

Feedback from meeting with Y2 and Y3 Parents/Carers about class structures for September 2019

Why is the school changing back to the mixed age class structure it had previously in Key Stage 2?

National and local funding pressures: due in part to a reduction in class sizes in certain years, particularly when the Steiner School opened and then expanded their intake. Plus the overall increased costs of running the school whilst funding is being reduced.

What are the other options the governors considered?

Another option they considered was one Year 4 class, one Year 3 class and one Year 3/4 class but then how do you decide which Year 3 children should join the mixed year group class? It seemed fairer to put all the Key Stage 2 children into three similarly structured classes. It also helps with teachers' plans to deliver the curriculum because they can plan as a team because all are dealing with the same class structure and range of needs.

How big are the classes?

At the moment classes are looking like they will be about 33 children. Our current Year 4 is a big birth year and has had classes of 33. Next year's Year 4 is full but there are spaces in Year 3.

How will the staff decide which children will be moved from their current classes in Year 3 into new classes for Year 4?

We will look at the needs of all the children in the class and the staff will decide initially which children should ideally stay with their current teachers because of meeting their particular needs.

What are the criteria for creating the new class structure?

- Individual need
- Boy to girl ratio
- Balance of Year 3 and Year 4 children
- Personalities of the children to get a good social mix
- A range of abilities to create a healthy balance.

How will the children be involved in making their choices of friends?

We will involve the children by asking them to write the names of three children they might like to be with and we will try to ensure at least one of those children is in their class.

How will the curriculum be delivered?

We currently teach a two year curriculum plan with Year A followed by Year B. We put this in place when we last had mixed year group classes and have retained the principles and updated the content to reflect the revised National Curriculum. English objectives are already grouped as Y3 and Y4 but Maths is not. We will consult with local small schools and make use of published mixed year group planning for Maths. Objectives for other subjects are published for Key Stages so these are easier to deliver.

How will teachers manage to meet the academic needs of two different year groups?

Even single age classes contain children who are accessing the curriculum with a very wide range of abilities so teachers are used to planning for this range of need. Currently in Key Stage 2 the children select the appropriate level of challenge for their tasks from mild, spicy and hot challenges.

How will the children be supported to manage the impact of change?

We have already briefed the current Year 3s about the changes and begun to talk to them about the impact of these changes, their worries and the things they are looking forward to. We will continue to meet with them to ask them to help us to plan and prepare for the changes. They will then have a chance to try out their new class on Transfer Morning (July 3rd). In September we will then review the process with them after a few weeks of being in their new classes to see how things are. Some more vulnerable children moving from Y2 to Y3 will have internal transition plans.

Will parents' have a chance to meet their child's new teacher?

In the Autumn term parents will be invited to a 'visit my class' afternoon. They will have any updates in the Thursday Note from Governors and the Headteacher who will be keeping an eye on things. Before October half term holidays there will be a Parents' Evenings to discuss children's progress.