

Mixed Classes Information

Why do schools have mixed age classes?

This is simply the result of school size. There are 7 year groups that children have to go through in primary school and there needs to be 27-30 children in each class to make the school financially viable. The government funds schools according to pupil numbers. This effectively means that only schools with 210, 420 or 630 pupils will have single age classes. We now have 45 children on average in most year groups and therefore mixed age group classes are unavoidable.

How do you decide the mixing within a year group?

This is based on a variety of factors including:

- working groups
- a spread of ability
- gender
- friendships

How do you teach two year groups in the same classroom?

Teachers are very used to dealing with this as all classes have a large range of abilities. Children are taught to their individual needs, not their age, as children develop at different rates. In mixed age classes, teachers use the objectives and plan a programme of study to teach these objectives effectively across the ability range of the class.

Will my child be disadvantaged being in a mixed age class?

Definitely not! The ways in which learning and teaching are organised in primary schools means that teaching and work is tailored to the needs and current achievement levels of **each and every individual pupil**. Our staff are very experienced at planning and delivering work to match the needs of mixed age learning. They provide challenge for the more able children and support for those needing more help no matter which year group they are currently in. National data suggests there is no negative impact on children due to mixed age classes. At individual school level, this is supported by Local Authority and Ofsted inspection. Studies have shown that children can develop academically and thrive socially through interacting with older and younger children. Our children are all used to working in different groupings and with different teachers. In our experience, they adjust well, settle very quickly into new classes and continue to make good progress.

Do the children end up repeating a year?

No. As in all of our classes, a creative curriculum topic will be planned, which stems from the needs and interests of the children. This personalised approach means that the learning is more relevant to the child and ensures that children are taught the specific skills from the National Curriculum.

How will the mixed classes be managed as they move through school?

Due to the numbers and needs of our children, the physicality of the school building and change of Key Stage, the classes are reviewed on a yearly basis.

Do children suffer emotionally?

No. Research has shown that children learn to form wider friendships and to relate to broader groups of other children. Children and parents are usually apprehensive but the long term view does not bear this concern out. Parent and child feedback is overwhelmingly positive by the end of the academic year.

Will my child still socialise with the rest of his/her current year group?

There are opportunities beyond the curriculum for pupils to maintain contact with friends, who have been allocated to other classes. It is good for children to experience classes with different classmates so that their circle of friends and acquaintances can be extended beyond the traditional age boundaries. Certainly when children transfer to secondary school, new friendship groupings in different subject areas become a fact of life and this situation is generally welcomed by many children.

How is the transition managed?

The children take part in a planned and carefully structured transition. All teachers also hold transition meetings to share key information about the children ready for September and our Meet the Teacher meetings for parents take place before we break up for summer. We make every effort to ensure that each individual child's transition between classes is as smooth as we can possibly make it.

Our priority is that your children are happy and achieving their very best in our school.

