**Northumberland County Council Guidance on – requesting admissions out of the normal year group (deferred entry/Summer Born/offset) for Schools and Nursery Settings**

**Admission of Children below Compulsory School Age and Deferred Entry**

Children are entitled to start school full time the September following their fourth birthday. This is when most children start school. However a parent does not have to send their child to school until they reach compulsory school age. A child will reach compulsory school age on the prescribed day following their fifth birthday (or on their fifth birthday if it falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31 December, 31 March and 31 August. Children must receive full time education from this point. For children under compulsory school age, once a school place has been offered and accepted, parents may decide that they would like their child to attend school part-time until later in the school year, or start full time, later in the school year, but not later than the start of the summer term. If you would like your child to attend school part time or start school later in the school year, you must contact the local authority and school following receipt of your offer letter.

**Admission of Children outside their Normal Age Group (Offset)**

A request may be made for a child to be admitted outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. Any such request should be discussed with the head teacher of the school and made in writing to the relevant admissions authority. The admissions authority will make its decision about the request based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child. In addition to taking into account the views of the head teacher who has statutory responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school, the admissions authority will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals.

**Summer Born Children**

The parents of a summer born child, i.e. a child born between 1 April and 31 August can also choose to defer entry as above but they can also request that the child be admitted out of their normal age group, to the reception class in the September following their fifth birthday and that the child will remain in this cohort as they progress through school. Parents who want to make this request should make an application for their child’s normal age group at the usual time. The application to the local authority should include this request. The local authority will liaise with the school and the relevant admission authority will make its decision about the request based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child. In addition to taking into account the views of the head teacher, who has statutory responsibility for the internal organisation, management and control of the school, the relevant admission authority will take into account the views of the parents and of appropriate medical and education professionals. Parents will be informed of the outcome of the request before primary national offer day.

Further guidance can be found below: <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Education/Schools/School-admissions-places-appeals-1/Guide-to-School-Handbooks.aspx>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/summer-born-children-school-admission/summer-born-children-starting-school-advice-for-parents>

**Considerations:**

* Parents should be aware that should they request to defer their child’s starting date to school, their child might be expected to join the year group for their chronological age. Parents should consider the potential impact on their child’s wellbeing, learning and development in this instance should they enter year 1 or join the reception class later than their peers having missed some of the reception year experience.
* Should parents choose to defer their child’s start to school, they should be aware that there is no guarantee that spaces within their preferred school will be available the following year.
* If your child has a special educational or disability, this need does not mean that you should delay their start to school. For many children, an earlier start to school with good transition arrangements in place can actually be the better option to enable children to access the support they need. Teachers are trained to support the needs of all children, including those with SEND. In addition, every school must have a Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) who has additional qualifications specific to supporting the needs of children with SEND. If you feel worried about your child starting school because they may have a special educational need, we can provide guidance and support to ensure that the transition for your child to school is as smooth as possible and that the staff in school have a good understanding of how best to meet your child’s needs in preparation for them joining the school.
* Children who remain in ‘nursery’ provision will only receive 15 hours free entitlement until the term in which they turn 5 (unless they are entitled to the extended entitlement - 30 hours)
* Children in reception are counted at autumn census for payment, therefore schools would not be funded for children who move to Reception in any other term.

**Decision making process:**

1. Parents should contact and visit the school(s) within their locality in the first instance to better understand the curriculum offered in reception and discuss how the provision will be matched to the needs of their child.
2. If parents are considering whether a request for deferred entry/offset would be appropriate, they should discuss this with the school.
3. Parents should contact [earlyyearsteam@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:earlyyearsteam@northumberland.gov.uk) to seek advice around the appropriateness and potential implications for deferred entry/offset requests to support informed decision making based upon their child’s best interests.
4. Once parents are confident that they have gathered sufficient information to be able to make an informed decision, they must contact the Northumberland School Admissions Team.
5. A request for admission out of the normal year group should be completed by the parent and submitted to [schooladmissions@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@northumberland.gov.uk) along with any supporting evidence. If the Council is not the Admissions Authority for the school e.g. Academies, the request will be forwarded to the appropriate body.
6. A decision will be made, and parents/schools will be notified.
   * + Schools who are their own Admissions Authority will decide the outcome with guidance from Northumberland County Council.
     + Schools that fall under Northumberland Council Councils Admission Authority, will be decided by NCC.

**Please note: All requests related to Reception entry will be shared with colleagues in our Early Years Team who might contact you directly for further information or to share relevant advice/guidance**.

**Request for admission out of the normal year group (deferred entry/Offset):**

*Please identify below whether you are requesting for your child to be deferred or offset.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Deferred Entry (non summer born) |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Deferred Entry (Summer born) |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Offset |  |

**Parent/Carer Information:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Parent/Carer Title: |  |
| Parent/Carer Full Name: |  |
| Home Address: |  |
| Email Address: |  |
| Contact Number: |  |

**Child’s Information:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Child’s Full Name: |  |
| Child’s Date of Birth |  |
| Child’s age in months by 1st September |  |

**Please list below any professionals involved:**

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| --- |
|  |

**Who is making the application:**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**Which Early Years setting does the child currently attend?**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**How many hours funded early years education is the child currently eligible for?**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

**Which school have/will you apply for?**

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| --- |
|  |

**Have you been offered a place? (if applicable)**

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| --- |
|  |

**Reason for deferral/offset request (please explain how the child will benefit from deferred entry):**

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| --- |
|  |

**Please include any relevant information you feel supports your request e.g. reports from professionals, outcome of 2 year integrated progress check etc.**

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|  |

**Please indicate any alternative arrangements that you feel would support your child in accessing a reception place at this point:**

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| --- |
|  |

For more information, please contactNorthumberland School Admissions at [schooladmissions@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@northumberland.gov.uk) or **01670 624889**.