

Deferred and part-time entry and Admission of children outside their usual age group

This policy has been produced in order to help parents and schools with requests for deferred entry, part-time attendance and admission outside the usual age group.

Our procedure is based on the School Admissions Code 2021 and current guidance available from the Department for Education. The Minister of State for Schools announced in September 2015 that consultation on the School Admissions Code in relation to this issue would be conducted in future. This Policy will be reviewed after the outcome of this consultation and any upcoming changes to the School Admissions Code and/or Statutory Guidance.

Background

It is a requirement of the School Admissions Code that admission authorities publish their arrangements for deferred entry and part time attendance for those parents who request it for children below compulsory school age (reception classes).

In addition, admission authorities must also make clear the process for requesting admission outside the usual age group.

In all cases parents should discuss any request with the relevant admission authorities (local authority or school).

Summer Born Children

In December 2014, the DfE published its revised non-statutory advice to help admission authorities comply with the admission requirements of summer-born children. This is available at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/summerborn-children-school-admission>

Deferred and part-time entry for Reception places

The above only applies for reception classes. Paragraph 2.16 of the School Admissions Code states that admission authorities must provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. Places must be offered on a full-time basis but where parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age. Please see part-time attendance section for more details.

Parents may also request that their child's entry be delayed until later in the school year following their fourth birthday, providing they do not delay beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age. Children born in the summer term are not required to start school until a full year after the point at which they could first have

been admitted – the point at which other children in their age range are beginning Year 1. Please see delayed entry section on the next page for more details.

Part-time attendance

- Parents may request that their child attend part-time until they reach legal school age. Parents should discuss this option with the head teacher at the offered school.
- The school is not required to offer flexible part-time hours. Instead, staff will confirm the part-time arrangements available at the school. It is recommended that the funded part-time options will be 15 hours per week, the same as the early-years settings. Schools will decide if the part-time offer is for morning or afternoon sessions.
- Children must be collected at the end of their morning or afternoon session and therefore lunch will not be available for children attending part-time.
- Children cannot take up a funded part time place at an early year's setting as well as a part-time Reception place.

Deferred (delayed) entry

Parents may ask to delay their child's start date but must still apply for a reception school place in the normal admissions round. Our website will always list the date of birth range of children in the relevant normal admissions round. After places have been 'offered' parents must write to the School Admissions Team to let us know their child's preferred start date and the options are below for reference. If you delay your start date, your child's nursery place cannot continue unless there are nursery spaces available after the correct aged children have been offered a place.

- **January Start:** Children whose fifth birthday is on or between 1 September and 31 December may delay their Reception place until the start of the spring term.
- **April Start:** Children whose fifth birthday is on or between 1 January and 31 March may delay their Reception place until the start of the summer term.
- **April or Year 1 Start:** Children with a fifth birthday on or between 1 April and 31 August may delay their Reception place until the start of summer term (April) or the September in the following autumn term when they will start as a Year 1 pupil.

Things to consider

1. The process in this document is for Barking and Dagenham schools only. If you have been offered a place outside the borough, you must check the policy of the relevant admission authority (School or LA) and follow their process.
2. The best interests and needs of the child should be the focus of any discussions surrounding his or her admission to school. As a result, parents may be asked to consider whether part-time attendance or delaying the reception start date, is beneficial to their child's long-term educational and social development.
3. The requirements of the Infant Class Size legislation will apply to all children admitted within the Reception Year, irrespective of the child's start date.
4. Where deferred admission has been agreed. The child's place will be held open and will not be available to be offered to another child during the academic year.
5. When deferred admission has been agreed, schools will make available an integrating programme for the pupil to ensure they settle into that year group appropriately.

6. Schools can obtain advice on the funding implications from the Finance Section.

Admission of children outside their usual age group

Reception places

If your child was born between 1 April to 31 August (Summer born children) and you wish him or her to start their Reception class a year later than their usual start date, please complete the 'Application out of usual year group' form. You may wish to attach any supporting information from education or medical professionals to support your application.

