

When & how do I apply for a School place?

How do you measure 'home to school distances'?

Which address do I state if I am moving house?

What is the application closing date(s)?

What happens if my application is late?

When will I find out which school has been offered?

I live outside Sefton, how do I apply for a Sefton School?

How do you define a 'sibling'?

How many schools can I apply for?



**APPLYING FOR A PRIMARY
OR SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACE**

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS 2022-2023

Sefton Council 

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INTRODUCTION

Dear Parent/Carer

We have prepared this guide to provide you with a wide range of information and advice to help you when it is time for you to complete and submit your application for a school place for your child.

For further information about the schools themselves, the number of places available, the admissions criteria and how places have been allocated previously for each school, please read the accompanying Guide 'Sefton Primary & Secondary Schools Admissions Information 2022-2023' which is available at www.sefton.gov.uk/admissions

Sefton Council is determined to ensure that all children and young people have the opportunity to fulfil their potential whatever their background and we work in partnership with schools, children, young people and their families to help achieve this.

I hope you will find this Parents Guide and the School Admissions Information Guide useful. I would recommend that you name three schools on your application and that you use Sefton's online Citizen Portal system to apply for your child's school place.

Please also take the opportunity to visit school websites and/or contact schools directly for more information to help you decide which three schools you would like to apply for. You should also contact schools to obtain information on open days/evenings or to arrange personal visits (restrictions permitting). Many schools also now offer virtual tours via their website.

If you have any questions or need any more information or advice, please do not hesitate to contact the School Admissions Team (contact details can be found on page 4).

If you live outside of the Sefton area please contact your home Local Authority for more information and advice on how to submit an application, even if you wish to apply for a Sefton school(s). Contact details for neighbouring Local Authorities can be found on page 14 of this guide.

Sefton residents should complete an online application via the Sefton website (Citizen Portal), please see further details on the next page. You can name any school on your application whether the school is within the Sefton area or outside of Sefton.

Yours sincerely

**Tricia Davies
Head of Education**

September 2021

Once you have read this guide and understand the school admissions process, associated closing date(s) and taken a look at the checklist and frequently asked questions, please ensure you read the accompanying guide ‘Sefton Primary and Secondary Schools Admissions Information 2022-23’. The accompanying guide provides you with additional information about each school within Sefton including contact details, the admissions criteria and previous admissions patterns. You are now ready to apply for a school place online.

Apply for a place online

Why should I apply online?

- It’s quick and easy – your application will be recorded automatically and once you have submitted the application, you will receive an email confirming submission of your application
- It’s convenient – you can apply 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You can start an application and finish it later. You can make changes at any time up to the **closing date**. Every time you re-submit the online application, you will receive an email confirming the status of the application
- It’s secure – the system has a series of features to ensure others do not see information they are not entitled to see.

How do I apply online?

- You will need access to the Internet and an email account
- Just go to www.sefton.gov.uk/admissions and follow the instructions within the Citizen Portal
- If you do not have internet access, a paper application is available upon request.

The national closing dates for applications are:

SECONDARY SCHOOLS: 31 OCTOBER 2021

PRIMARY SCHOOLS: 15 JANUARY 2022

Accessible Information

Sefton Council is now using ‘Recite Me’ software to help residents with accessibility issues customise its website to meet their needs. By turning on Recite Me, visitors to the council’s website www.sefton.gov.uk can use the service to read website pages out loud in different voices and languages, increase and decrease the size of the text and change the type style including into a dyslexic-friendly font. We have endeavoured to make this guide accessible for screen reading software, however if you have any difficulties please contact us.

Contact Details

Sefton School Admissions Team, Schools Regulatory Services, Town Hall, Oriol Road, Bootle, L20 7AE.
Email: admissions@sefton.gov.uk Tel: 0151 934 3590.

SECTION A

Coordinated Secondary Admissions Scheme

Transferring from Primary to Secondary School – September 2022

Important Dates to Remember

1 September 2021	You can access all the information and apply for a Secondary School place online via the Citizen Portal from this date www.sefton.gov.uk/admissions
31 October 2021	National closing date for receipt of secondary applications
10 January 2022	Deadline for receipt of changes to existing applications including confirmed house moves and changes of preference for inclusion on 1 March National Offer Day (see page 12 for information about moving to a new home)
1 March 2022	National Offer Day Email notifications sent to parents/carers who applied online and for applicants who did not apply online, an offer letter will be posted by Sefton Local Authority on this day
From 2 March 2022	Processing begins of any late applications and late changes of preference received on or after 11 January
12 April 2022	Deadline for receipt of appeals to be submitted from national offer day
Summer Term 2022	Independent appeal hearings take place

Coordinated Primary Admissions Scheme

Starting Primary School for the first time (Reception) – September 2022

Important Dates to Remember

1 September 2021	You can access all the information and apply for a Primary School place online via the Citizen Portal from this date www.sefton.gov.uk/admissions
15 January 2022	National closing date for receipt of primary applications
25 February 2022	Deadline for receipt of changes to existing applications including confirmed house moves and changes of preference for inclusion on 19 April National Offer Day (see page 12 for information about moving to a new home)
19 April 2022	National Offer Day Email notifications sent to parents/carers who applied online and for applicants who did not apply online, an offer letter will be posted by Sefton Local Authority on this day
From 20 April 2022	Processing begins of any late applications and late changes of preference received on or after 26 February
17 May 2022	Deadline for receipt of appeals to be submitted from national offer day
Summer Term 2022	Independent appeal hearings take place

SECTION A

Key Information

Starting Secondary School

Children transfer from primary to secondary schools in the September following their eleventh birthday. Children whose birthdays fall between 1 September 2010 and 31 August 2011 will start secondary school in September 2022. Children who are born on dates outside of this period can only be considered in exceptional circumstances. Please see the information on page 8 - 'Admission of Children outside of their normal (chronological) age group'.

Starting Primary School

Children start primary school in the September following their fourth birthday. Children whose birthdays fall between 1 September 2017 and 31 August 2018 will start primary school in September 2022*. Most schools admit the whole age group in the September after a child's fourth birthday. However, a child is not required by law to start school until the point at which they reach compulsory school age which is the prescribed day following their fifth birthday. The prescribed days are: 31 August; 31 December; and 31 March.*Further information can be found below.

Deferred Entry to School

If a child is offered a place in Reception but is not five until later in the school year, parents have the option to defer starting school until the term in which the child reaches compulsory school age (age 5).

Parents who would prefer for their child to defer starting school, must make an application for a school place in the normal way and within the published deadlines. A school place would be offered through the standard primary admissions round. Once a school place has been allocated, a deferred start date for the child **MUST then be agreed directly with the individual school**. The place offered to the child would be reserved until that time. You may choose to continue with Nursery provision until later in the year but **MUST** take up the school place allocated before the end of the summer term.

Examples:

- A child is 5 in October 2022; they can defer starting school until the beginning of the Spring term in January 2023.
- A child is 5 in February 2023 they can defer starting school until after Easter 2023.
- A child is 5 in August 2023; they can defer starting school until the Summer term 2023 but must start during the Summer term and then move up to Year 1 with their age group.

Delayed entry to school

As previously stated, it is expected that all children start Primary School in the academic year that they turn 5. Parents of a summer born child (born between 1 April and 31 August) and other children who may have **exceptional circumstances** may **request** that (as part of the usual application process) their child delays starting school until the academic year in which the child reaches 6 years of age. If a request is approved the child would permanently remain a year behind their chronological age group.

The parent should make an application for Delayed Entry to School and provide supporting evidence as to why they believe their child should start school outside of their chronological age group. Supporting evidence should include for example: Medical reports, Educational Psychologist reports, Speech & Language Therapy reports. The Admissions Authority will consider applications on an individual basis as outlined on the next page. Further information and an application form are available within our advice sheet for parents of 'Summer born children'. Please contact the School Admissions Team to request this.

Admission of children outside of their normal (chronological) age group

Current guidance from the Department for Education states that “the government would agree that, in general, children should be educated in their normal age group, with the curriculum differentiated as appropriate. **Children should only be educated outside of their normal age group in very limited circumstances**”.

Parents do not have the right to insist that their child is admitted to a particular age group, but they may make a request for this to happen. Such requests may be made for a variety of reasons, for example where a child has moved to the area from abroad, has missed schooling due to illness, or has exceptional talent or ability. Requests will be considered on an individual basis and a decision will be made in the best interests of the child. This will include taking account of:

- The parents' views;
- Information about the child's academic, social and emotional development;
- Where relevant their medical history and the views of a medical professional;
- Whether they have previously been educated outside of the normal year group;
- Whether they may naturally have been in a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely;
- The opinion of the Head Teacher of the school concerned.

