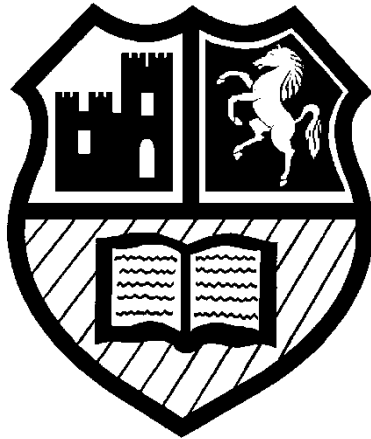


# Otford Primary School



## Mixed Age Classes Policy

Date June 2026

For review June 2028

## **Rationale**

Over the past few years at Otford, we have seen a decrease in pupil numbers, this is evident across schools in Sevenoaks and the surrounding villages as well as Nationally.

A school can only work effectively within its budget if the number in each class is close to 30 and above 25 pupil numbers. Therefore, when pupil numbers are consistently lower than this, it is necessary to review the size and structure of classes in order to continue delivering high quality education throughout the school.

Mixed age classes allow the school to adapt to changing pupil numbers in a way that is also compliant with the following national requirements:

- In Key Stage 1 and EYFS, schools are not permitted to have class sizes above 30.
- In Key Stage 2, class sizes not limited to 30
- In-year admissions should be accommodated up to the school's Published Admissions Number (PAN) which is currently 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 when making decisions;
- No pupil will be socially isolated by splitting a year group;
- 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 Headteacher is final. Pupils will not be moved once new classes have been set. In extreme and exceptional circumstances, and on a rare occasion, the Senior Leadership Team may consider cases on an individual basis.

## **How 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 mixing 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 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 throughout their primary schooling.

### **Working Together with Parents and Carers**

- A copy of this policy is on the website for all parents/carers to access.
- Initially, any concerns should be shared with the Senior Leadership Team 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 Otford 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 Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team. If there are extreme and exceptional circumstances regarding a pupil, on rare occasions, the Leadership Team 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.