



The Robert Drake Primary School

Mixed Age Classes Policy

Safeguarding Statement

Everyone at Robert Drake aims to keep children and young people safe by contributing to:

- Providing a safe environment for children and young people to learn in school and;
- Identifying children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and taking appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home and in school.

Rationale

- As the number to admit each year is 45, this makes it necessary to have mixed age classes;
- A school can only work effectively within its budget if the number in each class is 30;
- EYFS classes are smaller so that the children make the best possible start to their education. It also makes sense to have EYFS taught separately because their curriculum is different from Year 1 (National Curriculum);
- In Key Stage 1, schools are not permitted to have class sizes above 30;
- In Key Stage 2, class sizes are also limited to 30.

Principles and Processes for Organising Mixed Age Classes

- The arrangements for class structure are based on the professional judgements of class teachers and the Senior Leadership Team;
- Staff will always consider what is in the best interests of individual pupils and classes as a whole when making decisions;
- No pupil will be socially isolated by splitting a year group unless there are significant higher priorities;
- Arrangements will be made, where possible, to ensure all pupils have opportunities to socially interact with others in their year group. For example, break times, lunch times, clubs, sporting events;

- There will be occasions where the structure of the curriculum will be organised into stage not age groupings for some lessons. For example, phonics sessions;
- There may also be other curriculum areas and enrichment events, where greater numbers of pupils can be accommodated, and year groups can work together;
- The decision of the Co-Headteachers is final. Pupils will not be moved once new classes have been set. In extreme and exceptional circumstances, and on a rare occasion, the governing body may consider cases on an individual basis.

How the Classes are Organised

Staff spend a lot of time organising mixed age classes and will consider the following information:

- Protected Characteristics – create a balance of the number of pupils in each class;
- Ability – as far as possible, a mix of abilities will be in each class;
- Social - staff will make a professional decision about where a pupil should be placed for educational, social and emotional reasons;
- Other specific needs.

Staff base the final decisions on what is best for all pupils educationally, socially and emotionally. As the decision about which class a pupil goes into is based on confidential information, the school cannot explain the full decision about class-setting to parents or children as this would mean discussing confidential matters. No pupil is disadvantaged by which class they are in.

How the Curriculum is Planned

The curriculum is planned so that all pupils have the same experience and access:

- Maths and English – is planned weekly within each phase (Early Years, Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4, Years 5 and 6) and is adapted accordingly for the needs of pupils within each class;
- All other subjects are planned within a two-year rolling programme which is also adapted according to individual, or class needs. It also means that pupils do not repeat any learning.

Working Together with Parents and Carers

- During all New Intake Open Evenings and parent tours, mixed age classes are clearly explained and parents/carers are encouraged to consider this arrangement before making a decision about attending Robert Drake;
- A copy of this policy is on the website for all parents/carers to access.

Complaints and Appeals

- Initially, any concerns should be shared with the Senior Leadership Team or the Co-Headteachers who will be able to reassure parents/carers about their child's allocated class. The organisation of classes is carefully considered to enhance the best chances of educational success for all pupils at school. The motivation when organising classes is to protect the academic, social and emotional interests of the whole school, making the best decision in the interests of all pupils, not one pupil or one year group;
- Parents cannot refuse to have their child placed in any class at The Robert Drake Primary School. This is a managerial decision based on this policy;
- The Governing Body have delegated the responsibility of day-to-day management of the school to the Co-Headteachers and Senior Leadership Team. If there are extreme and exceptional circumstances regarding a pupil, on rare occasions, the governing body may consider an individual case;
- If a parent feels that the school has not adhered to the Mixed Age Classes Policy they can raise this in the first instance with the staff at school, and if still not satisfied, they should raise their concerns through the Complaints Policy available from school or on the school website.

Agreed by the governing body - Summer 2023

To be reviewed – Summer 2025