



Procedure for organising classes

At Patcham Junior School, we believe that mixing the classes each year is beneficial for children's development in a number of ways. The opportunity to make new friends, learn vital skills to work with others and feel confident with change is invaluable.

This procedure is designed to ensure that there is a transparent and fair system for class allocation. The key priority of this is to ensure well balanced classes that will enable pupils to learn and make progress.

Whilst parental input is important, it is ultimately the school's decision. Parental requests will only be met if they do not affect more important priorities.

We guarantee all children will have at least one friend choice.

Letter to parents

Parents should be provided with at least two weeks to send in any concerns or comments they may have for the coming year. The Deputy Headteacher will collate these comments.

We must make it clear that **"we cannot guarantee that any request will be met"**.

Children's choices

The letter to the parents will encourage them to discuss the importance of making sensible friend choices with their children when they have the opportunity. Teachers will ensure that this is discussed in class and support will be provided for children where appropriate (for example SEN/ vulnerable pupils).

Children will choose three friends. Teachers will make it clear that they may only have one of their choices.



Organising the new classes

A staff meeting will be held to organise the new classes. The objective is to organise three balanced classes, whilst ensuring that all children have one friend choice. The following groups will be balanced across the classes and prioritised:

- i. SEN
 - ii. Vulnerable, CP, disadvantaged pupils
 - iii. High need behavioural children
 - iv. Attachment/ SEMH children
- b. Each class will have a balanced mix of boys and girls and a range of abilities.
- c. Friendships
1. Every child needs one friend off their list
 2. These are non-hierarchical.
 3. Teachers will also consider historical and current friendship issues – e.g. sociograms/ behaviour incidents/clashes etc.
 4. Teachers will discount friendships that are negative or would lead to distraction in class.

All class decisions will be reviewed by the SLT. They will also be reviewed by the Deputy Headteacher and Headteacher to ensure these conditions are met.

It is important to note that it is nearly impossible to meet these conditions and please every parent and child all of the time. The best possible decision will be taken with the key focus on creating balanced classes that will work well together in the new year.

Decisions will not be changed after the classes have been organised.

Supporting children through the process

When the 'mixing the classes' letter comes out in the Summer term, it is important that teachers, parents and carers discuss this matter with their child(ren). Children need to be clear about their friend choices and know that they will get at least (but possibly only) one friend from their list. For most children, this will be enough to help them through the process.

Some children will need more help moving into a new year group, with a new class and new teacher. It is important that vulnerable pupils are identified early and bespoke transition support put in place. This will normally be managed by the SENCO.