

Policy on Delayed and Accelerated Transfer - Placement of pupils out of their chronological age group including Summer Born children starting school

Note: For **deferred entry** i.e. a child's entry to reception class being deferred until later in the same academic reception year group, please refer to the "Information for Parents Book":

<https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/admissionsguides>

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1. Policy Statement

The County Council:

- 1.1. expects the provision of an inclusive personalised curriculum in the belief that all schools should provide this for all pupils and students;
- 1.2. expects that pupils should be taught within their chronological year group and that consideration will be given to accelerating or delaying the entry or transfer of a pupil or student based on each individual's circumstances.

Where children have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans, settings should refer to the policy guidance document 'Guidance on Educating Children with an EHC Plan Out of Year Group in Mainstream Schools at the following link: <https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/transferpolicy>

This policy document is intended to provide best practice guidance to support parents/carers, colleagues in schools and colleagues within the Local Authority (LA) and commissioned services, in making appropriate and consistent decisions about pupil entry or transfer for children currently **not** in receipt of an EHC Plan..

Parents/carers must be made aware that even if delayed or accelerated entry is agreed, the normal admission arrangements apply and there is no guarantee of a place. Parents/carers should be made aware of this fact in advance of requesting delayed or accelerated entry and transfer.

2. Reasons frequently cited for placing pupils outside their chronological age group

The rationale for wishing to place pupils in a year group other than their chronological age group tends to be as follows:

- (i) the pupil has exceptional intellectual skills and is isolated as a learner in their present peer group which presents significant challenges for teachers in terms of providing appropriate curriculum extension;
- (ii) the pupil has significant cognition and learning difficulties and cannot productively engage in group learning tasks which presents teachers with significant challenges in providing an accessible and appropriately differentiated curriculum
- (iii) often in association with (ii) the pupil is significantly delayed in their social and emotional development and is unable to establish adequate relationships with their peer group and is at risk of isolation;
- (iv) a child or young person may have experienced adverse childhood experiences which has led to some form of trauma and attachment needs (Children Looked After or Previously Looked After);
- (v) a child or young person may have missed a substantial part of an academic year due to a medical condition, pregnancy or other exceptional reasons;
- (vi) reasons associated with a child's physical condition: physical frailty which appears to justify a "less structured" environment than that found in the same age group;
- (vii) By law, parents of Summer Born children (children born between 1st April to 31st August) are able to request that their child delay entry to the reception class in the September after their fifth birthday, effectively in the year group below their chronological age group.

These reasons are frequently allied with strong parental preferences for their child to be placed in an alternative year group.

3. Definitions

- 3.1. **Accelerated transfer**, involves a decision to place a pupil into an older year group than that of his or her age-group peers.
- 3.2. **Delayed entry and transfer**, involves a decision to keep or place a pupil in a younger year group than that of his or her age-group peers.
- 3.3. **Summer Born children** are those that are born between 1st April and 31st August.

4. Principles of our Inclusive Philosophy

- 4.1. We believe inclusive schools focus on the learning needs and social, emotional wellbeing of individual pupils, targeting support and differentiating curricular provision to ensure appropriate challenge at all levels. In these schools effective teaching and learning focuses on individual children, their strengths and interests, their needs, and the approaches that engage, motivate and inspire them.
- 4.2. The LA's Education Inclusion Policy (2010) addresses questions of inclusion, accessibility and equality of opportunity. Where the principles of inclusion could be best achieved for an individual pupil by applying accelerated or delayed entry or transfer, the option should be considered.
- 4.3. Mixed age class teaching is a form of class organisation that is common in a number of first and primary schools when children of different age groups are taught together. In the secondary phase, schools will often provide a range of flexible curriculum opportunities where students are taught with older or younger pupils. In these circumstances appropriate curriculum provision is planned and delivered by the teacher. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure parents/carers are clear about the reasons for this type of school organisation and that no assumptions are inferred with regard to accelerated or delayed entry or transfer.
- 4.4. Accelerated or delayed entry or transfer should be considered in the most exceptional circumstances and/or when requested to do so. The decision relating to entry or transfer should be reached on a case-by-case basis in line with the guidance in this Policy.
- 4.5. Transfer to an older or younger year group should generally take place at the start of an academic year. However, requests for in-year transfer must also be considered.

