

S. L. M. P.

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A strong case for January school intake

I FIND myself in the position of many expatriates in Hongkong, mother of a pre-schooler whose birthday falls, unfortunately, in January. This child will not enter school until she is five years nine months sharing a classroom with children as much as 11 months her junior who were lucky enough to be born in December.

As a teacher, I can appreciate the difficulties of teaching a group whose ability range is so wide and as a parent, I know the problems involved in finding intellectual stimulation for a child whose greatest desire is to be in school learning to read and write.

Can no solution be found to this problem?

Why can't the schools, Government and private, have a January intake to accommodate those children who are not five until after the first of the year?

If this could be arranged, surely by the summer, those children who have entered in January could be assessed by the teacher. Those who were ready for the second form could move up while those who needed more time in the first form could remain there. This system seems fairer in every way to me than the present arbitrary September-only intake.

If there are other parents who feel as strongly as I that accommodation for these children should be provided at least by Government schools (keeping in mind that Government guarantees schooling for the children of its employees at age *five*) please write to me at 39A, Conduit Road, Flat A15 with the aim of forming a Parents Association to gain this end.

JOANNE ELLIOTT (Mrs)