



CHILDREN EDUCATED OUTSIDE OF CHRONOLOGICAL YEAR GROUP

AVANTI SCHOOLS TRUST

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Introduction

This policy relates to the process regarding educating students outside of their chronological year group. This relates to a request received for a child to be educated outside of their normal age range year group; that is that they are educated in the year group below, or the year group above, of their chronological age. This policy applies to all schools in the MAT.

This policy does not relate to situations where students are in mixed-age classes. Mixed-age classes are where students may be taught in a class where a number, or even the majority, of students are in an adjacent year group. As long as this arrangement will not affect the age at which the students will transfer to the next key stage in their education, then the student is not considered to be 'educated outside of his/her age group'.

Avanti Schools Trust believes that students should be educated in the year group appropriate to their chronological age, for the following reasons:

- We are concerned with the development of the whole child. This includes physical and emotional maturity, the development of social and interactional skills and the pupil's ability to respond to a curriculum which is age-appropriate, as well as suited to his/her abilities.
- We promote and provide inclusive teaching. Teachers are expected to match the students' learning objectives and the learning activities planned to the abilities, aptitudes, and individual needs of students.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum and the Programmes of Study in the National Curriculum incorporate flexibility within, and between, each key stage in order to support a diverse range of students' needs. Where a student's abilities are significantly out of step with other students of his/her age, then individual provision should be planned. This could include addressing any special educational needs. In almost all cases, such individual provision will be made within the pupil's own year group.
- The SEN Code of Practice outlines a 'graduated response' of special provision, assessments and review within schools which does not normally require students to be educated out of their correct year group.
- Students have an entitlement to the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum and the Programmes of Study of the National Curriculum, designed for their age 4 group. The MAT and all schools within it have a legal duty to make sure this is available.
- When a request is being considered, a long term view should be taken of the student's educational needs. The MAT wishes to avoid the adverse consequences which frequently arise if students are educated out of their year group, including the possibility of a difficult transition back into their correct year group at a later date, if this is deemed appropriate. Additionally, students taught in a younger year group may be of an age to leave school before they have had the opportunity to acquire external qualifications. They may, in this way, become educationally disadvantaged.
- Teaching an older pupil in a younger year group may well extend the time which he/she spends at school. This will have significant financial implications for the use of public and/or designated funds. The MAT has a public duty to resource education equitably and fairly.

- Educational research has not demonstrated that accelerating more able students into older age-groups is in their best interests. Such acceleration inevitably brings emotional and social pressures which are not conducive to the well-being of the young person concerned. The advantages of accelerating the normal academic milestones, from developments in early years through to public examinations, have not been shown to outweigh the personal and social costs which can be involved.

Requests for children who are due to start school can be made to the individual school, and those requests will be considered in line with this guidance. Requests for children to be educated outside of their year group who are already of compulsory school age will be considered on an individual basis, in line with this guidance.

Legal requirements

The following extracts are taken from the School Admissions Code, in relation to the education of children outside of their chronological year group:

Section 2.17

*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. In addition, the parents of a summer born child * may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that they are admitted out of their normal age group – to reception rather than year 1. Admission authorities must make clear in their admission arrangements the process for requesting admission out of the normal age group.*

Section 2.17A

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. They must also take into account the views of the head teacher of the school concerned. When informing a parent of their decision on the year group the child should be admitted to, the admission authority must set out clearly the reasons for their decision.

Section 2.17B

Where an admission authority agrees to a parent's request for their child to be admitted out of their normal age group and, as a consequence of that decision, the child will be admitted to a relevant age group (i.e. the age group to which pupils are normally admitted to the school) the local authority and admission authority must process the application as part of the main admissions round, unless the parental request is made too late for this to be possible, and on the basis of their determined admission arrangements only, including the application of oversubscription criteria where applicable. They must not give the application lower priority on the basis that the child is being admitted out of their normal age group. Parents have a statutory right to appeal against the refusal of a place at a school for which they have applied. This right does not apply if they are offered a place at the school but it is not in their preferred age group.

* The term summer born children relates to all children born from 1 April to 31 August. These children reach compulsory school age on 31 August following their fifth birthday (or on their fifth birthday if it falls on 31 August).

Application process

Parents or carers seeking to have their child admitted outside of their chronological age should complete the application form in Annexe 1 and return to the school by December 1 in the year before the planned year of admission. The school will then consider the submission and respond before December 31 in the year before the planned year of admission.

Do parents have a right to appeal?

Parents do not have a right to appeal if they have been offered a place and it is not in their preferred year group. However if a parent is unhappy about the decision which is made, they can make a complaint via the school's published complaints procedure. If a request relates to a child already on roll at the school parents can submit their complaint to the MAT Board.

Annexe 1

Application for a child to be educated out of their chronological/year group

Child's Details:	
Full name:	
Date of Birth:	
Permanent Address:	

Parent or Carer's Details:	
Full name(s)	
Permanent Address:(if different from the child's)	
Home telephone no:	
Work telephone no:	
Mobile no:	
Email address:	

Please outline the reasons for your request for your child be educated out of their normal chronological/year group

This form should be returned to the school by December 1 in the year before the planned year of admission.