

**Public responses to the proposed changes to summer born admissions
in the Changes to the School Admission Code consultation**

Respondent type	Comment
Nursery/ preschool provider/ early years professional	This does not address the issue for those parents who do not wish their child to go into school until they are 5 but do not feel they need reception provision at that point. In reality there will not be a vacancy in the school of choice in year 1. The proposal is meaningless
Nursery/ preschool provider/ early years professional	Please allow summer born children the option to start school in reception aged 5 and complete their primary school education the same as any other child without having to skip a year.
Nursery/ preschool provider/ early years professional	Apologies for the delay in replying to this consultation. There are just a couple of points that we wish to make that will improve the experience of applying for schools for a significant number of our families. Firstly we strong support the proposal for the advice for deferring school entry for summer born and premature children being incorporated into the code. While the non-statutory advice has improved matters, formalising it within the code should help to address any remaining ambiguity that remains for parents and admissions authorities alike. Secondly, we would like to propose a small change to the code to prevent the ongoing difficulties for around 20% of multiple birth families each year when their children start primary school. This relates to a lack of input into the classroom placement decisions for their children. I attach the latest, as yet unpublished, research that shows that around 1,200 families have classroom placement decisions imposed on them by the school due to a blanket policy either to separate them across different classes or in the same class. These policies tend to either be written into the school's admission policy (John Ray Infants school in Essex is one such example) or are verbally confirmed by the headteacher at the time of applying. From the attached results, you can also see that around 1 in 5 parents were told to look elsewhere if they didn't like the policy, which equates to 2,400 families being potentially being denied the most appropriate school for their child. Many parents will be forced to choose an alternate school if one with a different policy is available. Worryingly for those who do not, independent research consistently shows that the wrong placement decision can have long lasting impact on some of these children's emotional and educational development. Whilst the issue has historically been viewed as a school organisational issue, it has a material

	<p>impact on the admissions process for 1,000s of families each year. To address this problem a small addition to the code, potentially at 1.9 could help. It could read, "It is for admission authorities to formulate their admission arrangements, but they must not: "(insert) in the case of multiple birth children (e.g. twins, triplets or more), place any condition on classroom placement decisions that effectively excludes parental involvement in the decision." I hope that this response proves helpful and we would be happy to provide further information on any of these points.</p>
Nursery/ preschool provider/ early years professional	<p>Schools should provide staggered starts, or preferably I would suggest we look to the continent and not even consider formal education until six or seven. This would remove the discussion on summer borns altogether as it would be decided at six if it was appropriate to start school or at seven!</p>
Nursery/ preschool provider/ early years professional	<p>I completely agree that parents should have the right to request that a summer born child be admitted to reception in the September after their 5th birthday although there should not be any conditions attached to this. However I strongly reject the assumption that most parents are happy to send their summer born children during the course of the academic after their 4th birthday. I have been a nursery provider for over 20 years and have seen and been part of a huge changes and improvements in the nursery education. In my experience there are very few summer born children who are 'ready for school'. They are quite naturally less mature and as a general rule less developed their older peers in all areas of learning. There is no doubt whatsoever that summer born children would benefit significantly from remaining at nursery for an extra year as long as the nursery provision is of a high enough standard and then joining reception at age 5 There is also no doubt whatsoever that the parents of summer born children would be delighted to have that option available to them!!! There are several main reasons why parents send their children to school when they are 4: Because that is the way the system works and they feel that there is pressure to send their child in September after their child has turned 4. Parents are generally not aware they have a choice Because it is free because it offers longer hours than most pre school nurseries do I have long been a believer that no child should start school until they are 5 and that there should be teachers employed in all nurseries which should be subsidised by local authorities. Not only would the children be in a more suitable environment for longer but it would ease the pressure on the demand for places in schools. In</p>

	<p>Surrey the PANs have had to increase year on year as the demand for places grows. As a consequence infant and primary schools are no longer small and cosy. They are large and have less outdoor space than previously. In my area most schools cannot fit all the children in the school hall because it is now too small. At my local school the children have to go into the senior school next door to have lunch because there is not enough space in their own school Whilst it would seem that no one in Government is brave enough to make such a proposal even though every study shows that children make better progress when they start school later, this proposal could have been a beginning and now seems to be a missed opportunity. In reality under the current proposals the option to defer a reception place for a year would only be open to children who have special circumstances I would strongly recommend that the proposal is amended to allow parents the right to choose to send their summer born children to reception class in the September after they are 5 under any circumstances and that local authorities must allow this</p>
<p>Nursery/ preschool provider/ early years professional</p>	<p>Although welcoming the inclusion of 'summer born' children in this consultation, I have objections to the wording and proposals themselves. On what evidence is the statement 'We believe that the vast majority of parents of summer born children are happy for their child to start school in the September following their 4th birthday, or at some point during that school year' made? It says that the publishing of non-statutory advice on the admission of summer born children in July last year has resulted in some positive impact. It goes on to say that the number of cases referred to the department by parents has not reduced. This implies that more parents are becoming aware of the problems created not only by early entry to formal schooling but by being assessed through out school a year younger than others. Most parents are not aware of their rights on this issue and local authorities do nothing to dispel the myth that all children must go to reception in the term after the child turns four years of age. I object strongly to the proposal that the admission authority will take account of the views of an education professional who WILL BE involved in the education of the child. On the contrary it is the views of the education professional who HAS BEEN educating the child which should be sought. Once again, despite the advent of highly professional qualifications now being part of early years registration requirements, early years practitioners and teachers are being invalidated and the most important years of a child's (adult's) life have been cast aside as unimportant.</p>

	<p>This government needs to consider fully the developmental stage birth to 6 years and support high quality environments for this age group. Parents need real choice, something that is not available to them.</p>
<p>Nursery/ preschool provider/ early years professional</p>	<p>I think there should be more flexibility in this area as some summer born children are clearly not ready to move to reception and would benefit from more time in the nursery. It would seem sensible to admit them to reception, rather than year 1 on transfer.</p>
<p>Other body / individual</p>	<p>Para 2.16b) of the draft Code states that 'parents can defer.....' whereas the current Code states that 'parents can REQUEST that the date their child is admittedis deferred' - two different meanings. Again in para 2.16c) of the draft Code, 'where parents wish, children may attend part-time.....' as opposed to the wording in the current Code - 'parents can REQUEST.....'. To add to the confusion, the guidance notes themselves at 5.4 first bullet, refer to 2.17 applying to 'parental requests'. Clarification is therefore essential in the wording please.</p>
<p>Other body / individual</p>	<p>This remains a difficult issue for schools, and presents challenges at two level:. a) Primary schools are required to keep empty spaces for up to a year which represents both a loss of income and an inefficient use of extremely scarce capacity; b) Secondary schools are presented with the challenge of fast-streaming pupils through a year, or providing an unfunded place at the end of the pupil's school career. But, the most serious issue with admissions lies in the fact that primary admissions are dealt with AFTER secondary admissions. Starting primary school is acknowledged to be one of the most important stages in a child's life, and schools do their utmost to ease this transition. They do this in particular by having children in to school to learn their way around, begin to understand the routines, and get to know those who will be looking after them. All this happens after the Spring Bank Holiday. But with the lateness of the allocation of places, and the time taken for appeals, many of the most vulnerable children do not know which school they will be attending until the summer holiday, thus missing out on those aspects they most need to ensure a secure start to their school life.</p>
<p>Other body / individual</p>	<p>The provisions relating to referred entry to school and admission for children outside their normal age group remains blurred. The Code needs to clarify that parents may defer the date their child is admitted to a school, and particularly for summer born children, and that this must not be beyond the point at which they would have been admitted to reception in the normal admissions round. It needs to be made abundantly clear that the admission of a child may not be deferred so that they</p>

	<p>enter the school in Year 1, rather than in reception. The admissions of children outside their normal age group, in particular "summer born children" is not something that should be included in the Code, because it is not in fact an admissions issue. A decision to educate a child outside their normal age group should be entirely the decision of the education professionals in the school. This is not an issue for the admission authority. The admission authority should make the decision about whether the child should be admitted, it is then for the education professionals to decide in which age group the child should be educated</p>
Other body / individual	<p>The suggested amendments leave the decision to the admission authority regarding which year group the child will be admitted to. The proposals also state that the application should be dealt with in the normal admissions round but do not state how the local authority should coordinate with potentially three or more different admission authorities regarding which year group they would offer to the parent prior to making a single offer of a place for a child (for instance, if a place is available at the first preference school in year one, but the second preference school would offer a place in reception what should be done?) A better amendment to the code might be to state that children must be admitted to the relevant year group for their age but schools must deliver education appropriate to the needs of the child. Such an amendment would enable clear coordination for a single offer with the commensurate reassurance to the parent that their child's needs will be accommodated appropriately both as they start and progress through school</p>
Other body / individual	<p>The clarification in the draft Code that parents may not defer entry beyond the beginning of the Summer term of the reception year, is welcomed. With regard to admission out of cohort, would be helpful if the Code could state: - that the expectation is that children will be educated out of cohort in "exceptional circumstances". Parents should consider the impact of their child being educated out of cohort, not only within primary school but at transition to secondary school when a fresh decision will be made about the year group to which they will be admitted. - that requests should accompany an application for a place in the normal round of the child's age, so that a place is available if the request is not agreed. If the request is agreed, the parent must reapply in the following year and will be considered equally with all other applicants. Parents have the right of appeal if place at the school cannot be offered in either age group. - that the wording "taking into account the views of the</p>

	<p>headteacher of the school concerned" be reworded "taking into account views from or on behalf of the school (s) concerned". This is necessary to give more local flexibility for LAs in managing the situation in which a parent applies for up to six schools (within the home LA and in other LAs), with the potential for different responses from each school and also the prospect of not being offered a place at any preference school. The consultation document states that if a child is premature, the decision will "take account of whether they would have naturally fallen into the lower age group if born at the expected time". However, the wording does not appear in the draft Code. I attach some template advice for parental publications which has recently been issued by LIAAG to London LAs in an attempt to achieve a more consistent approach to this issue.</p>
Other body / individual	<p>This seems reasonable, and we support the rights of parents of summer born children to choose whether to place their child in their chronological year, or to keep them down one year in order to develop socially, emotionally and educationally.</p>
Other body / individual	<p>We do not believe that the issue of children outside their age group and summer-born children should be included in the Code because it is not an issue for admission authorities, but rather a decision for the education professionals at the school.</p>
Other body / individual	<p>Our schools would find this useful, again if enough guidance from DfE and lead in time enabled.</p>
Other body / individual	<p>Agree</p>
Other body / individual	<p>Again these seem perfectly acceptable.</p>
Other body / individual	<p>1. Impact of revisions with no amendments (2.17) unnecessarily creates a limited set of children for whom places may be sought outside "normal" age group (gifted and talented ... problems ... ill health etc). Most parents I speak with have a premature summer born child for whom they believe there is absolutely nothing wrong, and they are probably right, yet the admissions authorities are set on finding out 'what is wrong' with that child as part of their justification to admit them to a different age group. For many, the whole point is a matter of timing of birth in relation to the school admissions process, which adversely affects the child's readiness for school if admitted at that point. Of course there are also those children for whom there are very real other issues compounded on top of the timing issue, such as medical, social, emotional and behavioural. 2.17 as it stands does not distinguish between these groups and thus wrongly leads the admissions authorities down</p>

the route of "what is wrong with your child?" The last sentence of 2.17 still leaves the parents with the gamble of 'should I send my child into Reception now, or hold back a year and hope I can get them into Reception next year?' This choice terrifies parents, because they don't want to send their child now, nor do they want the risk of them being forced into year 1 next year having missed all of Reception. This is an impossible position for parents that causes enormous and undue stress. It is a decision that must be made at an earlier point in the process so that parents never find themselves in this position. At the moment the admissions process actually creates this situation! (2.17) does not make it clear how the timing of the request, and the timing of the decision, to be admitted out of their normal age group relates to the school admission process, thus potentially creating the 'terrifying choice' described above. (2.17) does not specifically reference summer born premature children. The oblique reference to them in reference 49 "It is likely that most requests ... or those born prematurely" is almost worthless." It's like saying "It is likely to rain on Tuesday". For summer born premature children, (2.17A) seems to establish the requirement to provide evidence and again leads the admissions authorities down the road of "What is wrong with your child?" It creates the requirement for the parents to generate all this, often unspecified, evidence. It also presupposes that the people to whom this evidence is presented are qualified to understand it and then make a decision based upon it. In most of my conversations with parents and in my own experience too, the 'educational professionals' are unaware of the body of decades of peer reviewed academic research into children's academic attainment in relation to summer born affects, premature affects and the combination of the two. They often believe that they can simply 'have a look' at a four year old and determine their readiness for school, which takes no account of the decades of academic research into the subject. (2.17A) last sentence to take into account of the head teacher's views will generate considerable variability and thus uncertainty. Firstly, there are situations, where the actual school to which the child will be admitted is not known; for example, the family may live in a densely populated and heavily oversubscribed area with many schools, which would make it impractical to speak with lots of head teachers, not to mention wasting time. Secondly, there are many head teachers, many of whom have differing views depending upon their experiences and beliefs; for example, my wife is a head teacher and we have many head teacher friends, many of whom did not

	<p>understand our request for out of year admission for our summer born premature son. It was only when we were able to explain the circumstances in detail to them over dinner and they understood the research findings and the implications for a child's long term academic attainment that they became aware of the significance of correct year admission. They were also horrified when they realised how much they did not know or understand about summer born prematurity in the education admissions process and how their own earlier admissions decisions made in their schools had been adversely affected by the lack of knowledge. Most parents don't get the opportunity to 'educate' head teachers or admissions authorities about summer born prematurity. There is no clear differentiation between summer born and summer born premature children, which is unhelpful. For summer born children it is reasonable to have a discussion about the child's readiness for school. For summer born premature children it is a matter of timing and needs little discussion. (2.17A)'s reference to "... previously educated out of their normal age group" is interesting. This can be interpreted in several ways: 1. first time entry to school (age 4 or 5), hence it does not apply (or does it if nursery is considered?) , 2. second time entry to school where a 4 or 5 year old in reception class moves schools, 3. transition from infant to junior within a primary school, and 4. transition from primary to secondary school. There are probably others. The inclusion of this statement in 2.17B means that admissions authorities have only to take 'previously educated out of their normal age group' into consideration in their decision making; they could still decide to change the child's year group, which has the potential to be against the parents wishes and be devastating for the child. I can cite a case where exactly this has happened. (2.17B) Good that it makes it clear not to give out of year group applications lower priority, however the wording '... not of the correct age' is unhelpful . This terminology implies that it is wrong, which it clearly is not, but it sets the scene to look unfavourably on an out of year application. (2.17B)'s denial of right to appeal will cause confusion since parents will want to appeal and this statement will confuse both parents and admissions authorities about the basis of the appeal. Parents will want to appeal the year group, not necessarily the school. 2. Possible Amendments 2.17 Parents may seek school places for their children outside their normal age group. Where the parents of a summer born child choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth</p>
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	<p>birthday, they may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to reception rather than year 1. Children may be admitted outside their normal year group where they were born prematurely in the summer (49) or where they have previously been educated out of their normal age group. 2.17A Admission authorities must make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case. This will include taking account of the parent's views and information about the child's academic, social and emotional development. 2.17B When informing a parent of their decision on the year group their child should be admitted to, the admission authority must set out clearly the reasons for their decision. Where an admission authority agrees to a parent's request for their child to be admitted out of their normal age group and, as a consequence of that decision, the child will be admitted to a relevant age group (i.e. the age group to which pupils are normally admitted to the school) the admission authority must process the application as part of the main admissions round, unless the parental request is made too late for this to be possible, and on the basis of their determined admission arrangements only, including the application of oversubscription criteria where applicable. They must not give the application lower priority on the basis that the child is making an out of year group application.</p>
Other body / individual	<p>I do not feel the changes go far enough in prioritising the rights of parents who wish their summer born to enter Reception at age 5 rather than after just turning 4. In particular I believe that leaving the decision to the Head Teacher would be very problematic, as it is difficult to know which school your child is going to attend and there is the risk a change of head could lead to a reversal of a deferral. I believe the postcode lottery whereby different decisions on the same child can be reached by different LEAs will continue unless it is made absolutely clear that if this is the parents' wishes this is what should happen. For example: "Parents who wish their summer born (1st April - 31st August inclusive) child to join Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education."</p>
Other body / individual	<p>In response to your seeking views on the new schools admissions guidance, I wish to make the following comments with regard to late summer born children, particularly in regard to deferring reception year start dates (pushing back a year) 1. I am pleased to see</p>

	<p>involvement from the head teacher in the new guidance. This does not go far enough, parents and head teachers are best placed to make the decisions - not local authority officials. Ultimately, the decision should lie with the parents - there is no 'incentive' for parents to appeal for this - purely acting in the interests of their child, undertaking their legal obligation to act in their child's best interests and upholding the rights of the child. 2. What we need from the DfE is insistence of equality of treatment. LAs are operating with completely different agendas - progressive councils should be held up as examples of best practice, and those operating with an archaic policy (which they refuse to change through, one can only imagine, laziness) should really be shown up as requiring improvement. All public body organisations should be working on delighting the 'customer' and continuous improvement - I'm utterly shocked that so many can't even be bothered to look at the bigger picture of improvement, listen to common sense and ignore the legal rights of a child. The gvt should be acting and shaming non progressive, archaic LAs and using progressive and forward thinking councils, who allow parents to make the ultimate decision in deferring the year their child starts reception, as examples of best practice.</p>
Other body / individual	<p>2 -Changes to highlight Summerborn admissions I strongly support these changes. I enquired with my local authority about the possibility of delaying my child's start (born end August 2010). I was told it was unheard of and highly undesirable and would only be agreed in the case of a serious developmental delay or need, such as Cerebral Palsy. I have since discovered that the authority felt that it was within their remit to completely ignore the July 2013 advice as it was non-statutory and perhaps explains why I was given such poor advice and effectively told to 'put up or shut up' for want of a better expression.</p>
Other body / individual	<p>This still lacks clarity. The Code needs to address the seocndary transfer issue by making it clear that once a child has been accepted into a year group which is not the normal year group that child will be entitled to stay with that cohort. At present it still looks as though at secondary transfer the admitting school could require the child to go into Year 8 rather than Year 7 and that is unfair.</p>
Other body / individual	<p>This is a slight improvement, but it could also be clarified that, if the school does not agree to the child being offered a place outside his or her normal age group, there might not be any places available in Year 1. The parents would need to have consulted the admission</p>

	<p>authority and received a response in advance of deciding whether or not to complete the CAF for a Reception place in the normal or following round. There have also been some instances where parents of a summer-born child have been unsuccessful in obtaining a Reception place at the school in the normal round and have then tried to obtain an out-of-year Reception place in the following admissions round - a second bite at the cherry. This does not appear reasonable.</p>
Other body / individual	<p>In relation to the proposals set out in section 5, we are very pleased to see a clarification and firming up of the application of section 2.17 of the School Admissions Code. In particular, the requirement in para 5.4 for the admissions authority to take into account parental wishes when deciding on an application for a child to enter Reception rather than Year 1 in the term after their 5th birthday appears to us to appropriately redress the balance of responsibility for the child's well-being and education. The inclusion of prematurely-born children, and the requirement for their 'full-term' birthday to be taken into account, also addresses a current unfortunate anomaly which has severely disadvantaged these already vulnerable children. However, given the weight of evidence of the enormous and systematic disadvantage suffered by summer-born children with the present admissions regime, is it in the best interests of these children to leave their date of admission to the random chances that their parents are aware of their rights and options (currently not at all well advertised), and to the varying characteristics of different admissions authorities' appeal procedures? Ideally, we would wish to see the date of admission to compulsory education for all children in the UK delayed until they are 6 or 7 years of age, with an accompanying improvement in the provision and quality of play-based early education provision (in line with the current EYFS). Countries where this is the case do not experience such a marked summer-born phenomenon, and so serve the best interests of all their children more equitably. At the very least the existing date of compulsory school attendance, and the proposed appeal procedures to allow summer-born children to enter Reception once they are 5, should be much more widely advertised and more strongly and clearly supported. As it stands, ironically, it is only the well-educated and well-informed parents who are likely to have the relevant knowledge and confidence to take advantage of these provisions in their child's best interest, and these children are the least vulnerable in this respect. It is the summer-born children of parents from disadvantaged backgrounds who are most likely to</p>

	suffer unforeseen negative consequences from the more formal teaching in Year 1 when they are only just 5, and it is their parents who are currently least likely to know about or be in a position to take advantage of the proposed new appeal procedures and criteria.
Other body / individual	My input to the consultation is as follows... "Children must commence fulltime education in the September following their 5th birthday. Children will enter Primary School and start in the Reception class. Parents may request that their child is admitted outside their designated age group after the child's 4th birthday. In such cases schools are required to provide for the admission of children outside their normal age group. Before children reach compulsory school age (/compulsory education age), parents can request that their child attend school part-time. Schools must facilitate parental requests to that effect. At the point of entry into Primary School, all children have the right to access full 7 years of Primary School Education."
Other body / individual	As a summer born child and starting school too early I was put in the learning difficulties category and sent for remedial lessons. I feel as a result I have suffered with difficulties with the 3 r's and socialising. I certainly do not want this for my grand son and any other child that is summer born. It is imperative these young children are allowed to enter school and have the best education possible and the best person to decide when their summer born child is ready is the parent of the child. Also which level the child enters at should also be the parents choice. Responsible parents have the best interest of the children at heart and should have the right to choose what is best for their child. Attending school at too young an age can blight the life of an outgoing interested in everything child. I speak from first hand experience.
Other body / individual	We think there should be a right of appeal to all parents whose request is refused.
Other body / individual	Careful consideration must be given to the consequence of secondary transfer and the potential refusal of secondary school places because a child out of its year group may be detrimental to GCSE league tables.
Other body / individual	Dear Sir/Madam, Please would you consider adding these changes to the admissions code: "Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their

	education.”
Other body / individual	i agree that children born late in the school year should, if thought beneficial for the child, be able to start later in the year and not just in September and January
Other body / individual	We have a grandchild in this category, who also has developmental issues. We strongly believe that this child's learning and development is best served by delaying their admission to school by one year, at which time they would be 5 years 0 months old. We would use the year's grace to help build up the child's confidence and overall development to a level where they would be a suitable candidate for admission to school.
Other body / individual	<p>“The aim is to improve the fair and open allocation of places... The changes are primarily intended to provide greater freedom.” Pg.2 [and] “1.2 The overarching aim is to improve the fair and open allocation of places”</p> <p>Comment: I welcome this commitment for fairness and open allocation; however, as my comments below will outline, I believe that the proposed changes to the School Admission Code (SAC) do not go far enough if this is to be consistently achieved for all summer born (SB) entering or seeking to enter Reception class at compulsory school age (CSA). Similarly, evidence from parent groups demonstrates that again in this area the SAC does not “provide greater freedom” in the context of parents’ wishes, despite this being precisely what Ministers such as Elizabeth Truss and David Laws have publicly espoused: “We are absolutely clear that parents should be able to say to a school, “We want our child, who is aged five, to enter reception”, if they feel that that is in the best interests of their child.” (September 2013) “We will take action if we find that schools are not paying attention to parental demand.” (March 2014) There is a substantial disconnect between what Ministers are promising parents, and what Department for Education officials are purposefully willing to support and act on behind the scenes. Why is this? Re: “1.3 ...clarify the provisions relating to the admission of summer born children to aid decision-making;” Comment: It is vitally important that not only the provisions relating to the admission of SB children are clarified, but also their continued, uninterrupted full education and access to the curriculum throughout the whole of primary and secondary school. Too many children have been forced to skip a whole year of their education simply in order to be returned to a supposed ‘correct’ chronological year group, regardless of what is in their best interests. Also, parents considering requesting admission to Reception class for their CSA SB child are warned that their child may be made to skip a year later on – or miss the</p>

