



# Norfolk County Council

## **A Parent's Guide to Admissions to Schools in Norfolk 2024-2025**

Note: The information contained in this booklet relates to the school year September 2024 to August 2025

You can apply online during the three transfer rounds (First Admission to School, Transfer to Junior and Transfer to Secondary School) at: [Online Admissions](#)

For all other admissions, please apply at [Norfolk County Council's moving schools webpage](#)

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## Further Information

**If you require more information about any of the matters covered in this guide, please contact:**

Admissions Team  
County Hall  
Martineau Lane  
Norwich  
NR1 2DH  
Tel: 0344 800 8020

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

The Department for Education publishes statutory guidelines on school admissions and admission appeals which are available to read at [School Admissions Code booklet](#) and [School Appeals Code booklet](#).

You may also wish to visit the [Department for Education](#) website to see school performance data and the [Ofsted](#) website to see Ofsted reports on individual schools.

The [Government website](#) provides advice on choosing a school in the Parents section.

To obtain details of the catchment school for your address please visit [Norfolk County Council's where I live](#) webpage.

You can access the internet free in Norfolk's public libraries.

ACE provides free independent advice and information for parents and carers in England and Wales on a range of state education and schooling issues. Their website is at [Advisory Centre for Education](#)

To speak to an adviser, call the ACE Advice Line on **0300 0115 142**. The telephone advice line is open **Monday to Wednesday from 10am to 1pm term time only**. Calls to the ACE Advice Line cost the same as calling a standard landline number - even from a mobile. 0300 numbers are included in any inclusive call minute packages offered by phone operators.

## Neighbouring local authorities

Cambridgeshire County Council  
Castle Court  
Shire Hall  
Cambridge CB3 0AP  
Phone: 0345 045 1370.  
Email: [admissions@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:admissions@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)  
Website: [Schools and Learning - Cambridgeshire County Council](#)

Lincolnshire County Council

Education and Cultural Services Directorate  
County Offices  
Newland  
Lincoln LN1 1YQ  
Phone: 01522 782030  
Email: [schooladmissions@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@lincolnshire.gov.uk)  
Website: [Schools and education – Lincolnshire County Council](#)

Suffolk County Council,  
Endeavour House  
8 Russell Road  
Ipswich IP1 2BX  
Phone: 0345 600 0981  
Email: [admissions@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:admissions@suffolk.gov.uk)  
Website: [School places - Suffolk County Council](#)

## **The pattern of education in Norfolk**

Education takes place in one of the following kinds of school depending on where you live (see the Where I Live section on Norfolk County Council's website for details of schools and their age ranges in your local area).

### **When do children start school?**

Children born between 1 September 2019 - 31 August 2020 will be offered a full time place in a reception class from September 2024. Infant schools are for 4+ to 7 year olds and primary schools are for 4+ to 11 year olds.

### **When do pupils transfer from one school to another?**

Pupils transfer from infant schools to junior schools in the year after their 7th birthday (7+). Junior schools are for 7 to 11 year olds.

Pupils transfer to secondary education from primary schools or junior schools at 11+. Secondary schools are for 11 to 16 year olds or 11-18 year olds if the school has a sixth form.

Norfolk University Technical College offers technically orientated education for 14–19 year olds.

These ages define when pupils are "due to transfer" which is a term used in admission rules.

### **16-19 year olds**

A pupil ceases to be of statutory school age on the last Friday of June of the school year (1 September – 31 August) in which he or she reaches his or her sixteenth birthday. However, the Education and Skills Act 2008 means that all young people

will be required by law to continue in education or training to the end of the academic year in which they turn 17 and until at least their 18th birthday.

There are sixth form colleges at Gorleston and North Walsham. Other colleges of further education offer a wide range of academic and vocational courses and some secondary schools offer sixth form provision.

Information on the choices available for 16-19 year old pupils and how to apply for places at sixth form centres, sixth form colleges and colleges of further or higher education can be found on the [Help You Choose](#) website.

## **Types of school**

Across Norfolk the following types of school offer free education and Norfolk County Council coordinates admission to the majority of these schools. Norfolk County Council does not co-ordinate admissions to independent schools.

### **Community schools**

These schools are owned by us, but locally managed by the governing board and headteacher. Religious education and worship are taught in accordance with Norfolk's agreed syllabus. Norfolk County Council manages admissions to all community schools in Norfolk.

### **Voluntary controlled schools**

These schools were originally provided by voluntary organisations such as the Church of England and educational trusts. In most voluntary controlled schools, religious education is provided in accordance with Norfolk's agreed syllabus. Norfolk County Council manages admissions to all voluntary controlled schools in Norfolk.

### **Voluntary aided schools**

The governing board decides the religious education syllabus, but it must be in accordance with the trust deed of the school. The governing board also has additional powers and responsibilities for the appointment of staff, admission of pupils and the upkeep and improvement of buildings. Admissions to voluntary aided schools are coordinated by the local authority and the governing board must use their published admission rules to prioritise applications.

### **Foundation schools and Trust schools**

We are responsible for funding these schools, but their governing board is responsible for running them and specifically responsible for the admission of pupils. Admissions to foundation and trust schools are coordinated by the local authority and the governing board must use their published admission rules to prioritise applications.

## **Academies including Free Schools**

Academies are publicly funded independent schools with sponsors from the private or voluntary sectors or from churches or other faith groups. The board of governors is responsible for the strategic leadership of the school and for the admission of pupils. Admissions to academies and free schools are coordinated by the local authority and the governing board must use the published admission rules to prioritise applications.

In the first year of opening free schools are not legally required to coordinate their admissions through the local authority. Check the school's website for information about the admission process.

## **University Technical College (UTCs)**

University Technical Colleges (UTCs) are technical academies for 14 to 19 year olds. They have university and employer sponsors and combine practical and academic studies. UTCs specialise in subjects such as engineering and construction – which are taught alongside business skills and the use of ICT. Details of the UTC Norwich are available at: [Norfolk Schools and Learning Providers - Schoolfinder](#).

## **All through schools**

All through schools provide education for children from 4-16 and 4-18 years of age. Children on roll at an all through school do not need to transfer to continue their education at Year 7 even if the all through school is on more than one site.

## **Special needs schools**

These are schools for children with severe and complex special educational needs and who hold an Education Health and Care Plan (Previously called statements of special educational needs).

You can find out the category of each school from the individual school details on School Finder on our website.

## **Admission to schools in Norfolk**

### **When do children start school?**

All parents of children born between 1st September 2019 and 31st August 2020 must be offered a full time place from September 2024. Parents are entitled to defer their admission or request that their child attend on a part-time basis, however the child must start school on a full time basis on the prescribed day following their fifth birthday (or on their fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.

## **Can my child start school later?**

The law allows parents to ask for their child to be admitted but lets them delay the start date until later in the school year or to start on a part time basis. The effect of this is that the place is held and cannot be offered to another child. For a place to be held, admission can only be delayed within the academic year. This means the admission must take place by the summer term 2025. Places cannot be held until the following autumn term for those children who are five during the preceding summer term.

## **What is a part-time place?**

A part-time place will be five sessions of three hours per week. Each school will decide the days and times of the sessions that can be offered. If you want your child to attend part-time please discuss with the headteacher of your allocated school.

## **Can my child start school earlier?**

Your child cannot start earlier than the policy allows.

## **If I do not think my child is ready to start school can they start in Reception the following year?**

If your child was born between 1 April and 31 August (summer born) you can choose not to send them to school until the September following their fifth birthday and request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to Reception, rather than Year 1.

The admission authority must consider parental requests and make decisions based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child.

Parents are encouraged to make any request in good time and before the closing date for the normal admission round (to start school when their child is 4+ on 1 September - the normal year for admission (see timetable on page 9). Parents will need to provide the detailed reasons for their request including any supporting evidence from relevant professionals to enable their request to be given proper consideration. The request should be emailed to the [Admissions Team](#) and include the child's name and date of birth.

Parents will need confirm the school(s) they are planning to express preferences for as the decision will be made by the admission authority for the school, the Local Authority for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools, the Governing Board for Foundation and Voluntary Aided Schools and the Academy Trust for Academies and Free schools.

Where an admission authority agrees to a request to defer until the next academic year the parent will be able to apply in the following year when their child is 5+ on 1 September. Any agreement to a request to defer admission does not guarantee a

place at the preferred schools, but the application will be considered alongside all other applications for a Reception place (described as “due to start school” in our admission arrangements).

Parents need to be aware that the admission authority for a school can change (for example if a school becomes an academy). The new admission authority has the legal right to re-consider the request at the time of application.

Where a parent’s request is not upheld the child will still be considered for a Reception place for the normal year for admission (provided the admission application is received before the application deadline, otherwise this will be treated alongside other late applications).

Parents have a statutory right of appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied. This right does not apply if they are offered a place at a school for which they have applied.

It is recommended that you make application for the normal point of admission by the closing date of **15 January 2024** at the same time as making a request for a delayed admission. Late applications are considered after those received on time.

