



## **POLICY FOR DELAYED ADMISSION TO RECEPTION YEAR GROUP**

### **The Policy will apply to requests for summer born children to delay admissions to Reception**

#### **Introduction**

This policy document sets out the process and criteria for considering requests for delay admission to Reception. This policy applies to all pupils with the exception of those holding or undergoing assessment for a statement of special educational needs/Education Health & Care Plan whose parent(s)/carer(s) should contact the Special Educational Needs Team for advice.

Starting school is an exciting time for both parents and children, therefore at Parkfield School we would encourage all parents to start their child at the beginning of the school year in September. 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 statutory 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 statutory 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 statutory 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). These children are often referred to as 'summer born children'.

It is school policy that pupils attending Parkfield School normally be placed with their own age group, and be educated for the majority of the time with their age peer group. Parents do however from time to time seek to delay admission for up to a year after they could start school.

#### **Attending part-time or deferred entry to the same academic year**

Our School Admissions Code requires that we provide for the admission of children in the September following their fourth birthday. Parents can request that their child attends part-time until they reach statutory school age, or that the date their child is admitted to school is deferred until later in the same academic year. In such circumstances, an agreement can be made between parents and the Principal without involvement of any other relevant professional.

- On receipt of such a request in writing by 1<sup>st</sup> May, the Admissions Officer will inform the parent(s) to make an appointment to discuss this with the Principal / Vice Principal for Primary, in the first instance.
- Having met with the Principal / Vice Principal for Primary, those parents who decide that their child should defer must inform the Principal in writing by 1<sup>st</sup> June. The place offered for their child will be held open until the beginning of the term following the fifth birthday and will not be offered to another child.

- Where a parent does not inform the Principal that admission is to be deferred and does not admit the child at the beginning of the September term, the place may be withdrawn and may be offered to another child on the waiting list.

## **Applications for admission outside the normal age group**

Children born between 1 April and 31 August cannot automatically defer admission to Reception until the September after their fifth birthday; entering Reception, instead of Year 1 with their natural cohort. Where parents feel that their 'summer born child's' needs are such that they would benefit from starting school a year later, they must request this using the '*Request to Offset*' form, which can be obtained from their Local Authority.

### **Considering a request to offset**

All requests will be considered by the schools governing body and Local Authority. However, it is our view that wherever possible, children should be educated with their chronological peers. When considering a request for offsetting, the schools governing body will take into relevant factors will include:

- parents' individual case and the needs of the child;
- DfE document '*Advice on the admission of summer born children*';
- any delayed, social emotional or physical development which may be adversely affecting the child's readiness for school (supported by a relevant professional);
- any significant learning or special educational needs (supported by a relevant professional);
- optimising children's learning
- pupil forecasting and sufficiency of early years places
- effective use of resources and public funds

### **Process for consideration of parental requests for 'summer born children' to be admitted to Reception a year later than their chronological age group admission.**

1. On receipt of such a request in writing by 1<sup>st</sup> December, the Admissions Officer will inform the parent(s) that their request is 'out of year' and advise them to make an appointment to discuss this with the Principal / Vice Principal for Primary in the first instance.
2. If, after discussion with the Principal, the parents still wish to pursue an 'out of year' admission, they will be asked to complete and submit a '*Request to Offset*' application form and provide additional supporting evidence.
3. The application form will ask parents to confirm they understand the policy and that they will need to apply for a school place again the following year by the closing date of 15 January. **At no time will they be able to hold offers for their child in two year groups.** Information on the form will confirm that their application for a school place in their chronological age year group will not proceed to an offer of a school place at Parkfield School should their application for delayed admission be approved.
4. If the request for delayed admission is submitted after an offer of a school place in the child's chronological age group has been made, if it is subsequently approved that the child can delay admission the original offer will be withdrawn and offered to the next child on the waiting list.
5. Any application made the following year will not be given special priority over applications for children falling in that year group.
6. The form will also ask for basic information about the child and the following information must be provided:
  - The nature of the request
  - Clear reasons for the request
  - Information from the child's current nursery or pre-school if applicable
  - Assessments provided by the Pre-School Provider or Health Visitor from issues raised at the 2 year old check

7. In addition parents will be asked to provide specific information/documentation which may include:
  - Early Years reports and assessments where this is available
  - Existing professional reports and assessments e.g. educational psychology reports from Local Authority where this is available
  - Health information
8. Parents will be informed of the date that the Panel will meet within 15 school days of receipt of their written request (Application form and supporting evidence).
9. Parents will be informed of the decision of the panel in writing within 5 working days of the meeting.
10. As Parkfield School is its own admitting authority, the final decision on whether to allow delayed entry lies with the Principal and Governing body, however they will take note of The Panel's recommendation when making their decision.
11. The Principal will write out to parents within 5 working days once a final decision has been made.

### **The decision making process**

Where requests for out of year admissions are made a panel will be convened to consider the request. This panel will consist of:

- A senior officer from Admissions (Chair)
- The Principal Educational Psychologist (PEP) (or a representative)
- The Principal of Parkfield School
- An Early Years Advisor (where appropriate)

A member of the Admin support team will minute the meeting

On occasion there may be insufficient evidence for the panel to reach a decision. In this instance the panel may request additional information or a meeting with the parent(s) which may include the child.

### **Criteria for agreement to out of year admissions**

The following list is not final and binding and is an example of the type of information that will be considered by the panel. Meeting one or more of the criteria below is not in itself confirmation of agreement to the request to delay entry. The panel will consider evidence relating to all aspects of the child's development and needs in coming to a decision and this will include the following:

- in the case of children born prematurely, the fact that they may have naturally fallen into the lower age group if they had been born on their expected date of birth;
- whether delayed social, emotional or physical development is adversely affecting their readiness for school;
- relevant research into the outcomes of summer born and premature child.

### **Right of appeal following the decision**

The final decision is made by the panel. The parents will be informed of this decision by the Local Authority. There is no right of appeal if a parent has been offered a place in the school but it is not in the year group they would like.

If the decision is that the child may be offset, the parent will need to apply for a Reception place the following year, however, there is no guarantee that a place will be offered at Parkfield School. Parents can however apply for a place in Year 1. This would be an in-year application, which is to be made no earlier than the half term in June, before the September start.

If a parent is unhappy with the way the local authority has handled their complaint, the parent may then refer their complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman.