



# Deferred & Delayed Entry Guide

2025

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## ○ What is Deferred Entry?

Children are not of compulsory school age until the term following their fifth birthday. Parents can defer the date their child is admitted to school until later in the same school year following their fourth birthday, providing they do not defer beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age, or beyond the start of the final term of that school year.

### Examples

Date of Birth	Due to start school	Could defer entry to
01/09/2020 - 31/12/2020	September 2025	January 2026
01/01/2021 - 31/03/2021	September 2025	April 2026
01/04/2021 - 31/08/2021	September 2025	April 2026

### What do I need to do and when?

Parents must apply for a school place in the normal way at the usual time. At the point that a parent has been offered a school place, they should liaise directly with the school to notify the school that their child's entry to a reception class will be **deferred** until later in the same reception academic year group, when they reach statutory school age. This cannot be beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age, or beyond the start of the final term of that school year.



## ○ What is Delayed Entry for Summer Born Children

Parents of children who are born between 1st April and 31st August may request their child be considered for a place outside of their normal age group, for example, their child might be due to start in Reception in September 2025, but the parent may wish them to start school in Reception in September 2026, so in the year group below their chronological age group. This is known as **Delayed Entry**.

### Examples

Date of Birth	Due to start school	Could request a delayed entry to start in reception
01/04/2021 - 31/08/2021	September 2025	September 2026

### What do I need to consider before making a request for Delayed Entry for my Summer Born Child?

Placement outside a child's chronological 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 starting school.

It is also important to anticipate what will happen when your child would be old enough to transfer to secondary school, to leave statutory education and the timing of any consequent examinations.

## Some points to consider:

- Your preferred school may not have space in the following year to accommodate your child.
- Early years settings may not have a place for your child to remain in the setting.
- You should discuss with your early years setting the implications on your eligibility to receive nursery education funding. The 30 hours entitlement ceases when the child reaches compulsory school age (the term after their fifth birthday.) For more information, visit the following website: [gov.uk/apply-30-hours-free-childcare](https://www.gov.uk/apply-30-hours-free-childcare)
- As your child matures they may realise that the rest of their class are of a different age, causing adverse emotional impact. For example, when they are having their 16th birthday, all their peers will be having their 15th birthday. The social, emotional and educational impact of this should be carefully considered. Parents should consider the impact on friendship groups and peer-to-peer relationships.
- Admission authorities (e.g. academies) will be the decision makers and may decide to decline a Delayed Entry request.
- As the law currently stands, when your child transfers to another school, the admission authority for that school will make the decision on whether to allow them to continue to be educated out of their normal year group. You should 'rehearse' this conversation with the school before making your decision.
- When a parent/carer delays their child's admission to reception at a first or primary school, until the year after their expected admission, a request for Delayed Entry must be submitted before an application for the next phase of education is made. So for example for a high school place, when your child starts year 5, rather than year 6, you must at that point request the Delayed Entry.
- A child applying for a selective school (e.g. grammar school) may be subject to a weighting in their selective test due to being older than other children in their cohort.
- If your child reaches school-leaving age before they have completed their Key Stage 4 curriculum, they may decide to leave school without completing formal examinations.
- The expectation is that they will participate in employment or training up until the age of at least 19. If they wish to continue, their further education beyond the academic year of which they turn 18, there is no guarantee that their education establishment will be able to secure funding for that year.
- Home to school transport for children over 16 is not necessarily free. If school transport is required, this means you may have to contribute towards your child's school transport when they are in Year 11.

## Outcomes for children who have delayed entry:

The Education Endowment Fund has carried out a [review of research](#) that shows a negative impact on development and attainment of children who have been placed below their chronological age group. As your child matures, they may realise that the rest of their class are of a different age, causing adverse emotional impact.

## What do I need to do and when?

- Talk to your child's current early years setting.
- Talk to any services already involved with your child.
- Talk to the head teacher at any of the schools you may wish to consider applying for about your request.
- Complete any necessary documentation for a Delayed Entry request for each admission authority.
- Make your application before the **15 January**, along with your child's chronological age group.

The admission authority of the school must make the decision based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned.