Please visit [“Advice on the admission of summer born children”](#) for further non-statutory guidance from the Department for Education.

### **When must I decide which school I would prefer my child to attend?**

Please see the timetables below for all important dates in the three admission rounds. You might find it helpful to visit the school(s) before you apply. Many schools hold open events for parents. Details on these can be obtained from the schools or from notices which some schools publish in the local papers. If a school does not have an open event you can get more information by contacting the headteacher at the school. You must make your admission application to us by the closing date specified in the appropriate timetable.

### **What happens if I apply after the closing date?**

If your application is late we will still consider it but it will be given a lower priority than all preferences received on time. This is because all applications received by the closing date must be considered before any late applications. If there are exceptional circumstances as to why your application is late, please include them when you make your application.



## **School Admissions - Important dates**

### **Admission to Reception classes for the School Year 2024/25**

#### **25 September 2023**

##### **Admission round opens**

Parents can start applying for admission. You should apply online at: [Online Admissions](#)

#### **15 January 2024**

##### **Closing date**

All applications must be received by us by this date.

#### **3 April 2024**

##### **Coordination scheme applied**

No changes can be made to applications after this date until after Offer Day.

#### **16 April 2024**

##### **National Offer Day**

For those who apply online, decisions will be available on the website from 08:30am. An email, with additional information, will then follow during the day. If you complete a paper application, you will be sent a decision letter which will arrive after this date.

#### **14 May 2024**

This is the last day for telling us you want to appeal.

#### **20 May 2024**

##### **Mini admission round**

All changes requested since 15 January are considered from this date.

#### **June/July 2024**

Appeal hearings take place.

#### **31 December 2024**

All waiting lists held by us end on this day.

### **Transfer to Junior School for September 2024**

#### **6 November 2023**

##### **Admission round opens**

Information about the transfer to junior round is released; letters will be distributed to all children in infant schools due to transfer to junior schools. You should apply online at [www.admissionsonline.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.admissionsonline.norfolk.gov.uk).

#### **15 January 2024**

##### **Closing date**

All applications must be received by us by this date.

### **3 April 2024**

#### **Coordination scheme applied**

No changes can be made to applications after this date until after Offer Day.

### **16 April 2024**

#### **National Offer Day**

For those who apply online, decisions will be available on the website from 08:30am. An email, with additional information, will then follow during the day. If you complete a paper application, you will be sent a decision letter which will arrive after this date.

### **14 May 2024**

This is the last day for telling us you want to appeal.

### **16 May 2024**

#### **Mini admission round**

All changes requested since 15 January are considered from this date.

### **June/July 2024**

Appeal hearings take place.

### **31 December 2024**

All waiting lists held by us end on this day.

## **Transfer to Secondary School for September 2024**

### **11 September 2023**

#### **Admission round opens**

Letters will be distributed to schools and given to all Year 6 pupils who live in Norfolk and attend a maintained Norfolk School. You should apply online at: [Online Admissions](#)

### **31 October 2023**

#### **Closing date**

All applications must be received by us by this date.

### **2 February 2024**

#### **Coordination scheme**

No changes can be made to applications after this date until after Offer Day.

### **1 March 2024**

#### **National Offer Day**

For those who apply online, decisions will be available on the website from 08:30am. An email, with additional information, will then follow during the day. If you complete a paper application, you will be sent a decision letter which will arrive after this date.

### **16 April 2024**

This is the last day for telling us you want to appeal.

### **3 April 2024**

#### **Mini admission round**

All changes requested since 31 October are considered from this date.

### **May/June 2024**

Appeal hearings take place.

### **31 December 2024**

All waiting lists held by us end on this day.

## **Admission round questions**

### **How do I apply?**

You can apply online during the three transfer rounds at: [Online Admissions](#) or you can complete a paper application available from [Norfolk School Admissions](#) or by requesting a copy from Customer Services on 0344 800 8020.

### **Why should I apply online?**

There are a number of advantages to applying online.

- It's quick, safe and secure
- Your application will be confirmed electronically
- You will be able to view the application at any stage
- You will be able to find out which school your child has been offered on offer day.

**Remember, free access to the internet is available at all Norfolk libraries.**

Apply at [Online Admissions](#)

### **At which school do I stand the best chance of getting a place?**

You are entitled to make a preference for any school, but you should read the oversubscription rules for that school to work out what priority your child would have for a place. Some schools give a higher priority to children living in a defined area (the catchment area) and most are able to accommodate all pupils living in their catchment area. If a place is offered at a school outside your catchment area, your child will not be guaranteed a place at the next school in that area when it is time to transfer.

### **Where can I find out which is my catchment school?**

You can find out the catchment schools for your home address by visiting [Norfolk County Council's where I live](#) webpage or contact us on 0344 800 8020.

## **What is used to determine the priority for places?**

The admission authority must use the published admission rules to prioritise applications. A parent is entitled to provide additional information in support of their application, but this can only be considered where it confirms, or supports one of the stated oversubscription rules for the school.

The oversubscription rules for each school are available on our website at: [SchoolFinder](#)

## **Is there a limit to the number of children in a class?**

In Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 (children aged 4, 5 and 6) children should normally be taught in classes of no more than 30. There is no legal limit for children in all other year groups. It is, however, important that classes are not too large so that all pupils receive an effective education.

## **Should I state a preference for more than one school?**

We encourage parents to state three preferences for schools. These preferences will be considered by the admission authority for each school. You will not increase your chance of obtaining a place at a popular school by putting only one preference or the same school more than once. You must consider how your child will get to and from the preferred school(s) and you should read the section on School Transport on page 32.

We encourage you to include your catchment school as a preference as we cannot hold places and you may be offered a school further away if we are unable to offer any of your preferences.

## **How do I apply for a school not in Norfolk?**

If you wish to apply for a place at a school situated outside of Norfolk, you must include this school as one of your three preferences on your application. We will then work with that local authority to check whether they can offer you a place. We then make sure that when a parent could potentially be offered more than one place, their highest preference is offered, and other potential offers refused. This is to ensure that parents are only offered one school place and do not 'block' places that could be offered to other parents.

## **How does co-ordination work?**

Each admission authority (Norfolk County Council for community and voluntary controlled schools and the governing board or Trustees at each academy, Free School, Foundation, Trust and Voluntary Aided school) has to consider all preferences for the school and prioritise them in accordance with the published oversubscription rules. See page 19 for details of Norfolk's coordination scheme. You can find individual school's oversubscription rules on our website at: [SchoolFinder](#)

**Do you reserve a place at my catchment school if I do not state a preference for it?**

No - admission authorities cannot reserve places so you are advised to include your catchment school as one of your preferences, where in most cases you will have a high priority for a place. If you are not sure of your catchment school, please contact us or check [Norfolk County Council's where I live](#) website. If you do not include your catchment school as a preference, you may find we cannot offer you a place at either your catchment school or your preferred school and you could be offered a school much further away from your home address.

**If my child attends a nursery class do I need to apply again for a place in Reception?**

Yes - you **must** apply for a Reception place even if you want a place at the same school.

**Does attending a nursery guarantee a place at the attached school?**

No – attendance at a nursery does not guarantee or give any priority for a place in Reception even if the nursery is attached to the main school.

**What happens if a school gets too many applications?**

When there are not enough places at a school for all the children who have applied, we use oversubscription rules to decide who will get in. These are published on the individual school's page on [SchoolFinder](#).

**How many children can a school admit?**

Each school has a Published Admission Number which is the maximum number of places available. The Published Admission Number for each school is on the individual school's page on [SchoolFinder](#).

**What happens if you cannot offer any of my preferences?**

In accordance with our legal duty, we will offer you a place at the next nearest school with a place available. You have the right to appeal against any preference that has been refused.

**Who should complete the application?**

We expect a parent or parents to complete the application. We consider any person with parental responsibility (PR) to be the parent of a child. Any application signed by a parent has to be considered by us. If more than one parent has PR we are not required to obtain the agreement of both parents before processing an application.

## **Can each parent make an application for their child's school place?**

We expect one application per child. If more than one application is received only one will be processed. If more than one parent has Parental Responsibility, we are not required to obtain the agreement of both parents before processing an application.

### **Definition of parent**

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

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

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

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

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

### **What happens if parents cannot agree on which school their child should attend?**

We can only offer one school place to each child so we are unable to process applications where there is a conflict between parents as to which school their child should attend. Where we receive different preferences from parents we will firstly write to the parents and explain that we cannot process the application until agreement is reached. In the transfer rounds if agreement is not reached by the latest date for consideration of "late applications", all preferences will be frozen and a place will be offered at the nearest school to the child's home address with places available. We will require evidence of parental agreement in the form of written confirmation from each parent confirming their agreement or a Court Order.

For in year admissions, we will expect the child to stay at their current school until there is agreement by both of the parents in writing as to which school the child should attend or an Order is made by the Court. Where we have already offered a place and we are later informed of a dispute between parents we will withdraw the place offered and freeze the application until there is agreement between the parents or a Court Order unless the child has already started at the new school.

