

Deferring or Delaying Entry to SUAT Primary / First School Reception Classes *guidance for parents and others with parental responsibility*

In Academies that are in the Staffordshire University Academies Trust decisions on admissions are delegated by the Trust Board to the Local Governing Body of the individual academies.

The PAN for SUAT academies is

**All Saints CE Academy Denstone- 15
All Saints Primary School Bednall - 10
Boney Hay Primary Academy – 30
Charnwood Primary Academy – 30
Church Eaton Primary School, Church Eaton - 15
Dove CEFirst School Rocester - 30
John Wheeldon Primary Academy – 90
Little Aston Primary Academy - 30
Littleton Green Community School – 60
Moorgate Primary Academy – 45
Perton Primary Academy - 60
Staffordshire University Academy – 150
St Augustine’s CE Academy- 15
St Luke’s CE Academy, Endon - 30
Horton St Michaels CE First School- 15
St Edward’s CE Academy Cheddleton – 50
St Leonard’s First School, Dunston - 15
St Peters CE Academy Alton – 13
St Paul’s CE First School Coven - 30
Tynsel Parkes CE Primary Academy - 30**

Two terms are repeatedly used in this guidance:

Deferred admission is where a child starts school later than the normal admission point but joins their own year group. This may be at the start of the spring or summer term in reception or, exceptionally, the following autumn term where they will go straight into Year 1. The start date depends on the date of a child’s 5th birthday.

Delayed admission is where a child starts school a whole year late but joins the following year’s reception class. This is only allowed for children born in the summer term.

Introduction

All children in SUAT Academies have the right to start school in the Autumn Term following their 4th birthday (the **normal admission point**). However, they do not legally have to start school until the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday (**statutory school age**).

a) Deferred admission

Many children are ready for school in the September following their 4th birthday. However, some parents decide to postpone the date when their child starts school until later in the school year (**deferred admission**). If your child was born in the autumn term, between September and December, you can defer their school start to January. If your child was born in the spring term, between January and March, you can defer their start to the spring or summer term. If your child was born in the summer term (i.e. between 1 April and 31 August) they can start in the spring or summer term or you can decide to postpone this date until the following September, when your child is 5. This would mean your child misses the whole reception year and starts in year 1. If you defer entry to Reception while your child is below statutory school age, they will be able to access nursery or pre-school provision.

b) Delayed admission

Alternatively, parents of summer born children can decide to **delay** the start of their child's school education. In this case, your child will start in the reception class in the September following their 5th birthday and will be in a class with children up to a year younger than them.

You have an automatic right to defer entry to school for your child but there is no automatic right to delay entry i.e. for your child to be educated outside of their normal age group. You can request this but the decision to allow a child to delay their entry to reception will be made by the Local Governing Body. SUAT calls its Local Governing Bodies *Local Academy Councils* (LAC).

c) Part-time

You may request for your child to start school part-time for a period or up to the term following their 5th birthday. In SUAT Academies the decision to allow this is up to the school. If your child does attend school part-time and you want them to spend additional hours in a nursery or pre-school setting, these additional hours will **not** be funded. You can pay the cost yourself if you choose.

Procedure for applying for deferred admission

If you are thinking about deferring entry to school for your child until later in the school year (to join the reception class) or the following September (to join year 1), you should first discuss this with the school, your child's nursery, Staffordshire County Council admissions team and any other education or health professionals who may be in a position to advise you. These discussions should focus on the best interests and needs of your child.

You should start this discussion as early as possible so that all the people and organisations that work with your child can take a full part in decision-making and providing support to your child. The school may be willing to adopt a flexible approach where your child's progress can be monitored and reviewed by everyone involved.

You must apply for a reception place for your child through the normal application process run by Staffordshire County Council. This means you should apply between 1 November and 15 January in the school year before your child is due to start school.

Any discussions you have with your preferred school, your child's nursery or pre-school or other professional staff will **not** count as an application. You will still need to complete an application form. You can find out how to do this by looking at Staffordshire County Council's website.

Once you have a reception place for your child, you can defer until the term after your child's 5th birthday or the start of the summer term, whichever is earlier. If you want to defer your child's school start until the following September, and for them to start in Year 1, you will

need to apply for a place for them using the council's In Year application form. You would need to think carefully about why you would want your child to miss the whole reception year and generally this is **not** recommended. If you do decide to do this, please let the school and the Council's admissions team know. You will need to submit the In Year application form in early June for your child to start in September. Please bear in mind there are likely to be very limited places available and **there may well be no place at your preferred school.**

You cannot apply for a place in the reception class and defer it until the following September – it will only be held open until the start of the spring or summer term, depending on when your child reaches the age of 5.

The table below may help to clarify timings for deferred admission:

Child born	Normal date of admission	Deferred admission	Application process
1 Sept – 31 Dec	Autumn term	Spring term	Main round – apply between 1 Nov and 15 Jan
1 Jan – 31 Mar	Autumn term	Spring or summer term	Main round – apply between 1 Nov and 15 Jan
1 April – 31 Aug	Autumn term after 4 th birthday	Spring or summer term	Main round – apply between 1 Nov and 15 Jan
		Autumn term after 5 th birthday, into Year 1 Not recommended	In year application – apply early June for following September

Procedure for applying for delayed admission (summer born children only)

Your child's rate of development may change significantly between the ages of three and four. For this reason, you are advised to apply for a place in the normal admission round for your child's age group, as described above, in case you decide your child is ready to start school at the normal time.

