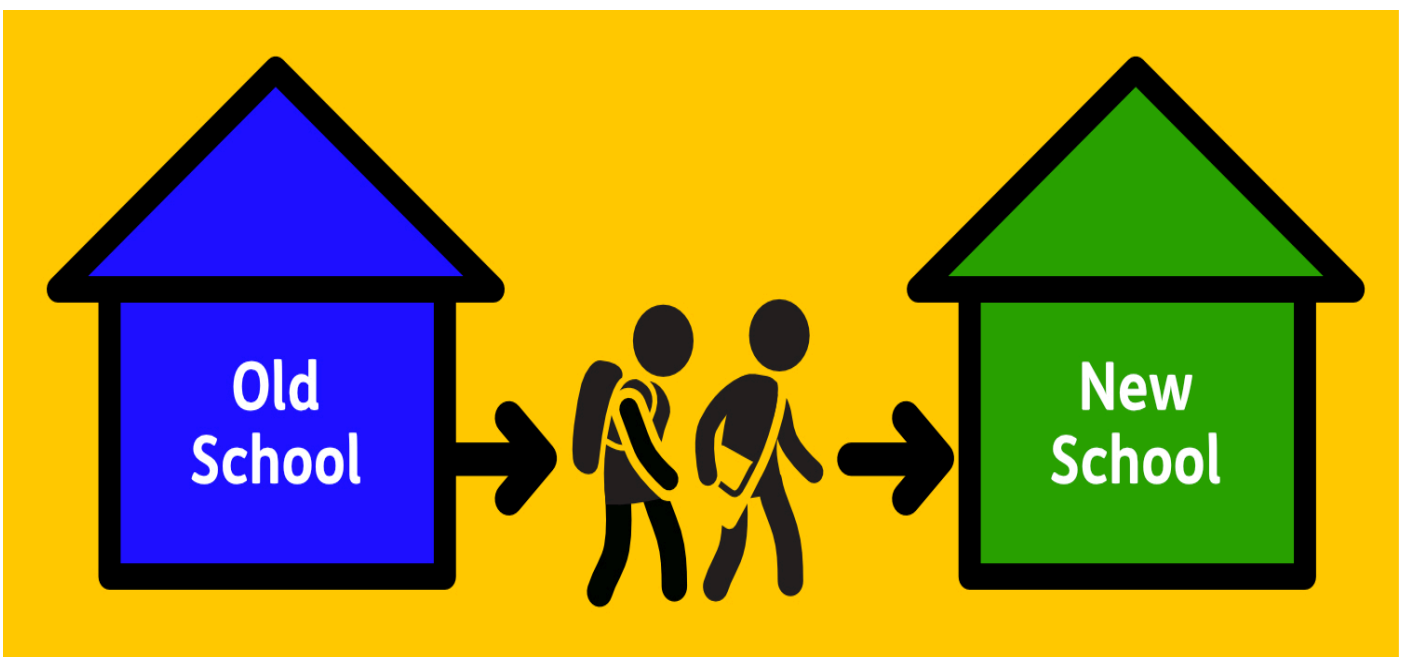


In Year Admissions - School Transfers

Guidance for parents/carers who:

Wish to transfer their child to a Sefton School where the transfer is requested for reasons other than a house move.



The decision to transfer schools can affect your child in many ways and the decision should not be taken without careful consideration. Please ensure that you read this guide before applying to transfer schools.

Updated September 2023 & September 2024

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Introduction

This guide will give you all the information you need to apply for a place at a Sefton school if you wish transfer your child from their current school, (for reasons other than a house move) during the school year.

We know that a number of families may wish to transfer their child to another school during the school year for many different reasons. We want to make this process as smooth as possible for every child.

We have therefore developed these arrangements for the transfer of children between schools if your transfer is for reasons other than a house move.

In order to do this, the local authority (LA) and/or schools establish whether a request for transfer should be processed as either a standard school transfer application or considered through Sefton's School Transfer Protocol.