Where a child has moved a distance that makes travel to the current school unreasonable even where there is a pending Court application, we will offer a place at the catchment school, or nearest school to the address at which the child is currently living.

Where a child is Missing Education, to comply with the Local Authority's statutory duties, a school place will be offered at the nearest school to the address which the child lives, with a place.

### **Who do you define as a brother or sister?**

When we use the oversubscription rules, 'brother' or 'sister' means: brothers or sisters living at the same address including adopted children, step-brothers, step-sisters and children in foster care within a family unit. Some admission authority schools may have a different definition. (See the individual school admission policy for details.)

### **What about twins, triplets and multiple births?**

If a school has only one place available and your children have priority for that place, all of the siblings will be offered a place, even though there is only one place available. Where infant class restrictions apply the local authority will grant an exception as the law allows. Siblings born in the same school year will be treated as multiple births and exceptions will be also granted in these cases.

### **What is the home address?**

Applications are processed on the basis of the home address for the child when you submit your application. In the majority of cases, this will be the parents' home address although in cases where the parents are separated you will need to tell us which address is the home address (please see the answer to the following question).

### **What happens if parents live at separate addresses?**

Where a child lives with separated parents who have shared responsibility, each for part of the week, the home address will be considered to be the address that the child lives at for most of the week (including weekends). We will expect evidence to support this at the time of application. In cases where the child spends an equal proportion of the week with both parents, evidence of the main contact address and which parent receives the child benefit will be required to support the application. If neither parent is in receipt of child benefit then we will use the address that the child is registered under at their GP surgery.

### **What if I move to a new house after I have applied for a school place?**

If you move after you have stated your preference, you must inform us. If it is after the closing date it may not always be possible to get a place at the local school for your new address. Let us know as soon as possible when you think you will be moving. You will need to provide evidence of the new address. We cannot take your

new address into account until we have received evidence that your child lives at the new address. Even though you may know that you are moving to a new address in the future we cannot take this into account until your child is living there.

### **What if I move out of the catchment area for the school I have applied for before the offer letters are sent out?**

You must notify us of any change of address as soon as you can as we must use your current address. If you are no longer living in the address used on the original application at the date places are allocated and only tell us of your move after offer day we may have to withdraw the place.

### **What if I am a UK Service Family or Crown Servant?**

In line with the provisions of paragraph 2.21 of the School Admissions Code, for families of service personnel with a confirmed posting, or crown servants from overseas, Admission Authorities must:

- allocate a place in advance of the family arriving in the area (provided the application is accompanied by an official letter that declares the relocation date)
- use the posting address when applying over-subscription criteria as long of evidence of posting is provided.

Additional useful information is available at: [Achievement - Norfolk County Council](#)

Admission Authorities may give some priority to children eligible for service premium, but you should check the over-subscription rules for the school you are applying for, to see if this applies.

### **Verification of Addresses**

The local authority is concerned that the “permanent addresses” given by some parents may not be genuine or is temporary for the specific purpose of securing a place at a particular school. The local authority must ensure that parents who provide misleading or fraudulent information for admission do not deprive other children of their rightful school place.

To ensure a fair process for all families we check carefully to ensure that we use the correct address to prioritise applications. However, if you feel a parent has not provided the correct information contact us in confidence by e-mail at [admissions@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:admissions@norfolk.gov.uk) or by telephoning 0344 800 8020.

**Any parent who has obtained a place using a fraudulent address will have the place withdrawn. If the fraudulent address is discovered after their child starts school the place will still be withdrawn, and the child will be asked to leave the school.**



## **Will you ask for documentary evidence of my home address?**

We will ask a sample of families to provide information to confirm the child's home address. We will contact these parents where additional information is required. We may also require parents to provide further evidence to support the change of address after their child starts at the school. If a school place has been secured through false information provided about a home address, we do have the power to withdraw the place offered even if the child has already started at the school.

We cannot accept a temporary address if you still own a property that was previously used as a home address.

## **Applications from Overseas**

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

We recommend that if you are entering the UK from overseas and wish to apply for a school place that you check your child has a right of abode or that the conditions of their immigration status otherwise permit them to attend a maintained, free school or academy in England. For further information please visit the government's webpage at [Right of Abode](#).

We will need evidence of your new address in Norfolk. If we do not receive this before we process your child's application, then your child's current address will be used. If this is in another country, it would give your child a lower priority for admission to most schools. If we receive evidence of your new address by the relevant closing date or we receive this before the following dates, we will process your application from your new address as an on-time application. You will need to either email or post your evidence to the Admissions Team making it clear who this evidence relates to by including your child's name and date of birth. If you send your information through the post, we strongly suggest you get proof of posting as we cannot be responsible for information lost in the post.

## **What does "due to transfer" mean?**

Children in their last year (Year 2) at an Infant school are due to transfer to a junior school. Children in their last year (Year 6) at a Junior school or Primary school are due to transfer to a secondary school.

## **Will my child be interviewed?**

Schools may wish to meet with parents before your child starts at the school to discuss needs and issues for your child. However, this must not in any way be used to consider whether your child is offered a place or not. No parent or child should be interviewed as any part of the application or admission process, in any school. This means that the outcome of interviewing or testing must not determine whether a

school offers a place or not. In order that schools cannot be accused of assessing prior to admission, they must clearly state to a parent before any interview or tests take place, that their child has been offered a place at the school. Only once this statement has been made can further discussions or tests take place to determine factors such as setting arrangements or the level of support an individual child might need.

An exception is Wymondham College (the only state school in Norfolk offering boarding places) which may interview pupils to assess their suitability for a boarding place.

Some schools admit a percentage of pupils on the basis of aptitude in a particular subject and those schools are permitted to test applicants prior to offering their specialist places.

### **Will I be offered help with transport?**

We will offer your child free transport to their nearest catchment or nearest school if it is more than two miles away if your child is under 8 years old on 1st September of a school year but this increases to more than three miles when your child is over 8. See pages 33–35 for full details about school transport in Norfolk. **Free transport will not be provided where parents express a preference for a school which is not the catchment or nearest school to their address.**

### **My child has special needs, will this affect the decision?**

Children with special educational needs, but without an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or statement of special educational needs, are treated in the same way as any other applicant. This means they cannot be turned down for a place just because a school thinks it cannot cater for their needs. Where a child has an EHCP or statement of special educational needs, adults with parental responsibility will have been consulted on the particular needs and the provision (including a named school where appropriate) that will be made to meet these needs. Once a school is named in an EHCP or statement, the school must admit the child. Parents of children with EHCPs or statements of special educational needs have the right of appeal to the Special Needs and Disability Tribunal.

### **Can I change my preferences after I have sent the form in?**

If you wish to change the order of your preferences after completing your application, you must email or write to us with your changes. You need to be aware that if you change your application after the closing date these will have a lower priority than those preferences received on time. You can only express a maximum of three preferences.

### **What if I want to consider flexi-schooling?**

Occasionally schools may make special arrangements for a child to be educated part time at school and part time at home (often described as flexi-schooling) with the family. However, this would be at the discretion of the headteacher.

## **When will I know if my child has a place?**

We will let you know the outcome of the application on the relevant national offer day.

Transfer to secondary school	National offer day 1 March 2024
Transfer to junior school	National offer day 16 April 2024
Admission to reception classes	National offer day 16 April 2024

If you have applied online, your admission account will be updated from 08:30 on the morning of National offer day and you will receive an email during the day telling you the outcome of your application together with additional information. If you have sent in a paper application, you will be sent a letter by 2<sup>nd</sup> class post.

All school admission decisions must be confirmed by email or in writing by Norfolk County Council. Schools are not able to make an offer or guarantee a place at their school.

## **What can I do if I am refused a place?**

If we are unable to offer a place for your child at your preferred school(s), you will be offered an alternative place. You will also be given the opportunity to appeal (see page 31). Appeals will be held in the summer term.

We must also keep a waiting list until the end of December of all children who have been refused a place at a higher ranked school. If any places become available, all those who have expressed a preference for a place at that school will be considered, including those that have applied after the closing date. We will use the oversubscription rules to determine who can be offered any available places.

## **Is there any further information to help me decide?**

If you contact us we will also give you further advice on the school(s) where you have a high priority for a place. Please remember that for most schools, it is your child's home address that determines which school they have a high priority for, not which school they currently attend. Nurseries and pre-schools are not considered feeder schools for admission into Reception classes for the majority of schools, so attending a Nursery or pre-school may not give your child a priority for a place.

Further details about schools can also be found in individual school brochures available from each school or on the school's website.

## **Summary of Norfolk's co-ordination scheme**

- Parents can express up to three preference schools.
- All Norfolk parents will complete a common application form either online or on a paper form which must be returned direct to us at the County Council.