**Please be aware that even if delayed entry is agreed, the normal admission arrangements apply and there is no guarantee of a place.**

## Who makes the decision?

The admission authority for each school must make the decision based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. So, if the school is an academy, free, foundation or voluntary aided school, this will be the Governing Body/Academy Trust. If the school is a community school or a voluntary controlled school, the Local Authority will ask the Head Teacher of the school to use the [Policy on Delayed and Accelerated Transfer](#) to make the assessment.

Every admission authority must have a process for dealing with requests from parents. [You can find the admission arrangements \(policies 2025 to 2026\) for each school here.](#)

## What will schools need to take into account when considering my request?

In the case of a Community or Voluntary Controlled School, the Local Authority will request the head teacher of the school to take account of the following areas when making a decision as to whether or not it is appropriate for the individual child to delay their entry into school and be taught permanently behind their chronological age group.

- The parents views;
- Information about the child's academic, social and emotional development;
- Where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional;
- Whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group had they not been born prematurely; and / or
- Where relevant evidence from specialist (SEND, The Virtual School) agencies supporting the child.

### What happens if my request is successful?

- The admission authority reaching the decision must communicate the outcome to you. If the Local Authority is not the admission authority, they must also receive a copy of the decision.
- The School Admissions application you have made for your child will be withdrawn by School Admissions.
- You will be invited by letter from the Local Authority, the following year to submit an application and provided with an application form to do so.

### What happens if my request is NOT successful?

- The admission authority reaching the decision must communicate the outcome to you. If the Local Authority is not the admission authority, they must also receive a copy of the decision.
- Your School Admissions application will remain open and an offer will be issued to you on the 16th April.
- You can accept the offer of a place for the normal age group, or refuse it and make an in-year application for admission to year 1 for the September following the child's fifth birthday. There is no right to appeal against the decision not to agree to a Delayed Entry request.

## ○ Can I request Delayed Entry if my child is NOT Summer Born?

You **cannot** Delay Entry to school beyond the point your child becomes statutory school age. You could decide to Defer Entry, but not Delay Entry to the next academic year.

### Examples of Deferred Entry

Date of Birth	Due to start school	Could defer entry to
01/09/2020 - 31/12/2020	September 2025	January 2026
01/01/2021 - 31/03/2021	September 2025	April 2026

You may however, seek a place for your child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health.

Admission authorities must make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parent's views; information about the child's academic, social, and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely.

### What do I need to consider?

All of the information already set out in this document is still applicable in cases where you might request a place for your child outside of their normal age group. Please note however that they must be in full time education from the point they become statutory school age.



## ○ What if I believe my child has Special Educational Needs or has an Education Health Care Plan, can I request Delayed Entry?

### My Child does NOT currently have an EHCP

- Where children do not have an EHCP, they should refer to the process above for Summer Born Children. If your child is **NOT** Summer Born you may seek a place for your child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted or talented, or has experienced problems such as ill health. Please note however that they must be in full time education from the point they become statutory school age.

### My Child currently has an EHCP

- The expectation of the SEND Code of Practice (2014) is that the majority of children with special educational needs and disabilities should be met within a mainstream setting.
- Where children have significant and complex needs an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment should be requested. If the assessment process deems that the child needs specialist education provision parent/carers should be aware that special schools will generally NOT agree to place a child out of their chronological year group. Please refer to the [Guidance on Educating Children with an EHC Plan Out of Year Group](#) for full details.

The Local Authority view is that children with EHCP' should be educated in their chronological year group. This is supported by research into repeating a year which in general shows a negative effect in terms of both academic and emotional outcomes. However, where requests are received for children with an EHCP to be educated out of year group, whether by delaying entry to school, if summer born, or by repeating a year.

Such requests require agreement of the Local Authority because this is a change to section F (provision) of the EHCP. As such, each request will be considered on the individual circumstances.

Although the decision is the responsibility of the Local Authority, it will be informed by the views of the young person, parents and professionals. Decisions will be discussed at a multi-agency panel meeting chaired by SEND services. Where the Local Authority agrees that a child should be educated out of year group, this will be recorded as special educational provision in Section F of the EHC Plan.

