a place at.

Late applicants will be added to any waiting lists in oversubscription priority order if their parental preferences cannot be met.

If a place becomes available at a school, it will be offered to the child who is ranked highest on the waiting list. Places are not offered based on the date on which names were placed on the list.

The waiting lists for community and voluntary controlled schools will close on 31 December 2021. The waiting lists for those voluntary aided schools and academies who have agreed to operate the same policy as Suffolk County Council (SCC) will also close on 31 December 2021.

Information on when the waiting lists close for voluntary aided, free schools and academies who do not follow the same policy as SCC is available from the schools directly.

## Waiting lists and SCC funded school travel

If after the initial offer of a school place, a place can be offered from the waiting list, by the end of the summer term (July 2021), for a school which was previously refused but with a higher parental preference, any previous offer of SCC funded school travel will normally be withdrawn.

## Moving from the waiting list to the in-year application process

Once the waiting lists have closed the names of all the children on those lists will be removed. After this date, if you would like your child to be considered for any place that becomes available at a school, you will need to make an in-year application. More information is available at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions) or by contacting us on 0345 600 0981 (local rate). Some voluntary aided, free schools and academies may continue to operate waiting lists throughout the year. Please contact these schools direct for more information.

## **Making another application for the schools you have already applied for**

You can apply for a school place for your child through the in-year process and we will consider this. However, if your application has been refused, we will not process another application for the same school in the same school year, unless there has been a significant change in circumstances of the parent/carer, child or school. This might be a house move or a place becoming available at a school.

If there is no significant change in circumstances, you can make another application for the following school year. However, this will not normally be considered more than one term ahead of the date when you want your child to start at the school.

Some voluntary aided, free schools and academies may have different arrangements. You should contact them directly for more information.



# The appeals process for Suffolk schools

Please visit [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions) for information about the appeals process and to download an appeal application form and guidance notes.

You have the right of appeal if your child has been refused a place at one of your preferred schools. You should submit your appeal application form to the Education Appeals Office (see the '[Useful contacts](#)' section) by the relevant dates below. Appeals received on or before the dates below will be heard within 40 school days. If they are received after these dates they may be heard later. We are expecting a change to these dates during 2021. Please check the website [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions) for the latest information.

## Secondary (including high and upper) schools

- ▶ You must submit your appeal form to the Education Appeals Office by **Tuesday 13 April 2021**

## Primary (including infant, junior and middle) schools

- ▶ You must submit your appeal form to the Education Appeals Office by **Monday 17 May 2021**

If you made a late application your appeal should be heard within 40 school days from the deadline for lodging an appeal where possible, or within 30 school days of the appeal being lodged.

If you want to appeal for a school outside of Suffolk, you must contact the relevant local authority who will provide you with the necessary forms and information.

## The appeal hearing

An independent appeal panel will review the decision the admissions authority made to refuse your child a place at your preferred school.

During the appeal hearing a representative from the admissions authority will explain why it was not possible to offer your child a place at the school. You are strongly advised to attend the appeal hearing to help clarify, explain and expand upon your written reasons for appealing.

The clerk will write to you with a decision within five school days.

## Infant class size appeals

Infant class size legislation states that it is against the law for children in an infant class, which is defined as a class in which the majority of children will reach the age of five, six or seven during the school year (Reception Year, Year 1 and Year 2) to be taught in a class of over 30 pupils with a single qualified teacher.

If you decide to appeal and your child has been refused a place because the admission of another child would breach infant class size legislation, then your appeal will be heard as an infant class size appeal. This type of appeal can apply to applications for the Reception Year, Year 1 and Year 2.

There are very limited grounds for success for infant class size appeals. The panel can only offer a place where it is satisfied that:

Apply online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)

- a) The admission of additional children would not breach infant class size; or
- b) The admission arrangements did not comply with admissions law or were not correctly and impartially applied and the child would have been offered a place if the arrangements had complied or had been correctly and impartially applied; or
- c) The decision to refuse admission was not one which a reasonable admission authority would have made in the circumstances of the case.

In relation to c) the threshold for finding that an admission authority's decision to refuse admission was not one that a reasonable authority would have made is high. The panel will need to be satisfied that the decision to refuse to admit the child was 'perverse in light of the admission arrangements, that is it was 'beyond the range of responses open to a reasonable decision maker' or 'a decision which is so outrageous in its defiance of logic or of accepted moral standards that no sensible person who had applied his mind to the question could have arrived at it'.

For example, a decision that makes it impossible for you to transport all your family to school on time or even impossible for you to continue working, is very unlikely to meet this threshold and found to be 'perverse'. This has been established in the courts.

### **Future infant class size appeals**

Your appeal will also be heard as an infant class size appeal if the admission of an additional child would cause future infant class size prejudice. An example of this may be a school that has a Published Admission Number of 60, who organise three Reception Year classes of 20 children, which then become two classes of 30 children when the children enter Year 1 or Year 2. Admission of a sixty-first child to the Reception Year would lead to one of the future Year 1 or Year 2 classes exceeding the infant class size limit of 30 children with one qualified teacher. We will tell you if future infant class size prejudice applies to your appeal.

### **Sixth form appeals**

Where the offer of a place would have been conditional upon exam results, the panel must hear appeals within 30 school days of confirmation of those results.

Where the offer of a place would not have been conditional upon exam results, appeals must be heard within 40 school days of the deadline for lodging appeals.

### **Children who have been permanently excluded from two schools**

If your child has been permanently excluded from two schools and the most recent exclusion occurred within the past two years, the right of appeal does not apply.

### **Children with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan**

If your child has an EHC plan your appeal needs to be directed to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability). Further information is available online at [www.gov.uk/courts-tribunals/first-tier-tribunal-special-educational-needs-and-disability](http://www.gov.uk/courts-tribunals/first-tier-tribunal-special-educational-needs-and-disability).

# Early education

## What funded early education and childcare can I get for my child?

### Three and four year olds

All three and four year olds in England can get 570 hours of funded early education and childcare per year. It's usually taken as 15 hours a week for 38 weeks of the year during school term time.

