

School Travel Scenarios: Will my child be eligible for Suffolk County Council (SCC) funded school travel?

SCC's School Travel Policy is separate to the admission policies. We will assess eligibility for school travel based on the principal of a pupil attending the nearest suitable school that would have had a place available, had the parent applied for that school, on the National Offer Day or when the application was decided. This might not be the catchment area school.

You will find details of the School Travel Policy at www.suffolkonboard.com/schooltravel.

The nearest schools have been calculated by measuring walking distances using a network comprised of the Ordnance Survey MasterMap Highways Network (which includes all roads and urban paths), and Suffolk's Public Rights of Way as shown on the [Definitive Map](#).

We strongly recommend that parents use the [Nearest School Checker](#) (which is based on the statutory walking distance, including public rights of way) to find out their three nearest schools for school travel purposes. The catchment area school might not be the nearest suitable school.

The **nearest suitable school** is the closest school by walking distance to the child's home address with places available that provides education appropriate to the age, ability and aptitude of the child, and any special educational needs the child may have.

Here are some scenarios that show how eligibility for school travel is assessed

For illustrative purposes:

- **School A** is the nearest suitable Suffolk school – 2.5 miles from child's address
- **School B** is the second nearest suitable Suffolk school – 3.3 miles from child's address
- **School C** is the third nearest suitable Suffolk school – 7.2 miles from child's address

Matthew is aged 4 and due to start full-time primary school in September 2021. His parent's school preferences were ordered as (1) School A which is 2.5 miles from home; (2) School B which is 3.3 miles from home; and (3) School C which is 7.2 miles from home. These schools are in order of the nearest schools to their home.

Scenario 1

- A place is offered at **School A – the nearest suitable school**.
- SCC funded school travel will be available for Matthew in the Reception Year, Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3, as this is the nearest school and is over 2 miles away.
- From Year 4, when Matthew is 8 years old, he would not meet the statutory walking distance criteria. SCC funded school travel would cease at the end of Year 3 because he lives less than 3 miles from the school.

Scenario 2

- **School A** is unable to offer a place.
- A place is offered at **School B – the nearest suitable school with a place available**. SCC funded school travel will be available because it is the nearest school with a place available for him on National Offer Day.

Scenario 3

- **School A** and **School B** are unable to offer places to Matthew.
- **A place is offered at School C – the nearest suitable school with a place available**. SCC funded school travel will be available because it is the nearest school with a place available for him on National Offer Day.

Note 1: As the parent applied for the three nearest suitable schools in order of distance from the child's home to the school, Matthew would have been eligible for SCC funded school travel to whichever of these schools he was offered because all three meet the distance criteria for a Reception Year school place and the preferences were listed in nearest suitable school order. So the nearest school possible would be offered.

Note 2: A family has extended rights when they are on low income (they receive the maximum working tax credit or the child is entitled to free school meals). If this applies, a child living between 2 and 3 miles from their nearest suitable school that had a place available would continue to receive SCC funded school travel until the end of Year 6.

Mary is aged 4 and lives in Suffolk near the county border. She is due to start school in the Reception Year in September 2021. Mary's parent applied for a school in Norfolk that is 2.1 miles and the nearest suitable school from her address as first preference. Her second preference is School A which is 2.5 miles from home; and the third preference is School B which is 3.3 miles from home.

- A place is offered at the first preference **school in Norfolk**.
 - SCC funded school travel would be provided for Mary in the Reception Year, Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 (as in scenario 1 above), as this school is nearer to the home address than **School A** and is over 2 miles away.
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Katie will be starting secondary school in September 2021. Her parent applied for School C only, which is 7.2 miles from home and the third nearest school to her home address.

- A place is offered at **School C**.
 - SCC funded school travel would not be available as **School B** had a place available and transport would have been available to that nearer school had Katie's parent applied for it.
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Johnny is due to transfer to high school in September 2021. His parent applied for School B, which is his catchment area school, as first preference.

- A place is offered at **School B** which is 3.3 miles from home.
- SCC funded school travel will not be provided to **School B** as had the parent applied for **School A**, the nearest suitable school, a place would have been available.

Note 3: We recognise that the parent would not know whether **School A** would have places available on National Offer Day. The relevant Directory of Schools in Suffolk online at www.suffolk.gov.uk/admissions and [the list of school details in Suffolk](#) provide admissions data for the previous school year to give parents an indication of the school's popularity and the cut off distance for the last place offered in 2020. This can only be an indication as both the popularity of schools and the size of the year group can fluctuate from year to year.

Amy is due to go to secondary school in September 2021. Her parent applied for School A which is 2.5 miles from home as first preference. This is Amy's catchment area school.

- A place is offered at **School A**.
- SCC funded school travel would not be available because the distance from home to school is 2.5 miles and does not meet the statutory walking distance criteria.

Note: 4: If Amy's parents are on low income, the extended rights eligibility applies (to attend one of the three nearest secondary schools as long as they are between 2 and 6 miles from the home address) and so SCC funded school travel will be available.

Alfie will start secondary school in September 2021. His parents are on low income. An application was made for a place at School B which is 3.3 miles from home.

- A place is offered at School B.
 - Had the parent applied for School A which is 2.5 miles from home and the nearest suitable school, a place would have been available.
 - As Alfie's parents are on low income, the extended rights eligibility applies (to attend one of the three nearest secondary schools as long as they are between 2 and 6 miles from the home address) and so SCC funded school travel will be available.
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Freda will start secondary school in September 2021. Her parents are on low income. Her parents applied for a place at a church school that is 9 miles away as first preference.

- A place is offered at the first preference school.
 - As Freda's parents are on low income, the extended rights eligibility applies (to attend the nearest school preferred on the grounds of religion or belief between 2 and 15 miles from the home address) and so SCC funded school travel will be available.
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Julie's parent applied for a place in Year 5 at a middle school as first preference. This school is over 3 miles away. There is one nearer primary school.

- A place is offered at the first preference school, however, there are two possible outcomes for eligibility to SCC funded school travel:
 - a) The nearer primary school had a place available, so SCC funded school travel would not be available to the middle school; or
 - b) The nearer primary school could not have offered a place, so SCC funded school travel would be available to the middle school.
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Bruce's parent applied for a place in Year 5 at a middle school as first preference. This school is over 3 miles away. He is currently attending a nearer primary school.

- A place is offered at the first preference school, the middle school.
 - As Bruce has a place at the primary school, which is nearer than the middle school, SCC funded school travel would not be available to the middle school.
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Arnie's parent applied for a place in Year 7 at a secondary school as first preference. This school is over 3 miles away. There is a nearer middle school.

- A place is offered at the first preference school.
- Although the middle school is nearer, the school offered is the nearest two-tier school, so SCC funded school travel would be available to the secondary school.