

DONCASTER COUNCIL

Deferred Entry For The Admission Of Summer Born Children

In December 2014, the Department for Education (DfE) published new guidance regarding the admission of summer born children (those born between 1 April and 31 August). The DfE's guidance is available to view on their [website](#). In response to this guidance and the new statutory requirements in the revised School Admissions Code, Doncaster updated its admission policy to address the options available to parents of summer born children.

Schools Minister Nick Gibb recently announced government plans to amend the School Admissions Code so that summer-born children can begin school after their fifth birthday and be placed into a reception class. A full public consultation will be carried out in due course and reforms will have to be approved by Parliament.

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).

What options do I have available?

In Doncaster, 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 deferment 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;
- defer 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:

- delay their child's entry to school 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 deferred admission are provided below.

How do I make the request?

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, 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 seek approval **from the admission authority of each school** you wish to apply for. The admission authority for each type of school is shown below:

Type of School	Who is the Admission Authority for the School?
Academy	Academy Trust
Community	Local Authority
Foundation	Governing Body
Voluntary Aided	Governing Body

You can find out the school's status on the school admissions page

- Doncaster is the admission authority for all *Community schools* in Doncaster. To request approval to defer admission to any of these schools, you must complete a Request to Defer Admission Form.
- For *Academies, Aided, Foundation or Trust Schools*, you must complete a Request to Defer Admission Form and discuss your request with the school directly.
- For *schools outside of Doncaster*, you will need to contact the individual schools directly to obtain their approval to defer admission.

In addition to seeking approval from the admission authority of your preferred school(s), you are also advised to make an application as part of the main admission round for the year group that your child would normally be admitted to school, until a decision on your request has been reached.

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 headteacher of the school concerned. You will receive a response in writing to your request before the primary national offer date 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. 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, 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 may provide evidence to support of request for deferred admission if you wish but it is not compulsory.

Will all schools agree to my request?

Not necessarily. One admission authority cannot be required to honour a decision made by another admission authority. If you have received approval from Doncaster to defer your child's admission to a community school, the same approval will automatically be applied to any other community school that you wish to name on your application. You must however seek separate approval for academies and aided schools because Doncaster is not the admission authority for these types of establishments.

Am I guaranteed a place?

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 your child's deferred entry. You will have the right of appeal.

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. Further information on appeals can be found on the Council's Website. 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 schools) or the school's complaints procedures (for *Academies or Aided Schools*). For schools outside of Doncaster, parents need to contact the school directly for information on their complaints procedure

What happens when my 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 for deferral 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 admission authority of your preferred school(s) to obtain their agreement to continue your child's deferral. 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 child's admission impact on when my child can leave school?

Yes. 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.

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

Please contact the School Admissions Team or speak to a Doncaster school.