

FORM CAF2: GUIDANCE LEAFLET FOR PARENTS

If you are thinking about transferring your child to another school in Suffolk, but are not moving house, then please read this guidance before completing the CAF2 form.

Changing your child's school can affect your child in many ways and the decision should not be taken without careful thought. You may find it helpful to consider the following issues:

- **Teaching and School Organisation**

For children of any age, every school has its own special way of doing things and of teaching the National Curriculum in different ways at different times.

How will your child cope:-

- *with learning new rules?*
- *doing things in different ways?*
- *if he or she has done the work before or has missed important earlier work?*
- *if he or she finds the work new or strange?*

Older children who transfer school after exam subjects have been chosen in Year 9 may find that:

- they can't do the same subjects in a new school; or
- the exam boards and the courses are different.

Have you thought whether:-

- *your child can take the same subjects at a new school?*
- *the courses will be the same?*
- *your child will be comfortable taking a new subject or exam courses?*

- **Relationships**

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

Have you thought whether:

- *your child will be able to settle in and get to know new people quickly, so that his or her learning does not suffer?*

- **Family Links**

If your child has brothers or sisters at the same school, a move to another school may need careful consideration.

Have you thought whether:

- *it will be a problem for you to have your children attending different schools? There is no automatic right for your other children to transfer to the new school, either now or in the future.*

- **Uniform**

You might need to buy a completely new uniform, including PE kit, if your child changes school.

Have you thought:

- *about the cost involved? Suffolk County Council no longer provides a grant towards the provision of school clothing unless there are very exceptional or emergency circumstances, changing schools would not be considered in either category.*

- **Transport**

Your child needs to be able to get to school easily, safely and on time.

Have you thought:

- *how your child would get to a new school?*
- *what the cost will be? In most circumstances you are unlikely to be eligible for travel assistance to another school.*

Resolving Difficulties

Many matters that worry parents and children can be sorted out without the need to move schools. Moving schools may not resolve the difficulties and can even have a negative effect on your child's education by disrupting his or her schooling.

Before coming to a final decision, you may find it helpful to ask yourself the following questions:

Have I

- *sat down with my child to talk about the points in this leaflet and to discuss how he or she really feels about moving to a new school?*
- *found out the real reason why he or she wants to move schools?*
- *spoken to the teachers who teach my child (if there are worries about certain subjects) to find out what they think and how they could help?*
- *spoken to the teacher in charge of Special Needs (if my child needs extra help)?*
- *spoken to my child's Tutor or Head of Year (if he or she is being bullied or not getting on with other children)?*
- *made an appointment to speak to the Headteacher (if you are still concerned about your child)?*
- *spoken to the School Preference Advice Service for some independent advice? (Contact details shown on page 4)*

If you have spoken to the Headteacher and are still not satisfied with the way in which the school has responded to your concerns, you can ask for the matter to be investigated in accordance with the school's General Complaints Procedure. A leaflet is available from the school or your local Area Office. This will explain how you can make a formal complaint and how your concerns will be investigated by the Area Manager or his representative and the findings shared with you and the school.

The next steps.....

Talking to your child and to school staff may help to overcome any problems. If you still feel that a move to another school is essential we strongly recommend that you arrange to visit to discuss the needs of your child and to learn more about the school. When you have done so and if you still want to go ahead with the move:

1. Please fill out the attached CAF2 form and send the completed form to your local Area Office (contact details below).
2. The Admissions Team in the Area Office will check if there is a place available at your preferred school. If there is no place available, they will not be able to meet your request but they will inform you about your right of appeal. If there is a place available, they will let you know.
3. If we are able to offer your child a school place we will write to confirm this. You may then be asked to contact the school to arrange a meeting with the new Headteacher or a member of his or her staff to discuss the arrangements for your child's transfer to the school. Admission will be arranged as soon as possible but it may take up to two weeks for all the necessary arrangements to be made in order to ensure a smooth transfer for your child.
4. If, following your meeting with the new Headteacher or member of staff, you decide you would prefer your child to remain at his or her present school, you should notify the Area Office immediately.
5. Once the move is completed, your present school will arrange for your child's school record to be transferred to the new school.

Please note that, if your request is for a Voluntary Aided School, a Foundation School, Trust School, or an Academy, the decision about whether or not there is a place available at the school will be made by the Governing Body, not the County Council, but the County Council will write to you on behalf of the Governing Body explaining whether a place is available or not. Apart from this, the process will be exactly the same.

These steps are aimed at making sure that a transfer is fully discussed between parents and schools and properly managed. It is important that a change of school is in the best interests of your child and that a transfer to a new school goes smoothly. Since the process may take some time to complete, you must ensure that your child **continues to attend his or her present school** while the necessary arrangements are being made.

If you have any queries about this leaflet or need advice about filling in the application form, please contact the **Admissions Team** in your local Area Office (see below for details). If you are unsure about which area office to contact, please telephone any of the offices or ask at the school concerned. You are also strongly advised to read the 'Schools in Suffolk' Guidance Booklet for Parents before completing this form. Copies of the booklet are available in schools and the Area Offices. The application form and the information booklet are also available from the County Council website at:

<http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/EducationAndLearning/Schools/AdmissionsToSchools/Listing.htm>

Please send the completed CAF2 form to your Local Area Office:

Northern Area Office

Clapham House
Clapham Road
Lowestoft
Suffolk
NR32 1QX

Telephone: 0845 600 0981 (Local Rate)

Email: admissions.north@csduk.com

School Preference Adviser – 07809 594373

Southern Area Office

St Edmund House
Rope Walk
IPSWICH
Suffolk
IP4 1LZ

Telephone: 0845 600 0981 (Local Rate)

Email: admissions.south@csduk.com

School Preference Adviser – 07809 594374

Western Area Office

West Suffolk House
Western Way
Bury St Edmunds
IP33 3YU

Telephone: 0845 600 0981 (Local Rate)

Email: admissions.west@csduk.com

School Preference Adviser – 07809 594375