

Guidance from Gloucestershire County Council

Summer born children and their right to defer their entry

In response to the Department for Education (DfE) guidance and the new statutory requirements in the revised School Admissions Code, Gloucestershire County Council has updated its admissions policy to address the options available to parents of summer born children (those born between 1 April and 31 August). This information is designed to explain the options available to parents for their child's starting school arrangements and to answer the frequently asked questions.

When will my child reach statutory school age?

Children must be receiving full-time education by the start of the term following their fifth birthday.

For children born between 1 September and 31 December, they reach compulsory school age on 31 December and must be receiving full-time education at the start of the Spring term (i.e. after the Christmas holidays, in January).

For children born between 1 January and 31 March, they reach compulsory school age on 31 March and must be receiving full-time education by the start of the Summer term (i.e. after the Easter holidays, in March or April)

For children born between 1 April and 31 August, they reach compulsory school age on 31 August and must be receiving full-time education at the start of the new school year (i.e. after the summer holidays, in September).

When do I need to apply for my child's school place?

Date of Birth	To Start	School Standard Application Process
1 Sept 2012 - 31 Aug 2013:	Sept 2017	Nov 2016 - 15 Jan 2017
1 Sept 2013 - 31 Aug 2014:	Sept 2018	Nov 2017 - 15 Jan 2018
1 Sept 2014 - 31 Aug 2015:	Sept 2019	Nov 2018 - 15 Jan 2019
1 Sept 2015 - 31 Aug 2016:	Sept 2020	Nov 2019 - 15 Jan 2020

What options do I have available?

In Gloucestershire, we provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents of non-compulsory school age children (*four year olds*) may request a pattern of part-time attendance or delay if that best suits the needs of their child. Parents will be offered the opportunity for their child to:

- Start Reception in September on a full-time basis from their first day of attendance or on a part-time basis up to the point of reaching compulsory school age;
- Delay the date their child is admitted to the school until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age and not beyond the beginning of the summer term of the school year for which the offer of the school place was made.

And for summer born children (those born between 1 April and 31 August) only:

- Defer their child's entry to school by a whole year until they reach compulsory school age and be admitted to Reception rather than Year 1 with their chronological peers. This means that a summer born child would not start school at all during the academic year after their fourth birthday. Details on the process for seeking approval for deferring a child's admission are provided below.

How do I organise for my summer born child's admission to be deferred for a whole year?

1. Before deciding to defer your child's admission, you should first contact the school(s) you are interested in applying for. They will be able to explain the provision on offer to children in Reception Year, how it is tailored to meet the needs of summer born children and how those needs will continue to be met as the children move up through the school. They may also be able to allay any concerns that you may have about your child's readiness for school.

If you still wish to defer your child's admission to school you must go to Gloucestershire County Council who is the admission authority for Kingsholm School. The application form to request deferred admission to reception year is available to download on their website

www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/schooladmissions/startingprimary . Alternatively if you are unable to access this form please contact Co-ordinated Admissions.

2. In addition to seeking approval at your preferred schools, you should make an application as part of the main admission round for the year group that your child would normally be admitted to school, by the closing date of 15th January, until a decision on your request to defer has been reached.

All information, including any preferences you make, must be submitted by you to the Local Authority during the Standard Application Process dates given in the Guidance booklet and the website www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/schooladmissions .

Each child's circumstances are considered on a case-by-case basis and a decision will be made in the best interests of the child. The Admission Authority is required to seek the views of the head teacher of the school concerned.

3. You will receive a response from Gloucestershire's Co-ordinated Admissions in writing to your request to defer your entry before the 30th January of the offer year, setting out clearly the reasons for the decision.

If your request to defer is approved, you can simply withdraw your application for the normal age group by the 30th January. You will then need to make a new application as part of the main admission round for the following year.

If your request to defer is refused, your application will be considered for the normal year group. You will need to decide whether to accept the offer of a place for the normal age group, or to refuse it and make an in year application for admission to Year 1 for the September following the child's fifth birthday.

Do I need to provide medical evidence or reports from an educational psychologist?

You will already have considered the social and emotional development of your child when considering to defer their entry to school. You may provide evidence in support of your request, such as letters from pre-school, nurseries or other professionals involved with your child if you wish but it is not an essential requirement.

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Will all schools agree to my summer born child deferring for a year?

Not necessarily. One admission authority cannot be required to honour a decision made by another admission authority. It is important therefore that you seek approval to defer your child's admission at *all* of your preferred schools.

Am I guaranteed a place for my summer born child?

Any agreement to defer your child's admission to Reception does not guarantee a place at the preferred school, nor does it provide any additional priority for a place. Your application to the school will be considered alongside all other applications in accordance with the school's published admission criteria. We can however, guarantee that your child will be given a school place. If we cannot offer any of your preferred schools, you will be allocated a Reception place at the nearest school with a vacancy that is willing to accommodate a deferred child.

Can I appeal?

Parents who are refused a place at a school for which they have applied have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel. As the purpose of the appeals process is to consider whether a child should be admitted to a particular school, parents do not have a right of appeal if they have been offered a place and it is not in the year group they would like. However, they may make a complaint about an admission authority's decision not to admit their child outside their normal age group either using the Local Authority's complaints procedure (for Community and Controlled Schools) or the school's complaints procedures for *Academies, Aided, Foundation or Trust Schools*. For schools outside of Gloucestershire, parents need to contact the school directly for information on their complaints procedure

What happens when my summer born child transfers to the next level of schooling (either to junior school or secondary school)?

Ideally, your child will remain with the cohort they have been taught with, but this is not guaranteed: at each point of transfer, your request to defer will be reassessed. Therefore, when your child's natural cohort are applying to transfer to junior or secondary school, you will need to speak to the headteacher of your preferred school(s) to obtain their agreement to continue your child's deferment. If agreed, you would then apply the following academic year (when the other children in your child's class are applying to transfer).

Does deferring my summer born child's admission impact on when my child can leave school?

If your child has been deferred, he/she will no longer be of compulsory school age during Year 11 of secondary school and will therefore be able to leave school before completing examinations.

My child is a summer born child and started in Reception Year this year but is struggling. What should I do?

You must speak to your child's school about your concerns. Together with the school, you may consider schooling on a part-time basis or defer their entry until the Summer Term. As we have already processed your application, you may not apply for a reception place for the following year.

Can I apply for a Reception place for my summer born child twice?

No - We are asking parents to consider very carefully before they request to defer their child. Therefore it is important to note that we can only process an application for a Reception place at a school once.

I'm still not clear, who can I speak to?

Please contact staff within Co-ordinated Administration