- Children born between 1 April and 31 August 2018 can start their early education at the beginning of the Autumn term 2021 (September).
- Children born between 1 September and 31 December 2018 can start their early education at the beginning of the Spring term 2022 (January).
- Children born between 1 January and 31 March 2019 can start their early education at the beginning of the Summer term 2022 (April).

Some three and four year olds in Suffolk can get 30 hours of funded early education and childcare each week. The entitlement to an additional 15 hours funded childcare (570 hours a year) is to support working parents with the cost of childcare and enable them, where they wish, to return to work or to work additional hours.

If eligible, you are entitled to an extra 570 hours of funded childcare a year to use flexibly, so 1140 hours in total. You, and any partner, must each expect to earn (on average) at least £120 a week (equal to 16 hours at the National Minimum or Living Wage). If you, or your partner, are on maternity, paternity or adoption leave, or you are unable to work because you are disabled or have caring responsibilities, you could still be eligible. You cannot get 30 hours funded childcare if either you, or your partner, expect to earn £100,000 or more.

You will find more information about this at [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk).

### Two year olds

Some two year olds can also get 15 hours of funded early education if they meet certain criteria. To find out whether you can get this for your two year old go to [www.suffolk.gov.uk/two](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/two).

## Where can I get funded early education and childcare for my child?

You can get funded early education with a childminder or a private, voluntary or independent pre-school playgroup or private day nursery included in Suffolk's list of Approved Providers. You can find out which settings are included in this list at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/fsd](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/fsd).

Your child can also get funded early education at many state schools. Please look at the school's website or contact the schools direct for further information. You will need to ask the school or setting what age of children they take (two, three or four year olds) and what hours they offer each day as some are able to be more flexible than others.

## **How do I apply for a place for my child?**

The providers of funded early education and childcare will have their own admissions policies which will explain how they allocate places and what will happen if more children have applied than the places available.

You can speak to your local school, pre-school playgroup or day nursery to find out what places they offer and how to apply.

## **When does funded early education and childcare stop?**

Funded early education and childcare stops once your child starts the Reception Year in a school.

If they are not attending a school they can continue to get funded early education and childcare in an approved private, voluntary or independent provider until they are of compulsory school age. This is the beginning of the term after their fifth birthday.

If your child already attends a day nursery, pre-school playgroup or childminder you can choose to keep them there until your child is of compulsory school age.

## **When can my child start school in the Reception Year?**

All primary schools must offer children a full-time place at the start of the Autumn term in the September following their fourth birthday. Children normally attend school full-time in the Reception Year in the September following their fourth birthday. However, legally they don't have to start full-time education until the term after their fifth birthday.

Until this time they do not have to take up a school place or can choose to attend school part-time. Once you are offered a school place you can talk to the school about your options. Whatever you decide, it is important that you apply for an infant or primary school place by the closing date.

Please note that a place in a school nursery class does not guarantee a place in the Reception Year of that school. You must make a separate application by the closing date of **Friday 15 January 2021**.

# Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her.

1. A child or young person of compulsory school age has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she:
  - Has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
  - Has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 providers.
2. For children and young people aged two or more, special educational provision is educational or training provision that is additional to or different from that made generally for other children or young people of the same age by mainstream schools, maintained nursery schools, mainstream post-16 providers or by relevant early years providers. For a child under two years of age, special educational provision means educational provision of any kind.
3. A child under compulsory school age has special educational needs if he or she is likely to fall within the definition in paragraph 1 above when they reach compulsory school age or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them (Section 20 Children and Families Act 2014).

Children and young people may have SEN that impact on their ability to access an educational curriculum for a number of reasons, some examples may include:

- Communication and interaction, for example, speech and language difficulties or other communication difficulties such as autism.
- Cognition and learning, for example, developmental delay, specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia.
- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties, for example, severe challenging behaviour.
- Sensory and/or physical needs, for example, problems with hearing, eyesight or physical difficulties which impact on accessing the curriculum.

If, as parents or carers, you feel that your child is not making the expected progress you can discuss your concerns with the member of staff with responsibility for SEN. In a school this will be the SEN Co-ordinator (SENCo), in other settings the designation of the member of staff will vary.

If a member of staff within the setting feels that a child or young person is not making the progress that is expected, they should talk to you about what they think the difficulties are and what measures they are going to put in place to help.

## Applying for a school place if your child has SEN

### Secondary (including high and upper) schools

- ▶ If you would like to discuss your child's options, please speak to the SENCo at your child's current school.

For the majority of children, their educational needs will be met in a mainstream school. You must apply online or on a paper application (CAF1) by **Saturday 31 October 2020**.

### Primary (including infant, junior and middle) schools

- ▶ If your child is starting in the Reception Year at a primary or infant mainstream school, please contact the Suffolk Families Information Service (FIS) or the Suffolk Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service (Suffolk SENDIASS) team for more information (see the '[Useful contacts](#)' section).

For the majority of children, their educational needs will be met in a mainstream school. You must apply online or on a paper application (CAF1) by **Friday 15 January 2021**.

## Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan

If your child is struggling to make progress at school even though additional support has been provided, then the SENCo may suggest that a request for an EHC Needs Assessment is made. If an assessment is agreed, then Suffolk County Council will then use the information and advice gathered to decide whether an EHC plan is required so they can clearly identify the support that is required or in some cases, consider a specialist placement. The majority of children with an EHC plan will continue to attend a mainstream school and the school will make sure that the support is made available. This may involve specialist education services and other practitioners.

If your child is currently undergoing an EHC Needs Assessment which will not be completed before the closing date for making an application, then you should still apply by the relevant closing date for a mainstream school.

You can find out more about EHC Needs Assessments and EHC plans by contacting your school or the SENDIASS team (see the '[Useful contacts](#)' section for details). More information can also be found online at [www.suffolklocaloffer.org.uk](http://www.suffolklocaloffer.org.uk).