Before making a request parent(s)/carer(s) should consider the following:

- A child ceases to be of statutory school age on the last Friday of June in the school year in which they become 16 years of age. If a child is educated outside of the normal age group (i.e. is in year 10 when this date is reached) the child will no longer be of compulsory school age during the school year in which most children will be taking their GCSE examinations.
- All children are now required to continue in education, training or employment until they reach their 18th birthday. This could potentially mean that a child could legally leave school once the statutory leaving age is attained.
- Admission Authorities are not required to automatically agree for a child to be placed outside of their normal age group and may decide that a school place can only be offered in the normal age group. Parents **do not** have a right to an appeal if they have been offered a place and it is not in their preferred year group. They may however make a complaint about the Admission Authority's decision not to admit their child outside of their normal age group.

Twins/multiple births (Primary & Secondary Schools)

Twins or children from multiple births will be considered in the same way as all other applicants having the admissions criteria applied to each application. In circumstances where one of the siblings has been allocated the **last** remaining place at a school the other sibling(s) will also be admitted. If the children are of infant age, they will be admitted as excepted children so that infant class size legislation is not breached. This will also be applied to all applications made during the academic year.

Arrangements for children with Special Educational Needs

In accordance with the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice it is anticipated that the majority of pupils with special educational needs will be able to have their needs met within their local mainstream school.

In addition to this, within Sefton, some mainstream schools have specialist resourced provision for pupils with additional needs. There are also a number of Special Schools that cater for pupils with more complex needs. An Education, Health and Social Care Needs Assessment, in line with the SEND Code of Practice 2015, would need to be carried out for a child likely to require a specially resourced or special school placement. The views of parents/carers and the child or young person are taken into account during the assessment. Information can be found online at www.sefton.gov.uk/localoffer

You can also get further information from the Special Needs Team: Assessment, Resource and Provision Planning Team, Ainsdale Hope Centre, Sandringham Road, Ainsdale, PR8 2PJ. Telephone: 0151 934 2347 Email: special.needs@sefton.gov.uk

All Sefton Schools will meet their legal obligation to admit a pupil who has an Education, Health and Social Care Plan where the school is named in the plan.

You can get impartial advice and support on special educational needs issues from Sefton Special Educational Needs and Disability Information Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS).

Contact Details: SENDIASS, Telephone: 0151 934 3334 Email: seftonsendiass@sefton.gov.uk or by completing an online enquiry form at: <https://forms.sefton.gov.uk/specialeducationneeds>

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

Where to view the admissions criteria & get further information about Sefton schools

The contact details and admissions criteria for all Sefton schools, along with links to individual school websites are included in the '**Sefton Primary & Secondary Schools Admissions Information 2022-2023**' guide which is available to view at www.sefton.gov.uk/admissions. The guide also includes information for Sefton Local Authority nursery schools, school sixth form admissions, and admissions for Year 10 entry to other education establishments.

If you need further information relating to a particular school, the School's individual website is a great place to start. If you want to arrange a visit to a school, please contact the school directly. Contact details for individual schools are also available by using the '*find my nearest*' function on the Sefton council website.

Additional information is also available from the following sources:

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

For independent advice and information on education issues in England you can contact Ace Education Advice & Training Service at: www.ace-ed.org.uk or telephone the free confidential advice line on: **0300 0115 142** (telephone lines are open Mon-Wed, 10am -1pm, term time only).

Sefton Local Authority's Coordination of Admission Arrangements

The Education Act 2002 requires all local authorities to have a coordinated admissions scheme which includes all schools within the Local Authority Area. This will ensure that every parent will receive one offer of a school place on the same day (**1 March** national offer date for **Secondary schools** and **19 April** national offer date for **Primary schools**). The Local Authority coordinates the admission arrangements using an admissions application process whereby parents can express three preferences for schools, in their preferred order, and reasons for those preferences if they wish.

Copies of the 2022 Coordinated Admission Schemes for Sefton Schools are available on the Sefton website www.sefton.gov.uk/schooladmissionspolicyandreports

SECTION A

Making your preferences and completing your application for a school place

Make sure you read the accompanying guide 'Sefton Primary & Secondary Schools Admissions Information 2022-23' which will give you:

1. All the details you require about each school in Sefton
2. The admissions criteria for each school which will be used if there are more applications than places available
3. How many applications have been offered places at each school, under each admission criterion, in previous years
4. Please complete the checklist - Things to Consider on page 16
5. Apply online using the 'Citizen Portal' available at www.sefton.gov.uk/admissions

Admissions Online Application (Citizen Portal system)

The online system is quick and easy to use, there is no risk of your application being lost in the post. You can change your application up to the closing date and you will receive confirmation via email that your application has been started or changed. However, in order to ensure your application is received by us, you must resubmit it each time you make a change, and before the closing date.

You must choose 'submit now' for your application to be received by the Local Authority

You will receive confirmation that your application has been submitted via email. **If you tick the relevant box within the online application, you will also receive your offer by email. This must be ticked in order to receive your offer by email, even if you have applied online.** In order to receive your offer, please ensure your email address is a **personal** email address and it is up to date.

If you do not have access to the internet, we can provide you with a paper copy of the Admissions Guides and a paper application form. Please contact the School Admissions Team to request this. If you submit a paper application form to a primary school, please **ensure you receive an official receipt from the school for the form.** Otherwise, you must return your completed paper application form to Sefton School Admissions Team by the deadlines shown on pages 5 and 6.

- When you make your application, we ask you to name up to three schools you would like your child to attend. You should list these in the order you most prefer – these are your preferences.
- **We strongly advise you to name more than one school.** This is so the Local Authority can consider other preferences which may be acceptable to you, if it is not possible to offer your highest preferred school.
- If you name only one school on your application and it cannot be offered to you, Sefton cannot automatically consider you for any other schools in your area and you will be allocated a place at the **nearest qualifying school to your home address with a place still available** after other preferences have been processed. This may be a school further away from your home.
- We can only offer places at any school up to the school's individual Published Admission Number (PAN). You can view the published number for all schools in the accompanying Schools Information guide.
- Please do not repeat the name of one school on your application as this will not improve your chances of getting a place. Neither will naming only one school three times.
- If you live in Sefton and we cannot offer your child a place at any of your preferred schools, we will allocate your child a place at the nearest qualifying school to your home address with a place available. In the case of Catholic children, if there are places available, it will be the qualifying

Catholic Voluntary Aided School, which serves the Parish in which you reside. If you live outside of Sefton and we cannot offer your child a place at any of your preferred Sefton schools, your own (home) local authority will be responsible for allocating your child a school place in your local area.

- If you reside in Sefton and do not submit an admissions application on time, we may not be able to offer your child a place at your preferred school.

Voluntary Aided Faith Schools – Supplementary Information Form (SIF)

In addition to the Local Authority's application form, Voluntary Aided Faith Schools will require parents to complete a **Supplementary Information Form (SIF)**, which should be obtained from, and returned directly to the school. Completion of a SIF is necessary for applicants applying for Church schools so that their application can be considered fully against the relevant admission criteria. Church schools may also require sight of a baptism certificate to authenticate any statements made.

- It should be noted that completion of a SIF does not constitute a valid admissions application on its own. The applicant must also name the school as a preference on the Local Authority's application form and submit this to the Local Authority in the normal way. **It is very important that you do both.** If you only complete the Local Authority application, your application cannot be fully considered by the relevant faith school.
- You should contact the Voluntary Aided School to obtain a Supplementary Information Form and the completed form should be returned to the school direct. Alternatively, you may be able to download a form from the relevant school's website.
- The Governing Body of the school uses the information on the Supplementary Information Form to apply their admissions criteria. The information you give on the form helps the Governors to assess under which criterion your application will be considered, e.g. Baptised Catholic living in Parish.

Home Address

Sefton Local Authority can only process applications from **one permanent home address**. This must be the address where the parent(s)/carer(s) with legal responsibility lives with the child. The address given on the application form should be your child's **current** home address. This applies even if you might move to a new address, at a later date (see moving to a new home on page 12). The address of relatives, childminders, businesses, or proposed addresses will **NOT BE ACCEPTED**.

The Local Authority may require evidence of the home address stated on the application form. Applicants will be contacted on an individual basis if evidence of a home address is required. The Local Authority reserves the right to undertake all necessary investigations and request appropriate evidence of a child's permanent home address, as fit the individual circumstances.

Applicants who do not respond to requests for further information should be aware that the Local Authority will NOT consider a request for a school place from an unconfirmed address.

For the purposes of allocating a school place, and establishing **one** permanent home address, it is required that the child and applicant are residing at the stated address, and not just own or be renting the property, whilst still living elsewhere.

The School Admissions Code allows Admission Authorities to withdraw a place offered to a child, if it is found that fraudulent or potentially misleading information has been provided in order to obtain a school place.

