

What do our pupils think about being in a composite class after they have been in one?

“It’s fun as you get to make new friends and learn from each other.”

“It’s good as you sometimes work with partners in another year and you can help each other and share ideas.”

“We sometimes work together as a class and sometimes we work separately.”

“It’s really good as you learn new games from other children but you can still play with other children who are the same age as you from other classes.”

“I’ve a friend who is in a composite class in another school and he was worried so I told him what it is like and he is not worried anymore.”

“You don’t do the same all the time as the work you get is for you and the level that you are at.”

“The teachers make sure we have opportunities to work the children that are the same age as us throughout the year.”

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.

Mrs. Jones, Head Teacher

PARENTS’ PRACTICAL GUIDE SERIES



A PARENT’S GUIDE TO COMPOSITE CLASSES

What are Composite Classes?

Schools are allocated teaching staff according to the total number of pupils in the school based on the current maximum class sizes which are:

P1: 25

P2 and P3: 30

P4 – P7: 33

Composite classes: 25

When there are not enough 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.

Children are taught according to their own ability not according to their age. In any year group there can 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. We look at ability groups, friendship groups and at which children work well together and who may be better apart.

A lot of discussion goes into this process and decisions are not taken lightly. We ask parents to trust us to place their children in the grouping most suited to them educationally, socially and emotionally.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Will my child still be able to socialise with the rest of the year group?

A. Yes, all the children mix at playtimes and lunchtimes and for social events such as parties and discos.

Q. My child is going to be in a class with younger children does this mean he/she is weaker in the year group?

A. No. The groups of children selected for composite classes are not chosen because of their ability but because they are part of a group from the same year who are able to work well together.

Q. Will my child miss out because he/she is doing a different project from the rest of the year group?

A. No. Science, Social Subjects and Enterprise projects are about the teaching of a range of skills. The same skills can be taught through different projects. Your child will be developing the skills required for the level he/she is at through whichever project is studied.

Q. Will my child cover the same amount of work as the rest of the year group?

A. Everyone in a year group will not cover the same amount of work because there is a range of ability in every year group. 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.

Q. I am concerned that my child may miss out on activities for his/her year group because he/she is in a composite class.

A. Children will not miss out on any activities which are specifically for their year group e.g: Cycling Proficiency training at P7 and Swimming at P4. However, each class will do different 'Enterprise activities' which vary from year to year. The very nature of Enterprise means that activities will vary because the ideas come from the children in the class. Enterprise is about developing important life skills and this works very well when children have to work with others who are different in age and ability.

Q. Will the teacher have less time for the children because there are two year groups in one class?

A. All teachers have to plan for different ability groups of children and a composite class will have a maximum of 25 pupils.