



Admissions Policy (Primary)

Supplementary Guidance for Delayed Entry Requests for Summer-Born Children

Supplementary guidance for delayed entry requests for summer-born children

1 Existing policy and guidance

- 1.1 This supplementary guidance around delayed entry requests for Summer-Born children sits within existing policies. Hull City Council is responsible for coordinating all admissions in the area and making offers of places. Further details are on the council's website at www.hullcc.gov.uk/admissions.
- 1.2 This supplementary guidance should be read alongside the [Trust Primary Admissions Policy](#) and forms part of that overall policy.
- 1.3 This supplementary guidance is based on [guidance materials](#) issued by the Department for Education (DFE) updated in November 2024.
- 1.4 This guidance does not apply to children with education, health and care (EHC) plans. If a summer-born child has an EHC plan and parents would like them to be admitted to school at age 5 to start in reception, the local authority will need to discuss this with them.

2 Overview of admissions for summer-born children

- 2.1 Paragraph 2.17 of the [School Admissions Code](#) requires admission authorities to provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. Most parents are happy for their child to start school at this point.
- 2.2 Children are not required to attend school until they reach [compulsory school age](#). Children born from 1 April to 31 August – known as summer-born children – do not officially need to start school until the September after their fifth birthday, a year after they could first have started school. A parent may request their summer-born child is admitted out of their normal age group at this point – to reception rather than year 1.
- 2.4 If a child is admitted to primary school out of their normal age group, the parent may make further requests, for example, when they transfer from primary to secondary school.
- 2.5 The admission authority of each school must make a decision based on the circumstances of the case and in the child's best interests. An admission authority may not decide that a child should start school before compulsory school age - that is the parent's decision.

3 Guidance for parents

- 3.1 The Constellation Trust, in line with the DFE guidance, supports the right of parents to decide their child will not start school until compulsory school age, but does not believe it should become the norm for summer-born children to begin reception at age 5. Most summer-born children will thrive if they are admitted to reception aged 4.

- 3.2 Some parents will be concerned that their child is not ready for school at age 4 and may need support to decide what is right for their child. The DFE have published [advice for parents of summer-born children](#), to help them make an informed decision.
- 3.3 If a parent is considering delaying their summer-born child's admission until compulsory school age, we would encourage them to visit the school in the first instance to discuss this. The Head of School and the teachers will be able to explain the provision on offer in the reception class and how the children's individual needs are supported. In the vast majority of cases, the needs of pupils can be accommodated within their normal year group.
- 3.4 We encourage parents who are worried their child may have a learning difficulty or disability that will make school challenging for them, to meet the school's special educational needs co-ordinator (SENDCO). They will be able to explain the school's approach to supporting children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- 3.5 Some children born prematurely (before 37 weeks' gestation) have social, emotional, physical and intellectual development behind that of their peers. Some may have health problems associated with their prematurity. The more prematurely a child was born, the more likely it is they will have developmental or health concerns. If a parent of a child born prematurely is considering delaying their admission, we would encourage them to discuss the options with their child's specialists.

4 Handling requests for admission out of the normal age group

- 4.1 Paragraph 2.18 of the [School Admissions Code](#) requires authorities to make clear the process for requesting admission outside of the normal age group in their admission arrangements. For primary schools in The Constellation Trust, the process is as follows:
- 4.2 Parents should make an application for a school place in their child's normal age group at the usual time, as outlined in the [admissions policy](#), usually prior to January, in preparation for a school start the following September.
- 4.3 Parents should submit a request for admission outside the normal age group to the school at the same time.
- 4.4 All requests will be considered by a panel from the Trust.
- 4.5 Parents will receive the response to their request in writing before the primary national offer day.
- 4.6 If a parent's request is agreed, they may withdraw their application for the normal age group before a place is offered. They will need to make a new application for a school place during the following admissions round. Please note, it is possible that the school will not be able to offer a place the following year if there are more applications than places available, as the oversubscription criteria for the school will be applied (as outlined in the admissions policy). This is why it is important for parents to request admissions out of the normal age group at all schools that parents apply for.

- 4.7 If a request for admission out of the normal age group at a primary school is refused, the parent will have to decide between 2 options:
- Option 1: accept the offer of a place in a reception class in the school year following their child's fourth birthday
 - Option 2: refuse the offer of a place in reception class and make an in-year application for their child to be admitted to year 1 in the September following their fifth birthday
- 4.8 It is important for parents to make a request for admission outside the normal age group at each school they wish to apply for, in case their preferred school is unable to offer a place.
- 4.9 It is also important to note that any offer of a place outside the normal age group does not guarantee the same offer at the point of transfer to secondary school, as they will have their own admissions arrangements.

5 Evidence provided by parents

- 5.1 The admission authority can reasonably expect parents to provide information about why they think their child should be admitted out of their normal age group, to enable them to make a decision in the child's best interests.
- 5.2 In some cases, parents may have evidence from professionals involved in their child's care or treatment that it would be appropriate for them to submit, for example:
- a speech and language therapist
 - an occupational therapist
 - a social worker
 - a paediatrician
 - the child's nursery or childminder
- 5.3 The admission authority should not expect parents to get evidence they do not already have, and must still consider requests that are not accompanied by evidence from professionals. Authorities should not refuse a request solely because it is not accompanied by professional evidence.

6. Making a decision

- 6.1 Paragraph 2.19 of the School Admissions Code requires an admission authority to decide which age group the child should be admitted to. They must make this decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case and in the child's best interests. They must also take account of the views of the Head of School.
- 6.2 The admission authority will need to decide whether a child's needs can best be met in reception or year 1, for a child starting primary school.
- 6.3 Factors an admission authority will need to consider include:
- parents' views
 - information about a child's academic, social, and emotional development

- where relevant, a child's medical history and the views of a medical professional
- whether a child would naturally have fallen into a lower age group if they had not been born prematurely
- the potential impact on a child of being admitted to their normal age group and missing a year of their education as a consequence
- if a child has already been educated out of their normal age group and is transferring to a new school.

6.4 There do not need to be exceptional circumstances, and a child does not need to have a medical need or SEND for it to be in their best interests to be admitted out of their normal age group. However, in most cases, it is likely that the recommendation will be that they are educated in their normal year group unless there are strong grounds, and it is in the child's best interests, to be educated outside of their normal age group.

7. Complaints and appeals

7.1 Parents who wish to challenge a decision to refuse their request for admission out of the normal age group may submit a complaint using the schools complaints procedure.

7.2 If a parent is unhappy with the way an academy has handled their complaint they may complain to the Department for Education, once they have exhausted the local process.

7.3 Parents whose request for delayed entry is refused have no statutory right to appeal this decision. The statutory admission appeals process does not cover a decision to refuse delayed entry to school.

8. Transfer to other schools

8.1 Parents will need to ask an admission authority to admit their child out of their normal age group again if their child needs to transfer to another school.

8.2 This applies if their child is moving, or going to move:

- from an infant to a junior school
- from a primary to secondary school
- to a new area and is changing schools

This request should be made alongside an application for a school place.

8.3 If applying to secondary school, parents will need to ask the admission authority of their preferred schools to agree for their child to continue being educated outside of their normal age group.

8.4 Parents should do this before the normal admissions round closes for their child's normal age group. This will be on 31 October of the year their child starts year 5, rather than year 6. This is so parents know the outcome of the decision in time to submit an application for their child's normal age group, should the request be turned down.