

At West Row Academy, owing to the transient nature of our school population, it is sometimes necessary to have mixed age classes within the school. Due to the differing sizes of year groups we may also have a different structure each year.

Principles:

- The arrangements for class structure are based on the professional judgements of Class Teachers, The Senior Leadership Team and the Principal.
- We will always consider what is in the best interests of individual children and classes as a whole when making decisions.
- No child will be socially isolated by splitting a year group unless behaviour factors are a higher priority
- The decision of the Principal is final. Children will not be moved once the class has met their new teacher since this would inevitably involve moves of other children to accomplish this.

Children will be assigned to classes for the following reasons:

- Gender – we will try to create a balance between the number of boys and girls;
- Ability – we will try to create, as far as possible, a mix of abilities
- Maturity – inevitably, some children will be asked to be in classrooms with older pupils and some will be assigned to classes with younger children – staff will make a professional decision about where a child ought to be placed for educational, social and emotional reasons
- Friendship – we do our very best to ensure that children are with friends that they prefer working with and that no child feels isolated.

We do not take into account requests from children of parents about which class they would like their child in or if they can “be with their friends”. This is because it would be impossible to take all requests into account and we must make a decision that is in the best interests of all the children in the school both educationally, socially and emotionally.

As the decision about which class a child goes into is based on confidential information, we do not explain the full decision about class-setting to parents or children as this would mean discussing confidential matters about other children.

We are aware that having children in a mixed age class where a child is not with all of his/her friends can be a concern for parents. We work hard to ensure that children are not disadvantaged by which class they are in. When children are placed in mixed age classes they will follow the same National Curriculum through a variety of themes and levels appropriate to their individual ability. Children will not be “held back” or “struggle to keep up” in any class. All teachers are trained to work in mixed ability classes whether in a straight year group or in mixed age classes. All tasks are differentiated to challenge the needs of individuals wherever they are on the learning continuum. In all primary classes there are a wide range of abilities and all children will learn in different ways at a different pace, responding to a variety of methods and resources. Teachers are able to adapt to the different needs within any class and plan accordingly. Programmes and schemes of work are compiled to suit the developmental needs of all learners in different groupings. Opportunities are made for children from the same year group to mix together during break times, lunch times, after school activities, sports teams etc.

In order to ensure parents are aware of the way we set classes:

- We explain it to parents when they are shown round school before making the decision to apply for a place at West Row Academy
- We have a summary of this policy in our school prospectus

- Ensure, through a newsletter, that parents are aware of this policy just before the classes for the following year are announced
- Have a copy of this policy on our website and available to parents upon request

Complaints and Appeals

Initially, any concerns should be shared with the Principal who will be able to reassure you about your 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 Principal's motivation when organising classes is to protect the teaching and learning interests of the whole school, making the best decision in the interests of all pupils, not one pupil or indeed one year group.

Parents cannot refuse to have their child placed in any class at West Row Academy. This is a managerial decision based on this policy. The Academy Trust have delegated the responsibility of day-to-day management of the school to the Principal and Senior Leadership Team.

If a parent feels that the school has not adhered to the Mixed Year Groups Policy they can raise this in the first instance with the Principal, and if still not satisfied, they should raise their concerns with the Complaints Committee of the Interim Executive Board/Governing Body. The contact details are available through the school office.