

P-05-832 To Amend the School Admissions Code Relating to Summer-Born Children, Correspondence – Petitioner to Committee, 14.05.19

Dear Committee Members,

thank you for continuing to pursue this case. As a group, we are growing and for many parents, whose children are struggling in various developmental ways and are therefore simply not ready for the rigours of full time school, this issue continues to cause problems and distress to many of our parents.

It is interesting to see that many local authorities report zero application for deceleration. In relation to Caerphilly Council, we know of two parents in our group who have been informed that under no circumstances would deceleration and a resultant Reception place be allowed, this was during informal discussion. Based on feedback within our group, we believe the low number of requests reported by local authorities is because:

*Many parents are simply unaware that Compulsory School Age (CSA) is actually 5 and do not realise their right to apply for Reception at CSA

*Many parents in our group report that headteachers are often unaware that deceleration is a right for parents and are forcefully told it would not be allowed - parents simply 'give up'

*Similar to the above, in initial, informal enquiries, local authorities are quite explicit that a request for deceleration and a subsequent Reception place at CSA would not be allowed.

*Socio-economic reasons in Wales, where parents might wish to decelerate, but financial constraints make this consideration an impossibility.

This process requires energy and determination. Many parents start the enquiry process and simply find all doors closed and 'give up'. We currently have several parents currently going through this process; they are being given a blanket 'no' response, with no full and detailed reasoning, on an individual basis, thus, failing to apply Wales Admissions Code correctly.

Such is the importance of this issue, Wales is currently one of the only regions within the UK not to have an explicit summer-born policy - we therefore urge you to continue to work towards some resolution within our country.

We thank you for your time.

Best wishes,

Flexible Admissions Wales Group