

Admissions to Schools in Suffolk 2015/2016

Your guide on how and when
to apply for a school place



Introduction

This booklet provides information about applying for a primary, infant, junior, middle, upper or high school place in the 2015/2016 school year. It does not cover independent schools.

There are two Directories of Schools in Suffolk which include:

- Contact details for each school
- How places are offered
- The oversubscription criteria used to prioritise applications
- Information about home to school travel.

One directory is for primary, infant, junior and middle schools and one is for upper and high schools. These are available from:

The Admissions Team

Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP1 2BX

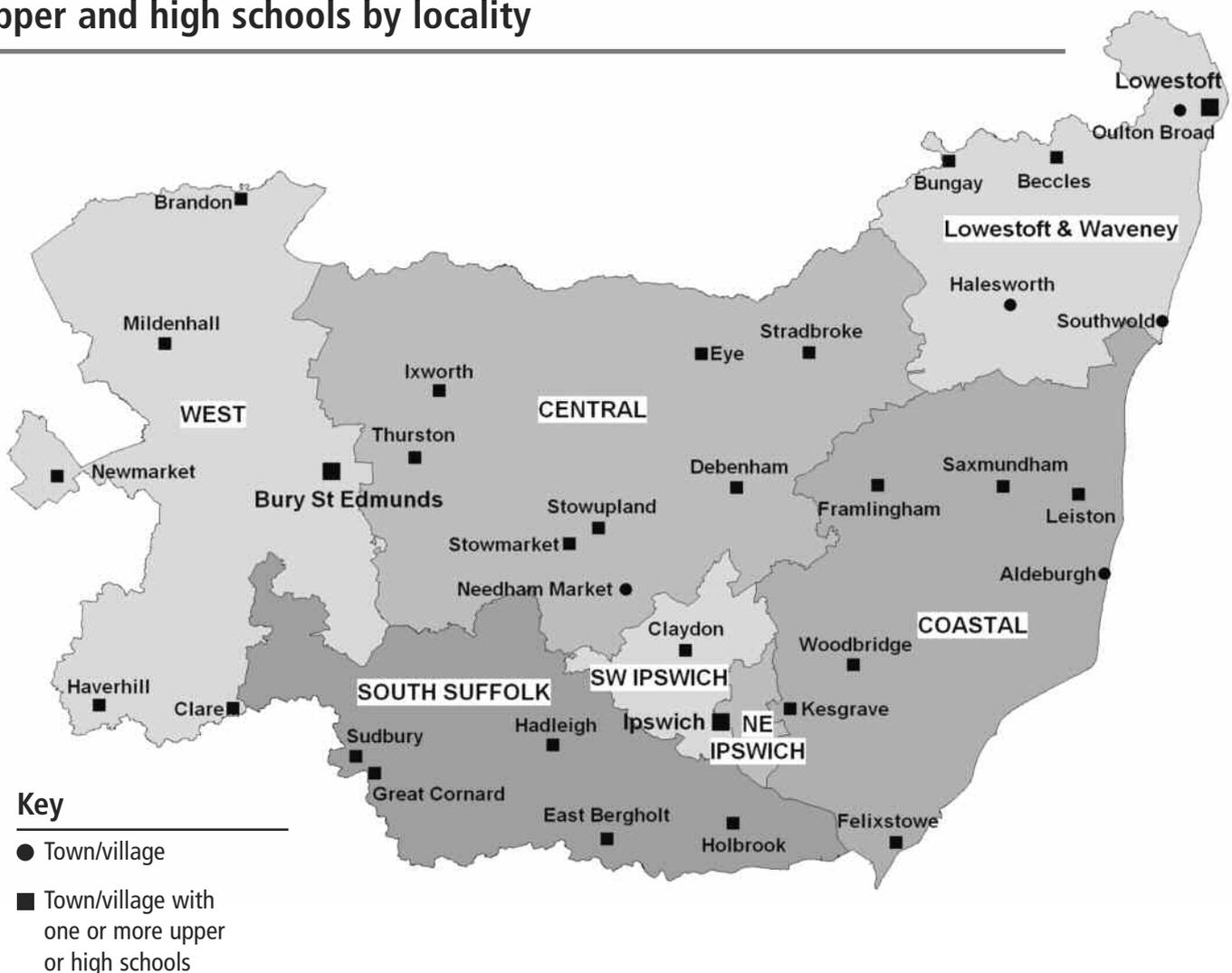
Phone: 0345 600 0981 (local rate)

Fax: 01473 260991

Email: admissions@suffolk.gov.uk

Online: www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissionstoschools.

Upper and high schools by locality



Key admission dates

It is very important that you apply by the closing date for the normal year of entry. Late applications will not normally be considered until after school places have been offered to those who applied on time.

We recommend you apply online at: www.suffolk.gov.uk/onlineadmissions.

Timetable for applications to the normal year of entry at upper and high schools in September 2015

Friday 12 September 2014	If you are a Suffolk resident you can apply online or fill in a CAF1 paper application form for a school place.
Friday 31 October 2014	Closing date for upper and high school applications for September 2015.
Tuesday 6 January 2015	If 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. For example, if you are moving house and we received written evidence that you are legally committed to your move, and that the move will take place before your child starts at the school.
Monday 2 March 2015	For on time applications, a letter will be posted to you with the offer of a school place. If you applied online we will also email you the offer of a school place.
After Monday 2 March 2015	We will consider all other late applications.
Friday 13 March 2015	We will assume that you have accepted the place offered, unless you let us know in writing by this date.

Timetable for applications to the normal year of entry at primary, infant, junior and middle schools in September 2015

Friday 12 September 2014	If you are a Suffolk resident you can apply online or fill in a CAF1 paper application form for a school place.
Thursday 15 January 2015	Closing date for primary, infant, junior and middle school applications for September 2015. You must apply for a primary school place even if your child is already attending a school nursery class or other pre-school provision.
Friday 13 February 2015	If 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. For example, if you are moving house and we received written evidence that you are legally committed to your move, and that the move will take place before your child starts at the school.
Thursday 16 April 2015	For on time applications, a letter will be posted to you with the offer of a school place. If you applied online we will also email you the offer of a school place.
After Thursday 16 April 2015	We will consider all other late applications.
Thursday 30 April 2015	We will assume that you have accepted the place offered, unless you let us know in writing by this date.

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Section 1

Introduction to schools in Suffolk

All schools in Suffolk are day schools for both boys and girls of all abilities.

How will schools be organised from September 2015?

The age range of pupils at schools varies, depending on which part of Suffolk they are in.

For the majority of Suffolk:

- Infant schools offer places for children aged 4 to 7 (year groups reception, 1 and 2)
- Junior schools offer places for children aged 7 to 11 (year groups 3-6)
- Primary schools offer places for children aged 4 to 11 (year groups reception and 1-6)
- High schools offer places for children aged 11 to 16 or 11 to 18 (year groups 7-11 or 7-13).

Information on schools in the Bury St Edmunds area can be found in section 2 on pages 9 and 10 (School Organisation Review).

School details are found in the separate Directories of Schools in Suffolk.

What are the different types of schools?

There are five types of schools in Suffolk, which are maintained by Suffolk County Council:

Community schools are owned and run by Suffolk County Council, we decide the admissions policy.

Foundation schools are run by the school governors. These are own admission authority schools and so the governors decide their school's admissions policy.

Trust schools are foundation schools which are supported by a charitable trust. They are own admission authority schools and so the school governors decide their school's admissions policy.

Voluntary controlled schools were originally provided by the Church of England and educational trusts. They have religious links but Suffolk County Council decides the policy for admissions.

Voluntary aided schools are run by the school governors in partnership with the Church of England or Roman Catholic Church. The governors decide how religious education is taught. These are own admission authority schools and so the governors decide the admissions policy.

In addition, Suffolk has academies and free schools:

Academies are publicly funded independent schools. They are outside of Suffolk County Council's control and run by governors/academy trusts. In academies the governors/academy trusts decide their admissions policy and they remain part of Suffolk County Council's co-ordinated admission arrangements for the normal year of entry. We anticipate that a number of schools will become academies during the school year.

Free schools are new academies established by proposers such as charities, universities, businesses, educational groups, teachers and groups of parents. They are outside of Suffolk County Council's control and run by governors/academy trusts. In free schools the governors/academy trusts decide their admissions policy. They are all part of Suffolk County Council's co-ordinated admissions arrangements for the normal year of entry. It is possible that further free schools may be established during the course of the year.

Co-ordinated admissions schemes for schools in Suffolk 2015/2016

The co-ordinated admissions schemes have been drawn up in order to ensure that all applications for the admission of statutory aged pupils to a maintained primary, infant, junior, middle, upper or high school in Suffolk are handled fairly, consistently and efficiently.

These schemes apply to all schools in Suffolk – community, voluntary controlled, voluntary aided, foundation/trust, academies and free schools. They give the details of the admissions process and the timetable for how applications are dealt with for the 2015/2016 school year. The schemes are available online at: www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissionstoschools. Alternatively a hard copy can be obtained on request from the Admissions Team (contact details on page 2 of this booklet).

Suffolk County Council must co-ordinate all applications to the normal year of entry at a school for children who live in Suffolk. We deal with applications for all types of schools, acting on behalf of the governors/academy trusts in the case of voluntary aided, foundation/trust, academies and free schools for the normal year of entry.

From September 2015, voluntary aided, foundation/trust, academies and free schools will deal directly with their in-year applications. Suffolk County Council will continue to deal with applications for community and voluntary controlled schools.

How do I know which schools are available in my area?

- There are two separate Directories of Schools in Suffolk which include school details and oversubscription criteria, one for primary, infant, junior and middle schools and one for upper and high schools.
- You can also use the national website www.direct.gov.uk to find out which schools are close to you.

How do I find out my catchment area school?

- Every school serves an area of streets or villages, but sometimes this is different for voluntary aided, academies and free schools.
- Catchment area maps are available online at: www.suffolk.gov.uk/catchmentmaps
- If you live near to a boundary line on the map please check your address against the catchment area parish/village and street lists for towns at: www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissionstoschools
- If you would like a copy of the map or list sent to you, or you are unsure of your catchment area please call the Admissions Team (contact details on page 2 of this booklet).

Do I have a choice of schools?

In Suffolk all parents and carers can express up to three preferences when applying for a school place in the normal year of entry. We will offer a place at the first preference school wherever possible. **We strongly advise parents/carers to apply for more than one school because we cannot guarantee school places, not even at a catchment area school.**

You may wish your child to go to your local school, which we call the catchment area school. This may not be the nearest school to your home address. We call other schools out-catchment schools.

If you prefer your child to go to an out-catchment school it is important that you read the home to school travel section on page 36 for more information before you apply for a school place.

You can, if you wish, apply for a school place outside Suffolk or, if you live in another county, for one of our schools in Suffolk. If you live in Suffolk you should still apply to Suffolk County Council for the normal year of entry. See section 3 on page 11 for further details.

How can I find out more about schools?

- As a first step, contact the schools you are interested in and ask for a free copy of their prospectus. The prospectus contains useful information about the school.
- Look at the school's own website, if it has one.
- There may be open evenings that you can go to. You will need to contact each school directly for details.
- Look at the latest Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) inspection report, which you can get from the Ofsted website at www.ofsted.gov.uk.
- You may also want to seek help from a school preference adviser, contact details can be found in section 6 on page 23.
- It is a good idea to arrange to visit any schools you are thinking about applying for before you make a decision. You can contact the school office to make an appointment. The headteacher will be happy to make arrangements to show you around and answer your questions.

First impressions can count when you visit a school but don't just rely on appearances. Bright, modern or recently decorated classrooms can give a good impression but what can you see of the work that the children do there? Is it well presented and up-

to-date, for example? You may have a number of questions you want to ask the headteacher or member of staff who shows you around the school such as:

- What is the atmosphere of the school like?
- How does the school teach reading, writing and maths?
- What have pupils achieved in their key stage assessments or public exams?
- What arrangements does the school have for helping children with special educational needs?
- Does the school offer music lessons, after-school sports and clubs or other extended school activities?

