

08 October 2015

Dear Parent/Carer

Updated information on the admission of summer born children

Following the Government's recent announcement setting out their intention to carry out a public consultation and amend the School Admissions Code 2014 so that it is easier for families of summer born children to defer their child's Reception place, Southwark is taking this opportunity to confirm its position.

The council is committed to ensuring all children are able to start school when they are ready and for this transition to take place at the right time for each child, this is particularly important for families of summer born children. We acknowledge that parents are usually best placed to make this decision and will endeavour to support families throughout this process.

We expect the Government to confirm any changes to admission arrangements for summer born children by early 2016. However, for the interim we wish to advise Southwark families that every request made to defer admission of a summer born child to Reception at a community school will be considered in the spirit of the announcement.

The information below must be read in conjunction with admissions policy information on our website which can be found at: http://www.southwark.gov.uk/info/200289/primary_school_admissions

The key points for families to note are:

Children born between 01.04.11 and 31.08.11 currently attending Reception or due to start Reception in the 2015/16 academic year

- If your summer born child is currently attending school in the Reception year, you can defer his/her school place until later in the 2015/16 academic year. However, you cannot defer your child's Reception place beyond the academic year for which the original application was accepted.
- Alternatively, you may withdraw your child from Reception (or give up a deferred place you are holding) and still be able to apply for a Reception place for the academic year starting September 2016. You must apply for a Reception place using a paper primary school application form along with a 'Request to defer' form. Your application for a Reception place will be considered on an equal

School admissions team, Children's and Adults Services, 160 Tooley Street, London SE1P 5LX

Website: www.southwark.gov.uk/schooladmissions

Chief executive: Eleanor Kelly

footing with all other applicants as long as it is submitted on time by 15 January 2016. Should you wish to do this we would urge you to speak to your child's school as soon as possible with a view to terminating their 2015/16 place so as to minimise disruption for your child and their school.

- You also have the option to complete an 'in-year' application for a Year 1 place starting September 2016 if this is your preference.

Children born between 01.04.12 and 31.08.12 currently applying to start Reception in the 2016/17 academic year

- We strongly advise you to apply for a Reception place online by 15 January 2016 for the academic year starting September 2016 alongside a "Request to defer" form if you would like your child to start Reception in September 2017. This is so that we can assist you as early on as possible.

Once offered a place for September 2016, you may choose to:

- i) accept a place and for your child to start Reception in September 2016; or
 - ii) defer the Reception place to later in the 2016/17 academic year; or
 - iii) turn down the place and not send your child to Reception during the 2016/17 academic year.
- If you have rejected your 2016 Reception place, you will be able to apply for a Reception place starting September 2017 when applications open next Autumn using a paper primary school application form. Your application for Reception 2017 will be treated on an equal footing with all other applicants as long as it is submitted on time by 15 January 2017.
 - As is the case at the moment, you will be able to complete an 'in-year' application for a Year 1 place starting September 2017 if this is your preference.

We will be working with our maintained nurseries to ensure that summer born children who are currently attending nursery are able to continue receiving their 'free hours' in their existing setting until they transfer to Reception class.

It is important to note that non community schools (academies, voluntary aided, foundation and free schools) are their own admissions authorities but we coordinate the applications for all schools. Our assumption will be that all Southwark schools will work together on our approach to summer born children.

It is also important to note that, for those parents and carers who are Southwark residents but who are considering applying for schools in other London boroughs, you must check with the relevant local authority how they will be dealing with applications during this interim period.

We expect any changes to admissions arrangements confirmed by the Government to include guidance for secondary schools. Our expectation would be that no summer born child will be expected to move cohort at either primary or secondary school.

As we are responding to potential changes in guidance part-way through the 2016 admissions process please bear with us, we want to work with you to make this process as smooth as possible.

If you are having any problems or wish to discuss, please contact Rizwana Natha either by email at rizwana.natha@southwark.gov.uk or by telephone on 020 7525 0245.

Southwark School Admissions Team