5. Accelerated Transfer

The following points take into account the learners needs: Cognitive, Social/Emotional, Physical:

- 5.1. It would be wrong to assume that the only way (or the best way) of satisfying the intellectual demands of significantly more able children and young people is through linear progression.
- 5.2. Conceptual match is not necessarily achieved by acceleration to the next year group but through the appropriate level of pitch and challenge to enable breadth and depth of learning
- 5.3. Acceleration does not *guarantee* an appropriate curriculum experience. Issues of differentiation, challenge, level and pace still need to be addressed.
- 5.4. It should be possible for all teachers to teach beyond a given syllabus/programme of study.
- 5.5. A pupil being considered for accelerated transfer must demonstrate a level of physical and emotional maturity commensurate with the year group to which it is proposed to transfer him or her.
- 5.6. There should be demonstrable factors indicating detriment to the pupil if retained within his or her current group, both educational, social and emotional.
- 5.7. The educational, social and emotional benefits of the pupil moving to a higher year group must be anticipated and carefully considered.
- 5.8. The implications for the pupil of reaching the end of statutory schooling prior to reaching statutory participation age should also be considered. Refer to **Appendix 2** for further information.

Procedures

- 5.9. Account should be taken of relevant and accessible guidance. For example, from the National Association for Able Children in Education (NACE).
- 5.10. Advice must be sought by the Headteacher from the relevant professionals (e.g. School Improvement Adviser, Educational Psychologist, etc.) as to the suitability of accelerated transfer for the pupil and the school must sufficiently demonstrate that other options have been considered to meet the pupil's needs.
- 5.11. The views of the pupil, parents/carers and appropriate professional(s) must be sought and considered in the light of the pupil's academic, social and emotional development.
- 5.12. Careful liaison with a next phase school(s) is vital, particularly when accelerated transfer is being considered at, or close to, the point of phase transition.
- 5.13. Based on the range of evidence gathered, the Headteacher should then make the final decision of whether or not to accelerate a pupil. A record of the advice received and the final decision should be kept [For ease of reference a suggested Recording Sheet is shown as Appendix 1] and placed on the child or young person's file.
- 5.14. The Headteacher must then inform the parents appropriately and return a copy of the completed Recording Sheet (Appendix 1) to the School Admissions Team at WCF.

6. Delayed Entry or Transfer (including summer born children starting school placed out of their chronological year group)

The following points take into account the learners needs: Cognitive, Social/Emotional, Physical:

- 6.1. It would be wrong to assume that the only way (or the best way) of meeting the additional learning needs of pupils with special educational needs is through keeping the pupil in a younger year group than that of his or her age-group peers.
- 6.2. It should be possible for all schools to successfully include a pupil with special educational needs in the mainstream classroom, taking into account guidance from the SEN Code of Practice (2015); the National Curriculum Inclusion statement (2014); DfE Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (2017) the Local Authorities "The SEND Graduated Response within Worcestershire" and advice from relevant external agencies.
- 6.3. It would be wrong to assume that the only way (or the best way) of meeting the needs of summer born children starting school with social/emotional immaturity or a developmental delay is through keeping the pupil in a younger year group than that of his or her age-group peers.
- 6.4. It should be possible for all schools to successfully include a summer born child starting school with social/emotional immaturity or a developmental delay in the mainstream classroom, taking into account guidance from DfE Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (2017); the Local Authorities "The SEND Graduated Response within Worcestershire" DfE Advice on the admission of summer born children (2014) and advice from relevant external agencies.
- 6.5. By law, parents/carers can request that their child enter the reception class in the September after their fifth birthday, effectively in the year group below their chronological age group, delayed entry. The admissions authority of the school must make the decision based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. In the case of a Community or Voluntary Controlled School the Local Authority will request the Headteacher of the school to take 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; whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely in order to reach 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 reasons for the decision must be clearly set out. Refer to **Appendix 2** for further information.
- 6.6. Delayed entry or transfer does not *guarantee* an appropriate curriculum experience. Issues of differentiation, challenge level and pace still need to be addressed.
- 6.7. A pupil being considered for delayed entry or transfer must demonstrate a level of physical, social and emotional maturity commensurate with the year group to which it is proposed to include him or her.
- 6.8. There should be demonstrable factors indicating detriment to the pupil if retained within his or her current group, both educational, social and emotional.

- 6.9. The educational, social and emotional benefits of the pupil moving to a lower year group must be anticipated and carefully considered.
- 6.10. The implications for the pupil of reaching the end of statutory schooling after reaching statutory participation age should also be considered. **Parents/carers and Headteachers of First or Primary schools must take into consideration that Middle and Secondary schools are under no obligation to honour the delay when children transfer to their next school.** Refer to **Appendix 2** for further information.