To help you judge whether or not your application for a school place in the normal year of entry might be successful, we have included in the **Directories of Schools in Suffolk** details of on time applications for the 2014/2015 school year. Please note that if you only apply for schools that have previously had more applications than places, there is a possibility that you will not be offered a place at any of them. You should also compare the 2014/2015 and 2015/2016 Published Admission Numbers (PAN). If the 2015/2016 number is lower, it could lead to a school having more applications than places available. In these circumstances, it is possible that some applications could be refused.

Section 2

School Organisation Review (SOR)

Schools in Suffolk are organised in two different ways. In most of Suffolk there is a two-tier system where children attend primary schools until they are 11 and then transfer to high schools. In the Bury St Edmunds area there is a three-tier system where children attend primary schools until they are nine, when they move to middle schools. They are at middle schools until they are 13 when they transfer to upper schools.

Over 95% of schools in England are organised into a two-tier system. There is evidence that children make better progress in the two-tier system. In common with most other local authorities which still have schools organised in three-tiers, Suffolk is reviewing this arrangement.

Timetable for the review

School reorganisation allows sufficient time to consult parents/carers, members of school staff, school governors and others about the proposed changes. Time must also be allowed to make changes to school buildings, train staff and prepare for the transfer of children to their new schools. The planned timetable for this process is as follows:

In August 2015, middle schools will close in the Stowmarket and Stowupland areas. Children attending these schools will be able to transfer into Year 7, Year 8 or Year 9 at upper and high schools. You will need to apply for a place for **September 2015 by Friday 31 October 2014**.

In the Bury St Edmunds area, King Edward VI CEVC Upper School and St Benedict's Catholic School will admit Year 9 students in September 2015. There will be no admission to Year 5 at St James CEVA, Hardwick, Howard and St Louis Catholic middle schools in September 2015. These middle schools will close in summer 2016 when all the pupils will transfer to the upper and high schools.

Year 5 places will be available at two of the Bury St Edmunds Academy Trust schools, Westley Middle and Horringer Court Middle. In addition to King Edward VI CEVC Upper School and St Benedict's Catholic School, there will be a new high school on the Moreton Hall estate which will be established for September 2016. Consultation on the admission arrangements for the new high school will take place during January and February 2015.

County Upper School which is part of the Bury St Edmunds Academy Trust is not intending to change its age range. A summary of the overall school provision in the Bury St Edmunds area is provided in the table on the next page.

How to find out more

If you would like to know more about how SOR will affect your child please email the SOR team at: sorbse@suffolk.gov.uk or telephone: 01284 758829.

List of schools	School	2015/2016 school year		2016/2017 school year	
		Age range	Published Admission Number (PAN)	Age range	Published Admission Number (PAN)
Bury Schools Partnership These schools will move to a two tier system	Abbots Green CP	3-10	60	3-11	60
	All Saints CEVCP, Lawshall	4-10	21	4-11	20
	Great Whelnetham CEVCP	4-10	20	4-11	20
	Guildhall Feoffment CP	4-10	50	4-11	45
	Hardwick Primary	4-10	45	4-11	45
	Howard CP	3-10	45	3-11	45
	Ickworth Park Primary	4-10	40	4-11	30
	Risby CEVCP	4-10	30	4-11	30
	Sebert Wood CP	3-10	60	3-11	60
	Sexton's Manor CP	3-10	30	3-11	30
	St Edmundsbury CEVAP	4-10	60	4-11	45
	Westgate CP	3-10	60	3-11	60
	Hardwick Middle	10-13	No intake	-	-
	Howard Middle	10-13	No intake	-	-
	St James CEVA Middle	10-13	No intake	-	-
	King Edward VI CEVC Upper	13-18	350	11-18	220
New High School	-	-	11-16	120	
Catholic Schools These schools will move to a two tier system	St Edmund's Catholic Primary	4-10	60	4-11	60
	St Louis Catholic Middle	10-13	No intake	-	-
	St Benedict's Catholic	11/13-18	60 Year 7 150 Year 9	11-18	150
Bury St Edmunds Academy Trust	County Upper School	13-18	260	13-18	260
	Horringer Court Middle	9-13	100	9-13	100
	Westley Middle	9-13	116	9-13	116
	Barrow CEVCP	4-9	30	4-9	30
	Tollgate Primary	4-9	60	4-9	60

Section 3

Applying for a school place

Applications for the normal year of entry to a school

When can my child start school full-time at a Suffolk infant or primary school?

All children can attend school full-time in the reception year group in the September following their fourth birthday.

We anticipate that most parents or carers will accept this full-time offer. However, children do not have to go to school full-time until the term after their fifth birthday if their parents or carers do not want them to, as this is the compulsory school age. Whatever you decide, it is important that you apply for an infant or primary school place by the closing date.

When do I need to apply for a full-time school place at an infant or primary school?

You must apply for a school place if your child will be five between 1 September 2015 and 31 August 2016. This means they will have been born between 1 September 2010 and 31 August 2011.

Important

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.

You must make an application, even if you want a place at the catchment area school.

Applications must be received by Thursday 15 January 2015 for primary and infant school applications for September 2015.

Does my child have to start school full-time in the September following their fourth birthday?

When you receive the offer of a school place, you will be asked to inform the school whether you wish to take up the place full-time, part-time, or whether you wish to defer entry.

You are able to ask the school, if you wish to defer your child's full-time admission until the beginning of the term after his or her fifth birthday at the latest.

Please note that if your child was born between April and August and you have already been offered a place in a school but then wish to delay your child starting until the following September, the place will be withdrawn and you must re-apply for a place on an in-year application form (CAF2 or ADM1) for Year 1. This is because September is the start of a different academic year. You should be aware that there may no longer be a place available. If it can be offered your child would normally move straight into Year 1 of the school rather than into the Reception Year. Before making this decision we strongly recommend that you seek advice from the Admissions Team in order to check the availability of places at the school for entry into Year 1. Further information can be found on page 20.

If you do not advise the school when you intend to take up the place, or you advise the school when you intend to take up the place but then do not do so, the place may be withdrawn and may be reallocated. If you need to delay your child's admission for a good reason you must let us know before the term begins.

More information about early education is available in section 9 on page 28 of this booklet.

When do I need to apply for a place at a junior or middle school?

If you live in Suffolk and your child is in their final year at a Suffolk infant or primary school, you will be sent a letter and an application form for the normal year of entry (CAF1) in the September before it is time to move schools. The letter will tell you:

- How to apply for a school place
- Your child's Unique Identifier (UID), if available, which will help you if you apply online.

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 so are unable to send you a letter. You will need to apply as set out below.

You must make an application, even if you want a place at the catchment area school.

Applications must be received by Thursday 15 January 2015 for junior and middle school applications for September 2015.

When do I need to apply for a school place at upper or high school?

If you live in Suffolk and your child is in their final year at a primary school for 4 to 11 year-olds or a junior or middle school in Suffolk, you will be sent a letter and an application form for the normal year of entry (CAF1) in the September before it is time to move schools. The letter will tell you:

- How to apply for a school place
- Your child's Unique Identifier (UID), if available, which will help you if you apply online.

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 so are unable to send you a letter. You will need to apply as set out below.

You must make an application, even if you want a place at the catchment area school.

Applications must be received by Friday 31 October 2014 for upper and high school applications for September 2015.

How do I apply for a school place in the normal year of entry at a primary, infant, junior, middle, upper or high school?

You can apply for a school place:

- Online (**we recommend you apply online for a school place as you will receive an automatic acknowledgement of your application**) see page 13
- By filling in the application form for the normal year of entry (CAF1) on page 49 of this booklet
- By downloading and filling in a CAF1 from www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissionstoschools
- By filling in a CAF1 from your local school or the Admissions Team (contact details on page 2 of this booklet).

If you have filled in a CAF1, send it to the Admissions Team by the closing dates below. You should not send it directly to a school. Contact details are on the CAF1 and on page 2 of this booklet.

We do not acknowledge receipt of paper applications and strongly suggest that you get proof of postage. The Admissions Team is not responsible for forms lost in the post.

If one of your preferences is for a voluntary aided, academy or free school you may also need to fill in a Supplementary Information Form (SIF) and return it to the school. More information about how places are offered can be found in the **Directories of Schools in Suffolk**.

Please note that the SIF is not an application form. It is used to provide extra information to help the school apply their admissions oversubscription criteria in order to rank your application. It is important to make sure that the school receives a SIF, if they have one, as without it your application for a school place may be considered after all other applications with a SIF. This means your child may not get a place at the school.

If you need a SIF you can:

- Download one from: www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissionstoschools
- Contact the school
- Contact the Admissions Team (contact details on page 2 of this booklet).

The SIF should be sent directly to the school.

Applications to upper and high schools for September 2015 must be received by Friday 31 October 2014.

Applications to primary, infant, junior and middle schools for September 2015 must be received by Thursday 15 January 2015.

If you make an online application please do not send in a duplicate CAF1.

If you make a second application because you want to change your preferences before the closing date, the last application received by the closing date will be taken as your final decision.

Please see the Directories of Schools in Suffolk for school details, oversubscription criteria and how we offer school places.

There is an application checklist to help you in section 4 on page 21.

We will check allegations of false addresses or other false information given on the CAF1 or SIF and will withdraw offers of places if we find that details were deliberately false or misleading.

You need to think about how you are going to get your child to school when making your application – please read section 12 on page 36 for information about home to school travel.

Please note that we cannot guarantee a place for your child at your catchment area school. We recommend that you apply for more than one school because of this. It is important to note that if you apply for your catchment area school as your first preference and we cannot meet your request, we would only provide home to school travel to another preferred school, if it is in your Transport Priority Area (TPA) or is the nearest suitable school to your home address with places available, taking into consideration the availability and cost of home to school travel, and your child is either:

- Aged under eight and lives two miles or more from the school, or
- Eight or over and lives at least three miles from the school.

Please note: the ages are taken at 1 September in each school year. If your child receives free home to school travel and is under eight years of age and lives more than two miles but less than three miles from the school allocated, transport will end at the end of the school year following their eighth birthday.

More information about home to school travel is on page 36.

How do I apply online for a school place in the normal year of entry 2015/2016?

You can apply online from 12 September 2014 at: www.suffolk.gov.uk/onlineadmissions.

Closing dates:

- Applications to upper and high schools for September 2015 must be completed and submitted **by midnight on Friday 31 October 2014**
- Applications to primary, infant, junior and middle schools for September 2015 must be completed and submitted **by midnight on Thursday 15 January 2015.**

Please see the **Directories of Schools in Suffolk** for school details, oversubscription criteria and how we offer school places. This is available online at: www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissionstoschools.

There are many benefits to applying online for a school place:

- It is safe and secure
- You will get an email confirmation that your application has been received
- There is no risk that your application will get lost in the post
- You can apply or change the details on your application on any day of the week. You must have completed and submitted your application by midnight on the closing date. Please allow sufficient time to register and complete your application if you are applying on the evening of the closing date.
- The system has a series of security procedures, which will prevent anyone seeing information they are not entitled to see.
- We will email you the offer of a school place on the offer date instead of waiting for a letter in the post
- If you do not have internet access at home you can use a computer at any Suffolk library.

How to apply

At the start of the online admissions process you will be asked to register and set up a password to allow access. If you have previously applied online you will have to register again to make an application.

If you live in Suffolk and your child is already at a Suffolk school you should have been sent a letter with a Unique Identifier (UID). This is helpful when you apply online (when you use it the computer fills in your child's details for you) but you can still apply online without one. If your details are incorrect please contact your child's current school.