	<p>opportunity to enter Grammar school entrance exams at the same time as their year group peers – and this fear and uncertainty is preventing many from following through with their request. There should be no punitive outcome for SB children starting school at CSA. Re: “5.1 but children do not reach compulsory school age until after their fifth birthday.” Comment: Given the stated aim of clarity, it would be useful here to more clearly define when children reach CSA. It would be useful to quote directly from primary legislation or at the very least make it clear that it’s “the term following their fifth birthday”. As it stands, the above description could be misinterpreted. Re: “5.1 Children born in the summer term, therefore, are not required to start school until a full year after the point at which they could first have been admitted – the point at which other children in their age range are beginning year 1.” Comment: One of the biggest problems with SACs in relation to SB children entering primary school is its failure to relate back to the wording contained within primary legislation wherever possible, and this document is in danger of doing that too. Children in Reception class and Year 1 are both within the “age range” of SB children. It doesn’t help the current situation for a SCA to reinforce the idea that there is just one ‘proper’ or ‘correct’ year group for a SB child to be in. For the SCA to do this undermines the very notion of parents ‘requesting’ admission ‘out of year group’, and does little to support such flexibility on a national level. It’s worth pointing out here that the 2010 SCA contained an inaccurate definition of ‘Reception class’, and this, together with a whole host of other publications, have all fed the idea that SB children ‘should’ enter school at age 4, and at the very latest during the academic year in which they ‘might’ turn 5 (note that many SB children turn 5 during the summer holidays when the Reception year is over). The culture of and societal pressure to enroll all children in school at age 4 does not make it right for all children, and simply because years and decades of education policies and admission restrictions has meant that the majority of SB children start school at age 4, this does not mean that it’s what all parents want. Entry to school at age 4 has become so ‘normal’ that the legal right of parents to wait until their child reaches CSA has become virtually redundant – that is if they want their child to have fair and equal access to primary school places, and a guaranteed ‘full education’. Re: “5.2 A parent who chooses not to send their summer born child to school until they have reached compulsory school age may request that they are admitted outside their normal age group – to reception rather than year 1. Paragraph</p>
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	<p>2.17 of the current Code requires that, where a parent requests that their child is admitted outside their normal age group, the admission authority must make a decision on the basis of the circumstances of the case.” Re: “We believe that the vast majority of parents of summer born children are happy for their child to start school in the September following their fourth birthday, or at some point during that school year. The number of parents who would like their summer born child to be admitted out of their normal age group appears to be very small. However, correspondence received from parents and MPs and feedback from local authorities suggests the decision is problematic in a high proportion of these cases.” Comment: Firstly, the number of parents who wish their child to begin school – in Reception – at CSA is only “small” because it simply is not presented as a viable option. Parents are all too aware of the implications of ‘rocking the boat’, and many are forced into full-time attendance for their 4 year-old (despite the supposed choice of part-time), let alone having their request for entry to Reception class at CSA agreed to. Also, while very few parents are actually aware of the admissions flexibility available in law, more importantly there are insufficient numbers of teachers and head teachers who are aware it. In many cases, parents approaching head teachers and LEAs have more knowledge and information about SB legislation than the professionals. Only a more clear, fair and objective SAC can help to resolve this unworkable situation. Secondly, I would question the above reference to “the vast majority” of SB parents. A survey published in 2009 (The Parents Omnibus Survey) found that 58% agreed that summer born children should start school in the September following their 4th birthday, with 25% saying no, and 17% ‘unsure’. Similarly, 55% said that they would choose for their child to start school in the September after their 4th birthday, while 32% said they’d prefer to wait until their child was 5. In the same year, the Rose Review acknowledged that “some parents would like their children to enter reception class in the September after their fifth birthday rather than entering Year 1 [and that] Some respondents questioned whether reception classes are the most appropriate place for 4-year-old children at all”. The Review stated, “It is important to be clear that this is not a recommendation to lower the statutory school starting age rather than give parents a greater choice, and to achieve a better match of provision to need in the Reception Year”. Nevertheless, an age 4 start in September became the norm, leading to the assumption that it’s what “the vast majority” of SB</p>
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parents are “happy” with. I am not convinced this is true. There appears to be a concerted effort to ‘keep the lid’ on admissions flexibility for SB children, through a lack of clear communication to parents, teaching professionals and LEAs, and an inherent fear that the ‘flood gates’ might open if too many parents become aware of the facts. A 2007 IFS report mooted that there may be funding implications for the government if SB children are allowed to enter Reception at CSA (due to them actually using their full 6-term allocation of pre-school provision), and so the DfE insists that all requests are considered as ‘individual cases’ – despite the circumstances being exactly the same. SB children whose parents want them to access a full education starting at CSA. The funding irony is of course that many of these parental requests are only agreed to if special educational needs or developmental delay can be proved (i.e. ‘normally’ developing children should do what’s ‘normal’ and start school at age 4), but then a disproportionately high number of SB children who do start school at age 4 go on to be diagnosed as having ‘SEN’ as a consequence. Such a short-sighted and irresponsible policy of restricting educational access for SB children to a 12 month chronological peer group window... and when the country’s education laws were founded on the importance of developmental age too. Re: “5.4 ...The changes would: clarify that the duty in paragraph 2.17 applies to parental requests for summer born children to be admitted to reception rather than year 1 at age five;” Comment: The juxtaposition of “clarify” and “paragraph 2.17” in the context of a “fair and open allocation of places” for SB children is nonsensical. Critically, paragraph 2.17 offers parents no right of appeal if their child is offered a place in a different year group to that requested. How is this fair (given that all parents applying for Reception class places for 4 year-old children have a right of appeal guaranteed)? Also, how can the DfE expect parents to take such a gamble, (especially given the current situation of oversubscribed primary schools in many areas)? Paragraph 2.17 says to parents – if you don’t apply for your SB child’s school entry at age 4, and you wait until the admissions round for your SB child to start school at CSA, not only can your school or LEA overrule your parental wishes (and completely logical request/ assumption that your child start school in Reception class, just as everyone else does...) and enforce a Year 1 start, but if Year 1 could well be full. And either way, you’ll have no right of appeal once the decision has been made. Paragraph 2.17 is a round peg attempting to fit into a square hole, and the

	<p>DfE seems determined that if it pushes and twists it hard enough, it can manage to wedge it in and make it fit. And all the time with the persistent warnings of 'early years' experts that many young children are being 'damaged' by being forced into school too early simply falling on deaf ears. Former Education Secretary Michael Gove refused to listen but at least there was no pretense in his aversion to such views; here the DfE seeks to give the appearance of flexibility for SB children, but in the full knowledge that by encasing any possibility of access in paragraph 2.17, it has merely provided a Hobson's choice for the parents of most SB children. Re: "5.4 ...clarify that the circumstances which the admission authority should take into account when making their decision include: the parent's wishes" Comment: This is too weak, and evidence the DfE has already accumulated from parents clearly demonstrates this is so. Worse, the DfE appears content that as long as schools and LEAs are 'seen to be' taking parents' wishes into account, the request can still be refused and the parent has no right of appeal. Furthermore, the Secretary for Education will not intervene, and as of May 2014, would prefer that any problems in this context are directed towards the LGO rather than the DfE. Re: "5.4 ...require the admission authority to take account of the views of the headteacher of the school concerned." Comment: Some head teachers are more willing than others to stick their heads above the parapet in a LEA that has made its views on the importance 'chronological age' year groups clear. Furthermore, when applying for primary schools, parents of SB children can only list 'preferences', and as such, this renders their application process far more unpredictable and unclear than that of other parents. If they are in the fortunate position to find a supportive head teacher, but are then allocated a place at a school lower down their preference list, their child stands to lose much more than attendance at a particular school. They stand to lose their foundation year of primary school if the head teacher of the school allocated insists on a Year 1 place – and/or says Year 1 is full. Re: "5.4 ...require the admission authority to set out clearly for parents the reasons for their decision to ensure transparency in the decision making process;" Comment: All too often schools and LEAs are completely transparent – in their steadfast inflexible attitude towards school entry at CSA. This affects the wider population of pupils than SB children too, where parents are refused part-time or deferred entry until CSA, but for SB children in particular, it is ridiculous that the DfE should propose so much time, money and energy being spent on a</p>
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convoluted “decision making process” for each and every SB child’s admission to school at CSA (very often resulting in complaints processes and DfE correspondence) when there is such a clear, fair and simple alternative. Make the flexibility consistently flexible – wherever you live and wherever you might move to (bearing in mind cases the DfE is aware of, where families move house for work or personal reasons and the new school or LEA seeks to ‘skip’ their child ahead one year in order to ‘return’ to a chronological age year group and lose a year of education). The DRAFT CODE Re: “12. The purpose of the Code is to ensure that all school places for maintained schools (excluding maintained special schools⁶) and Academies are allocated and offered in an open and fair way.”

Comment: In addition to the comments above, there are cases where parents’ applications for their SB children’s entry to Reception class at CSA has resulted in their application being put to the bottom of the pile and a primary school place offered only after all 4 year-old entry applicants have been allocated places. This is clearly unfair, and yet incredibly an LGO decision related to SB school admissions (County Durham February 2014) – again, bearing in mind that the DfE is now sending the majority of parents who face SB admission difficulties to the LGO – determined that “1. Child “N could not have had a place in the Reception year ahead of any other child of the correct age.” 2. “Clearly, it would have been wrong for an admissions authority to have offered a place in Reception for N if any other applicant in the correct age group would thereby have lost a place.” 3. “...he could not have taken a Reception place ahead of any other applicant of the correct age.” The lack of clarity and fairness in the area of SB admissions is both shocking and embarrassing, on every level. Words such as “open” and “fair” simply should not be used in the context of SB children’s admissions, and the existing flaws and failings in the 2012 SAC are not at all effectively remedied in this new draft code. As outlined in the January 2014 SB report that I co-authored, the CSA in England has been lowered to 4 through an unfair and unlawful SB admissions process, and this proposed draft code will do little to change this situation across the board. There may be some increase in the requests agreed to, but it will not go far enough, and it will not address the inconsistency and unpredictability that exists for SB parents who make the request for a CSA primary school start. If the parents of a SB child with Down’s Syndrome can have their request refused, while the parents of a May-born child with no SEN or

developmental delays can have their request agreed to, and if the parents of the exact same child can receive two different responses from two almost identical demographic schools, the proposed system is broken before it even formally gets underway. Re: "14. In drawing up their admission arrangements, admission authorities must ensure that the practices and the criteria used to decide the allocation of school places are fair, clear and objective. Parents should be able to look at a set of arrangements and understand easily how places for that school will be allocated." This is simply not possible for the admissions of SB children and for parents of SB children starting out on their quest to request a child's school start at CSA. The entire "fair, clear and objective" premise of the draft code is rendered impossible by the examples outlined in my comments above. There are so many more individual cases I could have highlighted here, and even as I submit these comments I am aware of recently published Admission Arrangements that are simply not clear to parents of SB children at all – or else they are clear, but clear that flexibility will only be supported in exceptional circumstances. Crucially, the issues for SB children and their parents continue far beyond the admissions process for first entry to primary school, and as explained above can have far reaching consequences in the child's future – if the parents move house, or a new head teacher arrives in the school and doesn't share the previous head's views on flexibility, and a decision is made for the child to 'skip' a year of primary school – or even Year 7 of secondary school. There appears to be no mention in this draft related to a SB child being able to stay in the same cohort for the duration of their education. As such, and given that everyone in authority appears to only look towards the Code for lawful instruction, I believe that the more rigorous support for flexibility contained within the paragraph below would offer parents of SB children a truly "fair, clear and objective" admissions process, and not the subjective, biased and discriminatory process that exists now: Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education." (paragraph written and published prior to this consultation) References: June 12, 2014 Press Release: 'FINAL DECISION' by Local Government Ombudsman

	<p>Condone Discriminatory Admissions Practices for Summer Born children January 15, 2014 Summer Born Report: Compulsory School Age in England has been Lowered to 4 through an Unfair and Unlawful Summer Born Admissions Process</p>
Other body / individual	<p>The proposed clarifications to the code in relation to summer born children offer a slight improvement which is to be welcomed, but they make no impact on the most significant stumbling block which is the enormous pressure on school places. Arrangements for summer born children continue to present challenges at two levels: a. Primary schools are required to keep empty spaces for up to a year which represents both a loss of income and an inefficient use of extremely scarce capacity. b. Secondary schools are presented with the challenge of fast-streaming pupils through a year, or providing an unfunded place at the end of the pupil's school career. We note that the draft code has removed the word 'request' (para 2.16b and 2.16c). This could potentially be misleading for parents, implying as it does that they have an automatic right to defer. In order to avoid unnecessary conflict with headteachers, we support the maintained use of the word 'request'. There remains significant confusion amongst schools, parents, LAs and dioceses over the process by which parents summer-born children may pursue an application for delaying their start, for example: a. When parents should apply for places – either at the 'expected' time, or a year later b. Whether the definition of 'summer born' is sufficient or fair c. What is meant by the phrase 'final term' (i.e. final of 6 terms or final of 3 terms) As pressure on school places increases, the Church of England stands ready to assist the Department for Education in developing creative new solutions to this complex problem.</p>
Other body / individual	<p>We welcome the additional clarity provided for parents and local authorities, and in particular the recognition that the views of the head teacher for the school that the child will be attending are important and should be taken into account by local authorities in determining whether a child can be admitted to reception rather than year one. The head teacher will be best placed to comment on the impact of joining that class for both the child and for the rest of the class, and will also be aware of what other options might be considered.</p>
Other body / individual	<p>"Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st - 31st August inclusive) child to join Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to</p>

	compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education.”
Other body / individual	The proposals seem a sensible way to proceed.
Other body / individual	These changes are outside of our area of expertise but seem like a sensible clarification.
Other body / individual	NGA agrees with the changes proposed which should lead to greater clarity of the current position for both admission authorities and parents. While out of the scope of this consultation, NGA would like to see more flexibility given to parents of both summer born and autumn born children, to decide which year they would want to have their child educated in. It isn't clear why more flexibility isn't given to parents to make the choice, either to have their child start school a year early or the year after, especially where their child's birthday falls near the relevant cut off point. While this government appears to want parental choice, it is noticeable that this is one area where parental choice is limited, especially compared to other countries.
Other body / individual	My grandchild falls into this category and would be 4 years and 1 month as they enter school. They have delayed development and by entering school one year later, at just 5 years, they would be in a much better position to cope with the school classroom and all that that involves.
Other body / individual	Although the proposed changes provide clarity, they do not really alter the status quo as schools already have discretion to admit children out of their normal age group. The proposed amendments do not enhance parents' rights in this regard. If it is the intention to allow summer-born children to be admitted into a lower age group, then this could be made more explicit. Also, provision needs to be made so that this arrangement can continue throughout a child's school career, especially if a child moves school (and, particularly, if the move is to a different local authority). Whilst the proposal is a welcome adjustment, which may benefit some summer born children, it opens up a wider debate about the circumstances in which children should be admitted to year groups which are outside their normal age group. For example, some parents of children who are especially gifted or talented would like their children to be admitted to year groups above their normal age group. Different schools and local authorities tend to have different approaches to such requests.
Other body / individual	I am writing to express concern regarding the issue of admitting a summer born child to a reception class the autumn after they become five. For schools this presents

	<p>a real problem, children are expected to take statutory tests at a given age, and I fail to see how they will be able to do so if they are permanently a year out of sync unless other legislation is changed to suit. For many years children have successfully entered school either part time or, in the past, at the beginning of the term in which they were five. This was stopped because the funding that school received did not take into account those places, therefore to be able to satisfactorily fund staffing children needed to be in place in September (even more important now the census is in the Autumn). I feel that a wider look at these issues is required rather than merely a change to the admissions code</p>
Other body / individual	<p>Proposals relating to summer born children a. The proposed text should help to clarify the position for parents. There may be a danger that being educated out of the relevant age group is thought of as an option rather than as an exceptional provision. It may be prudent to include wording that strengthens the position that it is an exception for children to be admitted outside their normal age group.</p>
Other body / individual	<p>The [name of organisation] recognises the sensitivities and organisational challenges that can be associated with the assertion by parents of their right not to send children born in the summer term to school until they have reached statutory school age. Where parents assert this right, it is important to note that they have the additional right under the Code to request that their children are admitted into reception classes rather than into designated classes for Year 1 children, which, in typical circumstances, would be the normal age group for such children. While the Union notes that while successive versions of the Code have sought to clarify the basis upon which admissions authorities should determine whether to admit summer-born children into reception classes on the basis described above, refusals by authorities to do so are often contested by parents. The [name of organisation] therefore believes that it is appropriate for the DfE to include clearer guidance in the Code on the factors that admissions authorities should take into account in assessing the applications for admission of summer-born children into reception classes. Specifically, the proposed requirement on admissions authorities to set out clearly in writing the reasons for the decisions they have taken on such requests is a potentially helpful addition to the Code although it will be important for the DfE to ensure that the impact of any change to the Code on this basis is reviewed once it has become an established element of admissions practice.</p>

<p>Other body / individual</p>	<p>The clarity in the draft Code that parents may not defer entry beyond the beginning of the Summer term of the reception year, is welcomed. With regard to admission out of cohort, would be helpful if the Code could state: - that the expectation is that children will be educated out of cohort in exceptional circumstances. Parents should consider the impact of their child being educated out of cohort, not only within primary school but at transition to secondary school when a fresh decision will be made about the year group to which they will be admitted. -that requests should accompany an application for a place in the normal round of the child's age, so that a place is available if the request is not agreed. If the request is agreed, the parent must reapply in the following year and will be considered equally with all other applicants. Parents have the right of appeal if place at the school cannot be offered in either age group. - that the wording 'taking into account the views of the headteacher of the school concerned', be reworded as 'taking into account views from or on behalf of the school(s) concerned.' This is necessary to give more local flexibility for LAs in managing the situation in which a parent applies for up to six schools (within the home LA and in other LAs), with the potential for different responses from each school and also the prospect of not being offered a place at any preference school. The consultation document states that if a child is premature, the decision will 'take account of whether they would have naturally fallen into the lower age group if born at the expected time'. However this wording does not appear in the draft Code. I attach some template advice for parental publications which has recently been issued by LIAAG to London LAs in an attempt to achieve a more consistent approach to this issue.</p>
<p>Other body / individual</p>	<p>Admission of children outside their normal age group Paragraph 2.17 • The points admission authorities should take into account when deciding on the circumstances of the case does not include (as referred to in Section 5.4 of the Consultation document) "In the case of children born prematurely, it will include taking account of whether they would naturally have fallen into the lower age group if born at the expected time". NB the reference in Footnote 49 to children born prematurely is not sufficient explanation. • The Code does not make clear when parents should request their summer born child is considered for a place in Reception rather than Year 1, ie is it when they would normally be expected to apply for a place in Reception or can it be the following year? Such a request would need to be made earlier than the usual deadline for applying for Reception year. •</p>

	<p>Further, on a local basis, how would parents know how/when to apply? (Not all parents are as knowledgeable as others!) NB If a parent only applies one year later and their request is refused, the majority of Year 1 classes would be full and subject to Infant Class Size legislation. Indeed such a parent would be at a greater disadvantage if they appealed one year later because it is far less likely errors would have been made, which is the usual reason why Infant Class Size appeals are successful.</p>
Public	<p>Parents need to be the primary decision makers as Schools and County Councils don't know the child. If a child is 'emotionally/socially immature' a school won't have the experience of this to make a decision (therefore it should not be up to headteachers) County Councils seem only to be interested in diagnosed problems with a child - but there seems to be a vast difference across the country. It is not fair that a child who is not mature enough for school is punished by having to miss reception and start in year 1. The code needs to be clear that parents should be the primary decision makers.</p>
Public	<p>It is good to see this issue raised in this new statutory guidance but very disappointing that this does not go far enough to enable equity of access to education for all summer born children, especially those born in the later summer months who evidence consistently shows experience the most detrimental impact throughout their education as a result of the current school year cut off. In light of my above comment this guidance must go further and state that " Parents of summer born children (especially those born in the later summer months ie between June-August) must be allowed to delay their child's entry in to reception by a year should they wish so that the child starts reception class at age 5 years (compulsory school age). The child must then remain in their adopted cohort throughout their entire education." If the above is not stated parents will still have to "jump through hoops" to get their child educated at the right time and may still be denied this right in some places. This would be a failure of this new statutory guidance before it is even published and will continue the inequity of access to education at the right time for this disadvantaged group. It is essential that this be addressed at this time.</p>
Public	<p>Clarification that where an admissions authority has agreed to a request it should be dealt with in the normal admissions round is great and very helpful. It is helpful to make it clear that parents views should be taken into account when making the decision. However, the current situation is that this is a postcode lottery where decisions</p>

	<p>are driven more by personal opinion of those in power to make the decision rather than by a fair and consistent consideration of the facts. The new code will NOT fix these inconsistency problems, it will just force the decision makers to work harder to come up with public reasons for their decision (which in reality will still be based on that personal opinion). Unless all parents of summer born children are given an automatic right to choose the year group that their child is placed in, and a right to choose to maintain this position throughout school (including on transfer to another school) these inconsistencies will continue. Giving parents this automatic right would make everything a whole lot easier for everyone with absolute clarity around the situation and remove a lot of unnecessary time and money spent dealing with conflict in these decisions. At the very least if the DfE chooses not to afford this automatic right then there needs to be clarity around what these mysterious valid reasons are for not allowing a child to join another year group. There should be some form of training for decision makers to improve consistency in the process. This should include explaining acceptability of evidence when making decisions. For example, many are using out of date reports on deceleration in the American school system that is not comparable to the system and issues in the UK. This leads them to cite ridiculous reasons for not granting a deceleration like puberty to a parent whose child is born only days before a September born child in the year below. With regards to including the head teacher in the decision. Again, this simply allows personal opinion to play a huge part in the process. Also, this is hugely impractical for many parents living in an area with high demand for school places as they would potentially have to consult with many different head teachers. Would an admissions authority then grant a deceleration request with a rider that this would only apply if the child subsequently received a place at the school where a head teacher had agreed? Also, this takes no account of the fact that head teachers move on and that a new head may disagree with the decision of the previous head. I know of several of these cases which have had disastrous consequences for the families involved where the new head has not agreed with the decision (another example of different personal opinion affecting a decision). As a parent of a child who has been granted an deceleration I feel hugely lucky that my admissions authority and head teacher have listened to my request (my child has no SEN and is developing normally). However, I feel that my child is now hugely vulnerable to potential changes in the status quo in the</p>
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	<p>future that might be detrimental to her socially, emotionally or academically. As long as those with power have her best interests in mind as I do then her future will be secure, but evidence shows that the current position has left other children ahead of her in the system vulnerable. Her main protection from this is her parents and we have no intention of allowing any decisions to be made that are not in her best interests. We have not taken this decision lightly. We now know, for example, that it would be hugely impractical for us ever to move house to another school area. Is a school admissions code that allows personal opinion to control and leaves children in an insecure position with the potential to lose a whole year of education in the future and the potential for social and emotional distress truly acceptable?</p>
Public	<p>My daughter is turning 4 on 11 August 2014 and she is not ready for reception, but is ready for nursery, as such I would rather have the opportunity to enrol her in reception after her 5th Birthday next August, rather than year one as I feel she wouldn't be ready for year one and would enjoy having the choice as her mother.</p>
Public	<p>I welcome the acknowledgement of the summer born children issue to the code, however, the proposals will not work uniformly as they stand. In areas where schools are over subscribed parents do not necessarily know which school they will end up with. Are they really supposed to have the conversation with 3-4 potential heads before submitting an application? Also some LEAs are already more flexible than others e.g. see Hampshire who quite rightly allow the parent to make the decision whether to delay or not. We have ended up with a County lottery system with flexibility in some and almost no flexibility in others. The decision whether to delay a child's start at school to CSA should be down to the parent alone. The LEAs don't meet the child. Who are they to determine a child's future on the basis of their own potential prejudice?! What about having the following, it is simple and doesn't require a host of extra work for LEAs and for the DfE whom parents will inevitably then contact when faced with LEA opposition?: "Parents who wish their summer born (1st April - 31st August inclusive) child to join Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education."</p>
Public	<p>Good start but not far enough. Still does not reflect</p>

	<p>PRIMARY legislation that compulsory school age is 5, not 4 and that entry level class is reception NOT y1 if a summer born starts at CSA. Primary legislation does not state a summer born automatically loses their right to reception if they start at CSA. Failure to fully reflect primary legislation still enables summer borns to be heavily disadvantaged. Parents should be given the choice whether to start in yrR at CSA or age 4. This is a right automatically afforded to winter and spring borns under the code but not summer borns? As already stated within your notes large numbers of parents are not expected to want to wait until CSA for summer borns but for those who do the legal rights should automatically be honoured especially when also considering academic year dates (1 August to 31 July). In summary my thoughts are: Automatic right to delay reception to CSA for ALL children. Amend 2.16 a) to reflect this: a) parents can choose the date their child is admitted to school is deferred until later in the academic year or until the term in which the child reaches compulsory school age, in the case of summer born children this will be the following academic year. IF this change cannot be made (I don't see why not when it is PRIMARY legislation...) then I comment as follows: Parents should have the automatic right to choose whether their children start at 4 or at CSA. In the case of summer borns starting in September at 5, this should be into reception. Obtaining Head Teacher approval is unworkable. Due to the number of HT's that would need to be approached prior to school applications being submitted. In LEA's that require a minimum of 3 school choices, some 6 this could be 2 to 5 wasted meetings per child. This would be costly and time consuming when HT should be concentrating on running their schools. A HT has to educate a just turned 5 year old (september born) so a summer born would be no different in curriculum. More effective would be approval by the child's EYFS provider who together with the parents know the child best. The child should have an automatic right to stay within their adopted age group until school leaving age. Thus meaning the child will not have to "skip" a year's education later on. Bearing in mind the fines for children taking in year holidays to be able to lose a whole year's education is madness! Right of appeal. Parents of summer borns should have a right to appeal as the entry to reception at CSA is in primary legislation. This is two fold - firstly, if a request has been granted to enter R at CSA and then a place in Yr 1 is offered, the LEA is effectively stealing a year of a child's education. Secondly there should be a right of appeal if a request is denied. Agreed - all summer born applications</p>
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	should be processed equitably with all other applications only subject to over subscription criteria. Come on Government honour the rights of our summer borns!!!
Public	The current wording and stance needs to change to bring about real change for summer born children, especially those born in the later summer months ie June-August. Please make it a compulsory matter and statutory that LEAs MUST allow parents of summer born children who wish their child to begin school at compulsory school age (which is and must remain as 5 years old) to do so. Further these children MUST be admitted in to reception (not year 1 at age 5) and they must stay in this age cohort for their entire school career. If needed to make this work please change cut off date for school enrolment from August 31st to May 31st.
Public	Please do not complicate the process further by requiring head teachers to approve requests for delay. In areas where places are limited, parents would be seeking approval from their 3 school choices in addition to the LEA and may still be allocated a place in a different school where agreement has not been sought. What would happen if agreement can not be reached? The child would be forced to skip reception year? Delay should simply be granted at the parents request to ensure a fair and consistent policy and avoids the current post code lottery.
Public	This needs to be set in law that children born after 31 May may be start reception the september after they turn 5 at the parent's request. Hertfordshire does not allow anyone to enrol their summer born children without exceptional circumstances (and even then they refuse for the first few months) and the process takes 2 years! Councils laugh at the DoE and [name of departmental official] and say that she does not know what she is talking about, and now if you live in some places like Sheffield, you can do it and where we live (Hertfordshire) it is a definite no!
Public	To be effective and stop inequity of access to education across the country for late summer born children we must change the date at which children register for reception. Any child born after 31 May should not start school until the September after they turn 5, and at this stage they should go in to reception not year one. Having children who are just 4 as the current system allows just places these young children at disadvantage throughout their school career. Please change the dates as recommended as part of this new statutory guidance and make this a must for all leas.
Public	The proposed changes are vague and unlikely to provide any improvement to outcomes in practice. The addition

