Admission of pupils outside their normal age group

(except for delayed entry to the reception year)

Guidance and frequently asked questions for parents and carers, schools, professionals and admission authorities

Version 3.6 – February 2017
‘Parents may seek a place for their child outside of their normal age group, for example, if the child is gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health...

...Admission authorities must make decisions on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of the parent’s views; information about the child’s academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely.’

School Admissions Code 2014, 2.17
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Introduction

It is usual practice in England for children to be educated in school year groups as determined by their date of birth, however there is no statutory barrier to children being admitted outside their normal age group. Parents\(^1\) do not have the right to insist that their child is admitted to a particular age group but may make a request for this to happen.

Department for Education guidance\(^2\) states that: ‘The government would agree that, in general, children should be educated in their normal age group, with the curriculum differentiated as appropriate and that they should only be educated out of their normal age group in very limited circumstances’.

The purpose of this document is to provide information and recommendations for those assessing the appropriateness of admitting a child outside their normal age group.

The specific considerations relating to delayed entry to the reception year (i.e. a child starting in reception when they should, according to their age, be starting in year one) are covered in a separate Local Authority (LA) document: ‘Starting school: deferring or delaying admission’ available at www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions.

Decision-makers

School admission authorities are responsible for making the decision on whether or not a child will be admitted outside their normal age group. The admission authority in the case of community and voluntary-controlled schools is the LA and in the case of academies, foundation, trust, voluntary-aided and free schools, it is the academy trust or governing body of the school. However, where a child has an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC Plan) or Statement of Special Educational Needs, the decision rests with the LA and must be confirmed in the Plan/Statement.

Admission authorities are required to make a decision based on the circumstances of the case. The LA recommends that the decision is made in consultation with the headteacher of the school concerned, the parents, all professionals involved with the child and the LA.

Admission arrangements

It is a requirement of the Admissions Code 2014 that admission authorities must make it clear in their admission arrangements (which must be agreed and published annually) the process for requesting admission outside the normal age group. The process for community and voluntary-controlled schools, for which the LA is the admission authority, is set out in this document. The process for all other schools (academies, foundation, trust, voluntary-aided and free schools) must be set out in their admission arrangements but may be based on the recommended process in this document.

Admission authorities are not able to set a blanket policy which states that no admissions will be made outside normal age groups.

\(^1\) Any reference to ‘parents’ in this document also includes carers and may also mean parent/carer in the singular. This refers to any person with Parental Responsibility.  
\(^2\) ‘Advice on the admission of summer born children’ December 2014

Placement of pupils outside their normal age group
Guidance v3.6 – February 2017
Basis for requests for placement outside the normal age group

There are a number of reasons why parents might request for their child to be educated outside their normal age group – either a year behind or a year ahead. This includes requests for children:

- born prematurely, who would have been admitted into the year below if delivered on their due date;
- with a late summer birthday (i.e. those born between the beginning of April and the end of August who would reach compulsory school age in the September following their fifth birthday);
- for whom concerns about their personal, social, and/or emotional development are expressed at the time when they are due to start in reception class;
- whose parents choose to defer admission into school until the child is of statutory school age, meaning that first admission into school is into year one;
- who have Special Educational Needs, including those with an EHC Plan or Statement of SEN;
- who have high levels of absence through ill-health;
- who are new to the UK and/or have little experience of the English language and/or curriculum;
- whose attainment is seriously trailing their new peers when they move schools, including when this is due to high mobility;
- whose emotional health and well-being has been affected by tragedy or trauma;
- who have had a high level of mobility which has affected achievement and/or personal, social, and/or emotional development such as children of Service Families;
- who are physically frail or vulnerable due to illness or disability;
- who are due to transfer to junior or secondary school but have been educated outside their normal age group in infant or primary school and need to request to stay outside their normal age group on transfer;
- who have been identified as gifted and talented and whose parents believe they should be educated a year in advance of their normal age group.

