Connect Alliance Trust

Excellence - Collaboration - Respect

In partnership with

MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

Our Manchester, Our Children

Summer Born Admission Policy 2026-2027

Date approved: XX

Date of next review: January 2027

Version Control Table

Version	Date	Author	Rationale / Summary of changes	Ratified
v1.1	12/12/25	Jayne Kennedy	New CAT policy	

Context

This policy sets out the process and criteria for considering parental requests to delay admission for summer born children within Connect Alliance Trust schools.

The School Admissions Code 2021 requires school admission authorities to provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday. However, a child is not required to start school until they have reached compulsory school age following their fifth birthday.

This policy applies to all pupils except those with an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP). Parents/carers of children with an EHCP should contact the Local Authority SEND/EHCP Team for advice (appendix 1).

There is flexibility for parents who do not feel their child is ready to start school before compulsory school age. They may defer the date their child is admitted to school following an offer of a place until later in the school year following their fourth birthday, providing they do not defer beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age, or beyond the start of the final term of the school year for which the offer is made. Alternatively, their child may attend school part-time until they reach compulsory school age.

For summer born children (children born from the beginning of April to the end of August) this is almost a full school year after the point at which they could first be admitted. Summer born children reach compulsory school age in the September following their fifth birthday. If parents wish to defer their child starting school until this point, the year group of children into which their child falls would by then be starting in year one. This policy sets out the trust's position in response to requests from parents to defer their summer-born child starting school until the September following their fifth birthday and for their child to enter the reception year group (the year group that is a year younger than the child's chronological year group) rather than year one at this stage. This is referred to as a 'summer born request to offset admission'.

Connect Alliance Trust is the admission authority and has adopted Manchester City Council's admission arrangements.

For parents of summer born children, who are considering delaying their child's entry to primary school until they reach compulsory school age, it is important to note that there is not a statutory right to offset admission, and that it is the school within Connect Alliance Trust that will make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case.

Applications for admission outside the normal age group - 'Offset Admissions'

The Department for Education updated its Guidance on Handling Admission Requests for Summer Born Children (April 2023) - which replaces previous guidance released in December 2014. The guidance is non-statutory, and has been produced to help local authorities, admission authorities and parents understand the framework within which admission authorities must operate, and to dispel some of the myths that appear to have arisen around the admission of summer born children.

It should be read in conjunction with the 'School Admissions Code 2021'.

Where parents are of the view, that their summer born child's needs are such that they would benefit from starting school at the start of the term following their fifth birthday in a reception year group, and therefore be admitted outside of their usual year of entry, they may submit their request to the

Local Authority within the application period for the normal year of entry to reception class. Such applications will be referred to as requests to offset admission which is a request for the child to be educated outside of their usual year group. Applications which are made before the normal application period will not normally be considered.

Application forms for all reception places should be completed and submitted for the year in which the child is eligible for a school place e.g. those children born between 1 September 2021 and 31 August 2022 should apply for a reception place for the 2026/2027 school year.

Timescales and deadlines should be followed in accordance with the published admission arrangements, which are available on the Council website. Every year, applicants submit their applications by the 15th January and parents are informed of their allocated school on 16th April.

All summer born requests for offset admission will be considered by the Headteacher of each preferred school within Connect Alliance Trust.

Parents should be aware that:

The child's admission may only be offset with the agreement of the Headteacher.

A child born prematurely is defined as a baby born before 37 weeks of pregnancy are completed.

Once a child has been admitted to a school it is for the headteacher to decide how best to educate them. In some cases it may be appropriate for a child who has been admitted out of their normal age group to be moved to their normal age group, but in others it will not. Any decision to move a child to a different age group should be based on sound educational reasons and made by the headteacher in consultation with the parents.

Should agreement not be given and the parent still chooses to defer entry to the start of the school year after the child's fifth birthday, the parent will need to apply for a place in Year 1 which will be dependent upon a place being available at the time.

Any child not being educated in the year group in which their chronological age falls is regarded as "an offset admission". This may raise complications if the child transfers to another school or another local authority mid year: it will be for the admission authority of the receiving school to decide whether to admit the child out of their normal age group.

Procedure for schools within Connect Alliance Trust

The request can be sent to the individual school for consideration as well as to the LA as part of the application for reception places. The school must notify the parent and the LA with its decision.

Changing Schools at transition point or an In Year move

If an offset school place has been previously agreed and a summer-born child is attending the year below their chronological age but the child is due to change schools either at transition point (moving from primary to secondary) or moving In year to a different school, then parents will need to make a new request to the school's admission authority as previous decisions will not be binding on the new authority.

Attending part time or deferred entry to the same academic year

Parents can request that their child attends part-time until they reach compulsory school age, or that the date their child is admitted is deferred until later in the same academic year. In such circumstances, an agreement can be made between parents and the head teacher of the allocated school without involvement of any other relevant professional

Review of the decision made

There is no formal right to appeal a decision made by the Headteacher if the parents/carers have been offered a place and it is not in the year group they would like. However, parents/carers may make a complaint, please refer to Connect Alliance Trust's Complaint policy. All schools have a duty to consider complaints about the school.

Appendix one

Supporting Documents when considering deferred admissions

Where requests for a deferred admission into Reception for a child with significant special educational needs are made, the LA would expect parents to provide any relevant professional reports as part of their request. If a parent is of the opinion that their child has significant SEN, then the LA would expect the parents to have referred the child to the Local Authority and to have obtained a report from an educational psychologist. Where this is the case the LA would also ask for this evidence to be provided.

Requests for any other reasons (e.g. for a child born prematurely or based on other personal circumstances) will require a written submission of the reasons and any other relevant information/evidence that parents/carers may wish the Headteacher to take into account.

Appendix two

Further sources of information

Associated resources

- The DfE's School Admissions Code 2021 and Guidance on the Handling of Admission Requests for Summer Born Children 2023
- The department has published a topic note which draws together the available statistical and research evidence on the month of birth effect in education.
- The Institute of Fiscal Studies has published research on the impact of month of birth on children's outcomes.
- Warwick University has published research on academic attainment and special educational needs in extremely premature children.
- Children in all early years settings and in school reception classes receive the early years foundation stage curriculum which has a strong focus on meeting the individual needs of all children, whatever their stage of development. Further information for parents about the early years foundation stage is available.
- Where a parent chooses to offset their child's admission to school, the child remains entitled to a funded early education place of 15 hours a week for 38 weeks of the year at another provider until they are admitted to school