	<p>of parental wishes is keying ultimately this should be the factor on which most weight is placed. It is already legal to start your summer born aged 5 and a year later than the 'normal' aged group and it hard to see any circumstances under which it would be in the child's best interest to start in year 1 having missed a year of school. The cases are small volume by high in hassle and litigation, why not be bold and make parental choice the primary consideration. The list of things for admissions bodies to consider offers no indication if what weighting to put on for example parental wishes and emotional and social development and therefore this is still open to wide and inconsistent interpretation by admissions bodies. In short I would be greatly surprised if these changes resulted in a reduction of complaints and problems as it still provides reluctant LEA's with enough wiggle room to administer a very strict interpretation of the rules. I am also concerned that the wishes of the head teacher who can only offer a generic opinion, as will not know the child, appears to have greater precedence than the wishes of the parents. Each LEA has a different process, or no process, different criteria, some require educational psychiatry reports, some take the opinion of the parents. This code will not solve this problem. Ultimately children do not have to start school until aged five, Reception is obviously the best introduction to school. Why should parents have to jump through hoops and make a case in order to do something that is legal and in the best interests of the child? Unless this code puts parents wishes as its determining factor on summer born then you will continue to have the same issues. They are low volume so there is no reason not to. I urge you to be bold on this issue as it has been on going for years and unless you think outside the box a bit you are going to continue to have the same issue.</p>
Public	<p>This was an improvement over the previous admissions code, although I do still have some concerns. In 2.17A it states that admission authorities must take into account the 'circumstances of the case', however I think this is a bit open to interpretation and it would be better if they took into account the 'best interests of the child'. I was very pleased to see that parents views should be considered, as well as academic, social and emotional maturity. However, I think that a child's personality should also be considered. For example a very shy child who started school for the very first time in year one could find it a lot more difficult to integrate than a child who was more extrovert. I also think that it should be mentioned that there is no requirement for professional evidence. This is because arranging a reception class</p>

	<p>place at compulsory school age for a summer born will have to be done when a child is only 3 years old (perhaps before they start nursery), and many children will not have a professional who will know them well enough to comment on all aspects of their nature and their school readiness. I am also a little uneasy why the views of the headteacher at the proposed school MUST be taken account. (Note that until school places have been allocated the admission authority would not know which headteacher's views to consider). Despite this, I do think that the headteacher should be consulted as an unsupportive head could cause problems. Instead I think head's should be required to provide reasons as to why their school cannot accommodate any summer born child starting in reception class at compulsory school age. Headteachers should not be allowed to comment on individual cases since they will have no knowledge of the child concerned since the child will not have started school yet. In 2.17B I think it is important that the authority does not just set out reasons for their decision, but also, if the authority is acting against the parents wishes, how these reasons are in the best interests of the individual child concerned. There should also be a right of appeal so that these reasons are subjected to scrutiny by an independent body. It is not acceptable that there is no 'quality control' on reasons for refusing to comply with a parents wishes when their children are involved. Finally, it is vital that the new code is more forceful about children who are educated outside of their 'normal' age group who will move to a different admissions authority. I have a late August born son who will be starting in reception class at age 5, and this is absolutely the best thing for him. However, both myself and my husband need to be slightly geographically mobile with our work. Unfortunately the current situation with summer born children is a postcode lottery and I do not feel that we will ever be able to move house because we need to ensure that our son gets his full allocation of schooling. I realize that the proposed admissions code states that one of the circumstances should be the year group the child has been educated in to date however this really does not go far enough. The code should have it as the default case that a child will continue with his/her adopted cohort throughout school.</p>
Public	<p>As the Mother of a Summer-born child who has experienced a lot of medical care and intervention, I welcome all progress made in this area. We are currently in a battle with our local authority who won't allow my child to start in Reception in the September following his fifth birthday; even though the Primary School Head</p>

	<p>Teacher and Educational Psychologist agree that my child should delay his entry into Primary School by one year. It is extremely frustrating. Stockport Local Authority admissions operate in an extremely covert way and I as a parent find it very difficult to communicate with them. They won't respond to emails or answer questions. Much greater transparency is required around decision making; and Council Admissions should listen to the professionals who know your child. I would welcome more explicit guidance for LA Admissions Depts that make it easier to apply for an 'out of year group' place. As you say, most parents won't apply for it, but in a small number of cases it is in the child's best interest and it shouldn't be a battle.</p>
Public	<p>As parents know their children best it should be an option to the parent to decide if they would like their summer born child to be admitted to reception or year 1. Head teachers, LEA and educational professionals should only be able to advise parents. Every child no matter which month they are born should be entitled to full 7 years of primary education.</p>
Public	<p>Summer born children should have the right to have a place in Reception when they turn statutory school age IF a parent requests one. Parents usually would not take this decision lightly, and gentle questioning would confirm if the parents have their child's best interests at heart. However LEAs currently are free to make wildly different decisions about similar children. Some typical children are granted a delay with no problem. Other children's parents are asked for 'evidence' to support their case! Some have even been told their child has to have a 50% developmental delay. All LEA's need to have similar criteria although to be honest, being summer born should be enough! My son does have a significant delay - probably 50% but we were refused a delay because he has SEN, but yet after a lot of fighting, we have been granted delayed entry. However his friend, born in the same week with similar delays and the same condition, was refused a delay by his LEA. My son will start in Reception in a mainstream school next September, whereas his friend has been now forced into a Special School starting this September :(Both of these children should have been granted a delay without any question - both families went through a traumatic time whilst decisions were made over nearly a year. Once a delay is granted it should be clear that the delay should be protected throughout the child's school career ie that they never get moved up a year, and that the child stays with their adopted cohort at transfer to secondary school - as per a SENDIST document on this topic. If the child</p>

	<p>moves house, then again, this delay should be protected, and the child allowed to move into the same year group in their new place of residence. I object to the head teacher taking more of a role in decision making about whether a summer born should be granted a delay. Our headteacher was completely against the decision even though it was in my child's best interests. She fundamentally has suggested we look at Special school even though it is unnecessary for him at this stage. A decision should be made by an informed panel. A child does not need SEN, but those with SEN should not be sent down the SEN route to make a decision. We had problems because we were in the SEN system and the usual admissions rules / team were not involved. The admissions team said yes, the SEN team didn't agree. The head teacher didn't agree. The professionals were too scared to speak out, but afterwards all said they said it was the best decision. The nursery teacher agreed but she was silenced. Parents need to know that if their child is delayed entry, that they can keep their nursery place for another year. Our head told us to go and look at other nursery schools as 'she couldn't allow' a child out of its year group to be admitted. The whole process needs some detailed guidance to ensure fairness across all LEAs so that a) the system is clear and transparent b) parents don't have to 'fight' and c) the child's best interests are kept at the core and not the hassle of paperwork and funding and transfers being reasons for not granting a delay.</p>
Public	<p>I think the admission of summer born children should be addressed in 2.16 and not 2.17. Summer born children do not reach compulsory school age until the September they're expected to go into Year 1. The admissions code should ensure that children who are not sent to school voluntarily before then do not lose the right to a full 7 years in primary school which includes time in Reception class (defined as an entry class to school for 5 year olds). It should also ensure that parents do not lose their parental preferences when applying. The amendments do not go far enough to ensure this - 2.17 discusses children outside of their normal age group but there is no legal definition of what this term actually means nor if indeed children beginning in Reception class are outside of their normal age group. Only giving parents the right to 'request' a place in Reception does not effectively take away the barriers that parents of summer borns currently face. The admissions code needs to go further to ensure that parental choice and the best interests of the child are the primary considerations to admit a compulsory school age child to reception. - 2.17A, I disagree with</p>

	<p>head teachers views being given the same consideration as parents views. Not all head teachers are or will be supportive of a child entering reception class at five. The admissions code needs to make it clearer that parents have no obligation to send their child to school before compulsory school age and when they decide not to do so there needs to be provision in place to ensure that summer born children have the same access to education that they would have if they'd entered voluntarily at age 4 and to ensure that parents don't lose their right to apply to their preferred schools. Without this the admission of summer born children will continue to be a postcode lottery. -2.17B, I agree that admissions authorities should set out clearly their reasons and that applications should be processed as part of the admissions round and considered under the same oversubscription criteria as other applicants. However, as parents do not have the right to appeal there is no way for parent's to ensure that the best interest of their children and their own right to choose when their child begins school has properly been addressed. As it stands the admissions code merely pays lip service to parents admitting their summer born children at compulsory school age. Admissions authorities will merely have to say "we've thought about it and the answer is no" and there will be nothing parents will be able to do about it. I also believe that the admissions code should make clear that when a summer born child is admitted to reception at five, there is no obligation for that child to skip a year whilst on the roll of that school and in any case this should only happen with agreement from parents and only if it can be demonstrated that this is absolutely in the child's best interest. I feel it is unnecessary to make the statement "It is likely that most requests for summer born children to be admitted out of their normal age group will come from parents of children born in the later summer months or those born prematurely". This could create a barrier for summer born children who do not fit this criteria. A child born on April 1st has as much legal right to begin education at compulsory school age as a child born August 31st and their application should be given equal consideration. The primary deciding factor for all summer born children starting school at compulsory school age should be that they haven't had any time in reception class and a refusal to admit them effectively gives them a years less education than their peers. This is why I believe 2.17 is not relevant to a summer born child beginning school at compulsory school age. Access to reception class should be either included in 2.16 as an other option or be given it's own</p>
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Public	<p>We have a summer-born (end August 2010) child with (hopefully mild) SEN and have approval from Surrey County Council for her to start primary school (reception) a year later than normal, in 2015 at age 5. This is great news for her education. The July 2013 guidance was helpful. The Council has not, however, been able to provide assurance that once she started in this (2015, reception) year group she would be allowed to continue with that cohort for her whole school education. If the head of her primary school later decided to move her to the "correct" year group; if we moved schools or areas; or secondary schools would not honour "out of year" admissions to year 3 or 7 she could be forced to skip a full year's education and change cohorts. We've been informally advised that in the event that she does well academically she will not be eligible to apply for selective schools for year 7. In any of these circumstances we would have no right of appeal. I have heard of several cases of these kinds of things happening now in other areas of England (through a Facebook group) and parents have had no recourse. This worries me greatly, since the negative impact on our daughter's learning, her social and emotional development of having to skip a year's education and leave her cohort could be even greater than her starting reception at the "correct" time. We are essentially taking a gamble with her education. At present, there is a "postcode lottery" in England over admission to reception a year late for summer born children. Even children like our daughter, lucky enough to gain approval for admission a year late to reception, face significant uncertainty and risks (as described above) , that will remain for many years as she moves through the system, that others do not. This is unfair and distressing for families.</p>
Public	<p>I think it's very important for Admission to allow parents with summer born children to defer for a year if the parent believes this is the right thing to do. This is especially the case with my child because he was born with many complex medical issues and he is behind physically and gets very tired easily and could not cope with full-time education aged 4. We have received a very negative approach from the Admissions team in our local authority who have refused this for my child and another in the area. This is very frustrating because we have the headteacher at the nursery school and primary school along with a child psychologist all agreeing this would be best for our child to defer and start reception a year later. I know that Admissions teams in other parts of the country are a lot more proactive in this and allow parents</p>

	<p>without any issues to defer their child for a year and this should be the case for all Admission throughout the country. Therefore all Admission teams should do training on this issue and there should be a blanket approach adopted everywhere, otherwise parents will be forced to move location, even if they would rather not.</p>
Public	<p>This is the area that I want to respond to. It is nimbysism but I feel strongly that parents' views on this subject should be taken into account. My son has a late August birthday [date of birth]. He is starting reception this September against my better judgement and wishes. Despite all the research on summer born children, especially boys, despite a wealth of evidence showing that children who start school young do no better or even worse than their European counterparts, despite me knowing my child for 4 years, knowing his personality and temperament, despite the Department of Education guidance, my local admissions authority (Birmingham) will not consider my request to defer him to start reception in 2015. As far as I know, my son does not have special needs, speech delay etc. which needs to be taken into account so the LEA will not, without specialist reports/ evidence etc, allow a deferment. So I am faced with no choice as I do not want him to miss the crucial year of reception. I do not want him to start in the summer term, thus missing out on friendship groups and again, much of reception. I do not have the financial or emotional resources to start a lengthy fight. I believe the denial was based on nothing more than a can't be bothered attitude. It's not convenient, it incurs admin time, so stuff the child's welfare. It is not for my benefit; I am a working parent and the drop in childcare costs is welcome, however I believe my child will ultimately suffer. It is not about him being top of the class but his long term social and emotional as well as academic development. The school are completely unsupportive. They couldn't care less. There are LEAs who do allow deferment. This disparity across the country is extremely irritating. Either parents have a real choice or they do not. Central government has done a classic fudge of devolving responsibility and getting the headteacher involved will simply make the problem worse. This is especially true in areas where the parent does not know which school their child will attend. It also starts the parent / school relationship off badly if the headteacher and parent have opposing views. My point is: either provide a real choice and legislate on the issue so that summer born parents will get a deferral if they want or just say what the reality is, children start school age 4 because the government wants them to conform as early</p>

	<p>as possible, get them learning formally as early as possible, despite all the evidence to the contrary and stuff children's well being. I apologise for going off topic at times and having a rant, but I am passionate about this issue and I hope other parents may have a choice whereas me and my child haven't.</p>
Public	<p>As a parent of a child born in the middle of August, I know first hand how valuable it was for my son to delay starting school, in reception, just after his 5th birthday. My son has Down syndrome and given he has a learning disability, it seemed completely logical to me for him to start school a year later. I really had to fight with my local authority to gain their acceptance, it took more than 18 months of stress, sleepless nights and a huge amount of time and effort. I would very much like to see more common sense being applied - if a child is a late summer birthday and has a known learning disability and the parents can see that the child would benefit from an additional year at nursery, why make it so difficult and stressful? It enabled my son to develop his social skills, his speech, to consolidate a lot of early learning, and to be completely dry so we really feel it set him up at school with the best possible start and now 5 years later he is flourishing in his mainstream primary and we are so glad we fought so hard for this. Please make it easier for other parents and children.</p>
Public	<p>5.2 decisions based on the 'best interests of the child' rather than the 'circumstances of the case' would be better wording as there is no clear indication what 'circumstances' are needed to allow for a delay. 5.4 Schools and LEA's should only be allowed to move a child back to their chronological year group after a delay has been agreed in the most exceptional circumstance. Several cases in Norfolk have meant children who have been delayed have been forced up a year, the onus of providing evidence that this is best for the child should fall to the school. It should state in the code that it is expected that this should occur only in very rare circumstances and should be the ultimate 'goal' of the primary school to get a child in their chronological year before going to high school. 5.4 Also the LEA needs to place the parental opinion above the headteachersbareing in mind that the headteacher has not yet taught the child and cannot have the indepth understanding of the child that the parent does. Parents should have the right of appeal against a decision to not allow a delay. There needs to be an explicit statement that the decision to delay rest with the parents unless the LEA and school can show that it is against the best interest of the child. This is needed to ensure that</p>

	children are treated fairly across England as at present different authorities are processing these requests very differently.
Public	<p>1. The same regulations need to be in force for all Authorities – or else parents will be unable to move house if their child is delayed</p> <p>2. No professional evidence should be needed. (Some children do not have professionals who know them well enough to state whether they are 'school ready', especially since we could be arranging all this before they start pre-school).</p> <p>3. Headteachers should be involved but only in a generic sense. The headteacher must state if their school cannot accommodate children out of the normal year group and give reasons. Headteachers should not comment on individual children since they do not know the children concerned.</p> <p>4. Parents must have a right of appeal otherwise the authorities' reasons for going against parental wishes are not subject to any scrutiny (quality control).</p>
Public	<p>As children born between 31st April and 31st August are not required to start school until the start of the term after their 5th birthday, it should be the parents' decision whether they begin earlier than this and to which year they are admitted if they do choose to wait until compulsory school age as they spend the most time with the child to be able to judge what is best for them. Once a child is admitted to a year group they should remain in that throughout their education and it should not be possible to force a child to transfer to another year group (i.e. miss a year) unless parents and teachers agree it is in the best interests of the child. The criteria for deciding which year a summer born child is admitted should be better outlined and have less reliance on individual admissions boards or head teachers' personal opinion to ensure fairness and clarity for all involved. The process for appeal if a summer born child is not offered a place in the chosen year should be the same as for any other appeal process and the criteria which judgement will be based on should be better defined.</p>
Public	<p>More priority should be given to parents' wishes. Admission authorities' decision-making should be more transparent. Admission authorities should agree to parents' requests to delay their summer born children's entry to reception class aged 5 solely based on the parents' informed decisions. Once a summer born child has been decelerated, they should remain in their adopted year group throughout their schooling.</p>
Public	<p>revision reviews on the current schools admission policy</p> <p>I belong to a facebook group of parents who are all locked in some sort of battle with their LEA in order to</p>

	<p>start their summer born child in reception after their 5th birthday. Some have received written agreements from their LEA via early stages of email correspondence, others have been locked in talks for the best part of a year with meeting after meeting, and some have received a point blank no. My personal battle has been ongoing since June and I am awaiting a meeting with the LEA to discuss the matter further. There is a very definite issue with local education authorities granting parents their request to start their summer born child in reception age 5. I have read the revision of the government policy regarding summer borns and for the most part agree, there needs to be a big overhaul made to the admissions of summer borns, there is a huge problem. As a group of parents we agree this wording would also help if included in the admission policy for summer borns. "Children must commence fulltime education in the September following their 5th birthday. Children will enter Primary School and start in the Reception class. Parents may request that their child is admitted outside their designated age group after the child's 4th birthday. In such cases schools are required to provide for the admission of children outside their normal age group. Before children reach compulsory school age (/compulsory education age), parents can request that their child attend school part-time. Schools must facilitate parental requests to that effect. At the point of entry into Primary School, all children have the right to access full 7 years of Primary School Education."</p>
Public	<p>I would strongly support this proposal. My daughter is born on 31st August and therefore due to go to school under the current system the day after she turns 4. I don't believe the current option of holding her back from reception and then entering year 1 as normal is as feasible as by that point the potential gap between her and her older peers would be a huge disadvantage and hamper ability to catch up. However, we would 100% take up the option to hold her back from reception until she is 5, if she could then enter reception when she does start. Having friends with children in similar situations who have been through the current system, I have experienced how much pressure the children are under to try and keep up with their peers and this does not go away as they progress the school years - they're always playing catch up - academically, physically and emotionally. This is an excellent proposal - fingers crossed it goes through</p>
Public	<p>The clarification is now much better particularly the clarification about part time attendance if the parent wishes. However further clarification needs to be made</p>

	<p>regarding the later education of a child admitted to reception class outside of their year group. It is of some concern that summer born children can be admitted to reception the term after they turn five BUT then at some point later in their education can be made to catch up to their peer group, in effect skipping a whole year. This needs to be clarified that if they are admitted out of their peer cohort they are allowed to stay in that year group and not forced to eventually be moved to their original year group.</p>
Public	<p>I absolutely feel parents should be given the option to decide when their child starts school A parent knows their child, and their capabilities. With the overwhelming evidence that summer children are at a disadvantage by starting school so young, this should be addressed quickly in order to give all children the best educational start possible</p>
Public	<p>As a parent to a summer born, I really feel the need for more flexibility on when summer borns can start school and i would like the option and flexibility to delay school and start outside year group. Instead of going to year 1 at 5yrs having the choice to start reception. Without feeling I have to have a fight to get that.</p>
Public	<p>As the parent of a summer born (30th Aug due Sept 11th) this is a current issue for our family. LA's still have too much power in the decision making, the current stance they have is yes a parent may request entry at reception at 5yrs but we as the LA have the authority to deny this. And that is mostly what happens without overpowering evidence, generally of an SEN, nature that suggests they won't get away with it. It needs to be a right that children can start reception at 5yrs if they are August born. The academic year ends in July so just keep it simple any child born in August has the right to start reception at 5yrs any child born from May - July has the right to apply to start reception at 5yrs providing evidence as to why this would benefit their child. LA's should also be accountable for providing evidence as to why they have denied applications relating specifically to the child's best interests in ALL CASES under current, proposed & my ideal codes. As I am yet to see a LA's response that gives evidence as to why allowing a reception start at 5yrs is not in the child's best interests.</p>
Public	<p>In relation to the factors that must be taken into account by an LEA when making a decision as to whether a child should be allowed to enter reception at compulsory school age there are issues with the following: "information about the child's academic development" When I have to apply for my youngest daughter's place she will literally have just turned 3 and have only just</p>

	<p>started pre-school. There will be no or very little information (and if there is any information it is likely to be highly inaccurate and not at all indicative of her future academic development) about her academic development. My LEA currently request evidence that your child's education and exam results will be negatively affected by starting school a year before they reach compulsory school age (something which can not be proved either way) and I fear that if this criteria is left in the admissions code it will be used as a way for LEAs to reject all applications as seems to be the case with my LEA. "They must also take into account the views of the head teacher of the school concerned. " Firstly parents do not always get their first choices, or in some cases any of their choices of school. How is it possible to get the views of the head teacher when you do not even know which school your child will be attending? Secondly it is highly likely that the head teacher will have no knowledge whatsoever of your child. Therefore they will not be acting in the child's best interests based on what they know about the child but rather will most likely be basing their decision on their own (biased) opinion which will probably be derived from experiences and observations of other children and I fail to see how this is relevant. This part of the code is only likely to increase the 'postcode lottery' which is sadly already evident. The only factor that MUST be taken into account should be the opinion of the parents as they are the only ones who know the child properly and who know whether the child will cope with school when they have only just turned 4. There should be something included in the code which makes it a responsibility of the LEA, when they reject an application for a child to enter reception at compulsory school age and force a child straight into year 1, to provide evidence as to why this is in the best interests of your child (bearing in mind that they no longer allow holidays during term time and issue fines for missing even a day of school). There also needs to be something that states that when delayed entry to reception is authorised, the deceleration is to be maintained throughout the child's whole school life.</p>
Public	<p>Although the draft ensures that once governing/admissions body agree to educate a summer born child outside of their chronological age group, that their application must be given the same consideration as others, it still allows said bodies to remove parental choice. If schools for whatever reason do not want to allow summer born children to begin Reception in the September after their 5th birthday, schools and councils will continue to enforce this and put parents and children</p>

	<p>in a catch 22 situation, where they are faced with damaging their child's education, emotional and social health and their child missing an entire year of school? On this note, there is much evidence to suggest that a later start in formal education is beneficial in the long run, however there is none to state that missing a year of education has the same benefit. It is also impossible and a reprimandable offence to take your child out of school for a week's holiday, but makes it ok for a child to miss an entire year of education.</p>
Public	<p>I would recommend that the code would be worded as such; Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education.” This removes the dilemma that parents currently face and will continue to face if the draft publication goes ahead of been put in a catch 22 situation between sending their children to school before school readiness and them missing a year of school and ultimately defeating the purpose of keeping them at home for another year.</p>
Public	<p>Hi. My daughter is born on [date of birth]. She is bilingual - bulgarian and english speaking, but her english is not very good. She loves her afternoon nap and her long summer holidays with grandma on the beach. I am really against putting her only 4 years and 4 days old into reception class and let her miss last year of freedom. I feel she is too young to start school and want her to postpone reception class with 1 year and not to skip it. I hope that this huge problem in the education system will be fixed and my daughter will start reception when she is 5 and 4 days.</p>
Public	<p>I find the updated proposals still need clarification and leave what should be a straight forward issue clouded in uncertainty. If a child is not obliged to start in reception until the September after their fifth birthday then that should be set in stone and not left up to the (differing) interpretations of authorities or head teachers. If parents wish to send their four year old to school then all well and good, but parents should be free to make the choice. In 5.3 you state that 'the vast majority of parents are happy for their summer born child to start school in the September following their fourth birthday'. While I'm sure this is the case, I think it is also largely down to the fact that most parents are simply not aware that their child is not obliged to start school until the September after their</p>

	fifth birthday. In our experience, even nursery staff and local authority staff are not aware that this is the case.
Public	<p>5.2 "A parent who chooses not to send their summer born child to school until they have reached compulsory school age may request that they are admitted outside their normal age group – to reception rather than year 1."</p> <p>I believe parents should not just be able to 'request' but instead "Parents have 'the right' or 'the option' to send their children to reception rather than year 1.</p> <p>5.4 Why is this advice 'non-statutory', why not make it 'statutory' and put an end to the postcode lottery that we have at the moment. Evidence should not need to be provided, it should be left at 'the parents wishes' as it is after all the parents that know their child best. Children born prematurely should have the right to enter into the year group they would have been in had they had been born on their due date. Admission authorities should not have to provide reasons as there should be no need if the parents wishes are respected. Parents should have the right to choose, this advice does not go far enough and until it does the inconsistencies across schools and authorities will continue to persist. The guidance should be statutory and not non-statutory.</p>
Public	<p>With regards to the admission of Summer born children to school a year early at age 4. surely it should be a parents' choice if they wish to send their child in the CORRECT year group which is the term after their fifth birthday. I do not understand why this is deemed to be 'outside of their normal age group' (5.2) as in fact it is correct as they do not have to start reception / formal education until the term after their fifth birthday! Why is the decision to defer to my child's entry to school made by the admission authority who don't know my child? Surely the decision should sit with me, their parent , who knows their child best and has their best interests at heart. I would request that the code be amended that where a child is a summer born (April to August) the parent has the absolute right for their child to attend Reception from compulsory school age and no further evidence be required nor approval needed. Also, when a child commences school they remain within that year group and aren't forced to move year groups which would be detrimental to their education.</p>
Public	<p>Im glad the paper address summer borns but it doesnt go far enough As a mum of three struggling summer borns I believe summer borns (especially August born boys) should have the option to start reception after their fifth birthday without there having to have any "special circumstances" other than being an August born. Doing this will really improve the quality of learning as they will</p>

