

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 a pupil attending the nearest suitable school that would have had a place available and when they are: a) aged under 8 and live at least two miles from the school; or b) aged 8 or older and live at least three miles from the school. This would be whether or not an application was made for a place at that school. **The nearest suitable school might not be your child's catchment area school.**

We strongly recommend that parents/carers check which school is their nearest suitable school on the [Nearest School Checker](#) because this may not be **your child's catchment area school**.

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

The **nearest suitable school** is the closest school by walking distance to your 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 your child may have.

We would only provide SCC funded school travel to your child's catchment area school if it is the nearest suitable school to their home that would have had a place available and they meet the distance criteria.

School preferences and the order that they are put on an application could affect a child's eligibility for SCC funded school travel.

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

Please note:

- SCC funded school travel eligibility for on time applications is based on the nearest suitable school in Suffolk that would have had a place available for your child on the relevant national offer day. This would be whether or not you applied for a place at that school.
- SCC funded school travel eligibility for late applicants will be assessed when the application is decided.
- If you make a second or subsequent application, we would only re-assess your child's eligibility for SCC funded school travel if they have moved house or their school place offer changes.

The following pages provide some scenarios to 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 2023. 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 2023. 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.

Katie will be starting secondary school in September 2023. 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 although there would not have been a place at **School A**, **School B** had a place available and transport would have been available to that nearer school had Katie's parent applied for it.

Johnny is due to transfer to high school in September 2023. 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 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 2022. 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 2023. 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 2023. 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 to **School B**.
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Freda will start secondary school in September 2023. Her parents are on low income. Her parents applied for a place at a church school that is 9 miles away as first preference. It is not the nearest school.

- 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 7 at County High School as first preference. The Lower Site, Oliver Road, is the nearest school and is over 3 miles away.

- A place is offered at the first preference school.
 - SCC funded school travel would be available in Years 7 and 8.
 - When Julie moves up to County High School, Upper Site, Beetons Way, in Year 9, SCC funded school travel would be available as long as this site is over 3 miles away from Julie's home address.
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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 and is their second nearest school. County High School, Lower Site, Oliver Road, is nearer.

- A place is offered at the first preference school.
- Although County High School, Lower Site, Oliver Road, is nearer, the school offered is the second nearest school and would be the nearest school when the child moves into Year 9, so SCC funded school travel would be available to the secondary school.