Making decisions on placement outside the normal age group

The Admissions Code 2014 makes it clear that admission authorities must make decisions about placements outside the normal age group on the basis of the circumstances of each case and in the best interests of the child concerned. This will include taking account of:

- the parents’ views;
- the views of the headteacher of the school/s concerned;
- information about the child’s academic, social and emotional development;
- where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional;
- whether they have been previously educated out of their normal age group; and
• whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely.

Schools and admission authorities should also make early contact for advice from the School Effectiveness Cornwall (SEC).

Considerations – looking ahead

Consideration should be given to the fact that:

• Receiving schools on transition (i.e. into junior school, secondary school, or special provision) are free to review and reconsider the placement outside the normal age group, and the continuing placement of the pupil outside their normal age group cannot be guaranteed on transition into a new school, (although decision-makers must take into account the year group in which the pupil is currently being educated).

• Pupils who have been educated a year behind their normal age group will become eligible to leave school before completing examination courses.

• The admission authority must first make a decision on the age group the child should be admitted to and then it must apply its oversubscription criteria to decide whether a place can be offered in that age group – a decision that a child should be accepted outside their normal age group does not guarantee a place at the preferred school in that age group. The normal application process will still need to be carried out.

• One admission authority cannot be required to honour a decision made by another admission authority on admission outside the normal age group.

Principles for decision-makers

Cornwall LA recognises that each case must be considered on an individual basis but believes in the following principles:

• Established good practice within the County and nationwide shows that, apart from in the most exceptional circumstances, schools are able to meet all pupils’ personal, social and educational needs within their appropriate age group, and that this is a reasonable expectation.

• Decision-makers should be able to demonstrate that other strategies have failed, or are highly unlikely to be successful in meeting the child’s needs.

• In no case should a child be placed in a year group more than one year different from their school-age peers.

• In no case should pupils be retained in a year group solely to avoid/defer other decisions e.g. about transition to a further Key Stage.

• It should always remain clear in which National Curriculum year group pupils are registered at the school. It is good practice to record this information on annual reports to parents.

• The needs of the child must always be considered as the key criteria, rather than, for example, school organisation, curriculum and assessment considerations.
**English as an additional language (EAL)**

It is generally recognised within the English school system that children should be placed with their chronological peers. Children with English as an additional language should not, as a rule, be treated any differently. Placing them with their peer group affords them all the same advantages and benefits it offers other children. All EAL pupils will need support in school to learn English but once they have gained basic English, with appropriate interventions they usually make quick progress. Children are seldom uniformly delayed in their intellectual development. Areas of strength are at risk of not receiving appropriate stimulation if a child is placed in a younger year group and a reduced set of general expectations applies. Similarly, physical, emotional and social expectations are likely to be inappropriate. Developing friendships relative to their maturity supports academic development and holistic wellbeing. Schools are ready and prepared to support EAL pupils of all levels and there is additional support from the Local Authority. Therefore, if either party are requesting an out of year placement schools should ensure that at the meeting with parents there is an interpreter present if appropriate to ensure they fully understand the implications.

**Evidence-gathering**

It is reasonable for admission authorities to expect parents to provide them with information to support their request but there should be no expectation that parents will obtain professional evidence that they do not already have. Admission authorities must still consider requests that are not accompanied by professional evidence. Supporting information might simply be the parents’ statement as to why they have made their request.

Cornwall LA makes the following recommendations for those making decisions about placement outside the normal age group:

For a pupil to be educated in a year group one year **above** their normal age group, decision-makers should satisfy themselves that:

- they have gathered sufficient evidence to show that the pupil’s personal, emotional and social maturity is sufficient to establish positive peer relationships with an older age group;
- the pupil demonstrates exceptional intellectual interest, skills and achievement in all subject areas, to an extent that it is not reasonable to expect curriculum differentiation within their normal age group to be successful;
- the pupil’s physical maturity does not and is unlikely, in the future, to make them developmentally different from their proposed peer group in such a way as to impact negatively on their self-esteem/self-awareness (including consideration of puberty);
- the pupil has physical maturity sufficient to meet the curriculum and personal/social demands of a higher National Curriculum year.