	<p>be more ready firschool . They should be allowed the full seven years of primary education and also be allowed to stay in that year throughout secondary school too Ive just read the draft admissions code Im a parent of 3 summer born children (my baby is 28 august) my other two are at school and are affected by the birthdate effect. I think your guidelines for summer borns are deffinatly moving in the right direction and is more positive for those parents who want their kids to start school age 5, not 4. However you say that the head-teacher can have a say, but what would happen if you don't know what school your child will get into. I believe that the parents know best rather than the "professionals", and there shouldn't have to be any "exceptional circumstances" to delay admission. I cant understand why councils find it a problem. Does it really matter if a child finishes school age 16 rather than 15. One extra year to develop at play school can have such a positive impact on their life with regards the child's confidence and academic learning. I think august born children should surely have option of starting a year later, as the youngest, as well as premature children etc. Im sure you are aware if the summer born report.</p> <p>http://summerbornchildren.files.wordpress.com/2013/03/14-jan-15-summer-born-report-csa-lowered-to-4-through-unfair-and-unlawful-sb-admissions-process.pdf Its very insightful I hope my views have helped</p>
Public	<p>I am writing as a parent of a summer born boy to express my huge support for the change in admission process. My Son started school at 4 years and 2 weeks old and has had to compete with children practically a year older than him throughout his school life so far. I was told he would catch up by year 3 (he didn't) and have had to watch his confidence shrink over the years. If he had been born a matter of days later he would have been in the year group down. How can that possibly be fair? The older children were and are physically bigger so tend to be faster and stronger as well. This means that they are often more likely to dominate the sports field as well. They did. At the end of year 3 I had my Son accessed by an educational phycologist. I wanted to know if there was anything we were dealing with apart from age. He came out with an above average iq, no problems but was just not with his peers. I could not watch my Son lose all belief in his abilities and solved the problem by enrolling him in a private school and repeating the year group. Can I afford to do that? Absolutely not but I am so very glad I did. He has blossomed in every way, he is now happy and excited to be at school. He is now with his real peers. However, what if the next parent is not able to</p>

	<p>find a private education. Why should I have had to? Please change this outdated and ridiculous admission rule. If someone wants their child to start school at age 4 and the child is ready then let them choose that but if another child would benefit from time to mature and attend school later please give a parent that choice.</p>
Public	<p>As a summer born child and starting school too early I was put in the learning difficulties category and sent for remedial lessons. I feel as a result I have suffered with difficulties with the 3 r's and socialising. I certainly do not want this for my grand son and any other child that is summer born. It is imperative these young children are allowed to enter school and have the best education possible and the best person to decide when their summer born child is ready is the parent of the child. Also which level the child enters at should also be the parents choice. Responsible parents have the best interest of the children at heart and should have the right to choose what is best for their child. Attending school at too young an age can blight the life of an outgoing interested in everything child. I speak from first hand experience.</p>
Public	<p>We do not feel that the guidelines given to LAs on the admission of summer born children outside their normal year group go far enough. Our son will not reach compulsory school age until a full school year after the point which he could have first been admitted. Reception is a class '...suitable to the requirements of pupils aged five...' If permission is given for our son to start in Reception in 2015 he will have just turned five and will therefore fit perfectly within the above definition. As our son will be four for the entirety of the 2014/15 academic year he will continue to benefit from the close attention he receives at home. As has been widely documented, keeping adult to child ratios small in the early years reaps long-term rewards. Our son has a stay at home parent and three grandparents he sees on a weekly basis; he receives a rich education in the broadest sense and is learning to form secure attachments. Why should he lose one whole year of this because he's a week off the 1st September cut off? Your code highlights that LAs should take into account the parent's view – this is certainly not what our LA is looking for. They have clearly stated that only the view of professionals for a delay is appropriate in their criteria. How is this fair when another LA accept any parental request? Your guidelines are far too woolly and this will open a postcode lottery of LAs taking their own view on the admission of summer born children. Particularly now when the code states that the Head teacher's views must be sought. So, I might have</p>

	<p>to travel 20 miles to find a Head who agrees with our philosophy? The law states that parents have the right to ensure the education and teaching of their children is in conformity with their philosophical and pedagogical convictions. However, in my experience, there is a flagrant violation by admission authorities of both the spirit and intention of the legislation that has been put in place in an effort to help parents and give them the right to choose. You state that flexibility exists. In reality, the notion that flexibility and parental choice are intrinsic and mutually supportive facets in the school admissions "system" fallacy. If I manage to find an LA and Head teacher who agree to our request, our son might have to skip a year or be denied entry to a grammar school because he's 7 days out of the statutory admissions criteria age range. Ultimately, parents of summer born children still have to give reasons for taking up their legal right to delay their child's entry to reception class until their child reaches compulsory school age despite the legal definitions of both these terms being on their side. And even if they manage to jump through all these invisible hoops (and moving goalposts) their child may still not receive a full 7 years of primary education or be denied entry into their preferred secondary school because the Head teacher does not agree. Because of 7 days? Look at the research and literature on the outcomes and challenges faced by summer born children – particularly boys... And tell me, do you really feel your code goes far enough in protecting my son from the studies which show that summer born children are most likely to be unhappy at school, weakest in mathematics, considered below average/ SEN, report bullying, and being significantly less likely to go to University. Because of 7 days?</p>
Public	<p>I think the whole policy on admissions of summer born children needs to be changed. Currently schools force children to enter reception at 4 years old by not allowing, or by making it extremely difficult, to delay entry into reception until the child turns 5 (the legal age at which a child has to be registered for education). For summer born children this is almost a whole year before they reach compulsory school age. They are therefore forced to undertake a whole year of schooling before they even legally have to be there as parents don't want to put them at an even greater advantage by entering them into year 1 at compulsory school age (which most LEA's force them). The system needs to recognise that not all children develop at the same rate. They are not machines after all. It makes no sense whatsoever to have a cut off date that parents and schools have to</p>

	<p>abide by. Rather it would make much more sense to have a 'grey area' - perhaps a couple of months either side of the cut off date. This would allow parents to decide which year would be the most suitable for their child to enter reception. Parents are the only ones who truly know their child and know whether they are ready for school. No child should be forced to miss out on a whole year of education because they are not ready for school when they have just turned 4 as the current system dictates. On the other side of the coin I know several parents who believe their advanced September or October born child is ready for school just before they turn 4. Let parents of Summer/early Autumn born children decide when their child is ready for school. With more pressure being put on young children with assessments and targets and a new, even tougher, curriculum now in place the government needs to allow parents of Summer-born children have the final say on whether their child is ready for school. Not a head teacher who doesn't know their child. Or a representative of the LEA who doesn't know their child!! Please can we have some guidelines in place that allow common sense to be used before more children suffer long term damage caused by our schooling system.</p>
Public	<p>On reading this proposed consultation there is no reference to premature summer born children and so we feel that we must express our views on this matter. Our daughter was due to be born in October 2008 but was born 9 weeks prematurely, this meant she had to start school in September 2012 instead of September 2013. On correcting our daughters age she was 3 years 10 months when she started school which is far too young to start formal education. Starting a whole year earlier has affected her socially and academically, she has struggled to keep friends as she is so much more immature than the rest of her peer group and has failed to reach the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics. The system at present makes it as hard as possible to delay a summer premature born child. We feel strongly that parents of summer born premature children should automatically have the right to delay their child starting reception year, this would enable their child to be in their natural school year. Our daughter started year 2 today and really she is not even 6 years old!! She will be expected to do schoolwork that developmentally she is not ready to do for another year. Our daughter and others like her have been let down by the school admissions system, this will affect them for the rest of their lives unless changes are made to allow a more flexible intake.</p>

Public	<p>Dear Sir-Madam I have summer born child ,[date of birth] as a family we are suffering with Admission cod, you wouldn't believe how many parent seeing nightmares because they kids just potty trained have to go to school . We applied for deferral with supporting document but it has been refused by Cambridgeshire county council And my son just tur to 4 last week force to go to school next week, 1-He cannot tell his name 2-He recognise some number in 10 and He is not interested with alphabet. He rather be dinosaur and turn around himself for 15 minutes 3-He needs help when he goes to toilet, when he eat and when he needs to dress 4-He needs to be looked after and he will not be looked after between 30 kids 5-When he is upset with food or anything no one can make him stop for hour, do you think is it fair to him or school? Do you think primary school teacher would be able to look after 30 of 15 maybe 10 of kids like my son, I doubt it. Your draft more flexible for summer born children but it still does not give right to parent of summer born child to be deferred easily every council has they own rules I think admission day (cut of point) should be 1st of June not 1st Sep so all the summer born children should start school after they 5th birthday After I shared my individual suffering with council I still have been refused, I would like to share my letter below it might explain why this code ruing our lives. There are quite a few reasons that we would like to defer entry for our Son [child's name] School start. It is very important for us to get permission from Cambridgeshire County council, not just for [child's name] sake but also for us as a family we are going thought some difficult times and we do not want to see our both children struggling this coming year. 1. [Child's name] was born [date of birth] and he is physically and emotionally not ready to go to school in Sep 2014. Our daughter went to a private school in Cambridge over last 2 years. Until recently we were also planning to send [child's name] to her school. He was assessed by the school September 2013. He was too young and he was behind his expected development age school granted us one year deferral. Unfortunately because of the recession which has affected my husband's business so now we had to make decision to send them both to a state school .There are few issues: Most important of all is Deferring [child's name] for one year and [second child's name] transition to state school , she is a very clever and sensitive child and recently we found out that our son also has to start school and we were not even thinking that would be an issue but it is now because school told us if we hold him a year he will need to start in year one next year . He is</p>
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	<p>not ready to go to school neither we are ready for him to start this year because we know our child and he has been assessed 3 times since September he is not ready and he will be so unhappy. We do not want him to spend all his primary years trying to catch up to those who had a whole year more in school. He is not interested being in class. He is physically and emotionally not ready he will be bored. The opinion of other parents of summer borns was that they seemed relegated in all respects below the older children. It is well known that summer born children lose out on sports team membership unless they are big for their age and my son is small. It is scientific fact that children do not all reach the same targets at the same time. It is not about us, or the school, it is about him. The English education system has one of the youngest starting ages in the world. It is common for many children to need to learn through play until they are 6-7 (especially boys) child is any more or less likely to achieve in the long run. However forcing children into academic instruction too early is scientifically proven to cause damage to their long term mental health and well-being., my child isn't ready, I would like him to begin their reception education at compulsory school age please. 2. [child's name] also has been assessed by his nursery (he is attending [name of nursery]) every 6 months. Last year he had a delayed speech issue. This year's January assessment showed he was 41 month old but his development was 22-36 month. We also did not need school to assess him again. the most recent assessment at the nursery this week said 46 month old child should be in 40-60 gap, but [child's name] has 30-50 in all over the results. They told us, we should not be worried because his nursery will help us to with his development this year, they have plan they will make him ready to go to reception 2015 (all in attachment). He is just potty training mid-June and he does not go on his own, he has to be reminded every hour at home and he has few accidents in the nursery and he uses nappy night time so he still not established his potty training. 3. [child's name] has just made his first friend; he is 6 month younger than [child's name]. They are very attached to each other, even weekends he cries to see him, we are hoping they will stay together this year and start school together next year. Especially [child name]'s development comes little slower than others he will really benefit being in his nursery one more year. Also as a family we will have our daughter having difficult time leaving her friends and her school that she loves. Unfortunately changing school is not optional for us, this is not the decision we would like to make but we have to do it but we don't want to see</p>
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	<p>both our children to suffer and we need this deferral for all the family. 4. [child's name] had an accident in the nursery in July 2013 .Since he has trouble using his left thumb (he was left handed and now he trying to use both).He cannot now hold a pencil .He has to have operation on his thumb, we are on the waiting list in [hospital name] and his operation will be in October or November time. It will not be a big operation but he will still have a general anesthesia and he will stay in hospital for one day and his hand will be opened and stitched and his recovery time will be between 6 to 12 weeks .He should be looked after as his hand will be open the infection. He should stay away from sand, water ,sun and accident, therefore the our plans is that I will take time of for 2 months to look after my son at home. Than he will go back to nursery part time in January. Than on a full time bases until school time (September 2015) and we hoped that he will have full recovery before 2015 September 2015 for the school and he will be able to use his thumb and he can use a pencil. 5. Another issue is, we have talked to our catchment area school [name of school] and admission office. We will apply for a year two entry for our daughter for Sep 2014 and although we don't want [child's name] to start .We have been told that we need to make an application. We also found out there are 50 children on the waiting list for the reception class therefore we might not be able get place for [child's name]. The school says there is no place for him and we do not want him to start school this year .that might also be one more reason that we need to have deferral. The key points are: Emotionally and physically [child's name] would be more closely matched with September 2015 children by he staying in his current nursery which he has attended last 2.5 years he will be completing his development plan .He will have significant progress ,had his operation , he will be able to use his thumb and will not struggle writing . He is still not interested academically at the moment and he only goes nursery 4 days a week because he get tired five days and gets upset therefore at the moment he is home with me on Wednesdays, by next year he will have had chance to develop and he than has a chance to love his new school and he will be able to be happy and achieve more. As a family we are going through very difficult time physiologically and financially and we are having to make making a decisions that will affect all of us .We have to make sure [child's name] has had more time to be ready for school and [second child's name] (our daughter) has a easy transition from her old school to state system. Than we need to concentrate on [child's</p>
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	<p>name] operation if [child's name] was already attending a school, he would lose a whole term in his first year and we felt that this would be counterproductive. If he can be deferred, then he can stay in nursery, have his operation than he has a chance to complete his development program complied by nursery. He will have more chance to be happy and achieve more by starting school in September 2015 will be best solution for our child and his future .We will be grateful if we could grant his deferral. I think cut of point should be 1st of June not 1st Sep so all the summer born children should start school after they 5th birthday, Most of summer born kids failing in education, admission date need to be changed</p>
Public	<p>I was born in Scotland and completed all my education there. In Scotland the cut-off for starting school in the Autumn is to turn 4 by the end of February prior to this. This means that the youngest any child can be on starting school is 4 and a half. Even then, if you feel that your child is not ready, you can choose to delay the start of their formal education for another year. In England, you have the often distressing situation where a child turns 4 in August, only to find themselves in school within weeks (sometimes even just minutes!) of their 4th birthday. This does not happen in Scotland. A child of this age is very much disadvantaged compared to a lot of their older classmates, and at this age there is a marked difference in most children's development at 4 compared to 4 and a half let alone 5 years old. There are numerous reports to support my own personal observations both as a parent and as a support staff member in primary school that these Summer-born children are disadvantaged not only at this stage, but also throughout their education. There ought to be parental discretion to delay the start of the Reception year if it is in the best interests of the child.</p>
Public	<p>I fully support the strengthening of the Code to take into account the parental request for delayed Reception entry for summer born children. Also that the request should be treated in the main admissions round. Missing is the assurance that should a child be admitted to Reception instead of Year 1 as requested, the child becomes a permanent member of their new year group and will not be asked to miss a year of secondary education at a later stage to realign them. I do not support having to consult the school in question, unless the child is not attending any childcare setting as they apply. The school won't know the child concerned at all and this may well result in a blanket local school policy of supporting/not such requests. This would end up with a postcode lottery again for children. Most children take up the 15 hours</p>

	<p>grant and so their childcare provider is best placed to comment on their development. It is not clear to me what emphasis the Code recommends is placed on a child's development vs parental wishes. A late summer born child who is perfectly 'normal' in their development may still not be emotionally ready for the big step to the school environment. It is parents who know this best and it really should be their choice. This is in the context that the vast majority of parents will opt for Reception at age 4 rather than ask to delay by a year. Missing in the Code draft here that was very useful in the July 2013 guidance is that the admissions authority should take account of the likely outcomes for those applying to defer a year. While the research on the subject may shift over time, there is enough clear evidence currently that Summer borns have lower average attainment and suffer from more low confidence issues. Also, it doesn't seem reasonable that there is no right to appeal the year group decision if the admissions authority haven't listened to the parents when they have been asked to. This goes back to what emphasis is suggested goes on parents' requests vs 'normal' development for the child etc. Finally, with friends in both Scotland and Australia where the parents' wishes are paramount in this area, I would also support strengthening the code still further to it being based on parental wishes alone as to when a summer born child enters Reception in line with the CSA. As you say, with such a small volume of likely take up, this would remove the emotion around the whole subject.</p>
Public	<p>At present there is a vast discrepancy across the country of LEA responses to parents of summer born children applying for their child to start at CSA in Reception. This alone is terribly poor practice. Some LEAs need only the parent request in writing- nil else, and agree. Others require various professional reports- and still say 'no'. 'The child's best interest' should be the key consideration in all LEA decision making, and so, since it is only the parents of summer born children making these requests to educate 'out of year group', and since those children would be younger than any other children in the world who start school, surely, the wording should simply state that for any parental request of a summer born, the wishes of the parent should be complied to. 5 is the CSA. Reception is seen as 'crucial' by the Government.....what more needs to be said? 5 is probably too early for some children anyway but that's another issue. Please keep it clear and simple for the LEAs so that there can be no 'altered interpretation' by LEAs. This causes such stress and worry for families and often results in children being placed in year groups</p>

	<p>which statistics tell us, and evidential research reveals, causes emotional/academic harm to the child. there is no justification in LEA's saying 'no' to these parent requests.</p>
Public	<p>I believe the parent knows the child and child's emotional state better than any cut off line to begin school. There should be flexibility in allowing summer born to start reception year aged 5. If it enables a child to enjoy their school years without struggling behind their peers then this can only be a positive situation. This is a matter I feel extremely strongly about and unfortunately have been met with a no when I have requested this for my summer born.</p>
Public	<p>There is discrepancy between LEA's when implementing these guidelines - the below would result in greater consistency "Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education."</p>
Public	<p>I feel it is important that parents of summer born children (born April 1st - August 31st) are able to start their child in reception at compulsory school age (rather than 'missing out' on reception and going straight into year one and effectively losing out on a year of education). The application to start school at compulsory school age into reception must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age. Importantly, the child should remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education (unless returning back to the 'correct' cohort is agreed by BOTH parents and the head teacher). The child should not be forced to return back to their original cohort (even if they move school / area).</p>
Public	<p>Whilst some Summer born children are ready to start school on September, the fact remains that they are almost a year younger than some of their class mates but expected to perform on a similar level. Although research shows that they will have caught up by the end of Year R, a huge amount of unnecessary pressure is put upon children who are only just 4 rather than almost 5.</p>
Public	<p>Parents of summer born children should be able to apply for a reception place for their child in the appropriate year. Their application should be treated equitably alongside all applications and they should receive written confirmation that their child can remain in their adopted year group throughout their education.</p>

Public	As a parent of a summer born child , i really believe my daughter should have the option to join the year below and start school at compulsory school age instead of being forced into school at just age four. parents should have this option and these changes to the admission code would make a huge difference to summer born children as well as children who are summer born prematurely and give them the chance to the early years education they are entitled to instead of rushing them through preschool from the funded age into school within a year.
Public	As a parent of two summer born children I believe that the code needs to be clearer and expanded. Schools and councils shouldn't be able to refuse a parents wish to start their child's education in reception at compulsory school age- a parent knows their child better than council members or a school head. Please make it clearer that the government supports parents and their right to start their children starting reception at 5- when talking to schools about starting my summer born at 5 I was told that I couldn't as it was not the governments recommendations - surely this is wrong and the must be changed to be clearer!! Also It is vital to include a statement which states that if summer born children are admitted to reception at compulsory school age, that they remain in that year group for their entire education. Please stop councils and schools from making our children miss an entire year of school so they 'catch up' with their 'cohort'. Forcing a child to miss an entire year of education is an appalling thing to do, especially since all the research into education and attainment in adult life determines that the single most important factor is number of years at school- ref Prof John Hattie Please include this and safeguard the education of our countries future workforce Make the uk proud and at the forefront of helping summer borns and listening to parents From a mum who wants the best education for her late August child- don't disadvantage him for his birthdate!!
Public	Summer born children should be given the legal right to enter into reception at compulsory school age (the calendar year they turn 5) therefore a year after their current 'cohort'. They should then be able to stay with this year group the whole way through their education, never having to miss a year of schooling. The difference between a child just turned 4 & one turning 5 is huge at this stage of life & the parent should be able to decide whether their child is ready or not.
Public	My child was born in [date of birth], how can it be fair that she will enter reception class practically a full year younger than her peers? Children are very adaptable,

	but not all children, surely the choice should lie with the parent.
Public	Parents of summer born children (those born April 1st - August 31st inclusive) should be allowed to apply for a school place starting in reception from the term after their child reaches compulsory school age. This place in this year group should then be allowed to continue throughout their school years. These children should not be expected to miss a vital year of their schooling by going straight into year one, not should priority for places be given to those children whose parents choose for them to start school before compulsory school age.
Public	The lack of consistency in terms of response to parents requests to start their children the term after they are 5 is appalling. It should not be a battle for parents - the guidance should be clear and support children who are not ready to start at 5 rather than 4.
Public	I feel strongly that parents know what is best for their child. I am glad to see that parents' wishes are to be taken into account and hope the decision will be heavily weighted this way. Local authorities need to be consistent in approach. The current situation where delaying a summer born child is easy in some counties and nigh on impossible in others, like Cambridgeshire, must end. It should be possible in all areas.
Public	Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education. At present all school admissions authorities seem to treat requests for delayed and deferred entry differently which leaves many parents confused. Compulsory school age is 5 and not 4 - and this really must be reflected clearly in admissions procedure. Please allow summer born children to begin reception class at compulsory school age (if this is preferred by the parents) without the fear of children being placed in Year 1 (against their parents' wishes) and missing a year of schooling.
Public	I support this wholeheartedly. My two children are July born and I think might struggle with full time school from age 4 as they have been with me at home their whole lives. I would prefer they had a slower introduction to school, as many parents in similar situations will agree.
Public	I have quite a summer born child and I am very worried about when the time comes she needs to start school. She was born [date of birth] and is a very happy little girl

	<p>her friend is almost a year older than she is but yet they would be in the same year at school! When I look at them both together, I can see obvious differences between the two children in terms of confidence and that my girl can't do a lot of things her friend can, this leads to distress on my daughter's behalf and I feel once this is taken to a school scenario my bubbly confident child would feel pushed back and not as confident as she wouldn't be able to do as well as the other children and would also become a lot tired easier therefore irritable and I worry this would label her as a "problem child" when she is not. I would like to be able to delay her a year without a stress, worry and fight on my hands if once the time came I felt it was necessary for her wellbeing and education. Early years are very important and I believe the parent, carer knows and should be able to do what's best for their child. I would then like her to go into reception when she is 5 like all the other children who aren't summer born. it would be unfair to hold her back then push her straight into full time schooling. Why is it other countries children don't start until much later? I am making sure my child has the best start in life and every day is about learning, having new experience and play. But then I feel let down by the government the fact that I can't continue to support her and give her the best she deserves. Every child is an individual and some children will probably be happy to be starting school at 4 but to me it seems a very young age especially when there are bigger children in your class and have a whole year on you. Just a few months a child learns so much so you can often see a big difference between a 24 month old child for example and a 26 month old child so to be in a class where there can be up to a years difference I feel is not right. At 4 they are simply too young to start school. I know it is law that children do not need to start until they are 5 so why is there a big fight to get what is the law??? And it should be compulsory that all children have to do reception class to break them in to school life. Not just shoved into a class the second they turn 5. I know there is a lot of people who feel very strongly about this and I really do hope that by the time my girl can start school I don't have a huge fight on my hands like others before me fighting for their child's rights by law</p> <p>Summer born children should be able to have a choice which year they attend school. Specially premature born children</p>
Public	I strongly agree to the proposal relating to the admissions of summer born children. By law a child in

	<p>the UK doesn't have to start school until age of five, so all summer babies should start at five so they are in line with ages of everyone in class. Any child under the age of five has options available e.g. Mum's and tots groups, playgroups, funded hours by government to attend pre school, so parents still have options available for children under five to develop, socialise and mix in with other children without the pressure of full time school age at four.</p>
Public	<p>Parents of summer born children (april to august births) should be given the choice to apply for reception at compulsory school age if they wish and be considered for places alongside all other applicants</p>
Public	<p>All summerborn children should be automatically given the right to start reception in the September after they turn 5, and be considered fairly along with the cohort for the year that they applying. There should not be any requirement to consider 'information about the child's academic, social and emotional development', as summerborn children are merely exercising their right to start school at compulsory school age – this should not require any justification. They are meeting the legal requirement and therefore should not be discriminated against by potentially being forced to miss a whole year of school. Summerborn children should also be guaranteed that they will complete the full schedule of primary years and not forced to move up to their chronological year group. Allowing parents to simply 'request' this as stated in the draft admission codes does not give summerborn children the opportunity they deserve which is to start school age 5 and not be forced to miss out on reception. The word 'request' needs to be changed to allow this right to be approved automatically, and ensure that summerborn children are automatically granted an opportunity to apply for a reception place at compulsory school age. As a parent of a summerborn child we are happy for him to start school age 5 in reception, but fear that by 'requesting' to do so, we will end up in a situation where he could potentially be forced straight into year one, with no opportunity to appeal. It needs clarity and a conclusive result which gives assurance that a reception place at compulsory school age will be offered. By having only the opportunity to 'request' they are deferred, parents are being threatened by the thought of their child being forced straight into year one, which would be an extremely harsh introduction to the schooling system. In my opinion sending a child straight into year 1, is neither fair or just and makes a mockery of the reception year if it is not essential for summerborns. Furthermore, parents are</p>

	<p>being fined for missing school for holidays during term time which implies that EVERY day of school is vital. So therefore how can it be justified to force children to miss an entire year? Finally, should it continue that the right for summerborns is still considered on a case by case basis, there needs to be an appeals process in place to ensure continuity and fairness. For clarity the code should be worded as follows “Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education’</p>
Public	<p>I do not believe that the small number of parents requesting that their summer born children enter Reception at compulsory school age is representative, but rather a reflection of the belief among parents that they do not have this option. The presumption should be that the parents' decision is paramount, unless other factors can clearly be shown to outweigh this. It must be clear that the child, who enters outside its normal year group, can remain with its adopted year group for the remainder of its education.</p>
Public	<p>Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education.</p>
Public	<p>Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education.”</p>
Public	<p>“Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education.”</p>
Public	<p>Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August</p>

	31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education.”
Public	Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age should be able to submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application should be not be treated differently to applications for children starting school prior to compulsory school age. Any summer born child starting reception at compulsory school age should remain with their adopted year group cohort for the remainder of their education, with no requirement to miss a year at any stage. Exceptional circumstances should not be necessary to obtain a place in a Reception class at compulsory school age.
Public	Parents of summer born children who wish their child to enter reception at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. This should be treated equally alongside those starting school prior to compulsory school age. The child can remain with that year group for the rest of their education.
Public	Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education.
Public	Please do this. A march cut off would make a huge difference.
Public	Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education.
Public	Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with

	that year group cohort for the remainder of their education
Public	I think summer born children should have the option to delay formal schooling including reception year until they reach 5 years of age.
Public	Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education.” If feel after having 3 boys enter school at mid late 4s there is no way my July boy will cope in anyway whatsoever
Public	I believe summer born children should be have the option to start school part time for that year and then attend full time the following year. (When they are five.) I also think that failing this, they should be able to start school when they are of compulsory school age. I do not believe as parents we should have to struggle to explain why we would like our children to start school when it is compulsory to do so. This should mean it is completely optional to start school in their 4th year of age.
Public	Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st - August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education.
Public	As an early years teacher but particularly as a parent of summer born I think it is essential to allow summer borns to enter school in reception year after 5th birthday. Would appreciate the code to make it clear that children would be able to progress to secondary school out of their usual year group.
Public	Since the birth of my twins seven weeks early in early August 2009 I have become more aware of the impact of birth month on my pupils' self esteem and perceived progress. In a whole-school context targeting is almost exclusively focused on the impact of cultural heritage or social situation, and month of birth is never used as an intervention indicator, even though the evidence is significant. I have come to feel very strongly that those children born prematurely into the year above that of their due date ought to be allowed to start school a year later and to remain in that cohort throughout their time on education.