When a child is educated out of year group, the appropriateness of arrangements must be considered at each Annual Review with a clear recommendation about whether to keep the child out of their usual year group or to return them to their chronological age group.

When the Local Authority does not agree to the request to educate out of year group, the challenge to the decision is via appeal to the First-Tier Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal (SENDIST).

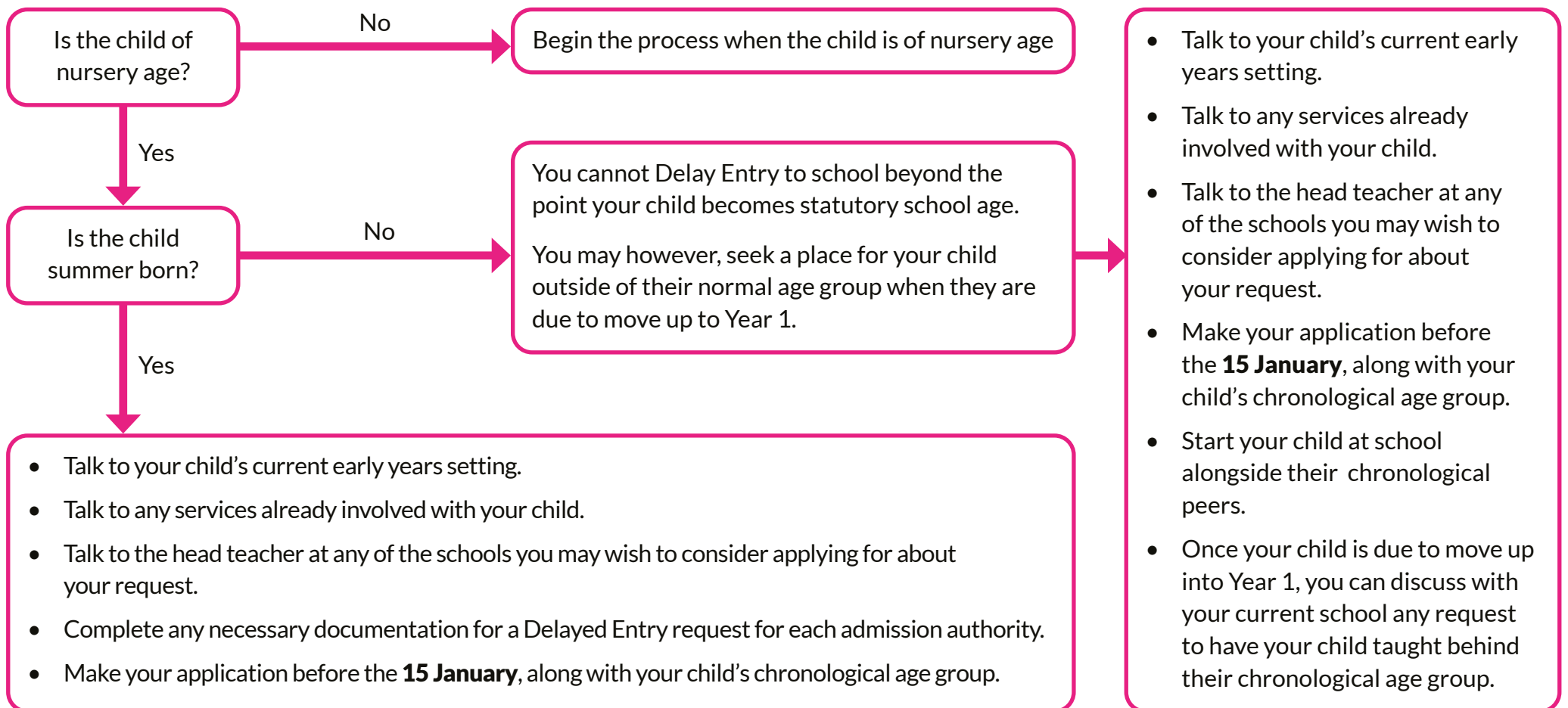
## ○ Deferred and Delayed Entry Flowcharts