This guide is for parents who wish their child to transfer to a Sefton school (without a house move). If you wish to apply for a school in a different area outside of Sefton, please contact the appropriate local authority where the school of your choice is located for information on their application process.

The contact details for neighbouring local authorities can be found on page 4.

Please Note:

The decision to transfer schools can affect your child in many ways and the decision should not be taken without careful consideration. Please ensure that you speak to your child's current school about any issues before submitting an application to transfer schools.

If you are seeking a new school place due to a house move please refer to the separate In Year School Admission Guidance Notes and application process which is available to view and download at www.sefton.gov.uk/inyearadmissions.

Please read this guide before completing the school transfer application form (T1).

Contact details

Sefton School Admissions Team

Website: www.sefton.gov.uk/inyearadmissions (all application forms are available on the website.)

Email: iyadmissions@sefton.gov.uk

Tel: 0151 934 3590 (multiple lines & voicemail facilities are available).

Normal office hours (excluding public holidays) are Monday to Thursday 9.00–17.00 & Friday 9.00–16.00.

Postal Address: Sefton Council, School Support Services, School Admissions Team, 3rd Floor Magdalen House, 30 Trinity Road, Bootle, Liverpool, L20 3NJ.

Where to get further information about Sefton schools

If you need further information relating to a particular school, the schools' individual website is a great place to start. If you want to arrange a visit to a school, please contact the school directly. The contact details for all schools within Sefton are also available on the Sefton website by using the 'Find my nearest' option on the home page at www.sefton.gov.uk.

Further information is also available in our published guide **Sefton Primary & Secondary Schools Admissions Information**, which can be accessed via the Sefton website www.sefton.gov.uk/startingschool.

You can access Ofsted reports and school performance data by using the Government's 'Find and Compare Schools in England Service' at: www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk.

If you require a school outside of Sefton within a different local authority area, please contact the appropriate local authority where the school is located for information on their application process. The contact details for neighbouring local authorities can be found on page 4.

Contact details for School Admission Teams in neighbouring local authorities

Knowsley www.knowsley.gov.uk

School Admissions, Education Improvement Team
PO Box 21, Municipal Buildings
Archway Road, Huyton
Liverpool, L36 9YU
Tel: 0151 443 5142 / 5143 / 3372 / 3373
Email: schooladmissions@knowsley.gov.uk

Lancashire www.lancashire.gov.uk

South Area Education Office
PO Box 100, Pupil Access Team,
County Hall
Fishergate Hill, Preston
PR1 0LD
Tel: 01772 532109
Email: SouthAdmissions@lancashire.gov.uk

Liverpool www.liverpool.gov.uk

Children & Young People's Service, Pupil Admissions Team
Cunard Building, Water Street
Liverpool, L3 1AH
Tel: 0151 233 3006
Email: admissions@liverpool.gov.uk

St Helens www.sthelens.gov.uk

Admissions Section
Atlas House, Corporation Street
St Helens, WA9 1LD
Tel: 01744 671030 / 671035 / 671027
Email: schooladmissions@sthelens.gov.uk

Wirral www.wirral.gov.uk

Children & Young Peoples Department, Mainstream Admissions, Delivery Services
PO Box 290
Brighton Street
Wallasey CH27 9FQ
Tel: 0151 606 2000
Email: Schooladmissions@wirral.gov.uk

