



# **Rutland County Council**

## **Guidance for parents considering admission to school for their child out of normal year group - including deferred entry for summer born children September 2024**

In response to Department for Education (DfE) guidance and the statutory requirements of the School Admissions Code, Rutland County Council has produced this document to explain the options available to parents for their child starting primary school and to answer some frequently asked questions.

In general, it is agreed that children should be educated in their normal age group, with the curriculum differentiated as appropriate, and that they should only be educated out of their normal age group in very limited circumstances. The government believes it is usually not in a child's best interests to miss the teaching that takes place during the reception year, and that it should be rare for a child to start school in year 1.

We are very aware that children are individuals and develop and progress differently. Schools in Rutland have a breadth of experience in successfully managing the varying academic, emotional and social requirements of all children regardless of their age.

The Early Years Foundation Stage sets the standards that all early years providers, including reception classes in school, must meet to ensure that the needs of every child are met. The interests and stage of development of every child must be used to plan challenging and enjoyable experiences for children helping them to be ready to start the National Curriculum as they move into Year 1, usually with children of their own age. If parents decide to defer entry, the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile will be completed for that child at the end of the academic year in which the child turns six.

### **1. Compulsory school age**

- a) For children born between 1 September and 31 December, compulsory school age is reached on 31 December and these children must be receiving full-time education at the start of the Spring term (i.e. after the Christmas holidays, in January).
- b) For children born between 1 January and 31 March, compulsory school age is reached on 31 March and these children must be receiving full-time education by the start of the summer term (i.e. after the Easter holidays, in March or April).
- c) For children born between 1 April and 31 August, compulsory school age is reached on 31 August and these children must be receiving full-time education at the start of the new school year (i.e. after the summer holidays, in September).

## 2. Applying for a first-time primary school place

Parents are required to submit a primary school application to the Council where they live by the national closing date of 15 January in the year that their child will be eligible to start school in the September. The following table gives examples of this:

<b>Child's date of birth:</b>	<b>Start school:</b>	<b>Application to be submitted:</b>
1 Sept 2020 – 31 Aug 2021	Sept 2025	From Oct 2024 to 15 Jan 2025
1 Sept 2021 – 31 Aug 2022	Sept 2026	From Oct 2025 to 15 Jan 2026

## 3. Deferred entry options

### a) Deferred entry until later in the academic year

As detailed in paragraph 1 above, a child does not reach compulsory school age until they turn 5 years old. For children who are under compulsory school age, once a school place has been offered and accepted, parents may request that their child's admission to school is deferred until later in the school year but no later than the beginning of the summer term (after the Easter holidays, in March or April).

### b) Deferred entry a year late in the following September

For a child who is summer born (born between 1 April and 31 August), compulsory school age is not reached until the September after their fifth birthday, a full year after they could first have started school. If a parent wishes to defer entry for their summer born child, they can choose for their child to go straight into Year 1 in the September following their fifth birthday (missing the reception year) or they may request that their child is admitted out of their normal age group and start in reception. This would mean that the child would not start school at all during the academic year after their fourth birthday but would join a reception class with children a year younger than them in the following September.

## 4. Deferred entry implications

Admission to school outside a child's normal year group must be considered to be in the best interests of the child. The decision could potentially have long-term effects and it is therefore important to establish the reasons for the request to delay your child starting school.

If you are considering delaying your summer born child's start at school, you should consider the implications of a delayed start to reception class. For example:

- As your child matures, they may realise that their classmates are of a different age, causing adverse emotional impact.
- If your child is educated in the year below their chronological age, they may become more physically and socially mature than their peers.

- Some sporting organisations organise teams based on age. For children who are educated a year behind their normal year group, this may mean that children would be eligible for a different sports team than their classmates and may not be able to participate with them.
- You will have to request deferred entry again when your child moves on to the next phase of education, such as secondary school, and there is no guarantee that your request will be agreed.
- If your child continues to be taught a year behind as they move into secondary education, they will reach school-leaving age before they have completed their Key Stage 4 curriculum and they could leave school without completing formal examinations.

In addition, if you choose to defer entry for your summer born child and decide that they will go straight into Year 1 in the September following their fifth birthday (missing the reception year), this could be difficult for your child as they will be joining an already established year group at a later time, and social circles and friendships will have already started to take shape.

Prior to making a decision about deferring entry for your child, you should discuss your child's situation with relevant professionals, including staff at your preferred schools. These discussions should ideally take place ahead of when you would normally be expected to apply for a place for your child in reception. Don't forget that your child still has lots of time to develop between you thinking of applying for a school place and the point at which they actually start school.

## 5. Deferred entry process

If, after due consideration, you consider that your child's best interests would be met by deferring entry, 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 will also discuss any concerns that you may have about your child's readiness for school.

