

Delayed and Deferred Admissions

Aim

1. The aim of this policy is to establish a procedure which gives parents, schools and settings clear guidance on deferred and delayed admission. When a request for admission out of the normal age group is made for an **own admission authority school** the decision rests with the admission authority of the school requested, but the Local Authority will coordinate the request.

2. Key Principles

- 2.1 All children and young people should normally be educated in their normal age group.
- 2.2 Schools assess the learning needs of children and young people so that the curriculum they provide is relevant enabling them to make appropriate progress and maximise their achievement.
- 2.3 Admission of children outside their normal year group will be made in accordance with the School Admissions Code 2021 – Paragraphs 2.17 A and B, 2.18, 2.19 and 2.20.
- 2.4 There is no statutory barrier to children being admitted outside their normal age group, but parents do not have the right to insist that their child is admitted to a particular age group.
- 2.5 The decision is made by the relevant Admission Authority, details of which are shown below:-

3. <u>Type of School</u>	<u>Admission Authority:</u>
4. Academy	Academy Trust
5. Community	Local Authority
6. Foundation	Governing Body
7. Voluntary Aided	Governing Body
8. Voluntary Controlled	Local Authority
- 2.6 For children already in school, in an existing year group, the head teacher will make the decision on whether the child should be educated outside of the normal age group.
- 2.7 For children moving into the local authority, the admission will be considered against the child's normal age group.

3 Entry to Reception Classes:

- 1.1 The Early Years Foundation Stage spans pre-school to the reception age group within school, providing appropriate learning experiences for children aged 3 – 5 years. Primary education is normally provided in primary schools although, in some areas, there are separate infant and junior schools.

1.2 Children usually start school in the September after their 4th birthday. All children are entitled to a full-time school place at this point.

1.3 Parents do not have to send their children to school until they reach compulsory school age.

1.4 Children must start full-time education once they reach compulsory school age. This is on 31 December, 31 March or 31 August following their fifth birthday - whichever comes first. If the child's fifth birthday is on one of those dates then they reach compulsory school age on that date.

1.5 Children born from the 1st April to the 31st August are known as Summer Born Children. Summer born children do not need to start school until the September following their 5th birthday, a full academic year after they are first entitled to a school place, going straight into Year 1.

1.6 There are several options available to parents if they do not feel that their child is ready start school full time in the September following their 4th birthday:

- Defer their entry to a point later in the school year (please see Deferred entry section below)
- Arrange for them to attend school part time – parents can request this from the school allocated.
- Even if the child is summer born they must attend school for at least the final term in order to keep the school place offered. If the child does not attend the school for the final term, the place would be withdrawn and the parent would need to make an In-Year application for a place for the child in Year 1.

2. Deferred Entry

2.1 Parents can request a deferred entry until later in the same school year as long as this does not go beyond the child's compulsory school age or beyond the academic year for which the original application was made.

2.2 Parents can request that their child takes up the reception place part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age. Once the child has started at the school parents cannot apply for delayed entry.

2.3 Deferred starts must be discussed with the allocated school directly.

3. Delayed Entry

3.1 Children whose 5th Birthday falls in the Summer Term do not legally have to send their child to school until the following September. Parents of summer

born children can request an admission out of the normal age group for Reception, instead of starting school in Year 1.

- 3.2 Parents who wish to do this should apply to the Local Authority for a Reception place within the normal admission round but also complete the Request for Admission Out of the Normal Age Group application. This application is to request for the child to be admitted into the reception year group in the September following their child's 5th Birthday. An application within the normal admission round is required to ensure that if the request is refused parents will still have an on-time application being considered.
- 3.3 All requests should be submitted by the 15th January, the primary closing date, alongside an application in the main admission round. Requests can be submitted after this date, but these may be considered later.
- 3.4 Parents should submit evidence which allows admission authorities to determine why it would be in the child's best interests to be admitted to reception rather than year one. In some cases, parents may have professional evidence that it would be appropriate for them to submit, for example, when a child receives support from a speech and language therapist.
- 3.5 Admission authorities must still consider requests that are not accompanied by professional evidence. In such cases the supporting information might simply be the parent's statement as to why they have made their request.
- 3.6 Before deciding to delay their child's admission to school parents should visit the schools they are thinking of applying for. Parents might find it helpful to speak to the staff at the schools they are considering for their child, for example the reception teacher or the headteacher. They can discuss any concerns they have about their child's readiness for school, and ask them how the school help children to settle in and how the school would support their child. Teachers understand that children develop at different rates and have different starting points when beginning school. They know some children need more support than others and are trained to adapt their teaching to suit individual children's needs.
- 3.7 Parents are encouraged to think carefully about this decision as it is likely to affect the child for the rest of their time at school. Parents must submit another request for admission out of the normal age group if the child wants to change school, this includes applying for secondary school. Parents are also asked to note that:
 - If the child wishes move schools, parents would need to make another request for admission out of the normal age group for that new school to consider. The admission authority of the new school is not required to comply with the decision previously made. If the request is refused, the parent would need to apply for a place in the child's normal age group, one year above where they have been educated up to that point.

