Summer Born Children
Delaying Primary School & Academy Entry

**General Information**
Statutory primary school / academy starting age is the term after a 5\(^{th}\) birthday.

All admission authorities must provide for the admission of children in the September following a 4\(^{th}\) birthday (School Admissions Code – 2.16). The majority of children start school at this time.

Where parents accept places for the September after a 4\(^{th}\) birthday they may:

- Access the place in September (and the majority do so).
- Agree part time attendance with the school or academy (up to the point where the child reaches statutory school age).
- Accept the place and agree to access it within the same school year – no later than when the child reaches statutory school age (usually a start date in January or March / April).

When delayed entry within the reception year is agreed the offered place will be reserved.

**Summer Born Children- General**
Children with birthdays between 1\(^{st}\) April and 31\(^{st}\) August are known as summer born.

In accordance with the Admissions Code these children will be offered a place in the September after a 4\(^{th}\) birthday.

Their statutory school start date is however the September after their 5\(^{th}\) birthday.

Parents can decide when a summer born child will start primary school.

However, where parents prefer a start date in the September after a 5\(^{th}\) birthday, they must be aware that there is no statutory requirement to a reception place. They may need to apply for Year 1 places.

Parents should be aware that teachers are skilled in differentiating the curriculum to meet a diverse range of needs. Parents are encouraged to visit the schools and academies they are thinking of applying for. Staff will be able to explain the provision on offer in the reception class, how it is tailored to meet the needs of individual children and how the needs of each child will continue to be met as they move up through the school or academy.

Whether a child attends a school, academy or an early years setting during the year following their 4\(^{th}\) birthday they will follow the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum which is largely based on learning through play.

If parents decide to access a nursery or early years setting during the year after a child’s 4th birthday this does not give them a right to have a reception place in a primary school or academy from the September after the 5th birthday. The expectation is that normally a Year 1 place will be offered.
Summer Born Children -
Requests for Full Year Deferral with Reception Start

Parents of summer born children must apply for primary school or academy admission in the September after a 4th birthday (the statutory closing date is 15th January in the usual year of entry).

They can also apply to defer their child’s admission until the September after a 5th birthday with a reception start. They will have to complete the Council’s application form 'Application for a Blackpool school place for summer born children'. This should also be submitted by 15th January and is in addition to the annual primary application.

Requests will be considered by the individual admissions authority of each preferred school or academy. A decision to allow admission in the September after a 5th birthday with reception start only applies to the school or academy whose admission authority has agreed the request.

Decision(s) about any request to defer until the September after a 5th birthday with a reception start will be confirmed ahead of the statutory primary offer date on 16th April.

Making Requests

Guidance from the Department for Education (DFE) advises that it is reasonable for admission authorities to expect parents to provide information to support a request. This will allow decisions to be made based on the circumstances of each case.

There is no expectation that parents will obtain professional evidence which they do not already have. Admission authorities will consider each request on the basis of the information and supporting evidence which parents decide to include with their request.

When considering a request for deferred admission the following factors will generally be considered (these are not however exclusive):

- Delayed social, emotional or physical development which may be affecting the child's readiness for school (supported by professional information);
- Premature birth and the fact that the child may have naturally fallen into a lower age group if they had been born on their expected date of birth;
- Medical incapacity - especially if this has prevented access to early year’s provision.
- Significant learning or special educational needs (supported by professional information);
- The views of the head teacher of the preferred school or academy;
- The views of the parent (s) and any statements made or information provided

The process for considering admission after a 5th birthday with a reception start follows DFE guidance issued in December 2014. Please note that there is no statutory requirement for any admission authority to place any child outside of his or her chronological year group.

Requests which provide only personal views and opinions and refer to guidance and research may not be accepted as being as compelling as those which focus upon the child’s individual needs and circumstances. Requests which include specific reasons (supported by evidence) which show why it would be in any child’s best interests to be admitted to reception in the September following their 5th birthday are likely to be considered as providing stronger reasons for full year deferral with a reception start.
**Decisions**
The Council will share all information provided by parents with the admission authorities and head teachers of all their preferred schools and academies. The Council and individual admission authorities may liaise with parents about the request if this is thought to be necessary.

In accordance with the DFE guidance there will be consideration of the potential impact on a child of being admitted to Year 1 without having attended a Reception year. The final decision will be for each admission authority (and may vary between admission authorities). The Council will confirm the decisions with the parent(s) ahead of the primary offer date on 16th April.

Where a request to defer full year with a reception start is approved, the application for the normal year of entry will be withdrawn. Parents will need to submit a new application for the next admission round (for a reception place in the September after a 5th birthday).

Where a request to defer full year with a reception start admission is refused, parents will need to decide whether to accept the offer of a reception place for the normal year of entry, or to refuse it and make an in-year application for admission to Year 1 for the September following the child's 5th birthday.

**Additional Information**
Parents should be aware that the number of applications, preferences and available places can differ from year to year. An agreed deferral does not mean a place at a preferred school will be allocated.

All applications are subject to the School Admission Code and associated legislation. Agreement by any admission authority to full year deferral does not provide any additional priority for a place the following year. The agreed admission arrangements will always be strictly applied to all applications.

A head teacher may consider that it would be appropriate for a child who had been admitted out of their usual age range (year group) to be moved back to their usual year. Any decision to move a child to a different year group would be in consultation with the parents. After admission the placement of any child within a school or academy is a decision for the head teacher and governors.

For any child not being educated in the year group in which their chronological age falls there may be complications if a change of school is required or there is a move to another local authority. It is for the new admission authority to decide whether to place the child out of their normal year group. This also applies at the time of transfer from primary to secondary. The new admission authority (taking information from parents and current provider into account) will decide whether a placement outside of the usual year group can be agreed.

Children who proceed through primary and then secondary school or academy a year behind their usual age range (year group) will reach statutory school leaving age on the last Friday in the June after a 16th birthday. They could therefore leave secondary school at the end of Year 10 without completing Year 11 or taking any GCSE examinations.

**Relevant Documents**
School Admissions Code (December 2014) – statutory guidance
DFE Advice on the Admission of Summer Born Children (December 2014) – non statutory advice