



Admissions and School Transition Policy

Introduction

At Venture Outdoor Kindergarten, we are committed to providing a high-quality early years experience that fosters play, exploration, and a deep connection with the natural world. Our setting follows the principles of the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)** while maintaining a child-led, play-based approach.

As part of our commitment to best practice, we have reviewed our provision in relation to **school entry regulations** and our ability to meet the needs of children beyond the age of 5. This policy clarifies **who we can accept, the transition to school, and our position on educational readiness.**

Starting School - Options

There are lots of options when it comes to how and when your child starts school. At Venture, we believe that the needs of each individual child and family should be considered when making any decision, including when they start formal education. We are keen to ensure families have all of the information they need and to support each individual family in whatever decision they make. It can feel overwhelming and complicated looking at the options, so please do get in touch with us if you would like to chat anything through.

When should my child start school?

In England, children may enter school in the September following their 4th birthday. Although most children start school in the September following their 4th birthday, they are not obliged to be in full time education until they are of Compulsory School Age.

What is Compulsory School Age?

Children reach Compulsory School Age at the end of the term in which they turn 5.

- Children who turn five between 1 September and 31 December reach Compulsory School Age on 31 December.
- Children who turn five between 1 January and 31 March reach Compulsory School Age on 31 March.
- Children who turn five between 1 April and 31 August reach Compulsory School Age on 31 August.

Note: Although the term used is 'Compulsory School Age', children are not obliged to receive their education in a school. The term 'Compulsory School Age' is used to mean that legally a child must be receiving an education from this age and this may happen at school or otherwise, i.e. through Home Education.

Summer born children

As noted above, summer born children - those born between 1 April and 31 August – do not have to start school until a full year after they *could* have been admitted. There is the option of them starting school just after their 4th birthday, but they do not legally need to

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do so until just after their 5th birthday. If you make a request to delay your child's school entry to the September after your child turns 5, they may begin their school career in the Reception class or in Year 1. Following discussion with the parents and the child's early years setting about the child's needs, the school will decide whether they can start in Reception a year late, or whether they will go straight into Year 1.

What is the difference between delayed entry and deferred entry?

A delayed entry is when a child starts school the academic year following their fifth birthday. The child may start in Year 1 having completed their Reception Year at an Early Years setting, or they may start in Reception a year later than they could have.

A deferred entry is when a child starts school during their normal academic year group, but at a later date.

What is flexi-schooling?

Flexi-schooling is when a child attends school for part of the week and spends the rest of their time either at home or at another setting, e.g. at Venture. Up until your child reaches Compulsory School Age, flexi-schooling is an option as legally, your child does not have to be at school full time. Arrangements for how this will work should be made with your chosen school once you have been offered a place, but it is best to discuss flexi-schooling with each school you are interested in before applying.

Once your child has reached Compulsory School Age, it is the decision of the school as to whether flexi-schooling can happen. The school will make this decision based on the needs of the child and also taking into consideration the way that the school operates and timetables the children's activities.

Will my child be funded?

Your child's funding will continue up until the end of the term during which they turn 5, i.e. up until the time that they reach Compulsory School Age. They will be entitled to 15 hours of funding per week, or 30 hours per week for those who are entitled to the Extended Entitlement. If you choose to flexi-school, Early Years funding will stop and all funding will go to the school regardless of the number of hours the child attends. In the case of flexi-schooling, if you decide that your child will continue at Venture, you will need to pay for your child's Venture sessions.

How and when should I apply for my child's place at school?

School places should be applied for between 15th November and 15th January during the school year during which your child turns 4.

You can apply for a Devon school here: [Apply for a reception or year 3 place at a primary school](#)

You can apply for a Plymouth school here: [Citizen Portal - Sign in](#)

If you wish to defer:

Deferral (when your child starts school during the normal year but later than September) is arranged with the school once a place has been offered. The school must keep your child's place available for them to start. If you wish to defer your child's start at school, you must apply for their place during the normal round for your child's chronological year group.

If you wish to delay:

If you wish to delay your child's start to school until the September after they turn 5 (available to summer born children only), it is recommended that you apply for a school place during the normal round for your child's chronological year group in the first instance.

When is the earliest I can request delayed admission?

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You can request delayed admission before your child has been offered a school place. A request will need to be made to each school you are interested in. It is a good idea to discuss your intention to delay admission with each school before applying for a school place too.

When is the latest I can request delayed admission?