Public	Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education.”
Public	Parents of summer born children should be able to apply for reception the year their child reaches compulsory school age if that is their wish. This should be treated like a 'normal' application and must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education and should not be forced to skip a year later if this is against the parent's wishes. This is likely to only be a small minority as the majority of parents prefer their child to start with all of their peers and friends, but this provides for the minority who may benefit from more time in a more informal setting to reach emotional maturity or other milestones.
Public	<p>I believe that: Parents who wish their summer born child to enter Reception at compulsory school age should submit an application for the relevant academic year and this should be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age. The child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education. I am Canadian, one of the best education systems in the world, where compulsory school age is six, and parents can choose when their child is ready to start school. Schools are flexible and classes are easier for teachers as most children are of similar ability, rather than similar age Scandinavia has a compulsory school age of seven with very high educational outcomes. Give parents the choice as to when they start their children – schools will be high achieving, teachers will find it easier and children will be happier. Look at the research on the negative outcomes of summer born children. Having a child with special needs is extremely difficult and the LEA do not make it any easier. Having a child with special needs and being born at the end of August is a disaster and I have spent way too much time battling with the local authority, who refuse to use a little common sense and flexibility. Making children start school at four years old, before they are ready, makes it difficult for the child, teachers and schools. Children will achieve higher results and be happier if they start school when they are ready. Schools will continue to get poor results, teachers will continue to struggle with mixed abilities within the classroom and</p>

	children will continue to be unhappy and disengaged if you continue to make children start school at four years old and provide no flexibility. It is not difficult, and now that the leaving age has been raised to 18, there are no reasons to allow children to start later if they require this.
Public	Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education. Regardless of the 'readiness' of my daughter at 4 and 3 weeks to start school I do not wish to disadvantage her by making her take GCSEs at 15 nor A Levels at 17. I believe she should have as much chance as a child potentially less than a month older than her who will have already had an extra years' education at pre school before even starting in reception class at almost a full year older. She is being set up to fail from day one at it is extremely unjust.
Public	In lots of cases this is totally right for the child and should be up to the parent to decide when their child is ready for full time education!
Public	Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must be able to submit an application for the relevant academic year to have their child enter year Reception. The application must be treated equally and applying the same criteria with children starting school prior to compulsory school age and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education
Public	Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education.” I'm the parent of a summer born child (August 13th) and I'd like to see the above in the code.
Public	Please encourage local authorities to allow summer born children to delay starting school when they are 5 years old and let them start in reception class instead of year 1 if parents wish to do this. I am concerned about the pressure and unfair disadvantage for children who have just turned 4 to start school.
Public	think this should be at their discretion of the parents as it is down to the individual child's situation

Public	<p>As a parent of a summer born child who is due to start school Sept 2015 and a qualified teacher, I have found the current guidelines confusing and stressful. As part of an online community who want our children to start school when they are ready and confident and not to be disadvantaged throughout their schooling, it is unfair that each LEA and indeed school has different understanding of the code and policies. I personally find it impossible to decide on the best course of action when there is the possibility that at some point in his education my son might have to 'catch up' and miss a year of school, even if deferment of reception is granted. "Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education"</p>
Public	<p>Key points include - what is in the best interest of the child - parental choice/preference - for a summer born child to be able to commence and benefit from being in Reception at compulsory school age (as autumn and winter/spring born children have the right to) - For a child to then be able to remain in that adopted cohort for the remainder of their education if the parents feel it would be in their best interest (granting maintenance of deceleration) - Being summer born is enough. Additional criteria i.e special circumstances, SEN should not be required. They are separate issues and should be covered in separate sections of the code - For all applications for a Reception place to be treated equitably - For the flexibilities that are already in the current law and the non-statutory DfE guidance to be reflected in the new Admissions Code. This is to ensure that current law is adhered to - There needs to be a Right of Appeal otherwise one person potentially has the authority to decide on a child's future (and that decision may not be in the child's best interest) - For the new Admissions code to be accompanied by robust guidance (supplementary guidance from an operational perspective) - Someone overseeing/policing the admission authorities making sure that the right decisions are being made across the county A paragraph similar to this encompasses most of the issues: - Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to</p>

	compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education
Public	I wish to see a clear and consistently applied set of guidelines for LEAs to use that are based on the growing weight of evidence surrounding the forced admission of summer born children to school prior to statutory school age. Where a delay is agreed, this must be maintained throughout the child's education so they are never forced to miss a year of schooling. Children born prematurely (I.e in the 'wrong' year) should be able to delay if the parent requests it.
Public	Parents should be able to apply for school place as a normal admission for a summer born child in the year they are 5 and be offered a place in reception class. Summer born children placed in reception class at request of parents who know their children best and their readiness for school should then be able to remain in this cohort throughout their full education. All children are different and should be treated as individuals rather than shoe horning a 4 year old and 1 day old child into reception class for the fear of delaying a year and being placed in year 1, missing vital education. Not all 4 year old children are ready for schooling and therefore there should be an option to start children at compulsory school age (5) in reception.
Public	I believe that parents should be given more of a say about when their summer born children start school. Why can't the arrangement be flexible such that if your child is born in June/July/August, you as a parent can choose whether they start reception aged 4 or 5? Parents in Scotland have always had flexibility about whether their children start school at 4 or 5. At a time when there is increasing choice in lots of areas of government policy (eg patient choice in healthcare), what is there to fear from letting parents, who are after all best placed to make decisions on behalf of their child, choose the right path for their individual without having to resort to fighting the system. Having been through it myself, I can tell you it's no fun, and I suspect that only those of us who are lucky enough to be articulate and confident would even try. It was interesting that the BBC published an article today stating that there are a lot of children who enter the school system when they are not ready, with the interpretation that our children are being failed, I would argue that our children are being forced into school before they are academically and emotionally ready. I started state school in Scotland aged 5 years and 3 months, thrived because I was ready and am now lucky enough to work as a doctor in the NHS. Please let

	parents decide when their children are ready.
Public	Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education.
Public	Personally I believe our children start school way too early here anyway. Many who are just 4 (and lots of the others) are really struggling emotionally with all the big changes that going to school involves. I think it's counterproductive to send 4 year olds to school, but appreciate not all families provide a suitable environment for a child to learn and develop at home. For the youngest though I would love to see their emotional wellbeing being taken into account by allowing them to start school later.
Public	1. Involving the head teacher in this decision is very difficult particularly in London where there is a huge push on places. Does this mean that a parent must meet with every school in their area? then the decision is unworkable. This must remain the decision of the LEA and then this decision must be supported throughout their education. 2. Additional clause that they remain in their group throughout their education. 3. "Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education."
Public	The proposed arrangements are not going far enough and will add further confusion, stress and added bureaucracy. 1. I live in [address], which according to their website have 90 primary schools to choose for my child. On the application form I am allowed to select 6 schools. However, there is no guarantee that my choice of schools will be one we will get. Your proposal "They must also take into account the views of the head teacher of the school concerned" therefore means I or the LEA would have to contact ALL 90 schools headteachers to get an agreement for our child to start reception at compulsory school age. It also begs the question when to start contacting the schools or LEA, during the application round for when a summer born would like to send their child to school or during the

	<p>application round when the child is entitled to start (ie for the earlier academic year)? 2. I also believe that the school admissions code as proposed would violate the education act which states that children should be educated according to the parents wishes. As a parent of a summer born child it should be the parents choice to send my child to reception or year 1 at compulsory school age. The majority (ie non-summer born parents) already have the automatic right to send their child at compulsory school age into reception. Parents of summer borns should have the same choice. Not allowing this could be seen as unfair treatment of parents of summer born children as by denying a start in reception one basically denies the child one whole year of its education. By allowing parents of summer borns to apply for the academic year in which the child turns 5 and to treat those applications equally to applications from parents of children below compulsory school age would make this fairer, less bureaucratic and less stressful to anyone involved. It should also be mentioned that, if a child is educated "out of chronological age" then it should also be allowed to continue with their new cohort for the remainder of his/her education. So to summarise, parents who wish their summer born child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. And the application should be treated equally alongside those that are not yet of compulsory school age.</p>
Public	<p>As the parent of a previously looked after child, one born on the [date of birth], 2 weeks premature and with poor eyesight and delayed expressive language I welcome any changes to the process to allow for a flexible start to her schooling. She will have enough challenges ahead with the issues mentioned as well as coming to terms with being adopted. I do not want my daughter being disadvantaged for the next 12 years or so just because she was born 2 weeks early. As the very youngest with these issues and complex needs we rely on the schooling system to help not hinder a child. Every step of the adoption process we are conscious and reminded constantly that the needs of the child are paramount and we have continued this since we adopted her. It seems unreasonable therefore to force one child into a particular year just because of a birthday, appreciating however that a cut off is required but flexibility until now limited. Head teachers when you speak to them are confused. Information for them and parents is limited and ambiguous and interpreted differently across the UK. The need for clearer guidelines and appeal procedures is required. I do not know whether my daughter should be</p>

	<p>delayed a full year. She is definitely not ready to start school next September but I will rely not just on my feelings but on professionals to advise whether a delay is in her best interest. One of the concerns I have, not addressed as far as I can see in this paper is what happens to children who are delayed initially and enter school 'outside their correct year' later in their school life. I have seen and heard of cases whether senior schools require the child to be channelled back into their 'correct year' . In some cases perhaps this is appropriate, if for example the primary education has helped them catch up but it does mean that they lose a full year of schooling usually at year 6. Parents views are not usually taken into consideration. This needs to be addressed. I agree that if the child has caught up perhaps they should be moved, but then again does this matter. Had they been born 2 days later (in my daughters case) they would have been in the different year anyway. My point therefore is the child once in a year should stay in that year for consistency, if a summer born or with SEN.</p>
Public	<p>Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education.</p>
Public	<p>I would like to see the guidance include a more explicit statement of what kind of evidence about a child's 'academic, social, and emotional development' will be considered material. Is the view of a parent that a child is not yet sufficiently developed to join their 'normal' age group at school starting age adequate, or will schools require evidence from a professional - and if so, what credentials must this professional have? I think greater clarity on this point would be helpful (and personally favour taking the parent's word for it). I would also like to see more guidance provided on the question of whether children admitted outside of their normal age group are to be expected to remain with their new cohort throughout their education, or whether they may be expected to "skip" a year at some later point, perhaps on entry to secondary school. I appreciate that central government doesn't wish to dictate too far to LAs and heads, but clarifying these matters would be reassuring for both parents and schools.</p>
Public	<p>It is imperative that the best interest of the child and the wishes of the parents are the principles on which this decision is made. The weight of the academic evidence</p>

	<p>that forcing children into formalised education too early is damaging cannot be ignored. Doing so will mean that all public bodies involved lose any credibility in the eyes of the informed. It will also mean that they have made an active choice to enforce a policy which is harmful to children. I support the proposed wording from the Summer Born Campaign for this section: "Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education."</p>
Public	<p>Fully support the proposed changes, summer born babies should be allowed to start Reception year at the age of 5 and not be forced to go straight into Year 1. My local authority – [name of local authority] have already told me my application to send my summer born daughter into Reception year when she turns 5, would fail and I think it is unfair for my daughter to miss out on Reception year.</p>
Public	<p>As a Reception Teacher I have seen that Summer born children generally are at a disadvantage in school academically, physically and emotionally. I feel some Summer born children would greatly benefit from deferring a year and beginning school a year later. However I have also seen children who have missed the Reception year and joined the school in year 1. These children are even more disadvantaged have they have missed key skills and in particular phonics teaching which they find it very hard to catch up. The current proposals are a step in the right direction but I feel unfair as the guidance is open to interpretation/negotiation. In short a May born child could be achieve a deferral to start school (Reception) in the following year whereas in another LA an August born child could be denied this chance, I feel this is very unjust and that the system should be fair for all. Rules should be clear and guidance should not be open to interpretation. The guidance is to stop Autumn born children having a distinct advantage in school, however it now means that some Summer born children will have an advantage over other Summer born children. There should be one rule for all ie any child born from June – August can choose to defer to Reception the following year. Schools are also beginning to realise that allowing children to defer could improve their results. Parents do not know about the consultation document or the option to defer or even to go part time</p>

	<p>during the reception year. Several parents have said that they would prefer their child to go part time in reception but they do not feel they have to right to demand this. My daughter was born on [date of birth] and is due to start school next year. I have looked into asking for a deferral as her due date was in September. The problem where i live is that we have the eleven plus and I have been told that this cannot be taken out of year group. This means she would have to take the eleven plus a year early and potentially skip a year of secondary school.</p>
Public	<p>We have a summer born child and would appreciate some flexibility in the application process in order to allow us to decide (when the time comes) the bet year that he should join year 1. We hope that you will see that parents need a little more choice here and know better than local authorities what is good for their own child.</p>
Public	<p>This is a good idea and would welcome these changes. It does open it up to it being a post-code lottery though and would like to see the rules being amended to strengthen parents views on this subject more. There also needs to be provision for children born between the 1st of January – 31st March and being able to choose to put them into reception class on the 1st January.</p>
Public	<p>“Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education.”</p>
Public	<p>It is imperative that parents should have the option of sending their summer born children to school a year ‘later’ should they feel it appropriate. Many people won’t take advantage of an alteration to the system, but there will be some who would see greater potential for their children to succeed with an option to delay. There is no such thing as a ‘normal age group’ other than arbitrary dates that have been set within the system – my child is in YR at the age of 4 years and 7 weeks; some of her so-called peers are already 5 years old, yet my daughter is closer in age and development to a child who won’t start school for another year. Parents are in the best place to decide what is right for their child and, if this Government takes it’s responsibilities to our children seriously, it will recognise that summer born children are statistically at a lifelong disadvantage under the current system. Flexibility is key – as is listening to parents who simply want their child to enjoy as much success in life as possible.</p>

Public	Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education.
Public	Summer born children should have the option to start in the September following their 5th birthday as standard. This should not have to be decided on a case by case basis. Summer born children who defer entry until the term after their 5th birthday and start in year 1 should have that place held for them. They should not have to re-apply. A summer born child starting school in Sept at age 5 is guaranteed to stay with that year group through to the end of their secondary education. There should be no risk of them having to miss a year out at some stage because their age. Local Authorities must ensure that all admission options for summer born children are clearly and objectively communicated to all schools and parents of children going through the admissions process.
Public	“Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age (the term after they turn 5) should be able to submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education.” This is likely to only be a small minority as the majority of parents prefer their child to start with all of their peers and friends, but this provides for those who may benefit from more time in a more informal setting to reach emotional maturity or other milestones. The child should not be made to 'skip' a year later in their Education, especially if this is against the Parent's wishes. There should be no need for professional input as at this age, it is the parent who knows their child best.
Public	Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education. As the parent of a late summer-born child I am acutely aware of how she is emotionally a long way behind her peer group, some of whom are almost a year older than her. Being pushed in to a full time school

	environment is detrimental to her well-being and she is too exhausted to learn or participate.
Public	I believe in the application and decision process, the parents' views should count for as much as the head teachers'. Parents who wish their summer born child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must be given clear guidelines from the LEA on how to apply and when to apply. They should be able to submit an application for the relevant academic year when they want their child to start reception. The application must be treated equitably with children starting reception prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education. This should also not prejudice their admission into secondary school.
Public	My son's birthday is August 31st. He has just started reception as we were told he would have to at some point in this academic year. I asked about the possibility to defer his entrance to reception to Sept 2015 but told this was not possible. I have just found out today that it may have been possible but due to the way the councils have communicated this information the schools and myself were not aware. I think the code should be far firmer with ensuring that the councils make parents aware of the options available to them and I am therefore in agreement with the proposed changes
Public	The DfE needs to take action to address the long lasting disadvantages faced by Summer born children in England. This proposal still leaves children at the mercy LEA administrators, many of whom place bureaucratic concerns above the interests of the child. Taking into account the views of the head teacher makes sense but it still allows panels who have never met the child to overrule professionals working with the child. I think the DfE should look at the Scottish system of allowing children flexible starts and ensure that all children have the right to a reception place at compulsory school age. 2.17 I suggest the wording should be: Where the parents of a summer born child choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday, admission authorities must provide for them to be admitted to reception if requested by the child's parents. 2.17a This is a retrograde step when compared to the current Summer born guidelines. If authorities do not have to take into account relevant research or any professional opinion other than the school head, families who want to delay their child's school start, based on the advice of educational psychologists, valid research and DfE's own statistics will not be supported by the new code. In effect, LEA bureaucrats will be given a green

	<p>light to ignore expert opinion and many children will be continue to be pushed into formal education at an inappropriate age or stage of development. At the very least, admission authorities should be required to take into account the possible impact of a child missing reception.</p>
Public	<p>My daughter was born in August, and I have been worried that she will be far too young to start school in the September term. I really welcome the option that she could join a reception class, being an older child. I imagine that this would give her confidence, and a better chance of academic success. But, likewise, I like the idea that she could join year one too. My ideal would be that I have both choices, which I could base nearer the time on her ability/maturity observed at pre-school. She's 13 months as I write this but it is something that I worry about already - at just 4 they are still so young, too young for a school setting I think (I have a 6 year old so speak from experience). I would very much like the option of her bring able to join the foundation year half way through, as an option too, but I understand that this would be difficult for schools to manage.</p>
Public	<p>It seems that most Admissions Authorities and Head Teachers still do not know about 2.16 and 2.17 of the Admissions Code, which in itself is a disgrace. Our Admission's Authority, [name of local authority], did not know we could defer in year and it was me that had to inform them of 2.16, last October 2013. If they do know of either of these, they are reluctant to inform parents or allow either. The guidelines for the admission of summer born children is still very ambiguous, allowing for a lot of different interpretations. Admissions Authorities and Head Teachers can still say "you can request", but they know that they do not have to grant that request and can come up with all kinds of reasons why they will not allow it. Any amendment needs to have crystal clarity and allow the parent to have the right to make the final choice for their summer born. The Education System, does not add up and inter-link appropriately causing a lot of unnecessary stress to summer borns, especially boys, parents and teachers. The school system for summer borns, is a mess and puts summer borns, particularly boys at a disadvantage and the research data shows this. (See Results of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) Pilot Research Report March 2013. Dept of Education.) Formal Phonics starts at the beginning of Reception. If a summer born starts in September aged just 4, they are often too young and under developed to start and enjoy this process especially a boy as we have. If they delay their start till</p>

January or April, (using 2.16, if they are aware of it) when more developed for formal schooling and full days, they will have missed a large chunk of phonics and so be at another academic disadvantage. By the end of Reception they are expected to be able to write a sentence. If they only started at Easter, this is too difficult and they feel stupid and their self esteem is effected. This is 10 weeks into their education career! If they start in year 1 aged 5, they have missed a whole year of phonics and by year 1 they are expected to write sentences and they may not even know how to write one letter or a word. Very unfair. The aim in term 1 is to write "golden sentences" with adjectives, very difficult, when struggling to even get to grips with words. If the parent is informed of 2.17, which most are NOT, the Admissions authorities and Head Teachers are reluctant to allow deferring a year and will try everything to avoid it. Something to do with their STATS data, particularly in year 6 which needs sorting out "top-down" as one Head Teacher wrote. So if a parent requests a Reception Place for a 5 year old it should be up to the parent alone and not be left to the Admissions Authority to decide under our current educational curriculum. The wording of 2.17 is still far too ambiguous and open to interpretation, which is stressful for parents. End this farce now. Start phonics in year 1 or allow parents the right to decide to defer a year. Let it be the parents choice and not left upto outside parties. End the ambiguity. Parents should not have to fight for all of this. It should be clear and not open to interpretation. Also sort out the STATS issue, so Head Teachers can allow children out of year easier and are not so RESISTANT. Head teachers need a change from "the top, down". Also Head Teachers love a big "Value added score" from reception to year 6. So they prefer a summer born in the correct year as they "struggle" initially but can then be pushed to catch up by year 6 when their brains are more developed, aged 7-11 years. Parents should not have to fight this system. The "needs" of the Head Teacher for good sats results and school are being fulfilled, more than the emotional and psychological development needs of the child. The amount of stress being caused now to summer borns and parents and indeed the teachers is a disgrace. If teachers have to accept a summer born in January, April or year 1 with no previous phonics, it puts a massive strain on the teacher and they are very annoyed, which passes onto the parent and even the child. It is the system that is wrong, not the summer born. They do not have this problem in Europe, where they start formal lessons at 7 when all children are ready for full days and

	<p>their brains are more adapted to learn words and write sentences. None of the departments in England seem to link up together with a cohesive framework for Summer Borns, including the curriculum being age appropriate, the Admissions Department, Stats for Head Teachers to deal with. If the curriculum was age appropriate for Summer Borns you would not have so many parents wanting or needing to defer a year using 2.17. Parents could just use 2.16 and request their children go part-time or start later in the year, the children would not be behind academically from the start and the teachers would not worry so much about how to get these children who are the youngest, to catch up with what has been missed and hence the teachers would be less stressed and annoyed and everyone would be a lot happier. It all inter-links. Summer born boys are the most disadvantaged and the research data shows this. They are the least developed and ready to sit and concentrate for long periods of time in year 1 and write sentences about geography and history and letters to aliens and golden sentences, full of adjectives at just turned 5. Hence, so many parents of summer born boys (if they know they can defer, which most DO NOT) wanting them to start in Reception at age 5 so they can still have lots of playtime outside and not have to be sitting for long periods of time writing, that is if they even know their phonics yet. It is the system that needs to change. Most parents of summer borns can see this, especially parents of summer born boys as we are. If a summer born boy starts at 5 in year 1, it is a big struggle to the child and parents as they are not developmentally ready and often academically behind already, if started late. If the summer born boy starts in Reception aged 5, it is a great deal easier for the child and the parent as it is all a lot more age appropriate, and the child starts their phonics at the very beginning. In summary, either change the education curriculum and start phonics in year 1 OR while the educational curriculum is as it is now, allow parents to have the final choice about which class their summer born 5 year old starts in and sort out the Stats issue in year 6, top-down for Head Teachers to allow this and to be supportive of it.</p>
Public	<p>Agree with the proposal for summer born children. Unhappy about the change on admissions policy....do I need to give up my job and live on benefits to help my child secure a school place?. Having worked hard all my life to give my children a better life, it seems to be a disadvantage. We are not wealthy but come from a hard working family with values. When are we going to be supported at any level? Having worked in the Yourh</p>

	Service for many years, I understand the social issues but will always point to the parents as the example. We need parents to take responsibility not the state. Off to put my beautiful son to bed and will now seriously consider a private education which I have always been against. Either that or perhaps leave him with the travellers to get him a school place.
Public	I have been told (by local schools) that if I choose to send my daughter to school at five years old rather than four I will not be guaranteed a place. If she doesn't take up the offer at four years old (and go into reception) then her place will be given to somebody else. I was told the only way to get her into a school would be to do a transfer? My daughter will turn four on 17 August 2015, when she turns five in 2016 I would like her to go straight into year one. She is very bright and socially developed, but emotionally not ready. On page 23 of the document it mentions being able to hold summer born children back and send them into reception at five, but what about parents (like me) who want to send their children straight into year one at five? The admissions policy needs to be made clear as the schools I spoke to seemed perplexed and some confused by my questions.
Public	Parents who wish their summer born child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age (5) should be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and crucially the child should remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education. If not, and the child is subsequently forced to jump a year to the year group above, later on in their education, this in my opinion is extremely short sighted and detrimental to the child's welfare, and is in no way in the best interest of children. I would appeal to the highest level possible any departmental decision which results in my child losing a year of their educational experience by way of this leapfrogging. I am currently unaware of the cross party political views on this topic, but will find out and will vote accordingly next summer.
Public	Seems reasonable
Public	Schools should cater for a child's ability and children should be kept with their peers. It makes no sense adding more layers (and therefore expense) to the admissions process. Children should be banded according to ability within their year group.
Public	I have a late august born child and it concerns me that he will go to school aged just 4. I think there needs to be flexibility for summer born children to start in reception the term after they turn 5. I think it is really unfair that there is no real flexibility and the only real option is for a child to start in year 1. I want my son to complete

	reception year, it's so important however at 4 and a few days it will be so much to expect from him.
Public	<p>We note that the Department for Education proposes to revise the current (2012) School Admissions Code. Our particular interest lies in Section Five (5.1-5.4), which deals with the admission of summer-born children to school. We feel that while the proposed amendments to the Code do address the problem of immature children beginning Primary education too early, they do not address the question of what then happens to these children at the stage of transfer to secondary school. In this case, when a child admitted to Reception at the age of five then has a birth date that does not fall within the range stipulated on a PAN (Published Admissions Number) form, used by Local Authorities to control admission to state secondaries, he or she will consequently be required to go straight from Primary Year Six to Secondary Year Eight, as is currently almost invariably the case. We are attempting to deal with exactly this problem at present, as our son, a low-birthweight baby born a few weeks prematurely on [date of birth] is due, according to his birthdate, to transfer from primary to secondary school in September of 2015. He has no statement of Special Educational Needs, and no particular problems other than those caused by general immaturity. However, his progress in primary was so poor (repeated verbal and written requests for help were disregarded)* that after Year Three we transferred him to a local independent school where, although his progress has now improved a great deal, he is repeating a year (at our request, with the school's support). This means that he is not due to not transfer to Secondary school until 2016. However, next year, his birthdate will not correspond with that on the PAN-London form. In reply to a written enquiry to six state secondaries in [name of local authority] and [name of local authority], our two nearest LAs, three have told us that they will definitely not consider admitting him to Year Seven in 2016, two have not replied and one has told us they would be happy to accept him. [name of local authority] LA's advice to parents on birthdates for application to secondary schools for 2015 is: "If your child's date of birth is between?1 September 2003 and 31 August 2004 they are the right age to transfer to secondary school in September 2015.... Parents of older children who have not transferred to secondary school, will find that some schools insist that children are taught with others of the same age group, even though the child would miss a year. Parents are advised to contact individual schools before making applications." Three</p>

