

Frequently asked questions

How are applications processed?

If a school is oversubscribed (i.e. has more applicants than spaces available), then each applicant is ranked according to the school's oversubscription criteria that is published in their admissions policy. Places are then offered according to that ranked list. If a child is eligible for a place at more than one school through this process, they are offered the highest preference eligible, and the lower preference space is given to the next eligible applicant.

Please note that the oversubscription criteria for a school are the only factors which can be legally considered when ranking applications and allocating school places. Matters of childcare arrangements, transport arrangements and other social considerations cannot be given consideration to ensure that the process remains objective.

When processing applications, all preferences are treated as equal applications for the chosen schools. All preferences are considered together in line with the oversubscription criteria of the school, rather than processing first preferences first before moving onto second and so on.

Where more than one school can be offered, the Local Authority makes the offer to the school with the highest preference rank for which they were eligible.

Why should I include 3 preferences on my application?

It is the advice of the Local Authority, that applicants use all of their preferences to increase their chance of being offered a school of preference. Not using all preferences may mean that children are allocated places at schools further than the applicant would like, if closer schools that are not given as preferences, oversubscribe from applicants. Only stating one preference will NOT increase your chances of being offered that school, doing this will potentially run the risk of not being offered your preferred school and with result in being offered an alternative – see below for more information.

Am I guaranteed a place at my catchment school?

No secondary schools located in Southampton has a catchment area.

What happens if I am not offered a place at any of my preferences ?

If through the process of oversubscription an applicant is not eligible for a place at any of their preferred schools, they are offered a place at the nearest school to their home address with a space available.

It should be noted that while applicants have the right to express preferences, and these will be met, if possible, through the process of oversubscription, this is not the same as having 'choice'. It is the duty of the Local Authority to provide a state-funded school place to every child who requires one, but it is not bound to provide a school of preference if this cannot be offered due to oversubscription, and it is not suitable for applicants to refuse a school offered on the basis of it not being a preferred school. Local Authorities cannot be compelled to

provide a school of preference when another school place is available, or to provide home tuition in lieu of a school place.

How do waiting lists work?

Waiting lists are kept in the order of a school's oversubscription criteria, rather than the length of time a child has been on that list. Because of this, waiting lists are re-ranked with each new applicant and an applicant can move down, as well as up, a waiting list.

What do I do if I am due to move house after the application submission deadline?

You can still make an application for a school place, but this will be through your current home local authority. You must use the address where you are residing at the time of submitting your application. We can only use the new address once your child is living there.

What address should I use as my child lives at two addresses?

If your child spends part of their week with one parent and part with the other, only one address can be used. This must be the address where they spend most of their time during the school week.

You will be able to list [Southampton] preferred schools as your first preference and your waiting list position will be amended once you have confirmed and notified us of your new address, along with sufficient proof of this.

Can I apply for Hampshire schools if I live in Southampton?

Yes you will be able to select Hampshire Schools, or any other Local Authority school in England on your application if you live in Southampton. If you are unsure who your local authority is you can check via <https://www.gov.uk/find-local-council>

Supporting information

Some applications need supporting information if you are applying to a school for the reasons below. The following schools require a Supplementary Information Form (SIF) to help process applications alongside their published admissions arrangements. Your application may be unsuccessful if you do not complete one.

- St Anne's Catholic School
- St George Catholic College
- St Mark's CE All-Through

Please complete the SIF and attach it to your online application or return it directly to the school. SIFs can be found on our admissions policies pages or by contacting the school directly.

Applying for a school for a significant medical or psychological reason

You will need to provide written evidence from a medical professional (GP or consultant) or psychologist giving details of the condition and why the school you are applying for is best suited to meet the child's medical or psychological needs. E.g. X needs to attend Y School due to Z condition which means only Y school is suitable for them for the following reasons....

Evidence simply giving a diagnosis is unlikely to be sufficient.

Please ensure that you give your child's name, date of birth, and school applied for with the evidence.

All evidence submitted for a community or voluntary controlled (VC) school i.e. schools for which Southampton City Council is the admission authority, is considered by a multi-disciplinary panel. Other schools that have a medical criterion may use other means to assess the evidence supplied.

You can provide the evidence either by:

- Uploading it to your online application
- Scanning and sending it to the school admissions team

Remember: Not all schools give priority to a child's medical or psychological condition. You are strongly advised to read the admission policies for each school you are applying for before making your application.

General information:

Deadline for on time applications is 31st October at 23.59. If the application is not submitted by this date then you will need to submit a late application via <https://www.southampton.gov.uk/schools-learning/find-school/apply-school/late-applications/>

School Admission policies for schools in Southampton can be found via <https://www.southampton.gov.uk/schools-learning/find-school/apply-school/secondary-school-admissions-policies/> we would recommend you read each policy carefully