

# School age

## Starting school

Most children begin primary school at the start of the school year in which they reach school age (5 years old). All schools must provide for the admission of children from the September following their 4th birthday

A school year runs from September to the following August.

## Deferred entry to primary school

You have the right to start your child at school on a full time basis from the September following their 4th birthday, providing they have been allocated a **school place**. While schools are free to suggest a preferred induction process, parents retain the right to formally request that the school provide a full term schedule for their child from the beginning of the school year.

You also have the right to delay your child's start date (known as deferred entry), until later in the school year, but not beyond the beginning of the term after they turn 5 and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year in April. Your child may also start part time later in the school year, but not beyond the beginning of the term after they turn 5.

If you plan to defer your child's start date until later in the school year, you must still apply at the usual time for **primary or infant school places**. You should also speak to the schools you are applying for, to discuss how you would like your child to be admitted.

## Summer-born children

Children born between 1 April and 31 August are sometimes referred to as summer born children. They have the same right to defer entry as any other child. This means they must start school at the beginning of the April term if they wish to keep their offer. Where parents wish for their summer born child to defer entry until the start of Year 1, they must refuse their offered place, which may be offered to a different child, and then reapply through the In Year process during the last month of reception year.

For your child to start reception year in the following September, a full year after they were first entitled to start, you will need agreement from the admissions authority of the school. This is because a new application for a later admissions round would be needed for your child to be considered for a place to be taught outside of their age group and with a younger group of children. The admissions

authority will make its decision taking into account the **school admissions code** and the advice of the headteacher.

To request admission to reception year outside of the normal age group, you should contact the Headteacher of each preferred school as early as possible during the application period for that child's date of birth. This will allow the school and admissions authority enough time to make a decision before the closing date.

You are not expected to provide evidence to support your request to defer your application, but where provided, it must be specific to the child in question. This might include medical or Educational Psychologist reports. There is no legal requirement for this medical or educational evidence to be secured from an appropriate professional, but failure to provide it may impede a school's ability to agree to defer admission.

You are required to complete an application for the normal point of entry at the same time, in case your request is declined. This application can be cancelled if the school agrees to accept your request for deferred entry into reception year the following year.

Deferred applications must be made by **completing a summer born application form (PDF, 394.3 KB)** to the local authority, with written confirmation from each named school attached. Deferred applications will be processed in the same way as all applications in the following admissions round, and offers will be made in accordance with each school's over subscription criteria.

## Year groups

The national curriculum is organised into year groups called **key stages**.

## When your child can finish school

Children must go to school until the last day of the school year in which they turn 16. This is usually the end of school year 11.

Your child is then required to continue in **education or training** until at least their 18th birthday. This could be studying in sixth form, going to college or becoming an apprentice.