

Guidance Note for Parents/Carers - Requests for deferment out of chronological year group – Academic Year 2019/20

By law children must start school from the beginning of the school term after their fifth birthday. In Leeds children normally start at the beginning of the academic year in which they have their fifth birthday. If your child was born between 1 September 2014 and 31 August 2015, he or she is due to start primary school in September 2018.

Delayed entry to school

If your child will not be 5 when they start school and you feel that they are not yet ready to start school, you can request that the start date for your child is delayed until later in the school year. You can also request that your child attends part-time until he/she reaches compulsory school age. If you want your child to start school later in the academic year you should contact the school direct and discuss this with them.

If your child is summer born and will not reach their 5th birthday until the summer term, they can start school in the following September. This would mean however that they start school in year 1 rather than in reception. In such cases, you should apply directly to your preferred school for a Year 1 place.

Deferment out of chronological age group

In exceptional circumstances, you have the right to request that your child starts reception the following year. In such cases children are educated out of their chronological year group. This is not an automatic entitlement and all requests will be considered on their merits, based on the circumstances of each case.

Requests for deferment can have far reaching decisions and therefore all requests are considered very carefully. In line with government guidance, a process has been established to ensure that all requests are considered by a range of professionals so that all the issues can be explored before a decision is reached. This ensures that each case is considered on its merits in an open and transparent manner.

Requests for deferment will take account of: the parents' wishes; information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; whether they had been educated outside their normal year group; and whether, if they were born prematurely, they would have naturally fallen into a lower age group if born at the expected time.

An important part of the decision making is based on the child's education functioning and whether this can be supported in their chronological year group. If it cannot, then evidence needs to be provided which explains why this is the case. The educational benefits of deferment need also to be provided. This should include evidence which describes the support which will be accessed during the coming year and how this will prepare the child to enter reception the following year.

If you wish to make an application, you should complete a Deferment out of Chronological Year Group Form which is available on the Leeds City Council

Website, alternatively a paper form is available from the admissions team on 0113 2224414.

For further information please contact the admissions team on:

E-mail: education.annual.cycle@leeds.gov.uk

Phone: 0113 222 4414

Summary of Application Process

1. Parents with children aged 4 on 31 August 2018 should apply for a Reception place for September 2019. Applications should be made between 1 November 2018 and 15 January 2019.
2. If parents wish to defer entry i.e. to take their child out of their chronological year group, they should also fill in a supplementary form and describe why they wish to make the request. The form should be accompanied by suitable evidence from an early years' professional, health care professional, educational psychologist or educational professional regarding their child's academic, social and emotional development; whether they had been educated outside their normal year group; and whether, if they were born prematurely, they would have naturally fallen into a lower age group if born at the expected time.
3. All schools preferenced (up to 5) will be contacted by an admissions officer, provided with a copy of the request form, and asked for their comments about their ability to manage the child's needs. They will also be asked about their ability to offer other options legally available to the parent, i.e. a start date during the school year, part time- time attendance or education within a school nursery setting for some / all of reception year.
4. Panel members will also receive a copy of the form so they can contact relevant providers and professionals to form their view on the application.
5. Each application for deferment out of chronological year group will be considered on its own merits by a panel of professionals from Children's Services including an educational psychologist, case work officer from statutory assessment and provision, early years' professionals, a headteacher and admissions officer. The headteachers of the schools preferenced will be asked for their views on deferment prior to the meeting and invited to attend. Parents will also be invited to attend the panel meeting.
6. A panel will sit to consider on time requests for deferment in February/March each year. The panel will set out the reasons for their decision. Decisions will be made by the end March to allow time for allocation process to operate.
7. Parents will be advised of the outcome by admissions, who will also advise on the next steps.

8. Where deferment is agreed, the child will be withdrawn from that round and added to the following year's admission round.
9. Where deferment is not agreed, offers will then be made on 16 April 2019. The school offered will then be able to contact the parent to make suitable arrangements for their child.
10. Where applications are received after the normal applications round has closed, requests will be considered by the panel at a meeting during the summer term. Parents will be asked to provide additional information setting out why a late application was made. The HT of the allocated school will be invited to attend the meeting.
11. If a parent is unhappy with the decision they can complain to Leeds City Council at:
Customer relations
PO Box 837
Leeds
LS1 9PZ