

# Coalbrookdale & Ironbridge C.E. Primary School



## **Delayed Entrance to Reception Policy**

Last review: Spring 2026

Responsible: M. Dhaliwal (Headteacher)

Review Date: Spring 2029

## **Vision Statement**

Jesus said: 'Love each other as I have loved you'. John 15:12

Our school motto, 'Living life in all its fullness' is at the heart of everything we do and believe.

At Coalbrookdale & Ironbridge C.E Primary School, we aim to prepare the children in our care to become well-rounded members of society on their journey through school life and beyond.

We strongly believe that children learn best and achieve their full potential when they are happy and feel secure. We strive to provide a safe learning environment with a warm and welcoming atmosphere that fosters a sense of belonging among children, staff, families and the wider community. We value each individual's uniqueness and diversity, promoting respect and acceptance of one another as equals and celebrating the differences that make our community so special.

We have high expectations of the children, and we work hard to support them to become the best that they can be. For our children to flourish, socially and academically, we aim to provide an outstanding education that is both challenging and inclusive. All children are encouraged to embrace the many opportunities, and the support school provides, so that they become curious learners who are motivated and resilient with a 'Can do' attitude. Our aim is to provide the children of Coalbrookdale & Ironbridge with countless positive experiences, along with happy lifelong memories, from their time with us. We also have high expectations of attendance. We encourage families to be at school every day and to arrive on time in order to not miss any learning.

Through our supportive and inclusive Christian ethos, we are proud to foster our school values of trust, responsibility, respect, compassion and perseverance, embedding these within everyday life at school. We believe that the emotional health and wellbeing of the whole school community is fundamental to the ongoing success of our school.

We aspire to make our school a place of excellence where we educate, nurture and value everyone; that ALL children will enjoy learning and achieve their potential.

### **'Flourishing For All'**

This policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, age, disability as well as SEND, gender reassignment, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

'Let us always meet each other with a smile, for the smile is the beginning of love.'  
Mother Teresa.

### **1. Purpose of the Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to explain clearly the difference between deferred and delayed entry into Reception, to outline the legal framework that governs these decisions, and to set out the roles and responsibilities of parents, the school and the Local Authority. The policy aims to support parents in making informed decisions while ensuring that the school fulfils its duties as an Admissions Authority in a consistent and child-centred manner.

### **2. Legal and Statutory Framework**

This policy is informed by the School Admissions Code, relevant education legislation, Department for Education guidance relating to summer-born children, and Telford & Wrekin Council guidance on delayed and deferred entry. As a Voluntary Aided school, the Interim Executive Board (IEB) is the Admissions Authority and is therefore responsible for decisions regarding admission outside a child's normal age group.

### **3. Compulsory School Age**

Children reach compulsory school age at the start of the term following their fifth birthday. Parents are entitled to a full-time school place from the September following their child's fourth birthday but may choose to delay their child's entry to school until compulsory school age. Once a child reaches compulsory school age, attendance at school becomes a legal requirement.

### **4. Deferred Entry**

Deferred entry refers to situations where a child is admitted to Reception in the usual academic year but begins attending school later in that year, for example in the spring or summer term. In these cases, the child remains within their chronological age group. Parents have an automatic right to request deferred entry up to the point at which their child reaches compulsory school age.

### **5. Delayed Entry (Education Outside the Normal Age Group)**

Delayed entry refers to situations where a child does not start Reception in the academic year in which they turn four but instead begins Reception one year later than their chronological age group. This means the child is educated outside their normal age group throughout their schooling unless a later decision is made to return them to their chronological cohort.

Delayed entry is not an automatic entitlement and must be formally agreed by the Admissions Authority. Each request is considered individually, taking account of the child's circumstances and what is in their best interests.

### **6. Summer-Born Children**

Summer-born children are those born between 1 April and 31 August. Parents of summer-born children may request that their child starts Reception at compulsory school age rather than being placed directly into Year 1. Such requests are considered on a case-by-case basis and are not agreed automatically. Decisions are made with careful regard to the child's development, needs and long-term educational outcomes.

### **7. The Role of Parents**

Parents considering deferred or delayed entry are encouraged to visit the school, discuss their concerns with the Headteacher and Early Years staff and seek advice from their child's nursery or early years provider. Parents must apply for a school place through the normal admissions process by the published deadline and submit any request for delayed entry in writing, in line with Telford & Wrekin guidance.

Where requested, parents should provide supporting evidence to help inform the decision-making process.

Parents should be aware that agreement to delayed entry does not guarantee that a school place will be offered at Coalbrookdale & Ironbridge C.E. Primary School.

### **8. The Role of the School and Interim Executive Board (IEB)**

As the Admissions Authority, the IEB is responsible for considering requests for admission outside the normal age group. Decisions are made on the basis of what is in the best interests of the child, taking account of parental views and professional evidence. The Headteacher provides professional advice to support this process but does not make decisions alone. The school works in partnership with Telford & Wrekin Local Authority throughout the process.

### **9. Considerations When Making a Decision**

When considering a request for delayed entry, the IEB takes into account a range of factors, including the child's social, emotional and academic development, information from early years providers and other professionals, the views of parents and the potential impact of the child missing the Reception year.

Consideration is also given to whether the child's needs could be met within Reception at the usual point of entry and to the longer-term implications of being educated outside the normal age group. No single factor determines the outcome.

### **10. Decision-Making Process**

Requests for delayed entry are considered on a case-by-case basis and, where possible, decisions are made prior to the allocation of school places. Parents are informed of the decision in writing, with clear reasons provided.

Where delayed entry is agreed, parents must submit a new application for a school place in the following admissions round. There is no guarantee that a place will be offered.

### **11. Children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)**

This policy does not apply to children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan. Decisions about delayed or deferred entry for children with an EHCP are made as part of the statutory EHC needs assessment and review process, led by the Local Authority.

### **12. Attendance at an Early Years Setting**

Where delayed entry is agreed, children remain entitled to funded early education in line with national entitlements. Parents are responsible for securing an appropriate early years placement until their child starts school.

### **13. Review of Placement**

Where a child is educated outside their normal age group, it is generally expected that they will remain with that cohort throughout their schooling. Any decision to return a child to their chronological year group will only be made where it is clearly in the child's best interests and will involve discussion with parents and the Headteacher, taking account of educational, social and emotional factors.

### **14. Transfer to Junior or Secondary School**

When a child educated outside their normal age group transfers to another school, parents must submit a request to the relevant Admissions Authority. That authority must consider the request independently and is not required to honour decisions made by a previous Admissions Authority.

**15. Complaints and Appeals**

Parents may not appeal against the year group a child is offered. However, they may make a complaint if they believe that a request has not been handled correctly.

Complaints should be made in line with the school's Complaints Policy or, where appropriate, Telford & Wrekin Council's complaints procedures. Parents may refer unresolved complaints to the Local Government Ombudsman or, where applicable, the Secretary of State for Education.

**16. Review of the Policy**

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if legislation or guidance changes.