- Parents will also need to make another request for admission out of the normal age group when they apply for secondary school so that the child could start in year 7. If this is refused, they would have to apply for a place in Year 8. This is the same for any phase transfer (infant to junior).
- A child ceases to be compulsory school age on the last Friday in June in the school year they become 16. The child will reach school leaving age at the end of year 10, rather than year 11. The school will not ask them to leave, but they will no longer be required by law to attend school, and the school may not be able to enforce their attendance. Children usually take their GCSEs in year 11.

3.8 Where a parent requests their child is admitted out of the normal group, the admission authority of the school is responsible for making the decision on which year group a child should be admitted to.

3.9 They are required to decide based on the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will require the admission authority to take account of the child's individual needs and abilities and to consider whether these can best be met in reception or year one. It will also involve taking account of the potential impact on the child of being admitted to year one without first having completed the reception year.

3.10 In addition, if the child was born prematurely, they may fall into a different age group, if they had been born at full term. When considering the circumstances of the case, admission authorities should take account of the age group the child would have fallen in to if born at full term.

3.11 Please note that the Admitting Authority of the School will contact any professionals they deem appropriate to be able to make an informed decision regarding the child for example Health Visitor, School, Early Years Provider (pre-school, private nursery, child minder), Education Psychologist, doctor or consultant. The views of the head teacher will also be an important part of this consideration. The details of the case will also be shared with these professionals.

4. Who makes the decision?

4.1 Decisions must be made by the admitting authority of the school. For Academy Schools this is the Academy Trust / Governing Body.

4.2 For Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools, the final decision on delayed admission will be taken by the Local Authority's Delayed School Entry Admissions Panel in consultation with the Headteacher of the school[s] requested. Parents will be informed in writing clearly setting out the reasons for the decision. The Delayed Admissions to School Panel is made up of representatives from Admissions, the Education professionals as necessary, Early Years Consultants, and SEND representatives if necessary.

5. What happens if the request is approved?

- 5.1 If a request for admission out of the normal age group is approved, the LA should withdraw the application made for the normal age group. Parents will then need to make a new application as part of the main admission round for the following year, the LA will provide the parents with the new application.
- 5.2 Please note that parents can only apply for those schools that have agreed to educate the child out of the normal age group, they cannot apply for any other school. Therefore, it is in parent's interest to request admission out of the normal age group to more than one school.
- 5.3 If the LA is unable to allocate a place at one of the preferred schools that has previously agreed, it will offer an alternative placement at the nearest school available, if that school also agrees to educate out of the normal age group. If the alternative school is not agreeable to this, the LA will offer a place to the child in the normal age group i.e in Year 1 at an alternative school.
- 5.4 Parents should note that where their request for admission out of the normal age group is agreed, this does not guarantee a place at a particular school. Parents must apply again as part of the following admissions round and their application receives equal consideration with all others received. In the event of a school being oversubscribed the admissions criteria will be used to determine the allocation of places. It remains possible, that the application could be refused a place if other applicants rank higher in the school's admissions criteria.

6. What happens if the request is refused?

- 6.1 Where a parent's request is refused, the on-time application will be processed as part of the main admissions round.
- 6.2 Parents will need to decide whether to accept the offer of a place for the normal age group and defer admission until the child becomes compulsory school age, or to refuse the place and make an In-Year application for admission to Year 1 for the September following the child's fifth birthday.
- 6.3 Please note there is no right to appeal against a decision to refuse a request for admission out of the normal age group.
- 6.4 Where a Swindon resident wishes to apply for a school outside of Swindon, they must gain agreement from that school / Local Authority that they would accept a delayed admission application.

7. Admission to Junior Schools and Transfer to Secondary Schools Out of the Normal Age Group

- 7.1 Children and young people should transfer to the next phase of education (junior schools) with their peer group.
- 7.2 Parents of children who were admitted out of the normal age group to reception, will need to make another request when they would need to apply

for a junior or secondary school place i.e in Year 5 to be allowed to apply for a place when the child is in Year 6.

- 7.3 The implications for pupils out of the normal age group reaching statutory school leaving age before completing Key Stage 4, alongside the social and emotional issues for pupils out of the normal age group must be considered when making any decision.
- 7.4 The final decision on an out of the normal age group transfer will be taken by the relevant admission authority. For Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools the final decision on an out of the normal age group transfer will be taken by the Delayed Admissions to School Panel in consultation with the Headteacher of the school[s] requested. The decision will be based on sound educational reasons in the child's best interests and will need to bear in mind the age group the child has been educated in up to that point.

8. Pupils with an Education Health and Care Plan

Due to their specific needs children with an Education Health and Care Plan, if parents wish the child to start school in reception (not year 1) when they are 5, they should discuss this with their local authority.