- Any parents seeking to apply direct to any state funded school must be provided with a common application form inviting three preferences which must then be forwarded to the County Council.
- For first admission to school, admission information will be sent to parents using data supplied by Norfolk Primary Care Trust in accordance with the published timetable. For transfers to Junior or Secondary school admission information will be sent to parents via their child's current state school.
- Closing date for applications will be as per the published timetable.
- The governing boards of academies, foundation, trust, voluntary aided and free schools manage their own admissions. If the school is oversubscribed, details of all preferences cast for the school will be forwarded to the Headteacher so that their over-subscription rules can be applied. Some schools require parents to complete a Supplementary Information Form (SIF) so that oversubscription rules can be applied. You will need to check if this is the case for the school(s) you are making application for.
- Applications for school places in other Local Authorities will be forwarded to that authority by Norfolk County Council in accordance with our timetable.
- Academies, foundation, trust, voluntary aided and free schools return all applications sorted in rank order to Norfolk County Council by the required date.
- Other Local Authorities notify Norfolk County Council of potential offers.
- Norfolk County Council applies the published admission rules in the event of oversubscription at Community or Voluntary Controlled schools to prioritise all applications.
- Where more than one place could potentially be offered the single offer will be for the school that the parent has ranked the highest. Lower ranked preferences will be withdrawn. This process will be undertaken until all potential offers are resolved.
- Where no preference can be met, Norfolk County Council will, wherever possible, allocate a place at the next nearest school with spaces to ensure an offer is made to all parents living in Norfolk.
- Parents will be advised of their right of appeal against any refusal and to whom their appeal should be lodged for each preference that is refused.
- Norfolk County Council will make the final allocation of school places on the appropriate offer day as stated in the timetable. Any changes after this date will be considered in a mini admission round which takes place after the initial offer of places.

- Norfolk County Council will maintain a waiting list until 31 December 2024 for all Norfolk schools to co-ordinate changes which occur after the offer date. The waiting list will be maintained in accordance with the published oversubscription criteria for the individual school. No waiting lists will be maintained after this date.
- Late applications will be considered a lower priority than all on time applications. After the initial allocations, applications will then be prioritised solely on the basis of the oversubscription criteria.

## **Information on oversubscription rules**

Unless specifically stated in individual school admission arrangements the following information and definitions apply to all maintained schools in Norfolk.

### **Distance**

Distance will be measured on a straight line "crow-fly" basis using Ordnance Survey data. The measurement will be taken from the post office postcode address point on the child's home to the post office postcode address point on the school.

### **Looked after children or children in public care**

Schools must give highest priority to looked after children and all previously looked after children, including those children who appear to have been in state care outside of England. Previously looked after children are those who were looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order).

### **Siblings**

When we use the oversubscription rules, "siblings" means: brothers or sisters living at the same address including adopted children, step-brothers, step-sisters and children in foster care within a family unit. Some admission authority schools may have a different definition. (See the individual school admission policy for details.)

Only siblings attending school at the time of your child's admission will be given a higher priority in the oversubscription rules.

### **Feeder schools**

Where an admission authority prioritises children on the basis of attending a feeder school, those feeder schools will be listed as part of the admission arrangements. Feeder school priority will only apply in the first year of entry to the school and will not apply to in year school admissions.

## **Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP)/Statements of Special Educational Needs**

Where a child's EHCP or statement of Special Educational Needs names a specific school, the school must admit the child regardless of whether the school has a place available. The oversubscription rules for most schools include pupils with EHCPs or statements as the first priority to help parents understand that these pupils have the highest priority legally. For those schools the remaining list of rules is used to prioritise applicants if the school is oversubscribed.

### **Disability**

Disability will be defined using the definition contained in the Equality Act 2010.

### **Random Allocation**

Where random allocation is used to offer school places, applicants will have their names drawn by lots to see who should be offered the places. There will be an independent scrutiny of the random allocation process.

Admission arrangements can be subject to changes imposed by the Department of Education Schools Adjudicator. If any changes are made these will be highlighted on the [School Admissions](#) page of our website. We will also ensure that the electronic version available on our website shows any changes as they occur.

Norfolk County Council decides on the admissions policy for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools. You can find out the category of each school on [SchoolFinder](#).

### **Oversubscription rules for Community and Voluntary Secondary Schools**

If there are more requests for places than places available, the Authority will admit children in the following order of priority:

1. children with an Education, Health and Care Plan or Statement of special educational needs naming the school;
2. children in public care, have been adopted from public care or adopted from abroad who are due to transfer;
3. children who are due to transfer and live in the catchment area;
4. children who are due to transfer who have been allocated a permanent place at a Specialist Resource Base attached to the school (Places allocated by Norfolk County Council's Placement Panel);
5. children who are eligible for the service premium. A pupil is eligible for the service premium if:
  - a) one of their parents is serving in the regular armed forces (including pupils with a parent who is on full commitment as part of the full time reserve service);

- b) they have been registered as a 'service child' on the January school census at any point since 2016;
  - c) one of their parents died whilst serving in the armed forces and the pupil receives a pension under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme or the War Pensions Scheme.
6. children who are due to transfer and live outside the catchment area, who have an older brother or sister attending the school at the time of admission (but not the sixth form);
  7. children who are due to transfer who live outside the catchment area and attend a feeder school at the opening date of the admission round
  8. children of staff at the school
    - a) where the member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made, and/or
    - b) the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for which there is a demonstrable skill shortage
  9. children who are due to transfer and live outside the catchment area.

If all children within any of the above rules cannot be offered a place, the highest priority will be given to children living nearest to the school within that rule. To determine who lives nearest, distance will be measured on a straight line 'crow fly' basis, using Ordnance Survey data. If following the application of admission rules and distance two applicants cannot be separated for a final place at a school the authority will use random allocation to determine the priority for the remaining place.

### **Oversubscription rules for admission to Reception classes in community and voluntary controlled schools for children due to start school in the School Year 2024/25**

If there are more applications for places than there are places available, the Local Authority will give priority to children living nearest to the school, according to the following rules in this order of priority:

Children who are due to start school and:

1. have an EHCP or statement of special educational needs naming that school
2. children in public care, have been adopted from public care or adopted from abroad who are due to transfer
3. live in the catchment area and who have a sibling attending the school at the time of their admission
4. live in the catchment area who have a brother or sister attending the feeder junior school
5. have a disability and live in the catchment area (Appropriate professional evidence will be required to confirm the disability)
6. live in the catchment area

7. have been allocated a permanent place at a Specialist Resource Base attached to the school. (Places allocated by Norfolk County Council's Placement panel)
8. children eligible for the service premium. A pupil is eligible for the service premium if:
  - a. one of their parents is serving in the regular armed forces (including pupils with a parent who is on full commitment as part of the full time reserve service);
  - b. they have been registered as a 'service child' on the January school census at any point since 2016;
  - c. one of their parents died whilst serving in the armed forces and the pupil receives a pension under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme or the War Pensions Scheme.
9. live outside the catchment area who have a brother or sister with a statement of special educational needs attending the school at the time of their admission
10. live outside the area served by the school who have a brother or sister attending the school at the time of their admission
11. live outside the catchment area who have a brother or sister attending the feeder junior school
12. have a disability and live outside the catchment area (Appropriate professional evidence will be required to confirm the disability)
13. children of staff
  - a. where a member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made and/or
  - b. the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for there is a demonstrable skill shortage
14. live outside the catchment area

If all children within any of the above rules cannot be offered a place, the highest priority will be given to children living nearest to the school within that rule. To determine who lives nearest, distance will be measured on a straight line "crow fly" basis, using Ordnance Survey data. The address will be measured from the post office address point on the property.

In the unlikely event that distance does not separate the final two or more pupils seeking the last remaining place, a random allocation will be used to determine who is offered the final place.

NOTE: Criteria 7 only applies to schools which have a Specialist Resource Base on site.

Feeder school priority will only apply in the first year of entry to the school.

Children who will be four or more but under five on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024 will be due to start school.



## **Oversubscription rules for pupils transferring to community and voluntary controlled junior schools (Year 3) for children in their last year at an Infant or First school**

If there are more applications for places than there are places available, the Local Authority will give priority to children living nearest to the school, according to the following rules in this order of priority:

1. children with an EHCP or statement of special educational needs naming that school
2. children in public care, have been adopted from public care or adopted from abroad who are due to transfer
3. children who are due to transfer, living in the catchment area who have a brother or sister attending the school at the time of their admission
4. children who are due to transfer, living in the catchment area who have no brother or sister connection with the school
5. children who are due to transfer and have been allocated a permanent place at a Specialist Resource Base attached to the school. (Places allocated by Norfolk County Council's Placement panel).
6. Children eligible for the service premium. A pupil is eligible for the service premium if:
  - a. one of their parents is serving in the regular armed forces (including pupils with a parent who is on full commitment as part of the full time reserve service);
  - b. they have been registered as a 'service child' on the January school census at any point since 2016;
  - c. one of their parents died whilst serving in the armed forces and the pupil receives a pension under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme or the War Pensions Scheme.
7. children who are due to transfer, living outside the catchment area who have a brother or sister attending the school at the time of their admission
8. children who are due to transfer, living outside the catchment area and attend a feeder school at the opening date of the admission round.
9. children of staff
  - a. where a member of staff has been employed at the school for two or more years at the time at which the application for admission to the school is made and/or
  - b. the member of staff is recruited to fill a vacant post for there is a demonstrable skill shortage
10. children who are due to transfer, living outside the catchment area served by the school who have no brother or sister or feeder school connection with the school.
11. children attending primary schools with a brother or sister at the junior school

12. children attending primary schools with no brother or sister at the junior school.