Please take particular care to fill in all of the fields correctly because failure to do so may affect how your application is ranked.

In some circumstances, we need evidence to support your application. This would include:

- An adoption order, residence order or special guardianship order for a child who was previously looked after, immediately following having been looked after.
- A letter from a priest or minister to support an application based on religious grounds for a voluntary controlled school
- If you are planning to move house and you want your future address to be the one used to allocate a school place, you must give us written evidence that you are legally committed to the move and that it will take place before your child is due to start at the school you have applied for. This could be proof of exchange of contracts, a signed letting/tenancy agreement confirming your new address, an assignment order that declares a relocation date and a unit postal address or quartering area address for a service child, or, for returning UK Service/Crown Servant families proof of the posting. If you are unable to provide evidence of your move by the closing date, we will still be able to use your new address to rank your application if we receive sufficient evidence by **Tuesday 6 January 2015 for upper and high school applications or by Friday 13 February 2015 for primary, infant, junior and middle school applications.**

Unfortunately, you are unable to attach evidence to your online application. Therefore you will need to either email or post evidence to the Admissions Team (contact details on page 2) by the closing date. If you send information through the post we strongly suggest you get proof of posting.

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 CAF1 paper application which should include all of your preferences. We regret you will be unable to apply online.

If you need any help or have any questions about the online admissions process you can call: 0345 600 0981 (local rate) or email: admissions@suffolk.gov.uk.

You should keep the following information so you can check or change your online application at any time until the closing date. If you make any changes you will have to re-submit your application.

If your contact details change before the closing date you will need to update your registration details and your child's application in the case of an address change.

If your contact details change after the closing date you will need to update your registration details and email us separately with the changes. This is because you are unable to update your child's online application after the closing date. You do not need to let us know if you change your email address.

Unique Identifier (UID)	Email address
Password	

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

What happens if I send in my application after the closing date?

Sometimes there are good reasons why an application is made after the closing date. For example, a family may have just moved into the area or are returning from abroad, or there may be very exceptional reasons, which have made it impossible to apply by the closing date. We will deal with these applications as if they were on time if we get them by **Tuesday 6 January 2015 for upper and high school applications and Friday 13 February 2015 for primary, infant, junior and middle school**

applications, as long as we are provided with written evidence at the same time and we agree that exceptional reasons apply. If you do not provide written evidence with your application it will be processed as a late application.

Otherwise, if we get your application after the closing date, it will be considered after we have offered school places for the applications we received on time. **This will be after Monday 2 March 2015 for upper and high school applications and after Thursday 16 April 2015 for primary, infant, junior and middle school applications.** Please be aware it may be several weeks before you receive an offer of a school place. If the school you have applied for is very popular, this could mean all the places have been offered already. If so, we will try to meet your second or third preference, or we will offer you a place at your catchment area school if a place is available. If there are no places available at your preferred schools or in your catchment area school we will offer you a place at the nearest suitable school that has places available. This will take into consideration the availability and cost of home to school travel. We will use the admissions oversubscription criteria which can be found in the **Directories of Schools in Suffolk.**

What will happen if I don't make an application?

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 group at a primary or infant school we are unable to allocate a place. You must make an application as set out on page 12.

If you do not make an application for a place at a junior, middle, upper or high school, then we will normally decide where to offer your child a school place after we have looked at all other applications. This will be in the catchment area school, if there is still a place available there or at the nearest suitable school which has a place available. This will take into consideration the availability and cost of home to school travel.

Applications for school places at other times (in-year applications)

Sometimes parents or carers apply for their child to go to a new school during the school year, or at the start of the school year but in a different age group from the school's normal entry year. We call these in-year applications.

If you are not moving house but want your child to go to another school, we strongly recommend that you give this very serious consideration as it might not be in your child's best interests to go to another school. We urge you to first discuss this with the headteacher of your child's current school and to make any such change at the beginning of a school year or term so that your child's education is disrupted as little as possible.

You need to think about how you are going to get your child to school when making your application – please read section 12 on page 36 for information about home to school travel.

There is an application checklist to help you in section 4 on page 21.

Making an in-year application depends on which school or schools you want to apply for.

Suffolk County Council deals with in-year applications for community and voluntary controlled schools.

From September 2015, voluntary aided, foundation/trust, academies and free schools will deal directly with their in-year applications.

Community and voluntary controlled schools

How do I make an in-year application?

You can apply for a place at a community or voluntary controlled school by:

- Filling in an in-year application form (CAF2) on page 53 of this booklet
- Downloading and filling in a CAF2 from: www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissionstoschools
- Filling in a CAF2 from the Admissions Team.

Please note:

- You cannot apply online for an in-year school place
- If you have filled in a CAF2, send it to the Admissions Team. The contact details are on page 2 of this booklet.

You can apply for up to three schools on the CAF2 in order of preference, naming the school you most want your child to go to

as the first preference. Please do not use this application form to apply for voluntary aided, foundation/trust, academies and free schools.

Please see the Directories of Schools in Suffolk for school details, oversubscription criteria and how we offer school places.

We do not acknowledge receipt of paper applications and strongly suggest that you get proof of postage. The Admissions Team is not responsible for forms lost in the post.

We will check allegations of false addresses or other false information given on the CAF2 and will withdraw offers of places if we find that details were deliberately false or misleading.

When will my in-year application be considered?

The Admissions Team aims to process your application within 10 school days of receiving it. It may take slightly longer to process the application at busy times.

Please note we will not normally consider your application more than one term ahead of the date when you want your child to start at the school. However, if your child is in the final year of his or her current school, we will consider your application in line with the timetable for the normal year of entry on page 3.

How will you deal with my in-year application?

Your application will be considered and we will let you know whether a place at the school can be offered. If there are more applications than places available, the admissions oversubscription criteria in the **Directories of Schools in Suffolk** will be used to see who can and cannot be offered a place.

More information about how places are offered can be found in the Directories of Schools in Suffolk.

We will let you know how to appeal against the refusal of a place at your preferred schools.

Suffolk County Council does not hold waiting lists for in-year applicants.

If a place becomes available in a year group that has been full we will consider all new applications, any that have been refused in the last 15 school days and any applicants for whom an appeal has been lodged and is still to be heard.

If you are offered a place at one of your preferred schools and it is not your catchment area school, you will usually have to get your child to and from school and pay for any home to school travel needed. Please read the information on home to school travel in section 12 on page 36.

You should also be aware that a place may not be available at that school for a younger sibling in the future or at a particular school at later stages of transfer.

If your child does not have a local school place and you make an application just before or during a school holiday we cannot guarantee that your child will be able to start at their new school immediately after the holiday.

If your child already has a place in a local mainstream school, we will normally offer a place from the beginning of the next half term. The school may admit your child before this date. If an application is made during a school holiday we will offer a school place to begin after the following half term, unless exceptional circumstances apply. This is to make sure schools have time to plan a smooth transition for your child. Your child will need to attend their current school until they take up the place at the school which has been offered.

Once a place has been made available for your child you must take up that place by the date given in your offer letter. The school will put your child on roll by this date. If you fail to take up the place it will be withdrawn and may be reallocated.

Voluntary aided, foundation/trust, academies and free schools

How do I make an in-year application?

If you are applying for a voluntary aided, foundation/trust, academy or free school, you should contact the school directly for details on how to apply. Alternatively you can apply for a place by:

- Filling in the own admission authority application form (ADM1) on page 57 of this booklet

- Downloading and filling in an ADM1 from: www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissionstoschools
- Filling in an ADM1 from the Admissions Team (contact details for the Admissions Team on page 2 of this booklet).

If you have filled in an ADM1, send it directly to the school you are applying for.

For voluntary aided schools and some academies and free schools you should also fill in the Supplementary Information Form (SIF) and return it to the school. More information about how places are offered and contact details can be found in the **Directories of Schools in Suffolk**.

Please note that the SIF is not an application form. It is used to provide extra information to help the school apply their admissions oversubscription criteria in order to rank your application. It is important to make sure that the school receives a SIF, if they have one, as without it your application for a school place may be considered after all other applications with a SIF. This means your child may not get a place at the school.

If you need a SIF you can:

- Download one from: www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissionstoschools
- Contact the school
- Contact the Admissions Team (contact details on page 2 of this booklet).

The SIF should be sent directly to the school you are applying for.

When will my in-year application be considered?

You will need to speak to the school or refer to the school's own website to find out when your application will be considered. Contact details for all schools are in the **Directories of Schools in Suffolk**.

How will the voluntary aided, foundation/trust, academy or free school deal with my in-year application?

The governing body/academy trust will consider your application and let you know whether they can offer your child a place at the school. They will write to let you know their decision.

If there are more applications than places available, they will use their admissions oversubscription criteria to see who can and cannot be offered a place.

More information about how places are offered can be found in the Directories of Schools in Suffolk.

The school must let Suffolk County Council know you have applied for a place and the outcome of the application. If the school is unable to offer a place you should contact the Admissions Team (contact details on page 2) to see which schools have places available.

You are able to make an application for a school at any time of the year, even if the year group is full. The school will let you know how to appeal against the refusal of a place if required.

Some schools hold waiting lists throughout the year for all year groups. This information is available from the schools directly.

If you are offered a place at your preferred school and it is not your catchment area school, you will usually have to get your child to and from school and pay for any home to school travel needed. Please read the information on home to school travel in section 12 on page 36.

Once a place has been made available for your child you must take up that place by the date given in your offer letter. The school will put your child on roll by this date. If you fail to take up the place it may be withdrawn and may be reallocated.

Essential information about applying for a school place

How do I apply if my child has a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC plan)?

If your child's needs can be met in a mainstream school, you should apply for a school place on the CAF1 by the closing date for the normal year of entry or on the CAF2 or ADM1 for in-year applications. If you would like to discuss the options, please speak to the special educational needs co-ordinator at your child's current school, or if your child is starting school please contact the

Suffolk Families Information Service on 0345 60 800 33. You may also contact the schools preference adviser; see section 6 on page 23 for more information.

We would normally expect any primary, infant, junior, middle, upper or high school to be able to meet a child's special educational needs when a mainstream place is required.

My child is currently undergoing an Education, Health and Care needs assessment which will not be completed before the closing date for making an application. What should I do?

You should apply by the closing date for the normal year of entry to a school. You will have the opportunity to discuss your child's needs during the assessment process.

What should I do if I am looking after someone else's child?

If you are caring for someone else's child for more than 28 days, you do not have parental responsibility for them and 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) or step-parent, you may be private fostering. It is a legal requirement that you contact Suffolk County Council on: 0808 800 4005 or email: customer.first@suffolk.gov.uk.

What happens if I move house when applying for a school place in the normal year of entry to a school?

If you are moving to a new address and want that address to be considered as your child's 'ordinarily resident' address, you must give us written evidence by the closing date that you are legally committed to the move and that it will take place before your child is due to start at the school you have applied for. Examples of this evidence could be proof of exchange of contracts, a signed letting/tenancy agreement confirming your new address, an assignment order that declares a relocation date and a unit postal address or quartering area address for a service child, or, for returning UK Service/Crown Servant families, proof of the posting. Please contact the Admissions Team for more details.

If you are planning to move house it is still important that you make an application by the closing date. If your new address cannot be confirmed by the closing date, you should apply using your current address. You will be able to make a further application when your moving arrangements are confirmed, and as long as we receive written evidence that you are legally committed to your move by **Tuesday 6 January 2015 for upper and high school applications and Friday 13 February 2015 for primary, infant, junior and middle school applications**, we will use your new address to allocate a school place.

If you do not provide sufficient evidence of your house move by these dates we will use your child's address as at the closing date 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 and so are unable to provide exchange of contracts or a signed tenancy agreement, you must explain this to us in writing and we will require evidence to support this at the time of application. Please contact the Admissions Team for further advice (see contact details on page 2).

