



Defence
Children
Services

DCS Guidance

Placement out of Chronological Year Group

DCS Guidance v1.0

General

Authorisation	Director DCS
Senior Responsible Owner	CEO MOD Schools
Point of Contact	SO1 MOD Schools Policy and Assurance
Review Date	Nov 2024
Related Policy/Guidance	JSP 342: Education of Service Children and Young People
	DfE: Placement out of Chronological Year Group

Introduction

1. Parents (guardians/carers) sometimes make a request for a child to be placed in a year group above or below the child's chronological year group. Whilst due consideration is given to these requests, the principle underpinning any decision on placement out of chronological year group is that it is in the best interests of the child's immediate and long-term needs.
2. Parents are responsible for the final decision to take up an agreed placement and their decisions must be fully informed by child specific evidence.

Scope

3. This guidance applies to all MOD schools overseas.
4. The Queen Victoria School Dunblane follows National Scottish statutory requirements for placement out of chronological year group and this guidance where it is complimentary.

Direction

5. Each case is to be considered on an individual basis to ensure that the child's needs are appropriately met and planning, and provision is tailored to the individual.
6. There is no guarantee that children educated out of their normal age group in a MOD school will be placed in this same age group on return to the UK state sector; such children may miss significant parts of education and this may present future disadvantage. It is therefore crucial that all factors in requests for placement out of chronological year are considered before a decision is reached, in particular:
 - a. Whilst a child's birth date in late summer is not automatic grounds to agree to a request, premature birth dates in August should not be discounted as a factor.

- b. Placement may be considered for a child whose social age is incompatible with those in the chronological year group.
 - c. Children transferring from an International School are to be placed in their chronological year group and appropriate support provided to address any gaps in education.
7. By exception, where placement may be considered beneficial for a child transferring between MOD schooling and UK schooling, parents are to contact the head teacher of the receiving (UK) school to discuss their child's needs.
8. Due to the potential long-term implications of placement decisions are undertaken by the MOD School head teacher in consultation with DCS's Specialist Services team and the Chief Education Officer. It is important to note that the head teacher of the MOD School has the final decision, and while other organisations can and do provide advice, they have no authority over MOD school placements.

Procedure

9. Requests must be made in writing through the head teacher and are to include all available supporting evidence (for example, advice/recommendations from health care providers).
10. Each request is assessed on its own merits and decisions will be informed by and reference child specific information and evidence provided by parents; school and multi-agency professionals including members of DCS Educational Psychology and Advisory Specialists service.
11. On first admission to a Foundation Stage 2 class in a MOD primary or first school, children will normally attend on a part-time basis for a period not exceeding four weeks. Each school is required to have its own policy, approved by the School Governance Committee (SGC), regarding the period of initial part-time attendance.
12. Where other authorities have been quoted by parents there may be a need to approach those authorities directly for further discussion.
13. Where a request is declined, the evidence and reasoning behind the decision is to be explained.
14. Where a request is agreed, the decision letter must clearly state that parents are responsible for the decision to take up a placement out of chronological year group. The letter must also explain evidence, reasoning behind the decision and include advice and guidance on future risks.
15. All information and context are to be recorded for each case which must include acknowledgment that a decision by one authority, such as HQ MOD Schools, carries no guarantee of continuation by any future local authority or school.