IMPORTANT INFORMATION – In Year School Transfer applications

- Applications should be submitted no earlier than **4 weeks** prior to the date on which you require the new school place. **Please do not apply for a school place several months in advance.** The local authority (LA) cannot pend places and will not be able to process an application for a school place unless you indicate that you can take up a place within the next 4 weeks.
- All In Year School Transfer applications that have been **fully completed** by the parent/carer and the current school, and received by the LA, are processed in the strict date order that they are received. In the unusual circumstances where there are multiple requests for the same school & year group, received on the same day, the admissions criteria will be applied to each application received, in order to allocate any available place(s).
- The Admissions Team will assess if there are places available at the school(s) you have requested. If there are vacancies at the requested school, you will be contacted directly by the new school in order to make arrangements for your child to be admitted.
- If a school you have requested does not have a place available, we will write to you, refusing a place and advise you of the arrangements for submitting an appeal. You will also be given the option of adding your child's name to the waiting list for the school(s) you have been refused a place at. The LA may offer an alternative school at this point, if it is appropriate to do so.
- In some cases, an application may be referred through the School Transfer Protocol (see page 14 for further details). In these cases, the standard transfer process is not implemented. Instead, a school placement recommendation for the child would be made via the relevant Transfer Panel.
- Where additional consent has been provided a referral may be made for other support services offered by the LA (see page 12).
- **Places required for the start of the next academic year (September start)**
Applications should be submitted from the start of June onwards. If you apply any earlier than this, the application will **not** be processed. If the preferred school(s) do not have a vacancy, please be aware that appeals are only heard during term time and **therefore any potential appeal may not be heard until the new academic year has started.**

Matters for you to consider before applying

Sefton's school transfer process has been agreed by the LA and all schools within Sefton. The process is in place in order to support both families and schools by allowing them both the opportunity to discuss and comment on any current issues before an application to transfer school is received and processed by the LA. There are several different reasons for requesting a transfer during the academic year. Some matters that should be considered before deciding to apply to change your child's school are shown below.

Teaching, School Organisation and GCSE Year Groups

Each school teaches the National Curriculum in different ways and at different times of the academic year.

How will your child cope?

- With learning new rules
- Doing things in different ways
- If he/she has done the work before or has missed important earlier work
- If he/she finds the work new or strange

Older children who transfer school after exam subjects have been chosen may find:

- That they cannot do the same subjects in a new school; or
- That the exam boards and courses are different.

Have you thought whether?

- Your child can take the same subjects at a new school
- The courses will be the same
- Your child will be comfortable taking new subjects or exam courses

Relationships

Children need to feel happy at school and relationships with friends and teachers are an important part of this.

- Will he/she be able to settle in and get to know new people quickly, so that his/her learning does not suffer?

Family Link

If your child has brothers and sisters at the same school, transferring one child may affect others.

- If you have other children attending the same school, will it be a problem for you to have your children attending different schools? There is no automatic right for your other children to transfer to the new school.
- Will you be able to transport your children to different schools at the appropriate times?

Uniform

Parents/carers will need to buy a completely new uniform, including a PE kit, if your child changes school.

Transport

Your child needs to be able to travel to school easily, safely and on-time. Any change of school may affect your child's entitlement to a travel pass or home to school transport from the local authority.

- How would your child travel to and from a new school?
- What will be the cost involved?
- Does your child have a travel pass issued by the LA? - this may have to be returned if a child changes school.
- A change of school will usually be regarded as parental choice, and in most circumstances you are unlikely to be eligible for assistance with travelling costs to a new school.

Concerns you may have about current school

Any school related matters that may be troubling a child or parents/carers could potentially be addressed without the need to transfer to a new school. **Please discuss any concerns you may have with your child's current school.** Transferring schools may not resolve issues and could have an adverse effect on your child's curriculum choices and education.

Ask yourself the following questions:

Have I:

- Sat down with my child to talk about the points in this guide, to find out how they really feel about moving to a new school?
- Discuss all the reasons why they want to move schools?
- Spoken to the teachers who teach my child (if they are worried about certain subjects) to find out how they are getting on?
- Has your child already started their GCSE courses? Changing schools in Years 9, 10 or 11 could have a significant impact on your child's attainment.
- Spoken to the teacher in charge of special needs (if your child has additional needs)?
- Spoken to my child's Tutor or Head of Year (if you believe they are being bullied or having issues with other children)?
- Made an appointment to speak to the Headteacher if you are still concerned about your child?

Please remember:

In most cases, matters could be resolved with your child's current school, without the need to transfer to a new school. Please speak to the current school before completing the application form and requesting a school transfer.

