



Statutory School Age Requirement Guidance

Introduction

This document provides guidance on the statutory school age requirements and Hillingdon's aims to provide parents and carers with a clear understanding of the regulations surrounding when children are expected to be in receipt of full-time education.

This guidance has been created to provide you with the essential information needed to ensure a seamless transition into school life for your child.

By exploring this guidance, you will gain insights into the legal requirements, admissions processes, and the steps to take, in case of any challenges that may arise.

At Hillingdon we believe that every child's education journey should be supported from the very start, and this resource is designed to support you in making informed decisions for your child's educational success.

Legal requirement

Your child is required to commence full-time education when they reach statutory school age. This occurs on either the 31 December, 31 March, or 31 August following their fifth birthday, depending on whichever of these dates comes first. If your child's fifth birthday falls on any of these dates, that will be the day they are deemed to have reached compulsory school age. For instance, if your child's compulsory school age is reached on the 31 March, they are expected to start full-time education at the outset of the following term, which is the summer term of that year.

Children must remain in full-time education until they attain the [school leaving age](#).

Deferring/Part-time attendance

School admission authorities are required to provide a school place for all children in the September following their 4th birthday, but children do not reach compulsory school age until the school term after their 5th birthday. For children who are under compulsory school age, once a school place has been accepted, parents may, if

they wish, agree with the allocated school a pattern of part-time attendance or a deferred start until later in that school year (but not past the point they are of statutory school age). These arrangements should be discussed with the school.

The guidance provided by the Department for Education states: 'In most cases, it is appropriate for children to receive education in alignment with their typical age group, ensuring the curriculum is adapted accordingly. Exceptions to educating children outside of their expected age group should be exceedingly rare and specific.'

For further information regarding this please visit [School admission of children outside their chronological age group - Hillingdon Council](#) where you can review our guidance on the admissions of children outside their chronological age group.

Process on applying for a school place

For more information on applying for a school place, please visit Schools placements and admissions - Hillingdon Council.

Local Authority's statutory duty for children missing education & the referral process

The local authority holds the responsibility for addressing situations involving children who are of statutory school age and are missing education.

For children who are statutory school age but not in receipt of full-time education, the School Placement and Admissions team will pass your child's details over to the Children Missing Education team.

The Children Missing Education (CME) team within a local authority plays a crucial role in ensuring that all children within the jurisdiction are receiving an appropriate education and are not missing out on their educational entitlements.

For more information regarding Hillingdon's Children Missing Education team including their roles and responsibilities, please visit [Children missing education - Hillingdon Council](#)

Parental disputes and responsibility

Hillingdon have published guidance to help parents understand Hillingdon's protocol for dealing with situations in which parents disagree on school applications or choices for their children.

Our protocol and guidance regarding parental responsibility can be found on our webpage [In-year school admissions - Hillingdon Council](#).

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