

Heaton St. Barnabas' C.E. Primary School

Rossefield Road, Heaton

Bradford, BD9 4DA

Tel: 01274 545019 Fax: 01274 553910

Headteacher: Mrs Gillian Evans M.A.



Date: 16th January

Dear Parent(s) /Guardian(s),

I am writing to alert you to the council's proposal to change admission arrangements for children who are born in the summer term (June - August). At the moment the law states that children must begin school by the end of the term following their child's fifth birthday.

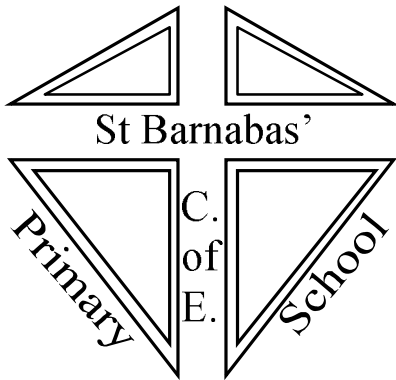
In most areas, including Bradford, children usually enter school in the year following their 4th birthday. This is fine for the vast majority of children. However, a very few children who are born in late July and August have difficulty starting school so young and struggle to keep up with classmates. Research shows that the effect of this stays with them all their school lives.

At present, parents of children born in June, July and August may request that they delay their child's entry to school until the September after the child's 5th birthday. This means that they will then be more mature and more able to cope with school life and they will get a full year in the reception class. The council's proposal is that from September 2011, if parents chose to exercise their right in law to delay entry to primary school, children will have to be admitted, not to the reception class, but to year one. They will miss their reception year and, more importantly, year one will probably already be full so they are unlikely to get a place at the school they want. This proposal will therefore force parents to send some children who may not be ready for school to school just a few weeks after their 4th birthday. Whilst many children are fine with this, a few children will struggle all through school and not achieve the results they are truly capable of.

The government have recently published a report and one section looks at this issue. It gives evidence that children born in summer do not do as well in later life as children born in autumn and spring. However, they have not included evidence of the attainment of children born in summer who are allowed to go through school 1 year later.

I believe that the main reason that Bradford wants to stop a few children going through school 1 year later than 'normal' is that, in later life these children have to be included in figures for the secondary school GCSE results. This is despite the fact that they will not have finished the course and will not





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I feel very strongly that it is unfair to penalise very young children all their school lives and beyond for a ridiculous clerical rule that spoils league tables for secondary school.

The council's consultation closes on 27th February. I have enclosed with this letter my response and a model letter for anyone to use which give the main arguments that I can think of. I would urge you to write a letter giving your views about this, otherwise this important change may be allowed to go through unchallenged. You could also contact councillors /MPs etc.

I will put a copy of my letter and a 'model' letter on our school website (www.hstb.co.uk) which you may download and use as you wish. Please spread the word amongst any neighbours and friends with young children.

There are some copies of the part of the government report which refers to this in the school general office. If you want to download the report it is on the DCSF website www.dcsf.co.uk and the report is 'The Independent Review of the Primary Curriculum: Interim report' by Jim Rose. The section on summer born children is p. 48 - 55.

Once again, please do respond to this and encourage as many others as you can to do the same.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Gillian Evans

