

Delayed Entry to Reception

Overview

Most children born between 1 September 2019 and 31 August 2020 will be joining Reception in September 2024. However, children do not have to be in full-time education until the term after their fifth birthday. Delayed entry to Reception only applies to those children who are 'summer-born' and whose birthdates fall between 1 April 2020 and 31 August 2020.

Information

1 September 2019 - 31 December 2019

Children born between these dates can start school in September 2024, but they must be receiving full-time education by January 2025, as this is the term after their 5th birthday and when they will be statutory school age.

1 January 2020 - 31 March 2020

Children born between these dates can start school in September 2024 or January 2025, but they must be receiving full-time education by April 2025 as this is the term after their 5th birthday and when they will be statutory school age.

Parents of children born between 1 September 2019 and 31 March 2020 cannot defer entry to full-time education for September 2025.

1 April 2020 - 31 August 2020

Children born between these dates can start school in September 2024, January 2025 or April 2025, but they must be receiving full-time education by September 2025 as this is the term after their 5th birthday and when they will be statutory school age.

The parent/carer of a summer born child may decide that their child should not start school until they are chronologically of Year 1 age (in September 2025). However, any place offered for entry in 2024/25 cannot be deferred to September 2025. The parent/carer would need to re-apply for a place for their child for entry in September 2025 and unless the parent would like their child to enter Year 1, they need to request an Admission Authority's permission for their child to be considered for a place in Reception.

How to make an application for Delayed Entry

Requests should be made to Oxfordshire County Council's Admissions Team by **15 January 2024**, using the form "[Request to delay a school application](#)". Additional evidence can be attached (i.e. medical reports) and this will be considered by the Admissions Authority for the preferred school(s). The form is available on Oxfordshire County Council's public website [Delay reception application | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

How the request to delay an application is considered

Once the form has been received by the Admissions Team, the Admission Authority for each of the school(s) listed will be contacted to ask whether they are willing to accept an 'out of year group' application in the next academic year. All Admission Authorities must consider such a request and the parent must be informed of the outcome of their request. In all cases, the Admissions Authority must take into account the views of the Headteacher of the school concerned.

Factors that may be considered by an Admission Authority are:

- the views of the parent;

- the needs of the child and the possible impact of entering Year 1 without having first attended the Reception class;
- if a child has been born prematurely, the fact that they may have naturally fallen into the lower age group if they had been born on their expected date of birth;
- the extent to which a child's delayed social, emotional or physical development is adversely affecting their readiness for school;
- any relevant research into the outcomes of summer born and premature children;
- where relevant, the child's medical history and the views of a medical professional.

If it is agreed that an application can be processed for Reception for the September following a child's fifth birthday, no weight may be added to the application owing to the application being delayed. Similarly, no Admissions Authority will give a lower priority for admission on the basis that the child is not of the correct age.

If an Admission Authority refuses a parent or carer's request for a child to be considered for admission to Reception a year later than is usual, it is open to the parent to make a complaint using the Admission Authority's formal complaints procedure. All schools have a duty to consider complaints about the school and must have a published complaints procedure in place. Oxfordshire County Council also have a complaints procedure which can be used if the school concerned is a community or voluntary controlled school.

If a child is already of statutory school age and the child's parent requests that the child is admitted to Reception rather than Year 1, there is no right of appeal if a place has been offered in Year 1. If a place is not available in either year group, there would be a right of appeal. However, the appeal would be for the year group that the Admission Authority had decided was the appropriate year group for the child.

School Admissions Code

Paragraphs 2.18 and 2.19 of the 2021 School Admissions Code set out arrangements for parents to request their child's admission outside normal age group and how admission authorities need to reach a decision. Paragraph 2.19 advises that decisions must be made on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child, which means that a 'blanket' decision cannot be made without considering the individual circumstances. The relevant Paragraphs are below:

Admission of children outside their normal age group

2.18 Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. In addition, the parents of a summer born child may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to Reception rather than Year 1. Admission authorities **must** make clear in their admission arrangements the process for requesting admission out of the normal age group.

2.19 Admission authorities **must** make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parent's views; 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; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born. They **must** also take into account the views of the head teacher of the school concerned. When informing a parent of their decision on the year group the child should be admitted to, the admission authority **must** set out clearly the reasons for their decision.

Secondary School Placements

If a child is educated outside of the normal age group whilst in primary school, on applying for a secondary school place, it will be for the Admission Authority of the secondary school to decide whether to admit the child outside of their normal age group. When making this decision, the Admission Authority for the secondary school must make the decisions based on the circumstances of each case. There is no automatic transfer from primary school to secondary school. Further information can be obtained by emailing the School Admissions Team at: admissions.schools@oxfordshire.gov.uk