Before your child takes up a place at their new school, you must provide us with evidence to confirm your new address. This could be, for example, a copy of a personal bill such as mobile phone, salary or wage slip, DVLA registration or driving licence, or correspondence from HM Revenue and Customs. There is no need to include financial information in any evidence you send us.

If you make a catchment area application, then move out of the catchment area before the closing date and still want the same school, you must let us know, as your application will then have to be dealt with as an out-catchment application.

If we find out that you have moved house before the closing date but had not informed us, and your change of address would have affected your application for a school place, we are entitled to withdraw the offer of a school place.

If you have made an application for your catchment area school by the closing date and then move out of the catchment area after the closing date, your application will still be considered as a catchment area application. If you accept the offer of this place you will usually have to get your child to and from school and pay for any home to school travel needed. Please read the home to school travel information in section 12 on page 36 for more information.

My child lives at two addresses – which one will you consider?

Where a child lives with separated parents who have shared responsibility, 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). Both parents must provide evidence in writing to confirm the child's living arrangements at the time of the application.

In cases where the child spends an equal proportion of the school week with both parents, evidence of the main contact address will be required to support the application. Both parents must agree in writing 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 your application, we may not be able to deal with your application and you may need to seek independent legal advice in order to resolve the matter.

If I live in Suffolk, how do I apply for a school outside of Suffolk in the normal year of entry?

If one or more of your preferences for the normal year of entry is for a school that is not in Suffolk, you must include it on your Suffolk online application or CAF1. You should not fill in a separate application form for another council. Suffolk County Council will liaise with the council in which your preferred school is situated and will write to let you know the decision of that council.

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

- Put the school as a preference on your online application or CAF1 and return the CAF1 to the Admissions Team
- Contact the Consortium of Selective Schools in Essex (CSSE) on: 01245 348257 or at: www.csse.org.uk without delay.

How do I apply for a school outside of Suffolk at any other time (in-year applications)?

If you would like to make an in-year application for a school outside of Suffolk, you need to contact the relevant school or local authority where the school is located for advice on how to apply.

How do I apply for a place in a Suffolk school when I live outside of Suffolk or am moving to Suffolk?

If you wish to apply for a school place in Suffolk in the normal year of entry and you do not live in Suffolk, you should contact the local authority where you live for information on how to apply. If your home council allows you to express more than three preferences, we will consider them all by reference to the admissions oversubscription criteria, not the ranking of the preference.

If you wish to make an in-year application you need to complete a CAF2 or ADM1. Please see page 15 for details. If your child is resident in the UK we can offer a school place before you have moved into Suffolk. This may not be the case if the school you are applying for is full, written evidence that you are legally committed to the move may be required. This could be a solicitor's letter confirming exchange of contracts, a signed letting/tenancy agreement or an assignment order confirming your new address or, for returning UK Service/Crown Servant families, proof of the posting. If your child is not yet resident in the UK please see page 20.

If you are applying for the normal year of entry to a school, please refer to the contact details for applications for our neighbouring county councils, below. The national closing dates for applications are: **31 October 2014** for high school applications and **15 January 2015** for primary school applications.

<p>Cambridgeshire County Council</p> <hr/> <p>Admissions Team, Box No. CC1206, Castle Court, Castle Hill, Cambridge, CB3 0AP</p> <p>Phone: 0345 045 1370</p> <p>Email: admissions@cambridgeshire.gov.uk</p> <p>Website: www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/admissions</p>	<p>Essex County Council</p> <hr/> <p>School Admissions, P.O. Box 4261, Chelmsford, CM1 1GS</p> <p>Phone: 0845 603 2200</p> <p>Email: admissions@essex.gov.uk</p> <p>Website: www.essex.gov.uk/admissions</p>	<p>Norfolk County Council</p> <hr/> <p>Admissions, Room 7, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2DH</p> <p>Phone: 0344 800 8020</p> <p>Email: admissions@norfolk.gov.uk</p> <p>Website: www.norfolk.gov.uk/schooladmissions</p>
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What happens if I am part of the UK Service personnel (UK Armed Forces) or a Crown Servant returning from overseas?

If you are a family of service personnel with a confirmed posting to Suffolk, or Crown Servants returning from overseas to live in Suffolk, we will allocate a place in advance of you arriving in the area. This is provided the application is accompanied by an assignment order that declares a relocation date and a unit postal address or quartering area address for a service child, or, for UK Service/Crown Servant families, proof of the posting.

How do I apply for a school place from outside the UK?

If your child is not yet resident in the UK, you can apply for a school place, provided that your child is either:

- A British Citizen
- A Citizen of the European Economic Area (EEA), which comprises the Member States of the European Union together with Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland and Iceland
- Accompanying you as a member of the United States Air Force.

If your child is accompanying you on a teacher exchange scheme the local authority has a duty to find a school place once we are notified that you are resident in the area.

We will require a copy of the child's current passport as evidence of citizenship, or a copy of the documentation confirming your placement. We may also require evidence of your new address in Suffolk.

If your child does not fall into any of the above categories, then you should not make an application for a school place until your child has arrived in the UK.

How can I apply for an early full-time place or a place in a different age group?

All schools are experienced in educating and caring for children with different abilities, social and emotional needs and will be able to provide a suitable education. It is expected, therefore, that children will normally be educated within their chronological year group.

Applications for children to be admitted to a school earlier or later than normal, to stay longer with a younger year group or to be taught ahead will be considered carefully and the decision will be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and evidence provided. This may apply when a parent wishes to delay their summer born (April to August) child entry to full-time education in the reception year group until the following school year.

If you are thinking about an early or delayed admission or transfer to a school for your child, you should contact the Admissions Team by the end of the autumn term in the year before the usual transfer year group for advice. The Admissions Team will write to you to confirm the decision and the next steps to take. However, if you make a later request we would advise you to apply for your child's chronological year group in the normal year of entry to the school if your request is still under consideration.

Section 4

Application checklist

Please see the **Directories of Schools in Suffolk** for oversubscription criteria and how we offer school places.

We urge you to apply online for a school place in the normal year of entry as you will receive an automatic acknowledgement of your application. You will also receive the outcome by email on the offer day.

Check your application carefully to make sure you have:

- Ticked the box if your child is a looked after child (child in care) or previously looked after child (who ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order, immediately following having been looked after).
- Ticked the box if your child has a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC plan)
- Named your preferred schools and given reasons for your preferences if you want to
- Written the names and dates of birth of any siblings at your preferred schools. Failure to provide this information on your application may affect the offer of a school place. Please refer to the individual policies and definitions of your preferred schools to clarify the meaning of sibling and when this criterion may apply. Definitions of siblings for all community and voluntary controlled schools can be found in the **Directories of Schools in Suffolk**.
- Ticked the box if you are applying for a Church of England voluntary controlled school for religious reasons, and have sent a letter from a priest or minister which states that you and/or your child is a practising member of the Church of England and that you and/or your child go to church regularly, that is to say, at least once a month.
- Ticked the box if you are applying for a voluntary aided school/academy or free school and have sent your Supplementary Information Form (SIF) to the school direct.
- Attached evidence of a legally binding commitment to a house move if you want a future address to be considered. Please refer to page 18.
- Attached evidence of your child's living arrangements if he or she lives at two addresses. Please refer to page 18.
- **If you are using a paper CAF1 or CAF2, sign and date it.**

Keep a record of the schools you have expressed a preference for on your application.

School 1

School 2

School 3

For the normal year of entry you must submit your online application or return the CAF1 to the Admissions Team by the closing date of **Friday 31 October 2014 for upper and high school applications or Thursday 15 January 2015 for primary, infant, junior and middle school applications for September 2015.**

Section 5

Fair access protocol

Suffolk County Council has a fair access protocol to ensure that access to education is secured quickly for children who have no school place. The aim of the protocol is to encourage close co-operation between schools, when allocating places for pupils who are 'hard to place' that balances the needs of parents/carers, children and 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 to admit a child on the basis of their or their parents' disability, special educational need or medical condition.
- Refuse a place when the year group is not full.

The fair access protocol is published online at: www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissionstoschools.

Children with challenging behaviour and managed moves protocol

Some children who have been permanently excluded or have a recent history of challenging behaviour may be admitted to a school above the Published Admission Number in accordance with an agreed protocol. We have a managed moves scheme for the transfer of pupils at risk of exclusion and the placement of permanently excluded pupils, which has the agreement of all schools in Suffolk. For more details look at the fair access protocol online at: www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissionstoschools.

Looked after children (children in care)

The School Admissions Code requires that looked after children (children in care) and previously looked after children (children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a residence 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 have been identified as a particularly vulnerable group.

The Admissions Team, in partnership with social workers and the Looked After Children Education Support Service, will work with colleagues in schools to ensure that looked after children can be admitted to the appropriate school outside of the normal admissions round and, where necessary, above the Published Admission Number for the school. Whilst the School Admissions Code allows the authority to direct a maintained school to admit a looked after child and to ask the Secretary of State to intervene in the case of academies, all efforts to negotiate a suitable admission within an appropriate timescale will be exhausted before a decision about direction is made.

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.

Section 6

School Preference Advice Service

School preference advisers are available during term time to help you find out about schools in Suffolk, how to make an application or how to appeal for a school place. Their aim is to help you make informed and realistic decisions about which schools to apply for to best meet your child's needs.

The service advises parents/carers but does not make decisions for them. School preference advisers are managed by the Parent Partnership Service and act independently of the local authority.

The service provides key information about schools for parents and carers. Some examples of the information that you will be able to discuss with an adviser are:

- How the admissions system works, including online applications
- Admissions policies for different types of schools
- Admissions oversubscription criteria
- Information about the admissions appeals process
- School Ofsted reports, performance and value-added data
- The range of relevant professionals, specialists and organisations available to support children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- Time of the school day and term dates
- Home to school travel details
- How to access information about the school's Local Offer.

You can contact an adviser through the parent partnership helpline on: 01473 265210 or by email at: parent.partnership@suffolk.gov.uk.

Further details can be found on the parent partnership website at: www.suffolk.gov.uk/parentpartnership.

Parent Partnership Service

The Parent Partnership Service aims to promote effective partnerships between parents or carers of children with special educational needs, schools and Suffolk County Council.

The service provides impartial information, advice and support for you if your child has special educational needs to help you to play an active and informed role in your children's education, enabling you to make decisions with confidence.

Parent partnership staff and volunteers can support you from the time that your child's needs are first identified, and they will work with you whatever your child's age or special educational need. The service is available to parents/carers of children attending Suffolk County Council maintained schools, foundation/trust, academies and free schools.

The service also works with schools and Suffolk County Council to increase awareness of parental perspectives and encourage schools and parents/carers to work together more effectively.

The Parent Partnership Service includes:

- Support for parents and carers from an independent parental supporter
- Information sessions and support groups for parents and carers
- Training for volunteers, professional staff and school governors
- Help with educational reports and paperwork
- Consultation and focus group work with parents and carers
- A telephone helpline: 01473 265210
- Local drop-in sessions
- Access to independent mediation service.

For further details of the service call: 01473 260026 or email: parent.partnership@suffolk.gov.uk or visit: www.suffolk.gov.uk/parentpartnership or www.parentpartnership.org.uk.

Section 7

How we offer school places

Community and voluntary controlled schools

We offer a set number of places in any one year. This number is known as the Published Admission Number (PAN), which is based on a national formula for deciding how many children can go to a school, without causing overcrowding. Infant classes must not have more than 30 pupils with a single qualified teacher.

Although the PAN applies to the year of entry we would normally apply this number across all year groups in the school. However, there may be occasions for other year groups where it is not possible to do so. This could be, for example, when it would result in a single qualified teacher having more than 30 pupils in an infant class.

If the number of applicants is less than the PAN all applicants will be admitted. For any preferred schools, there may be more applications for that school than there are places available. If the number of applications for a school is greater than its PAN, we use our admissions oversubscription criteria to decide who gets a place.