### I want my child to start Reception later in the school year

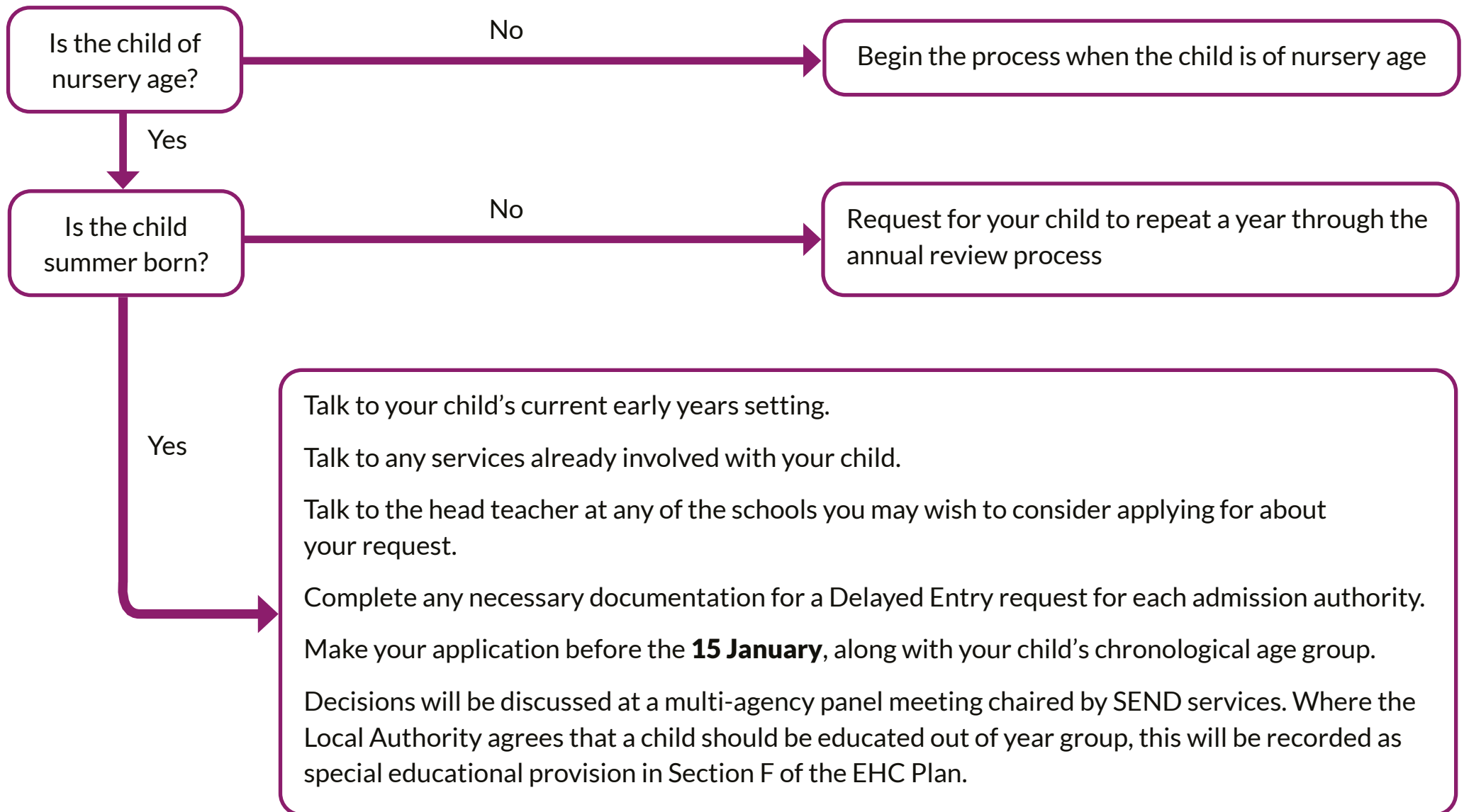
Visit schools in your local area and apply for a Reception place in the usual way in the usual time frame

When you receive an offer of a Reception place, notify the school that your child will be starting later in the academic year (this can be up to the term they turn 5)

### I don't want my child to start Reception this year, I want them to start the year after (delayed entry) when they are 5. My child does not have an Education, Health and Care Plan



## My child has an Education, Health and Care Plan and I don't want my child to start Reception this year, I want them to start the year after (delayed entry) when they are 5



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