## Specialist Education Settings in Suffolk

Admissions to special schools and specialist units are managed by Inclusion Services and are outside the normal admissions arrangements. The majority of children of statutory school age will have an EHC plan when admissions to a special school or unit is considered. There will be a small number of children that may be considered for a place in the Reception and Key Stage 1 specialist units.

We will listen to your views about the school you want your child to attend before we decide which school your child will go to. We have to be sure that:

- The school will be able to help your child learn
- The other children will be able to learn
- It is a sensible way of using the funding available.

Apply online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)



For advice or support you can contact the SENDIASS team (see the '[Useful contacts](#)' section for details).

## **Special schools**

There are 11 special schools in Suffolk. If a special school is felt to be the best option for your child then the decision to offer a place is made by Suffolk County Council managers, who will consider all the information concerning your child's needs. This decision will only be made following agreement with you. Sometimes children are offered a dual placement, this means they spend part of the week at a special school and the other part in their local mainstream school. Suffolk County Council's specialist education staff and some special school staff will help teachers in other Suffolk schools by sharing their knowledge, ideas and equipment.

## **Specialist units**

Suffolk also has a number of specialist units in mainstream schools. The units offer places to children from the Reception Year to the end of Year 11 and from Key Stage 2, different units specialise in different areas of needs such as learning, communication and interaction, and hearing impairment. If a specialist unit is felt to be the best option for your child then the decision to offer a place is made by Suffolk County Council managers, who will consider all the information concerning your child's needs. This decision will only be made following agreement with you.

## **Other local council's and independent, non-maintained special schools**

Very occasionally, when a child's needs cannot be met in a Suffolk special school, a place may be arranged at another local council or an independent, non-maintained special school which could be outside Suffolk. This would always be discussed with you first.

## **Alternative Tuition**

We also make provision for a small number of young people who are not in school. This is arranged through Inclusion Services in discussion with you and we provide support to meet your child's needs.

## **Suffolk's local offer**

We have developed a 'local offer' which contains information about services and provisions for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities in Suffolk. It is a web-based resource which helps you find out which services are available in your area. Further details about Suffolk's local offer are online at [www.suffolklocaloffer.org.uk](http://www.suffolklocaloffer.org.uk).

# School Travel Policy

## Suffolk County Council (SCC) School Travel Policy

Suffolk's School Admissions Policies and SCC's School Travel Policy are separate policies. It is important you understand how your school admission preferences may affect your child's eligibility for SCC funded school travel before you apply for a school place.

The current School Travel Policy applies to children starting at a new school or when they move house. SCC funded school travel will only be provided when a child is attending their **nearest suitable school** and meets the distance criteria as detailed in the table on the next page. Pupils who were eligible for SCC funded school travel before September 2019, will continue to retain their eligibility until they change school or move house.

All children living in Suffolk who will be starting at a new school will be eligible for SCC funded school travel when they meet the statutory walking distance criteria from their home to the **nearest suitable school** that would have had a place available for them. This would be whether or not an application was made for a place at that school.

Full details about SCC funded school travel, including additional arrangements for low income families and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), can be found at [www.suffolkonboard.com/schooltravel](http://www.suffolkonboard.com/schooltravel).

When you apply for a school place for your child, it is important to think about how you will get your child to school on time. Most parents make their own arrangements for their child to go to and from school.

### Nearest School Checker

Find out what your nearest school is at [nearestschool.suffolk.gov.uk](http://nearestschool.suffolk.gov.uk).

Your **catchment area school** may not be the nearest suitable school for SCC funded school travel – you **must** check this if SCC funded school travel is important to you.

**Important:** If your child is offered a place at a school that is **not your nearest suitable school** but a place could have been offered at a nearer school when your admission application is decided, whether or not you applied for that school, you will be responsible for making school travel arrangements for your child, travelling with them as necessary, and paying their travel costs.

### Closing date for eligible pupils to opt-in

If your child is starting at a new school in September 2021 and you wish to be assessed for SCC funded school travel, you will need to opt-in by **31 May 2021**. Late applications may not be processed by the beginning of the Autumn term 2021.

SCC funded school travel may be provided on a dedicated closed contract school bus, for pupils only, or on public transport, depending on where you live.

Information on school travel will be provided in the admissions email or letter that we send you in 2021 when we offer your child a school place. Find out more information about school travel and whether your child may be eligible at [www.suffolkonboard.com/schooltravel](http://www.suffolkonboard.com/schooltravel).

Apply online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)

## SCC funded school travel

We will offer your child SCC funded school travel if your child meets at least one of the eligibility criteria in the table below.

<p>Statutory walking distance</p>	<p>All children aged between 5 and 16* (Reception Year to Year 11) qualify for SCC funded school travel if they attend their <b>nearest</b> suitable school with a place available when the school admission application is decided and live at least:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Two miles from the school if they are aged under 8.</li> <li>▪ Three miles from the school if they are aged 8 or older.</li> </ul> <p>*ages are taken at 1 September each school year. If your child receives SCC funded school travel and is under eight years of age and lives more than two miles but less than three miles from the school allocated, travel arrangements will finish at the end of the school year following their eighth birthday.</p> <p>We will support travel for four-year olds who have a full-time place in the Reception Year class when their fifth birthday falls during the school year.</p> <p>The way we measure distances for school travel is different to the method used for school admissions. We measure distances by the shortest available route along which a child may walk accompanied as necessary. Routes are calculated using a network comprised of the Ordnance Survey MasterMap Highways Network, which includes all roads and urban paths, and Public Rights of Way as shown on the Definitive Map. Distances are measured from the point of the network that is closest to the address point of the child's home to the nearest gate or access to the school.</p>
<p>Safety of the Route</p>	<p>If your child attends their nearest suitable school and does not meet the statutory walking distance criteria but you consider the route from home to the school is unsafe for them to walk, accompanied as necessary, with reasonable safety then you can appeal this decision. If an appeal panel agrees with you, we will provide SCC funded school travel while the route remains unsafe.</p>
<p>Next nearest suitable school</p>	<p>If your child is offered a place at a school that is <b>not your nearest suitable school</b> but a place could have been offered at a nearer school when your admission application is decided, whether or not you applied for that school, you will be responsible for making school travel arrangements for your child, travelling with them as necessary, and paying their travel costs.</p>
<p>Income</p>	<p>Your child will be entitled to SCC funded school travel if you are on low income and receive the maximum Working Tax Credit or if they are entitled to free school meals. If this applies, then they will get SCC funded school travel if they are either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Aged 8 to 11 attending the nearest suitable school from your address and the school is two miles and over</li> <li>▪ Aged 11 to 16 attending one of the three nearest suitable schools from your address that is two to six miles away</li> <li>▪ Aged 11 to 16 attending the nearest school preferred on grounds of religion or belief that is two to fifteen miles from your address.</li> </ul>

Apply online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)

	We measure distances by the shortest available route along which a child may walk accompanied as necessary. Routes are calculated using a network comprised of the Ordnance Survey MasterMap Highways Network, which includes all roads and urban paths, and Public Rights of Way as shown on the Definitive Map. Distances are measured from the point of the network that is closest to the address point of the child's home to the nearest gate or access to the school or college. Once three miles is reached, we measure via road routes to check that the distance is not more than six or fifteen miles.
Special Educational Needs (SEN)/ Disability and mobility difficulties	<p>If your child has special educational needs and disabilities, or mobility difficulties, we will assess their eligibility for SCC funded school travel against our School Travel Policy, except where a child has an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan that states travel arrangements should be provided.</p> <p>In very exceptional cases, we may agree to provide a passenger assistant to travel with your child. This decision would be made on an individual basis using the evidence provided.</p> <p>If your child does not have an EHC plan but has special educational needs and/or mobility difficulties (including temporary medical conditions) then we will assess their entitlement on a case by case basis (see the Review/Appeals section on the next page).</p>
Exceptions	If you feel you or your child has exceptional circumstances that require your child to have help with SCC funded school travel you can ask us to review your case (see the Review/Appeals section on the next page).

If your child is eligible for SCC funded school travel and home to school travel options are not available in your area, we may consider paying you a mileage allowance to take your child to and from school instead.

## Spare seats

If your child is not eligible for SCC funded school travel, we may still be able to help you through our spare seat policy. If there are spare seats on vehicles that SCC has arranged specifically for children eligible for SCC funded school travel, then you may be able to buy a seat for your child on a term by term basis. SCC will sell these on a first come first served basis.

We cannot guarantee that a spare seat will continue to be available as this will depend on the number of seats needed for children who are eligible for SCC funded school travel. We re-assess school travel capacity every school term. However, this may mean that we may have to withdraw the offer of a spare seat if more children become eligible for SCC funded school travel.

The charging arrangements for the sale of spare seats for the school year commencing September 2021 will be £930 per year. The termly charge will be £310 per child per seat. Each year the cost of a spare seat will rise by £90 per year (£30 per term) until it reaches the average cost of a spare seat (which was £1,205 in May 2020). The following table explains the charging structure over the next three years. As agreed at Cabinet in June 2018, the charges for spare seat travel are to align with the actual average costs per seat for transport.

School Year	Autumn term	Spring term	Summer term	Total per year
2021/2022	£310	£310	£310	£930
2022/2023	£340	£340	£340	£1,020
2023/2024	£370	£370	£370	£1,110

Apply online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)

If your child has Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and is not eligible for SCC funded school travel, you may purchase a spare seat for £750 per year for the school year 2021/2022. The termly charge will be £250 per child per seat. Each year the charge of a spare seat will rise by £30 per year (£10 per term).

School Year	Autumn term	Spring term	Summer term	Total per year
2021/2022	£250	£250	£250	£750
2022/2023	£260	£260	£260	£780
2023/2024	£270	£270	£270	£810

We can offer you a half termly payment option if your child is offered a seat. More information is available online as you make your payment at [www.suffolkonboard.com/pay](http://www.suffolkonboard.com/pay).

You will need to contact the operator directly for the price of seats on any commercially operated public transport routes, or routes run by schools. The contact details for bus companies operating in Suffolk are available online at [www.suffolkonboard.com/operators](http://www.suffolkonboard.com/operators).

If you would like us to check if we can offer you a spare seat, please complete the online form at [www.suffolkonboard.com/optin](http://www.suffolkonboard.com/optin) or you can call us on 0345 606 6173.

You can opt-in for a spare seat from 1 July 2021. Applications for spare seats will not be assessed until all the on time applications for eligible pupils have been processed. On time spare seat applications will be assessed from August 2021. For full details on the priorities for allocating spare seats, please refer to the Spare Seat Policy 2021/2022 at [www.suffolkonboard.com/schooltravel](http://www.suffolkonboard.com/schooltravel).

## Review/Appeals Process

If your child is not eligible for SCC funded school travel and you believe that you or your child's circumstances need special consideration, you have a right to challenge our decision.

You may challenge a school travel decision for the following reasons:

- The travel arrangements we have offered.
- Your child's eligibility.
- You disagree with the distance measurement in relation to statutory walking distances, including Public Rights of Way.
- Safety of the route.

Further information on Review/Appeals process is available online at [www.suffolkonboard.com/appeals](http://www.suffolkonboard.com/appeals).

## Roman Catholic travel

Children starting at Roman Catholic schools are not entitled to SCC funded school travel unless it is the nearest suitable school. There may be exceptions to this if your family has a low income, please see the eligibility table on [page 44](#).

## Sustainable modes of travel

SCC has a Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy (SMoTS) for schools and colleges available at [www.suffolkonboard.com/smot](http://www.suffolkonboard.com/smot). The aim of this is to provide your child with the opportunities to travel to and from school in a sustainable way. This can improve their health and wellbeing and also the quality of the local environment. Travelling to school in a sustainable way can also save you money and can help your child develop their independence.

Sustainable modes of travel can include:

- Walk, use a bicycle or scooter to school or college ([www.walkit.com](http://www.walkit.com)).
- Access public transport or Connecting Communities (using the Endeavour Card).
- Use a motorcycle or moped.
- Car share.
- Make other arrangements – for example park and stride.