Voluntary aided, foundation/trust, academies and free schools

The governing bodies/academy trusts rank the application according to their oversubscription criteria. For the normal year of entry, Suffolk County Council co-ordinates all applications for children who live in Suffolk and will write directly to you on behalf of the governing body/academy trust.

For in-year applications the governing body/academy trust will decide if a place can be offered in the relevant year group. They will write to let you know their decision. The school must let Suffolk County Council know you have applied for a place and the outcome of the application. If the school is unable to offer a place you should contact the Admissions Team (contact details on page 2) to see which schools have places available.

The admissions oversubscription criteria for schools are set out in the Directories of Schools in Suffolk. There are two directories, one for primary, infant, junior and middle schools and one for upper and high schools.

The wording in the **Directories of Schools in Suffolk** may be a summary of the full admission policy and therefore you must refer to the school's own full admissions policy which sets out how places will be prioritised. You can get a copy of the full policy from the school or online at: www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissionstoschools.

If you are applying for a place at a voluntary aided, foundation/trust, academy or free school you may also need to complete a Supplementary Information Form (SIF) and send it directly to the school.

Waiting lists

If you apply for a school place in the normal year of entry and one or more of your preferences are refused, your child's name will automatically be placed on a waiting list for these schools.

Names are placed on the waiting list in the priority order with reference to the school's admissions oversubscription criteria. For further information refer to the relevant **Directories of Schools in Suffolk**.

The order of children does not remain static – as circumstances change, a child's place on the waiting list can go up or down, for example, due to withdrawals or additional 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, particularly if you move into or out of the school's catchment area. 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 you have been refused a place at. See section 8 about making an appeal.

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, we will offer it to children on the waiting list for that school in priority order. We do not offer places on the basis of the date on which names were placed on the list.

The waiting lists will cease to operate at the end of the first full week of the spring term (Friday 8 January 2016).

Suffolk County Council does not hold waiting lists for in-year applicants. Some voluntary-aided, foundation/trust, academies and free schools may hold waiting lists throughout the year for all year groups. This information is available from the schools directly.

Making another application for a place at the same school

A parent/carer can apply for a place for their child at any time to any school outside of the normal admissions round. However, if your application for a school place is refused, we will not determine a further application for a place in the same school in the same school year, unless there has been a significant change in the circumstances of the parent/carer, child or school. Such circumstances might be a house move or a place becoming available at the 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.

Section 8

How to make an appeal

You have the right of appeal for places at all schools for which you have applied and been refused a place.

If you have been refused a school place for your child at your preferred school you will receive a letter that will offer you the right of appeal. The letter will include information with a link to an appeal application form and the Guide to School Admission Appeals. You must fill in a separate form for each school you wish to appeal for.

The appeal process and its administration are independent of the admission authority, the school and its governing body. The independent appeal panel has no previous knowledge of your child's case, nor has it had any contact with the school, governing body or admission authority. They will make a decision based only on the evidence presented to them.

If you are appealing for a Suffolk school, please return the appeal application form directly to the Education Appeals Office, PO Box 579, Ipswich, IP1 2BX marked Private and Confidential. We advise you to get proof of postage. The Education Appeals Office is not responsible for forms that are lost in the post.

Is there a deadline to appeal by?

If you are planning to appeal it is very important that your appeal application form is received in good time by the Education Appeals Office. The key dates are set out below:

Applications received on time for admission to the normal year of entry for an upper or high school

If you applied on time and wish to appeal, you should send your appeal application form to the Education Appeals Office by **Monday 13 April 2015**. Appeals received on or before this date will be heard within 40 school days.

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.

Applications received on time for admission to the normal year of entry for a primary, infant, junior or middle school

If you applied on time and wish to appeal, you should send your appeal application form to the Education Appeals Office by **Friday 15 May 2015**. Appeals received on or before this date will be heard within 40 school days.

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.

In-year appeals

If your application is refused for an in-year admission or for the normal year of entry and it is submitted on or after the first day of the autumn term, your appeal will be heard within 30 school days of the form being received by us.

Sixth form appeals

Where the offer of a place would have been conditional upon exam results, appeal applications must be received by **Wednesday 30 September 2015** and heard within 30 school days.

Where the offer of a place would not have been conditional upon exam results, appeal applications must be received by **Wednesday 30 September 2015** and heard within 40 school days.

What happens at an appeal hearing?

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

During the appeal hearing the admission authority will explain why your preference was not met and why it is not possible to offer your child a place at your preferred school. You will be given the opportunity to explain why you think that it is in the best interests of your child to attend your preferred school.

The panel will look at your written case but it is strongly suggested that you go to the appeal hearing to help clarify, explain and expand upon your written reasons for appealing.

The clerk will let you know the decision of the panel in writing within five school days. If the panel make a place available for your child after a successful appeal you should contact the headteacher who will arrange for your child to be admitted as soon as is practicable.

Where can I get further information?

Please read the Guide to School Admission Appeals. This is available online at: www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissionstoschools.

You can also contact the Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) for further help either by telephone on: 0808 800 5793 or online at: www.ace-ed.org.uk.

The School Admission Appeals Code and supporting regulations can be found online at the Department for Education website at: www.gov.uk.

You can also contact the Education Appeals Office on: 01473 264218 or 264219. Please note we are a small team who are exceptionally busy around the time transfer appeals are being processed. We will do our best to provide information which is held by us as quickly as we can. We do not hold information about such matters as the day to day running and organisation of individual schools. This information can be obtained directly from the school for which you are appealing and you must contact them yourself.

My child has 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.

My child has a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC plan)

If your child has a statement of SEN or an EHC plan your appeal needs to be directed to the First Tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability). Please contact them by telephone on: 01325 392760 or online at: www.justice.gov.uk.

Section 9

Early learning

What is free early learning?

Early learning is the first stage of education for all children. It starts part-time at the beginning of the term after a child's third birthday. Some two year olds are also eligible to receive 15 hours free early learning. To find out more contact the Suffolk Families Information Service on: 0345 60 800 33.

When can my child receive free early learning?

Part-time entitlement

All children are entitled to part-time free early learning from the beginning of the term following their third birthday. They are entitled to 15 hours a week free early learning for 38 weeks a year.

In Suffolk:

Children born between **1 April and 31 August 2012** can start their early learning at the beginning of the autumn term 2015 (September).

Children born between **1 September and 31 December 2012** can start their early learning at the beginning of the spring term 2016 (January).

Children born between **1 January and 31 March 2013** can start their early learning at the beginning of the summer term 2016 (April).

Please note: in accordance with the Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities on the Delivery of Free Early Education for Three and Four Year Olds (Sept 2012), children born in April are entitled to their free early education from the beginning of the autumn term.

Where can my child access their free early learning?

Your child can receive free early learning wherever places are available in a maintained school nursery class or any private, voluntary or independent 'setting' that is included in Suffolk County Council's list of Approved Providers. To find out whether the setting you are interested in is in Suffolk's list of Approved Providers, call the Suffolk Families Information Service on: 0345 60 800 33.

Your child's free early learning could be in:

- A pre-school playgroup
- A private nursery
- A day nursery (as part of full day care)
- A children's centre which provides day care
- A childminder
- An independent school
- A maintained school nursery class.

Different settings will be offering different patterns of attendance. Please speak to the setting of your choice or the Suffolk Families Information Service on: 0345 60 800 33 to find out more about this.

Most of the options are settings run by private or voluntary organisations and have their own admissions policy. Suffolk County Council has an admission policy for our maintained school based nursery classes and this is set out below.

Important

A place in a maintained school nursery class does not guarantee a place in the reception year of that school and you must make a separate application by the closing date of Thursday 15 January 2015.

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. Compulsory school age is the beginning of the term after a child's fifth birthday.

You can get more information about early learning:

- From your local school or pre-school playgroup
- From the Suffolk Families Information Service on: 0345 60 800 33
- Online at: www.suffolk.gov.uk/childcare
- At public libraries.

How can my child get a place at a maintained school nursery class?

You can find out which schools have nursery classes and the admissions criteria for Highfield Nursery School in the **Directory of Schools in Suffolk for primary, infant, junior and middle schools for the 2015/2016 school year**. Some school nursery classes will not be in local authority maintained schools (for example, the school may be an academy) and you should contact the school to ask about their nursery admissions policy. They may have chosen to follow Suffolk's nursery admission criteria. The admissions criteria for Suffolk's maintained school nursery classes are below. Ask the school for an application form.

Nursery classes in community and voluntary controlled schools

A Suffolk County Council nursery admissions panel monitors the allocation of nursery places to make sure the agreed admission procedures are consistently applied. You should ask the headteacher for an application form and return it to the school. The headteacher will let you know when you will hear the outcome of your application.

Wherever possible, we will try to give your child a place at the nursery school or nursery class you ask for. Sometimes there are no places available or there are fewer places than the number of children wanting them. If this happens, we have admissions criteria to help us decide who will be offered places.

Nursery classes in voluntary aided schools

The governors decide who can go to this type of school so you should ask the headteacher for an application form and return it to the school.

How long can my child stay in a nursery class?

Your child can stay in a maintained school nursery class until the September following their fourth birthday. You **must** make a separate application for a full-time place in a school by the closing date of **Thursday 15 January 2015**.

Please remember that a place in a maintained school nursery class does not guarantee a place in the reception year (see section 3 on page 11).

How we offer places in a nursery class

There are special rules for deciding which children should get priority for a place in a nursery class and they are set out on the next page for community and voluntary controlled schools.

The nursery admissions panel will consider applications for each nursery class and will offer places first to any child aged three or four years old who has a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC plan) which names a specific school.

As early years funding to schools is based on the number of sessions attended **we allocate places first to children wanting five sessions per week.**

Children wanting five sessions a week

We will list applicants wanting five sessions in date of birth order (oldest to youngest).

We will then consider children in each academic year group according to the following criteria:

1. Children living in the school's catchment area:

We will offer places to children in the school's catchment area according to the following priorities:

- a) Children who are the subject of a recognised child protection plan (under current legislation) where a specific school nursery placement is identified
- b) Looked after children (children in care) and previously looked after children (children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order, immediately following having been looked after)
- c) Children who have a sibling at the school when they can start in the nursery
- d) Other children in date of birth order (oldest to youngest).

2. Children who live outside the school's catchment area:

We will then offer places to children who live outside the school's catchment area according to the following priorities:

- a) Children who are the subject of a recognised child protection plan (under current legislation) where a specific school nursery placement is identified
- b) Looked after children (children in care) and previously looked after children (children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order, immediately following having been looked after)
- c) Children who have a sibling at the school when they can start in the nursery
- d) Other children in date of birth order (oldest to youngest).

Where a child has a **dual placement** at a specialist nursery (The Bridge, Thomas Wolsey, Hillside, Riverwalk or Warren) then they may require less than five sessions. These children will be considered individually, at each nursery admission panel meeting, in consultation with the Early Years and Childcare Team.

Siblings: children who are brothers and sisters of, or who live as a family at the same address as, pupils who are already at the school or who have already been offered a place, and who will still be there at the time of admission. Priority will be given, where necessary, to applications where there is the smallest age gap.

Children wanting fewer than five sessions a week

Once all children wanting five sessions or more have been allocated a place we will use the same procedures to allocate any remaining places to children wanting fewer than five sessions. We will give priority to those wanting most sessions.

Full-time entitlement

All children are entitled to full-time education in the September following their fourth birthday.

Section 10

Choices for 16 to 19 year olds in Suffolk

The education and training opportunities open to young people are changing fast to equip them with the skills they need for life and work in a global marketplace.

The 'participation in learning' age is rising to 18 in 2015 so young people will be continuing in education and training for longer. Learners with special educational needs, learning difficulties and/or disabilities will be offered provision and support up to the age of 25.