Where a child lives with parents who have shared responsibility

The Local Authority has an **obligation** to process an application form that has been signed and submitted by a parent/carer stating that they have parental responsibility. The Local Authority can only process ONE application form per child, from one address. If your child lives at a different address from you or with another parent/carer from Monday to Friday, please provide a copy of the Parental Responsibility or Child Arrangements Order with your application. The Local Authority (or Admission Authority) reserves the right to undertake all necessary investigations and request appropriate evidence of a child's permanent home address, as fit the individual circumstances.

In cases where parents are separated and both have retained joint responsibility, only one application form will be accepted, from the parent with whom the child primarily resides. 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.

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).

Where parent(s)/carer(s) submit two separate application forms and do not reach an agreement regarding school preferences, the Local Authority reserves the right to determine which application should be accepted and which application will be discarded.

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.

Moving to a new home

If you are intending to move to a new home during the application period(s), you must still apply from your child's **current home address** before the national deadlines. Changes of address will be **considered** if sufficient evidence of a house move is received prior to the application closing date or by the deadline for changes to existing applications (see pages 5 & 6).

You must be **resident** at the new address (and provide satisfactory evidence) by the published deadline for changes, in order for this to be considered for the initial allocation of school places on national offer day. New addresses **will not** be considered without a solicitor's letter confirming that contracts have been exchanged and signed on the property or evidence of a long-term tenancy of at least 6 months, together with evidence that parent(s)/carer(s) are residing at the new property.

The evidence of house purchase (exchange of contracts) or long-term tenancy, and independent evidence which confirms **residency** at the new address, **must** be received by the Local Authority by the deadline for changes (shown on pages 5 & 6) in order for this to be considered for the initial allocation of school places on national offer day.

Evidence of the disposal of a previous property may also be requested where there is any uncertainty or dispute in establishing **one** permanent home address for the purposes of allocating a school place.

The Local Authority (or Admission Authority) reserves the right to undertake all necessary investigations and request appropriate evidence of a child's permanent home address, as fit the individual circumstances.

For house moves taking place, or evidence that is received **after** the deadline for changes (shown on pages 5 & 6), applications will be considered on an individual basis and can only be dealt with **after** national allocation/offer day along with any other requests in the date order that they are received.

Crown Servants/Children of UK Service Personnel (UK Armed Forces)

For children of UK service personnel (UK Armed Forces) or crown servants returning from overseas, the Local Authority will accept the posting or return address, and allocate a school place (where there is a place available) in advance of the family arriving in the area, provided that the application is accompanied by an official letter from the Ministry of Defence confirming a relocation date and address. All applications are still considered according to the admissions criteria for the individual school(s) requested.

Applications from families living outside of the UK

Children of families who are resident overseas and are planning to return to the UK and to an address within the Sefton area, must provide appropriate evidence of ownership of the property, or a tenancy agreement and provide a **confirmed** moving date. In most cases, and prior to national offer day, it is required that the child and applicant are actually residing at the stated address, and not just own or be renting the property, whilst still living overseas. Applications from overseas residents may have to be considered on an individual basis. Therefore, the Local Authority (or Admission Authority) reserves the right to undertake all necessary investigations and request appropriate evidence of a child's permanent home address, as fit the individual circumstances.

Places in schools outside of Sefton

Most pupils who live in Sefton will usually want to go to a school within Sefton. However, you may apply for a place for your child at a school outside Sefton, particularly if you live near a boundary with another Local Authority. If you wish to apply for a school outside Sefton, please include it on your Sefton admission application form. Sefton will automatically send your application details to the Local Authority where the schools are located, for them to process it in line with their co-ordinated admission arrangements.

If you have expressed preferences for schools in more than one Local Authority area, those authorities will co-ordinate the results once the decisions have been made. If more than one Local Authority can offer a place, the highest preferred school on the individual admission application will be offered. Wherever possible, within the timescales before the national offer days, authorities making a lower offer will withdraw their place. If you want to appeal for a higher preferred school, which has not been offered, you may do so.

You should contact the School Admissions Team of the appropriate Local Authority for more details. Contact details for neighbouring Local Authorities can be found on page 14. Other Local Authorities may have different timetables for processing applications. It is important to check carefully how their procedures may affect you. If your child is given a place in a school outside of Sefton, we will not necessarily pay their travelling costs. See Section C, 'Home to School Transport Eligibility and Arrangements'.

Pupils who live outside Sefton and want to go to a school in Sefton

If you live outside Sefton and you want to apply for a place at a Sefton school, you must complete the online application via the website for your **own Local Authority** (or the paper form supplied by your own Local Authority). You should name the Sefton School you wish your child to attend on the form and return it to your own Local Authority. Your application will then be automatically forwarded by your home Local Authority to Sefton.

If you have any questions, please remember that we will help you if you are not sure about completing an application. If you need any help or advice, please contact the School Admissions Team for assistance.

Contact details for neighbouring Local Authority Admission Teams

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
Room C37
Pupil Access Team
County Hall
Fishergate Hill
Preston
PR1 0LD
Tel: 01772 532191 or 01772 532189
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

Schools Admissions
People's Services
Atlas House
Corporation Street
St Helens
WA9 1LD
Tel: 01744 671030
Email: schooladmissions@sthelens.gov.uk

SECTION A

Admission Authorities for Sefton Schools

The table below sets out who is the Admissions Authority for each type of school within Sefton and indicates who is responsible for arranging an Admission Appeal hearing against the refusal of a school place.

Type of School	Who is the Admission Authority?	To whom do I send the request for an appeal hearing if a place has been refused?
Community & Voluntary Controlled Church of England	Local Authority	Local Authority
Catholic Voluntary Aided	School Governing Body	Liverpool Archdiocese
Church of England Voluntary Aided	School Governing Body	Chair of Governors c/o the school
Secondary Academies (excluding St Michaels CE High)	School Governing Body	Local Authority
St Michael's Church of England High (Academy)	School Governing Body	For Year 7 entry - Sept 2022 Go to school website to access an appeal form www.stmichaelshigh.com For In Year Applicants or School Transfers Local Authority (see below)
Church of England Primary Academies (except for St Andrew's)	School Governing Body	Chair of Governors c/o the school
Other Primary Academies & St Andrew's Maghull CE Primary	School Governing Body	Local Authority

Please note:

St Michael's Church of England High School (Academy) – For Year 7 entry into the school in September 2022, the School will administer the appeals for pupils transferring from Primary School. You can access the appeal form via the school's website or by contacting the school directly.

For In Year admission and School Transfer appeals for all other year groups (and Year 7 once the academic year has begun), the Local Authority will administer the appeals. You should submit your appeal using the Local Authority appeal form and send it to Sefton School Admissions Team, Town Hall, Oriol Road, Bootle, L20 7AE. Email: admissions@sefton.gov.uk

SECTION A

Checklist - Points to Consider



I have checked that my home Local Authority is Sefton.	
I understand that my child will not automatically transfer from Nursery to a Primary school or Primary to Secondary school and that I still need to apply for a school place.	
I have checked whether my child attends a feeder primary school for a particular Secondary school.	
I have checked whether my house is in a catchment area for a particular school, or a parish area which is linked to a particular school.	
I have read the admissions criteria for my preferred schools to see whether my application will receive a high priority.	
I have checked whether I need to complete and return a supplementary information form to provide further information for a faith school I have named.	
I have made three preferences naming schools in the order I most prefer.	
I have remembered to include any brothers or sisters who are currently attending my preferred school and will still be attending in September 2022.	
<p>Applications for schools which have 'Children of Staff' as part of their Admissions Criteria</p> <p>I have clearly stated the <u>name of the school employee</u> on my application form, and I understand that if I fail to do so, the Local Authority may not be able to consider my application under this criterion, for that particular school.</p>	
As I did not have access to the internet, I have submitted a paper application to the Primary school of my choice (for a place in Reception) <u>and I have an official receipt from the school.</u>	
I have considered how my child will get to and from my preferred schools and whether I would be eligible to receive travel assistance through the Local Authority. I have also noted how the Local Authority measures home to school distance (safest walking route).	
I have read the guide ' <i>Sefton Primary & Secondary Schools Admissions Information 2022-23</i> ' which details the admission criteria for each school I have chosen. I have noted how places were allocated at the schools previously.	
I have checked the closing date for my application and understand that <u>all information</u> must be submitted before that date.	

SECTION B

How Sefton Processes your Application

Sefton Administers an Equal Preference Scheme

All preferences expressed for a Sefton school on the admission application form will be considered **equally**. This means that your child will be considered for a place at each school named on your application using the individual admissions criteria for that school irrespective of whether it is your 1st, 2nd or 3rd preference on the application form. Your application is then ranked against the admissions criteria for each school.