You can request delayed admission up until the October half term following your child's 4th birthday. This allows your child to start in and complete one half term in a Reception Class, enabling you to judge whether they are ready to start school if you are unsure.

How do I request delayed admission?

To request delayed admission, complete the form here: [Education and skills websites - Delayed admissions - All Documents](#). Some schools may ask that you write directly to them to request delayed admission.

When will I receive an offer of a school place?

You will receive an offer of a school place on 16th April.

If you would like to defer your child's start, you will then let the school know that this is your intention.

If you have requested to delay your child's start, you will receive a decision in writing from the school at the same time as you receive your offer of a place. At this point you may choose to:

- Accept your child's place in Reception, aged 4
- Decline your child's place and reapply for a Reception place for the following year
- Decline your child's place and apply for a Year 1 place for the following year

What does Venture offer?

Your child may spend part of their Reception Year at Venture. They will continue to experience education and care which is:

- Lead by experienced, qualified Primary School Teachers
- Reflective of their own interests
- Fun
- Engaging
- Nature-based
- Nurturing
- A partnership between the Venture team and their family

They will continue to develop:

- A thirst for learning
- Emotional literacy
- Communication skills
- Social skills
- Independence
- Creative and critical thinking skills
- Resilience
- Ability to assess and take risk

Why do some families choose to extend their child's time with us?

- The adult to child ratios at Venture exceed those in a classroom environment. For example on any given day at Venture Kitley Farm, there are two or three qualified teachers, plus another member of staff to a maximum of 28 children. In a Primary School classroom, there is one teacher and perhaps a classroom assistant for up to 30 children.

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- Many children benefit from being given a little extra time to grow within a child-led, nurturing environment before heading off into the big wide world!
- Many children benefit from being given a little extra time to develop skills that enable them to do well at school, including independence, social skills, and fine and gross motor skills.
- Many children benefit from being given a little more time to learn through play.
- Many children benefit from more time outdoors

Every child is different and what works for each family is different. If you are considering extending your child's time at Venture for part or all of the Reception Year, or considering flexi-schooling or home education, let us know and we will arrange a meeting to talk about what would work for you and your individual child.

Eligibility & Age Limits

We accept children up to the age of **5 years**, with the following considerations:

1. Children who will attend school:

Children must transition to school in line with UK school entry requirements:

- o Children may stay at Venture **until the end of the term in which they turn 5**, ensuring they have **at least one term in a Reception class** before progressing to Year 1.
- o Summer-born children (born between 1 April and 31 August) may stay for their **entire Reception year** at Venture **if they are deferring entry to school until the following academic year.**

2. Children who will be home educated:

- o Children may stay at Venture **until the end of the term in which they turn 5.**
- o In some circumstances a child who will be home educated may stay with us until the end of the year in which they turn 5. This is down to the discretion of the kindergarten manager and will depend on a variety of factors including the child's level of social and emotional ability and the current cohort within the setting.

3. We do not provide education beyond the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS):

- o We are not a school and do not intend to operate as one.
- o Children cannot remain with us beyond their Reception year. Our environment is designed for early childhood education and as such, we cannot provide the structured learning required once children move on from the EYFS Curriculum.

Transition & Preparation for School

While we integrate early literacy and numeracy experiences into our play-based curriculum, we **do not provide formal instruction** in phonics, writing, or structured mathematics to the same extent as a school Reception class.

This means:

- Children moving directly from Venture to **Year 1 without attending Reception** may find the transition challenging, as Reception provides an important bridge between early years and formal education.
- We believe it is in the best interests of children to experience a Reception within their chosen school before moving into Year 1, rather than transitioning straight from our play-based approach into formal learning.

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Foundation Stage Profiles & Assessments

- We do **not** complete the EYFS Foundation Stage Profile for children. This statutory assessment is the responsibility of the school where the child attends Reception.
- We will provide developmental information through our own observations and records to support transition.

Our Beliefs & Commitment

We strongly believe in the benefits of a **play-based, nature-led** approach to early childhood education. While we acknowledge the limitations of the current education system, we must operate within existing frameworks and ensure children receive **the best possible transition** to school or home education.

We encourage open conversations with parents about their child's development, school entry options, and how we can support a smooth transition.

If you have any questions about this policy or need guidance on school admissions, please speak with a member of the team.

This policy was written by Venture Outdoor Kindergarten April 2025.

Reviewed August 2025.