If all children within any of the above rules cannot be offered a place, the highest priority will be given to children living nearest to the school within that rule. To determine who lives nearest, distance will be measured on a straight line “crow fly” basis, using Ordnance Survey data. The address will be measured from the post office address point on the property.

Where distance does not separate the final two or more pupils seeking the last remaining place, a random allocation will be used to determine who is offered the final place.

### **Important Note**

‘School’ is defined as the main school and not a learning support centre or nursery class attached to the school. This means that no priority would be given to a child from outside the catchment area who had either a brother or sister at the attached nursery class or in temporary or part-time attendance at the attached learning support centre. The address given on the application form will be used to decide the catchment school.

Children in their last year (Year 2) at an Infant or First School will be considered due to transfer. Children attending a primary school are considered as not due to transfer and therefore their applications have the lowest priority for a place even if they live in the catchment area of the school.

Feeder school priority will only apply in the first year of entry to the school.

NOTE: Criteria 5 only applies to schools which have a Specialist Resource Base on site.

**Individual admission policies for academies and foundation, voluntary aided, trust, and free schools can be found on the [SchoolFinder](#) website.**

## **In Year Admissions – Guidance**

This section deals with requests for a school place other than those to join Reception, Year 3 at a junior school or Year 7 at a secondary school for September 2024.

To apply for a change of schools, other than at the point of transfer, parents must complete an in year application which can be completed online at [Moving schools during the school year - Norfolk County Council](#) or by contacting the Admissions Team for an application form.

It is generally agreed that it is in the best interests of children and schools for school transfers to take place at the beginning of a new term. In Norfolk where a parent makes an application to change their child’s school during the school year it will only be considered by the Admissions Team in line with the following timetable:

- 31 October for a transfer to take place at the beginning of the spring term (after Christmas)
- 28 (29) February for a transfer to take place at the beginning of the summer term (after Easter)

- 31 May for a transfer to take place at the beginning of the autumn term (the beginning of a new school year). Decisions regarding preference(s) will be sent out before the end of the summer term. Applications received after 31 May will be considered after all on time applications. Late applications will be processed until 3 July. After 3 July applications will be processed after 31 October. Where possible decisions regarding late applications will be sent out before the beginning of the new school year.

If a parent believes there are exceptional reasons why their child should move immediately, they should provide them to the Admissions Team in writing along with the appropriate supporting documents and they will be considered by the admission authority for the school.

This guidance does not apply where a family has moved a significant distance from their previous home address which makes travel to their current school unreasonable. In this case the Admissions Team will process the application as soon as it is received.

Please note the following:

1. Where a child is currently attending a school in the independent sector and notice to leave has been given to the school, the application will be considered for admission at the beginning of the following term to ensure continuity of education. Written confirmation of notice will be required.
2. Where medical reasons are given, a letter from a relevant medical professional will be required to support the application.
3. Where “Home education” has been disallowed by Norfolk County Council. We will seek confirmation from the Manager for Services to Home Education. If parents are currently home educating and want to access a school place it will only be considered for an immediate transfer where home education has been disallowed.
4. Where issues with the current school such as severe bullying are given as the reason for a transfer, we will require additional evidence to corroborate parent’s reasons. An immediate transfer will only be agreed where the current school confirms to us that there is no further action that can be taken to resolve the problems.

In all cases the Admission Team will contact the current school to advise that an exception to the In Year policy is being sought and the reason for a move of school.

**Under no circumstances should you withdraw your child from their current school before an alternative school has been offered.**

Please remember that if you are concerned about any aspect of your child’s schooling you should first raise the issue with their class teacher (primary school) or head of year/member of the pastoral team (secondary school). If the matter remains unresolved you should approach the headteacher who may wish to discuss your reasons for requesting a school transfer and be given the opportunity to resolve issues.

We will not process a request for an exception to the In Year policy if you have not raised the issues, you are concerned about with the current school.

**It is important that you consider the following when deciding whether to apply for a transfer of your child's school:**

You need to think about the County Council's policy for transferring schools as it is expected that most transfers occur at the start of the term, depending on when the application is made. We have detailed our timetable on page 3 of the 'In Year' admissions application form.

We encourage you to talk to your child's teachers, Head of Year or Headteacher if there are difficulties at the current school. You should also talk to your child about the possible change.

Moving schools may not necessarily be the right thing to do. Your child may have friends and the right teachers at the current school. All schools organise and do things differently, teaching the National Curriculum in different ways and at different times. Your child will have to deal with all this change, having to settle into a new environment. It is important that any transfer of schools is in the best interest of your child.

For Key Stage 3 and 4 transferring schools after GCSE options have been selected may mean that your child will not be able to do the same subjects and the examinations may be set by different boards at a new school. Many subjects also involve course work which your child will not have completed.

You need to also consider the costs involved with a possible change of schools. You may not be entitled to help with transport to another school and you will need to consider how your child will get to and from school. You may also need to buy new uniform.

A transfer can only take place should there be a place in the appropriate year group at the point that we consider the application. Where a year group is over-subscribed your application will be refused and, at which point, you will be offered the right of appeal. We provide details of the admission appeal process on our website and in our Parent Guide to School Admissions

## **In Year Admissions Questions**

### **What admission rules apply?**

The individual admission rules shown on the school's individual entry on [SchoolFinder](#) will apply with the following amendment. Where the rules state 'due to transfer' this will be amended to 'the appropriate age for the requested year group.' In addition, no feeder school priority will apply to In Year admissions.

Places can normally only be refused if the school has reached its maximum capacity in the relevant year. This may be different to the published admission number shown on [SchoolFinder](#) and will be determined by the size of class groups within the school.

## **What happens if I move to a different part of Norfolk or am moving to Norfolk?**

If you move home and a change of school is necessary, you must make an in year application which can be completed on line at [Moving schools during the school year - Norfolk County Council](#) or by contact the Admissions Team for an application form. If you move home but wish your child to remain at his or her existing school and this is no longer your catchment school, you would normally be expected to meet the costs of transport from home to school. Please contact us to find out if there is any transport to meet your needs - telephone 0344 800 8020.

## **What if I prefer a school outside Norfolk?**

If you wish to apply for a place at a school run by another local authority you must apply direct to that local authority. If you are offered a place at a school outside Norfolk school you must accept responsibility for transport and the cost incurred unless it is your nearest school. In these cases, transport will be provided for children who live more than 3 miles away or 2 miles for those under 8 years old. (see pages 33). See page 3 - 4 for contact details of neighbouring authorities.

## **What about children transferring from the independent sector?**

If your child currently attends an independent school and you want them to transfer to a maintained school, their priority for a place will be based on the standard oversubscription rules. You must make your application to the Local Authority for that school to seek a school place. (See page 3 - 4 for contact details for neighbouring local authorities).

## **Are there special arrangements for pupils with behavioural difficulties?**

Schools cannot refuse to admit pupils thought to be potentially disruptive, or likely to exhibit challenging behaviour, on the grounds that the child is first to be assessed for special educational needs. An Admission Authority may refuse to admit a child because it has good reason to believe the child may display challenging behaviour. This can only happen if the school also has a particularly high proportion of either children with challenging behaviour or previously permanently excluded pupils on roll compared to other local schools. The Admission Authority can then refer the request back to the Local Authority for action under the Fair Access Protocol (see page 32 for details).

## **What if I am a UK Service Family?**

For UK service families we comply with the provisions of paragraph 2.21 of the School Admissions Code and will accept a Unit postal address, quartering area address or future home address as the address for the application when provided with official proof of a posting to Norfolk and a relocation date. We will try to process the application in advance of the place being required.

## **What if I am a UK Service Family and the local schools are full?**

Norfolk's Fair Access Protocol requires schools to admit children who move into an area where there are no school places within a reasonable distance of their home address even when local schools are full. Fair access applies to all families including service families.

Service families are also included within a limited number of legal exceptions to infant class limits (classes with a majority of Reception, Year One and Year Two pupils) to allow classes to exceed 30 pupils without the need for an additional teacher. This supports the application of fair access in these year groups; however, no class would be expected to have more than 32 children under these arrangements so as to limit the impact on learning for all children in primary classes including infant classes.

### **Will my child always be educated in their chronological age group?**

Children are normally taught in their chronological age group. There may be circumstances in which the Headteacher decides that the child's education should be provided in an alternative year group. Any decision must be made in the best interests of the child and any decision will be made in consultation with the family.

Parents may also seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group. Admission authorities must make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned.

Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied for. This right does not apply if the child is offered a place at a school, but it is not in the preferred age group.

### **How many applications can I make for a school place?**

You can only make one application per school year unless there is a material change of circumstances, such as a significant house move, and you are no longer able to get your child to their current, or previous school.

### **What restrictions apply in Infant Classes (Year R, 1 and 2)?**

The law does not permit Infant classes to exceed 30 children with a single schoolteacher. Additional children may be admitted under limited exceptional circumstances as defined in paragraph 2.16 of the School Admissions Code.

## **In Year Admission Process**

All parents must fill in a Primary or Secondary In Year Application Form for each child. The form can be filled in online at [Moving schools during the school year - Norfolk County Council](#)

If you would prefer an application form this can be sent to you. Please call the Admission Team (see page 3)

### **If you have moved a distance which makes travel to your child's current school unreasonable**

- All applications will be dealt with as quickly as possible and we will contact you within 15 school days.
- You will receive a letter/email telling you at which school we are able to offer your child a place.
- A copy of the offer letter will be sent to the Headteacher of the school who will contact you within 5 school days to arrange the admission and start date.
- The school may require you to visit before your child starts at the school.

If we are unable to offer you a place at your preferred school(s) you will be offered the right to appeal to an independent appeals panel. If you want to appeal you will need to contact the Admissions team for more information.

### **If your child is already at a Norfolk school and wishes to change schools**

- We expect any change of school to take place at the beginning of term. (See timetable on page 26)
- Applications for a change of school mid-year are considered after the next half term holiday. You will be told the outcome of your application by the end of term.
- If you believe that there are exceptional reasons why your child should move immediately you should provide these in writing and the Local Authority will consider your request.

If we are unable to offer you a place at your preferred school(s) you will be offered the right to appeal to an independent appeals panel. If you want to appeal you will need to contact the Admissions team for more information.

**NOTE: No waiting lists are kept for in year applications by the Local Authority.**

**The following schools do not take part in the co-ordinated In Year Admissions Scheme managed by Norfolk County Council. Applications should be made direct to the Headteacher of the school.**

Glebeland Primary School, Toft Monks  
Martham Primary & Nursery School  
Sacred Heart RC VA Primary School, Swaffham  
St. Augustine's RC VA Primary School, Norwich  
St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Primary School, Norwich  
St. Martha's RC VA Primary School, King's Lynn  
The Free School, Norwich  
Winterton Primary School & Nursery

## **The right of appeal**

### **Admission appeals**

If the request for your preferred school is refused, you have the right of appeal to an independent panel and information about how to appeal will be sent to you with your refusal letter. Appeals are heard by School Admission Appeals panels who act independently of the admissions authority.

You will be told ten school days in advance when and where your appeal will be heard. At least seven working days before your appeal you will be sent a written summary of the case for refusing your child a place. You are encouraged to attend your appeal in person. All appeals are being heard virtually through MS Teams. Your appeal will be heard in private and if you wish you may bring a friend, relative or representative with you. It is for you to decide if you want to bring your child to the hearing. If you do not attend the appeal hearing, your written appeal case will still be considered by the panel.

At the hearing there will be 3 panel members who make the decision and a clerk who will record the proceedings and advise on law and procedure. The admission authority will also be represented and will give the reasons for not meeting your preference. You will be given the opportunity to explain to the panel the reasons why you wish your child to attend the school.

The panel will firstly decide whether the admission authority has shown why it cannot admit more children and if so, will go on to consider all the points you have made. The panel's decision is based on balancing the needs of the child against the effect of admitting another child. Wherever possible you will be told the decision by telephone by the next working day and a letter will be sent within 7 days explaining the decision and the reasons for it.

All admission appeals panels act independently and their decisions are binding on everyone. There is no further right of appeal to the panel for a place in the same academic year unless there is a significant change in your circumstances. This would include a new medical problem or a house move where this was not known about and considered at the original appeal hearing.

The Local Government Ombudsman can investigate complaints of maladministration. You will be given further details about this if your appeal is unsuccessful. You should complain to the Ombudsman within 12 months of when you first knew about the matter you want to complain about.

### **Infant class appeals**

If you are seeking a place for a 5, 6, or 7 year old in Year R, Year 1 or Year 2, you may have a more limited right of appeal. This will happen when the year group is full and the class already has 30 children in it. This is because the law states that infant children must not be taught in classes with more than 30 children in them. In these situations, appeal panels can only allow your appeal if the admission rules were not



applied correctly and your child should have been offered a place, or the decision to refuse your child a place was not one which a reasonable admission authority would make in that situation.

### **Further Information**

Parents can contact the Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) Ltd, which is an independent national advice centre. They provide clear advice and information particularly for parents on admission appeals through a national advice line and a wide range of publications. Especially helpful is a booklet called "Appealing for a School".

To speak to an adviser, call the ACE Advice Line on **0300 0115 142**. The telephone advice line is open **Monday to Wednesday from 10am to 1pm term time only**. Calls to the ACE Advice Line cost the same as calling a standard landline number - even from a mobile. 0300 numbers are included in any inclusive call minute packages offered by phone operators.

### **Norfolk Fair Access Protocol**

All local authorities are legally required to have in place 'Fair Access Protocols' to ensure that children who do not have a school place are able to access one quickly. The main principle of Norfolk's Fair Access Protocol is that schools must admit children who do not already have a school place or who have moved and it is unreasonable to travel to their previous school. This is to ensure that in the more rural parts of the county, children can access a local school place quickly and to ensure that journeys to school are reasonable. In Norwich and the other major towns in the county, local agreements have been reached to reflect local issues and to ensure an equitable distribution of children amongst all schools in the area.

The School Admissions Code requires schools to admit children into year groups that are already at or above their Published Admission Number as part of the Fair Access Protocol. Children without a school place will also take precedence over children on a waiting list.

Where a governing board does not wish to admit a child with challenging behaviour outside the normal admissions round, even though places are available, it must refer the case to the local authority for action under the Fair Access Protocol. This will normally only be appropriate where a school has a particularly high proportion of children with challenging behaviour or previously excluded children.

You can find out more about the [Fair Access Protocol](#) on the Norfolk Schools website.

# School transport

## Home to school transport

Full details of the transport policy together with policies on Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy and the Local School Travel Policy are available on the [Travel and Transport](#) website.

For transport purposes, each home address has an allocated school for each stage of education. This is called the catchment school.

## How we decide who is entitled to free transport

Applications for transport are considered individually, considering the relevant legal requirements. We provide free transport for children of compulsory school age (5-16) who attend the nearest catchment school or the nearest school, provided they meet one of the following criteria:

1. Aged under 8 and living more than 2 miles from school,
2. Aged 8 or over and living more than 3 miles from school,
3. Primary school pupils aged 8 or over and living more than 2 miles from school who are from low income families,
4. Secondary school pupils from low income families who attend one of the three nearest schools between 2 and 6 miles from their home,
5. Secondary school pupils from low income families attending their nearest school preferred on grounds of religion or belief where this is between 2 and 15 miles from their home.

The qualifying distances of 6 or 15 miles, as stated at 4 and 5 above, will be measured using the shortest route by road. The 2 and 3 mile qualifying distances will be measured by the shortest available walking route using roads and public rights of way. The nearest school is determined by the shortest route by road for schools over the statutory qualifying distance, or by the shortest route using roads and public rights of way for schools within the statutory walking distance.

Ages are taken on 1 September in each school year.

Low income families referred to in 3, 4 and 5 above, means those in receipt of their maximum level of Working Tax Credit or where the child concerned is entitled to free school meals.

## Discretionary travel scheme

Some help may also be given with transport to those not entitled under the general policy, if there are spare seats available on existing school buses, for example to those who:

- live within the qualifying distance of two or three miles.
- are not attending their catchment or nearest school.

Parents will be expected to pay a contribution towards costs under the discretionary travel scheme.

### **Transport help if the local school is full**

If the catchment or nearest school is full, transport will be provided in accordance with the general policy to the next nearest school with spaces available. Please contact us (see page 3) to confirm if the local school is full and if so, which is the next appropriate school to attend.

Please note, if a school is chosen because a parent believes the catchment or nearest school is full and this decision is not made by the School Admissions Team and is not the next nearest school with a place, then the parent will be responsible for transport to that chosen school, regardless of the fact that the nearest or catchment school is full. This also applies if your first preference school is the catchment or nearest school but is full, and you are offered a place at your second, or third preference school which is not the next nearest – the County Council would not be responsible for transport to the allocated school as this is one of your preferences.

### **Parental choice and transport**

Children may attend any school at which they can get a place, but it does not follow that transport will be provided; transport is only provided in accordance with the transport policy to the nearest or nearest catchment school.

Parents should be aware that if they are offered a place at a preferred school they are responsible for transport to that school for the duration of the child being at that school. This will also be the case if family circumstances change and they can no longer provide transport, at this point, however difficult the situation. The Council is not responsible for transport to that school.