Examples of how equal preferences work - child is ranked using the admissions criteria

Primary School Example:

Preference 1: School A – 30 places
Child's rank 25

Preference 2: School B – 60 places
Child's rank 34

Preference 3: School C – 30 places
Child's rank 12

Child Allocated School A

This child is eligible for all three schools. In this case, the child would be offered School A, because it is the highest of the three preferences.

Secondary School Example:

Preference 1: School A – 150 places
Child's rank 165

Preference 2: School B – 180 places
Child's rank 154

Preference 3: School C – 135 places
Child's rank 103

Child Allocated School B

This child is not eligible for School A (their first preference) as they are ranked outside the number of places available. They are eligible for both School B and School C. They would be offered School B as it is a higher preference.

If you are allocated your highest preferred school, all other lower preferences are disregarded as you can only be offered one place.

If you name only one school on your application form and it cannot be offered to you, Sefton cannot automatically consider you for any other schools in your area as you have not named them. You will be allocated a place at the nearest qualifying school to your home address with a place still available after other preferences have been considered first. This may be a school that is further away from your home.

How Sefton works out which school to offer your child

Using the co-ordinated equal preference arrangements, each school you list on your application is considered as a separate application.

- The Local Authority Admissions Team uses a specialist computer system that allows the Local Authority to apply the admissions criteria to applications naming Community, Voluntary Controlled, Secondary Academy Schools and some Primary Academy Schools.
- The computer system also allows the Local Authority to administer the admissions criteria that have been applied by the Governors of Faith Schools, who are their own admissions authorities.
- The computer system co-ordinates this information for each school you have listed on your application form to ensure that each child is only offered one place.
- If we can offer your child a place at more than one of the schools you listed, we will offer you the one that was **highest on your application form**.
- We will repeat these steps until every child has been offered a place at the highest possible school.

- If we can only offer your child one of the schools listed on your application, that is where we will offer your child a place.
- If we cannot offer you any of the schools you listed, we will allocate your child a place at the nearest qualifying school with a place still available.
- If a school has more places available than the number of applications received, all children would be offered a place at that school.

Making Changes to Applications/Late Applications/Waiting Lists

Changes of Preference

Once parents have submitted their application by the **closing date**, the Local Authority will not allow them to be changed without a genuine reason for doing so, for example, if the family has recently moved address, and provided the relevant evidence of one new permanent address.

For families moving into or within the area, we will consider their application if we receive it by the deadline for changes and they provide proof that they have moved and are residing at their new address and that the previous property has been relinquished (deadlines for changes are shown on pages 5 & 6).

For any other changes in circumstances, or change of preferences for applications already submitted, the requested change will only be considered if we receive details by the deadline for changes (deadlines for changes are shown on pages 5 & 6). If a request is received later than the applicable date, it will not be possible to process the request until after the national offer dates, at which time the request will be dealt with in the order of the date it was received by the Local Authority.

Late Applications

The national closing dates for Primary and Secondary applications are shown on the tables on pages 5 & 6. We expect **all** Sefton residents to have submitted their applications by that date. If parents apply after the national closing dates the Local Authority may still be able to consider the application providing we receive the application before the deadlines for changes (see pages 5 & 6).

For families moving into the area after the national closing dates, their application will still be considered if it is received before the deadline for changes with proof that the removal has taken place (for further details see page 12).

For late applications or late changes that are received **after** the deadline for changes **but before national offer dates**, they will be processed after the allocation of places has been completed (for either the Primary or Secondary offer days) and in the date order they are received by Sefton Local Authority. All late applications and late changes will have the school admissions criteria applied to them, in the normal way. The processing period for these applications will be dependent on the number of late applications/changes received.

For late applications or late changes that are received **after the national offer dates**, they will be processed in the date order they are received by Sefton Local Authority. All late applications and late changes will have the school admissions criteria applied to them in the normal way. The processing period for these applications will be dependent on the number of late applications/changes received.

Any late applications naming a Voluntary Aided school, that are received after the closing dates, will be forwarded to the school stating that the application has been received late. The individual admission authority must then decide how it wants to respond to the application.

Waiting Lists for Secondary Schools

If you have not been successful in obtaining a place at a Secondary Academy or Community School you expressed as a higher preference than the school you were offered, your child's name will **automatically** be placed on the waiting list, **only until the deadline for submitting appeals which is 12 April 2022**. We will keep the waiting lists in order of the individual school's admissions criteria. If a place becomes available, we will offer it to the next child on the list.

For those allocated a place on 1 March, only those children for whom an appeal has been submitted, by the appeals deadline, will remain on the waiting list.

If you do not submit an appeal, you will not be included on the waiting list after 12 April 2022.

NB: At any time, new applicants can be added to the waiting list and they must be placed on the list in priority order, using the school's admissions criteria. This means that waiting lists may change because of house moves, late applications or children accepting places at alternative schools.

The Local Authority will keep the waiting list until the end of the Autumn Term 2022. The Governing Body of a voluntary aided school & St Michael's CE High School may maintain a waiting list for their school. Further details are available from the individual school.

After 1 September 2022 if a place becomes available, the applicant at the top of the waiting list will be contacted and offered a place. If the place is not accepted within 7 days, the child will be removed from the waiting list and the place offered to the next child on the waiting list.

Waiting Lists for Primary Schools

If you have not been successful in obtaining a place at a Primary school you expressed as a higher preference than the school you were offered, your child's name **will automatically be placed on the waiting list whether you submit an appeal or not**. This is implemented in Sefton and is different than secondary schools as there are limited rights at appeal for parents of infant age children due to infant class size legislation. We will keep the waiting lists in order of the individual school's admissions criteria, and if a place becomes available, we will offer it to the next child on the list.

NB: At any time, new applicants can be added to the waiting list and they must be placed on the list in priority order, using the school's admissions criteria. This means that waiting lists may change because of house moves, late applications or children accepting places at alternative schools.

The Local Authority will keep the waiting list until the end of the Autumn Term 2022. The Governing Body of a voluntary aided faith school (including some Faith Academy schools) may maintain a waiting list for their school. Further details are available from the individual school.

After 1 September 2022 if a place becomes available, the applicant at the top of the waiting list will be contacted and offered a place. If the place is not accepted within 7 days, the child will be removed from the waiting list and the place offered to the next child on the waiting list.

School Place Offers - How will you let me know which school my child has been offered? **The offer of a school place will be issued on the national offer dates** set out below.

Please note:

<p>SECONDARY SCHOOLS</p> <p>If you applied online for a Secondary School place</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An email will be sent on national offer day 1 March 2022, informing you of the school place that we have been able to offer your child (if you have given us an email address and ticked that you want to receive your offer by email). • You can view the school offered online on national offer day. • The email will include details of how to submit an appeal, if applicable.
<p>PRIMARY SCHOOLS</p> <p>If you applied online for a Primary School place</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An email will be sent on national offer day 19 April 2022, informing you of the school place that we have been able to offer your child (if you have given us an email address and ticked that you want to receive your offer by email). • You can view the school offered online on national offer day. • The email will include details of how to submit an appeal, if applicable.
<p>If you did not apply online (or elected not to receive an offer by email) for either a Secondary or Primary school place</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An offer letter will be posted on national offer day (see dates above), informing you of the school place we have been able to offer your child. In normal circumstances you should receive this letter within 2 days. • The letter will include details of how to submit an appeal if applicable.

The Admissions Team cannot provide details of school places that have been offered, by telephone or via email before letters/emails have been received by parents.

Accepting/Declining an offer of a school place

<p>Accept the school place you have been offered</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You DO NOT need to confirm your acceptance of the place allocated, as we will automatically consider the place as being accepted.
<p>Decline the school place you have been offered</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you wish to decline the school place you have been offered you should contact the School Admissions Team via email, and provide details of what alternative arrangements you have made. • If you received an offer via letter you can complete and return the decline slip enclosed with the letter. • You should NOT decline the place offered if you are going to appeal for a place at another school, until that appeal has been heard.
<p>Find out if there is another school with places</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can contact the School Admissions Team for details of other schools with available places at that time. Please be aware, however, that any request received by the Admissions Team for an alternative school will be dealt with in accordance with the procedure for processing late applications/changes of preference, outlined on page 18.
<p>Return any appeal form by the appeal deadline date(s)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unless you have been offered a place at your highest preferred school you will be informed of your right of appeal. Please see the important dates to remember on pages 5 & 6.

Admission Appeals Information - Applications for Secondary School (Year 7 entry)

Community and Academy Schools

If you have a child transferring to a Secondary school at the age of 11, either Sefton, or your home Local Authority, will offer your child a place at one Secondary school. If you are refused a place at any of your preferred school(s), by law you have the right to appeal against that decision.