Options after 16

With the expectation that all young people will be in education or training to 18 the main routes are:

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 apprenticeships offered in Suffolk ranging from administration and financial services to sports and working with children and young people.

Further Education colleges (FE)

The four FE colleges in Suffolk are: Easton and Otley College, Lowestoft College, Suffolk New College 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.

Sixth form/Sixth form college

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 choice. Alternatively you can also choose to attend one of the two 16-19 institutions - One in Ipswich or Lowestoft Sixth Form College.

You should contact the school or sixth form college 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 (see section 8).

Contact details can be found in the **Directory of Schools in Suffolk for Upper and High Schools for the 2015/2016 school year**.

Self employment

Some young people may also consider starting their own business enterprise. There is a wealth of information and support available through business organisations and online support. Further information on starting a business is available online at The Source, visit: www.thesource.me.uk.

Beyond 19

The choices are just as varied for young people and include:

Higher Education (HE)

University Campus Suffolk offers a wide range of full and part-time degree courses across the county. The campus itself is based at the Waterfront building in Ipswich but some courses are delivered more locally through the HE bases in each of the FE colleges. All universities offer distance learning and part-time courses. To find out more visit: www.thesource.me.uk.

FE colleges

All four 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 Level 4 qualifications and/or a degree. For further information go to www.apprenticeships.org.uk.

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: www.menta.org.uk.

More information

Schools now have the responsibility to provide impartial information, advice and guidance to their students from Year 8 onwards. Support staff include: careers advisers, tutors, heads of year, heads of sixth form and student advisers in colleges.

Young people aged 11-19 (25) in Suffolk can get help and advice on courses, jobs, CV builder, apprenticeships, careers, money, free time, life, housing and health from: www.thesource.me.uk.

Help and advice on apprenticeships for parents/carers and young people:
www.apprenticeships.org.uk.

The National Careers Service provides careers advice and information on a wide range of jobs, training course resources and funding and is available online at: nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk.

For further information and advice on helping your child you can also access the Suffolk Parent Hub at: www.suffolk.gov.uk.

Section 11

Special Educational Needs (SEN)

What should I do if my child has learning difficulties?

Some children experience learning difficulties when they are at school (these difficulties may be in one or more subjects). In most cases, the difficulties will not last long. Teachers in school are alert to the needs of children who are not making expected progress and will give extra help.

If your child has started school and you think that they are having difficulties with their work then talk to your child's teacher first. If your child needs help, the school can arrange it. If concerns persist, parents and carers should ask to speak with the school's Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo). The headteacher or SEN governor are also available to speak with parents and carers about any concerns or worries they might have. In addition there are people outside of the school who can be contacted to give support and assistance. Families can get in touch with the Parent Partnership Service (this is an impartial, 'arms-length' service run by Suffolk County Council to support parents and family carers) or they can ask to speak with an adviser for learning support. The advisers can be contacted through the SEN team.

What are special educational needs?

Some children have more difficulties with their learning than others of their age. These difficulties may last longer, sometimes for the whole time that the child is at school. These difficulties are often called SEN because the child is not making the same kind of progress as other children.

Children may have SEN for a number of reasons. These include:

- Learning difficulties
- Specific learning difficulties, such as dyslexia
- Speech and language or other communication difficulties
- Social, emotional or behavioural difficulties
- Physical difficulties or disabilities
- A problem with hearing or eyesight.

Children have SEN if their difficulties affect their learning and progress.

In nearly all cases, it will be the teachers at the school who notice that a child is not making the progress that is expected. The teachers will talk to you about what they think the difficulties are and what they are going to do to help your child. Schools can also ask for advice from an educational psychologist or an adviser for learning support, if they have concerns about a child's SEN.

Education, Health and Care plan (EHC plan)

Some children do not make the progress that parents/carers and teachers expect, and they may need a very detailed assessment of their needs. If this is the case, Suffolk County Council will arrange for an assessment to be carried out. Parents and carers are fully consulted and are involved in this process. The outcome of this assessment may lead to the development of an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC plan). This is a process of co-production that focuses on your child's needs, their learning abilities and how they are getting on at school. It also explains what the school will do to help your child and what extra support they will get. If an EHC plan is not considered necessary, parents and carers will receive detailed information which explains what was discovered about their child's learning needs during the assessment.

You can find out more about assessments and EHC plans by contacting your school or the Parent Partnership Service (see section 6 on page 23 for contact details). More information is included in the Suffolk SEN and Disability Policy and Practice handbook, available on the Suffolk County Council website at: www.suffolk.gov.uk.

If my child has SEN, do I have a choice about which school they attend?

Your views will be considered when we decide which school your child will go to. Staff from Suffolk County Council will talk with you and listen to your views about where you would like your child to go to school. Our staff 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.

In nearly all cases, parents/carers and staff from Children and Young People's Services will agree about which school is best for your child.

For advice or support call the Parent Partnership Service on: 01473 265210. More details of what this service offers can be found in section 6.

Are there any special schools and specialist units in Suffolk?

There are nine special schools in Suffolk. The special schools offer a high-quality education for children who have more complex difficulties. If a special school is felt to be the best option for your child, the decision to offer a place is made by Suffolk County Council staff, following discussion and agreement with parents and carers. Sometimes children may be offered a dual placement, this means pupils may spend some days of the week at a special school and some days in their local mainstream school. The special school teachers will help staff in other Suffolk schools by sharing expertise, ideas and equipment.

There are also a number of specialist units for children with hearing difficulties and three units for young children with speech and language problems. Suffolk also provides services to support children with specific learning difficulties including dyslexia. Children may receive intensive support by attending a special unit or sometimes, they receive support in their local school on an outreach basis.

Most children who go to a special school or unit will have an EHC plan (or still have a statement of Special Educational Needs until transfer to the new process is completed).

In some schools there are small classes for children with complex learning difficulties. These are called specialist support centres. Most children who attend these classes have a statement of SEN or a EHC plan. The support to meet a child's particular needs will always be discussed with parents and carers.

Very occasionally, when a child or young person's needs cannot be met in a Suffolk maintained school, a place may be arranged at an independent, non-maintained special school; this could be outside of Suffolk – again, any such decision would only be made with the full consent of parents and carers.

Suffolk County Council also makes provision for a small number of young people who are not in school. Education other than at school (EOTAS) is arranged through the local teams in consultation with parents and carers. A personalised package of support is put in place to meet children's individual needs and ensure their entitlement to full-time education.

Admissions to special schools and specialist units are handled by Suffolk County Council's SEN team and are outside the normal admission arrangements.

What are Suffolk County Council's arrangements for providing assistance with travel for children and young people with SEN and disabilities?

Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school. Sometimes, families need assistance with home to school travel, particularly where young people may be attending a special school or specialist unit some distance away from home. Suffolk County Council has a clear policy about the arrangements for special needs home to school travel and assistance that can be given for children and young people with SEN and disabilities. The policy can be accessed on our website at: www.suffolk.gov.uk or from the local office; a parent/carer's information leaflet is also available. You can also email us at: customer.first@suffolk.gov.uk.

Home to school travel for learners at special schools and for other learners with SEN may exceptionally be provided irrespective of the minimum distance and other criteria set out in this policy, where it is accepted by Suffolk County Council that home to

school travel is essential to enable them to have access to the education they require. In other cases the advice about home to school travel needs may also come from the Youth Support Service, Social Care Services, schools or other agencies.

Travel assistance for students with learning difficulties and disabilities

Travel assistance may also be available for students with learning difficulties and disabilities undertaking a course at a further education college or a school sixth form after Year 11. In some circumstances this support can continue up to the age of 21. This support is not automatic; families must apply for Post 16 travel assistance for their child. For more details go to the Suffolk County Council travel website at: www.suffolkonboard.com.

Section 12

Home to School Travel

Will my child get help with travel to school?

Children of compulsory school age (between 5 and 16) are entitled to free home to school travel if they are attending their nearest suitable school and are:

- Aged under eight and live two miles or more from the school, or
- Eight or over and live at least three miles from the school.

These are called the statutory walking distances.

Note:

- We will support travel for four year olds who have a full-time place in the reception class when their fifth birthday falls during the school year.
- The ages are taken at 1 September in each school year. If your child receives free home to school travel and your child is under eight years of age and lives more than two miles but less than three miles from the school allocated, transport will end at the end of the school year following their eighth birthday.
- Distances are measured by the shortest walking route along which a child may walk accompanied by an adult where necessary with reasonable safety.

In addition, every school has a Transport Priority Area (TPA) that is used to decide if a child is entitled to free travel. The TPA may be the same as the catchment area or, if there is a free school in the area, the TPA may be different. More information is included on page 37 regarding travel to free schools.

Where a school has never had a catchment area, for example, some church schools and free schools, statutory walking distance criteria set out above will apply where this is the nearest suitable school.

We may also offer free home to school travel:

- If the catchment area school is full and we have offered a place at another school which is over the statutory walking distance and it is the nearest suitable school to your home with places available
- If it is assessed the child cannot be reasonably expected to walk to school because of their mobility problems or because of associated health and safety issues related to their special educational needs or disability (even if the child lives within the statutory walking distance of the school)
- For children whose parents receive the maximum level of Working Tax Credit or if the child is entitled to free school meals due to low income, and they are:
 - a) Aged 8 to 11 and the school is at least two miles away, or
 - b) Aged 11 to 16 and the school is two to six miles away – as long as there are not three or more suitable schools nearer to home, or
 - c) Aged 11-16 and the school is two to fifteen miles away – if it is their nearest suitable school preferred on the grounds of religion or belief.

In certain circumstances and with the agreement of parents/carers, we would consider paying a mileage allowance for an eligible child to parents/carers in place of providing free home to school travel. This would only be when transport is not already available in the area.

We will only provide passenger assistants on home to school travel to support children with very exceptional needs and this will be agreed on an individual basis.

Do I need to apply for home to school travel?

If you qualify for a free entitlement you do not need to apply for home to school travel. We will contact you with further details on how to submit your child's details for a travel pass. However, you will need to contact us on: 0345 606 6173 if:

- You believe you may qualify for free travel because of low income (see page 36)
- You have recently moved to the area
- Your child has changed school during the school year
- Your child is attending a free school, or
- You think your child might be entitled to free home to school travel.

Home to school travel may mean travelling on a school bus or on public transport.

Roman Catholic Travel

Children starting at Roman Catholic schools are not entitled to free travel unless it is the nearest suitable school. There may be exceptions to this due to low income; as set out on page 36.

Children who are already attending a Roman Catholic school and have home to school travel will continue to receive it whilst they remain at that school.

Thurston Community College expanded catchment area

Thurston Community College's catchment area expanded in September 2014 to include the entire catchment areas of Elmswell, Rattlesden and Woolpit Primary Schools. Therefore, pupils living in these areas will be entitled to free home to school travel to this school if they qualify on grounds of distance or income, as set out on page 36.

Free home to school travel will continue to be provided for any students currently attending Stowupland High School from this area. This will continue until the student completes Year 11. We will also provide free travel to Stowupland High School to the next sibling as long as they join the school whilst the older sibling is still attending, but not in the sixth form.

Travel to free schools

Transport Priority Areas (TPAs) for free schools depend on the pattern of schools in the area. Sometimes this affects travel entitlement to a neighbouring school.

When pupils qualify on distance grounds or income, they will be entitled to free home to school travel as follows:

Beccles Free School and Sir John Leman High School

We will provide travel to either of these schools for pupils living in the Sir John Leman High School catchment area.

IES Breckland and Mildenhall College Academy

We will provide travel to IES Breckland when it is the nearest suitable school. In addition, families living in the Lakenheath Community Primary School catchment area are entitled to free travel to either IES Breckland or Mildenhall College Academy.

Ixworth Free School and Thurston Community College

Travel will be provided to Ixworth Free School when it is the nearest suitable school. This will not affect free travel to Thurston Community College for pupils living in its catchment area.

