

## Information pack

### Secondary transfer for September 2015 intake

We understand that making arrangements to start secondary school is an important time for parents and carers as well as for children transferring and many families will have lots of questions. We have put together below, a list of frequently asked questions relating to the secondary school transfer process which we hope you find helpful.

**Q. I have been trying to contact the school admissions team by telephone to discuss the contents of my offer letter but it has been constantly engaged. What shall I do?**

**A.** As all local authorities in London send out their secondary school offer letters on 2 March this year, many families will be receiving their offer letter at the same time as you. This is also a very busy time for the school admissions team, with a large number of people trying to contact us regarding their secondary offer letters.

Before you contact us you may find the answer to your question by reading this leaflet, your offer letter or the 'Starting secondary school' brochure which is available to download on the Southwark Council website at [www.southwark.gov.uk/schooladmissions](http://www.southwark.gov.uk/schooladmissions).

If you feel that you still need assistance then you can contact the Southwark school admissions team by:

1. Email - If you have access to the internet then this is probably the fastest way to contact us. Our email address is: [schools.admissions@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:schools.admissions@southwark.gov.uk); or
2. Telephone - If you are unable to send your query by email then you can contact our call centre on 020 7525 5337 where trained staff will be available to help, Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm

The telephone lines may still be busy at certain peak times of the day so please remain patient and someone should be able to assist you. We advise you to try and avoid calling at midday and if your query is not urgent, then please allow a few days to pass before contacting us.

**Q. Why didn't I receive my offer letter on 2 March?**

**A.** The Southwark school admissions team post out all offer letters by first class post on 2 March 2015 which is the national offer day for local authorities to post out secondary school offer letters to families. This means that most families will receive their offer letter a few days after this date.



**Q. My child has not been offered any of his/her preferences. What happens now?**

**A.** The Southwark school admissions team will try to ensure that all children residing in Southwark are offered a secondary school place on 2 March 2015. If we are unable to offer your child a school which you listed as a preference on your child's application, we will offer an alternative place at a school with capacity. This is likely to be the nearest school to your child's home which has a vacancy. Your child's name will also automatically be added to the waiting lists of those Southwark schools which were listed as a preference on their application form but could not be offered.

You can contact the school admissions team for up to date vacancy information about Southwark secondary places after 16 March 2015 on 020 7525 5337.

You can also contact the schools preference adviser (SPA), who is based in the Southwark Information, Advice and Support Team and can offer you impartial, independent advice on what you can do next. Please call to find out how they can help you on 020 7525 5211.

**Q. I do not want to accept the offer that has been made to my child. What do I do?**

**A.** The Southwark school admissions team will only make one offer of a secondary school to your child on 2 March 2015. It is important that you accept this offer for now. If it is possible for us to offer your child a place from a waiting list at one of your higher preference schools, we will contact you immediately.

Alternatively, if you have accepted a place at an independent fee paying school please let the school admissions team know so that we can update our records and offer this declined secondary school place to the next child on the waiting list.

It is important to remember that the secondary transfer process does not end after 2 March 2015 but continues right up until 31 August 2015.

**Q. Will my child remain on the waiting lists for the Southwark school/s they were not offered?**

**A.** Yes, your child will automatically be placed on the school waiting lists for those Southwark schools which were listed as a higher preference on your child's application form but could not be offered. The school admissions team will hold waiting lists for all Southwark academies, voluntary aided and free schools until 31 August 2015.

If you wish to check your child's position on a waiting list for any Southwark school please contact the school admissions team after 16 March 2015 on 020 7525 5337 or email your request to [schools.admissions@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:schools.admissions@southwark.gov.uk).

Please also refer to your letter.

**Q. I have chosen to educate my child at home and take on the responsibility for their education. Can I do this?**

**A.** Yes, for further information please contact Sherry Glasgow at Southwark Council's Early Help Service on 020 7525 5768.



**Q. I would like to appeal against the decision not to offer my child a place at the school/s of my preference. How do I do this?**

**A.** If you would like to appeal for any Southwark secondary school you must contact the school directly to request a copy of their own appeal form.

If you have applied to a school outside of Southwark and wish to make an appeal please contact the relevant admissions section of the borough in which the school is located to ask for their advice. For example, if you wish to appeal for a Lambeth school, please contact the Lambeth admissions section. (Please also refer to your offer letter). Listed below are the contact numbers for other London borough school admissions teams which you may find useful.

London borough	Admissions contact details
Bexley	020 8303 7777 option 3
Bromley	020 8313 4044
Camden	020 7974 1625
Croydon	020 8726 6400 option 3
Greenwich	020 8921 8043
Hackney	020 8820 7489
Islington	020 7527 5515
Kensington and Chelsea	020 7745 6432
Lambeth	020 7926 9503 option 2
Lewisham	020 8314 8282
Merton	020 8274 4906
Newham	020 8430 2000
Tower Hamlets	020 7364 5006 option 2
Wandsworth	020 8871 7316
Westminster	020 7745 6433