

Guidelines for Reviewing the Membership of Classes

Wheatfield Primary School – March 2018



Rationale

We are committed to ensuring parallel classes remain balanced as children progress through the school. There are factors, beyond the school's control, which can mean that classes become imbalanced over a period of time. These include:

- Children leaving or joining the school mid-way through a year or Key Stage
- Children progressing in their learning at different rates
- The dynamic which forms between individuals or groups of children over time

Wherever possible, the school wants to ensure the following characteristics are as balanced as possible between parallel classes:

- The number of pupils in each class (where cohorts are not full)
- Gender – the number of boys and girls in each class
- Ability and need – having a spread of pupils of differing abilities across each class
- An even spread of personalities *e.g. making sure there is a balance between children who may appear quieter and less inclined to speak with children who articulate themselves with confidence*

Deciding classes for Reception Year

When children enter school for their Reception year, the school uses information from a number of sources to inform the class groupings. Much of this information comes from pre-school settings and some of it comes from home. In deciding classes for Reception year, it is easier for the school to ensure balance in terms of pupil numbers and gender than it is in respect of ability, need and personality.

Built-in Review Points

The school will always review the balance of classes at the following times:

- At the end of Year 1 (before the children move into Year 2 – the final year of Key Stage 1).
- At the end of Year 4 (before children move into upper Key Stage 2).

At each review point, two options are available to the school:

1. Conclude that the classes remain balanced and leave the groups unchanged until the next review point.
2. Decide that the classes need reviewing and begin this process.

Exceptional circumstances

The school's commitment is to only review the organisation of classes at these times but it reserves the right to do so at other times in exceptional circumstances. This would be where factors, beyond the school's control, have led to parallel classes becoming imbalanced and where the school's leadership team believe that not intervening could have a negative impact on children's educational experiences.

The Process of Reviewing Classes

The school understands that re-grouping classes could cause some children and families anxiety. We want to minimise this by following a clear and transparent process which enables children and families to share their thoughts and feelings.

Where a decision has been made to review the membership of classes in a year group, the following process will be followed:

- Current class teachers will be consulted about class dynamics including friendship, personality and ability.
- Every child will be asked to name up to four people from their current class (two boys and two girls) and up to four from the parallel class (two boys and two girls) who they would ideally like to be with in their new class.
- Families will be invited to comment on any factors which they would like the school to consider, on behalf of their child, during the review process.
- Senior Leaders will work with class teachers to assemble the new classes. They will take into account the information they have consulted on, however, it will be impossible for them to meet every request.
- Once classes have been finalised, the new class groups will be reported to families. At this point, no further changes will be considered or made – there is no ‘right of appeal’.
- Children will get to spend some time, in their new class group, with their new teacher, before the end of the academic year.