

Deferred Admission Late Transfer to Secondary School

This information sheet offers advice and guidance to parents who are considering making a request to delay the transfer of their child to secondary school by a year. It sets out the Cambridgeshire County Council's policy and procedure for responding to such a request.

In general, the policy of Cambridgeshire County Council is not to delay the transfer of children from primary to secondary phase. However, in accordance with the *Schools Admissions Code* all requests will be considered on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child, taking account of the pupil's educational and social progress. Decisions will be based on a judgement of what is best for the pupil both now and in the long-term. Possible immediate gains need to be weighed against a range of difficulties including those related to SATs, transition planning, school leaving age and loss of peer group.

If your child has a statement of special educational needs or Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) the appropriateness of whether or not to defer transfer to secondary phase will be considered through the Annual Review process, in conjunction with the Statutory Assessment and Resources Team (START). You can contact START on 01480 372600 or Statutory.Assessment&ResourcesTeam@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Issues to consider

Even if their birthday falls within the last few months of the school year, pupils with significantly delayed attainment and development should not automatically be considered for deferred transfer, as their needs can normally be met through differentiation and appropriate levels of support either from the school and/or through Local Authority (LA) provision where appropriate.

Deferred transfer should only be considered when both the parents and the professionals involved are of the opinion that the needs of the pupil cannot be best met within his or her age group even with appropriate levels of differentiation and support.

The key test questions are these:

Do all professionals involved, and the child's parents, think that in a lower year group the child:

- would make significant progress; and
- would be able to maintain a better position academically within the class; and
- would cope with curricular demands with no, or much less, differentiation and support; and
- would be more closely matched in terms of physical and emotional maturity to the other children?

If the answer to the above questions is 'yes' then deferral could be valuable and would be considered.

However, if it appears that the answer is 'no' or there is doubt or the pupil may have longer term special educational needs, then it would normally be more appropriate for him or her to transfer with his/her peer group with the appropriate levels of support.

Where a pupil has had a significant and lengthy absence from school on medical grounds (e.g. of at least one full term, in a single block) which has led to a significant loss or delay in attainment/development/progress it may be appropriate to consider deferred transfer.

Making an application for deferred transfer to secondary school

Please bear in mind that very few children transfer late to secondary school but if you are thinking of making a request for deferred transfer you should discuss this with your child's headteacher and any other professionals involved, as soon as possible. You will need to submit your formal request during the summer term when your child is chronologically Year 5 (and certainly no later than September of the academic year when your child is chronologically Year 6), in order that you are able to meet the end of October closing date for secondary applications, if deferred transfer is not agreed.

If you decide you wish formally to pursue a request for late transfer, you will need to provide as much information and detail as possible explaining why you think that deferred transfer is the best course of action for your child. As a minimum you will need to provide:

- information regarding how your child is performing in the core subjects of the National Curriculum, English, Maths and Science (this will be available from your child's primary school);
- if applicable, details of any interventions/additional support your child is receiving at primary school;
- if applicable, a copy of your child's two most recent Individual Education Plans (IEPs)
- if applicable, reports from other agencies e.g. medical professionals, the specialist teaching service, Educational Psychologist, who may be supporting or working with your child
- a covering letter explaining your reasons for your request ;
- your child's views on going to secondary school a year late;
- anything else which you feel is relevant.

The LA will, as required under the School Admissions Code, seek the views of the headteacher.

Your formal request for late transfer should be sent to:

The Admissions Team, Cambridgeshire County Council, Box OCT1213, Shire Hall, Castle Hill, Cambridge CB3 0AP.

Who will make the decision?

The LA, through its nominated officer panel, will look at all aspects of your child's case e.g. social/emotional maturity, as well as his/her educational progress. You can expect a decision, within a working month of submitting your request and supporting information.

Applications for deferred entry into a community or voluntary controlled school are considered by an officer panel, comprising at least three of the following: a senior educational psychologist, an adviser for the primary phase, a primary school headteacher and an adviser for secondary/special education.

Applications for deferred transfer into a voluntary aided or foundation school or an Academy are usually considered by the school's governing body, except where they have opted to use the LA's panel.

Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied. This right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

Further information and contacts

If you would like to discuss any of the issues surrounding deferred transfer to secondary school, please contact the lead officer for deferrals (0-19 Places Planning & School Organisation Service) on 01223 699779.

Please note, the LA's advice is that parents should still complete a secondary application form even if they are applying for deferred transfer. If your request for deferred transfer is agreed you can always withdraw your application or decline a Year 7 place that has been offered.

A copy of the secondary admissions booklet for parents, *Next Steps*, can be requested from the Admissions Team on 0345 045 1370 or on line at www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/admissions .

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE)
1c Aberdeen Studios, 22 Highbury Grove, London N5 2DQ
020 7704 3370
www.ace-ed.org.uk

October 2017

