

Southwark's Protocol for In-year Admissions – Secondary

Following consultation with Headteachers and in line with the admissions code, Southwark carried out a major review of its in-year admissions process which was then implemented September 2012. The process aims to be more efficient, transparent, consistent and easier for parents and schools than the previous system and should ensure that children are enrolled in a school without unnecessary delay.

1. Major changes to the in-year protocol

- (a) Southwark parents applying to transfer their child from one Southwark school to another will apply directly to the school**
- (b) Schools will provide the LA with their decisions for children who are new to the area within 10 school days. When a place can be offered, schools will aim to provide the parent with a start date within 5 school days, but definitely in no more than 10 days.**
- (c) The new in-year application form will allow a parent to express a single preference**

2. The Process

All Southwark residents applying for a school place in or outside of Southwark must complete the Southwark in-year application form.

(i) Applications from Southwark residents applying to transfer their child from one Southwark school to another

- Parents must return the completed in-year application form to the school to which they are applying. They should include any supplementary information forms that a particular school requires, as part of their admissions process.
- The school will inform the parent and the child's current school of the availability of a place and the decision to enrol.
- Only when a place is to be offered, the school will confirm the child's start date by filling in section 10 of the completed application form and returning it to Southwark Admissions.

(ii) Applications from families new to Southwark and Southwark residents who have children attending out borough schools

- Parents are required to return their completed in-year form to Southwark Admissions for processing, stating their preferred preference for a school.
- Southwark Admissions will forward the child's details to the school.
- Where there is a vacancy, the school will contact the parent to invite the family to an induction and agree a start date.

- The school will send the parent an offer letter and inform Southwark Admissions of the start date. A proforma for this letter will be provided to schools for September 12.
- Where the preferred school does not have a vacancy, Southwark Admissions will contact the parent to let them know and will suggest other options including local schools with places, waiting lists and their right to appeal etc.

(iii) Families new to Southwark and Southwark residents who have children attending out borough schools who turn up at your school for a place

- The school will provide the parent with a Southwark in-year application form to complete and the contact details for Southwark Admissions.
- The school will forward the family details to Southwark Admissions.
- The school may offer a place should one be available, but must first check with Southwark Admissions to ensure there is no other application pending.
- When the offer is made, the school will forward the completed application form to Southwark Admissions completing section 10.
- When it is known that the child's current school is in a neighbouring LA, Southwark Admissions will inform that school of the Southwark offer.
- Where the school is not able to offer a place, the parent may ask about alternative schools in the area. It would be helpful for the school to provide this information however, when it is known that the child is out of school, the family details must be forwarded to the LA for follow up.

(iv) Applications to Southwark schools from out borough families

Out borough residents applying for a place at any Southwark school must complete and return the in-year application form provided by the borough in which they live. This includes those families living outside of Southwark who have a child already attending a Southwark school. All out borough families who turn up at a Southwark school for a place must be referred to their home LA even if the Southwark school has a vacancy.

This follows the Pan-London protocol in place for cross-borough applications which all admission authorities must follow.

3. Some Examples

Scenario 1

A Southwark parent contacts Southwark A secondary school for place for her child who is currently attending Southwark B secondary school. The parent wants to transfer to Southwark A because they have moved address.

Southwark A has a vacancy and offers the family the place and informs Southwark B of the offer. Southwark A then forwards the completed form to Southwark Admissions and includes the start date.

Scenario 2

A family has just moved into Southwark from outside of London and turns up at Southwark A secondary school requesting a place for their child. The school is unable to offer because there are no vacancies in the relevant year and they discuss this with the family. The family then ask about other schools in the area and Southwark A is able to provide them with details.

Southwark A provides the family with an in-year application form and contact details for Southwark Admissions. Southwark A forwards the family details to Southwark Admissions for follow up.

Scenario 3

An out-borough family contacts Southwark A secondary school wanting a place for their child because they plan to move to Southwark in the near future. Southwark A school informs the family that, whilst they are living 'out-borough', they must apply for school places through that borough even if they are applying for a school in Southwark.