Procedures:

- 6.11. Account must be taken of all relevant guidance including the School's Admissions Code; the LA's Educational Inclusion Policy (2010); the SEN Code of Practice (2015); The Local Authorities "The SEND Graduated Response within Worcestershire"; DfE Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage (2017); DfE Advice on the admission of summer born children (2016).
- 6.12. Advice must be sought by the Headteacher from the relevant professionals (e.g. School Improvement Adviser, Educational Psychologist, Health Care professionals; Early Years Inclusion Team; WCC SEN Services; the Virtual School for Children Looked After and Previously Looked After Children, professionals associated with Pre-School Forum etc.) as to the suitability of delayed entry or transfer for the pupil and the school must sufficiently demonstrate that other options have been considered in meeting the pupil's needs.
- 6.13. The views of the pupil, parents/carers, and appropriate professional(s) must be sought and considered in the light of the pupil's academic, social and emotional development.
- 6.14. Careful liaison with a next phase school(s) is vital, particularly when delayed transfer is being considered at, or close to, the point of phase transition.
- 6.15. Based on the range of evidence gathered, the Headteacher should then make the final decision of whether or not to delay a pupil's entry or transfer. A record of the advice received and the final decision should be kept [For ease of reference a suggested Recording Sheet is shown as Appendix 1] and placed in the child or young person's file.
- 6.16. The Headteacher must then inform the parents appropriately and return a copy of the completed Recording Sheet to the School Admissions Team at Worcestershire Children First.

Appendix 1 - Recording Sheet

DELAYED OR ACCELERATED TRANSFER

(i.e. placed outside their chronological age group)

To be read in conjunction with the Local Authority's Policy on Delayed and Accelerated Transfer

School _____

School Contact _____

Pupil's Name _____ D.O.B. _____

Current School Year Group _____

1. Reasons for considering placing this pupil outside his/her chronological age group:

(✓ please tick all the relevant statements below)

- (i) the pupil has exceptional intellectual skills and is isolated as a learner in their present peer group which presents significant challenges for teachers in terms of providing appropriate curriculum extension;
- (ii) the pupil has significant cognition and learning difficulties and cannot productively engage in group learning tasks which presents teachers with significant challenges in providing an appropriately differentiated and accessible curriculum
- (iii) often in association with (ii) the pupil is significantly delayed in their social and emotional development and is unable to establish adequate relationships with their peer group and is at risk of isolation;
 - a. a child or young person may have experienced adverse childhood experiences which has led to some form of trauma and attachment needs (Children Looked After or Previously Looked After);
- (iv) a child or young person may have missed a substantial part of an academic year due to a medical condition, pregnancy or other exceptional reasons;
- (v) reasons associated with a child's physical condition: physical frailty which appears to justify a "less structured" environment than that found in the same age group;
- (vi) By law, parents of Summer Born children (born between 1st April to 31st August) are able to request that their child delay entry to the reception class in the September after their fifth birthday, effectively in the year group below their chronological age group.

2. **When did this situation first come to the school's attention and how long has this been an issue?** *(Include here any information from previous schools or settings including the involvement of external agencies - please attach relevant paperwork)*

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3. Describe the current situation and reason for consideration of a change of year group. This should include strategies which have already been employed within the school for meeting this pupil’s needs within their chronological year group.

4. Summarise the advice received from all relevant professionals in the boxes below. (See Policy on Delayed and Accelerated Transfer: Procedures 5.10 and 6.12)

Name..... Role..... Date.....

Name..... Role..... Date.....

Name..... Role..... Date.....

5. Summarise the views of the pupil and his/her parents/carers.

Pupil's view

Date.....

Summary:

Parent information

Parents name/s:

.....

Parents address:

.....

Parents'/carers' view:

Summary:

Parents' signature

Date:.....

Final Outcome/Decision **Agreed** ☐

Declined ☐

Headteacher's signature _____ **Date**_____

Please return a copy of this completed form to:

School Admissions via the Children's Services Portal:

https://capublic.worcestershire.gov.uk/ChS_Theme/NoPermission.aspx

or

School Admissions,
Worcestershire Children First
County Hall,
Spetchley Road,
Worcester,
WR5 2NP

Appendix 2 – Delayed Entry into School – Impact, criteria and process

(Involves a decision to keep or place a pupil in a younger year group than that of his or her age-group peers.)

Understanding the impact of delaying entry into school:

If the child does not qualify for the 30 hours of extended Nursery Education Funding, then the child will only be able to access 15 hours of Nursery Education Funding in their delayed year. When a child enters a school reception class they attend for 30 hours. By opting to delay, parents are agreeing to continue with only 15 hours of early education where children predominantly learn through play.

If a child does qualify for the 30 hours entitlement, the additional hours will only be awarded to children with a corresponding 30 hours code and the subsequent eligible time-period. Parents should be aware that the 30 hours ceases when the child reaches compulsory school age (the term after their fifth birthday.) At this point, the child will only be able to access 15 NEF hours (including the attached inclusion supplement). For more information, visit the following website: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-30-hours-free-childcare>

If a child is eligible for the Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) Worcestershire County Council will consider continuing this funding on a case-by-case basis.