All schools in Suffolk have a School Travel Plan (STP) which identifies the problems children may experience during their journey to and from school. It sets out the school's aims to overcome these problems and describes the steps to improve these. Schools should review their STPs regularly and we provide a range of templates to help schools with this. These are available online at [www.suffolkroadsafe.net](http://www.suffolkroadsafe.net).

Information about planning your journey, including cycle maps and travel choices, can be found at [www.suffolkonboard.com/cycle](http://www.suffolkonboard.com/cycle) and [www.suffolkonboard.com/walk](http://www.suffolkonboard.com/walk).



# Choices for 16 to 19 year olds in Suffolk

There is lots of information and advice for young people in Suffolk at [www.thesource.me.uk](http://www.thesource.me.uk).

## Options after 16

Young people need to stay in some form of learning until they are 18 under the Raising of the Participation Age (RPA) legislation. This means that they will need to think about whether to:

- Remain in full-time education (such as school sixth form or college)
- Go on to work-based learning (such as an apprenticeship or traineeship)
- Go onto a Supported Internship
- Be in full-time work alongside part-time learning leading to an accredited qualification
- Take up volunteering for 20 hours or more and do this alongside part-time learning which leads to an accredited qualification
- Be self-employed, combining this with part-time learning leading to an accredited qualification.

To find out more about RPA and how this affects your child visit [www.thesource.me.uk/rpa](http://www.thesource.me.uk/rpa).

Wherever your child chooses to study they will need to apply in good time. It is best to contact local providers directly or look at their websites for detailed information.

Apprenticeships	Apprenticeships give young people the chance to work for an employer, learn on the job, improve their skills and earn a salary while being supported by training providers. There are currently over 200 types of apprenticeship offered in Suffolk ranging from administration and financial services to sports and working with children and young people. Further support and information is available from Apprenticeships Suffolk visit <a href="http://www.apprenticeshipssuffolk.org">www.apprenticeshipssuffolk.org</a> .
Further Education (FE) colleges	The three FE colleges in Suffolk are East Coast College, Suffolk New College (including Suffolk Rural at their Otley Campus) and West Suffolk College. All offer a wide range of courses and qualifications and young people can study full-time or part-time. Colleges provide a different learning environment, they also provide support and help of a personal tutor.
School sixth forms	Young people already at a school with a sixth form may choose to remain, or they could go to a sixth form at another school. School sixth forms vary widely from each other in terms of size and range of courses, and this could affect their choices.  You should contact the school sixth form directly for details of the application process including any closing date, for further information or a prospectus. If you are refused a place you have a right of appeal against that refusal.
16 to 19 providers	Alternatively, young people can choose to attend one of the 16 to 19 providers – One in Ipswich, Lowestoft Sixth Form College or Abbeygate Sixth Form College in Bury St Edmunds.  You should contact them directly for details of their application processes including any closing dates, for further information or a prospectus. If you are refused a place you have a right of appeal against that refusal.
Independent Training Providers	Independent training providers offer a range of study programmes that can include qualifications including retakes of Maths and English, training, work experience placements, enrichment activities and skills development. They often have more than one intake in a year.

continued on next page

Apply online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)

Self-employment	Some young people may also consider starting their own business enterprise. There is lots of information and support available through business organisations and online support. Further information on starting a business is available online at <a href="http://www.thesource.me.uk">www.thesource.me.uk</a> .
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Further sources of information and support can also be found at:

- [nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/](http://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/)
- [www.icanbea.org.uk](http://www.icanbea.org.uk)
- [www.apprenticeshipssuffolk.org](http://www.apprenticeshipssuffolk.org)

## Opportunities for young people with additional needs

There is lots of information about opportunities for young people with additional needs at [www.thesource.me.uk](http://www.thesource.me.uk) and you can find out about the Suffolk Local Offer on the Suffolk County Council website [www.suffolklocaloffer.org.uk](http://www.suffolklocaloffer.org.uk).

You can also find information about the full range of services that we provide for families and carers who support young people with additional needs and disabilities at [www.access-unlimited.co.uk/](http://www.access-unlimited.co.uk/).

## Post-16 Travel Policy

Please note that the current Post-16 Travel Policy is available at [www.suffolkonboard.com/schooltravel](http://www.suffolkonboard.com/schooltravel). This policy details the arrangements that will apply during the school year commencing September 2021.

Currently we provide a subsidised travel scheme for young people aged 16 to 19 years old, known as post-16 travel. Young people who are offered post-16 travel have to make a payment towards the cost each term. The cost from September 2021 will be £930 per year. The termly charge will be £310 per child per seat. Each year the cost of a spare seat will rise by £90 per year (£30 per term) until it reaches the average cost of a spare seat (which was £1,205 in May 2020). The following table explains the charging structure over the next three years. As agreed at Cabinet in June 2018, the charges for post 16 travel are to align with the actual average costs per seat for travel.

School Year	Autumn term	Spring term	Summer term	Total per year
2021/2022	£310	£310	£310	£930
2022/2023	£340	£340	£340	£1,020
2023/2024	£370	£370	£370	£1,110

Post-16 travel will be offered to young people who:

- Attend either their nearest school sixth form or post-16 centre that offers the course that will help them to progress with their chosen pathway and
- Are studying in Years 12 or 13 but are under 19 years old (or are completing a course that started prior to their nineteenth birthday) and
- Are undertaking an approved full-time course of further education and
- Are resident in Suffolk and
- Live at least 3 miles from their nearest school sixth form or post-16 centre they wish to attend.

*continued on next page*

**Apply online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)**

The only exception to this is if the young person is studying something specific that cannot be studied at their nearest school sixth form or post-16 centre. This will need to be verified by the Passenger Transport Team.

## Spare seats

If there is no public transport available to the young person's nearest school sixth form and there is a closed contract school bus to that school that has spare seats on it, we make them available to families living on the route who don't qualify for post-16 travel.