	<p>nearby Grammar schools (who also use the PAN admissions system) say they would have no problem considering him for admission in 2016, though of course admission to these schools is also controlled by examination. Four Independent schools, who control admission by examination but do not use the PAN form, have also said he would be welcome to apply for their 2016 enrolment. None of the schools that have refused to consider him for admission in 2016 have given any reason why this would not be possible. The head of one of these, an Academy, began his response: "I have now had an opportunity to discuss this further with the local authority..." but did not say what they had discussed, or why he had approached the Local Authority regarding the matter, rather than the Academy Trust. With this, and with paragraph 7 above in mind, I wrote to the local authority to ask if they could tell me what their policy is regarding the education of children out of their chronological age group. I have had no response. My guess would be that, aside from the generalized confusion that surrounds the issue, schools and local authorities are referring to Section 1-1.5 of the School Admissions Code 2012, which deals with the Published Admission Number, and to the wording of Section 82 of the Education Act 2001 regarding Key Stages (and therefore the age at which children are expected to sit GCSEs), and interpreting and applying these strictly. No surprise, particularly as in addition to all the above factors, all the local schools we wrote to – except the one that agreed to admit our son in 2016 – are heavily oversubscribed. Our suggestion would be that for any new proposals on the admission of summer born children to be successfully enacted, and for these children and their families to experience a normal transfer from primary to secondary school, there would also have to be a corresponding revision of the legislation surrounding the age at which children may begin secondary education, and their age when they sit GCSEs. * Correspondence available on request</p>
Public	I believe that summer born children should have an automatic right to defer starting school by a full year and then be able to join Reception class rather than Year 1.
Public	Please allow parents the choice for their Summer born children to begin their education in Foundation at the age of 5, rather than being forced to enter at Year 1 should the parents decide their child is too young to commence full time education in Foundation at the age of 4!
Public	I feel that a flexible and realistic admission policy for summer born children is desperately needed in our education system. I come from the stance that I do

	<p>believe we start formal education too early in this country, however, I accept that situation as it stands. I agree with the fact that most parents of summer born children would choose to send their child in the year after their 4th birthday (this is for a number of reasons, mainly because of the system they are presented with) but I do feel that they should be given the option of delaying that start as standard practice in all schools. I also feel there should be a clearer and more defined process for parents who wish for their summer born child to start in the September after their 5th birthday. Obviously this should be assessed on an individual basis but it should be offered to parents as standard with a clearer and more accessible process for them to engage in, rather than the 'fight' it often becomes now with the education authority to grant them their request. I feel for decisions to delay start for an academic year there would need to be evidence from nursery/parents/speech language therapists/social workers/school to support the request and aid the decision making. I feel in reality there would be few parents who would take up this option however for those few children it would make an immense difference to their first experience of formal education and to the rest of their education.</p>
Public	<p>The advice currently proposed is widely open to interpretation, & is non-statutory - leading to a postcode lottery on how requests for delay are dealt with. Some LEAs give an immediate 'yes', with no further questions asked, whilst other parents in other areas face long & protracted battles with their local councils, before eventually being told 'no', even after a mountain of professional supporting evidence has been provided. This is clearly unacceptable & incredibly unfair. It also makes moving between areas for affected families quite precarious. Statutory advice which all LEAs are required to follow needs to be introduced to level the playing field. In my opinion, the code should read: "Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education."</p>
Public	<p>Clarity needs to be put in place over this - I have a child born late August who is 3 and it is ridiculous that I have to apply for her school place (as the school and LEA requirement) even though she legally does not need to go to school next September. The government guidance suggests parents requests for emotional reasons (eg we</p>

	<p>have a child who is fine intellectually, she is just slightly slower in development, speech, babyish ways etc, we just have a very young child) - this seems a reasonable request in the governments document, but Surreys document suggests we would only have a case if we had a special needs child / statemented child. Surrey also suggests (threatens) that if we were successful in delaying our child (which I gather could only be done with a battle, stress , paid for educational psychology reports etc) we could have a school year taken away from her at a later date, - this also needs clarification. The move for all 4 year olds starting in September at some schools (like ours) would mean if we were not able to delay for a year to start reception a year later, if we took up our rights to stagger her entry eg part time, or defer her by a term, she would be the only 1, ie an exception (however the guidance in bringing children's starting age to 4 seems to suggest I have all these rights, but in practice, this is very much an unfriendly / solitary process) AND WHY when our European counterparts and many in the world start later and Scandinavian countries who start later do far better than we do..... Yes to bring head teachers opinions in would be a good idea, like ours which is a community school, but what does a parent do if the nearest preferred school (where siblings go), has a head teacher who is not supportive of a parents request for a child. Please make the process transparent re summer born admissions and so that the governments paper cannot be so misinterpreted by an individual authority.</p>
Public	<p>All summerborn children should be automatically given the right to start reception in the September after they turn 5, and be considered fairly along with the cohort for the year that they applying. There should not be any requirement to consider 'information about the child's academic, social and emotional development', as summerborn children are merely exercising their right to start school at compulsory school age – this should not require any justification. They are meeting the legal requirement and therefore should not be discriminated against by potentially being forced to miss a whole year of school. Summerborn children should also be guaranteed that they will complete the full schedule of primary years and not forced to move up to their chronological year group. Allowing parents to simply 'request' this as stated in the draft admission codes does not give summerborn children the opportunity they deserve which is to start school age 5 and not be forced to miss out on reception. The word 'request' needs to be changed to allow this right to be approved automatically,</p>

	<p>and ensure that summerborn children are automatically granted an opportunity to apply for a reception place at compulsory school age. As a parent of a summerborn child we are happy for him to start school age 5 in reception, but fear that by 'requesting' to do so, we will end up in a situation where he could potentially be forced straight into year one, with no opportunity to appeal. It needs clarity and a conclusive result which gives assurance that a reception place at compulsory school age will be offered. By having only the opportunity to 'request' they are deferred, parents are being threatened by the thought of their child being forced straight into year one, which would be an extremely harsh introduction to the schooling system. In my opinion sending a child straight into year 1, is neither fair or just and makes a mockery of the reception year if it is not essential for summerborns. Furthermore, parents are being fined for missing school for holidays during term time which implies that EVERY day of school is vital. So therefore how can it be justified to force children to miss an entire year? Finally, should it continue that the right for summerborns is still considered on a case by case basis, there needs to be an appeals process in place to ensure continuity and fairness.</p>
Public	<p>I would like to see words along the lines of: "Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st - 31st August inclusive) child to join Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education." To ensure that a summer born child is not discriminated against and that parents retain control of the child's needs and best interests. This would also help ensure that head teachers and local authorities cannot arbitrarily exclude the such children or move them back into an arbitrary age group or otherwise deny their rights or the rights of their parents.</p>
Public	<p>There does not appear to be any new proposals made just improved clarification. However, that clarification does not provide a clear process for parents. Should the parent be able to apply to the LA for a deferral through an Education, Health and Care Plan process and directly to an own admission authority school, whilst a parent applying for admission to a voluntary controlled, or community school will only have one opportunity, through the EHC process, to apply for a deferred/accelerated admission? Information in the Code and to parents needs to be clear nthat this does not</p>

	replace the need to make an application and the implications should they not do so on-time.
Public	<p>Does not go far enough. Still penalises children who are born between 1/4 to 31/8 ie winter borns can defer to csa and start in reception, spring borns can defer to csa and start in reception. Summer borns still CANNOT defer to csa and automatically start in reception. Which by primary legislation is an entrance level class and csa is aged 5. This is still effectively lowering csa through the back door. In the days of equal opportunities this is obscene and goes against the childrens best interests. Parents should be given the choice start their summer borns at the age of 4 or start them at 5 but in reception not making them miss a WHOLE year. Disagree that head teachers support needs to be provided. EYFS provider support and parental support should be provided - these are the people who know the child the best. HT do not know the child in the slightest but may just see it as a slur against their setting. Equally if a parent has 3+ school selection options thats a minimum of 3 meetings for the parents, the HT will be spending their valuable time meeting parents who may or may not get a place within their setting. Surely their time is better spent concentrating on the pupils they already have not debating the summer born issue when all they need to do is educate the summer born in the same way as a September born. The school year should be changed to meet the academic year. Right of appeal - there is no right of appeal if the LEA decided against a summer born starting at csa or indeed if agreement has been reached and the LEA renade. Rights of the child... Confirmation that summer born applications will be treated equitably with all other applications and not at the end of the process - they are just as important! Put in place rights that once a summer born starts in reception at CSA they can stay within that year group for their entire education, without the threat of having to skip a year later on - especially when parents are being fined for a two week holiday. Suddenly a summer born can loose a whole year - again rights of the child is their education less important?????</p>
Public	<p>The proposed changes to the School Admission Code (the Code) are simply a reflection of the current inequitable process. Even where admission authorities 'follow' the 'correct' process, in no way is the current process clear, fair or objective. It does not ensure "fair and open allocation of places" and the DfE is more than aware of this given the amount of correspondence it has received from parents and MP's. It is clear from correspondence from the DfE to parents that government</p>

will not intervene, despite previous assurances from David Laws that it would, so long as an admission authority is 'seen' to have followed the 'correct' process no matter what the outcome for a child. A look at historical Hansard records show that this issue has been raised time and time again and that successive governments have effectively swept this issue under the carpet. It is right that the Code's wording be amended – the current Code is poorly drafted, yet the incumbent government appears to be paying little more than lip-service to an issue that parents are rightly angered by. The proposed Code does not "provide greater freedom", it merely provides clearer wording. If Minister's really were concerned about the number of children entering school in Year 1 rather than Reception class as indicated in correspondence to MP's, any new Code would reflect this rather than compound the current situation. The use of 2.17 for summer born children starting school in reception class AT compulsory school age (CSA) is fundamentally flawed; these children are not 'outside their normal year group' by any stretch of the imagination. Just because "Admission authorities must provide for the admission of all children in the September following their fourth birthday." following Sir Jim Rose's recommendations implemented in the 2010 Code, how can a child starting in a class (Reception) which is fundamentally the beginning of school (and the point at which school places are allocated during the normal admission round) at CSA possibly be 'outside their normal age group' where a parent wishes this? The DfE may well argue that this is the 'point at which their peers are moving up to Year 1' – but let's not forget that those other summer born children who are moving up to Year 1 at this point are doing so because they started school early, before CSA. The current stance dictates that the 'peer group' of summer born children can only be comprised of older children. A summer born child starting Reception class at CSA will be age five for the majority of their time in a Reception class, furthermore those born in late summer will be age five during the whole of their attendance in a Reception class. Ironically, that recommendation was implemented so that no child should be forced to miss any of the reception class yet a child being forced to miss the entire Reception class simply for starting school at CSA is deemed not to be unacceptable by government. The DfE has also stated previously to parents that not all schools may be appropriate for a summer born child to validate its 'localism' policy on this issue, inferring that some schools are incapable of supporting a five year old child in

	<p>Reception class. What then for example, of a child who reaches the age of five in September? Is that child denied access to a Reception class for being age five for the majority of the time they will spend in Reception class – no, of course not. Will that child be forced to join Year 1 for the same reason, again, no, of course not. So why is it deemed acceptable to the government for a summer born child starting school at CSA to possibly be denied access to a Reception class – a class which is the start of school, a class that the government has previously described as “critical”, a class where allocation of places is determined during the normal admission round? Parents should not lose their positions in terms of gaining access to their preferred schools simply because they choose to start their children in school at CSA. Having said that, parents indicate a preference, it is not a choice – “5.5..... require the admission authority to take account of the views of the headteacher of the school concerned....” What is a LEA to do in these circumstances? Contact every headteacher of all maintained schools, just in case? Just in case the school is oversubscribed and a child does not receive a place at a preferred school? This does not take into account the fact that LEA’s often lean on schools and headteachers to tow an inflexible LEA line. I am aware, from parent groups that headteachers who have previously been supportive of a child starting school in Reception class at CSA changing their mind and performing a U-Turn after contact with their LEA. – One case in particular where the headteacher was allegedly threatened by the LEA that they would have funding removed if they allowed a child to enter Reception class at CSA. Take this one example of an LEA exerting influence not only on headteachers of maintained schools but also academies. The extract below is taken from a document published by Lancashire County Council ‘Primary School & Academy Admission – Reception Intakes September 2014 – Information for Governors and Headteachers’ “(A DEVELOPING ISSUE) Lancashire adheres firmly to the requirement for children to start primary school / academy in the September after a 4th birthday. Parents may apply and then defer entry for 1 or 2 terms but not for a full school year. Those who do start a year late because the child's date of birth permits usually apply for Year 1 places. It is important to apply this principle robustly especially as demand for primary places is increasing. Only in the most exceptional cases will reception entry a year later than normal be considered by the relevant admission authority. “</p>
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[http://www.park34.lancsngfl.ac.uk/download/file/Admissions%20Notes%20of%20Guidance%202014-15%20FINAL\[1\]\[1\].pdf](http://www.park34.lancsngfl.ac.uk/download/file/Admissions%20Notes%20of%20Guidance%202014-15%20FINAL[1][1].pdf) This is the same LEA whose own EYFSP data demonstrates “The percentage of summer-born children achieving a good level of development was 49%. Using the new measure, the performance of summer-born children is lower to a greater extent than for any other pupil group.”

http://www.lancsngfl.ac.uk/curriculum/early_years/download/file/EYFS%20newsletter%20September%202013.pdf The DfE document Ref: DFE– RR291 ‘Topic Note: Results of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) Pilot Research report March 2013’ also demonstrates this trend. That all requests are considered as ‘individual cases’ ensures a lottery, essentially the circumstances are the same – parents of summer born children, with or without prematurity, with or without special education needs who wish their children to start school in Reception class at CSA. Ironically, a high number of summer born children who do start school at age four go on to be diagnosed as having SEN as a result. These children are less likely to do well in reading, writing and maths, they are more likely to suffer emotionally and socially and more likely to experience bullying (Ref: DFE-RR017 Month of birth and education: schools analysis and research division), they are less likely to do well in GCSE’s, all in all, these children are less likely to reach their potential in life as a result of current policy. Current policy is short-sighted, these children and therefore society as a whole would benefit hugely if the government went one step further and incorporated a right for summer born children to start in Reception class at CSA within the Code. Also, paragraph 2.17 offers parents no right of appeal if their child is offered a place in a different year group to that requested. This is unfair; all other parents applying for Reception class for their children prior to CSA do have a right of appeal. Parents of summer born children are having to take a gamble, they are presented with a Hobson’s Choice; enter your child in reception class before CSA or face the possibility that your child will have to miss Reception entirely and join Year 1, a year group which is likely to be full and little to no chance of entry to a preferred school and by the way, if your request is successful it’s likely that a headteacher will make your child skip a year later on. The ‘choice’ is insidious blackmail. Re: “5.4 ...clarify that the circumstances which the admission authority should take into account when making their decision include: the parent’s wishes” Parents of summer born children are

frequently met with unknown obstacles that have nothing to do with their wishes. The DfE is aware of this, aware of the demands from admission authorities for requests to be accompanied by 'professionally supported evidence' or 'exceptional circumstances'. Absolute age is no reason for any family to be working with any kind of 'professional'. Though even when there is plenty of 'professional evidence', admission authorities are at liberty to dismiss this, and have done so and the DfE is aware of this. Again, as mentioned above, it is this group of children who, if denied access to reception class who are likely to go on to need extra support of professionals. I question the use of resources to examine each 'individual case' and the administrative burden and cost this will likely cause admission authorities. The 'near view' may be that an extra year of Early Years Funding will be saved which does not take into consideration the costs of extra support that is likely to be needed throughout school, or the long term costs to society and the treasury when individuals have not met their potential, purely because of a flawed school admissions policy. "the parent's wishes" does not take into account the fundamental responsibility that parents have under the Education Act 1996 "Duty of parents to secure education of children of compulsory school age. The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable— ...to his age, ability and aptitude," This is precisely what parents of summer born children requesting Reception class entry at CSA are trying to achieve. Fundamentally, to fulfil this responsibility, parents are attempting to exercise their parental rights to make decisions in their child's best interests. Something that current policy and the proposals have taken away from parents. Re: "12. The purpose of the Code is to ensure that all school places for maintained schools (excluding maintained special schools⁶) and Academies are allocated and offered in an open and fair way." Even when a request for a Reception class place has been granted, the application is not always treated fairly, it is put to 'the bottom of the pile' and processed after all other applications. The DfE amended its summer born advice in May 2014 to direct complaints to the LGO, the very body that published a decision advocating discriminatory processing of applications of summer born children entering Reception class at CSA: County Durham County Durham Council (13 013 380) Decision date :11 February 2014 "1. Child "N could not have had a place in the Reception year ahead of any other child of the correct age." 2. "Clearly, it would have been wrong

	<p>for an admissions authority to have offered a place in Reception for N if any other applicant in the correct age group would thereby have lost a place.” 3. “...he could not have taken a Reception place ahead of any other applicant of the correct age.”</p> <p>http://www.lgo.org.uk/decisions/education/other/13-013-380 The inclusion of “They must not give the application lower priority on the basis that the child is not of the correct age.” is therefore welcome in the draft as it stands, but the proposals themselves do not make the process more open or fair, admission authorities will ultimately ensure that they are ‘seen’ to be following procedure. Admission authorities have very different views regarding this issue and without a firm lead from the DfE embedded in the Code ensuring that parents can indeed exercise a genuine choice, the lottery will continue. For example Taken from South Gloucestershire’s Annual Report to the OSA 2014: “Consideration by individual admission authorities taking in to account key factors such as the needs of the child, readiness for school and importantly, advice from professionals should over-ride the wishes of parents seeking admission of their summer born child to school in the September after their fifth birthday to enter Reception class.”</p> <p>http://www.southglos.gov.uk/documents/cyp130066.pdf Taken from Hampshire’s Annual Report to the OSA 2014: “The Hampshire Admission Forum has concerns about the legislative loose ends that are currently at odds with this more flexible approach to starting school for summer born children. Parents are left in a position where they need to renegotiate their child’s continued deceleration at each transfer point in their child’s schooling; the advice from DfE is not robust enough and admission authorities are taking different views about approving an application for a decelerated admission, and finally, the reporting requirements at the end of KS4 mean that secondary schools will want to resist admitting a decelerated child to their school.”</p> <p>http://documents.hants.gov.uk/education/LAReportforOSA2014.pdf As outlined in the January 2014 Summer Born report co-authored by myself, the CSA in England has been lowered by the back door to four through an unfair and unlawful admissions process for summer born children via a Code that does not clearly represent primary legislation. This proposed draft code will do little to change this situation across the country, with each admission authority at liberty to arrive at different decisions, even regarding the SAME child. Surely every child in the country should be given the opportunity to</p>
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	<p>reach their full potential in school and where they exist, inequalities stamped out. Given the well documented research regarding summer born children, a change in the Code to give parents the right to send their child to school at compulsory school age and enter Reception class is the right thing to do. One matter which these proposals completely ignore is that where requests for summer born children to enter Reception class at CSA have been granted, that child may be forced at some point, against parents wishes to skip an entire year of school, purely because the headteacher/school wants every child to end up in the 'correct' age group. This has happened the DfE is aware that this has happened and nothing is being done to prevent this shocking behaviour. Every child should have access to a continuous curriculum. This practice cannot be condoned and the DfE should take measures within any new Code to prevent this. I would like to see the removal of any reference to summer born children within 2.17 and an additional, separate paragraph included instead to ensure that there is no gamble for parents and so that children are not forced to skip either Reception class or indeed any other year of their education when they start school at CSA: Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education.” (paragraph written and published prior to this consultation - http://summerbornchildren.files.wordpress.com/2013/03/14-jan-15-summer-born-report-csa-lowered-to-4-through-unfair-and-unlawful-sb-admissions-process.pdf)</p>
Public	<p>I feel strongly that all summer born children be given the opportunity to start school in a reception class be it at 4 or 5 years of age without argument. Those children should be treated equalling to those starting in at 'normal' school age. It is important that those parents who feel that their child needs more time before starting school be given options. Those options should be regulated by the government and not left to schools to police. All summer born children need to be the best start possible.</p>
Public	<p>Changes to the Schools Admissions code, section 5: Summer Born Children My views by [name] A change in law and not just a guidance is well and truly overdue. Starting children into school when they are often just 4 is just too young. Children, especially boys need time to play when they are 4 and are not ready to learn, that is a</p>

	<p>biological fact. A majority of countries in the developed world start their children much later and often have better results to show for it. I think the Department of Education is focused too much on improving the curriculum, getting results, getting children into a school but fundamentally when children are this age we should be also thinking about their emotional and social well-being. I have followed this issue for a couple of years now and I can't believe how difficult it is to request for a child to go into the lower year group when all the information makes the decision obvious. Pushing summer born children/ boys who may have developmental or speech delays into school when they have just turned 4 causing them much anxiety is something the Department of Education should be ashamed of. There are parents all over the country dealing with tired, emotional and unhappy children. This country needs to start to be a bit more flexible and forward-thinking. Our children are the leaders of the future. I suggest the following: "Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child should be able to remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education."</p>
Public	<p>DfE must issue STATUTORY Advice, not Non-statutory guidance that LAs can decide to ignore. "Parents have the RIGHT to have their summer born child enter Reception class at compulsory school instead of Year 1. No professional evidence must be required by the LA or by Headteacher of school with their own admission criteria. Applications must be submitted for the relevant academic year and must be treated equitably with all other applications of the main admission round. The child has the right to remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education."</p>
Public	<p>DfE must issue STATUTORY Advice, not Non-statutory guidance that LAs can decide to ignore. "Parents have the RIGHT to have their summer born child enter Reception class at compulsory school instead of Year 1. No professional evidence must be required by the LA or by Headteacher of school with their own admission criteria. Applications must be submitted for the relevant academic year and must be treated equitably with all other applications of the main admission round. The child has the right to remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education."</p>
Public	<p>A change in law is overdue. Starting children at school when they at 4 is often too young, especially summer-</p>