This is also the case if you choose to change your child's school because you are not happy with the school that they attend, e.g., if you feel that they are not addressing any concerns you have over your child's education or welfare. All schools should address any issues raised by parents and therefore transport will not be provided to an alternative school unless parents have followed the full complaints procedure of the school, including raising any concerns with the governing board, and if the school then confirms in writing that there was no further action that could be taken to resolve the situation. The next nearest school would then be deemed the appropriate school for transport purposes.

### **What help is provided with transport?**

For pupils entitled to free transport, we arrange transport on local bus services, rail services or contracted vehicles. In exceptional circumstances, grants may be paid for parents to use their own transport. Cycling allowances are available for pupils who prefer to cycle to school. Each application is assessed based on the distance involved, the age of the pupil, and the availability of other forms of transport. Young

people with specific mobility difficulties may be provided with specialist transport. Each case will be assessed on individual circumstances.

### **How do I apply for transport for my child?**

You will need to complete an online application form, available from our website - [School and College Transport](#). You can also print off a form from the website.

### **I do not live in Norfolk but my child goes to a school in Norfolk. Can I get any help with transport?**

If you do not live in Norfolk, you must contact the authority for the area in which you live for help.

### **Safety**

We will specify the transport arrangements and appropriate pick-up points for each route and will take all reasonable precautions to ensure the safety of pupils on their journeys to and from school. For their part, children are expected to behave whilst travelling and to observe the Code of Conduct. Parents are responsible for getting their child to and from the nearest pick-up point and are reminded that their child's safety is solely their responsibility at all times before they board the vehicle for the journey to school and after they get off the vehicle on their way home.

### **Norfolk sustainable school travel strategy**

The sustainable school travel strategy sets out a vision, objectives and a work programme for improving accessibility to schools. It is a source of information to parents about the travel options available. [Norfolk Sustainable School Travel Strategy](#)

### **Further information**

If you need further help or information, visit the website at [School and College Transport](#) or email us at: [education.transport@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:education.transport@norfolk.gov.uk)

### **Provision for pupils with special educational needs**

Many children experience a difficulty with learning, or other special educational need at some point in their school life. It is nearly always possible to provide appropriate help and support within local mainstream schools and it is our policy to do so wherever possible. The standard admission rules will apply.

If you think your child has a special or additional need, you should first talk to his or her class teacher. This may result in a special programme being set up within the school or in some cases it may lead to contact with one of our specialist services.

All schools are required to have a SEN Information Report, in line with the Children & Families Act (2014), and sometimes known as the schools 'local offer'. This should

include details of the ways special needs are assessed and what resources will be used to help pupils with difficulties.

If neither the school's own resources nor help from specialist services enable your child to make satisfactory progress, it may be necessary, in consultation with you (the parent/carer), to carry out an assessment for an Education, Health & Care Plan (in line with the Children & Families Act (2014)). The need for this assessment will be carefully considered first. The assessment will always involve those with parental responsibility and your child's teacher, as well as key professionals that are supporting children directly and/or advising schools on how to provide support.

If necessary, an Education, Health & Care Plan will be produced describing your child's special educational needs and how they will be met. The help provided can be in a variety of forms and may include additional specialist teaching, resources, support from a teaching assistant or attendance at a specialist educational provision, either part time or full time.

**Most children with statements in Norfolk go to their local mainstream school. A much smaller number of children go to special schools. These schools are usually smaller than mainstream schools and are for children whose needs can only be met in a more specialised setting.**

These smaller schools have a very limited number of places and we have to look at the individual needs of each child to decide who should attend.

If you would like your child to go to a special school, we will carefully consider your request.

If you feel your child may need a special school place, you should ask at their present school for an Interim Review of their statement/education, health & care plan. At the Review your views and those of your child's school can be discussed and recommendations for changes to the statement can be made to the Local Authority

If you would like your child to go to a special school contact your Education, Health & Care Plan Co-ordinator (previously known as Additional Needs Co-ordinator). Their details will be in the letter you have from us about your child's statement/education, health & care plan.

If you are planning to move to Norfolk, please contact us if you feel your child needs a Special School placement on 0344 800 8020. You should also tell your child's current school and Local Authority.

If you live outside Norfolk and are not moving but are thinking about asking for a place in a Norfolk Local Authority Special School, you need to speak to your own Local Authority's Special Needs Department. Details for all Local Authorities can be found at: [Directory of Local Authorities](#)

To find out what help is available to support children with SEN and their families in Norfolk, visit: [SEND Local Offer](#)

If you live or are moving into Norfolk and want to talk to someone who is independent about special educational needs, call Norfolk SEND Partnership

Norfolk SEND Partnership provides information and support for parents and carers of children with special educational needs. It works closely with parents and local voluntary and statutory organizations to plan its service.

Parents can be helped and supported by:

- A confidential listening service to discuss concerns about their child's special educational needs;
- User-friendly information;
- Information about voluntary or statutory organizations that can provide further help;
- A volunteer independent parental supporter.

Norfolk SEND Partnership trains and coordinates a team of volunteers who can support parents in many ways, including help with paperwork, meetings in school or with statutory assessment and statements. 'Norfolk SEND Partnership News' is produced each term and is available on our website, in schools and libraries or from the address below. We ask schools to give a copy to the parents of every child who has a special educational need. All of our information booklets are available on our website or by contacting the office.

For more information, please contact:

Norfolk SEND Partnership, Woodside Road, Norwich, NR7 9QL.

Tel: (01603) 704070 - there is a 24-hour answer phone.

E-mail [sendpartnership.iass@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:sendpartnership.iass@norfolk.gov.uk) or visit our website on:

[www.norfolkparentpartnership.org.uk](http://www.norfolkparentpartnership.org.uk)

### **Provision for disabled pupils without EHCPs or statements**

Any disabled pupils without an ENCP or statement who have specific physical needs that cannot be met by their catchment school will be considered as in the catchment area for the next nearest school that has (or can have with reasonable adjustments) the appropriate facilities. A panel of officers will be convened by the authority each year during the admission rounds to consider any cases where that may be required to ensure consistency across Norfolk.

Contact the Disability Coordinator for further information and advice:

Tel:0344 800 8020.

## **Attendance support**

### **Attendance team**

Attendance staff promote good attendance at schools in Norfolk. Attendance is extremely important to ensure that all children have every opportunity to achieve their maximum potential. Attendance Improvement Officers follow up cases of unsatisfactory attendance providing support and advice to schools and families.

For further information and advice please visit: [Behaviour and Attendance](#)

## **Child employment**

All children of compulsory education age from 13-16 require a permit to be employed. Legislation stipulates that it is an employer's responsibility to apply for a permit and failure to do so is an offence. Child Employment staff work with employers and parents so that legal requirements are complied with. Performance Licences are issued for children 0-16 who perform in films, theatre, modelling or sporting activities.

For further information and advice please visit [Children in employment and entertainment](#)

## **Behaviour support**

### **Exclusion helpline**

This is available to provide advice and support to parents of pupils excluded from school.

For further information and advice please visit [Exclusions](#)

## **Other support services**

### **Child protection and safeguarding children**

The Education Act 2002 places statutory requirements upon the Local Authority and schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. All schools and educational establishments are required to have a Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and a Senior Designated Professional with lead responsibility for safeguarding children. Training for school staff is provided by the Local Authority and Norfolk Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB). All schools and educational establishments are required to follow national statutory guidance and NSCB procedures and have a duty to refer cases of suspected child abuse to Children's Services.

Parents can ask the school for a copy of their Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy. For further information contact the Headteacher or the Senior Designated Professional at the school.

### **Educational Psychology and Specialist Support**

Educational Psychology and Specialist Support consists of educational psychologists, advisory learning support teachers, EPSS social workers, and specialist support assistants, who work together to help children, parents, and staff in schools and other settings. The teams provide a graduated continuum of support ranging from training, consultation, assessment, and advice to specialist interventions for children, their families and schools/settings.

The team has four main areas of work:

- To perform statutory SEN duties for the Local Authority.
- To work with groups of children that the Local Authority considers to be particularly vulnerable e.g. children looked after.
- To provide a Core Offer of support to schools and clusters of schools. In this role, educational psychologists and advisory learning support teachers provide consultancy advice to clusters and schools, provide individual consultations where appropriate, and, in the case of very complex difficulties, may provide assessments.
- To provide a wider range of educational psychology and learning support activities to schools on a traded basis.

Requests for the involvement of EPSS are made by Head teachers/SENCo.

There is also a specialist support service for children and young people with visual, hearing and multi-sensory impairments.

### **English language support service**

This service works with schools to raise the achievement of ethnic minority pupils at risk of under-achievement and to meet the particular needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language, refugees and asylum seekers. It offers support to pupils who are new to English, teacher support for more advanced learners and home/school liaison where appropriate.

For further information please visit [English Language Support](#) .

### **Traveller Education Service**

The Traveller Education Service promotes the education of children and young people with highly mobile lifestyles and traveller heritage. It offers direct teaching, curriculum support and training to schools and provides support, advice and information on educational matters to the families of children from the different Traveller communities.