The child **will not be taught** with their peer group, and all children in their class will be one chronological year younger than the delayed transfer child. E.g., 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 of the physical size of the child in relation to their peers, along with any impact on friendship groups and peer-to-peer relationships.

A young person will also be able to exit school education without completing their courses of study when they cease to be of statutory school age (16). 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 18th the education establishment will need to contact the School Funding Council to ensure funding is secured. (Please see further guidance in Appendix 3:6.)

For each new school placement (First / Primary, Middle and High / Secondary) the Admissions Authority for the school, taking into account the opinion of the head of the school, will be required to agree to the child being placed in the year below. Parents should bear in mind that the agreement to delay entry has been made with a specific educational setting and there is no guarantee that this decision will be honoured by other educational settings (e.g. middle or high schools) when children transfer to their next school. Parents and Headteachers should consider the social, emotional and educational impact should this situation occur.

In the case of Community and Voluntary Controlled schools, the Local Authority is the Admission Authority and any decision made for this type of school will apply to all Community and Voluntary Controlled schools within the same educational setting. Academy, Voluntary Aided, Foundation and Free schools are own Admission Authority schools and can, if required make their own decision. There is no guarantee that the decision will be honoured by all other admission authorities

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

For children with SEND:

If your child is known to the Pre School Forum their specific learning needs will be considered prior to entry. Decisions will take into account the child's individual and specific needs; to ascertain the level of support they will require on entry into school.

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 the Pre School Forum will consider whether an Integrated Needs Assessment for an Education Health Care Plan is required. 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.

Please note: if the child attends an Early Years Provision outside of Worcestershire, the Nursery Education Funding will cease the term after they turn five. Parents will therefore be required to pay for any remaining Early Years educational sessions until their child starts school.

Does the child meet the following criteria for **summer born children**?

1. The child has a birthdate which falls within the summer term: 1st April to 31st August
2. The parents/carers have given careful consideration to the impact of delaying the child's entry into school

AND / OR

Does the **child with SEND** meet the following criteria (and has the support of the Pre-School Forum)?

1. The child has exceptionally delayed development and cannot productively engage in group learning tasks and present teachers with severe difficulties in curriculum differentiation
2. Is the child very delayed emotionally and cannot make adequate relationships with their peer group and is at risk of isolation?
3. There is a reasonable expectation that the child will catch up developmentally with their peers during the delayed year.

Process for applying for Delayed Entry into School

Step 1:

Parent/carers can request that their child enter the reception class in the September after their fifth birthday, effectively in the year group below their chronological age group. This is known as delayed entry.

Step 2:

Parent/carers should discuss their request with the head teacher of the school that they wish to apply for, in the first instance. The head teacher of the school must make the decision based on the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child **concerned**.

Step 3:

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 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;
- whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group;
- 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.

Step 4:

Please note that **Academies, Free Schools, Voluntary Aided Schools** are required to comply with the legislation when determining their own admissions processes.

Step 5:

This process must be completed in advance of the closing date of 15th January prior to the child's usual start date. For more information on the time frames please follow link: <http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schooladmissions>

Step 6: Delayed entry is AGREED (if denied please go to step 9)

Delayed entry **agreed** by the Head Teacher and Schools Admissions Authority

Step 7:

The Delayed Transfer Recording Sheet (Appendix 1) is to be completed and copied to WCF Schools Admissions, and parents are informed by the head teacher that the Delayed Transfer has been agreed.

Step 8:

Parent/carers will receive details of how to proceed with an application for the following year.

Contact: WCF School Admissions Department on: 01905 843111 or via email: schooladmissions@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk

Step 9: delayed entry is DENIED

Delayed entry is **declined** by the Schools Admissions Authority and Head

Step 10:

Parent/carers will need to make an application in time for the chronological reception intake. Please refer to the relevant Information for Parents Booklet:

<https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/admissionsguides>

Appendix 3 – Reference Documents

1	School Admissions – Information for Parents Book	https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/admissionsguides
2	Guidance on Educating Children with an EHC Plan Out of Year Group	https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/transferpolicy
3	WCF Education Inclusion	https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/worcestershire-children-first-education-services/support-services/inclusion-educational-settings
4	DfE SEN Code of Practice (2015) – Schools and Early Years	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25
5	Local Inclusion Fund - Ordinarily Available in Early Years Settings	http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/WCFEducationServices/info/31/early-years-inclusion
6	WCC – The SEND Graduated Response within Worcestershire	http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/graduateresponse
7	DfE Advice on the admission of summer born children	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/921254/Guidance_for_admissions_authorities_September_2020.pdf
8	Further advice and guidance on funding arrangements for Post 19 Education	https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/transferpolicy