

Medway Council protocol for the admission of summer born children

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Please note information in this protocol is correct at the time of publication.
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Background and general information

The School Admissions Code 2014 requires that school admissions authorities (including local authorities) have in place a clear process for the handling of parental requests seeking a place for their child outside of their normal age group.

In addition parents of summer born children may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted outside their normal age group – to Reception rather than Year 1.

This protocol takes account of the School Admissions Code 2014 and the Department for Education guidance on the admissions of summer born children published in December 2014:

- **Definition of ‘summer born’:**
For the purposes of school admissions, the Department for Education defined summer born children as those born between 1 April and 31 August each year.
- **Deferred start**
All schools places are offered for a September start in the relevant academic year.

Once a school place has been offered for Reception year for the start of the relevant academic year, parents/carers have the right to defer entry until later in the same academic year. This is to be discussed and agreed with the school offered.

The offered place can be held open until the agreed deferred start date. No school place can be held beyond the end of the academic year in which it is offered (e.g. delayed start until the following September)

NB: Children must, legally, be in education no later than the term following their fifth birthday

- **Delayed start**
Parents/carers of summer born children have the right to request to be considered for delayed entry into reception year until the following academic year. This would place a child outside of the normal (chronological) year group.

This protocol details Medway Council’s process for the handling of such requests for delayed start by a whole academic year.

Request for delayed admission process

Step One

Parents/carers must contact the relevant admission authority (in the case of Voluntary Aided schools, academies and free schools who are their own admission authority) or the Head Teacher (in the case of Community and Voluntary Controlled schools) for each school they wish to apply for.

Parents/carers must discuss their individual circumstances and reasons for requesting a delayed start with the admissions authority or Head Teacher and obtain their written agreement to the request.

Step Two

Parents/carers should submit an application during the usual admission application period for their child's chronological date of birth, along with a request to delay admission to reception year until the following academic year.

The request should be accompanied the written evidence of agreement from the admission authority or Head Teacher for each preference school.

Step Three

If agreement has been obtained from the relevant admission authority or Head Teacher:

- The delayed admission request will be upheld
- Written confirmation provided to the parent/carer along with an information sheet regarding other factors to consider including:
 - the agreement for delayed admission does not guarantee the child a place at the school
 - the possibility of a future jump of year group at a later stage in the child's educational career, for example at the point of transfer to secondary school
 - implications for selective testing.
- The submitted application (for the chronological year group) will be cancelled
- A new application will have to be made by the parent/carer during the application period for the 'delayed' year group and a copy of the agreement letter must accompany the application.

NB:

a) If the new application names different schools to those who originally provided their agreement, the written evidence of agreement from the admission authority or Head Teacher of each of the new preferred schools named on the application must be provided.

b) If Medway Council is unable to meet parental preference when the application for the 'delayed' year group is processed, a place will be secured in the 'delayed' year group at the nearest appropriate school with a vacancy that is agreeable to accept a child out of normal year group (in line with the statutory duty) following discussions with the Head Teacher of the school.

c) The parent/carer will have the right of appeal to any of the named preferences for the 'delayed' admission that have not been able to offer.

If agreement has not been obtained from the relevant admission authority

- The delayed admission request will not be upheld
- Written confirmation will be provided to the parent/carer
- The application for the chronological year group will be processed.

Important points to note:

- When seeking the agreement of the admission authority or Head Teacher of the preferred schools there is no requirement for parents/carers to provide evidence to support their request, but where provided, it must be specific to the child in question. This might include medical evidence 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 delay admission.
- Parents/carers are required to complete an application for the normal point of entry at the same time as their request, in case it is declined. This application can be cancelled if the deferral request is agreed for entry into reception year the following year.
- Delayed applications must be made in same way as all other applications, with written confirmation from each named school attached. They 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.

Process flowchart