How to make an In Year School Transfer application

The In Year School Admission Transfer Form (T1) & guide for parents/carers can be downloaded and/or printed from the Sefton council website at: www.sefton.gov.uk/inyearadmissions.

The details requested should be self-explanatory. You may be asked to provide further information in answer to some of the questions. Incomplete forms cannot be processed and could lead to delays in processing the application. If you need any assistance in completing the application please contact the In Year Admissions Team. A paper copy of the application is available upon request by email: iyadmissions@sefton.gov.uk.

Important - Any false or deliberately misleading information provided on the application and/or supporting documents may render the application invalid or lead to the offer of a school place being withdrawn.

Completing the In Year School Transfer application

Stage 1 - Parent/carer completes **Section A** of the In Year School Transfer application form (T1).

Stage 2 - Once Section A has been completed the parent/carer MUST submit the whole form to your child's current school, even if they are currently not attending. This applies during both term time & school holiday periods. If necessary, you must wait until the school re-opens to submit the form to your child's current school. The current school should complete **Section B** of the form and submit the application directly to Sefton LA. This should be done within 5 school days of the school receiving the form.

Stage 3 - Once a completed application has been received by Sefton LA, the application will be checked and registered. An acknowledgement will be sent to the parent/carer, usually via email. If additional information is still required this will be requested from child's current school.

Stage 4 – The LA School Admissions Team assess the application for place availability. Following assessment there are three possible outcomes (see pages 12-13).

Please note the following points whilst completing Section A of the application

Childs and Parent/Carer details

- Please check you have entered the correct date of birth & year group for your child's age.
- The child's current home address must be the permanent home address and cannot be a relatives, childminder's or business address.
- A person who has **parental responsibility** for the child MUST complete the application (see page 11). Please provide a valid working email address so we can acknowledge receipt of the application form (**when it is returned to the LA, by the child's current school**), and contact you if we require any further information.
- Please provide the name and address of your child's current or most recently attended school.
- Please state the relevant information regarding your child's faith/religion if you are applying for a faith school.

Private fostering arrangements

If a child is living with you and you do not have parental responsibility for the child and are not a close relative, (a close relative is a step parent by marriage, grandparent, sibling, aunt or uncle) and you have or will be, caring for the child for more than 28 days, can you please indicate this on your application. This type of arrangement is called 'private fostering', and the LA has a legal responsibility to recognise, support and monitor any child in their area who is being 'privately fostered'.

Looked after children/social care involvement

Looked After and Previously Looked After children have the highest priority in the admissions criteria for all maintained schools in Sefton. Children who are subject to a Child in Need Plan, Child Protection Plan, Child Arrangements Order, formal Kinship Care Arrangement or Special Guardianship Order, may if necessary, be referred to the Transfer Panel for a school placement. If this applies, please provide all the requested details.

Education background & Free School Meals

- Please indicate if you are receiving free school meals (FSM) for your child. In most circumstances this will allow eligibility for FSM to automatically transfer when your child starts at their new school. NOTE: If you live outside of Sefton you will have to make these arrangements separately yourself.
- If your child has been permanently excluded please indicate this and provide the requested details.

School Preferences

- Please state the reason(s) for requesting a school transfer.
- You can choose *up to* 3 Sefton schools in the order in which you prefer them.. Please ensure that your school preferences are only for those schools that you actively wish to request a place at.
- Please **DO NOT** list schools outside of Sefton as the LA is unable to process requests for schools outside of the area. Please see pages 3-4 for more information.
- If your child has a sibling who is attending any of the schools you have listed, please provide their details. 'Sibling' refers to a brother or sister and includes half, step, adopted or foster siblings, provided they live at the same home address as part of the same family unit. **Please note cousins or other relatives are not classed as siblings.**
- Provide the date that the new school place is required from. Please read the important information on page 5 regarding dates that applications should be submitted for a new school placement.

