

Admissions Committee guidance - reviewing deferred applications for summer born children, March 2021

Background:

The Holy Trinity admissions policy follows current guidance from the DfE with regard to applications from parents who wish to defer a school place for summer born children. The guidance states that:

*“parents would need to provide supporting reasons for seeking a place outside the normal age group and should discuss the position with the head teacher as early as possible. **The school** will consider the request carefully and if it is agreed, this should be clear before the national offer day.....”*

The DfE has wished to change this guidance for the last few years to allow parents greater choice in when to place summer born children. Changes have not yet been made because of legislative delays caused initially by Brexit and then in turn Covid 19.

Two recent applications to defer summer born children received by Holy Trinity have highlighted a need to have a clearer process for the school and Admissions Committee to follow when considering applications. The issues are:

When approached for advice, both the Diocese and RBWM have been clear that while the guidance is not yet changed, its imminent introduction means that a far more lenient approach should already be being adopted by schools.

Secondly, while our current policy states that ‘the school’ will consider the request, with the headteacher as the first point of contact, it’s not clear, and again has been confirmed by the Diocese and the borough, that the final decision should actually be made by the Admissions Committee.

To make our process simpler and more robust for the school and parents, the Admissions Chair proposes the following:

- We make a note to amend the 2023/24 policy to read: *“parents would need to provide supporting reasons for seeking a place outside the normal age group and should discuss the position with the head teacher as early as possible. **The Admissions Committee** will consider the request carefully and if it is agreed, this should be clear before the national offer day.....”*
- The head teacher should still ask for supporting documentation from parents and make a recommendation to the Committee based on their professional opinion. The Committee will then consider the application and if possible seek to allow parents to defer a place, while reminding them that they will still need to follow the usual application process through the borough and our agreement to the deferral does not guarantee them a place.

Application procedure:

1. Parents approach the school, head teacher reviews initial documentation
2. Admissions Committee meets to discuss the application and reasons for deferment
3. Decision made by the Admissions Committee is communicated to parents