### Process for deferred entry until later in the academic year

- a) If, after contacting your preferred schools, you wish to request deferred entry for your child until later in the academic year, you must still submit a school application to Rutland County Council by the national closing date of 15 January. However, you will need to include alongside your application your written request to defer entry.
- b) Your child's primary school application will be processed alongside all other applications and a school place will be offered to your child on national offer day.

- c) As a result of your request to defer entry, the primary school place will be held for your child until the first day of the term following your child's fifth birthday. For summer born children, the place will only be held until the end of the academic year.

Process for deferred entry for a summer born child until the following academic year into reception year group (a year behind the child's normal year group)

- a) If, after contacting your preferred schools, you wish to request deferred entry for your child until the September following their fifth birthday, you must still submit a school application to Rutland County Council by the national closing date of 15 January. However, you will need to include alongside your application your written request for deferred entry and any relevant supporting documentation. There is no expectation that you will obtain professional evidence that you do not already have.
- b) When your primary school application and request for deferred entry is received, Rutland County Council will forward your request, along with any supporting documentation, to the admission authority for each of the schools listed on your application.
- c) It is the admission authority of your preferred schools that is responsible for making the decision about whether your child's request for deferred entry is to be agreed. The admission authority for a school can vary, based on the type of school:

Type of school	Admission Authority
Academy	Academy Trust
Voluntary aided school	Governing Body of the school

Details of all Rutland schools and their school type can be found in the Starting Primary School brochure which is available on the admissions website at [www.rutland.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.rutland.gov.uk/admissions)

- d) The admission authority will consider your request, seek the views of the headteacher of the school and then make a decision based on what they feel is in the best interests of your child.
- e) The decision of each of the admission authorities will be sent to Rutland County Council who will then communicate the decisions to you.
- f) If an admission authority agrees to defer entry for your child, you will be asked to confirm in writing that you accept this decision. At the same time, you will be asked to withdraw your application for that school for the current year. You will then have to submit a new application for that school during the following year's admissions round. **It is important to note that for the following year's admissions round you can only apply for schools that agreed to defer entry for your child and that there is no guarantee that your child will receive an offer at these schools.**

g) If an admission authority does not agree to defer entry for your child, you will need to decide:

a. to continue with the application for the normal year group. You can still delay the entry date into school until later in the school year but the place must be taken up by the first day of the summer term.

or

b. withdraw the application for a place in reception year and make an in-year application for admission into Year 1 for the September following the child's fifth birthday. There is no guarantee that a place will be available for the following year in the school of your choice.

#### Process for deferred entry for a summer born child until the following academic year into Year 1

a) If, after contacting your preferred schools, you wish to request deferred entry for your child until the September following their fifth birthday, into Year 1, you must notify Rutland County Council of your intention to do this.

b) There would be no requirement for you to complete a primary school application by the closing date as you will have to wait until later in the academic year to submit an in-year application for a place in Year 1 for the following September.

c) In-year applications are processed by the admission authority of your preferred schools and you are advised to contact your preferred schools to find out when you must submit an in-year application in order for it to be processed for admission in the following September.

d) There is no guarantee that a place will be available for your child in Year 1 at your preferred schools. The year group may have been oversubscribed when children were admitted into the year group in the previous September and all places may have been offered.

#### 6. Moving from one school to another when a child is taught out of normal year group

It is important for parents to consider that if their child needs to move to another school, the new school does not have to continue to educate the child out of their normal year group and a request must be submitted to the new school, alongside the in-year application, requesting deferred entry.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **1. Do I need to provide medical evidence or reports to support my request for deferred entry for my summer born child?**

As a parent you will already have considered the social and emotional development of your child when considering deferring their entry to school. You can provide

evidence in support of your request, such as letters from pre-school, nurseries or other professionals involved with your child but it is not an essential requirement.

**2. Will all admission authorities agree to my summer born child deferring for a year?**

Not necessarily. Each admission authority is responsible for making a decision about its own school(s) and therefore different admission authorities may reach different decisions based on the information provided by you in your request.

**3. How can I complain if I am not happy with the decision made about my request to defer my child's entry to school?**

You can make a complaint about an admission authority's decision not to admit a child out of normal year group by following the school's complaints procedure. For schools outside of Rutland, parents should contact the school direct for information about their complaints procedure.

**4. Am I guaranteed a place for my summer born child the following academic year?**

No. Any agreement to delay your child's admission to reception year does not guarantee a place at the preferred school for the following year, nor does it provide any priority for a place in the following year. You should therefore give careful consideration to requesting deferred entry. If we cannot offer any of your preferred schools, you will be allocated a reception place at the nearest school with a place available that is willing to admit a child requesting a place out of normal year group. If there are no schools willing to accept a child out of normal year group, your child will have to go into Year 1.