	<p>born boys. It is scientific fact that some children at this age are not ready to learn - and something our European counterparts are clearly aware of, given they delay entry into school (and in some instances as late as 7 years). The fact these European countries often also have better education results only goes to prove that early years education in the UK needs to be looked at more closely. It shouldn't solely be about results, funding and Ofsted. It should be about creating the right environment to learn, and the law of averages alone suggests a one-size-fits-all approach cannot work. For personal reasons I have followed this issue with interest over the past two years. It doesn't appear to have improved either and is clearly too difficult to request for a child to delay their start into the school system - simply because they're not emotionally or intellectually prepared. The same applies for children who aren't able to settle in their year group and would clearly benefit from "backclassing". The fact that in some instances some children are forced to continue their education in an age group that is not right for them and is ultimately causing great anxiety is something DoE cannot be proud of. The reality is this country needs to start to be a bit more flexible and forward-thinking about its children and education. They are, after all, the leaders of the future. I suggest the following: "Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child should be able to remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education." I hope you take this seriously. A small change in the law would have a big positive effect on a lot of young people's lives.</p>
Public	<p>Families should have the option to start their children a year later and to start in reception. Like my comments above; we force children into learning too early when they should be learning through play. Can the government look at international research on this; including psychology research. Why is schooling being restricted by age? When a child is developmentally ready for each stage of learning that is when they should progress; not because they have reached a certain age. We need to support a child's learning in order to enable them for life and lifelong learning; there is no need to cram stressful academia into the first 16 years of their life. I did not do well at school but now have a Masters; that was through passion for my work not because I was 'academic'. Schools should be there to</p>

	inspire and excite children into learning, not force them into passing exams to suit a government target or agenda. You need a big overhaul and you need to listen to the experts...only then will you see a successful generation and not just an elite few.
Public	The guidance "Admission of summer born children in school" is great, but in reality, I have to say it means nothing. If you say "we want to see local authorities giving the parents the choice for their five-year-old child of joining reception or year 1, Letting parents be able to say to a school, 'We want our child, who is aged five, to enter reception', if THEY feel that that is in the best interests of their child." Then put it in the code.
Public	The government needs to think about the developmental needs of children when considering school start ages. As the mother of a summer born boy I think a longer stint in early years would be hugely beneficial for all UK children who already enter school/formal learning too soon. I agree with the Too Much Too Soon campaign and wish we could adopt the approach to early years that countries such as Finland do.
Public	Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education.
Public	As a father of the summer born child I would like to have an automatic right to apply to YR after the 5th birthday, the SAME RIGHT AS WINTER AND SPRING BORN already have. Not rely on the LEA to make the right decision, which I understand is next to impossible to achieve at the moment. The YR is declared essential for transition from play-based learning to formal schooling and I do not want my child to miss it. Appeals process needs changing as currently there is no automatic right to appeal if another place is offered at the same school. This is unacceptable as LEA denies one full year of education to that child. The permission from the head teachers is unworkable. I have no idea, which highly popular local school my child will be able to get to and seeking permission from several heads is a waste of my time and theirs. And again, the parent know their child best, why ask a person who never even met a child for permission to attend out of year if the parent feels it is in the best interests of their child. Once a child is allowed to enter YR at CSA they much be allowed to progress with their adopted cohort. It is unacceptable that kids forced

	to jump up a year against the wishes of their parents.
Public	My little girl was born at the end of July 2011 and consequently is due to start attending school in September 2015. As a parent I would like there to be more flexibility with regards to summer born children attending school and would like to see the parents of summer born children not penalised for deciding to defer admission. Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education
Public	<p>Ample evidence proves that most summer born children would achieve better in academic, personal, social and emotional development if they were allowed to start in reception as a right, at the age of 5, and receive 7 full years of primary education. The ability to 'delay' a summer borns entry to school by a full year should be a parents rightful choice. The admissions code should include a new paragraph to give parents this option, and it should not be at the discretion of heads, schools or admissions boards to decide.</p> <p>Parents of Summer Born children should be given the automatic option for their child to start Reception at aged 5. Once that child joins whatever cohort (be it in Reception at just turned 4 or Reception at just turned 5) then they should be allowed to remain in that cohort for the remainder of their full education inclusive of secondary schools. Should any summer born child who started school at age 4 finds it challenging, then it should be an option for the child to rejoin Reception but in the following year.</p>
Public	Summer born children should be given the chance to start school when they are ready, not at just turned 4 when they are nearly a year behind their classmates. Parents should not have to battle with LEA's if they wish to defer their child.
Public	Summer born children have been shown to struggle all the way through to GCSE due to missing out on an additional vital year to early years play. While some parents may be happy to send a just turned 4 year old, parents are best placed to decide whether to send their child to school to start in reception at just turned 4 or the term after they turn 5. They shouldn't have to go straight into year 1 as they have then missed a years teaching and are in a year with more pressure at just turned 5

	when Autumn babies started year R.
Public	<p>5.1 Children born in the summer term OR LATER -many children here are born so close to the 31st aug cut off. ... other children in their age range are beginning year 1. Ref to age range here is critical. A definition would be necessary – eg children born from 1st June to 31st Aug. Much more preferable language to normal age group. This is used to justify the admission of summerborns with children nearly 1 year older than them. 5.2 5.3 The number of parents who would like their summer born child to be admitted out of their normal age group appears to be very small. Therefore it should not be difficult to support these parents in their decision. The impact to these children from this early admission is severe, often seen in ongoing emotional and social issues which carry on over later in life (evidence from many studies). There is also impact to the wider school community in the support these children often require from teachers, teaching assistants, sencos. The changes would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clarify that the circumstances which the admission authority should take into account when making their decision include: the parent's wishes (for divorced parents there should be 2 submissions allowed per child); information about the child's academic, social and emotional development - it is odd to me the focus on academic – the children under discussion here are barely 4, many may not have even gone to nursery. Academic should be later. and whether they have previously been educated outside their normal age group. • require the admission authority to take account of the views of the headteacher of the school concerned. This concerns me greatly unless a substantial change is made to the funding for these children. A head could lose a year's worth of funding – a very strong incentive to get the child enrolled. Also the head does not know this child at all or barely. I fear that local authorities will place greater reliance on the views of the head, than the parents. the decision made will take account of the views of an education professional who will be involved in educating the child. There may be other professionals involved with the children who can comment more authoritatively about the impact on that child from starting formal school too young. ; • require the admission authority to deal with the application as part of the normal admissions round, where an admission authority agrees a parent's request for their child to be admitted out of their normal age group, and where the age group they are admitted to would be the one in which pupils are normally admitted to the school. Perhaps I am not understanding correctly - it seems as if

	<p>the request to defer needs to be submitted and approved prior to application in the normal way. This surely is problematic if the request to defer is denied, then does the child enter yr 1? There is no mention here of the threat used to parents about the deferral being withdrawn if a child changes school in primary stage or on the transfer to secondary at age 11 or other. The ability for local authorities to threaten parents in this way must be stopped.</p>
Public	<p>Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education</p>
Public	<p>I strongly feel that all parents of summer born children should be given the right to choose whether or not they feel that their child is ready to start school in the September following their child's 4th Birthday. As parents of a summer born child who has been allowed to delay starting reception until September 2015 , we as parents can see the huge advantage he now has with another year in nursery school and how he would have struggled had he had to start school this September. No summer born child should be forced into school before they are ready for an academic setting. In the long term it is only the child themselves who will be the one to suffer. The needs of the child must be met first and as the mother and primary educator of my son no one knows better what is best for my child other than myself and my husband.</p>
Public	<p>The fairer approach would be to send a letter to parents accompanying their child's offer of a school place informing them of ALL their options - starting in September, deferring and starting later in the reception year, starting in a part time basis, deferring summer born start until the following year. At the moment parents often are not even aware that they have options and schools are often not forthcoming with this information. A letter from the admissions authority at the time the offer is made, with a tick box reply, would make everything transparent and straight forward for parents and all concerned.</p>
Public	<p>I have two summer born twin daughters who start school at just 4 years 2 months adjusted years. If I had my preference, they wouldn't start school until CSA which is a year later. However, they would then probably miss reception year which as a primary school teacher believe</p>

	<p>is a vital year of education. Having lived overseas (and taught) I believe that we 'switch' our summer borns off from learning as they are too young to engage in formal learning at such a young age. If given the choice, as a parent and a teaching professional I would start my children later in formal education allowing them more time to learn through emergent play and exploration.</p>
Public	<p>There needs to be clearer guidelines across the board. Some local authorities are allowing a reception start aged 5 without any exceptional circumstances and some aren't even allowing it with exceptional circumstances. Why should it be a postcode lottery. Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education.</p>
Public	<p>Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education.</p>
Public	<p>I would like to see the wording reflect the full range of options available to summer born children, as follows: Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education. At present there is far too much uncertainty and unfairness surrounding the admission of summer born children into Reception at compulsory school age, as well as a general lack of awareness. The situation is particularly unfair when the parents' first choice school is likely to be over subscribed. There are many parents who wish to delay their summer born child's start into school but are unable to do so because of variability in the interpretation of the guidance note and a lack of commitment to keeping children in their cohort in future.</p>
Public	<p>Dear DfE, I am interested in the amendments to section 2.17, and in particular the flexibility to allow summer born children to enter reception classes at age 5+. The evidence clearly shows that allowing a child born in the</p>

	<p>later summer months to enter reception at just gone 5 can benefit the child considerably. My son was born on [date of birth], and would be 'due' to start reception this year. However, I strongly feel that he is not suited to a school environment at his age and stage of development. He is a bright and active boy, but he has no interest in phonics, drawing, or sitting down to do anything structured – he wants to play! I firmly believe that he will benefit enormously from being given an extra year to allow him that time to develop before entering into a formal schooling environment (I realise that Reception classes are heavily play-based, but in general Year 1 classes are not). In terms of the code, I would propose some changes to ensure greater consistency between admissions authorities: No exceptional circumstances: I am encouraged to see that that the DfE is making it clear to admissions authorities that children can be admitted outside of their 'normal' year group. However, if the DfE really wants to give this flexibility and allow summer born children to enter into reception classes at 5+, the code needs to go further and remove the ambiguities in the wording. Currently, the code is interpreted differently by different LEAs; some will allow children into reception classes at 5+ purely because the child is born in later summer months and the parents feel that that would be in the child's best interests, while others insist that additional evidence is required. This is simply unfair – it is a postcode lottery, and the decision that is made by the admissions authorities varies widely. It should be prescribed in the code that if a parent feels that their late summer born is not ready to start school then they should be granted that choice, and there should be no need for any 'exceptional circumstances'. A possible amendment to the wording could be as follows: "2.17A Admission authorities must make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case. This will include taking account of the parent's views, information about the child's academic, social and emotional development, and whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group. If a parent wishes their late summer born (June-August) child to enter into reception at age 5+, no exceptional circumstances need to be documented." Involvement of the head teacher: The addition of the statement "They must also take into account the views of the head teacher of the school concerned." might cause logistical problems in allowing greater flexibility. In a dense urban environment, there may be several possible schools a child could attend. Must the LEA and/or parents enter into a dialogue with each one of them to ascertain their</p>
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	<p>views? Again, this stipulation would cause further inconsistencies and inequalities between decisions made for children with very similar circumstances. Again, if the DfE really wants flexibility in the system the Code needs to be more prescriptive. Maintenance of deceleration: The Code needs to make it clear that if a child is allowed to enter reception at age 5+, then they must never be forced to move up a year and rejoin their original cohort (against their parents' wishes). A possible addition to the code is as follows: "Where a child is allowed to enter reception at 5+, they must never be forced to rejoin their chronological age group against their parents' wishes."</p> <p>I'm encouraged to see that careful thought is being given to this important issue, and I hope that there will be some true flexibility (in line with other countries) in the system in the near future.</p>
Public	<p>Being a summer born and the mother of a summer born I have grave reservations about current admission policy which allows just four year olds to attend reception. The choice is reception or year 1 and you have to apply, this leaves no choice but to let your child start in reception with the rest. Not just this but a system that lets 4 year olds start at 9 and finish at 3 needs changing. Summer born children are younger and at a different stage and not allowing parent who know their children and abilities the flexible options of staggered intakes and hours for a longer period is doing our children a diserve. I think any change to bring flexibility into the school start age and hours is a good thing. We are all told that children develop at different rates,well let's show that we understand this fact and not doing a diserve to our younger children</p>
Public	<p>Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education."</p>
Public	<p>Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st - 31st August inclusive) child to join reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education.</p>
Public	<p>Parents should be able to decide which year the child starts - ie delay reception start by one year if they deem</p>

	<p>the child socially/emotionally/ unable to start - these qualities often cannot be adequately assessed by LEA's but parents have a deeper understanding of children. Expecting children who are not ready to go straight into year 1 is not fair as they will miss much of the early years curriculum just because they are young. LEA's need further help defining what circumstances should result in a delay, perhaps some examples should be included as different LEA's are being stricter than others. It should be expected that the child stays in their new cohort if a delay is agreed unless there are extreme circumstance for why they should change. LEA's and Headteachers need to be aware of this.</p>
Public	<p>I agree that parental wishes should be taken into account. I agree that such applications should be processed alongside all the other applications. I agree that the headteacher should be consulted, however, they should not be able to overrule the parents' wishes - if a headteacher insist on a Year 1 place, then an alternative place should be offered at a different school where a Year R place is available - enabling the family to decide whether to send their child to Y1 in their preferred school or to YR in a less desirable school (ideally it should still be one of the preferred 3 listed on the application</p>
Public	<p>Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age (the term after they turn 5) should be able to submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education.” This is likely to only be a small minority as the majority of parents prefer their child to start with all of their peers and friends, but this provides for those who may benefit from more time in a more informal setting to reach emotional maturity or other milestones. The child should not be made to 'skip' a year later in their Education, especially if this is against the Parent's wishes. There should be no need for professional input as at this age, it is the parent who knows their child best</p>
Representative of children or early years organisation	<p>The group felt that allowing parents to hold back their children for a year and then enter Reception year instead of year 1 was a positive step. If the child's personal, social, emotional & development is that of a reception aged child, then they should be allowed with consultation with the school, to start them where is best for them as it would be catering for the needs of that individual child. However, the group felt that the process of deferring should be made easier. The document should make it</p>

	<p>clear that parents are entitled to a full time place in the September following their child's 4th birthday, but also it should make it clear that there is no legal obligation for them to be in school until the age of 5.</p>
<p>Representative of children or early years organisation</p>	<p>Although [name of organisation] welcomes the clarification these proposals will provide to summer born children's admissions arrangements, we believe that more effort should be made to understand and mitigate the obstacles many parents face when securing late admission to Reception for their summer born children, not least from schools and local authorities themselves. We know from our own membership that the process is challenging for parents, with other hurdles including concerns that delaying admission may mean their child does not secure the primary place they hope for, and high childcare costs remaining a burden for a further year. More generally, it should not be forgotten by Government or schools that the EYFS also comprises Reception year at school. As well as preparing children for their later years at school, Reception should also support the learning and development requirements of all children through a play-based approach, irrespective of the age of the child concerned. Ensuring this approach is taken in all Reception classes should effectively enable younger children to be supported throughout the important first school year. There is a vast array of evidence that all children up to the age of 7 benefit from a play-based approach that supports their whole development (social, physical, emotional as well as educational). Given how early children start school in England, it is vital that schools support the EYFS ethos up to the end of reception year and indeed, extend this into year 1 through a commitment to child-centred teaching.</p>
<p>Representative of children or early years organisation</p>	<p>We support this proposal.</p>
<p>Representative of children or early years organisation</p>	<p>We welcome any attempt to improve the situation for summer-born children, as current arrangements are clearly not working well enough. We would if anything wish to see these changes made stronger, eg to give parents an absolute right for a summer-born child to enter Reception in the term after their fifth birthday, rather than leaving this to the decision of local authorities, or for the onus on the local authority to demonstrate why this was not in a child's best interest. We urge government to keep these provisions under review and commit to further changes if the current changes do not lead to an improvement in the situation.</p>

<p>Representative of children or early years organisation</p>	<p>There are two key ways in which a child's premature birth can affect their readiness for school. Firstly, complications associated with prematurity can delay a child's development meaning they may not be ready to start school following their fourth birthday. With just a little more time to develop many of these children catch up with their peers without any significant additional needs. The second, and compounding factor, is that as a consequence of being born weeks or months before their due date, the child is placed in a different year group to that which they would have joined had they been born full-term. This means that simply as a result of their prematurity they are expected to start school a year earlier than if they had been born when expected, despite the additional developmental delays they may face. [name of organisation] recognises that every child is unique, therefore we welcome the emphasis that the Code places on parental choice about applications to delay and defer entry to school. What is right for one child is not necessarily the case for another. This applies as much for premature born children as for any other child. This response is informed by extensive engagement with parents of prematurely born children, who have direct experience of the school admissions process. An open request was made seeking parents views on the specific changes to the School Admissions Code outlined in this consultation through [name of organisation]' website, e-newsletters and social media. Over 25 detailed responses were received and it is from these that the quotes used below are based. This feedback adds to a considerable body of evidence [name of organisation] has been collecting from parents over recent years; including over 60 responses to a request for case studies we collected to help inform Department for Education guidance on this issue over a three month period in 2012, and a further 150 plus responses collected from an open survey we conducted between 2010 to 2012. The overriding theme that has emerged from this dialogue with families is that parents have often had to mount significant battles with admission authorities in order to afford their premature born child any flexibility in when they can start school. This is often despite strong supporting evidence from healthcare professionals and other experts with a good knowledge of the difficulties that these individual children have faced. There are also many clear and worrying accounts of admissions authorities operating blanket policies to refuse delayed entry to school for children outside of their normal age group, regardless of the individual child's needs. It is also apparent from the feedback that</p>
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	<p>we have seen, that admissions authorities have either been misinterpreting or, in some cases, knowingly misleading parents about the options they have regarding delaying or deferring their child's admission to school. This is why we believe it is imperative to make the relevant sections of the School Admissions Code as clear and as strongly phrased as possible. As one parent put it in response to our most recent survey: "The admission authorities are a rule to themselves and in my opinion unless the code states clearly in black and white that they MUST allow premature children who have fallen into the incorrect school year to start reception age five, the year they SHOULD have started had they not been premature, they will continue to ignore it. I am disgusted by the way my son's case is being dealt with by our local education authority, and feel I am being bullied into sending my son to school a year early, at the corrected age of three years ten months, when he will not be ready socially and emotionally." [name of organisation] welcomes the proposed changes to the School Admissions Code and the increased flexibility they should offer to the parents of children born prematurely. Below we have addressed a few key areas where we feel further revisions could increase both clarity and the flexibility afforded to premature born children. Stronger emphasis on parental rights We welcome the changes in emphasis that have been made to paragraph 2.16 regarding parents' entitlements to defer entry to school for their child. The revised Code states that "(b) parents can defer the date their child is admitted...", and "(c) where parents wish, children may attend part time..." This is an improvement to the previous code which emphasised that "parents can request that the date their child is admitted is deferred" and that "parents can request that their child take up the place part-time". [name of organisation] would also like to see this change in emphasis applied to section 2.17 regarding admission of children outside of their 'normal' age group. Clarification of ill health Paragraph 2.17 currently states "Parents of gifted and talented children, or those who have experienced problems or missed part of a year, for example due to ill health, can seek places outside their normal age group." To better reflect the needs of those children experiencing delayed development, many of whom will have been born prematurely, we recommend that clarification is given that this applies equally to children who experience ill health before starting school as it does to those who have missed periods of schooling as a result of ill-health once in formal education. We recommend that the below</p>
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	<p>is added as a footnote to the first sentence of paragraph 2.17: “A child may have been required to take time away from school due to ill health, or have experienced developmental delay as a result of ill-health or an ongoing medical condition before starting school.”</p> <p>Summer born children The second sentence of 2.17 could be mistaken as applying only to those children described in the first sentence (gifted, talented or having missed part of a year). To avoid this we proposed the following amendment to the second sentence: “In addition, parents of a summer born child may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and can request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to reception rather than year 1.”</p> <p>Factors to consider We welcome the reference made to children born prematurely in footnote 49 defining ‘summer born children’. However, we would welcome a stronger emphasis on prematurity as a factor to be considered in relation to admission of children outside their ‘normal’ age group in 2.17A. A further important omission in this section is reference to the child’s medical history, which is important for those children who have experienced problems and ill-health. Finally we believe this paragraph of the Code should more clearly reference the impact that missing out on a year of education could have on a child entering year one without having first attended reception class. To ensure consistency with both 2.17 and the Department’s 2013 Advice on the admission of summer-born children we recommend amending 2.17A to read as follows: “Admission authorities must make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case. This will include taking account of the parent’s views, information about the child’s academic, social and emotional development, (where relevant) a child’s medical history, whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group or will be otherwise entering year 1 without first having attended reception class, and whether they may have naturally fallen into a lower age group were it not for being born prematurely.”</p> <p>The role of head teachers While we recognise the value of involving schools and specifically head teachers in admissions decisions, we have concerns that not all head teachers appreciate the impact prematurity can have on a child’s readiness for school. Additionally, while some head teachers will have had the opportunity to meet with both the parents and the child, in many cases this will not have been possible; particularly when parents are applying to multiple schools. One parent shared their concerns about their head teacher’s understanding of the issues their child</p>
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faced: "My little boy was born 1lb 3oz at 29 weeks and 6 days in December 2006. He started school in my view three months too early and has always struggled to keep up even now, in particular with his maths...I asked the head teacher to delay my little boys start date by three months but they would not even consider it." We recommend equal value is placed on the views of health professionals and others experts with knowledge of the individual child, their unique medical histories and social development. We recommend that the final sentence of 2.17A is replaced with: "They must also take into account the views of relevant health and education professionals who have attended the child, as well as the head teacher of the school concerned." Reasons for decision We welcome the requirement for admission authorities to set out any reasons for refusing a request for a child to be educated outside of their normal age group. To further increase transparency, we recommend that admission authorities are required to publish their criteria for determining whether a child can be educated outside of their age group. This would not be a blanket policy as this would contradict the requirement that each case should be treated on its individual circumstances. We recommend inserting the following sentence at the end of 2.17A: "Admission authorities must include their criteria for determining whether a child can be educated outside of their normal age group in their admission arrangements." Consideration given to applications We warmly welcome this section stating that applications for children to be placed outside of their year group are not given lower priority to other applications. This is an issue that has affected many parents of premature children. As one mother of a child born extremely premature told us: "My daughter...has developmental delay and my request was backed by her consultant paediatrician (she is still under hospital care). I was told that her application would not be considered until all children in the 'correct' year of birth had received school places. As we live in an area where all local schools are oversubscribed and many parents struggle to get a place in either of the local schools, I didn't feel that I could risk it. She might have ended up delaying reception but being in a school on the other side of town with no chance of making local friends." However we would suggest a small amendment to 2.17B to improve clarity and avoid any confusion over interpretation of "correct age" in this instance. The penultimate sentence currently reads: "They must not give the application lower priority on the basis that the child is not of the correct age." We would suggest it becomes: "They must not give the application lower

	<p>priority on the basis that the child is making an out of year group application.” Complaints and appeals The draft Code sets out the need to inform parents of their right to appeal if they disagree with the allocation of their child’s school place. We would recommend introducing a 2.24A covering parents’ right to complain. As paragraph 2.24 sets out, currently parents cannot appeal a decision if their application for a delayed start has been refused but their child has been offered a place at the school in a different year. This significantly disadvantages many parents of premature born children. We believe that all parents must have the right to appeal when their applications are refused. We urge the Department to ensure that this inequality is addressed. Ability to remain in adopted year group A final area where [name of organisation] believes current policy is lacking in the absence of any assurance for children who have successfully delayed entry to reception by a full year that they will be able to continue in their adopted school year throughout their education. For example, this could affect children moving from primary to secondary school or if they move between admissions authorities. We strongly believe that it is in a child’s best interest to ensure that they do not miss a vital year of schooling as a result of this loophole. We recommend that a further provision is added to the Code to address this issue. Advice to admission authorities and parents [name of organisation] contributed to the development of the Department’s 2013 Advice on the admission of summer born children: for local authorities, school admission authorities and parents which, “helps clarify 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”. We warmly welcome this guidance and recommend that it is referenced in the updated Code. [name of organisation] would welcome working with the Department on any update that is required to this advice document in light of the revised Code.</p>
<p>Representative of children or early years organisation</p>	<p>The research has shown that summer-born babies are at a disadvantage in school because they are the youngest children in the class. July and August babies are nearly a whole year younger than the oldest children in the class. Crawford, Deardon and Meghir (2010) examined the differences between the test scores of children at different ages by looking at their performance in national tests such as SATs, GCSEs and A-levels and university admissions. They found large differences in achievement at age 7 between children born in September and children born in August. This difference was also linear,</p>

meaning that April born children performed on average better than children born just one month later in May. The difference between the oldest and youngest children in the year did reduce over time but it was still evident at 18-years-old and affected university admissions. The research evidence concluded that the older child is more ready for school intellectually and emotionally and so more ready to learn. These children then go on to experience less failure because they are more capable. This success brings approval and an increase in confidence and self-esteem. As a health professional my extensive training has focused on developing the core understanding that parents have the best knowledge of their child. In all my clinical assessment of Early Years children the main source of information on the child is the parent. There are a small (but significant) number of parents, that I see for assessment and intervention who have identified (in line with my clinical assessment and observation) that their July or August born child does not yet have the key developmental skills and cognitive development to engage in Reception. These parents often go through considerable stress and heart-ache. Firstly battling with schools and their LEAs to try and get them to consider allowing their child to start Reception a year later. Later, after these requests have been rejected they and their child often experience significant stress when their child has started in school and struggled. This process creates a source of stress for parents who feel they are not acting in line with their children's needs. It can also (as the evidence shows) lead to long-term disadvantage for those summer-born children who are not cognitively ready for school (Crawford, Deardon and Meghir, 2010). During my previous experience working as a Highly Specialised Clinical Psychologist in a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service I was struck by the number of referrals for children with July and August birthdays. These were often children who had internalised a sense of failure or a feeling that they were not as clever as their peers. This resulted in low self-esteem, anxiety and low mood. In my clinical opinion, parents of summer-born children should be given the option, without question, of delaying their child's start to Reception by a year by the local authorities and schools. The admission authorities and schools should allow the parent's wishes to be taken as a reason for the delay, with the acknowledgement that for these small minority of summer-born children whose parents don't feel they are ready, parents have the best knowledge of their child. The application should be considered as part of the normal admissions round, this would give parents

	certainty about the course for their child and would significantly reduce the anxiety they can experience. This recommendation to allow parents of summer-born babies to defer entry to Reception until the following year, on the basis of parents' understanding of their child and parents' wishes, fits with the research evidence and my clinical observation.
School	The advice sent out earlier this year was sensible. It is good to adjust the Code accordingly
School	I can see advantages for a delayed start into reception for summer born children as often they are not 'school ready'
School	These proposals all seem reasonable.
School	I am concerned about the strengthening for the possibility of children being accommodated outside their chronological year group. Good schools make suitable provision for all learners through skillful differentiation that reflects the age & maturity of children across each cohort. Placing children outside their chronological year group will deny places for other children who need them.
School	I agree this could be better for the child. Would this child then be guaranteed a place at the school of their choice for the following year? What would happen if they wouldn't have been granted a place the second year under normal circumstances? For example, if a child lives out of catchment and would get a place in the first year as there weren't many in catchment applications, but wouldn't get one the second as there were more applications from in catchment children. Would they then be guaranteed a place because they had deferred?
School	Most children come to school anyway. We've never had a summer born child stay back a year.
School	As head of a large infant school, all of our children have started in September and this has worked well. Parents already have the right for the children to start later in the school year and should continue with that choice. I do not think that the parents should have the ability to request that they should then start in Year R rather than in Year 1. This provides problems when the children are older, as they will go through all of their school life out of cohort.
School	We believe too that the vast majority of summer born children are happy to start school in the September following their 4th birthday
School	It is not true that the majority of parents of summer born children are happy for their child to start Reception in the September following their fourth birthday – however, many parents are intimidated by schools that say that their child will have no friends if they defer entry, that they will fall behind with phonics etc. The important thing

