

Mixed-Age Classes: Frequently Asked Questions

At **East Bridgford St Peter's CE Primary School**, our aim is to ensure every child flourishes academically, socially and emotionally. The following **Frequently Asked Questions** and answers explain how mixed-age classes are organised, why they are necessary, and how decisions about class allocation are made.

What is a mixed-age or split-year class?

A mixed-age class contains children from two year groups learning together. A split-year arrangement means children from the same year group may be allocated across more than one class. These arrangements are common in primary schools and are designed to make the best use of staffing, resources and class sizes.

How is my child taught in a mixed-age class?

Teaching is planned according to children's needs, attainment and stage of development rather than solely by age. Our teachers are highly skilled at adapting learning, providing challenge for those ready to move further and support for those who need additional help. Every child is taught the knowledge and skills required for their year group.

How do we ensure the curriculum is covered in Key Stage 2?

Key Stage 2 follows a carefully planned two-year rolling curriculum. This ensures every child covers all required curriculum content throughout their journey without unnecessary repetition. Curriculum planning is regularly reviewed to ensure progression and continuity. The four years in KS2 follow a curriculum plan and pathway of different topics. Each child will experience the four years of our broad and balanced curriculum.

What are the benefits of mixed-age classes?

Mixed-age classes provide valuable opportunities for children to learn from and support one another. Older children often develop leadership, responsibility and communication skills by acting as positive role models. Younger children benefit from seeing these examples and often grow in confidence and independence. Mixed-age classes can also widen friendship groups and encourage cooperation.

What happens if friendship groups are split?

Friendships are carefully considered, but they are only one of several factors used when organising classes. Children continue to see friends during playtimes, lunchtimes, clubs, enrichment activities, educational visits and school events. Experience shows that children quickly develop new friendships and social confidence while maintaining existing relationships.

How are decisions made about class allocations?

Class allocations are made carefully by teachers and senior leaders using professional judgement. Factors considered include class size, gender balance, social dynamics, additional needs, academic pathways and the overall balance of each class. The Headteacher makes the final informed decision based on where each child is most likely to flourish academically, socially and emotionally.

Can parents request a particular teacher or classmates?

No. Parents cannot request a particular teacher, request that their child is placed with specific children, or request that their child is separated from particular children unless there is a significant safeguarding or welfare concern. We have a responsibility to make a decision in the best interest of the whole school.

What if I am unhappy with my child's class allocation?

We understand that class allocations can sometimes be disappointing for families. However, class structures are carefully balanced using a wide range of factors. A change for one child often creates a ripple effect for many others and can significantly disrupt the balance achieved across classes. For this reason, once class allocations have been finalised and shared, they will not be changed. We cannot guarantee a child will be with their best friend in class but we are mindful to ensure a wide range of friendship groups. We respectfully ask parents to support the professional judgement of the school and help children approach their new class positively and confidently.

What is a PAN?

PAN stands for Published Admission Number. St Peter's current PAN is 42. This is the maximum number in each cohort. We are looking at potentially reducing this PAN to 30 going forward, this would require a parent consultation. PAN is also linked to Rushcliffe pupil place planning projections.

When will we find out classes for September?

Parents will be informed of class allocations before Class Swap Day. Children will then spend time with their new class and teacher on Class Swap Day to help them prepare for September.

Working Together

Parent partnership is a key element of every child's development. We appreciate the support of parents, governors and staff in helping children embrace new opportunities, develop new friendships and settle confidently into their new class. By working together and presenting a positive message, we can ensure every child starts the new academic year feeling secure, valued and ready to succeed.