For residents of Sefton, who have been refused a place at a **Sefton school**, you will receive an information leaflet with the decision letter, explaining the appeals process. The leaflet is also available on the School Admission Appeals webpage at www.sefton.gov.uk/schooladmissionappeals

If you wish to appeal for a school **outside of Sefton**, you should contact the relevant Local Authority where the school is located. Contact details for neighbouring Local Authorities can be found on page 14 of this guide.

If you do not reside within Sefton, but wish to appeal for a Sefton school, please contact Sefton Admissions Team for further information on how you can appeal.

Appeals are heard by an Independent Appeal Panel. In all cases you should submit your appeal to the appropriate Admission Authority. Please refer to the table on page 15 which shows the Admission Authority responsible for arranging an appeal hearing, for different types of schools. **Please note the specific arrangements in respect of St Michael's Church of England High School.**

Parents are allowed at least 20 school days* from the date of notification that their application was unsuccessful for any of their preferred schools, to prepare and lodge their written appeal. The Local Authority is required to publish an Admission Appeals Timetable which can be found on the School Admission Appeals webpage at www.sefton.gov.uk/schooladmissionappeals

*School days refers to Sefton's standard school term dates. **Appeals are not heard during school holidays.**

Temporary Appeal Arrangements due to Covid-19 (Coronavirus) Public Health Emergency

At the time of publishing this guide there is temporary legislation in place governing the arrangements for Admission Appeal hearings. This allows appeal hearings to be held remotely for example via a video call. These temporary arrangements are due to be reviewed by the Government in September 2021. Please go to the School Admission Appeals webpage on the Sefton website to obtain the most up to date information www.sefton.gov.uk/schooladmissionappeals

Sefton publishes the number of successful and unsuccessful appeals heard for all Sefton Secondary Schools for previous academic years on the Sefton website. Appeals statistics for the Academic Years 2017 to 2021 are available to view at www.sefton.gov.uk/schooladmissionappeals

Catholic High Schools (Voluntary Aided)

If the Governing Body of a Sefton Catholic High School has refused your child a place, you will have the right to appeal. For Sefton residents, details of how you can appeal will be included in the decision letter sent to you. It is necessary for you to appeal via Liverpool Archdiocese, Schools Department and you can do this by requesting an appeal form online at: www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk/educationAppealing-For-A-School-Place. The Archdiocesan Schools Department will confirm the time, date and place of your hearing once it has been arranged.

In respect of **Maricourt Catholic High School only**, arrangements for you to appeal can be made by writing to the school directly: Maricourt Catholic High School, Hall Lane, Maghull, Liverpool L31 3DZ; email: hunterm@maricourt.net.

Admission Appeals Information

Applications for Primary School (Reception Year)

If you are refused a place at any of your preferred school(s), by law you have the right to appeal against that decision. For residents of Sefton, who have been refused a place at a Sefton school, you will receive an information leaflet with the decision letter, explaining the appeals process. The leaflet is also available on the School Admission Appeals webpage at www.sefton.gov.uk/schooladmissionappeals

If you wish to appeal for a school outside of Sefton, you should contact the relevant Local Authority where the school is located. Contact details for neighbouring Local Authorities can be found on page 14 of this guide.

If you do not reside within Sefton, but wish to appeal for a Sefton school, please contact Sefton Admissions Team for further information on how you can appeal.

Infant Class Size Appeals

Government legislation requires that any Reception, Year 1, or Year 2 class **should not** contain more than 30 pupils with a single qualified school teacher. The Authority will refuse admission to any child, except in certain limited circumstances, if admitting the child would take the class over the limit of 30 children. An appeal against such a decision **can only be allowed** if the Appeal Panel is satisfied that either:

- The decision to refuse admission was not one which a reasonable admission authority would have made in the circumstances of the case; or
- The child would have been offered a place if the Local Authority's admission arrangements had been implemented properly.

In this context, 'reasonable' has the legal meaning of 'not perverse', therefore the threshold for finding that an Admission Authority's decision to refuse admission was not one that a reasonable authority would have made, is high, and must be:

'Beyond the range of responses open to a reasonable decision maker or a decision which is so outrageous in its defiance of logic or of accepted moral standards, that no sensible person who had applied his mind to the question could have arrived at it'.

Appeals are heard by an Independent Appeal Panel. For Infant Class Size Appeals, the Appeal Panel will simply hear the Admission Authority's explanation as to why a place has been refused followed by your reasons for saying that the appeal should be allowed on one of the grounds referred to above before making their decision.

Parents are allowed at least 20 school days* from the date of notification that their application was unsuccessful for any of the preferred schools, to prepare and lodge their written appeal.

*School days refers to Sefton's standard school term dates. Appeals are not heard during school holidays.

Temporary Appeal Arrangements due to Covid-19 (Coronavirus) Public Health Emergency

At the time of publishing this guide there is temporary legislation in place governing the arrangements for Admission Appeal hearings. This allows appeal hearings to be held remotely for example via a video call. These temporary arrangements are due to be reviewed by the Government in September 2021. Please go to the School Admission Appeals webpage on the Sefton website to obtain the most up to date information www.sefton.gov.uk/schooladmissionappeals

For all Sefton Community, Voluntary Controlled, and Academy primary schools (excluding Holy Trinity CE & St Thomas' CE Primary schools) you should submit your appeal to Sefton Local Authority.

For Sefton Voluntary Aided Catholic primary Schools - it is necessary for you to appeal via Liverpool Archdiocese, (Schools Department) and you can do this by requesting an appeal form online at: www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk/educationAppealing-For-A-School-Place

For Sefton Voluntary Aided Church of England primary Schools (including Holy Trinity CE & St Thomas' CE Primary) - appeals should be sent to the Chairperson of the School's Governing Body c/o the school in question.

To help you make an informed decision as to whether you want to proceed with an appeal for a reception school place, Sefton publishes the number of successful and unsuccessful reception appeals heard for all Sefton Primary Schools for previous academic years.

Primary School Admissions Appeals statistics for the Academic Years 2017 to 2021 are available to view on the School Admission Appeals webpage www.sefton.gov.uk/schooladmissionappeals

If my appeal for a Sefton School is unsuccessful can I appeal again?

If your appeal is refused, you **do not** have the right to a second appeal for the same school for the same academic year unless, in exceptional circumstances, the Admission Authority accepts a second application from the appellant because of a significant and material change in the circumstances of the parent, child or school. Examples of a significant and material change in circumstances may include:

- a) If a sibling link has been created at the preferred school, which was not there at the time of the appeal hearing.
- b) You have moved house and the Admission Authority accepts that you can no longer attend the existing school due to the distance.

You may, of course, also request a further appeal to be heard if there are other significant reasons which you feel should be taken into account and these will be given due consideration. If a request for a further appeal is considered and allowed, a fresh appeal may be heard. However, if a request for a further appeal is denied by the Admissions Authority no further appeal can take place in the same school year.

As indicated on page 22, for any further appeals relating to infant classes, the appeal panel may only grant an appeal if the Admissions Authority has either acted unreasonably or made an error in the way places were allocated. This is to ensure that the limits placed on infant class sizes are maintained, in accordance with current legislation.

To request a further appeal, please write to the Admissions Authority who refused the original appeal. Please refer to the table shown on page 15 for further information.

Frequently Asked Questions about your application

Please read the questions and answers below **before** contacting the Local Authority.

How many schools can I list?

You are advised to list the maximum number of **three schools**. As each school listed counts as a separate application, you are increasing your chances of being offered a place at one of your preferred schools.

In which order should I list the schools?

It is important to list the schools in priority order, with your most preferred school at the top. If we can offer you a place at more than one of your preferred schools, we will automatically offer you the place at the school you listed higher or highest.

Please note:

- Listing just one school on the application does not improve your chances of getting a place at that school
- There is no advantage in listing the same school more than once because we can only process one application per child per school, and you are therefore wasting a preference
- The applications are entered onto a database, which processes the criteria and allocations automatically
- School staff are not involved with this and do not influence results

How do you handle applications from twins or children from multiple births?

Please complete one application form for **each** child. If you apply online the process will be quicker as you will only have to enter parental details once. Where there are twins or children from multiple births, and one of the children has been allocated the last remaining place at a school, the other twin or siblings will also be admitted.

My child attends the school nursery, does this mean my child will automatically be admitted to the Primary School?

NO, attendance at a primary school nursery is NOT linked to admission into the reception class in any way and will not guarantee a place in the Reception class at the school.

Each application for a place in reception is assessed against the **individual admissions criteria for the school**. Therefore, any nursery provision previously attended by your child will not be considered at all.