From 1 September 2021 the cost for spare seats travel will be £310 per seat per term for a young person between their home and school sixth form or post-16 education centre:

School Year	Autumn term	Spring term	Summer term	Total per year
2021/2022	£310	£310	£310	£930
2022/2023	£340	£340	£340	£1,020
2023/2024	£370	£370	£370	£1,110

This charge will increase each year in line with the table on the previous page. Further information about the spare seats policy can be found online at [www.suffolkonboard.com/schooltravel](http://www.suffolkonboard.com/schooltravel).

## Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Travel to a post 16 centre for students with SEND or mobility difficulties is assessed against the Post 16 and Spare Seat Travel policies. The termly charge for SEND transport is £750 per year for the school year 2021/2022. The termly charge will be £250 per young person per seat. Each year the charge will rise by £30 per year (£10 per term). The following table explains the charging structure for SEND travel.

School Year	Autumn term	Spring term	Summer term	Total per year
2021/2022	£250	£250	£250	£750
2022/2023	£260	£260	£260	£780
2023/2024	£270	£270	£270	£810

## 16-19 bursary fund

There is no exemption to these costs for post 16 or spare seat travel for families on low income. Young people may be able to get a bursary to help with education-related costs if they are aged 16 to 19 and are:

- Studying at school or college (not university) in England.
- On a training course, including unpaid work experience.

The bursary is money that your child, or their education or training provider, can use to pay for things like:

- Clothing, books and other equipment for your course.
- Travel arrangements and meals on days you study or train.

You can go online at [www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund](http://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund) for more information or contact the college or training provider to find out more.

Apply online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)

## Endeavour Card

The Endeavour Card is a cashless travel smartcard for all 16-19 year olds. The card entitles 16-19 year olds to a minimum 25% discount off the price of a full single or return adult fare on participating services.

The card can be topped-up online and can be used at any time, seven days a week. More information about the Endeavour Card and how to apply is available online at [www.endeavourcard.co.uk](http://www.endeavourcard.co.uk).

The Endeavour Card is currently free of charge, but this may be subject to review.

## Beyond 19

Higher Education (HE)	The University of Suffolk offers a wide range of full and part-time degree courses across the county. The campus is based at the Waterfront building in Ipswich, but some courses are delivered locally through the HE bases in each of the FE colleges. All universities offer distance learning and part-time courses.
Further Education (FE) colleges	All three FE colleges offer a wide range of full and part-time courses throughout the county. These courses cover technical as well as academic and leisure learning.
Advanced apprenticeships	This could include Level 3 or 4 qualifications and/or a degree.
Employment including self-employment and own business start-up	Further information is available from local organisations such as the Suffolk Chamber of Commerce and Menta at <a href="http://www.menta.org.uk">www.menta.org.uk</a> .

## Further information

Young people aged 16-19 in Suffolk can get help and advice on courses, jobs, CV building, apprenticeships, careers, money, free time, life, housing and health from [www.thesource.me.uk](http://www.thesource.me.uk).

If you are 16-19 and not in education, employment or training (NEET), you can get one to one help and support from a Youth Support Worker to explore your options. Look at the help and support pages available at [www.thesource.me.uk](http://www.thesource.me.uk) to find someone in your area.

Help and advice on apprenticeships for parents and carers and young people is available at [www.apprenticeshipssuffolk.org](http://www.apprenticeshipssuffolk.org).

# Other useful information

## Term dates

The school term dates for all Suffolk County Council's maintained schools for 2021/2022 are:

	Term begins	Term ends	Half term begins	Half term ends
<b>Autumn Term 2021</b>	Wednesday 1 September 2021	Friday 17 December 2021	Monday 25 October 2021	Friday 29 October 2021
<b>Spring Term 2022</b>	Tuesday 4 January 2022	Friday 8 April 2022	Monday 21 February 2022	Friday 25 February 2022
<b>Summer Term 2022</b>	Monday 25 April 2022	Thursday 21 July 2022	Monday 30 May 2022	Friday 3 June 2022

- **Christmas Holidays:** Saturday 18 December 2021 to Monday 3 January 2022
- **Easter Holidays:** Saturday 9 April 2022 to Sunday 24 April 2022

The total number of days for the school year is 195. All maintained schools set five teacher training days called Professional Development (PD) days, which means there are 190 actual teaching days in the school year.

Suffolk County Council recommends the following PD days: Wednesday 1 September 2021, Friday 22 October 2021, Tuesday 4 January 2022, Monday 28 February 2022 and Friday 8 April 2022. Most schools in Suffolk follow these dates but you should contact your school to confirm.

**Please note:** academies and free schools can set their own term dates. All term dates for community and voluntary controlled schools are on the county council's website at [www.suffolk.gov.uk](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk). Where a school has chosen different term dates to Suffolk County Council this information will be available from the school.

## Charging and remissions policy

Schools have their own charging and remissions policy for activities such as music tuition, school journeys in school hours, activities outside of school hours or purchase of materials. For more information contact the school directly.

## Fair Access Protocol (FAP)

The FAP is designed to ensure children who are considered hard to place and/or vulnerable are offered a place at a suitable school as quickly as possible and that no school is asked to take a disproportionate number of children who have challenging behaviour or who have been excluded from other schools. It is normally unacceptable for schools to:

- Refuse to admit children on the basis of their behaviour elsewhere.
- Refuse admission to a child thought to be potentially disruptive, or who has exhibited challenging behaviour.
- Refuse a place when the year group is not full.

The FAP is published online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/FAP](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/FAP).

Apply online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)

## Children in care (looked after children) and children who were previously in care

The School Admissions Code requires that children in care (looked after children) and children who were previously in care (children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order, immediately following having been looked after), must be given the highest priority in the oversubscription criteria for all schools. This is because these children are particularly vulnerable.

We work with social workers, the Suffolk Virtual School for children in care and schools to make sure children in care can be admitted to the appropriate school, even if it is outside the normal admissions round and/or above the Published Admission Number (PAN) for the school. The School Admissions Code allows us to direct a maintained school to admit a child in care and to ask the Secretary of State to intervene in the case of academies and free schools. However, all efforts will be made to make sure the child has a place at a suitable school as soon as possible before a decision about a direction is made.

