

Water Primary School

Happiness, Health & Opportunity

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Headteacher: Miss E. McKay

Wednesday 19th June 2024

Dear Families,

As we prepare for the upcoming school year, I wanted to outline our class structure at Water Primary School for 2024-2025.

Class	Year Group	Teacher	Support Staff
Acorn Class	Reception/Year 1	Mrs Smith	Mrs Greenwood
Hazel Class	Year 1/Year 2	Miss Ashworth	Mrs Collins
Maple Class	Year 3/Year 4	Miss Wilson	Miss Crowther
Blossom Class	Year 4/Year 5	Miss Lomas	Mr Riley Miss Sykes
Sequoia Class	Year 6	Miss Launder	Miss Knights
Evergreen (A.M)	Mixed	Mrs Edington	Miss Ross Mrs Sanderson

Your child _____ will be in _____ class.

As a small school, we operate on a mixed class system where children may be split into different classes for various reasons. This allows children to benefit from a dynamic learning environment that caters to their individual needs. I want to assure you that the splitting of children into various groups is done thoughtfully and with the aim of providing the best possible learning experience for each child. It is important to note that this system is not about holding any child back, but rather about creating the best conditions for all our children to thrive.

If a mixed age or split year group class is formed, how are decisions taken about which children should be allocated to which class?

Due to many years of experience with mixed age classes at Water Primary School, we take a number of influences into consideration when splitting a year group up and make a professional judgment based on this. Split year groups are considered very carefully depending on each cohort of children. A range of factors may influence the decision such as:

- social learning group
- birthdays/age



- emotional development
- readiness to learn
- stage of learning
- additional needs

All these factors will be taken into consideration by the Headteacher and class teachers when making a decision. The one point where we seek out parental views before our decisions are published is in the case of twins. However, it is the Headteacher who makes the final allocation based on their professional judgement of where the child will best flourish in both their personal, social and academic achievements.

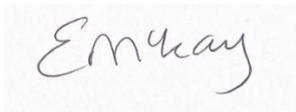
To facilitate a smooth transition into their new classes, the children will be having transition sessions with their new teachers. These sessions are designed to help them get to know their classmates, familiarise themselves with the classroom environment, and build a positive relationship with their new teacher. We believe that these transition sessions are crucial in ensuring that the children feel comfortable and supported as they start the new academic year.

I encourage you to engage with your child/ren about these transition sessions and to support them as they navigate this change. It is normal for children to feel a mix of emotions during this time, and your reassurance and encouragement can make a significant difference in helping them settle into their new class.

There is further information of mixed classes following this letter and on our school website. If you would like to discuss this further, please contact the school office to arrange a meeting or email enquiries@water.lancs.sch.uk

As always, your support is greatly appreciated.

Many thanks,



Elizabeth McKay
Headteacher



What is a mixed age and split year group class?

A mixed age class is defined to be a class in which there are children who are from more than one-year group of the primary school. On occasions year groups will be split between classes.

Why are mixed age and split year group classes formed?

Mixed age classes are formed in most schools partly because of the number of pupils in each year group. It is not uncommon for this situation to change from year to year. The sizes of year groups can vary quite dramatically as has been the case at Water Primary School. The annual intake of children at Water Primary is 20 children and with 7-year groups and with 5 class teachers, this means that children are organised into 5 classes. One factor that influences these class sizes is that EYFS and KS1 children should only be registered and taught in groups of 30 or less children. Physical classroom space is also a consideration.

Will my child be held back if she/he is placed in a mixed age or split year group class?

No. The ways in which learning, and teaching are organised in primary schools means that teaching and work is tailored to the needs and current achievement levels of individual pupils. The staff at Water Primary School are experienced at planning and delivering work to match the needs of mixed age learning. They provide challenge for the more able children and support for those needing more help whichever year group they are currently in. Much work is undertaken in small groups that contain children from 1- or 2-year groups or those of similar existing achievement levels. Furthermore, the school plans the educational experiences for pupils in all classes in ways which ensure good progression and continuity, whichever year group or class they are in. We monitor the work of split year groups closely and assessments show that children make good progress. There are many subjects in our curriculum which are taught in single year groups such as Maths and Science.

Why is the situation different in my child's school from that in other schools?

Every Primary school is unique. Many schools have less than 100 pupils or between 100 and 150 and may therefore arrange groups in 3 or 4 or 5 classes. Each one of these schools has no choice but to form one or several mixed age classes. In none of these schools is the formation of mixed age classes an issue or a professional concern. There is no evidence to suggest that being in a mixed age class has any detrimental effect whatsoever on the education of children in that class.

I am concerned that forming a mixed age or split year group class may mean that my child's friendship grouping is being broken up.

Although care is taken in allocating pupils to classes - 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 beyond the traditional age boundaries. Where new classes are formed, opportunities are created beyond the standard curriculum for pupils to maintain contact with friends who have been allocated to other classes (such as at lunchtimes, playtimes, special activities, trips, school performances). When children transfer to secondary school, new friendship groupings in different subject areas become a fact of life, and this situation is generally welcomed by many children.

What are the benefits to the arrangements?

Children benefit in many ways from the opportunity to become an 'expert' for the younger children and a positive role model which the younger children often aspire to. This grouping often nurtures thinking & problem skills, vocabulary & social competences. There is often a greater sense of cooperation and opportunities to work with a wider circle of peers. The children usually have continued learning with the same teacher and this provides an opportunity for the teacher to develop a deeper understanding of a child's needs and strengths and is therefore in a stronger position to better support the child's learning. In turn the child knows their teacher well, understands the expectations they have, and can build upon a level of trust that encourages them to 'have a go' or try something new.