For a pupil to be educated in a year group one year **below** their normal age group, decision-makers should satisfy themselves that they have gathered sufficient evidence to show that:

- the pupil shows a significant delay, and little progress, in their personal and emotional development, and social skills appropriate for a younger peer group;
• the pupil shows significant delay and little progress, in intellectual development/educational skills across the subject areas, to an extent that it is not reasonable to expect curriculum differentiation within their normal age group to be successful;

• the pupil’s physical maturity does not and is unlikely, in the future, to make them developmentally different from their proposed peer group in such a way as to impact negatively on their self-esteem/self-awareness (including consideration of puberty).

In either case, schools should satisfy themselves that:

• this is the wish of all those with Parental Responsibility for the child and that they have been adequately advised of the implications of placement outside the normal age group;

• there is a clear understanding about why and how the child’s needs will be met more effectively out of their normal age group, than would be possible within;

• the child’s parents, the school, and all involved professionals agree that this is the best provision for the child;

• where appropriate, according to their age and capability, this is also the wish of the child;

• where the pupil is approaching transition into Key Stage 3, likely secondary schools have been consulted (or junior schools if relevant for transition into Key Stage 2);

• any implications have been fully discussed with parents;

• full consideration has been given to the likely/possible impact of relevant regulations and local practice as the pupil progresses outside their normal age group;

• where an EHC Plan or Statement of SEN is in place, all relevant factors have been considered, with all relevant parties consulted, at the Annual Review. The final decision about out of age group placement for these pupils lies with the LA and will be recorded in the EHC Plan/Statement.

Recommended/required procedures for making a decision on placement outside the normal age group in Cornwall

For schools which are their own admission authority (academies, foundation, trust, voluntary-aided and free schools) the following procedures are recommended good practice. For community and voluntary-controlled schools (where the LA is the admission authority) the procedures are required practice. However, the LA expects all admission authorities and schools to alert the LA School Admissions Team if considering the admission or placement of a pupil out of their normal age group to enable the LA to discharge its statutory duties with regard to the provision and organisation of school places.

Making a request

When parents submit a request for a placement outside the normal age group to a school, the school should alert the School Admissions Team as soon as possible who will provide guidance and ask to be alerted to the final decision. When parents submit a request for placement outside the normal age group to the School Admissions
Team, they will alert and forward any information to the school, along with guidance and a request to be informed about the final decision. In the case of a community or voluntary-controlled school, the School Admissions Team will also alert School Effectiveness Cornwall as an officer must be involved in the decision.

On receipt of a request by a school

To support admission authorities and the LA in fulfilling their long term responsibilities for pupils, a meeting should be convened by the school concerned.

Arranging a meeting

The meeting should be arranged in good time, to allow for full consideration of the case and (if an out-of-year-group placement is agreed) to allow for supported admission/transition for the pupil, with adequate planning and preparation for their needs to be met in the allocated year group. Consideration must also be given to deadlines for applications, particularly if the request relates to transition where a ‘normal admissions round’ application would need to be submitted (see later in this document for details on applying for places). Attendees should include:

- the parents;
- the headteacher of the school/s concerned;
- all professionals involved with the child;
- a LA School Effectiveness Cornwall representative.

In addition, admission authorities should be mindful of the need to consider well ahead of any proposal for deferred transition into a new junior or secondary school. This discussion should not be delayed until just before transition. In these cases a representative of the proposed receiving school should attend.

Where attendance by invited parties is not possible, all relevant views/advice should be sought in writing for consideration at the meeting.

At the meeting

Full notes of the meeting should be made and agreed by all parties. These should include a clear statement as to whether any agreement by the admission authority to place a child out of their normal age group is being made with or without the support of the LA, as expressed by SEC representation at the meeting.

After the meeting

- Notes of the meeting, together with any written reports considered at the meeting, should be placed permanently on the pupil’s file and transferred to any new school at each transition. A copy of these notes and any written reports should also be forwarded to SEC via the officer who attended the meeting.
- A letter should be sent to the parents confirming the outcome of the meeting and requesting acknowledgement of their agreement with the facts recorded and the outcome as agreed by returning a signed form (see suggested templates in Appendix 2). A copy should also be forwarded to the SEC officer involved.
- The School Admissions Team should be notified so that the LA records can be updated and any related application handled appropriately.
The process in relation to children with an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC Plan) or Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN)

- Where a child has an EHC Plan or Statement the Annual Review meeting (or transfer to EHC Plan meeting) should serve as the consultation meeting and SEC should be invited to attend. The notes of the meeting should show that all relevant factors have been considered, and should clearly record the views of all participants in the meeting as to whether they support any request for placement out of year.