Saxmundham Free School and Alde Valley High School

We will provide travel to Saxmundham Free School when it is the nearest suitable school. This does not affect free travel to Alde Valley School for pupils living in its catchment area.

Stour Valley Community School, Samuel Ward Academy and Ormiston Sudbury Academy

TPAs have been drawn up for these three schools based on the nearest suitable school principles. Together, these three TPAs cover the areas that were formerly the catchment areas of Samuel Ward High School and Sudbury Upper School and Arts College. Therefore we do not provide travel support to Samuel Ward Academy or Ormiston Sudbury Academy based on those former catchment areas.

If you want to find out more please contact us on: 0345 606 6173.

What are my travel options if I'm not entitled to free travel?

If there are empty seats on a school bus, we make them available to families living on the route who have children of statutory school age (5-16) and do not qualify for free travel. This scheme is known as discretionary travel.

From September 2014 the cost is £180 or £200 per seat per term. The difference in the cost depends on whether your child is attending their catchment school or not. This charge will increase each year respectively by up to £10 per term (£30 per year).

In the past, in certain circumstances this charge has been waived. For example, if a parent has been in receipt of Income Support, Income Based Job Seekers Allowance, maximum level of Working Tax Credit or the child is entitled to receive free school meals based on low income. If you need further information please contact us on: 0345 606 6173.

From September 2015, an exemption will no longer be available for any new children or children who currently receive exemption but move schools.

If you would like us to check if we can offer you any travel assistance under our discretionary scheme, please complete the online application form on our website (address below).

If your child does not qualify for any travel detailed above then there may be a suitable public transport service route available. Details of these services and information regarding free and discretionary travel can be found on our website: www.suffolkonboard.com. If you can't access this online, call us on: 0345 606 6173.

Can I appeal if you decide my child is not eligible for free travel?

If we advise you that you are not eligible for free home to school travel and you do not agree with the decision, you should contact Passenger Transport within 20 working days of the decision date and ask for the decision to be reviewed. You will be sent a written response within 20 working days of your request.

If you still disagree with the decision, and your child is attending their nearest suitable or TPA school, or has been placed at their school by Suffolk County Council, you may submit an appeal against the decision. Appeal forms can be obtained from Suffolk County Council's Democratic Services on: 01473 265119.

Free home to school travel is not available for children whose parent or carer chooses to send them to an out-catchment school or who are not of compulsory school age.

Post 16 Travel

Endeavour Card

The Endeavour Card is for young people aged between 16 and 19 and provides a 25% discount on full price adult bus fares with participating transport operators. Please contact us for full details of the scheme and how to apply or visit: www.suffolkonboard.com/endeavour-card.

Who is entitled to Post 16 travel assistance?

The county council offers discretionary travel to qualifying students who:

- Are over compulsory school age but under 19 years (also to those who are completing a course started prior to their 19th birthday)
- Undertake an approved full-time course of further education study
- Are normally resident in Suffolk, and
- Live at least three miles away from the school or college to be attended. Where learners qualify, travel assistance will normally be provided to either the nearest school sixth form or Post 16 institution. For students wishing to study more specialist subjects or courses which are not available at their local school or college, applications will be considered on an exceptional basis to the nearest centre offering this programme, where this is needed to enable the student to progress.

In the 2014/2015 school year this service is offered at a subsidised rate of £180 per term (£540 per year) to eligible students. This will increase by up to £30 each year. The payment applies to all students who use this service. However, all Post 16 providers receive a bursary direct from government that is available to support students from low income families. More information is available at: www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund or from the Post 16 school or college.

The offer of travel assistance is for a 'main road' type of service only. This provision is usually made on existing contracted or public transport services, and students should note that they are responsible for the arrangement and cost of any additional travel needs at the home end of the journey or in the area of the school/college.

Travelling to school

Starting a new school is an important time for you and your child. Take some time to think about what may be the best way to get to your chosen school.

- Walking, cycling or scootering – for most families this is the easiest and most simple choice, it's often faster and less stressful than driving at busy times of the day. Check the route you will take at: www.walkit.com, which will also tell you how long it will take and local shortcuts may make it even quicker.

Walking and cycling helps children to engage with their local community, develop wider social networks, greater spatial awareness and improves road sense.

- Park and Stride – if you need to use your car why not park further away and walk the last 5 minutes to school, you'll also help to keep the school entrance free of cars and make it a more pleasant place for everyone.
- Bus – many children will be entitled to home to school travel as outlined in this booklet. To find out which public bus services may serve your school visit: www.suffolkonboard.com. Many bus companies provide special offers for children.
- Car Sharing – driving to and from school every day can be a costly event, why not think about sharing your regular trips with other families going the same way.

What are the benefits?

Health – over the past few years the number of children being taken to school by car has increased. We all know we should be more active and walking or cycling to school is a really easy and convenient way to do this. Healthy bodies help to make healthy minds and getting some physical activity on the way to school helps children start the day alert and ready to learn.

There is also an increasing evidence base that indicates the levels of obesity in children is rising and has an adverse impact on their health; walking or cycling to school will help contribute towards the recommended 60 minutes of physical activity every day – it doesn't have to be sport.

The Environment – in Suffolk pollution from transport is one of the biggest contributors to high levels of CO₂. Using our cars less will not only help to reduce this, but also helps to keep the local area much more pleasant by reducing noise and congestion.

Visit our pages on the Green Suffolk website: www.greensuffolk.org/travel to find out more about greener and healthier travel, including cycle maps.

Wealth – transport charity Sustrans estimates that families spend an average of £367 per child per year to drive to and from school. Public transport or car sharing may be more convenient than you think and can help to save money. Walking and cycling is virtually free, so even more money in your pocket.

Independence – young people have far less freedom now than previously, but there are key life skills to be gained from planning simple journeys, being a safe road user or having the confidence to use public transport. The benefits of forging a sense of independence will be felt long into the future.

What are we doing to help support this?

All schools in Suffolk have a School Travel Plan (STP) that has been written in conjunction with the school and with pupil, parent/carer, staff and community consultation as the underpinning information. Each school received a capital grant on successful completion of their travel plan, which was to be used to support sustainable travel measures, such as new cycle storage.

It is always good practice for schools, as the owners of these plans to regularly review and update them. As pupils and families move through the school there will be changes to peoples' habits, where families live and the ways in which they travel to school may also change, by continuing to review plans we will ensure that the process captures emerging issues. Promotion of walking, cycling, and car sharing schemes is given high priority within the STP.

We have provided a range of templates to assist schools with reviewing and updating their travel plans at Suffolk Road Safe, available online at: www.suffolkroadsafe.net.

Road Safety Officers act as 'critical friends' to support the reviewing process as required. Road Safety Officers also arrange to support schools in educational activities, and to share 'best practice' as seen across Suffolk.

The Road Safety Team manage the delivery of Bikeability to over 3000 Year 5 and 6 children across Suffolk, and are increasingly delivering Bikeability training within upper and high schools.

Where to find out more information

Information about Bikeability within Suffolk can be found at www.suffolkroadsafe.net/cyclists.

Information about planning your journey, including cycle maps and travel choices can be found at: www.greensuffolk.org/travel.

Section 13

Useful information

Term dates 2015/2016

The school term dates for all Suffolk County Council's schools for 2015/2016 are:

Autumn term

Wednesday 2 September 2015* to Friday 18 December 2015

Half term is Monday 26 October 2015 to Friday 30 October 2015

Spring term

Monday 4 January 2016* to Friday 25 March 2016

Half term is Monday 15 February 2016 to Friday 19 February 2016

Summer term

Monday 11 April 2016 to Thursday 21 July 2016

Half term is Tuesday 31 May 2016 (Monday 30 May Bank Holiday) to Friday 3 June 2016

* recommended PD day

The total number of days for the school year is 195. All schools set five teacher training days called professional development (PD) days. Two of these PD days are recommended by Suffolk County Council at the start of the autumn (September) and spring (January) terms. The remaining three PD days are set by the schools in agreement with other schools in their pyramid. You can get the extra dates from your school.

There are 190 actual teaching days in the school year.

All term dates are on Suffolk County Council's website at: www.suffolk.gov.uk.

Please note: academies and free schools can set their own term dates. At the time of printing, Suffolk County Council has not been made aware of any changes to the above dates by these schools for 2015/2016.

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.

Free school meals

Food for thought – Suffolk schools are missing out on £3million – they need your help

There are around 3,000 young people in Suffolk who are eligible for a free school meal but are not currently claiming one. If they all claimed the meal they are entitled to, Suffolk Schools would be £3million better off.

More than 13,000 children in Suffolk already receive a free school meal. This saves their families around £400 a year and gives the school up to £1,300 extra funding for each child.

From September 2014, schools will give all children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 a free school lunch every day. However, if you are receiving one of the benefits on page 42 there are still advantages in registering for free school meals. This is because your

school will get up to £1,300 to help your child learn and may support you in other ways, such as by reducing fees for after school clubs and/or school trips. If you have any questions please speak to your child's school.

Is your child eligible?

To register for a free school meal or help your school with extra funding you will need to receive any of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income based Job Seeker's Allowance
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, as long as you do not get a 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.

To check if your child is eligible, simply call us on: 01473 260989 (Ipswich/Lowestoft and surrounding area) or: 01284 758883 (Bury St Edmunds and surrounding area).

How do I apply?

The quickest and easiest way to apply, if your child is eligible, is online at: www.suffolk.gov.uk.

If you apply online, you will be sent emails to confirm that we have received your application, and when it has been processed. Or you can complete an application form by:

- Downloading one from: www.suffolk.gov.uk
- Collecting one from your child's school
- Calling us on: 0345 606 6067.

Once completed you can either hand the form into your child's school or post it directly to us.

Once we've confirmed if your child is eligible we will write to you and your child's school. If we cannot confirm your eligibility we will contact you for qualifying documentation.

Please note: If you already have an older child receiving a free school meal, you do not need to fill in a new application form, just contact us before your younger child starts school full-time.

School clothing

Parents/carers who are experiencing difficulties regarding school clothing should speak to their child's school as they may be able to offer some help and assistance.

Getting involved with school

Most schools have a Parent Teacher Association (PTA) to help with the wide range of activities on offer at the school.

Members of the PTA:

- Help to decide about the type of events that should be held
- How the money raised should be spent
- Help to run the activities.

If you would like to find out more about becoming a member of the PTA, please ask the school.

How can I become a parent governor?

Parents can stand for election as a parent governor once their child is at the school. The school should let you know when a parent governor leaves and that there needs to be an election to find a new governor. The size of a governing body varies.

Governors are usually elected for four years and are expected to go to at least one meeting each term. Meetings are usually held at the school.

Volunteering to become a school governor is an excellent way to get involved in the local community. School governors do not need to have any special qualifications, the most important quality is a real desire to help provide children with the best possible education, and be willing to work together as part of the team. A really good mix of people, from all walks of life, means different viewpoints, experience, skills and fresh ideas for a school's governing body. In fact anyone aged 18 or over from any background, who has an average of 2-4 evening meetings per term to spare, can add tremendous value to a school's governing body.

Today's schools are increasingly autonomous, placing greater responsibility on the governing body for budgeting, standard-setting and strategic decision-making. A governor's role is to be a 'critical friend' to the headteacher whilst helping with the overall management of the school. School governors gain exposure to a range of responsibilities and have a unique opportunity to develop their own skill set.

Once you have been elected, you can finish your term of office even if your child has left the school.

If you are interested in becoming a parent governor, the headteacher of your child's school will be able to tell you more.

Attending school

Good school attendance is essential for your child's success. There are clear links between good attendance and future examination success.

Most children enjoy their years at school and look forward to going every day, even though there will be things they like and dislike. However, if you are worried about anything you should discuss the matter with the school straightaway so that any difficulties can be sorted out as soon as possible. The important thing is for children to go to school regularly so that they can benefit from the education provided and be in the best position to choose their future careers.

