

Admissions Policy



Suffolk County Council is responsible for coordinating the admission arrangements for all the local authority maintained schools, including Voluntary controlled (CEVC) schools.

The following is the local authority policy which applies to primary and secondary schools.

We will offer you a school place on the following basis:

Step 1

If we can meet your first preference, we will offer you a place at that school.

Step 2

If we cannot meet your first preference but can meet your second preference, we will offer you a place at that school.

Step 3

If we cannot meet your second preference but can meet your third preference, we will offer you a place at that school. For the entry year only we will put your name on the waiting list of your first and second preference schools.

Step 4

If we cannot meet any of your preferences, we will offer you a place at your catchment school (if you have not included it in your preferences and if there is a place available there) or at the next nearest school, which has a place available, with regard to the efficient use of resources. The next nearest school is measured by walking distance. Walking distance is from the front door of the home to the nearest school gate. Where there is more than one home within a single building (for example apartments) we will measure from the main entrance of the building.

For the entry year only, we will also place your name on the waiting list for your first, second and third preference school. This waiting list is held until the last day of the autumn term.

PLEASE NOTE that we cannot guarantee a place for your child at your catchment school. We recommend that you apply for more than one school because of this.

Admissions Oversubscription Criteria



Admissions oversubscription criteria

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.

Children who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs which names the school must by law be offered a place at that school.

The following admissions oversubscription criteria show the order of priority for places at community and voluntary-controlled schools (and at those foundation/trust schools where it has been agreed that the local authority will manage their admissions arrangements). For entry year applications, these criteria will be applied according to the circumstances existing at the specified closing date.

- 1 Children in public care (Looked After Children).
- 2 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). Priority will be given, where necessary, to applications where there is the smallest age gap. If you have more than one child at the school, please name the youngest one.
- 3 Children who are **ordinarily resident** in the catchment area.

Places will be allocated in the following priority order:

- a If the school is voluntary-controlled, children whose parents are applying on the grounds that the child and/or the family are practising members of the Church of England. (You must provide a letter at the time of application from a priest or minister. This letter must specifically state that you and/or your child is 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).
- b Children who live nearest to the school. We will measure the distance by a straight line ('as the crow flies'). All straight line distances are calculated electronically by the LA using data provided jointly by the Post Office and Ordnance Survey. The data plots the co-ordinates of each property and provides the address-point between which straight line distance is measured and reported to three decimal places. Where there is more than one home within a single building (for example apartments) we will measure to a single point within that building irrespective of where those homes are located.

- 4 Children who live outside the school's catchment area in the same priority order as set out in (a) to (b) above.

NOTES:

Distance tie breaker

It is possible that the PAN of the school will be reached in any one of the categories set out above. For this reason, all applications will be prioritised according to the rules described. Decisions will be made about the offer of places in accordance with those priorities. If it is necessary to use a tie-breaker to distinguish between two or more applications, a distance criterion will be used. We will give priority to the applicants who live nearest to the school as measured by a straight line.

In the unlikely event that two applicants competing for a single place at a school live the same distance from the school, the place will be offered to one applicant on the basis of lots drawn by an officer of the county council not involved with admissions.

Multiple births

If the final place available at a school is offered to a twin or triplet and the remaining sibling/s would ordinarily be refused, Suffolk County Council will offer places to the remaining sibling/s at the same school, unless in the case of primary schools such admissions would breach infant class size legislation.

Waiting lists

If you apply for a school place in the normal admissions round and one or more of your preferences are refused, your child's name will automatically be placed on a waiting list for these schools (as described in Step 2 to Step 4 at the beginning of this document). Names are placed on the waiting list in the priority order set out in our admission oversubscription criteria (above).

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.

Having your child's name on a waiting list will not effect your right to appeal for a school place in any of the schools you have applied for.

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 operate up to the last day of the Autumn term and we do not hold waiting lists for school places for mid-year applications.

Making another application for a place at the same school

If your application for a school place is refused, we will not consider a further application for a place in the same school in the same academic year unless there has been a significant change in the circumstances of the parent, child or school. Such circumstances might be a house move or a place becoming available at the school.

Ordinarily Resident

By “ordinarily resident” we mean 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).

Catchment Area Maps

You can obtain a catchment area map for a school from your local area office.

