Continuity of Education Allowance (CEA) and chronological year groups

1. This information sheet is for serving parents who claim CEA for their child and are considering a request to place their child out of the expected chronological year group.

2. If you are considering placing your child outside of their normal age group you must first read JSP 752 14.0114 (available on the Defence Intranet) and you must speak to CEAS before taking any action. Placing your child out of their year group may have significant implications for your CEA claim and may also not be in the best interests of your child.

3. It is acknowledged that there are various reasons why a parent might consider a request to place their child out of their chronological year group including late summer births as well as an intention to repeat a year, e.g. following exam failure at age 16 such as with GCSEs.

4. Generally, it is expected that children are best placed within their age-appropriate year group apart from exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances are always considered on a case by case basis and can include where a child is considered gifted and talented or has experienced problems such as ill health or other problems.

5. Some children may have started school later than others, such as with summer born children (see School Admission Code Para 2.17 to 2.17B) or transferred from another educational system with different year group age ranges; if this is the case, you can apply for your child to be placed outside of their normal year group when claiming CEA but email CEAS for guidance as this may result in casework to the PACCC (see below). If agreed, CEAS will provide you with a letter which you must retain and submit with your CEA application, so that the PACCC are aware.

6. While a head teacher may agree that placement out of year group is appropriate, in accordance with JSP 752 a written request must be made to CEAS by you as the serving parent. Full details of why such placement is requested are to be provided together with any supporting evidence, such as your views as parents; information about the child’s academic, social and emotional development; relevant medical history with the views of a medical professional. You may also want to include other relevant information such as if your child had been born prematurely, whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group had they not been born early; whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; evidence of disruption to a child’s education caused by Service mobility.

7. When first visiting a school, a head teacher may advise parents that they believe a child would be better placed in a more junior year group or that entrance is dependent upon such placement, further advice must always be obtained from CEAS; you should request a letter from the head teacher detailing the reasoning behind such a recommendation so that you can include this as part of your evidence.

8. There may be implications of such a placement in the future that you must also keep in mind. For example, any return to the state sector might well result in your child being placed back into their expected chronological year group. While you might not think that is a possibility it is important to be aware of this.

9. For CEA claimants whose children are intending to go into sixth form, they should make casework to the PACCC in year 10 alongside their CEA EC for the extra year (if previously backyeared). Claimants should be aware that this may not be approved, so initial back-yearing carries this risk.