



WIMBLEDON PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Class Mix-up Policy

Approved by Governors Mar 2024

Next revision: Mar 2027

Background

At Wimbledon Park Primary School, we are committed to ensuring an effective learning environment for all pupils.

The balance of pupil characteristics and needs in each class across the three different classes in a year group can have a significant adverse impact on the progress of the students.

Our school has a continuous enrolment policy; as a result, we take in children throughout the year, placing them in classes where places are available. By the end of an academic year, with children joining and leaving the class, classes can become quite unbalanced in terms of gender, attainment, language, personal, social needs, maturity and friendships.

We have a policy at Wimbledon Park Primary School of mixing up the three classes across a cohort in order to maintain three balanced classes throughout. Mixing up of classes will normally take place at two points (at the end of Reception and year 3) but occasionally may happen at other points if necessary, at the school's discretion. We may also choose not to mix up classes at the end of Reception and year 3 if we feel that no significant learning benefit would be derived.

Outside of class mix up, the school does very occasionally, in consultation and agreement with parents, effect class individual moves where it's believed that the student's learning would be improved.

Rationale for the Mix Up approach

- To ensure that class learning environments remain broadly similar across the year group in response to pupil transfer (mobility); transition between phases and year groups and changes to individual needs within each class
- To address situations where additional needs (educational or behavioural) are impacting adversely on the learning environment of classes
- To prepare children for secondary school where they will be taught in different classes throughout the year
- To develop greater resilience to change and transitions
- To create opportunities for children to learn and play with a wider variety of peers
- To promote a greater sense of year group community

Principles

Through this policy, we are communicating the criteria and principles we use for class mixing openly:

- Class mixing will automatically take place at two points:
 1. End of Reception Year
 2. End of Year 3
- The arrangements for class mixing are based on the professional judgements of class teachers and the senior leadership team
- We will always consider what is in the best interests of the learning environments for all classes in a cohort as a whole when making decisions
- We will take into consideration existing friendship dynamics when we create new classes. Over the course of primary school, children will have a range of friendship experiences. We find that with children some friendships can be very fluid, whilst others can stand the test of time. Taking

this into account, when we plan new classes, we will consider the children's relationships with their peers at school

- The children and parents will be asked to name three other children they may like to be in a class after mix up. When teachers allocate children into new classes, they will ensure that each child is in a class with at least one of the children they named
- Where a child/parent names less than three children in this process, we will not be able to ensure that they will be in a new class with any of their nominations

Process

- Class teachers and support staff observe and experience the learning and social dynamics within their class and the year group cohort overall, and identify and discuss whether and how a mix up would be beneficial for the cohort
- Class teachers meet together exercising their professional judgements, seeking advice/guidance from the senior leadership team if necessary, to plan new classes to ensure a good balance of the range of educational, social and personal needs, gender and maturity are represented in each class with the aim of achieving the most settled learning environments in all three classes
- Each new class should be composed of a minimum of at least six children or one third of the cohort, whichever is the smaller number, from each previous class
- Key factors that will be considered when creating the new classes would include:
 - Learning behaviours/attitudes
 - Combinations of children which impact adversely on others learning/well being
 - Additional educational needs (for example stage of learning English and language spoken, special education needs, and medical needs)
 - Gender
 - Prior academic achievement
- Class Teachers will consider the list of friends that children have nominated
- Senior Leadership Team review and approve classes
- New classes are shared with parents and children in July when the end of year reports are published
- Changes to the new classes will not be considered until at least after the Autumn half term to have given time to see how new classes have settled

Supporting children with change and transitions

Transitions are important events in a child's life but, if managed well, there is no evidence that they have a lasting impact on mental health, academic progress or social and emotional development.

If a child is anxious (whether after mix up or not) about starting school, we will work with parents to provide support to ease transition anxieties. These support approaches may include:

- An adult to meet, greet and accompany to class
- A modified arrival routine or time
- A 'welcome' task or responsibility for the child to carry out daily
- Using transition objects between home and school
- Emotional Literacy Support from a trained support staff member

- Involving the NHS Family Well Being service who provide established and successful support programmes for parents that can be tailored to the child and family's specific needs

Generally speaking, we find that children adapt best to this kind of transition when parents are able to put the following evidence-based strategies in place:

- Discouraging school avoidance
- Communicating a clear message of confidence in your child's ability to manage new and tricky situations
- Communicating confidence and trust in school
- Normalising tricky feelings about change and transition
- Reminders of help and strategies that can make things easier
- Reminders that tricky/anxious feelings are temporary
- Balancing preparation for transition with a confident attitude towards uncertainty