



Early Years Transition to School

Your guide to Deferring, Offsetting and Summer Born Children

Children must legally begin Full Time Education the term after they turn 5, however all children are entitled to a full time place in Reception the September following their fourth birthday and then will enter into Year 1 the following September.

It is also the general view of the local authority that moving pupils into older or younger year groups is usually not in their best educational, social or emotional interests.

However parents have the right to defer entry into Reception and/or request their child to offset the year they start formal education.

Summer Born Children (Children born between 1 April and 31 August)

Generally children are expected to enter into school with their chronological age group the term after they have turned four. However parents can request that the child offsets the year to enter Reception after the child has turned 5. You would still need to formally request this from the local authority.

Deferring:

This means that you delay the entry that your child starts into Reception, but children will still be expected to enter into year 1 with their chronological age year peer group and the school will still hold this place for your child should you choose to defer.

It is important to note that if you defer a child's entry into Reception, this means they may only have 1 or 2 terms in Reception before transitioning into year 1.

If you wish to defer entry into Reception, you can discuss this with your child's school and they will need to hold this place for your child to start the next term.

You will also need to have this conversation with your current setting to determine if there are spaces available for your child to stay.

The table below sets out when your child must be receiving full-time education.

Children born between	Statutory school age
1 September – 31 December	January
1 January – 31 March	April
1 April - 31 August	September

Please refer to the School Admissions Code; Section 2.16 for the national guidance on Deferring.

Offsetting:

This means that your child starts school in a different year group outside of their normal age range.

In order to offset your child's academic year, you will need to formally request this from the Reading School Admissions Team with evidence as to why you feel this would be in the best interest for your child's educational, social and emotional interests.

It is important to consider what will happen to your child's education at the point of transition to primary school and finishing Education and have these conversations with the school. It is worth noting that a child ceases to be compulsory school age on the last Friday of June in the school year they become 16. This means that if your child is educated out of their normal age group throughout their school life they will no longer be of compulsory school age during the school year in which most children take their GCSE examinations and so they cannot be obliged to attend.

It is also important to remember that where a child has been educated out of their normal age group, the parent will have to request admission out of the normal age group when they transfer to junior or secondary school and the decision made by an admission authority is not binding on any other Admission Authority.

Please refer to the School Admissions Code; Section 2.17 and National Guidance "Advice on the admissions of summer born children" for the national guidance on Offsetting and admission of children outside their normal age group.

You can contact the School Admissions Team to discuss your child's situation and gain advice on 0118 9373777.

What should I do if my Child has Special Educational Needs?

If your child has Special Educational Needs then please discuss with professionals (SENCO, Portage, Speech and Language Therapist, Educational Psychologist etc.) who are supporting your child and may be able to advise you on the advantages and disadvantages of deferring/offsetting and therefore allow you to make an informed decision in the best interests of your child's education.