

Guidance on deferring your child's Reception place until the following school year

1. The admission authority must consider parental requests to defer their child's admission to Reception until the following school year and make decisions based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child.
2. Parents who are considering deferring their child's entry to school 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 they are thinking of applying for where staff will be able to explain the provision on offer to children in Reception class, how it is tailored to meet the needs of individual pupils and how the needs of each pupil will continue to be met as they move up through school.
3. Whilst the law requires a full time place to be offered from September when the child is four the law allows parents to ask for their child to be admitted but lets them delay the start date until later in the school year or to start on a part time basis. The effect of this is that the place is held and cannot be offered to another child. However, for a place to be held, admission can only be delayed within the academic year. This means the admission must take place by the summer term. Places cannot be held until the following autumn term for those children who are five during the preceding summer term. Parents who want to defer within the same school year must apply for a place as normal and once a place has been allocated the parent is responsible for contacting the headteacher to discuss deferring the place.
4. Where a parent wishes to defer their child's admission until the following school year parents are encouraged to make requests to defer in good time before the closing date for the normal admission round (to start school when their child is 4 or more but less than 5 years old on 1 September - the normal year for admission (see published timetable). Parents will need to provide the detailed reasons to enable their request to be given proper consideration and are encouraged to include any supporting evidence from relevant professionals
5. Parents will need to advise at which school(s) they are planning to express preferences as the decision will be made by the admission authority for the school, the Local Authority for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools, the Governing Body for Foundation and Voluntary Aided Schools and the Academy Trust for Academies and Free schools
6. Where an admission authority agrees to a request to defer until the next academic year the parent will be able to apply in the following year when their child is 5+ on 1 September. Any agreement to a request to defer admission does not guarantee a place at the preferred school, but the application will be considered alongside all other applications for a Reception place (described as "due to start school" in our admission arrangements).

7. Parents need to be aware that the admission authority for a school can change (for example if a school becomes an academy). The new admission authority has the legal right to re-consider the request at the time of application.
8. Parents submitting a request for admission out of the normal age group are encouraged to also make an application for a place in their child's normal age group at the same time. If the application to defer is made by the national closing date for applications the admission authority will ensure that the parent receives the response to their request before the primary school national offer day. (16th April or the first working day after the 16th April if not a normal working day)
9. Late applications are considered after those received on time and this is why it is important for your request to be made before the closing date for applications for the normal admissions round, 15 January each year, so that your application can be considered in your child's normal admissions round if your request is not upheld. Alternatively you can apply at a later stage, either as a late application for Reception or you can re-apply during the following year for your child to attend a school in Year One. This will depend on the availability of spaces in the Year One cohort your child would join. Around a third of Reception classes are over-subscribed so the availability of Year One places will be more limited.
10. Department for Education advice on the admission of summer born children" can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/summer-born-children-school-admission>