Where schools have a nursery class attached, parents should be aware that separate admission arrangements are in place for entry to the school. **Completion of an 'Expression of Interest' form for a Primary school, or a nursery application form or giving any personal details to a nursery, DOES NOT count as any type of admission application for a place in Reception.**

How do you define a sibling? Please see glossary for full definition (pages 35 & 36).

My child has an Education, Health and Care Plan: How do I apply?

If your child has an Education, Health and Care Plan that names a particular school, your child will be admitted to that school. This is a separate process from applying the admissions criteria and is handled by the Special Educational Needs (Assessment, Resource and Provision Planning) Team. The Team will inform the School Admissions Team of the outcome of any decision made.

How do I let you know my child is looked after or was previously looked after?

You should indicate this on the application and provide the requested further details e.g. the name of the Social Worker involved with the family or the relevant Local Authority.

Frequently Asked Questions about your application

How do I confirm that I wish for my child to be considered under the 'Children of Staff' admission criterion (if applicable to the school)?

You **MUST** clearly state this on your application by providing the **name of the school employee**. If you do not provide the name of the employee on your application form, the Local Authority may not be able to consider your application under this criterion, for the relevant school.

What happens when the number of applications received is less than the School's admission number?

If a school has more places available than the number of applications received, all children who apply would be offered a place at that school.

What happens when the number of applications received exceeds the school's published admission number?

Whilst we do all we can to meet parental preferences, it is not always possible to do this. If more parents express a preference for the school than there are places available (i.e. the admission number), the Admissions Authority will use the school's admissions criteria to decide which children can be offered a place. **The Local Authority can only offer places at any school up to the school's individual published admission number.** This includes academy schools for whom the Local Authority applies the admission criteria on behalf of the individual school.

For Voluntary Aided and Academy Faith Schools

If more parents express a preference for the school than the admission number, the Governors of the school will apply the school's admissions criteria to decide which children can be offered a place and they will let the Local Authority know their decisions.

What happens if my application is late?

Please read the information on page 18.

What happens if you cannot offer any schools that I list?

If we cannot offer your child a place at any of the schools listed on your application, by law, the Local Authority must still offer you a place at another school. You will normally be offered a place at the nearest qualifying school with a place available. A qualifying school is the school closest to your home. This can be a community, voluntary controlled, voluntary aided or academy school and includes a single sex school.

How do I appeal for a school place?

Unless you have been offered a place at your highest preferred school you will be informed of your right of appeal and how to appeal in your offer letter. Please see pages 21-23 for more detailed information.

Distance from home to school is used as an admission criterion, how do you measure the distance from my home address to the school?

In order to accurately measure home to school distances Sefton Local Authority uses a bespoke computerised measuring system called 'Map Info'. This is a Geographical Information System (GIS) which uses location data from Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG).

The distance is determined in every case by measuring the **shortest walking route** from the child's home address (known as the property address point) to the nearest school gate. The system uses recognised **safe** walking routes **known to the Authority at the time of measurement**, which are considered suitable of being used by a child, accompanied as necessary by a parent/carer. Walking routes may include footpaths that have been assessed and considered safe for a child to use, accompanied as necessary.

The Local Authority uses shortest walking route as a method of measuring home to school distances **equally for all pupils** to allocate school places. The term 'walking route' is a complicated one. It is the shortest available route on foot, measured from the property's address point to the nearest school gate. It is not necessarily the nearest route by car, road or bus.

IMPORTANT: Websites or apps which provide distance measuring facilities may give driving and walking distances, however none of these systems will measure home to school distances using the specific footpath data held by the Local Authority, or by the definition that is used by the Local Authority -

If you are refused a place at any of your higher preferred schools and you would like a further explanation of the measured route that has been used, please contact the Admissions Team who can provide you with further details.

Is my child eligible for a travel pass or assistance with the transport costs from home to school? Home to School Transport arrangements and eligibility criteria are summarised below. Full details of Sefton's Home to School Transport Policy can be found at www.sefton.gov.uk/schooltransport

SECTION C

Home to School Transport Eligibility and Arrangements

Sefton's general arrangements and policies about transport to and from schools other than special schools are set out below. We make no arrangements for transport to and from Independent schools, other than for pupils who we place in non-maintained special schools.

Sefton will meet the travelling expenses of pupils who go to school full time by providing either a Solo/Trio ticket or an Arriva bus ticket (or equivalent) for **eligible children**.

Statutory regulations (where the Local Authority must provide transport and travelling expenses for primary age children)

Sefton will meet the travelling expenses of pupils who go to school full time by providing transport or a travel pass for Primary School pupils in the following three categories:

- Where a pupil under eight years old is attending the **nearest qualifying school** with places available where the shortest walking distance between home and school is more than **2 miles**.
- Where a pupil is eight years old and over and is attending the **nearest qualifying school** with places available where the shortest walking distance between home and school is more than **3 miles**.
- All Primary aged pupils (8 -11 years) who are attending **their nearest qualifying school** with places available where the shortest walking distance between home and school is more than **2 miles** and the family is **in receipt of Free School Meals** or the maximum level of Working Tax Credit.

Statutory regulations (where the Local Authority must provide transport and travelling expenses for secondary age children)

Sefton will meet the travelling expenses of pupils who go to school full time by providing transport or a travel pass for Secondary School pupils in the following three categories:

- Where a pupil is attending **the nearest qualifying school** with places available (including the appropriate denominational school) where the shortest walking distance between home and school is more than **3 miles** and the family is not in receipt of the benefits listed (next page). *

- Where a pupil is **in receipt of *Free School Meals** or whose parents/carers are in receipt of the *maximum level of Working Tax Credit and they are attending **one of the three qualifying secondary schools** closest to their home, where the shortest walking distance to the school is between **2 and 6 miles** from their home; **OR**
- To the nearest school preferred by their parents/carers on the grounds of religion or belief, and the shortest walking distance to the school is between 2 and 15 miles from their home address.

Qualifying school for transport eligibility

Eligibility for transport is not automatically linked to a school's individual admissions criteria e.g. if a child is admitted to a high school because they attended a feeder school, this does not necessarily mean the child can be considered as eligible for transport.

In general, the qualifying school for transport purposes will be the school closest to your home, if you do not live in a catchment area.

If you live in an identified catchment area for a school (e.g. Meols Cop High School), that school will be considered as your child's qualifying school for the purposes of transport eligibility.

If your child is attending a Voluntary Aided or Voluntary Controlled faith school which is of your family's own religious denomination, usually the qualifying school for transport is the one which serves the Parish where you live.

In some circumstances, the Local Authority may ask for additional information e.g. a letter from the appropriate minister of religion. This is because the Local Authority must establish admission on the grounds of faith, in order to confirm that the school is the qualifying school for transport eligibility.

Once a qualifying school is established, the eligible distance criteria will then be applied.

For families in receipt of Free School Meals or the maximum level of Working Tax Credit, the 3 nearest schools to your home will be considered as your 3 qualifying schools (irrespective of Local Authority Boundaries or faith).

For families in receipt of Free School Meals or the maximum level of Working Tax Credit, who are attending a school on the grounds of faith, the qualifying school will be the closest faith school to where you live (irrespective of Local Authority Boundaries). **Once a qualifying school is established the relevant distance criteria will then be applied.**

If you live in Hightown or Ince Blundell areas

For primary school pupils, transport is provided by the Local Authority, without charge, as follows:

- between Hightown, Ince Blundell and St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Little Crosby
- between Ince Blundell, Hightown and Formby Primary Schools

If you live in Aintree or Melling Parish/local area of Waddicar

There are currently local agreements for residents of Aintree & Melling parishes and the Waddicar local area which include criteria for home to school transport with regards to qualifying secondary schools linked to catchment areas and/or the safety of walking routes. In most cases the **statutory distance criteria** is still applied. Please note that residents of these areas (who live outside of the Deyes High School Catchment Area) are considered as either resident in the **catchment area for Maghull High School (or Maricourt Catholic High School on the grounds of faith)**.

Additional support Sefton Local Authority provides:

Sefton Local Authority may also pay travelling expenses in the following circumstances:

- a) **If our medical advisers recommend the child goes to a particular school for special medical reasons**
- b) **If a pupil continues attending a school after the family has left the neighbourhood of that school**

In most circumstances we will not pay travel expenses if you choose to keep your child at that school. In general, we will only accept the school the child attended before the change of address, as the qualifying school, if a pupil has already started in Year 6 or Years 10 & 11 and meets the statutory distance criteria. This will only apply if the distance or time taken to travel to the school is not regarded by the Local Authority as excessive and harmful to the pupil. The child must have moved house once they have already started school in Year 6, or Years 10 & 11 (i.e. not moved house during the summer holidays beforehand).