- The SEN Assessment and Provision Team will consider the information arising from the Annual Review in the usual way and communicate the decision of the LA to the school, parents and others that attended the meeting.

- Where allocation outside the normal age group is agreed by the LA an amendment to the child’s Plan/Statement will be issued.

Admissions processes

In some cases, requests for out of age group placement will be made for pupils that are already attending a school or have been offered a place in the normal age group. If this is not the case and if a decision to accept a child outside their normal age group is made but a place has not yet been allocated, the following should be taken into account:

- Parents should be reminded that agreement to placement outside the normal age group does not guarantee a place at the school if this has not already been secured – the normal processes relating to school place applications will need to go ahead. This means that an application will need to be submitted if it hasn’t been already and if the school is full or there are more applications than places available, the school’s oversubscription criteria will be applied to see if the child can be offered a place in the agreed year group.

- Where the school place is required for a year group which would be allocated through the normal admissions round (for a place in September to start in reception, transfer to junior school or start in year 7 of a secondary school) any agreement to placement outside the normal age group means that the LA must treat the application as it would for any child, regardless of the fact that the application is not for the normal age group. This includes the process for the handling of late applications, if this is the case.

- Where the school place is required other than in the normal admissions round, the in-year admissions process will take place.

For deadlines and guidance related to normal admissions round and in-year applications, see www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions or contact the School Admissions Team.
Summary of the required/recommended process

NB:
- See separate guidance for requests to delay entry to the reception year.
- The process for a request in relation to a child with an EHC Plan or Statement is different – see page 9).

School receives request from a parent for a placement outside the normal age group

School Admissions Team receives request from a parent for placement outside the normal age group

School to alert School Admissions Team who will provide guidance and request notification of decision. If a C/VC school, SEC must also be alerted.

School Admissions Team to alert school, provide guidance and request notification of decision. If a C/VC school, SEC must also be alerted.

Next steps required for a community or voluntary-controlled school and recommended for a foundation, trust, voluntary-aided, academy or free school

School to call a meeting
between parents, all professionals involved, transition school representative (if appropriate), a Cornwall School Improvement Team representative and the pupil (if appropriate).

Notes of meeting taken
These should include a clear statement as to whether any agreement by the admission authority to place a child out of their normal age group is being made with or without the support of the LA as expressed by SEC representation at the meeting, if present.

Notes and any written reports considered at the meeting placed permanently on the pupil’s file. Copy of notes and any reports forwarded to SEC via the officer who attended the meeting.

Letter sent to the parent/s confirming the outcome of the meeting and requesting acknowledgement of their agreement. Copy forwarded to the SEC officer involved.

School Admissions Team notified of outcome.

School place application processed, as appropriate.

Placement of pupils outside their normal age group
Guidance v3.6 – February 2017
Parents’ right to appeal/make a complaint

Parents who are refused a place at a school for which they have applied have the right of appeal to an independent admission appeal panel. **However, they do not have a right of appeal if they have been offered a place and it is not in the year group they would like.** They may, however, make a complaint, as follows:

- Where the decision of the LA, in the case of a child with an EHC Plan or Statement of SEN, is not to uphold the request for placement outside the normal age group then as part of the statutory assessment or Annual Review the parents have a right of appeal to the SEN and Disability Tribunal. Details of ‘How to Appeal’ are set out in correspondence sent to parents by the SEN Assessment and Provision Team.
- For **foundation, trust, voluntary-aided, academy and free schools**, parents must follow the school’s published complaints procedure, because the governing body of academy trust is the admission authority.
- In the case of community and voluntary-controlled schools, parents must follow the LA’s complaints procedure, because the LA is the admission authority.