	is that children transfer to Reception at the point at which they are ready and not at the convenience of the primary school. It is obviously easier administratively to have one intake but this disregards what is in the best interests of the individual child.
School	In my experience, despite what the parent believes most children are able and ready to start school and do not need to defer entry. It is often a parental perspective that quickly changes when the child begins school. There are medical reasons why deferment is more appropriate however deferring entry may cause a slower rate of progress throughout school.
School	There may be some circumstances where deferred entry may be appropriate, however if a child joins later there will undoubtedly be a knock-on effect in transitions through the key stages and there could be the possibility of ultimately finishing school before completing GCSE examinations. Also a child may well be ready to begin school, even though their parent may not think this. They may know their child emotionally and socially, but not academically.
School	The emphasis on parental opinion in determining whether a child should defer entry to Reception to a different cohort is of particular concern. Whilst there are some cases where it is in a child's best interests to defer, e.g. where there have been health issues or delays in development, it is sensible. However, parents do not always know what is best for their child and a decision to join a year later, so that a child may be the oldest rather than the youngest in cohort, is not always in a child's best interests. As a child progresses through their education and on to secondary school this can cause unforeseen problems and children may be eligible to leave school before completion of their GCSE qualifications.
School	I feel that the proposed changes will allow parents to make an informed decision about their summer born child knowing that if they do not decide to send their child to reception until they are 5 they will not miss all their Reception life and start the next term in Year 1. Many summer born children with specific needs would benefit from another year in Nursery to ensure they are school ready.
School	We are concerned that without very clear guidance on what circumstances might be considered, that this could place an unnecessary administrative burden on headteachers and SENCOs, who would need to assess the individual cases being made. It is not unheard of for 50 per cent of a reception class to be summer babies. If all asked for a deferred place to be considered it would

	put pressure on places the following year and add significantly to workload. Very clear guidance would need to be given on this to avoid accusations of unfairness and LAs must take the lead in the decision making process to ensure headteachers and schools are properly supported in what can be an emotive issue.
School	The current problem is that schools are expected to keep places open for children whose parents do not want them to start school until they are of compulsory school age, yet consistent funding with PVIs only pays schools for the sessions attended, so schools lose funding for agreeing to these arrangements. This proposal seems eminently sensible
School	Agree that this seems sensible.
School	Not necessary.
School	I have huge concerns regarding this area. If children born in July/August are allowed to defer their places for a year, the 'Summer born' children will effectively become those born in June/May and as such the problem continues although pushed back for two months.
School	Support
School	The clarification makes sense and I support the proposal of the Headteacher's views being taken in to account.
School	Great idea, but by leaving the Secondary schools free to choose whether they accept these children into Year 6, it may add complication and difficulty in to the system
School	if a child has gone through school in a specific year group s/he should be permitted, on the parents'/carers' request to stay within that year group when entering secondary school and that the parent's wishes should take precedence over those of the school.
School	The academies I represent strongly disagree with this proposal. The impact of this change is very high, potentially leading to a lot more older children in Year R classes, which could lead to children of the correct age group being refused places. Parents would then have to re-apply for the child to continue in a lower age group at each phase transfer stage as well. Junior/secondary schools are under no obligation to continue educating a child out of their age group – they would be required to consider each application but this could mean that a child applying for a Year 7 place, when age-wise they should be in Year 8, is told they cannot apply out of age group and the child then misses all of the Year 7 curriculum by being admitted to a Year 8 class. This change is unworkable for schools. It has a knock-on effect at junior and secondary transfer levels that could potentially lead to children missing a whole year of education. Parents do not have a right of appeal against the decision not to allow them to apply for a lower age

	group so there will be no method of ensuring consistency in decision making. Very few children are currently admitted out of their year group, even if they have EHC plans. With the correct support summer born children usually flourish in the correct year group without being kept back a year.
School	These proposals seem sensible. However, there should be no penalties for secondary schools in accepting children out of year as far as accountability measures are concerned.
School	We do not believe this is in the best interests of the child.
School	I agree
School	This has seldom been an issue. However we have always dealt with these children on a case by case basis according to parental wishes and the Headteachers thoughts. These proposals make this more transparent and would work for our school
School	These changes seem reasonable.
School	Clarification on the admission of summer born children to include the advice contained in the guidance issued by the DfE in July 2013 no comment
School	Clarification in this area would be welcomed. It is essential that there is clear separation between the decision making of the admissions authority and the decision of the professionals to determine in which year group a child should best be educated. The decision to educate a child outside of their normal age group needs to be a decision of the education professionals in the school.
School	This pre-supposes that all parents know what is best for their children. The number of parents attending our parenting classes would suggest otherwise. For a parent to choose to keep a child from attending school until the next academic year could be detrimental to the able child who is ready to learn and also this disadvantaged child who has received little in the way of stimulation at home. Some parents find it very hard to let their child go, since they either find emotional support by keeping them at home or as in some of our experience, are 'little carers' and helpers with younger children. The current system of schools applying for advice on whether it may be a good idea to defer entry into reception class for Summer born children and consulting with relevant stakeholders, seems the more sensible approach.
Teacher	These need to be made very clear to parents and schools and implications re. Baseline testing on entry from Sept 2015, Phonics screening checks and KS1 assessments clarified. How will this impact school performance data?
Teacher	I am delighted that the DfE are looking at the issue of

	<p>summer born children, who i have witnessed consistently being disadvantaged by the current system as LEAs fail to allow parents to defer their child's entry in to reception. Summer born children especially those born between June-August must be allowed to begin reception at age 5, not at 4 which is happening now and causing long term damage to these children. Please make this guidance more robust to stop LEAs from refusing parents requests to defer by a year their child's entry to school. The guidance must state that children born after 31st May must be allowed without any objection to start school in reception at age 5 and LEAs must honour this request of any summer born child/ parent without prejudice. Further these children must be allowed to stay in this year group throughout their whole school career at both primary and secondary school.</p>
Teacher	Is in the interests of the child.
Teacher	<p>If the requirement is for children to attend school the term following their fifth birthday then there should be an automatic right for these children to gain a placement in the reception class, it is discriminatory to give the LEA the option to turn down an application for a reception placement, why should summer borns have to miss their reception year of school if their parents wish for them to attend at the beginning of their mandatory education career? I have worked in education for over ten years and I have first hand experience of the detrimental effects entering education before a child is emotionally physically, mentally and academically ready to start school. The evidence cannot be disputed on this, we are years behind the rest of Europe on our school start age.</p>
Teacher	<p>I am both a parent of an August born child and a teacher and I agree with the campaign group www.summerbornchildren.org and would very much like my child to be allowed to start reception the September after he turns 5 rather than being forced into year one. Rather than having to jump through hoops to do this I would like it to be a case of simply applying for the year I wish to apply for. The research is clear that summer born babies are disadvantaged and my husband, as a 31st August baby, had rather a torrid time. Parents of summer born children should be free to decide what is best for their child without question or prejudice. I agree with the phraseology of summerbornchildren.org below. "Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with</p>

	that year group cohort for the remainder of their education.”
Teacher	All Parents of summer born children (April to August birthdays) should have the option for them to start school the term after they are 5 in the reception year group and for the child to remain in this year group through their school life. At this age they are better able to cope with full time schooling and would not be disadvantaged by their age.
Teacher	Since the birth of my twins seven weeks early in early August 2009 I have become more aware of the impact of birth month on my pupils' self esteem and perceived progress. In a whole-school context targeting is almost exclusively focused on the impact of cultural heritage or social situation, and month of birth is never used as an intervention indicator, even though the evidence is significant. I have come to feel very strongly that those children born prematurely into the year above that of their due date ought to be allowed to start school a year later and to remain in that cohort throughout their time on education.
Teacher	<p>“Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education.” As a teacher for over 30 years, working with reception children I have seen time and time again, children born in the summer months struggle to settle into the school environment on many levels. Academically they struggle, but more importantly their emotional and social capabilities leave them struggling in an environment that is too much too soon. The UK needs to follow the example of the German and wider European system that supports children's best interests. A later age of school would be ideal but more immediately, summer born children need to be given the opportunity to begin reception at 5 and stay with that cohort throughout their school life. Parents are threatened with their child being forced into year one, or losing their school of choice and buckle, sending them to school against their wishes. They are too young to sustain the hours and part-time or delayed starts are a Band-Aid solution to what is a distinct problem. The evidence is there and the government needs to support parents in making a decision in the best interest of their child.</p>
Teacher	With reference to the proposed amendments to the admissions code, I have the following concerns to raise

	<p>on the subject of deferred entry to Reception classes for Summer born children. 1 Parents need to be made aware that children entering Reception after their fifth birthday will move through primary school in the normal way, but at Secondary level, will move into Year 8, rather than Year 7. This may not be the case in all schools, but I do know that in this area, local secondary schools do not admit children out of their age band. They would have to made to do this by law, but I understand it affects their public examination results so they are not willing to do it. I would be grateful if you could let me know if I am wrong on this point - I have had no success in persuading high schools to allow such children into Year 7. 2 Here is a worst case scenario: 30% of a class are Summer birthdays. They all defer until the following year. Therefore, there are 20 children in the Reception class. More places can't be allocated because the parents may change their mind during the year. (This has happened to this school twice in recent years). In the following year, the 10 children who deferred now take up a Reception place. 20 more places are allocated, but 10 of those wish to defer. Again, another class of 20. In the mean time, parents desperate for a school place for their child can't have one. In Trafford, it is so difficult to find places for children in good schools, this would be unfair to many children. The code of practice would have to state that parents who defer a place cannot change their mind during the year. This would enable schools to allocate any further available places. 3 Some parents, unsuccessful in securing a place in their preferred school, could defer entry into their allocated school in the hope of a place becoming available in their first choice school. Should they subsequently be allocated a place there, they will have effectively blocked other children taking up a place for several months. In short, although I understand the reasons behind parents wishing to defer starting school until later, I do feel that schools need to be protected. Parents must agree a date for starting school and understand that this is final. This would enable schools to plan in advance and to fill places. Parents need to understand that the deferral cannot continue into Secondary school. Please let me know if I am mistaken here. If I am not, perhaps that should also be looked at.</p>
Teacher	The clarification in relation to summer born children would be a welcome improvement.
Teacher	Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be

	<p>treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education.</p>
Teacher	<p>As a teacher I am acutely aware of the difficulties some summer born children face right through their educational career. A later school starting age would be the greatest change that our educational system could offer to children (removing the stress/pressures of targets from children at such a young age). Without that as an option however at least giving parents of the youngest children the flexibility to allow their children to start school later makes a great deal of sense. I would support the parents of children born in the last 6 months of the academic year to have the flexibility to decide if their child was "school ready" or not. Unfortunately the reception year now contains a much larger taught complement than it used to so delaying the start date of these children to later in the same academic year only puts them at a greater disadvantage/makes them more likely to feel inferior/stupid compared to their peers who would have already learnt a great deal. A child's sense of self belief and self worth is formed very early in their school career and starting too soon/before they are ready can impact hugely on their passion for education. I wholeheartedly support a change in the admissions code to allow for the flexibility to delay starting school by a year (entering reception) and then critically staying with that cohort throughout their educational career.</p>
Teacher	<p>I wholeheartedly support the policy that summer born children should be allowed to start school the September following their 5th birthday if parents/carers so wish and remain with their cohort for the rest of their school years. Not only is this positive for the education and confidence level of the child it would also I believe boost attainment results generally. Research supports this, especially for boys and other European countries do have later school starts which prove beneficial.</p>
Teacher	<p>This is NOT a minor technical change to the education of 4 year old children in state schools! Currently, the majority of Primary Schools have an induction period for Reception pupils, which allows them to gradually get used to their new educational setting, new teachers and the presence of many other older children on the same site. It also enables teachers to get to know their class, carry out baseline assessments, that inform their planning for the curriculum, and build relationships with new families. As an educational professional, I firmly believe this practice is in the best, long-term interests of children starting school. Most parents understand that</p>

	<p>we are laying the foundations for the rest of their child's time in primary school by ensuring they get off to a positive start and feel secure. A very small number of parents have concerns that their child only attends part time in the first 2-3 weeks, based on the fact that they are working and object to the costs, or have difficulty making arrangements for, child care. There are children who are happy to attend full time Nursery, but find a school setting more tiring and stressful in the early weeks. I think it is detrimental for such young children to attend school full time from the beginning of September, with potentially 29 other children in the class. Schools should be allowed to make their own arrangements for the induction of 4 year old children, without pressure from parents, who feel they are 'entitled' to full time child care from day 1 of their child's primary education. Previously, section 2:16 was focussed primarily on the right of parents not to send their child to school full time until they were ready, which is strengthened in the revised code, (i.e. your child is entitled to a place, but you don't have to send them until you feel s/he is ready). I feel the wording and emphasis of 2 :16 in the revised code needs to be altered to reflect current best practice in primary schools, which includes a short induction period.</p>
Teacher	<p>Allow parents of summer born children to enter their child for schooling at compulsory school age (the term in which they turn 5) directly into the reception class, and allow them to remain with their cohort throughout the duration of their school and college years</p>
Teacher	<p>Allow parents of summer born children to enter their child into formal schooling at compulsory school age (the term after their 5th birthday) into reception class and to stay with that cohort for the remainder of their school education, including throughout secondary school.</p>
Anonymous	<p>Summer born children should be allowed to defer a year. Academic and social ability suffers if children are placed in school before they are emotionally and academically ready.</p>
Anonymous	<p>This is an extremely good proposal and I would welcome all the suggested changes as the parent of a summer born child who I consider would benefit greatly from deferral. I would like an appeal process to be included so LEAs' decisions can be scrutinised if they are considered unreasonable</p>
Anonymous	<p>Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to</p>

	compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education.”
Anonymous	I think that summer child should be able to start school at the age of five in Reception and not be forced into Reception when they have only just turned four, it is far too early and very damaging to the child. This needs to be changed urgently as children are suffering being forced to school when often at just four they are not ready. Parents should have the power not the councils, please help these poor children.
Anonymous	I agree there needs to be flexibility for the parents to decide if their child is ready if summer born.
Anonymous	My child was born close to threshold date and I support flexibility . This is especially important for prematurely born children, for both their corrected age and in case of developmental delays. There should be more options for children to start early where the child is ready.
Anonymous	<p>The proposals are a great help in clarifying and enforcing a more flexible approach to school admissions. I personally have had to pay nearly</p> <p>1000gbp in fees to EP's to prove the admissions committee that our son is not ready for school and his application should be delayed.</p> <p>The process took nearly 6 months and is almost impossible with voluntary aided schools that are not accountable to anyone.</p> <p>Things must change to make things easier for parents.</p>
Anonymous	<p>It should be easier and not just for children with demonstratable SEN. At this age most children who are later diagnosed with SEN will not be showing diagnosable symptoms. If parents apply they have very little to gain apart from happier children.</p> <p>The government's own research, in addition to a plethora of other research, shows that children with september births perform better than children with summer births so it seems like a winning choice all round.</p> <p>Educational staff should be made aware of the option. Woefully few seem to know about the change in the law.</p> <p>Once granted the child should be able to stay with peers throughout the whole school life.</p> <p>Grammar school tests need to be changed to reflect this. As long as the child hasn't previously sat a grammar</p>

	school test their should be no reason for them not to sit it with their peers.
Anonymous	<p>Summer born children are entering school anywhere from 4yrs and 5 months to 4 years and 1 day. they are too young emotionally. They may be ready (in some, not all cases) educationally, but emotionally they really aren't. They still need nurture that 2 adults to 18/30 children can not give. They take time still to adjust to new situations. They still have some separation anxiety I understand that by getting them all in early you can catch those with s+l difficulties due to less than ideal homelives, but they can be caught through the nursery system... some children benefit from being home with a parent/grandparent/carer and that can never be given back.</p>
Anonymous	<p>I am of the view that the admissions code should provide the greatest weight to the views of the parents who know their child best. Leaving the ultimate decision in the hands of a headteacher could lead to perverse decisions based upon preconceived ideas. An inconsistent approach could be applied. There is no credible argument not to allow it all circumstances. This would provide certainty and avoid conflict with a potential school which a child will then attend. This issue should be considered further.</p>
Anonymous	<p>Children must commence full time education in the September following their 5th birthday. Children born between 31st April and 31st August are not required to start school until the start of the term after their 5th birthday. It should be a parents decision whether they begin earlier than this and to which year they are admitted if they do choose to wait until CSA.</p> <p>Children will enter Primary School and start in the Reception class. Parents may request that their child is admitted outside their designated age group after the child's 4th birthday. In such cases schools are required to provide for the admission of children outside their common age group. Before children reach compulsory school age (/compulsory education age), parents can request that their child attend school part-time. Schools must facilitate parental requests to that effect.</p> <p>At the point of entry into Primary School, all children have the right to access full 7 years of Primary School Education. There is no requirement to move a child from one year group to another once they have begun school or at any point of transfer unless all persons involved and the parent agree it would be in the child's best interest.</p>

	<p>If a child is not offered a place in the year group their parent feels best suits their needs then the parent should be entitled to access the same appeals procedure after offers day as any other parent of a child beginning reception class before compulsory school age.</p>
Anonymous	Agree with proposal
Anonymous	<p>I am concerned that the procedure for requesting a reception place at age 5 for a summer born child is still very vague and success in securing a delay will depend largely on which county the child happens to live in.</p> <p>I have followed the experiences of parents through the 'Campaign for Flexible School Admissions for Summer Borns.' It has become apparent that some admissions authorities are happy to admit a child out of their chronological year group based solely on the fact that they are not ready to begin formal education due to their summer birthday (e.g. Hampshire, Sheffield.) Other LEAs across the UK take a much less sympathetic approach and have refused requests from parents (e.g. Surrey, Norfolk). The uncertainty creates enormous anxiety for the parents/carers of summer born children. Particularly as there seems to be a lot of misunderstanding amongst schools/LEAs as to how these requests should be dealt with.</p> <p>Although it states that the parents wishes must be taken into account it also stresses that the theheadteacher's views must also be taken into account. Yet, the headteacher may have little or no knowledge of the child at this stage. Whilst the headteacher must be part of the decision making process, surely the views of the parents and those who know the child well (e.g. pre-school teacher) should be given much greater priority when looking at the circumstances of the case.</p>
Anonymous	<p>As a Church School, we follow the admissions code but have our own admissions authority. I welcome the clarification of admissions for Summer born children, especially the inclusion that the HT's views should be listened to. However, I feel that the professional opinion should be given a higher status with ability and attainment being provided as evidence as a must, rather than just the wishes of the parents, which in our particular case, were a consequence of their attachment issues. Our Governors were swayed by the guidance, the threat of negative publicity as opposed to taking the professionals' views on the matter, which indicates that the odds are in favour of the parents, who are not always capable of making the rational decision in these matters of benefit to the child.</p>

<p>Anonymous</p>	<p>Parents who wish their summer born (April 1st – August 31st inclusive) child to enter Reception class at compulsory school age must submit an application for the relevant academic year. The application must be treated equitably with children starting school prior to compulsory school age, and the child can remain with that year group cohort for the remainder of their education (state or private).</p> <p>More needs to be done for those children forced into school in reception when they have just turned 4 (and were born prematurely). Support in class, age taken into account for any test and parity between the state and private system on how age impacts assessment throughout the school system.</p>
<p>Anonymous</p>	<p>Parents should be able to choose the best option for the education of their child. Summer born children are placed at a severe disadvantage in the current system, and for those children who were premature or who have any form of delay the current cut off point is incredibly harsh, and causes them to suffer throughout their education.</p>
<p>Anonymous</p>	<p>I cannot understand the wording so please simplify it. Again, OK in principle but in practice a parent talks to a Head and admission authority to see if they would admit out of year group. They are given a 'yes' but then have to apply by 15th January for a place in the next year's reception... what if they don't get a place and their second or third preference school does not think they should be put down a year? Parent could end up having to put their child into Year 1 and therefore the child is even more disadvantaged (and with no right of appeal). I also suspect some parents will use this as a means of trying again to get their child into a popular school where they were refused first time round.</p>
<p>Anonymous</p>	<p>The new code does have some improvements relating to the admission of summer born children. However, it doesn't go far enough.... I am a parent who knows my child best and I would like to see parents to have the right to delay into reception at CSA if parents feel it is in the best interest of their child. Currently most children go to reception shortly before or shortly after turning 5, summer born children are the only who have to spend most of the academic year being 4 and it can be hard for them emotionally, physically and/or academically. Parents can now automatically defer during the school year they turn 4 until the start of the summer term and they can also automatically go part time. But reception is turned into an essential part of the school programme and missing it can disadvantage the child who is</p>

	<p>deferred or goes part time. The choice to delay entry to the school for a year and then entering at reception is very important. Not all children will be delayed as it is not always necessary and not always in their best interests, so I do not understand why it is not yet done.</p> <p>In the proposal it is still the local authority/academy who makes the final decision, not the parent and I would like to see the parent making this decision. Now the LA will take into account the EYFS profile, parents wishes but also you have to have agreement from your head. Agreement with the head does not make much sense practically in the area like ours, where the schools are oversubscribed. Do I have to approach several heads in order to seek their approval? Can they make a decision in the best interest of the child if they have never met/heard of the child? Head teacher approval proposed in the new code is totally unworkable in my opinion.</p> <p>The rights of appeal are still unacceptable. If they agree a reception start and the local authority offers you a place at a school in yr 1 I cannot appeal you can only complain. Even if they have previously agreed a reception start. So the appeal procedure needs to change as obviously the LEA/school is in this situation removing a year of my child's education.</p> <p>The code has to go further and reflect primary legislation that reception is an entry level class for 5 year olds and therefore our summer borns should have the same right to defer reception until CSA as the winter and spring borns do. You can easily do this within 2.16.</p> <p>Also, there is no automatic right for the child to stay within their adopted cohort. This needs to be changed and that right given. The only change of cohort against parental wishes should be where the head teacher can demonstrate that this is in the best interest of the child. But I personally would like to see the final decision staying with the parent.</p>
Anonymous	<p>My child was born close to threshold date and I support flexibility . This is especially important for prematurely born children, for both their corrected age and in case of developmental delays. There should be more options for children to start early where the child is ready.</p>
Anonymous	<p>I wholeheartedly welcome a change in the guidance to allow flexibility in the school year a summer born child joins. Having watched our son develop over the last few years it is striking how far behind emotionally and academically he is compared to our Autumn born</p>

	<p>daughter. He was not ready for school this September and we feel incredibly fortunate that Bristol LEA and our local</p> <p>primary school have supported our request to delay him a year. Having an additional year to develop outside of the stresses and targets of school will we believe allow him to develop into a confident and rounded individual.</p> <p>Our plea for this admissions code is that it makes it clear that when a child is admitted to school</p> <p>"out of year" that they will not be made to skip a year later in their educational journey (ie be forced to rejoin their original cohort) not will they be excluded from school sports as a result of their age.</p> <p>Thank you for addressing these issues.</p>
Anonymous	<p>The DfE guidelines on this issue – deferred and delayed entry have been notoriously vague and do need to be clearer. The whole issue of part-time working and delayed start, has in my view has not been fully thought through by the DfE and its full implications have not been considered. If these matters must be explored in the Code, it must be workable and fair on all sides. In the proposed code the word 'request' has been replaced by 'can' and 'may' in relation to parental wishes from the current code, which would lead to further ambiguity. The wording in the 'Changes to school admissions: consultation document' 5.4 is actually clearer and better than the proposed Code about the process, but the word 'request' needs to remain.</p> <p>Because a few pushy parents/carers have asked for Summer-born children to get different treatment, does not mean that it is in the child, or school's best interest and is workable for all parties. There are studies that show that Summer-born children catch up with their peers over time. Reception class teaching is set-up to ease children in to school life and gain the required skills, regardless of what pre-school provision, if any, they attended and when they were born. School staff nurture all children to settle and learn to ensure children are ready for the more academic structure of key stage 1, work that would be undone if the proposals are implemented.</p> <p>The proposed Code's deliberate removal of school/sponsor/LAs explicit ability to reject parental wishes to delay or defer a child's start or part-time</p>

	<p>working gives parents/carers too much power over the whole school workings, to the whole school's detriment. The Code should clearly state that the school, sponsor and/or LA must be allowed to give full consideration to requests on an individual basis regarding deferred or delayed entry or part-time teachings. The Code needs to provide clear criterion for this task, not have this communication removed wholesale! Only with clear criterion being used and considered by all parties – including parents/carers - in an open and fair way, better working relationships would be forged between school staff and families from the start. The proposed Code has the very real potential to create chaos in schools and place ridiculous pressure on class teachers!</p> <p>For example, how would a class teacher be expected to deal with children starting at various times throughout the year, whenever a parent/carer decrees? Would schools have to agree to a half day or half week teaching just because a parent/carer requested it? How can a teacher be expected to teach a whole class and ensure they all progress when there are part-time and full-time pupils attending? What if there are several part-time arrangements within a class, how would class dynamics and cohesion be affected? Pressure on attainment is rightly high, but if a teacher is only able to teach a child half of the week or day, subject continuity is lost. Those on a shorter timetable would lose out on key skills and learning, would feel lost and disorientated, so further adversely affecting attainment. Also, the other children in the class would lose out as re-caps would be frequent, so their progress would be hampered too.</p>
Anonymous	<p>My son was born at the end of June and was due to start school this September however as a result of your guidance the head of our local primary [address] has agreed to us deferring his entry into reception until next September. I cannot begin to tell you how happy and relieved I am about this. He quite simply was not emotionally ready for starting school and I am overjoyed at the fact that he now has another year of childhood without the stresses of school.</p> <p>I wholeheartedly support the change in the admissions code to enable flexibility for parents surrounding the school starting age of their child. Missing part of the reception year through starting at Christmas/Easter or attending part time doesn't help these children with their learning or with their transition to year one (which is where the real stresses start).</p>

	<p>Parents know whether their child is ready for school or not and offering the flexibility of school start age (as in the Scottish model) makes a lot of sense. I know some parents of early September girls who wish they could send their daughters in the year above so maybe there should be flexibility there as well.</p> <p>The one thing I would ask to have clarified/confirmed in this code is that once a child starts school "out of year" that they are able to remain in this year group until the end of their school career. In Bristol I have been informed that my son might be made to miss year 7 at secondary school so that he is returned to his original year group - this strikes me as being far from in his best interests and so we have decided to take the "gamble" on the basis that any sensible head would see that this would not be in his best interests (nor those of the school).</p>
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