



Guidance for parents on the admission of summer born children

Reviewed: September 2024
To be revised: September 2027

In September 2015, the government released information on their proposal to change the right of parents of summer born children to delay their start in reception until the Autumn term after they become 5 years of age. This proposal is, however, not yet mandatory as it is subject to a consultation period, following which a decision will be made by the government as to when this will take effect. Until then, the correct information and procedure is contained in the guidance below.

The Department of Education's School Admissions Code (2021) requires school admission authorities to provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday, and this is when children usually start school. A child does not reach compulsory school age, however, until the "prescribed day" following their fifth birthday (or on their fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day - 31 December, 31 March and 31 August).

The parents of summer born children (born between 1 April and 31 August), are able to delay their child's entry to school by a full academic year after they are first entitled to a place. Parents may request that their summer born child is admitted out of their normal age group, to reception rather than year 1, at this point.

In cases where parent have applied for a place in the chronologically prescribed reception cohort and deferral is agreed the place allocated cannot be reserved for the whole academic year. The parents must re-apply for the following reception intake to be considered against the admission arrangements for that intake.

Where a parent requests their child is admitted out of their normal age group, the school admission authority is responsible for making the decision on which year group a child should be admitted to. They are required to make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case and in the best interests of the child concerned.

The schools within The Pioneer Academy work closely with their Local Authority's school admission team and will inform this team of any requests to defer entry for a summer born child.

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.

Parents of children born between 1 April and 31 August (referred to as summer born children) may decide that they want to delay their child starting school until the September after the child has reached compulsory school age (CSA) into Reception Year instead of Year 1. There is, however, no automatic right to this. Parents/carers should keep in mind that there is a high possibility that there may not be any availability in that year group.

The table below illustrates when a summer born child reaches compulsory school age and the date by which they must enter school, according to their date of birth:

Child's date of birth	Date child reaches compulsory school age (prescribed date)	Latest point of entry into primary school
1 September 2020 – 31 December 2020	31 December 2025	January 2026 (start of spring term)
1 January 2021 – 31 March 2021	31 March 2026	April 2026 (start of summer term)
1 April 2021 – 31 August 2021 ("summer born children")	31 August 2026	The start of the academic year commencing September 2026 into Y1

The process for requesting admission outside of the child's normal age group for Summer born children (delaying entry to Reception until September of the following year)

Parents/carers must initially submit a primary application by the relevant closing date for the child's school place within the child's normal age group. This is to ensure a school place is made available for the child in his/her normal age group should the request to delay be refused.

Parents/carers who wish their child to be admitted in the Reception year of any school within The Pioneer Academy outside his/her normal age group **must** contact the relevant school with relevant documents.

Each school will make a decision, having taken into account the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. The decision process takes account of the parents' views and any supporting information available, this might include 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 normal age group; or whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely.

Parents should therefore take these factors into account when writing their request and considering what supporting documentation to provide. This will enable the parent to make an application for the correct year group if the request is denied. There is **no mandatory requirement** for requests to be met. Each application will be considered as an individual case and the Head Teacher will share the request with a Regional Director for The Pioneer Academy and the Chair of the local governing body (School Board).

Where the request is agreed, the parent will be required to make an application in the following reception year and the application will be considered with all other applications, applying the oversubscription criteria as necessary. However, parents need to be aware that there is a possibility that they will not be offered a place at that particular school if they do not meet the relevant criterion. If this happens the parent will be required to make the request to other schools to ensure the child is in education by compulsory school age.

If the request for delayed entry to start in the September after the child becomes 5 is not agreed and the parent chooses not to take up the option to defer the child's start in the summer term of the reception year, then the parent would have to apply for a year 1 place for the September after the child is 5. Taking into account that all places are likely to have been offered in the reception year it is very doubtful that a preferred place would be available. The child would also have missed out a year's education with their peer group in reception.

The decision

Based on the information provided, once a decision has been reached on the year group the child should be admitted to, the Head Teacher and Regional Director will write to the family, clearly setting out the reasons for their decision.

Should the parent/carer's request to admit the child outside of their normal age group be agreed, this will only be relevant to that school and there can be no guarantee that a school place would be available at that school as it will be dependent on whether the child fulfils the oversubscription criteria and the number of applications the school has received.

In such circumstances the parent/carer must contact the Local Authority's school admissions team to discuss the availability of places at other schools in the Local Authority. Please note however that this still does not guarantee a school place outside of the child's normal age group unless a school has previously agreed to the delay and there is availability.

In addition to the factors stated above, where the school agrees to admit a summer born child into the Reception year after they are five, the parent/carer must withdraw their child's primary application for the year they are eligible to start school. They must then re-apply for a school place in the following year, attaching a copy of the decision letter.