At the same time, you should discuss the possibility of your child starting in Reception a year later than normal with your preferred school, your child's nursery or pre-school, Staffordshire County Council Admissions team and any other education or health professionals who may be in a position to advise you. These discussions should focus on the best interests and needs of your child.

You should start this discussion as early as possible so that all the people and organisations that work with your child can take a full part in decision-making and providing support to your child. If after discussion you decide you would like to go ahead with a request for delayed admission for your child, you will need to put this in writing to your preferred school.

The LAC will then make a decision about whether or not to allow a delayed admission. They will make their decision based on your child's individual circumstances and what is in your child's best interests. They will consider

- your views
- information about the child's academic, social and emotional development
- where relevant, your child's medical history and the views of a medical professional
- whether your child may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely

- the views of the Head teacher of the school.

If you have any medical reports or reports from other specialists, please include them with your request. Please note, failure to gain a place at the school of your choice is **not** a valid reason for requesting delayed entry to reception.

The school will write to you with their decision, giving the reasons for that decision. If at this point you are certain that you want to apply for a delayed place you should notify the **admissions team at the Council** in writing, giving up any reception place that you have been offered so that it can be allocated to another child. If you are uncertain at this stage, you can keep the offered place and defer the start date while you see how your child develops.

If it has been agreed that you can apply for delayed entry for your child, you will then need to **complete a new application form** between 1 November and 15 January the following year. **It is really important that you let the admissions staff at Staffordshire County Council know that you are applying for delayed entry.** You will need to compete for a place in your preferred school(s) with all other applicants with children in the following year group. There is no guarantee that your child will be given a place at your preferred school. If this is the case, your child will be offered a place at the closest school to your address that a) has a space and b) is willing to accept your child into reception i.e. out of year group. This school may be some distance from your home address. If your preferred school(s) can offer your child a place in Year 1 (the correct age group for your child's date of birth) you will have no right of appeal.

You will not be able to both keep a deferred place at a school and receive an offer for delayed entry for the following September so before the allocation day you will need to give up any deferred place if you want a delayed place. If a school agrees to a delayed entry and then you do not complete a new application form, you will not be given a place at the school.

Frequently asked Questions

What factors might a school take in to account when considering my request for my summer born child to be admitted to a reception class in the September following their fifth birthday?

The school will consider a number of factors and the combined impact for your child, including:

- The needs of your child and the possible impact of them entering the year 1 class without having first attended the reception class
- Whether delayed social, emotional or physical development is adversely affecting your child's readiness for school
- Whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if they had not been born prematurely and whether their development has been affected by this
- Any relevant medical history and the views of medical professionals

If my child is educated outside of their normal age group whilst in primary school, what happens when they move to secondary school?

It will be for the secondary school to decide whether to admit your child out of their normal age group. Ideally they will remain with the year group they have been taught with, but this is not guaranteed. The request for your child to continue being educated outside their normal year group will be reassessed at this point. If your child is being educated in the year group below the one for their age you should contact your preferred secondary school(s) at the end

of year 4/start of year 5 and follow the same procedure as above for a request for delayed entry. The application period for transfer to secondary school is 1 September to 31 October to start at secondary school the following September.

What are the rules about part-time attendance at school?

There is no requirement for a school to offer flexible part-time hours in Reception prior to your child attending full-time. It will be for the school to detail the part-time arrangements available to parents. It is recommended that part-time provision will be equivalent to the 15 funded hours per week available at early years' settings. Schools may feel it is appropriate for children to attend for whole morning or afternoon sessions.

Will my child be entitled to early education funding if they continue in a nursery setting until they are 5 years old?

Children can receive up to 15 hours of free nursery education until the end of the term in which they are five.

Is there a guaranteed place for my child?

An agreement by a school to accept delayed entry for your child does not guarantee a place at the preferred school and it does not provide any priority for a place. If there is no place in any of the preferred schools, a place will be allocated in reception in the closest school to your child's home address that will accept the child out of year group. If no school is willing to accept them, they may have to be offered a place in year 1.

If my child is educated out of their normal age group when will they take their SATs?

Children are assessed using SATs when they reach the end of a key stage, not when they reach a particular age.

If my child is educated outside their normal age group, will their primary school lose funding when they reach age 11?

Primary schools are funded for the number of pupils they have on roll, regardless of their age.

What right of appeal do I have?

If you have been refused a place at a school for which you have applied, you will have the right of appeal to an independent appeal panel. The purpose of the appeals process is to consider whether a child should be admitted to a particular school rather than to a particular year group. Therefore, if the school can offer a place in the correct year group for your child's age, you will have no right of appeal. However, you may make a complaint against a school's decision not to admit your child outside their normal age group. This should be done using the SUAT Complaints Policy.

Will a delayed admission impact on when my child can leave school?

No. Students can legally leave school on the last Friday in June in the school year when they reach their 16th birthday i.e. they have to be 16 by the end of August. Therefore, your child can legally leave school before completing their GCSE examinations, although they will be required to continue in some form of education or training until the age of 18.

General Information and Contacts.

Useful links:

Department for Education
Telephone 0870 000 2288
www.education.gov.uk

Office of the Schools Adjudicator
www.education.gov.uk/schoolsadjudicator

School Admissions Code and School Admissions Appeals Code
www.education.gov.uk/schools/adminandfinance/schooladmissions/a00195/c

Staffordshire University Academies Trust

<https://www.suatrust.co.uk/>

School Admissions and Transport Service,
2 Staffordshire Place, Tipping Street, Stafford, ST16 2DH
(01785) 278801
www.staffordshire.gov.uk

Diagram showing process for deferred and delayed admission to school