## Private fostering

You may be private fostering if:

- You are caring for someone else's child for more than 28 days.
- You do not have parental responsibility for the child.
- You are not a relative such as a grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt (whether full blood, half blood or by marriage or civil partnership).

If this situation applies to you then it is a legal requirement that you contact Suffolk County Council to speak to Social Services on 0808 800 4005. More information is available at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/privatefostering](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/privatefostering).

## Free school meals

If you receive one of the following benefits your child may be entitled to a free school meal at lunchtime:

- Income Support
- Income based Job Seeker's Allowance
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit **but no element of Working Tax Credit** and have an annual income (as assessed by HM Revenues and Customs) that does not exceed £16,190
- If you are supported under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Working Tax Credit during the four-week period immediately after your employment finishes or after you start to work less hours per week
- Universal Credit (provided you have an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400 (£616.67 per month), as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods)

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If your child is attending a nursery school:

- They must be in a maintained school nursery as a registered pupil at the school (your provision can advise you whether it is a maintained or a private setting).
- Your child must be in receipt of education before and after lunch on the same day.
- You must be in receipt of a qualifying benefit (as described above).

The advice from the government, as at July 2020, is that the roll out of Universal Credit is currently expected to complete in March 2024. The Department for Education states that, from 1 April 2018, all children currently receiving free school meals will continue to do so while Universal Credit is rolled out. This protection will apply even if their parents' earnings rise above the new threshold during that time. In addition, any child who becomes eligible for free school meals after 1 April 2018 will also have protection applied as described above during the Universal Credit rollout period.

Once Universal Credit has been fully rolled out, we are advised that any existing claimants that no longer meet the eligibility criteria at that point (because their earnings are above the threshold or are no longer a recipient of Universal Credit) will continue to receive free school meals until the end of their current phase of education (such as primary or secondary).

All children in the Reception Year, Year 1 or Year 2 are entitled to Universal Infant Free School Meals regardless of family income. However, we recommend you apply for free school meals if you are on any of the benefits detailed above and you believe you may be eligible. This will secure the protection to free school meals beyond Year 2 and your child's school will receive additional funding called Pupil Premium funding. This extra financial help received by schools is currently worth £1,345 per child, per year for children in Reception Year through to Year 6 and £955 per child, per year for pupils in Year 7 through to Year 11.

Schools decide how best to spend this money to support your child but this could include help with the costs of school trips, uniform costs or additional support in school.

If you have a sibling not already in school, you will need to apply in August and, if eligible, they will currently be protected until March 2024. If you are not eligible for free school meals at that time, they will be entitled to Universal Infant Free School Meals until Year 2.

To check if your child is eligible, apply online for an immediate response at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals) or call 01473 260989.

## **Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children**

We will consider Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children moving into an area as ordinarily resident in that area when they apply for a school place.

# Useful contacts

## Admissions Team

The Admissions Team are able to help you with queries about the admissions process.

**Phone:** 0345 600 0981 (local rate)

**Email:** [admissions@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:admissions@suffolk.gov.uk)

**Website:** [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)

## ACE Education Advice and Training

A voluntary organisation which offers support with education issues. Normal opening hours are Monday to Wednesday from 10.00am to 1.00pm, term time only.

**Phone:** 0300 0115 142

**Email:** [enquiries@ace-ed.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ace-ed.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.ace-ed.org.uk](http://www.ace-ed.org.uk)

## Consortium of Selective Schools in Essex (CSSE)

Opening hours: Monday to Friday from 9.30am to 3.30pm.

**Phone:** 01245 348257

**Email:** [admin@csse.org.uk](mailto:admin@csse.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.csse.org.uk](http://www.csse.org.uk)

## Department for Education

The government department responsible for education and children's services in England. Normal opening hours are Monday to Friday from 9.00am to 5.00pm.

**Phone:** 0370 000 2288

**Website:** [www.gov.uk/dfes](http://www.gov.uk/dfes)

## Education Appeals Office

Who to contact if you've been refused a place for your child at your preferred school in Suffolk, and about the Permanent Exclusion Reviews. Some academies arrange their own appeals instead of using this service.

**Phone:** 01473 264218 or 01473 264219

**Email:** [statutory.appealsoffice@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:statutory.appealsoffice@suffolk.gov.uk)

**Website:** [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)

## Neighbouring local authorities

### Cambridgeshire County Council

**Address:** Admissions Team, OCT1221, The Octagon, Castle Hill, Cambridge, CB3 0AP

**Phone:** 0345 045 1370

**Email:** [admissions@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:admissions@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)

**Website:** [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/admissions)

**Apply online at** [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)

## **Essex County Council**

**Address:** School Admissions, County Hall, Market Road, Chelmsford, CM1 1QH

**Phone:** 0345 603 2200

**Email:** [admissions@essex.gov.uk](mailto:admissions@essex.gov.uk)

**Website:** [www.essex.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.essex.gov.uk/admissions)

## **Norfolk County Council**

**Address:** School Admissions, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2DL

**Phone:** 0344 800 8020

**Email:** [admissions@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:admissions@norfolk.gov.uk)

**Website:** [www.norfolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/admissions)

## **Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted)**

Ofsted inspect services providing education and skills for learners of all ages. You can find inspection reports for the schools you are interested in on their website or you can ask the school for a copy. Many schools also publish their inspection reports on their websites.

**Website:** [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

## **Passenger Transport**

For all queries about travel to school.

**Phone:** 0345 606 6173

**Website:** [www.suffolkonboard.com/schooltravel](http://www.suffolkonboard.com/schooltravel)

## **Suffolk Family Information Service (FIS)**

The Suffolk FIS offers free and impartial advice to parents and carers about finding childcare, the funded early education entitlement and other family services for 0-19 year olds.

**Email:** [childcare.planning@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:childcare.planning@suffolk.gov.uk)

**Phone:** 0345 60 800 33 (please note a voicemail service is in operation)

**Website:** [www.suffolk.gov.uk/family](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/family)

## **Suffolk Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service (Suffolk SENDIASS)**

The Suffolk SENDIASS team offers impartial information, advice and support to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, and their parents and carers, about education, health and social care.

