



The Island Learning Trust

TILT Policy for Placement Outside of Chronological Year Group March 2026

1. Legislation, Statutory Requirements and Statutory Guidance

Most children begin primary school at the start of the school year in which they reach school age (5 years old). All schools must provide for the admission of children from the September following their fourth birthday however parents may consider that this is not in the best interests of their child and are able to request deferred entry to school.

Link to DfE advice:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/summer-born-children-school-admission/making-a-request-for-admission-out-of-the-normal-age-group>

Parents have the right to delay their child's start date (known as deferred entry), until later in the school year, but not beyond the beginning of the term after they turn 5 and not beyond the beginning of the final term of the school year in April. This may be particularly appropriate if the child's school readiness has been delayed by a medical condition or developmental delays.

2. Summer-Born Children

Children born between 1 April and 31 August are referred to as summer born children. They have the same rights to deferred entry as any other child. This means they must start school at the beginning of the April term if they wish to keep their offer of a space. Where parents wish for their summer born child to defer entry until the start of Year 1, they will be expected to make a **deferred entry request** alongside the application for their child to be admitted to reception at age 4. This is so they can keep open the option of sending their child to school at age 4 in case the request is refused by the school.

Parents can support their request with information from any professional involved in the child's care or treatment;

- a speech and language therapist
- an occupational therapist
- a social worker
- a paediatrician
- the child's nursery or childminder

If the child was born prematurely, parents can explain whether this caused health problems or developmental delays, and whether, because of being born before their due date, the child would have fallen into a different age group than if they had been born at full term.

The admission authority will decide based on the evidence what is best for the child by taking account of the information provided and the view of the school's head of school. They will give their decision in writing.

The government believes **it is usually not in a child's best interests to miss the teaching that takes place during the reception year.**

If the deferred entry request is refused, the admission authority will explain why they believe it is not in the child's best interests to start school in Year 1. If the request is agreed by the admission authority parents need to:

- submit a new application for a school place for the September following the child's fifth birthday
- withdraw the application made for a school place for the September after the child's fourth birthday

It is possible the school will not be able to offer a child a place. If there are more applications than places available, places will be allocated in accordance with the oversubscription criteria for the school. This is why it is important that parents request admission out of the normal age group at all the schools applied for.

If the request is refused, parents can:

- accept a school place for the September after the child's fourth birthday – the child will be admitted to the reception class, as normal
- [make an in-year application](#) to start school in Year 1 in the September after their fifth birthday

If parents accept the reception place following the child's fourth birthday, they can:

- request that the child attends part-time for part or all the school year
- delay the child's school start until later in the school year (but not later than the beginning of the summer term).

3. Children with Special Educational Needs or a Disability (SEND)

Having SEND does not necessarily mean a child should delay starting school. Teachers are trained to support all children to succeed, including those with SEND. Every mainstream school must have a SENCo – a qualified teacher with an additional SEND qualification. If parents feel worried because of the child's SEN, they can speak to staff at the school you are applying to. If the child is going through an EHC needs assessment and parents intend to request admission to reception aged 5, this needs to be discussed with the local authority.

4. Placement Outside of Chronological Year at other points of the Year

Consideration of pupils' individual needs are at the heart of every class placement decision. The decision to place a pupil outside of their chronological class or key stage (KS) may be considered by TILT at any stage during EYFS, KS1 or KS2 in the circumstances described below:

- The pupil has special educational needs and/or disabilities and holding them back a year would be in their best interests developmentally, academically or socially.
- If the pupil is experiencing social, emotional and mental health difficulties meaning that they would struggle to access the increased demands of their next year group.
- If an EHCP application has been made and the pupil is likely to move to specialist provision.
- The pupil has missed a significant amount of their education and requires time to catch up.

Each case will be considered taking a holistic view of the child, their social, cognitive and emotional development. Decisions will be made in partnership with parents, professionals such as S&L Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Social Worker or Paediatrician and if appropriate to do so the pupil themselves.

TILT does reserve the right to offer an education in an alternative year group, despite parental wishes, as meeting the needs of the pupil are paramount.

5. Tests and Assessments

Children are usually assessed when they reach the appropriate point in their education, not when they reach a particular age. The exception is the phonics screening check, which should be taken in the year the child turns 6, but only if they have completed the Year 1 programme of study.

This policy was developed with staff, parents/carers and the Trust Board, it will be reviewed bi-annually.

Policy Reviewed:	March 2026
Next Review:	March 2028