

18. Admission to Reception Classes - Some Questions Answered

These are the answers to some of the questions parents ask most often about admission to reception classes.

At what age can my child enter reception class?

Children are admitted to reception classes in the September following their fourth birthday. This is not compulsory, but all children by law must start school no later than the first day of the term after their fifth birthday. Current policy allows for a single intake in September, which enables reception age pupils to be admitted to school full time in the September of the academic year in which they are five years old. Any child reaching the age of five between 1 September and 31 August may be admitted into school at the start the autumn term before their fifth birthday. (Please see **Statutory School Age** section).

Is my child automatically guaranteed a place in the reception class of a school where he/she attends nursery?

No. The attendance at a nursery class attached to a school, will not automatically entitle a child to a reception class place at the same school. An application must be made. Priority will always be given to those children who live within the catchment area of the school following application of the published criteria. Attendance in the nursery class is not a factor given consideration in the oversubscription criteria.

How are admissions decided if a school is oversubscribed?

In the event of oversubscription i.e. where there are more applications than places available, applications will be admitted applying the oversubscription criteria published in this document. In the case of Voluntary Aided and Catholic Schools please refer to the admission criteria detailed at appendix 6.

What arrangements are there for me to appeal?

All parents have a statutory right of appeal against decisions made to refuse an admission to a school once their child reaches statutory school age. Parents who have applied unsuccessfully will be informed in writing of the decision made, offering the right to appeal with a closing date for submission. The appeal will be heard by an Appeal Panel which is independent of the Council and whose decision is binding. Please refer to the section on **Appeals** for further information.