Other situations where your child travels further than the statutory distances, not covered above

We will consider these cases on an individual basis. Evidence of exceptional circumstances may be required before consideration can be given.

Circumstances when a travel pass/transport would not be provided

There is no entitlement to school transport when parents/carers choose to send their child to a school other than the nearest qualifying school (except where the school has been recommended by the Local Authority medical advisers).

Routes for children living within the statutory walking distances from home to school

This applies to:-

Pupils who attend a qualifying school and live less than the statutory walking distances, and whose parents apply for us to pay the cost of transport to school.

When considering whether to pay transport costs, we will consider the age of the pupil and the nature of the route or alternative routes, along which he or she could reasonably be expected to walk to school, accompanied as necessary by a parent or guardian. If we consider that a child cannot use a route on their own, we will take account of whether or not there are any circumstances, which prevents it from being reasonably practical, for the child to be accompanied.

However, we will normally consider a route which involves any of the following features as being suitable for a child to use if he or she is accompanied by a parent or carer.

- 1) Crossing any main road (for example, a dual carriageway or trunk road) where there are one or more of the following:
 - A school crossing patrol
 - A pelican crossing
 - A pedestrian crossing
 - Traffic lights
 - A pedestrian footbridge
 - A subway
 - A police officer, traffic warden or other responsible adult (for example, a parent or teacher)

- 2) As long as the road is maintained by the Local Authority; all unclassified roads (that is, roads which are not A, B or C roads) are regarded as being safe to cross even if there are none of the facilities named in 1)
- 3) The presence of a pavement in a built-up or rural area
- 4) The presence of street lighting on a route in a built-up or rural area
- 5) As long as the area is maintained by the Local Authority; the use of appropriate passageways which are properly paved and lit

This policy applies throughout the year as public lighting is altered to meet the changes in daylight hours.

We will not normally consider a route which involves any of the following as suitable for a child to use:

- Any pathway not maintained by the Local Authority e.g. privately owned land
- Paths on canal banks for a child of any age
- Footpaths in rural areas will not be regarded as being safe without detailed investigation
- A road system on the approach to a motorway

Sustainable Travel & Transport to and from School

Sefton Council promotes the use of sustainable travel and transport to and from school by:

- encouraging every school to develop a travel plan;
- promoting and assisting schools to run travel to school reward schemes, including: Walk to School week, Walking Buses, car sharing and prevention of inconsiderate parking around the school gate;
- continuing to develop the safer routes to school programme which aims to build a safer environment for children walking, cycling and travelling by school transport to and from school.

Sefton Travel Team has developed a mobile journey planning app 'Sefton Travel' to promote sustainable travel choices in Sefton. This has a particular focus on improving access to education and employment opportunities by public transport, walking and cycling. It is available to download for free on iOS devices.

Features of the app include:

- Plan your journey
- Share your location
- Listen to voice alerts
- Save your favourite locations for journey planning on the move
- Count your steps and set daily targets
- Customise your playlist
- Get information and find out how to get to key facilities in Sefton such as schools.

For further details on travelling to school please visit www.activetravelsefton.co.uk or Merseytravel's website: www.merseytravel.gov.uk

Payment of Transport/Travelling Expenses

Travelling expenses are usually given in the form of an annual travel pass e.g. Solo/Trio Ticket or Arriva bus ticket, where this is cheaper than a separate payment for each journey (unless stated otherwise).

- All families should adopt the most economic method of travelling.
- The Local Authority's responsibility to pay travelling expenses will be in respect of one journey each way for each date on which the pupil attends school.
- The Local Authority sometimes authorises private arrangements with a parent/carer to enable a child to travel to and from school. In these circumstances claims may be made within the amount equivalent to the cost to the Authority of a travel pass by public transport. Payments will be made termly in arrears.

Application forms and further details

You can find the full Home to School Transport Policy and access a Travel Pass application form on the Sefton Council website at www.sefton.gov.uk/schooltransport. Forms should be returned by the date stated on the application form. If you need any help or advice, or a paper application form, you can contact **Sefton Travel Support Team** on telephone number: 0151 934 3399 or email: Travel.Support@sefton.gov.uk
Postal Address: Sefton Travel Support Team, Ainsdale Hope Centre, Sandringham Road, Ainsdale, PR8 2PJ.

Travelling arrangements for young people aged 16 and over

The Local Authority does not provide financial support to pupils attending sixth form or further education provision. Some schools/colleges have support funds available to assist pupils with transport costs. Please contact the school/college directly for more information.

The Local Authority does, in some cases provide transport for young people aged over 16 who have an Education, Health and Care Plan or Special Educational Needs. The details for this are included in the Sefton Post 16 Transport Policy Statement at www.sefton.gov.uk/schooltransport

SECTION D – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In Year School Admissions and School Transfers

The majority of this guide sets out the arrangements for children starting school for the first time (Reception entry) and transferring from primary to secondary school (Year 7 entry) at the start of the new school year. Applications for admission to a Sefton school **during** the school year, for any age group, either due to a house move or for any other reason are called **In Year School Admissions**.

If you wish to apply for a place at a Sefton school during the academic year, please refer to the **In Year Admissions and School Transfers** webpage where you can access further information and details on how to submit an application www.sefton.gov.uk/inyearadmissions

House moves requiring a new school place - If you are planning to move into the Sefton area, recently moved in, or moved a significant distance away from your child's current school, you should read the Guidance Notes for 'In Year Admission to Sefton Schools' and if applicable complete the 'A1' Admission Form. You will be required to provide evidence of the house move/proposed address with your application form. An online application system is planned for the near future. Please check the website for updates and full details of the application process.

School Transfers – If you wish for your child to transfer school for reasons **other than** a house move, you should read the Guidance Notes 'Sefton School Transfers' and complete a 'T1' In Year Transfer form, which is available on the website www.sefton.gov.uk/inyearadmissions

If you need any help or assistance please refer to the website www.sefton.gov.uk/inyearadmissions. If you cannot find the information you need on the website you can also contact the **In Year School Admissions Team** at: **Email:** iyadmissions@sefton.gov.uk **Tel:** 0151 934 3590.

Fair Access Protocol

By law, each Local Authority must have and implement an Admissions Fair Access Protocol. The Fair Access Protocol applies to applications made outside of the normal admissions round (In Year Admissions) and supports vulnerable or hard to place children who may have difficulty in securing a school place. From September 2021 the Fair Access Protocol may only be used where reasonable measures have already been taken to secure a school place through the usual In Year Admission procedures. The panel meets regularly, which allows a recommendation regarding a school place or relevant education provision, to be made quickly.

Please note that there is no legal duty for a Local Authority or Admission Authority to comply with parental preference when allocating a school place via the Fair Access Protocol, although parents' views should be considered. The panel may therefore recommend placement at an alternative school.

You will be informed in writing if your application for a school place has been referred through the Fair Access Protocol. You will also be informed of the Fair Access Panel's decision or recommendation. If the decision of the Panel is not to admit a child to your preferred schools, you will still have the right to appeal for a place at those schools. For further information and to view the full Sefton In Year Admissions and Fair Access Policy please go to the Sefton website www.sefton.gov.uk/schooladmissionspolicyandreports

School Attendance

Promoting and supporting good attendance at school is essential to learning and attainment. Poor school attendance damages educational achievement and the future progress of children and young people. If you are experiencing any problems with your child attending school, you should contact the school. The school can help you to resolve any issues or difficulties in the first instance. Sometimes, the school may need to involve other services to provide help and support. If this is the case, you need to work with the school to look at your child's difficulties so that they can best consider who may be able to help.

In Year Admission Appeals Procedure (during the academic year)

You may apply for a place for your child at any school, during the academic year (normally because you have moved into the area). If a place cannot be offered you have the right to appeal against that refusal, to an Independent Appeal Panel. You will receive an appeal information leaflet with the decision letter, explaining the appeals process. The leaflet is also available on the Sefton website at www.sefton.gov.uk/schooladmissionappeals

You should give written notice of your appeal within 20 school days* of receiving your refusal letter. Further details will be included in the refusal letter. *School days refers to Sefton's standard school term dates. **Appeals are not heard during school holidays.** In all cases you should submit your appeal to the appropriate Admission Authority. Please refer to the table on page 15 which shows the Admission Authority responsible for arranging an appeal hearing for different types of schools.

For Sefton Voluntary Aided and Academy Church of England Primary Schools - appeals should be sent to the Chairperson of the School's Governing Body c/o the school in question. In respect of St Andrew's Maghull CE Primary and St Michael's CE High School – please refer to the table shown on page 15 for further information.

For Sefton Voluntary Aided Catholic Primary & Secondary schools - it is necessary for you to appeal via Liverpool Archdiocese, (Schools Department) and you can do this by requesting an appeal form online at: www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk/educationAppealing-For-A-School-Place.