Children who have an Education Health & Care Plan (EHCP)

All Sefton maintained or academy schools will meet their legal obligation to admit a pupil who has an EHCP where the school is named in the plan. An EHCP is a legal document that describes a child or young person's special educational, health and social care needs. It explains the extra help that will be given to meet those needs, and it will include the name of a specific educational

establishment that the child will attend in order to meet their needs. This is not the same as a SEN Support Plan or a child receiving additional help within the classroom.

The School Admissions Team is **NOT** involved in school placements for children who have an EHCP. **In these circumstances DO NOT COMPLETE AN IN YEAR TRANSFER APPLICATION.** Instead, a separate application process applies.

For children with an EHCP **who live in Sefton** if they wish to change school placement an 'annual review meeting' must be held to discuss the request to change placement. Parents/carers should contact their child's current school or their SEN Casework Officer at Sefton LA to arrange this.

For children with an EHCP **who do not live in Sefton** but wish move to a Sefton school, parents/carer's should contact their child's current school or the SEN Casework Officer at the local authority where you live.

Children with Social/Medical or Special Educational Needs (without an EHCP)

For children who do **NOT** have an EHCP but do have Special Educational Needs or disabilities, you should complete the school transfer application in the normal manner. It is not always straight forward for children who have additional needs to transfer schools. For example: if your child currently has 1:1 support it can take some time for similar arrangements to be put in place at a new school, and in some cases this may not be possible at all due to school budgets/funding arrangements. This is one of the reasons why a request to transfer schools may be referred to the Transfer Panel for a decision.

If you believe that a particular school is the most suitable to meet your child's needs, you should detail this on the application and provide supporting evidence with your application from a doctor, social worker, or other appropriate professionals. Please provide copies, rather than original documents. Your evidence should set out the reasons why the school you have chosen is most suitable for your child to transfer to.

Contact details for Sefton Council Special Educational Needs & Inclusion Service

You can get further information from the SEN & Inclusion Service, Assessment, Resource and Provision Planning Team, Magdalen House, 30 Trinity Road, Bootle, L20 3NJ.

Email: special.needs@sefton.gov.uk or telephone: 0151 934 2347.

Information is also available online: www.seftondirectory.co.uk/localoffer.

You can get free, confidential and impartial advice to help parents make informed decisions about their child's special educational needs, and support children and young people to have their voices heard and discuss their options for next steps and future transitions, from Sefton Special Educational Needs and Disability Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS).

Contact SENDIASS by email: sefton.sendiass@barnardos.org.uk Telephone: 0333 323 8003 or online: <https://www.barnardosendiass.org.uk/sefton-sendiass/>.

Data protection & parental declaration

Sefton Council maintains an electronic database in respect of all pupils who apply for a school place within Sefton. All personal information provided on the application form is treated in strict confidence in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018. Paper application forms will be held for 2 years and then destroyed securely. The application information held within the electronic database may be held for up to 7 years.

Sefton council reserves the right to verify all information stated on the application.

- The information provided will be shared with the requested school(s) in order to complete the school admission application process. In some circumstances the information may also be shared with the current (or last attended) school.
- You must agree that the information provided is correct and up to date.
- A person with **parental responsibility*** must sign the declaration in section A. Applications that are not signed will NOT be processed.

Shared parental responsibility

*It is recognised that important decisions such as which schools to apply for should be made if possible jointly between parents, however, if parents are unable to agree lines of communication between themselves on issues involving their child, they may wish to seek independent legal advice and explore other options. These might include referring the matter to non-court dispute resolution, such as mediation, or to the family court for adjudication. **In all cases and in the best interests of their child, the local authority requires parents to resolve matters between themselves (taking legal advice if necessary) BEFORE submitting any application for a school place.**

In cases where parents are separated and both have retained joint responsibility, the parent with whom the child primarily resides should complete the application form. The home address used will be that which is directed by the court, or the address where the child lives for the majority of the school week. If the child's time is split equally between two homes, the address of the parent who receives the child benefit will normally be used.