LA complaints procedure in relation to requests for placement outside the normal age group

- Parents should set out their complaint in writing to the Service Director, Education and Early Years, including all paperwork relating to the decision and the nature of the complaint.
- The Service Director, Education and Early Years, will review the case and the process that has been undertaken to reach the decision, assessing whether the processes and advice in this guidance has been followed appropriately. He/she will make a decision as to whether those involved in the case should reconsider their decision.
- The Service Director, Education and Early Years, will write to all parties to confirm his/her findings and recommendation.

If parents are not happy with how their complaint has been handled

There are further routes of redress if parents are unhappy with the way their complaint has been handled – the Local Government Ombudsman in the case of complaints to the LA and the Secretary of State in the case of complaints to schools.
Contacts

School Effectiveness Cornwall (SEC)
Telephone: 0300 1234 100
Email: schooleffectiveness@cornwall.gov.uk
Website: www.cornwall.gov.uk/schooleffectiveness (via School Messenger)

School Admissions Team
Telephone: 0300 1234 101
Email: schooladmissions@cornwall.gov.uk
Website: www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions

SEN Assessment and Education Provision Team
Telephone: 0300 1234 101
Email: SENDEnquiries@cornwall.gov.uk
Appendix 1: Frequently asked questions

Who makes decisions on placement outside the normal age group?

School admission authorities are responsible for making the decision on whether or not a child will be admitted outside their normal age group. The admission authority in the case of community and voluntary-controlled schools is the LA and in the case of academies, foundation, trust, voluntary-aided and free schools, it is the academy trust or governing body of the school. However, where a child has an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC Plan) or Statement of Special Educational Needs, the decision rests with the LA and must be confirmed in an amendment to the EHC Plan/Statement.

Who might be involved in an admission authority’s decision on a placement outside the normal age group?

It is likely that any professional working with the child, the headteacher of the school concerned and a LA representative will be involved in the decision, usually by way of a meeting between these parties and the parents (and if appropriate, the child).

What will an admission authority consider in relation to a request for placement outside the normal age group?

Admission authorities should consider the parents’ views; the views of the headteacher of the school concerned; information about the child’s academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; whether they have been previously educated out of their normal age group; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely.

What about requests for placement outside the normal age group for a child with an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC Plan) or Statement of Special Educational Needs?

Where a child has an Education, Health and Care plan (EHC Plan) or Statement of Special Educational Needs, the decision rests with the LA and must be confirmed as part of the statutory assessment process or via an amendment to the Plan/Statement following an Annual Review. The decision would normally take place through the Annual Review process.

Is it common for a child to be placed outside their normal age group?

No. As Department for Education guidance states: The government would agree that, in general, children should be educated in their normal age group, with the curriculum differentiated as appropriate and that they should only be educated out of their normal age group in very limited circumstances.

What if an admission authority agrees to placement outside the normal age group, is the child guaranteed a place at the school?

Requests for placement outside the normal age group will, in some cases, be made for pupils that are already attending a school or have been offered a place in the normal age group. If this is not the case and if a decision to accept a child outside their normal age group is made but a place has not yet been allocated, agreement to placement outside the normal age group does not guarantee a place at the school – the normal processes relating to school place applications will need to go ahead. This means that an application will need to be submitted if it hasn’t been already and if the school is full or there are more applications than places available, the school’s

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3 'Advice on the admission of summer born children' December 2014
oversubscription criteria will be applied to see if the child can be offered a place in the agreed year group.

**What if it is agreed that a child can start late/early in reception, year 3 of a junior school or year 7 in a secondary school – when and how will an application need to be made?**

An application would need to be made as part of the ‘normal admissions round’ for September entry to those year groups – if the School Admissions Team is advised of the agreement to placement outside the normal age group, the application will be processed along with all of the others for the year group and will be treated in the same way as all of the other applications. See www.cornwall.gov.uk/admissions for more information.

**Will placement of a child outside their normal age group affect funding for them?**

No. Schools are funded for the number of pupils on roll, regardless of their age.

