



St Peter's R.C. Primary School

Information For Parents on Composite Classes

Schools are allocated teaching staff using a formula which takes account of number of pupils in the school at each stage and the current maximum class sizes which are:

P1	25
P2 and P3	30
P4, P5, P6 and P7	up to 33
Composite classes	25

When there aren't enough, or are too many, children in a year group to make up full classes, we are obliged to make up composite classes. Composite classes have children from two or more year groups in the same class. This is usual in every school and in no way disadvantages children.

The number of teachers in a primary school is based on the number of children on the total school roll, not on the number in any single year group. The Head Teacher decides on the best possible structure of classes based on the number of pupils enrolled.

Children are taught according to their own ability and not according to their age. In any class there may be children working across several levels, even though they are the same age.

When we make up composite classes we take a number of factors into consideration including, but not exclusively; groups that work at the similar levels (reading and maths groups), friendship groups and the needs of individuals within the class. Considerable discussion goes into the process and decisions are not taken lightly. We ask parents to trust us to place their children in the class and grouping most suited to them educationally, socially and emotionally.

The Head Teacher will form classes using their professional judgement taking account of a range of criteria to best meet the educational, social and emotional needs of children.

The range of criteria to be considered include the following:

- Working groups (i.e. groups of children who are together for the greatest part of their curricular experience)
- Social groups
- Levels of attainment and achievement
- Pupils' dates of birth
- Particular family circumstances
- Gender balance

Frequently asked questions

Will my child still be able to socialise with the rest of the year group?	<i>Yes, all children mix at playtime and lunchtimes and for learning events such as when working with other classes.</i>
My child is going to be in a class with younger children does this mean he/she is weaker in the year group?	<i>No. The groups of children selected for composite classes are chosen because they are part of a group from the same year who are able to work well together.</i>
Will my child miss out because he/she is doing different projects from others in the same year group?	<i>No. Science, social subjects, expressive arts and technologies are about the teaching of a range of skills. The same skills can be taught through different learning contexts. Your child will be developing the skills required for the level he/she is at through whichever topic is studied.</i>
Will my child cover the same amount of work as the rest of the year group?	<i>Your child will cover the same amount of work in a composite class as he/she would cover in a class with all the same year group.</i>
I am concerned that my child may miss out on activities for his/her year group because she/he is in a composite class.	<i>Children will not miss out on any activities which are specifically for their year group e.g. P4 swimming.</i>
Will the teacher have less time for the children because there are two year groups in the class?	<i>No, if anything teachers of composite classes may have more time for individual pupils. All teachers have to plan for different ability groups of children within a class and a composite class will have a maximum of 25 pupils compared to up to 33.</i>
Will forming a composite class mean that my child's friendship grouping is being broken up?	<i>This may be the case, although care is taken in allocating pupils to classes that their social needs are not ignored. In general terms, it is likely to be good for children to experience classes with different classmates so that their circle of friends and acquaintances can be extended.</i>

It is important to us that your child is happy and achieving at school and we do everything we can to achieve this. If you have any concerns or questions which have not been answered in this leaflet, please do not hesitate to contact us.