

Summer born children who had a delayed start to reception

If your child is summer born (between 1 April and 31 August) and you were given permission for them to start primary school a year later, you will need to apply again for an out of year group place as they move up to secondary school.

A decision by one admissions authority¹ does not bind another admission authority and this means a new admissions authority could decide that it is in your child's best interests to return to their chronological² year group and so your child would miss a school year.

It is important to make your request for admission out of the chronological age group to **every** school at which you plan to apply for a year 7 place.

The request is separate to whether your child can be offered a place at the school.

You should also consider whether your child is likely to be offered a place at one of these preferred schools, having reviewed the criteria against which places at the school will be allocated when there have been more applications than places available (the oversubscription criteria).

It is possible that your child could be refused a place at a preferred school if there are more applications received than there are places available at the school, and other applicants have met higher oversubscription criteria for that school.

Before you apply, we recommend you

- read this guide carefully
- read the [Department for Education guidance for summer born children](#)
- talk to any professionals involved with your child about your request

¹ The admission authority could be the council or the school itself. See *who makes the decision* below.

² The chronological year group is the one your child would be in based on their date of birth.

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How to apply

When your child is in year 5, you must apply for a year 7 place in your child's chronological year group in case you do not get permission.

You should submit a written request that sets out

- the year group you would like your child to start school in
- why you want your child to start secondary school late
- the impact on your child if they are moved up to their chronological year group and miss year 6
- if you have it, you can attach evidence that supports your request. You are not expected to obtain professional evidence you do not already have.

If you are applying for a year 7 place using the online portal, you should add notes into each school preference to say you have asked for a summer born delayed start.

You also need to send your written request by the national closing date (31 October) to our email address startingsecondary@leeds.gov.uk.

At the end of this guide, we have provided suggested information you may wish to provide to the decision maker.

Who makes the decision

For **community and voluntary controlled** schools, Leeds City Council makes the decision.

Requests submitted by 28 November will be given a decision before national offer day (1 March or next working day). For requests made after 28 November, we will make a decision as soon as possible.

For all **other types of schools** (academies, foundation, voluntary-aided and free schools) the Governing Body or Trust Board will make the decision. These schools may have their own process and timetable for making decisions.

You can find out what type of school your preferences are by checking our [coordination scheme](#).

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How decisions are made

Schools must consider these requests in the same way as the original summer born request but must also take into account the fact the child has been educated in a different year group up until this point.

When making a decision, each school will take into account:

- the legal requirements in paragraph 2.17 to 2.20 of the [School Admissions Code](#).
- the child's best interests
- your views
- the impact on the child's academic, social and emotional development
- the longer-term impact throughout a child's education
- what the school can offer to help the child progress
- the views of the head teacher
- the child's medical history
- the views of any medical professional
- the [Department for Education guidance for summer born children](#)
- whether there are good educational reasons for a child to join their normal age group, otherwise the child should remain with their adopted year group as it is rarely in the best interests of a child to miss a year of school.

It is possible that different schools may come to different conclusions and do so for good reasons. A secondary school may decide that it is in your child's best interests to return to their chronological year group and so your child would miss a school year.

If your request is agreed

This does not mean your child has been, or will be, offered a place in year 7 at that school. It means you can apply for a place at that school the following year alongside all other applicants.

You will need to withdraw the application in the chronological year group and reapply for a year 7 place the following admissions year. You will not be able to apply online via the portal. You will need to

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ask us for a paper form and submit this by 31 October.

If your request is refused

This means your child will miss either year 6 or year 7.

The decision maker will set out their reasons for refusing the request for admission out of age group in writing. You will have to decide between 2 options:

- 1) accept the offer of a place in year 7 in the school year following their child's 11th birthday - meaning your child would progress from year 5 to year 7
- 2) refuse that offer and make an in-year application for your child to be admitted to year 8 in the September following their 12th birthday - meaning they will progress from year 6 to year 8. It is possible that the year 8 class may be full and so may not have space for your child.

Complaints

Parents whose request for admission out of age is refused have no statutory right to appeal the decision as the purpose of the appeals process is to consider whether a child should be admitted to a particular school, not the year group into which they should be admitted.

If you are unhappy with the admission authority's decision to refuse your child a place out of their chronological age group you should complain directly to them, in the first instance.

If you remain unhappy once you have exhausted the admission authority's complaints procedure, you may then refer a complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman, in the case of maintained schools (including community, voluntary controlled, voluntary aided and foundation schools), or the Education and Skills Funding Agency, in the case of an academy.

Important considerations when considering admission out of age group

- there is no legal right to remain educated out of age throughout a child's education

In 2015 the DfE committed to amend the School Admissions Code to automatically allow summer born children to start in reception at the age of

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five at parental request and to remain with that cohort throughout their education. However, in 2023 they confirmed they no longer intend to change the law because the system is working much better than in the past but will keep everything under review.

The law does not provide for a child admitted out of age group to stay with that cohort throughout their education – a decision must be made by the admitting authority each time a child moves to a new school

- if at any time your child needs to change school, you will need to reapply for admission out of chronological age group. A fresh decision will be made by each school. This means your child may miss a year if the school do not agree your child should be admitted out of chronological age
- Headteachers are responsible for deciding how best to educate the children in their school. On occasion, this may include deciding any child should be moved to a different age group. Such decisions should be based on sound educational reasons and made in consultation with the parents.
- there is no expectation that children who were admitted out of their normal age group should be moved to their normal age group. As with other children, they should remain in the age group to which they were admitted unless there are sound educational reasons to do otherwise.
- a child reaches school leaving age on the last Friday of June in the school year they turn 16. A child educated in the age group below their normal age group, will be in year 10 when they reach school leaving age.
- they are required to continue in education or training until the end of the school year in which they turn 18, but need not attend school to fulfil this requirement. They cannot be obliged to attend school during year 11 (in the same way that a child educated in their normal age group could not be required to attend school during year 12 or 13) but the school will continue to receive funding for them if they do.
- a local authority's duty to arrange suitable education (for example by arranging alternative provision) for certain children who would otherwise not receive a suitable education does not apply to children who have reached school leaving age.
- local authorities have a duty to support and encourage young

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people to participate in education or training and should ensure there is sufficient provision available for all young people aged 16 to 19.

- a local authority's duty to arrange free travel to school for eligible children does not apply to children who have reached school leaving age. Authorities may choose to arrange travel for such children, but they are not required to do so.

Suggested information to provide in your written request

- 1) **Child's details** name, date of birth and permanent address
- 2) **Your details** as applicant: name, contact information (email/phone) and your relationship to child
- 3) **Requested year group**

For example: I request my summer born child is given permission to start year 7 in September 2025, not September 2024, as they have been educated one year below throughout their education.

- 4) **Explain why you want your child to start year 7 later.** It may help the decision maker to provide information about:
 - a) Your child's current academic, social and emotional development – your child's primary school may be willing to provide you with a letter in support
 - b) Your child's medical history and views of a medical professional
 - c) When your child started to be educated in a different year group up and why
 - d) The impact on your child if they are moved to their chronological year group, including on their wellbeing
 - e) What additional support your child may need at secondary school, if they were to miss year 6.
 - f) Why you think any support the secondary school can offer may not be enough for your child
 - g) If you have any available, you can attach evidence that supports your request