**If a child is placed outside their normal age group, can they move back to their normal age group at any time?**

Once a child has been admitted to a school it is for the headteacher to decide how best to educate them. In some cases it may be appropriate for a child who has been admitted out of their normal age group to be moved to their normal age group. Any decision to move a child to a different age group should be based on sound educational reasons and made by the headteacher in consultation with the parents.

**If a child has been educated outside their normal age group in infant /primary school will they automatically be educated outside their age group when they transfer to junior/secondary school?**

No. Parents will need to request again for admission outside the normal age group and it will be for the admission authority to decide whether or not to accept the child outside the normal age group. They must make the decision based on the circumstances of the case and will need to bear in mind the age group that the child has been educated in up to that point. This is why it is prudent for parents and decision-makers to ‘rehearse’ requests for placement outside the normal age group with any potential school to which the child might transfer.

**If a child has been educated outside their normal age group in a school outside Cornwall, can they continue outside the normal age group when they move to a Cornwall school?**

Only if the admission authority of the new school agrees to this. They would need to consider the circumstances of your case, taking into account the year group that your child has been educated in up until now.

**Might there be a problem with the timing of tests and the reporting of performance tables if a child is accepted outside the normal age group?**

Children are assessed when they reach the end of each key stage, not when they reach a particular age. There are no age requirements as to when children must take their GCSEs or other assessments. Reports on performance occur when pupils reach the end of a key stage, regardless of age.

**What about school leaving age?**

A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday of June in the school year they become 16. If a child is educated outside their normal age group (i.e. is in year 10 when this date is reached) the school will continue to receive funding for that
child but the child will no longer be of compulsory school age during the school year in which most children take their GCSE examinations and cannot, therefore, be obliged to attend.

The government has changed the law so that all young people will be required to continue in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 18. Young people will have a choice about how they do this. It could be through full-time education in school or college, an apprenticeship or full time employment combined with part time education. However, the date on which they cease to be of compulsory school age will remain unchanged.

**How can parents appeal against a decision on placement outside the normal age group?**

Parents who are refused a place at a school for which they have applied have the right of appeal to an independent admission appeal panel. As the purpose of the appeals process is to consider whether a child should be admitted to a particular school, parents do not have a right of appeal if they have been offered a place and it is not in the year group they would like. However, they may make a complaint about an admission authority’s decision not to admit their child outside their normal age group.

They may also make such a complaint if they have not made, or do not yet know the outcome of, their formal application for a school place. All schools have a duty to consider complaints about the school and must have a published complaints procedure in place. Local authorities will also have a complaints procedure.

In the case of foundation and voluntary-aided schools, academies and free schools, parents may make a complaint using the school’s complaints procedure – because the governing body or academy trust is the admission authority. In the case of community and voluntary-controlled schools, they may complain to the LA – because they are the admission authority.

If parents are unhappy with the way a LA or maintained school has handled their complaint, the parents may then refer their complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman. If they are unhappy with the way an academy has handled their complaint they may complain to the Education Funding Agency who will consider the complaint on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education.
Appendix 2: Letter templates

Template letters to parents following meeting to discuss placement outside the normal age group (to be completed by person representing the relevant admission authority).

a) Agreement to placement a year behind

Dear

Request for , D.O.B to be placed outside his/her normal age group from .

Thank you very much for meeting with us on . It was very helpful to meet with you and also with and who were representing . I really appreciate all of the information that you gave to us and I understand that you have a very strong view that should stay on in/enter year , outside his/her normal age group. Essentially this is because you feel that .

You clearly stated that it was your wish that should stay on in/normal age group. confirmed that, based on their professional opinion, they also fully supported this arrangement.

It was stated that the LA view is that schools should be able to ensure that provision meets the needs of all children and that where a school wishes to take a child outside their normal age group this would be due to evidence that:

- the pupil shows a significant delay, and little progress, in their personal and emotional development, and social skills appropriate for a younger peer group;
- the pupil shows significant delay and little progress, in intellectual development/educational skills across the subject areas, to an extent that it is not reasonable to expect curriculum differentiation within their normal age group to be successful;
- the pupil’s physical maturity does not and is unlikely, in the future, to make them developmentally different from their proposed peer group in such a way as to impact negatively on their self-esteem/self-awareness (including consideration of puberty).