The LA has an **obligation** to process an application that has been submitted and signed by a parent/carer stating that they have parental responsibility, unless there is a specific court order produced to the LA that prohibits the child from changing school. **It is a parent/carers responsibility to ensure that any request for a new school placement does not breach any existing court orders.**

THE LOCAL AUTHORITY WILL NOT INTERVENE AND CANNOT RELEASE ANY INFORMATION, WHERE DISPUTES OR DISAGREEMENTS ARISE BETWEEN PARENT(S)/CARER(S) IN RELATION TO ANY PROPOSED OR SUBMITTED APPLICATION FOR A SCHOOL PLACE.

Optional Consent to share information

Sefton Council provides many support services for children and families who may be experiencing difficulties at home, in the community or at school. There are sometimes circumstances identified within the information provided on the application which impacts on a child's attendance at school. There can also be family issues identified where the child/family may benefit from an agreed Early Help Plan or support from council services. Examples being, non-attendance or lateness at school, problems with transport to school, a family bereavement, a medical condition or a disability, or community/social issues adversely impacting on the child or family.

By selecting/signing the optional declaration, you agree that, where appropriate, the council may share information contained within the application form with the relevant council support services with the view to contacting you to offer support or an Early Help Plan for the child/family where applicable.

What happens next ?

In accordance with the School Admissions Code 2021 Sefton LA will, wherever possible, aim to notify parents of the outcome of their application within 10 school days*. You should receive an outcome **no later than** 15 school days* from your application being received by the LA. *School days refers to Sefton's standard term dates which are available to view on the Sefton website www.sefton.gov.uk.

Outcome A – a place is available at the requested school

If we are able to offer you a place at more than one of the schools you have listed, we will offer you the school named highest on your application. The application and any additional information are sent to the preferred school by the LA. The school is asked to contact the parent/carer directly, within 3 school days, to plan for the child to be admitted. The school informs the Admissions Team of the agreed start date & the place is allocated. The child is admitted to the preferred school on the agreed date.

Outcome B – no place available at preferred school(s)

If it is not possible to offer you the highest preferred school, the application is refused. The LA will send you a decision letter with details on how to appeal for that school to an Independent Appeal Panel. A lower preferred school will be offered if it is appropriate to do so.

If it is not possible to offer **any** of the schools requested, the LA will send you a decision letter with details on how to appeal for those schools. The LA may offer an alternative school at this point, if it is appropriate to do so. The parent/carer will be required to complete and return a reply slip to the local authority for any preference refused or alternative place being offered.

If you do not live in Sefton and cannot be offered any of your Sefton school choices, you are advised to contact your home local authority to seek advice on securing an alternative school place for your child. The contact details for neighbouring local authorities can be found on page 4.

Please see below for further information on appeals and waiting lists. If requested, the LA can also provide you with information relating to schools in the wider Sefton area which may have places available.

Outcome C – referral to the Transfer Panel (under the School Transfer Protocol)

In certain circumstances an application can be referred to the School Transfer Panel, either by a school once they have considered the admission request, or by the School Admissions Team. The applicant will be informed if the admission request is being referred to the Transfer Panel. In these circumstances a school placement recommendation would be made via the relevant Transfer Panel. Please see page 14 for further details.

Appeals and waiting lists

Appeals

If you cannot be offered a place at a school you have named as the highest preference on your application form because the school is full, you have the right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel. Information about how to appeal will be sent to you with the decision letter. If an Appeal is submitted there are two possible outcomes following an appeal hearing:

- 1) If the Appeal is **refused** by the Independent Appeal Panel the parent/carer will need to accept or seek a place at an alternative school that has a place available. Alternatively, and if feasible, the child can remain at their current school.
- 2) If the Appeal is **successful** an admission date will be agreed between the preferred school and the parent/carer.

For further information regarding the admission appeals process please go to the admission appeals webpage on the Sefton website: www.sefton.gov.uk/schooladmissionappeals.

Waiting lists

The In Year Admissions Team holds waiting lists for all Sefton schools.