By law, you are responsible for making sure that your child receives an education. This means that, once children are registered at school, they must go regularly. If they are not well enough to do so, you should contact the school immediately to explain the situation.

There are national guidelines about what constitutes exceptional circumstances. Essentially, leave of absence during term time can be granted at the discretion of a headteacher where parents' or carers' employment does not allow holiday time to be taken during school holiday periods because of non-negotiable rotas. This applies to some factory workers, workers in uniformed services and agricultural workers, although this is not an exhaustive list.

If your child is absent from school without a good reason, the school may ask the Education Attendance Service to become involved. Education welfare officers will work with you and support you to ensure your child goes to school.

Parents and carers who do not ensure that their children attend school regularly can be taken to court. However, we hope that any difficulties can be sorted out long before they reach this stage and that all children will want to go to school and be happy there.

If you have any questions about school attendance, you can speak with the education welfare officer through the local school or telephone the lead attendance officer or senior education welfare officer on: 01473 265348.

Children who have been excluded from school

Sometimes children and young people are excluded from school. This is usually for a fixed period of time or in some circumstances an exclusion can be permanent.

National legislation makes parents/carers responsible for ensuring that during the first five days of a fixed term exclusion their child is not in a public place during school hours. Schools will set work for a fixed term excluded pupil to undertake during this period and parents or carers need to ensure this work is undertaken.

Where a pupil is excluded from school for more than five days schools will provide full-time education for fixed term excluded pupils from and including the sixth day of the exclusion until the pupil returns to school.

In some cases, a managed move to another school may be suggested before circumstances get to the point of a permanent exclusion. A managed move can provide a fresh start for a pupil but it is only possible with the parents' or carers' agreement.

In very few cases, a pupil may be excluded from a school permanently. If your child is permanently excluded from a school:

- You have the right to appeal against the decision
- Staff from Suffolk County Council and the Parent Partnership Service can give you advice
- You have a right to be supported by a member of the Suffolk County Council Inclusion Team if your child is permanently excluded from any school
- Suffolk County Council will also discuss future education provision with you.

Arrangements will be made by the Inclusion Team to provide education for pupils who are permanently excluded whilst a new placement is arranged.

Children who find it difficult to cope at school

Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) usually work with young people who have been excluded from school, or who are at risk of exclusion. Some also help children and young people who find it difficult to cope in a local school. Staff in the PRUs support children and young people to develop a range of skills so that they can manage with the demands of school as well as supporting them with their learning.

Our First Base PRUs (for three to eight year olds) are based in Lowestoft, Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds.

Our key stage 2/3 PRUs (for 8 to 13 year olds) offer help for children in their mainstream school and many children are dual registered so that they remain on the roll of their local school but spend a short period of time in the PRU. This means pupils are provided with special help and support, including behaviour management and strategies on how to better cope when they are back in school.

Our key stage 2/3 PRUs are:

- The Harbour, Lowestoft
- Kingsfield Centre, Stowmarket
- Mill Meadow, Gazeley, Newmarket
- Alderwood, Ipswich
- St Christopher's, Ipswich

Hampden House in Great Cornard caters for key stage 2/3 boys and has residential facilities.

Our key stage 4 PRUs (for 14 to 16 year olds) help pupils prepare for college, training and employment and for life when they leave school. Some pupils often spend some of their week in the unit and some at school, at a further education college or doing work experience. These units are:

- Old Warren House, Lowestoft
- Albany Centre, Bury St Edmunds
- Parkside, Ipswich
- Westbridge, Ipswich

The Attic Pupil Referral Unit in Lowestoft caters for pupils in key stage 3/4.

Staff from Suffolk County Council and your child's school will talk to you if they think a PRU will help your child.

Section 14

What does the jargon mean?

ADM1 – in-year application form for voluntary aided, foundation/trust, academy and free schools. However, the school may have its own application form.

Admission Authority – Suffolk County Council is responsible for admissions to community and voluntary controlled schools. The governors/academy trusts are responsible for admissions to voluntary aided, foundation/trust, academies and free schools.

CAF1 – normal year of entry application form.

CAF2 – in-year application form for community and voluntary controlled schools.

Catchment area school – the school that serves the area you live in. We cannot guarantee a place at your catchment area school. Free schools and some academies do not use the catchment area in their oversubscription criteria.

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

Express a preference – naming a school that you'd like your child to attend.

Education, Health and Care plan (EHC plan) – the result of an assessment we have made about a child's special needs and the extra support they need.

Infant class – a class with Reception, Year 1 and/or Year 2 pupils in it.

In-year applications – applications made at different times of the year to the normal admissions round.

LA – Local Authority.

Local Offer – allows local authorities to publish and keep under review information about services available for young people with special educational needs and disabilities, aged 0 to 25.

Making an appeal – your right to question a decision that goes against your request for a place at a school.

Nearest suitable school – the nearest qualifying 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.

Ordinarily resident – this refers to the place where your child usually lives. We may need proof of this address. We will not treat your child as ordinarily resident if you rent or own a second home in the catchment area or if you use another address to give the impression that your child lives in the catchment area so that you have a higher priority for a place at that school. Where a child lives with separated parents who have shared responsibility, each for part of the week, the ordinarily resident address will be considered to be the address that the child lives at for most of the week (excluding weekends and school holidays).

Out-catchment school – a school that does not serve the area you live in.

Oversubscribed school – a school where the number of applications is greater than the number of places available.

Oversubscription criteria – the rules used to decide which children will be allocated places when a school has more applications than places available.

Own admission authority schools – these schools usually have their own admissions policy and the governing body/academy trust make decisions on applications. These can be voluntary aided, foundation/trust, academies and free schools.

Previously looked after children – children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted, or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order, immediately following having been looked after.

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 for deciding how many children can go to a school, without causing overcrowding. Although the PAN applies to the year

of entry we would normally apply this number across all year groups in the school. However, there may be occasions for other year groups where it is not possible to do so. This could be, for example, when it would result in a single qualified teacher having more than 30 pupils in an infant class.

Prospectus – information booklet published by the school.

Reception class – a class for children who are four or five years old.

School Bus – this is a vehicle wholly contracted for eligible students.

School Organisation Review – changing the way schools in Suffolk are organised to reduce the number of times a pupil has to transfer to another school and to avoid transfer at age nine.

Siblings (for community and voluntary controlled schools) – children who are brothers and sisters of, or who live as a family at the same address as, pupils who are already at the school or who have already been offered a place, and who will still be there at the time of admission (but not in the sixth form).

Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) – the result of an assessment we have made about a child's special needs and the extra support they need.

Summer born – this refers to children born from the beginning of April to the end of August.

Supplementary Information Form (SIF) – this asks for extra information which will make it possible for the governors/academy trust of a voluntary aided, foundation/trust, academy or free school to rank your application against their school's admissions oversubscription criteria. This form is available on our website and from the school.

Transport Priority Area (TPA) – every school has a TPA that is used to decide if a child is entitled to free travel. The TPA may be the same as the catchment area or, if there is a free school in the area, the TPA may be different.

Section 15

How do I apply online for a school place in the normal year of entry 2015/2016?

You can apply online from 12 September 2014 at: www.suffolk.gov.uk/onlineadmissions.

Closing dates:

- Applications to upper and high schools for September 2015 must be completed and submitted by midnight on **Friday 31 October 2014**
- Applications to primary, infant, junior and middle schools for September 2015 must be completed and submitted **by midnight on Thursday 15 January 2015**.

Please see the **Directories of Schools in Suffolk** for school details, oversubscription criteria and how we offer school places. This is available online at: www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissionstoschools.

There are many benefits to applying online for a school place:

- It is safe and secure
- You will get an email confirmation that your application has been received
- There is no risk that your application will get lost in the post
- You can apply or change the details on your application on any day of the week. You must have completed and submitted your application by midnight on the closing date. Please allow sufficient time to register and complete your application if you are applying on the evening of the closing date.
- The system has a series of security procedures, which will prevent anyone seeing information they are not entitled to see.
- We will email you the offer of a school place on the offer date instead of waiting for a letter in the post
- If you do not have internet access at home you can use a computer at any Suffolk library.

How to apply

At the start of the online admissions process you will be asked to register and set up a password to allow access. If you have previously applied online you will have to register again to make an application.

If you live in Suffolk and your child is already at a Suffolk school you should have been sent a letter with a Unique Identifier (UID). This is helpful when you apply online (when you use it the computer fills in your child's details for you) but you can still apply online without one. If your details are incorrect please contact your child's current school.

Please take particular care to fill in all of the fields correctly because failure to do so may affect how your application is ranked.

In some circumstances, we need evidence to support your application. This would include:

- An adoption order, residence order or special guardianship order for a child who was previously looked after, immediately following having been looked after.
- A letter from a priest or minister to support an application based on religious grounds for a voluntary controlled school
- If you are planning to move house and you want your future address to be the one used to allocate a school place, you must give us written evidence that you are legally committed to the move and that it will take place before your child is due to start at the school you have applied for. This could be proof of exchange of contracts, a signed letting/tenancy agreement confirming your new address, an assignment order that declares a relocation date and a unit postal address or quartering area address for a service child, or, for returning UK Service/Crown Servant families proof of the posting. If you are unable to provide evidence of your move by the closing date, we will still be able to use your new address to rank your application if we

receive sufficient evidence **by Tuesday 6 January 2015 for upper and high schools applications or by Friday 13 February 2015 for primary, infant, junior and middle school applications.**

Unfortunately, you are unable to attach evidence to your online application. Therefore you will need to either email or post evidence to the Admissions Team (contact details on page 2) by the closing date. If you send information through the post we strongly suggest you get proof of posting.

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 CAF1 paper application which should include all of your preferences. We regret you will be unable to apply online.

If you need any help or have any questions about the online admissions process you can call: 0345 600 0981 (local rate) or email: admissions@suffolk.gov.uk.

You should keep the following information so you can check or change your online application at any time until the closing date. If you make any changes you will have to re-submit your application.

If your contact details change before the closing date you will need to update your registration details and your child's application in the case of an address change.

If your contact details change after the closing date you will need to update your registration details and email us separately with the changes. This is because you are unable to update your child's online application after the closing date. You do not need to let us know if you change your email address.

Unique Identifier (UID)	Email address
Password	

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

Section 16

Comments, compliments and complaints

Have your say

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 the member of staff or headteacher as soon as possible. This can be put in writing if you prefer.

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 complaint's policy.

If your complaint relates to a service you have received from Suffolk County Council (SCC), rather than issues arising in a maintained school, you can contact Customer Rights on: 01473 260711 or email: customerrights@suffolk.gov.uk. Compliments about SCC services can also be sent to Customer Rights.

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 2015/2016 school year. Any changes will be up-dated at: www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissionstoschools.



If you need help to understand this information in another language please call 0345 606 6067.

Se precisar de ajuda para ler estas informações em outra língua, por favor telefone para o número abaixo.

Portuguese

Jeżeli potrzebujesz pomocy w zrozumieniu tych informacji w swoim języku zadzwoń na podany poniżej numer.

Polish

এই লেখাটি যদি অন্য ভাষাতে বুঝতে চান তাহলে নিচের নম্বরে ফোন করুন

Bengali

بەم زانیاری هەشتانی ئێ بە ت گەهەتی هە یارمەر پ ویستیت بەگەه
بکە. وەدی خوارەم ژمارەنێدی بەهێو بەزمان کە شێر نەکایە

Kurdish

如果你需要其他語言來幫助你了解這些資訊，請撥以下電話。

Chinese

اگر شما نیاز دارید که این اطلاعات را به زبان دیگری دریافت کنید لطفاً به شماره زیر تلفن کنید.

Farsi

If you would like this information in another format,
including audio tape or large print, please call 0345 606 6067.

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