In respect of **Maricourt Catholic High School only**, arrangements for you to appeal can be made by writing to the school directly: Maricourt Catholic High School, Hall Lane, Maghull, Liverpool L31 3DZ; email: hunterm@maricourt.net.

Temporary Appeal Arrangements due to Covid-19 (Coronavirus) Public Health Emergency

At the time of publishing this guide there is temporary legislation in place governing the arrangements for Admission Appeal hearings. This allows appeal hearings to be held remotely for example via a video call. These temporary arrangements are due to be reviewed by the Government in September 2021. Please go to the School Admission Appeals webpage on the Sefton website to obtain the most up to date information www.sefton.gov.uk/schooladmissionappeals

What happens if your appeal is not successful?

If your appeal is refused, you **do not** have the right to a second appeal for the same school during the same academic year, unless, in exceptional circumstances, the Admission Authority accepts a second application from the appellant because of a significant and material change in the circumstances of the parent, child or school. Examples of a significant and material change in circumstances may include:

- a) If a sibling link has been created at the preferred school, which was not there at the time of the appeal hearing
- b) You have moved house and the Admission Authority accepts that you can no longer attend the existing school due to the distance

You may, of course, also request a further appeal to be heard by the Admissions Authority if there are other significant reasons which you feel should be taken into account. If a request for a further appeal is granted, a fresh appeal will be heard. However, if a request for a further appeal is denied by the Admissions Authority no further appeal can take place in the same school year. If you want to request a further appeal, please write to the Admissions Authority who refused the original appeal. Please refer to the table shown on page 15.

Help with School Expenses

School Meals

School meals are available to pupils in all our schools. Schools offer a wide choice of meals and other refreshments. You can get more details with regard to menus and costs from individual schools.

Eligibility for Free School Meals

The eligibility criteria for Free School Meals is set by the Government and applies to all Local Authorities. To qualify for Free School Meals families must be in receipt of one of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Universal Credit and have a net household income of less than £7,400 per annum (£616.67 net each month)
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Guarantee element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you are not also receiving Working Tax Credit) and have an annual gross income of £16,190 or less, as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs)
- Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)

Free School Meals & Pupil Premium

Pupil Premium takes the form of additional funding allocated to schools based on the number of children **entitled to and registered for** free school meals and children who have been looked after continuously, by the Local Authority for more than six months. The premium helps support the financial and unique challenges that children from low income households and children in care, may face at school, where they can often struggle to keep up with their peers at both Primary and Secondary level.

Schools decide how to spend this money 'since they are best placed to assess what additional provision should be made for the individual pupils within their responsibility'. It is therefore important that each school can claim the entire pupil funding for eligible pupils.

If your child is due to start school this year and would be eligible for Free School Meals using the eligibility criteria above, please contact the Admissions & Pupil Support Team who can ensure that the school receives the appropriate funding without the need for parents to contact the school. Your child does not have to take up their free meal entitlement to ensure that the school receives the pupil premium funding.

You can get more details and an application form from:

Website: www.sefton.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals

Email: education.benefits@sefton.gov.uk

Pupil Support Team

Schools Regulatory Services, Town Hall, Oriel Road, Bootle L20 7AE

Tel: 0151 934 3263

Universal Infant Free School Meals

From September 2014 every child in Reception, Year 1 & Year 2 in state funded schools in England will receive a free school lunch. The government will fund the schools to provide every child in infant classes with a hot, nutritious meal at lunch time. Infant and Primary Schools in Sefton have made arrangements for all infant class children to access a free meal at lunchtime.

Older children in junior school classes (Years 3-6) will continue to be eligible for Free School Meals using the national eligibility criteria shown on page 33.

Free School Meals for students over the age of 16

The Local Authority will continue to assess eligibility for Free School Meals for pupils over the age of 16 who are studying in Sixth Form at schools and at sixth form colleges. To qualify for Free School Meals families must be in receipt of one of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Universal Credit and have a net household income of less than £7,400 per annum (£616.67 net each month)
- Employment and Support Allowance (Income-related)
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit ONLY (provided you are not also receiving Working Tax Credit) and have an annual gross income of £16,190 or less, as assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
- Working Tax Credit run-on (paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit)

Students attending Further Education Colleges may also be entitled to Free Meals, however, eligibility will be assessed directly by the college itself. You should contact the college directly for further advice.

Support Funds for students over the age of 16

Discretionary Support Funds or Bursaries may be available in colleges and school sixth forms to help with learning costs and transport. The funds are ordinarily prioritised for those who face financial hardship. Schools and Colleges set their own criteria and manage their own procedures.

Amendments to the information provided in this guide

The information in this guide relates to the school (academic) year 2022-23. 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 school year beginning in September 2021. We may need to make changes from time to time, due to circumstances beyond our control.

Glossary - Definitions of terms used in this guide

The following terms used throughout this guide are defined as follows, except where individual arrangements spell out a different definition. If you would like further clarification, please contact the School Admissions Team who are always happy to assist. Contact details can be found at the front of this guide.

- **Admissions Authority** – This is the body responsible for deciding which pupils are admitted to a school. In Community Schools, this is the Local Authority (LA). In Voluntary Aided (VA) Schools, it is the Governing Body. Further information is provided on **page 15** of this guide.
- **Admission number** – This is the maximum number of places available at a school, in each relevant age group that can be offered by the Admission Authority.
- **Admissions Criteria** – This is the method used to allocate places to pupils for a particular school, if the number of applications is more than the number of places available. These do vary between the different types of school.
- **Admissions Team** – LA officers who implement the admissions criteria and procedures for Community, Voluntary Controlled and most Academy Schools. The team also co-ordinates the offers of places as required by the School Admissions Code legislation.
- **Appeal** – If it is not possible to offer a place to a child at a particular school, parents have the right to submit an appeal. An appeal hearing normally takes place some weeks later in front of an independent appeal panel. The panel could decide that a place should be offered above the admission number.
- **Appeal Panel** – An independent body, usually of 3 people, who hear admission appeal cases.
- **Appellant** – The person who has submitted an appeal.
- **Brothers and Sisters or Sibling**– Siblings are brothers and sisters including step-children, foster children and half-brothers and sisters, adopted brothers and sisters or children of the parent(s)/carer(s)'s partner, living in the same family unit at the same address, who attend the school in question, as long as they will be at the school in **September 2022**.
- **Co-ordinated Scheme** – This is where the LA shares and exchanges school applications with neighbouring LA's in order to offer a school place.
- **Community Schools** – Schools which are run by the Local Authority and the Local Authority is responsible for admissions to these schools.
- **Distance** – Distance will be measured by the shortest safe **walking** route, from the child's home to the nearest school gate. We will measure from the property's address point, to the nearest school gate (using recognised routes known to the Authority at the time of measurement). If two or more applicants meet the distance criteria exactly (e.g. they live in the same block of flats or are exactly the same distance away from the school), the Authority will carry out a random allocation to decide which applicant will be given the place. This will be carried out in a public place with the required names placed in the box. The allocated name will be drawn out by a Senior Manager from the Local Authority.

Glossary - Definitions of terms used in this guide

- **Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP)** – A small number of children have special educational needs (SEN). In some cases, a formal document is prepared to make special educational provision to meet the needs of the child or young person and to secure the best possible outcomes for them across education, health and social care. This document is called an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP). There are different application and appeal procedures for pupils who have an EHCP.
- **Equal Preference Scheme** – This means that each preference expressed by a parent for a school will be considered using that school's individual school admissions criteria.
- **Local Authority (LA)** – This refers to the Local Council in the area in which you live e.g. Sefton. For the purposes of this guide this refers to the team within the appropriate LA that administers School Admissions.
- **Looked after Children and previously Looked After Children** - A looked after child is a child who at the time of making an application to a school, is in the care of a local authority or is being provided with accommodation by a local authority in England in the exercise of their social services functions (see definition in section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989). This includes children who were previously looked after, (including children who have been in state care outside of England), and ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a child arrangements order or special guardianship order. A child is regarded as having been in state care in a place outside of England if they were accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other provider of care whose sole purpose is to benefit society.
- **Online admissions** – Using the Citizen Portal on the Sefton website to complete and submit an admissions application form.
- **Oversubscribed** – If the number of applications received for an individual school is more than the number of places available.
- **Parents/Carers** – A parent or carer is any person who has parental responsibility or care of a child.
- **Sibling** – see Brothers and Sisters or Sibling
- **Supplementary Information Forms (SIF)** – A supplementary information form is the form used to provide faith schools with additional information (such as Baptism details). This will enable the school 'to consider the application under their faith criteria.
- **Voluntary Aided (VA) Schools** – Faith schools linked to a particular Church or parish.