- If the LA cannot offer a place at your preferred school, you will be offered the option of adding your child's name to the schools waiting list.
- For ALL SCHOOLS a waiting list **must** (by law) be held and maintained in priority order, using the school's admissions criteria. A waiting list cannot be ordered based on the date an application was submitted. Waiting lists are subject to change at any time as other applications are added, removed or due to other changes of a child's circumstances. **Therefore, a child can move up or down on a waiting list.**
- In Year waiting lists are held until the end of the school year in which you apply (31 July). Your child's name will NOT automatically remain on the waiting list for the following school year.

- If you wish for your child's name to remain on a waiting list during the following school year, you **MUST** contact the School Admissions Team **before the end of the summer term in July**, to specifically request this.
- If a vacancy arises and your child is at the top of a waiting list the LA will contact you to see if the place is still required.

Sefton School Transfer Protocol

The Transfer Protocol may be used to place certain groups of children, where they may have difficulty in securing an In Year school transfer. This will include children who fall into a Fair Access category (a separate protocol for unplaced children), children who have been electively home educated, and those who transfer schools three times or more within a local area, without any house move.

In Sefton, the Protocol is administered by two panels one for primary school applications and one for secondary school applications. You will be contacted by e-mail/letter and informed if your application is being considered under the Sefton Transfer Protocol. There is no duty for Admission Authorities to comply with parental preference when applications are considered under the Transfer Protocol however parents view should be considered.

An individual school (or Sefton In Year Admissions Team) may request that an application for a school place is referred to the appropriate Transfer Panel, if it meets the requirements contained within the Protocol. The Transfer Panel considers the application and makes a school placement recommendation. If a school place is being allocated based on the panel's decision arrangements will be made for the child to be admitted into that school. If a new school placement is being refused by the panel, the parent/carer will be advised of their right of appeal to an Independent Appeal Panel. The Admissions Team informs schools and the parent/carer of the panel's decision.

In some circumstances a recommendation may be made for a 'managed transfer' between two schools. This would involve a child attending a new school whilst remaining on roll (dual registered) at their existing school, for a limited period. Parents must agree to a specific plan for the child's attendance and behaviour etc at the new school.

You can view/download the full School Transfer Protocol from the Sefton website by accessing the **In Year School Admissions Policy** document at www.sefton.gov.uk/schooladmissionspolicyandreports

Sefton schools

Sefton has 74 primary schools and 18 secondary schools. There are different types of schools including community schools, academy schools and faith schools.

Community & voluntary controlled schools are primary schools funded by the LA, and the LA is the admission authority for these schools. **Voluntary Aided faith schools** are managed by a church authority and the LA meets the running costs of the school. The Governing Body is the admission authority for these schools.

Academy schools, (including some faith schools), are independently managed, all ability schools set up by sponsors from business, faith or voluntary groups in partnership with the Department for Education. Together they fund the land and buildings, with the government covering the running costs. The Governing Body is the admission authority for these schools. The majority of secondary schools and some primary schools within Sefton are academies.

Sefton LA is the coordinating body for In Year admissions & school transfers for ALL Sefton schools.

Admissions criteria

For more information about individual schools, the type of school, and the admissions criteria for each school (which will be applied to applicants on a waiting list) can be found in the publication, **Sefton Primary & Secondary Schools Admissions Information Guide** which is available to view or download on Sefton's website: www.sefton.gov.uk/startingschool.

Each voluntary aided and academy school have their own oversubscription criteria which are set by the school governors.

Please remember that in most cases, matters could be resolved with your child's current school, without the need to transfer to a new school.

Please speak to the current school before completing the application form and requesting a school transfer.

Amendments to the information provided in this guide

The information in this guide is correct at the time of publishing. We have done all we can to make sure it is accurate, correct and accessible, at the time of publishing. However, the local authority cannot include in this guide any changes that come into effect during the current school year. We may need to make changes from time to time, due to circumstances beyond our control.