(See page of ‘Placement of pupils outside their normal age group’ enclosed.)

As the headteacher of /representative of the admission authority of school/an officer representing the Local Authority I was able to talk to you about the implications of your child being educated outside their normal age group. This was essential so that you understood that there may be issues that arise at a later date related to the provision of education for your child. This included the following information:

- Receiving schools on transition (i.e. into junior school, secondary school, or special provision) are free to review and reconsider the placement outside the normal age group, and the continuing placement of the pupil outside their normal age group cannot be guaranteed on transition into a new school,
(although decision-makers must take the previous placement outside the normal age group into account).

- Pupils who have been educated a year behind their normal age group will become eligible to leave school before completing examination courses.

- The admission authority must first make a decision on the age group the child should be admitted to and then it must apply its oversubscription criteria to decide whether a place can be offered in that age group – a decision that a child should be accepted outside their normal age group does not guarantee a place in that age group. The normal application process will still need to be carried out. [remove this section if child is already at the school]

- One admission authority cannot be required to honour a decision made by another admission authority on admission outside the normal age group.

- [Other information as relevant]

In the case of    it was agreed that there is a need for him/her to be educated outside his/her normal age group at this time/in September for the following reasons:

- 
- 
- 

Therefore I/we am/are happy to support that decision. All parties agreed that    progress would however be very carefully monitored so that if, in future, there was a significant change this arrangement may be reconsidered.

Full details about pupils being educated out of their year group are contained in the enclosed guidance document ‘Placement of pupils outside their normal age group’.

I would be grateful if you could complete and return the attached form to indicate that you agree with and understand the content of this letter.

I wish    the best as she/he continues his/her education.

Yours sincerely

[Other information as relevant]

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**Reply form**

I agree with and understand the content of the letter from    dated    describing the outcomes of our meeting on    . I am happy with the decision that was reached by all parties that my son/daughter    should be educated out of his/her normal age group for the time being and understand that this will be subject to review.

Signed:    

Name:    

Date:    

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**Placement of pupils outside their normal age group**

Guidance v3.6 – February 2017
b) Refusal of a placement a year behind

Dear [Name],

Request for [Name], D.O.B [Date of Birth] to be placed outside his/her normal age group from [Year].

Thank you very much for meeting with us on [Date]. It was very helpful to meet with you and also with [Name1] and [Name2] who were representing [School or Local Authority]. I really appreciate all of the information that you gave to us and I understand that you have a very strong view that [Name] should stay on in/enter year [Year], outside [his/her] normal age group. Essentially this is because you feel that [Reason].

It was stated that the LA view is that schools should be able to ensure that provision meets the needs of all children and that where a school wishes to take a child outside their normal age group this would be due to evidence that:

- the pupil shows a significant delay, and little progress, in their personal and emotional development, and social skills appropriate for a younger peer group;
- the pupil shows significant delay and little progress, in intellectual development/educational skills across the subject areas, to an extent that it is not reasonable to expect curriculum differentiation within their normal age group to be successful;
- the pupil’s physical maturity does not and is unlikely, in the future, to make them developmentally different from their proposed peer group in such a way as to impact negatively on their self-esteem/self-awareness (including consideration of puberty).

(See page [Page Number] of ‘Placement of pupils outside their normal age group’ enclosed.)

As the [Position] of [School or Local Authority] I was able to talk to you about the implications of your child being educated outside their normal age group.

In the case of [Name] it was agreed that there is not enough evidence to support the need for [him/her] to be educated outside [his/her] normal age group at this time/in September for the following reasons:

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Full details about pupils being educated out of their year group are contained in the enclosed guidance document ‘Placement of pupils outside their normal age group’.

I wish [Name] the best as [he/she] continues [his/her] education.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]
Prepared by:

Sarah Lewis
Pupil Placement Manager
Education Access and Sufficiency
February 2017

If you would like this information in another format please contact:

Cornwall Council
County Hall
Treyew Road
Truro TR1 3AY

Telephone: 0300 1234 100
Email: enquiries@cornwall.gov.uk
www.cornwall.gov.uk