**Phone:** 01473 265210

**Text:** ADVICE4ME to 87007

**Email:** [enquiries@suffolksendiass.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@suffolksendiass.co.uk)

**Website:** [www.suffolksendiass.co.uk](http://www.suffolksendiass.co.uk)

Apply online at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions)

# Glossary and definitions

## Admissions Authority

Suffolk County Council is responsible for admissions to community and voluntary controlled schools. The governing body or academy trust is responsible for the admissions to voluntary aided, free schools and academies.

## CAF1

The normal year of entry paper application form.

## Catchment area

The school that serves the area you live in. The school may give your child priority for admission to that school within their oversubscription criteria. Free schools and some academies and voluntary aided schools do not have catchment areas. We cannot guarantee a place at your catchment area school. **A catchment area school may not be the nearest school to your home address.**

## Co-ordinated admissions

Admissions are co-ordinated by local authorities for the normal admissions round only, to ensure that children across the county are offered a single school place on the same day.

## Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan

An EHC plan is the result of an assessment we have made about a child's special needs and the extra support they need.

## Infant class size legislation

The legislation that states it is against the law for children in an infant class, which is defined as a class in which the majority of children will reach the age of five, six or seven during the school year (Reception Year, Year 1 and Year 2) to be taught in a class of over 30 pupils with a single qualified teacher.

## Nearest suitable school

The nearest suitable school with places available that provides education appropriate to the age, ability and aptitude of the child, and any special educational needs that the child may have. It does not include independent schools.

## Normal admissions round

The set period of time when applications and decisions are made for children to start school full-time, or to move on to their next school, in the following year.

## Normal year of entry

The normal year of entry for full-time pupils in the age range served by the school.

## Ordinarily resident

By ordinarily resident we mean the place where your child usually lives. We consider this to be where they sleep overnight. We may need proof of this address. If you use another address to give the impression that your child lives at a different address to where they are ordinarily resident, such as a second home or a grandparent's address, so that you have a higher priority for a place at that school; we consider this to be a fraudulent application. Where a child lives at

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two or more addresses, each for part of the week, the address at which the child is ordinarily resident will be considered to be the address that the child lives at for most of the week (excluding weekends and school holidays). Separate evidence in writing from each parent must be provided to confirm the child's living arrangements at the time of application.

In cases where the child spends an equal proportion of the school week at two or more different addresses, evidence of which is to be considered the main contact address will be required to support the application. Agreement in writing by the parents will be required to state which address is to be used as the ordinarily resident address. This address will then be used when processing all school preferences expressed. It is not acceptable to use one address for one school preference and another address for another school preference.

### **Out-catchment school**

A school which is not the catchment area school.

### **Oversubscribed**

A school becomes oversubscribed when the number of applications is greater than the number of places available.

### **Oversubscription criteria**

The rules used to decide which children have the highest priority for places when a school has more applications than places available.

### **Own Admission Authority (OAA) schools**

These schools sometimes have their own admissions policy. The governing body or academy trust makes decisions on applications. These can be voluntary aided, free schools and academies.

### **Parent**

For the purposes of education law, section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines a 'parent' as:

- all natural (biological) parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person (this could be a step-parent, guardian or other relative)
- any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.

A person has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their relationship is with the child.

### **Published Admission Number (PAN)**

This is the set number of places at a school in any one year. It is based on a national formula which decides how many children can go to a school without causing overcrowding. Although the PAN applies to the year of entry at a school, we would normally apply this same number across all the year groups. However, there may be times where this is not possible.

### **Preference**

Naming a school that you would like your child to attend.

### **Prospectus**

The information guide published by the school.

### **Siblings (for Suffolk County Council's admission oversubscription criteria)**

Where the child has a sibling in the school or a sibling has already been offered a place at the school, and where the sibling will still be attending the school at the time of admission but not in a specialist unit or a specialist resource base for Hearing Impaired provision, a nursery or in the sixth form. Priority will be given, where necessary, to applications where there is the smallest age gap.

The term 'sibling' includes: natural, half, step, and adopted brothers and sisters; a child of the partner of the parent; and children who are fostered into the family. In all these cases, the child and their sibling will both be living at the same address (that is where the child is ordinarily resident) in a single family unit. This means that children from different family units, where those separate families are living together at the same address, are not considered siblings under this criterion.

### **Summer born children**

Children born from the beginning of April to the end of August.

### **Supplementary Information Form (SIF)**

The form you may need to complete if you are applying for a voluntary controlled, voluntary aided, free school or academy which asks for extra information to enable the admissions authority to rank your application against their school's admission oversubscription criteria. SIF's are available at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions) or from the school direct.



# Comments, compliments and complaints

Our aim is to make sure your child gets the best education possible. If you have any comments, compliments or complaints about your child's education, it is best to discuss this with a member of staff or the headteacher at your child's school. This can be put in writing if you prefer. Further information can be found at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/feedback](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/feedback).

Most issues can be resolved without any further action. However, if you are not happy with the outcome, you should ask the school for details of their complaints policy.

If your complaint relates to a service you have received from Suffolk County Council you can contact Suffolk County Council's Complaints Team (Customer Rights).

**Website:** [www.suffolk.gov.uk/feedback](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/feedback)

**E-mail:** [customerrights@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:customerrights@suffolk.gov.uk)

**Telephone:** 0345 266 1821

Comments or compliments about our services can also be sent to Suffolk County Council's Complaints Team (Customer Rights).

## Data Protection

Our Privacy Notice is available at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/CYPprivacynotice](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/CYPprivacynotice). This privacy notice tells you what information Children's Services collects and uses, and your rights regarding your information.

You can request a paper copy by contacting us on 0345 600 0981 (local rate).

We have been careful to make sure the information within this publication is accurate at the time of printing. However, we cannot rule out the need for changes before the start of the 2021/2022 school year. Any changes will be up-dated at [www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions).

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