**5. If I choose to defer my child's entry into school, am I able to access a Funded Early Education place?**

Your child will be eligible for government-funded childcare until they start school or reach compulsory school age, even if they delay their admission by a year.

**6. Do I need to provide evidence to my childcare provider that deferred entry to school has been agreed for my child?**

No. The local authority does not ask early years providers to seek approval to continue offering early education.

**7. Do I need to provide evidence to Rutland County Council that deferred entry to school has been agreed for my child?**

This depends on where you live and in what area your early years provider is located:

- If you live in Rutland and your early years provider is located in Rutland, you do not have to provide evidence to Rutland County Council. Rutland's school

admissions team will advise Rutland's Education and Childcare Coordinator that deferred entry has been agreed for your child and this will ensure that your early years provider can continue to access the correct funding.

- If you do not live in Rutland but your child attends an early years provider which is located in Rutland, evidence that deferred entry has been agreed for your child will be required to ensure that your early years provider is able to access the correct funding. When your request to defer entry has been agreed and you have written confirmation from your own Council or the school concerned, you should contact Rutland's Education and Childcare Coordinator at [EarlyEducationSupportTeam@rutland.gov.uk](mailto:EarlyEducationSupportTeam@rutland.gov.uk) and provide a copy of the written confirmation of deferred entry.
- If you live in Rutland and your early years provider is located outside of Rutland, evidence that deferred entry has been agreed for your child may be required to ensure that your early years provider is able to access the correct funding. When your request to defer entry has been agreed and you have written confirmation of this from Rutland's school admissions team, you should contact the Early Years Team at the Council where your early years provider is located to ask about, and then respond accordingly to, requested information of your child's deferred entry.

**8. If my child's entry to school is deferred, will access to additional funding streams, such as Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) and Disability Access Funding (DAF) continue?**

Yes. Rutland County Council recognise the impact on children's outcome of additional funding and therefore all funding streams will remain in place until the child reaches compulsory school age.

**9. If my summer born child's entry to primary school is deferred, what happens when they transfer to secondary school?**

Ideally, your child will remain with the cohort they have been taught with, but this is not guaranteed. You must consult with your preferred secondary schools in plenty of time in order to determine if they will consider admitting your child out of year group. We would strongly recommend that you consider this when your child moves on to Key Stage 2 at primary school (Year 3 onwards). When your child's natural cohort is applying to transfer to secondary school, you must still submit an application by the national closing date but alongside your application you will need to submit a written request for your child to continue to be taught out of normal year group. This request will be forwarded to the admission authority of your preferred school and, if agreed, your application for a place at secondary school would be withdrawn and you must submit an application for admission in the following year.

***It is important to note that for the following year's admissions round you can only apply for secondary schools that agreed to defer entry for your child and there is no guarantee that your child will receive an offer at these schools.***

**10. Does deferring my summer born child's admission to school impact on when they can leave school?**

Yes. If your child has been taught out of year group, they 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. However, young people are required to continue in education or training until their 18th birthday.

**11. Does deferring my summer born child's admission to school impact on how long they will receive school transport?**

Local authorities have to arrange free home to school travel for certain children of compulsory school age. If your child gets free travel, it may stop when they reach the end of year 10. The local authority could choose to continue arranging their travel, but they don't have to.

**12. I made an application for a primary school place by the closing date but have since decided I want to apply for deferred entry. What do I do?**

You need to consider very carefully before you request to defer your child's entry to primary school. Your submitted application for school will continue to be processed in the normal way but you must submit a new request for deferred entry which will be considered by the admission authority of your preferred schools alongside your application. Only at the point where deferred entry is agreed will your application for that school be withdrawn and you must submit an application for the following academic year.

**13. My summer born child is currently deferred, but we feel they are catching up. Can they now be moved into their correct chronological year group?**

You should speak to your child's school and, together, consider the options available to your child. There is no automatic right for your child to move into their chronological year group and there is no guarantee that a place will be available in that year group.

**14. My child deferred entry and I now need to move them to another school (in-year admission). Will the other school continue to teach my child out of normal year group?**

School places are generally considered based on a child's normal year group once the child has started school. If you wish to apply for an in-year place out of normal year group, you should provide evidence that your child has previously been educated on a deferred entry basis. The admission authority for the school will consider your application along with any evidence you wish to submit. There is no automatic right for a new admission authority to honour a decision made by another admission authority.



**15. Who can I speak with to discuss my child's deferred entry to school in more detail?**

You can contact Rutland County Council's School Admissions Team:

- Telephone: 01572 722577
- Email: [admissions@rutland.gov.uk](mailto:admissions@rutland.gov.uk)
- Address: Rutland County Council, Catmose, Oakham, Rutland LE15 6HP

You can contact your preferred primary school. Details of Rutland primary schools, along with their contact details, are available on the Admissions website at [www.rutland.gov.uk/admissions](http://www.rutland.gov.uk/admissions)