

# Class Formation Information For Parents



Schools are given a staffing allocation by the Local Authority, based on agreed standards linked to the total number of pupils within the school irrespective of the number of children in each year group. Schools organise their classes to make best use of available staff, resources and space. Depending on the number of pupils and the staffing allocation, classes formed may have children from one stage or from two or more consecutive stages eg P1/2 or P3/4/5. This is called a composite class. Most schools in Aberdeen City, and other Local Authorities will have a combination of single stage and composite classes

Current maximum class sizes are:

P1 - 25

P2 and P3 - 30

P4, P5, P6 and P7 - 33

Composite classes - 25

When we cannot make up full classes we must then create composite classes.

## Formation of classes

Classes are formed using the professional judgement of staff, taking account of a range of criteria to best meet the educational, social and emotional needs of children.

*Fundamentally classes must be formed which best support pupils to make progress in their learning.*

When forming classes a range of criteria are considered which include the following:

- Working groups (i.e. groups of children who are together for the greatest part of their curricular experience)
- Levels of attainment and achievement
- Additional support needs
- Pupils' dates of birth
- Gender balance
- Social groups
- Particular family circumstances
- Distribution of pupils across year groups in a particular class (only when possible within teacher staffing entitlement)

In schools, we plan for and support pupils learning based on their individual progress/next steps (linked to CfE levels Early – First – Second – Third) **not based on their year group**. Your child is not being kept back by being in a composite class. Schools make sure that children will progress through learning experiences in line with their personal levels of attainment and achievement. If your child is placed in a composite class you can be confident that the staff will provide appropriate learning and teaching opportunities suited to his or her individual needs. Your child will be working within a programme of locally and nationally agreed curricular policies and guidelines and the activities will be appropriate for his or her age, aptitude and ability.

A lot of discussion goes into the process and decisions are not taken lightly. We ask parents to trust our professional judgement in placing their children in the class and grouping most suited to them educationally, socially and emotionally.

## **Equal Opportunities**

Children in all classes, whether composite or single stage, will follow educational programmes devised to help them progress at their own level. Schools make efforts as appropriate to involve children of any one year group in activities which bring them all together. However, it is also important that the natural identity of each class is maintained.

## **Class Topics**

Class topics are used as a context for developing skills and all children will be developing the skills appropriate for their age, ability and aptitude. Contextual topics for learning will differ by class, not year group, as these are planned by teachers in line with the needs/interests and curricular coverage required for the children within their class. Quality improvement procedures exist at school and education authority levels to ensure that your child is making appropriate progress within locally and nationally agreed curriculum guidelines.

## **Promoting Good Working Relationships**

You should be assured that all teachers will be sensitive to the social and emotional needs of children in their classes and will be encouraging members of the class to develop good working relationships with each other. Children have daily opportunities to socialise with children of all ages throughout the school during morning and lunchtime breaks.

## **Keeping Informed**

School will keep you informed of the arrangements for the allocation of classes. This will be done at as early a stage as possible before the end of the current school session. If you would like to discuss further the decisions made for you child please contact the Senior Learning Team who will be happy to meet with you to answer any questions.

## ***Frequently Asked Questions***

### **Will my child still be able to socialise with the rest of the year group?**

*Yes, all children mix at playtime and lunchtimes and there are opportunities for year groups to work together at times.*

### **My child is going to be in a class with younger children does this mean they are weaker in the year group?**

*No, absolutely not. The groups of children selected for composite classes are chosen because they are part of a group from the same stage who are able to work well together.*

### **Will my child miss out because they are doing different projects from others in the same year group?**

*No. Science, social subjects, expressive arts and technologies are about the teaching of a range of skills. The same skills can be taught through different projects. Your child will be developing the skills required for the level he/she is at through whichever project is studied.*

### **Will my child progress at the same rate in a composite class, as in a single stage class?**

*Yes, we're committed to excellence for all. We make sure children in composite classes have the right opportunities for learning, so they reach their full potential. Even in single stage classes there will be a range of ages, needs and aptitudes. Our teachers support them all.*

**Will my child miss out on activities for their year group due to being in a composite class?**

*Children will not miss out on any activities which are specifically for their year group eg P4 swimming.*

**Will the teacher have less time for the children because there are two year groups in the class?**

*All teachers have to plan for different ability groups of children and a composite class will have a maximum of 25 pupils. We carefully select groups of children who work at the same level in order to maximise quality teaching time.*

**Do children in composite classes perform as well as those in single stage classes?**

*Yes. There is no evidence that composite classes are have any negative impact on a child's education.*

**It is important to us that your child is happy and achieving at school and we do everything we can to achieve this. If you have any concerns or questions which have not been answered in this leaflet please do not hesitate to contact us.**