

**Medway Council**

**Protocol for the**

**Admission of**

**Summer Born Children**

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## Background information

The School Admissions Code 2021 requires admissions authorities have a clear process for the handling of parental requests seeking a place for their child outside of their normal age group.

Parents of summer born children may choose not to send their child to school until up to the September following their fifth birthday (deferred entry) and may request that they are admitted outside their normal age group – to Reception rather than Year 1 (delayed entry).

## Definition of ‘summer born’:

Children as those born between 1 April and 31 August each year.

## Deferred start

All school places are offered for a September start in the relevant academic year e.g. if you apply for entry to Year R in September 2022, you would receive an offer for your child to start Year R in September 2022.   
  
Once a school place has been offered for Year R, parents/carers have the right to defer entry until later in the same academic year. To do this, parents should discuss their request 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).  
  
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 their child delays entry to Year R until the September after they would usually start school. This would place a child outside of their 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.

## Chronological year group

The year group that a child would normally be admitted to based on their date of birth.

## More information

The Department for Education has published more detailed guidance:

* [Advice for schools and local authorities](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/summer-born-children-advice-for-admission-authorities)
* [Advice for parents](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/summer-born-children-school-admission)

## Request for delayed admission process Step One

Parents/carers must contact the Head Teacher for each school they wish to apply for.

Parents/carers must discuss their individual circumstances and reasons for requesting a delayed start with the Head Teacher. Parents must submit their request in writing and obtain a written response from the Head Teacher.

This should be done before the closing date for on-time applications for the year group the child would normally be admitted to. This allows for schools and parents/carers to make decisions ahead of needing to apply for school places, however any requests received after that time must still be considered in the same way.

When seeking the agreement of the 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.

Head teachers must make a decision based on what they believe is in the best interests of the child. More information about the decision-making process can be found in the Department for Education advice (see hyperlinks on page 3).

At points of transition such as junior transfer and secondary transfer, the Local Authority expects schools to allow pupils to continue in their adopted year group if they have been taught in that year group since starting primary/infant school.

## Step Two

Whilst parents/carers are going through step one, they should also apply for school places during the usual admission application period for their child’s chronological date of birth.

This is so that if the Head Teachers do not agree to a delayed entry, a school place would still be allocated for the child’s usual entry year.

## Step Three

*Where agreement is obtained*

If the Head Teacher of the preferred school(s) agree to delayed entry and parent/carers wish to proceed with delayed entry, they must contact School Admissions to cancel their application for their child’s chronological (usual) year group.

A new application must be submitted by the parents/carers for entry to the delayed year group. This must be done during the window where other children starting Year R are also applying. For example:

If your child is usually due to start school in September 2022 but your preferred schools have agreed to allow a delayed entry to September 2023, you must reapply for those schools during the September 2023 admissions window. Any place you are/were offered for September 2022 entry cannot be held for Year R in September 2023.

To apply for schools in the year group that has been approved by Head Teachers, parent/carers will need to request a paper application form from School Admissions during the application window. This must be returned with a copy of the Head Teacher approval letter for each of the schools being applied for.

The delayed entry school application will be processed if School Admissions has confirmation that delayed entry has been approved. The application will be processed in the same way as all other applications for that year group and Medway Council will aim to offer a place at one of the schools named on the application if possible.

If Medway Council is unable to meet parental preference, 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.

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.

*Where agreement is not obtained*

If agreement has not been obtained from the relevant admission authority, the application for the chronological (usual) year group will be processed and the child will be expected to start school in their chronological year group.

## Process flowchart

Parents seek the written agreement of the Head Teacher of each school they wish to apply for. This should be done before the closing date for on-time applications for the year group the child would normally be admitted to.

Parent meanwhile submits an application during the usual admission application period for the child’s date of birth.

If agreement has not been obtained from the relevant Head Teacher – the application for the chronological year group will be processed. The child will be expected to start school during the chronological year group.

If agreement has been obtained from the relevant Head Teacher – delayed admission will be upheld and the application for the chronological year group cancelled.

A new application will have to be made by the parent during the application period for the ‘delayed’ year group and the agreement letter must be provided at that time.

A place will be secured at a named preference, wherever possible.

If a named preference cannot be offered, a place will be secured at the nearest school to home address with a vacant place available.

For those who have been approved delayed entry and a preference cannot be offered, a place will be secured at the nearest school to home address with a vacant place available which also agrees to admit the child outside of their chronological year group. There is no guarantee that another school will agree to this, therefore it is possible at that point that the child would need to be admitted in-year to their chronological year group.

## Implications of delayed entry to school

Any application made for entry to Year R in your child’s chronological (usual) year group will be withdrawn if a request for delayed entry is accepted.

The agreement for delayed admission to does not guarantee a child a place at the school which has agreed to the delayed start. All places are offered according to each school’s oversubscription criteria – for more information about this please visit the Medway Council’s [admissions website](http://www.medway.gov.uk/admissions).

There is no guarantee that a child will be taught in the delayed year group until they are of school leaving age. Throughout primary/infant/junior school, this will be at the discretion of the school your child is attending.

SATs are taken at the end of a Key Stage rather then when a child reaches a particular age. Therefore if a child is educated outside of their usual year group, they will take SATs alongside the other child in the year group they are taught in.

If parents/carers wish for their child to have a delayed entry to secondary school, they must seek agreement from your preferred secondary school(s) in advance of the time they would be applying if their child was in their chronological year group. The reason for this is that if the secondary school(s) do not agree to delay entry, parents/carers will have time to assess options for next steps. This could potentially involve the following:

* A jump of year group from the start of Year 5 to the start of Year 6
* A jump of year group from the end of Year 5 to the start of Year 7

Secondary schools are, however, required to take into account whether a child has been educated outside of their year group throughout primary education. The expectation is that if they have, the secondary school(s) should accept the request for the child to continue in that year group through secondary education.

If parents/carers are considering an application for selective (grammar) schools and would like their child to sit selection tests, please check with the relevant local authority (i.e. Medway Council for the Medway Test, Kent County Council for the Kent Test) that this is going to be possible in advance of registering for the test.