Contact for further information and advice call 0344 800 8020.

## **Immunisations for Children Starting School**

At school, your child will be mixing with large numbers of other children, which increases the risk of germs and diseases spreading. Before your child begins school it is really important that they are up to date with their vaccinations so that they are protected from diseases which could make them seriously unwell.

Measles, mumps and rubella (German measles) are highly infectious and can have serious, potentially fatal, complications including meningitis, swelling of the brain (encephalitis), and deafness. The MMR vaccination protects against measles, mumps and rubella and to be fully protected each child needs to have two doses.



Before your child begins school please make sure that they have had all their vaccinations. If you are not sure if your child has had all their vaccinations, check their personal health record (Red Book) or contact your GP surgery.

For more information, please visit [Immunisations and Vaccinations](#) or to discuss this or any other health concerns with a Health Visitor, please call **Just One Number 0300 300 0123**.

## **Norfolk Library and Information Service Welcome Families**

Reading for pleasure is one of the best ways to help your child through their school journey and build skills for life. Joining your local library is free, children can choose their own books and there are no overdue charges for under 16s. Libraries have many free events and clubs for children and young people, as well as support for homework, free WIFI and access to computers. You can borrow books, DVDs, Games, eBooks and use online dictionaries and encyclopaedias from home. You can join online for free, and find out more by visiting the [Norfolk Libraries](#) website or by visiting your local library in person.

## **School Governors**

Anyone who would like to offer their services to both the school and community by serving as a school governor please visit [School Governors](#) or email [governor.services@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:governor.services@norfolk.gov.uk)

## **School catering**

### **How meals are provided**

#### **First, infant, junior and primary schools**

In most of these schools a two-course meal is provided at a fixed price. The menus are varied and designed to appeal to children. You can get a copy of the current menu from the school. Schools will tell parents of the arrangements for payment of school lunch money but parents usually pay on Monday for the whole week. If a pupil is absent on a day when a lunch has been paid for, the cost of the meal will be held in credit until the pupil's return.

#### **Secondary schools**

Most high schools have self-service cafeterias with a wide range of popular dishes. Pupils may choose from a menu of individually priced items, paid for at the time they are taken. They should therefore take money to school every day. The menu is on display at the school so that pupils can choose what they would like to eat and calculate in advance how much money it will cost them. Copies of menus and price lists are available from the school.

## **Menus**

Menus offer two choices, one of which is a meat free alternative.

The menus follow the Government Nutritional Guidelines and include many freshly cooked dishes. Processed and shaped protein products are no longer used. Meals are prepared and cooked fresh daily, with a balance of home cooked and ready prepared foods. We offer fresh and where possible locally sourced meats, vegetables, and fruit. In the presentation of our menus, we endeavour to provide reduced salt, skimmed milk, reduced fat, reduced additives and preservatives and no harmful 'E' numbers.

If your child would prefer a healthy packed lunch this can be provided by the school caterers. If you wish to find out more about our menus, please contact us on 0344 800 8020.

## **Special diets**

Special diets can be provided for medical or religious reasons. If your child requires a special diet, you should give details to the school, including any recommendations. A letter from your child's doctor should accompany any requests for special diets on medical grounds.

## **Packed lunches**

Pupils bringing packed lunches to school are provided with a chair and a table at which to eat their meal. Cutlery and crockery are not provided and therefore children wishing to have a drink should bring their own cups. Drinking water is available. In the interests of hygiene and safety, parents are asked to cooperate with the school in the provision of packed lunches. Lunches should be packed in leak proof containers. Canned drinks, vacuum flasks and glass bottles should be avoided. Parents are advised that packed lunches are not refrigerated at school.

## **Free school meals**

All children attending Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are offered free school meals as part of the Government's Universal Free School Meals for Infants scheme. If you receive a benefit that gives entitlement to Free School meals (as detailed below) the school can also get additional funding but you must apply for us to confirm this to the Headteacher.

Children of families receiving Income Support, Employment Support Allowance (income related), Income-based Job Seekers allowance or Universal Credit are entitled to receive free school meals. Families receiving support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 are also entitled, as are children in households with no recourse to public funds (NRPF), subject to maximum income thresholds.

Families receiving child tax credit but who are not entitled to a working tax credit, and whose annual income (as assessed by the Inland Revenue) does not exceed £16,190 are also entitled, as are those who receive the guaranteed element of state

pension credit. Those families receiving working tax credit are not entitled to free school meals.

Note: Where a parent is entitled to working tax credit during the four-week period immediately after their employment ceases, or after they start to work less than 16 hours per week, their children are entitled to free school meals.

From 1 April 2018, those who receive Universal Credit (provided the family has an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400, as assessed by earnings from up to 3 of the most recent assessment periods) are entitled.

Whilst Universal Credit is being rolled out the following pupils are protected against losing their free school meals entitlement.

- All existing free school meal pupils will continue to receive free school meals
- Any child gaining eligibility for free school meals after 1 April 2018 will be protected

Once Universal Credit is fully rolled out (which is expected to be by March 2025) any existing claimant who no longer meets the criteria will continue to receive free school meals until the end of their current phase of education.

If you are receiving one of these benefits either contact the Headteacher of your child's school to obtain an application form or call 0344 800 8020 for further advice.

You can apply for free school meals online using your Norfolk Education Online (NEO) account. You can use the same account for 2-year-old childcare funding and school admissions. To create an account, or apply please go to: [Free School Meals Online](#)

You do not need to provide proof of the benefit you receive with your application. We will carry out checks against the records held by the Department for Work and Pensions, HM Revenue and Customs and the Home Office to determine entitlement. If further information is required in support of your application, you will be contacted again.

The application form can be obtained from your child's school or from us at Free School Meals Section, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2DH or from our website [Free School Meals](#)

## **Milk**

A third of a pint of milk a day is provided free of charge to pupils attending special schools and to those recommended on medical grounds by the County Council's medical practitioner. Milk is also available at a subsidised price to pupils in most of the county's schools.

## **Further information**

For more information about school meals or milk, please contact: The Contracts Unit, Children's Services, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2DH  
Tel: 0344 800 8020

## **Charges for school activities**

For some activities, a charge may be made to cover costs in certain circumstances. These may include:

- music tuition
- cookery and craft activities where ingredients and materials are required
- transport for school visits
- board and lodging on school trips
- entry for examinations for which the pupil has not been prepared by the school.

If you have difficulty meeting any charges you should discuss the matter in confidence with the headteacher. If you are in receipt of Income Support, Income Based Jobseeker's Allowance, Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, Child Tax Credit, and not entitled to Working Tax Credit and your annual income (as assessed by the Inland Revenue) does not exceed £16,190 (as at 6 April 2016) you may be eligible for remission of board and lodging costs. Each school is required to have a charging policy. The school's charging policy must be described in its brochure, available from the school. We have a policy which is recommended to governing boards, but it is for the governing board to decide whether or not to adopt this. Details of our charging policy are available from the Customer Service Centre on 0344 800 8020.

## **Educational visits and journeys**

Educational visits are an essential part of school life, providing stimulating opportunities to promote learning and personal development. All off site visits are managed in school through the schools' educational visits coordinator according to our guidance and procedures. Parents should be informed of all off site activities and asked for medical information, emergency contact details and consent. For regular local visits such as sports fixtures this can be via on-going or blanket consent for a fixed period of time.

Schools may ask for voluntary contributions (in addition to travel and accommodation costs) towards the cost of school trips that may not run if funds are not available. We are constantly re-evaluating safety procedures and many schools may ask parents to volunteer to support visits & hence parents may be required to undergo appropriate checks before they can help on school visits. The Norfolk County Council Adviser for Outdoor Learning gives approval for adventurous, residential and visits abroad and can be contacted for advice.

Outdoor Learning Adviser.  
Professional Development Centre,  
Woodside Road, Norwich, NR7 9QL  
Tel: 0344 800 8020

## **Insurance**

A liability insurance policy covers Norfolk County Council, its employees, approved voluntary helpers and pupils against any claims arising from acts of negligence by the County Council.

## **Insurance for Academies**

Schools which have moved to academy status are no longer automatically insured by the County Council. Some have chosen to stay under our insurance cover and therefore have the same arrangements as above. However, some have bought their own private insurances and these policies may vary.

## **Complaints about schools**

Concerns and complaints about a school are dealt with by the school. Every school has its own complaints procedure and they will provide a copy on request. The Authority only gets involved if the school has not followed its own procedure correctly. Even then the matter still has to be resolved by the school.

If your concern or complaint is about Children's Services please visit [Compliments and complaints](#) where you will find information about the complaints procedure.

We will try to help you immediately. Sometimes this is not possible and your enquiry will be passed to the person most likely to be able to help. This person will give you their name, title, telephone number and e-mail address and will either help you immediately or tell you how they will deal with your complaint. They will ask you if you agree to these arrangements and how you would like to be contacted. We will try to deal with your complaint as quickly as possible and within 15 working days.