Appealing against the decision to refuse admission outside of the child's normal age group

Parent/carers have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied. However, the right to appeal does **not** apply if the child is offered a place at the school but the place offered is not within the parent/carers preferred age group. If applicant parents disagree with a decision of the school then they can make a complaint on this point using the school's complaints policy.

Appendix A - SUMMER BORN CHILDREN Q & As

In line with legislation, all children can start in reception in the September following their fourth birthday. However, where a child is born between 1 April and 31 August they are classed as summer born children and parents can request that the child starts in reception in the September after their 5th birthday. Please see the Questions and Answers below:

- Q1 When does my child legally have to start school?
A1 A child reaches compulsory school age on the prescribed day following his or her fifth birthday (or on his or her fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August.
- Q2 My child's birthday is between 1st April and 31st August. Is my child classed as summer born and when do they have to legally start school?
A2 Yes, and the date would be the start of the autumn term in September after they are 5.
- Q3 Do I have the right for my child to delay their start in a reception class until the September after he/she is 5?
A3 No, but you do have the right to request this to the school you prefer. However, there is no automatic right for this to be agreed by the school.
- Q4 What happens if the school does not agree to a delayed start in the September after my child is 5?
A4 You should apply in the normal round for admission in the September after your child is 4.
- Q5 If I do this does my child have to start in that September?
A5 No you can request that your child has a deferred start. Once a place has been offered you would not be able to defer entry beyond the academic year (ending 31st July) for which the original application was accepted.
- Q6 What happens if my request to delay is refused and I choose not to let my child start in the reception year before they are 5?
A6 You would have to apply for a year 1 place when your child is 5.
- Q7 Would I be guaranteed a place at my preferred school?
A7 No as all places would have been allocated during the reception application process and those children would still be at the school transferring into year 1. You would be relying on places becoming available.
- Q8 What happens then?
A8 The Admission team for the Local Authority would have to find you a place at the nearest school with a vacancy.

Appendix B – Request for admission outside a child’s normal age group (Summer Born Children)

This form is for parents of children born between 1st April and 31st August wishing to apply for a Year R place outside of their child’s chronological year group.

If your child was born at any other time of the year, they are not eligible to delay admission into Year R for a full academic year, as they will reach compulsory school age during the year of their expected point of entry

Section 1: Child’s details

Surname/family name

First name

Middle name(s)

Gender

Boy

☐

Girl

☐

Date of Birth

/ /

Was your child born prematurely?

Yes

☐

No

☐

If yes, please provide your child’s due date: day _____ / month _____ / year _____

Child’s home address: This must be the child’s permanent home address and where the child benefit eligibility letter is addressed.

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

Town/City

Postcode

Section 2: Parent/Carer's details

1. Title Mr ☐ Mrs ☐ Miss ☐ Ms ☐ Dr. ☐ Other ☐

Surname/family name

First name

Relationship to child

Mother ☐

Father ☐

Step parent ☐

Foster parent ☐

Other ☐

☐

If you have indicated other, please explain what your relationship is to the child:

Home tel no.

Daytime
tel no.

Mobile tel no.

Email

Section 3: Reason(s) for requesting admission outside your child's normal age group

When completing the form, the parent/carers must set out the reason(s) why they are seeking a place

for their child outside his/her normal age group which must be accompanied with relevant evidence that may include:

- The parent/carers' views;
- Recent information about the child's academic, social and emotional development;
- Medical history accompanied with recent medical professional evidence;
- Whether the child may have naturally fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely.

Please attach all relevant supporting documents and continue on a separate sheet(s) if necessary

Reason(s) for request:

Section 5: Declaration and signature of parent/carers

I certify that I have parental responsibility for the child named on this form and that the information is true to the best of my knowledge. I understand and accept that if I have given false or deliberately misleading information on this form and/or any attached supporting papers or withheld any relevant information, the agreement to admit the child outside their normal age group may be withdrawn.

Signature of
parent/carer

Date

Data protection

Information you provide when applying for a school place will be entered into a computerised database. Your information is protected by the Data Protection Act 1998, which ensures it can only be used for defined purposes and may be passed only to specific people. The defined purposes are:

- (i) Administering the admissions process
- (ii) Preventing fraud or other criminal offences or to ensure the safety of a child

The people who may receive the information are:

- a) The school to which the pupil is to be admitted and the Director of Education for The Pioneer Academy
- b) Other admission authorities, in order to ensure they can carry out their role in the coordinated admissions process
- c) Any organisation legitimately investigating allegations of fraud, other criminal offences or child protection
- d) Independent appeals panels should you decide to appeal the offer of a school place

Return your fully completed form with all attachments and supporting documentation to the school office

PLEASE also request the Kent Local Authority Form, which must be returned to Coordinated Admissions, Room 2.20, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone, ME14 1XQ