

Guidance on applying for an out-of-year place for your child

‘Out-of-year’ means applying for a place in a year other than the statutory age defined year. There are many reasons a parent may wish to do this, and this guidance is to help you understand how we will assess your application and what to include.

Summer-borns

Children usually start school the September after they turn 4. However, Compulsory School Age (CSA) is the term after a child turns 5. Parents or carers can choose to defer their child’s starting date until they are of Compulsory School Age, or until the summer term of that year, whichever comes first (in other words, children can start later in the year if they are younger). They can also choose to send their child part-time until they reach Compulsory School Age. This is a right, and does not require an application to the Governors (although please do let the Head Teacher know as soon as possible so we can plan accordingly)

If your child has their birthday during the summer (April – August) and you do not feel your child is ready to start school when they have just turned 4, you may wait and apply for a place in Reception the following year, when they would count as an ‘out-of-year’ applicant.

Correspondence from the Department for Education and Government Ministers confirms they will soon be updating the School Admissions Code to give greater power to parents and carers to decide whether their summer-born child starts school aged 4 or 5. They will also be ensuring that once a child joins a cohort, they cannot be forced to ‘skip a year’ or ‘catch up’ by a different school in the future.

In advance of this change, the Governors of Mariposa Primary School will honour the judgement of parents about what is in the best interests of the child, unless there are exceptional reasons why this shouldn’t be the case. If your child is born between April and August, please make your application to the school as normal, attaching a formal request for an out-of-year admission. We do not require any additional evidence.

If you would like to speak to one of our Governors or our Head Teacher before making your decision, please do get in touch. We will be pleased to discuss any concerns or answer your questions. Our aim is to give you the information you need, without pressure one way or the other.

If you decide to apply for a place in your child’s statutory-age school year group (i.e. so that they start school when they are 4), and then change your mind, we are unable to defer your place and you will need to re-apply for Reception entry the following year. This is due to statutory regulations around the allocation of school places, so we cannot make an exception.

If you decide to wait and apply for an out-of-year admission to Reception (i.e. so that your child starts school when they are 5), and then change your mind after the main application deadline, you will need to make a late application or join our waiting list for an ‘in-year place’. The criteria for late applications and our waiting list are the same as our over-subscription criteria.

Other out-of-year admissions

Decisions about other out-of-year admissions are made by the Governors, who need to satisfy themselves that it would be in the child’s best interests. This means that, unlike summer-borns, you will need to provide an explanation for your application and some evidence to support it so that we are able to make a decision. This evidence may come from childcare providers or another school, a social worker, doctor or other healthcare professional. It may help to ask a friend or contact to look at your application before submitting it, to see if they think it would be clear to someone who doesn’t know your child’s situation.

Please put your request in writing to the Governors, clearly setting out your reasons, and indicating which reason(s) the evidence you have supplied supports.

NB: If your application is based on medical, social or other need that Mariposa Primary School is best able to meet, then you will fall into a higher consideration on our over-subscription criteria. Please make sure that Mariposa Primary School is named in your evidence in this case.

We respect parent and carers' views and will always take out-of-year applications seriously and look to meet the needs of the individual child. However, each case will necessarily be decided on its own merit and we will need to be able to justify our decision if challenged.

If you have made your application by the main deadline (15th January), and you have been allocated a place according to our over-subscription criteria, we will notify you of our decision on offer day (16th April).

- If your application for an out-of-year place is successful, you will have two weeks to accept or decline the place.
- If your application for an out-of-year place is unsuccessful, you will be able to appeal that decision in line with our main appeals process. You will need to demonstrate why the decision we made was not in the best interests of your child. If there have been new developments or changes that you believe strengthen your case, we are afraid that you will need to re-apply as a late-application, presenting this evidence. This is because we can only make decisions based on the evidence we were given at application.