For us to consider your application and the individual circumstances of your child we need to have this form submitted before **15th January** in the year that they would usually commence school (the usual date for starting school is in the September following the child's 4th birthday). Parents should complete the common application form (CAF) Admission Form (online) so that a place in reception may be issued, should the application to be educated out of cohort be refused. Failure to submit a common application form could leave your child without a school place.

In all cases parents will be advised to discuss any request with all relevant parties.

Advice for Schools

1. The best interests and needs of the child should be the focus of any discussions surrounding his or her admission to school, therefore, parents may be asked to consider whether part-time attendance or deferring the start date is better for the child's long-term educational development.
2. Infant Class Size legislation applies to all children admitted within the Reception Year, despite the child's start date. Therefore, if deferred admission is agreed, that child's place will be held open and will not be available to be offered to another child during the academic year.
3. Schools can obtain advice on the funding implications from the Finance Section.

Advice for Parents

1. A school will assume that a child will start Reception Year in September unless a parent contacts the head teacher to discuss other options. Please see previous page about part-time and delayed admission.
2. Parents should discuss with the head teacher whether starting school outside the usual admission group is in the best interests of the child.
3. Parents who are considering educating their child outside the usual admission group must still apply for a place in Reception Year in the normal admissions round.
4. Parents who defer entry to Reception Year while the child is below statutory school age still receive free early education entitlement funding.

Other year groups

As a general principle, the Local Authority believes that children should be educated within their chronological peer group. The National Curriculum allows schools to change both the curriculum offered and the assessment procedures in order to meet individual needs. Inclusion is therefore promoted through altering the curriculum within the classroom to the child's ability, rather than by moving the child into another year group.

There is no legal barrier to educating a child outside their usual year group. Paragraph 2.17A of the School Admissions Code makes it clear that it is school admission authorities who are responsible for making the decision on which year group a child should be admitted to, but they should make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned.

This includes taking account of:

- 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 out of their usual age group; and
- Whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely.
- They must also take into account the views of the head teacher at the school concerned.

Common reasons for parental requests for educating outside the usual chronological age group

- The pupil has a birth date in July or August or they were born prematurely
- Parents moving in from another country where education starts later.
- The pupil is gifted and exceptionally able.
- The pupil has missed a significant portion of a particular year's study through
- Illness or other unavoidable absence.

Advice to Schools

Pupils placed and taught out of their age group, will be suitable in very limited circumstances. Such placement will only be considered as appropriate after full consultation and agreement has taken place with all parties and (where applicable) in accordance with the requirements of the School Admissions Code.

Where pupils are placed in a younger age group, it is expected that:

- There is strong evidence to show the child's readiness and well-being for school is significantly below that expected of their peers.
- There is informed parental support and agreement
- Both parents and pupil agree with the potential implications e.g. statutory school leaving age of 16 and the requirement to be in education and training until their 18th birthday.

Advice to Parents

- Where a parent wishes their child to be admitted outside their usual age group, they should discuss this with the school or local authority they will be applying to in order that the relevant admission authority can decide whether this can be agreed.
- They should then complete the attached 'Application out of usual year group' form by the relevant cohort admission closing dates listed below. The Local Authority will then make arrangements to include the child's application in the relevant admissions round.

Starting school Reception application deadline **15 January**

Moving to Junior school application deadline **15 January**

Moving to secondary school application deadline **31 October**

The above closing dates do not apply for the 'In Year' admissions process. Instead, the 'Application out of usual year group' form must be submitted with the ICAF (In-Year application form).

- Parents should be aware that where an admission authority agrees to admission outside of usual age group, it does not guarantee a place in the relevant class at their preferred school. Places will be allocated based on the schools published admission criteria.
- The decision on the application will need to be made through the normal admission round on the home local authority's application form. In other words, an application for an oversubscribed school could be unsuccessful, even though the parental request for admission out of their usual age group has been agreed by the relevant admission authority.
- Parents have a right to appeal to an independent appeal panel if decline an application for a school place. This right does not apply if we offer a place at the school but not in the preferred year group.