



Holly Park School Class Composition Policy

1 Rationale

- 1.1 The staff at Holly Park believe that mixing classes benefits the learning experiences of our pupils
- 1.2 Mixing classes ensures that there are opportunities for children to learn and play with a wider variety of peers
- 1.3 By mixing the classes, the school staff hope to enable greater social interaction between children as they move through the school. This also benefits the wider community of parents and allows them to integrate with each other more and get to know a wider circle of people in the school which is also of benefit to the children ultimately.
- 1.4 Ultimately, the staff aim to promote a greater sense of community among their learners

2 Principles

- 2.1 The school seeks to create classes which are equal in size and similar in composition across a given year group
- 2.2 The purpose of any class is to maximise learning opportunities
- 2.3 The changing nature of the classes and growing mobility within the school means that class dynamics and composition change regularly and we want to do our best to maintain as balanced classes as possible.
- 2.4 Ultimately, the classroom is a learning environment and not a social one. While the staff want all children to be appropriately supportive and respectful to their classmates, friendships are encouraged and nurtured in social contexts, namely playtimes and lunchtimes.
- 2.5 The arrangements for class mixing are based on the professional judgements of the children's classteachers, , The SENCO, SLT, The Deputy Head and the Headteacher
- 2.6 Any change made to the composition of the class will only be agreed if it is of more benefit than for the pupils to stay in their current class groups.

3 Framework for class composition decisions

- 3.1 The following factors form the core framework for deciding on class composition
 - The ratio of boys to girls in each class

- The spread of ability in all subjects
- Positive relationships for learning
- The variety, range and type of additional needs identified in the new class
- The balance of Pupil Premium children in each class
- The behaviour of children in each class

- 3.2 The school believe that best friends do not always make the best learning partners, and therefore the classes are not split based on friendships. However, children are asked to identify some friends they wish to be placed with – with the guarantee that they will definitely have one of these friends.
- 3.3 External factors, such as safeguarding issues, may be additional factors considered to support vulnerable children. This is at the discretion of the Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead
- 3.4 Individual pupils’ needs are a factor in all considerations, and all staff involved must strike an appropriate balance between the needs of these pupils, and the needs of all of their peers
- 3.5 Parental requests are not part of the consideration framework, unless related to 3.3 above. Agreement with such requests is the decision of the Head teacher, and any decision will be explained, in person where possible, to the parent concerned.
- 3.6 Where siblings are admitted into the same year group, the school will liaise with their parents or carers with regard to placing the children together or in separate classes. The final decision, however, will be the school.

4 Planned points for reviewing class composition

- 4.1 Key Worker groups are composed on entry to Reception, using the framework described in paragraph 3 above.
- 4.2 The composition is reviewed at the end of the Reception year, and new classes may be created ready for Year 1, again using the framework described in paragraph 3 above.
- 4.3 The composition is reviewed at the end of the Year 2, and new classes may be created ready for Year 3, again using the framework described in paragraph 3 above.
- 4.4 The class composition is reviewed at the end of Year 4, and classes may be reallocated ready for Year 5, again using the framework described in paragraph 3 above.
- 4.5 The school reserves the right to reallocate classes at the end of ANY academic year in any year group in response to extenuating factors. This is the decision of the Headteacher.

5 Procedures for composing classes

- 5.1 Procedures for pupils starting in Reception:
- 5.1.1 The Lead Practitioner for the Early Years Foundation Stage will, where possible, visit settings once places have been accepted. He or she will talk to key workers, managers and other staff to gather information to support this process. They will also get information from our own nursery staff.
- 5.1.2 All children new to our setting from Y1-Y6 make a visit to the school prior to

Starting. Nursery families receive a home visit and Reception families make a school visit.

- 5.1.3 The children will be allowed to settle and initial observations and assessments will be made.
- 5.1.4 The Reception staff will endeavour to ensure a good balance of behaviour, and a range of educational, social and personal needs, gender and maturity are represented in each Key Worker Group, based on the information gathered
- 5.1.5 SENCO will meet with the Reception staff to discuss any children as necessary
- 5.1.6 The Class groups are shared with parents a few weeks into September
- 5.2 Procedures at any other point during a pupils' time at the school:
 - 5.2.1 Class teachers and Teaching Assistants will observe the children's learning, effort, behaviour and attitudes at work and play throughout the year, and gather their observations together ahead of the class teachers meeting in June/July to reallocate Classes
 - 5.2.2 Parents will be informed at Meet the teacher meetings at the start of the year that the class will be reallocated at the end of the year. A letter will be sent again at the start of the Summer term to remind parents again that it will be happening. This letter will suggest that any parents with any concerns come and meet the Families Co-ordinator immediately.
 - 5.2.2 Class teachers will meet in June/July to ensure a good balance of behaviour, and a range of educational, social and personal needs, gender and maturity are represented in each class. The families Co-ordinator, The SENCO and Deputy Head will be involved in the class splitting in Y4 as by this stage they will have a great deal of knowledge about children and families over the years
 - 5.2.3 Once proposed new classes have been established, these new classes will be trialled a few times and tweaks made as necessary.
 - 5.2.3 The Families Co-ordinator, SENCO and The Deputy along with other teachers who Have taught the children in previous years will look at the suggested new classes and finalise groupings
 - 5.2.4 The Senior Leadership Team will meet to give final approval to the proposed classes
 - 5.2.5 The new classes will be shared with parents and children in time for The Class Swap Day.
 - 5.2.6 Children come to school to learn not to be with their friends in class. Children can still play together with other friends every playtime and parents can still arrange play dates. Being in separate classes does not mean that children cannot be friends.
 - 5.2.7 It is very difficult to make changes to the classes once published as the classes have been set and any changes would have a knock on effect on other children and the balance of the classes.

5.2.8 Parents are told in writing that they can discuss any concerns they have about who their child might be with well in advance of the class mixing. Concerns raised after the classes are made are then hard to action after the event. We have to make decisions based on evidence that we see in school, not on issue that parents tell us are happening that we have no knowledge of or evidence for.

5.2.6 The decision of the school is final after a year group have been mixed and classes have been shared with parents. This is an operational decision and the Headteachers' decision is final. We realise that not all parents or children may not always be happy with the way that the classes have been mixed up. We operate in what we believe is the best interests of the children from what we observe and know of the children and the evidence we see in school.

6 Moving individual children

6.1 Unless there are very exceptional circumstances, a child will not be moved into another class during the course of the year. It is not our policy to move children from one class to another apart from at the key points outlined in this policy during their time at the school, unless there are extreme circumstances which generally involve the advice and input from an outside agency giving us their support and professional opinion. If there are problems with friendships, relationships etc within a class group we work with the children and parents to overcome these problems. Moving class is generally not the answer to such problems. A child will not be moved into another class because a parent requests it.

7 Grouping Across the Year Group

Occasionally, the school decides that it is necessary to group pupils for particular subjects of lessons across the year group – e.g Y6 maths groups or comprehension groups. There will be a clear rationale for doing this. The groups will be flexible in as much as there will be criteria for why pupils are in a particular group and on a half termly basis, teachers will re-consider the groupings. The groupings will be decided to best provide for the needs of the child and not parental perception of what being in a certain group may mean. This will generally be based on academic ability and sometimes self-esteem will be considered. The groupings will be decided by teachers and parental views may be considered but will not determine the outcome. The best academic outcome for the child will be the deciding factor.

7 Supporting documents

7.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- The Parent Code of Conduct
- The Behaviour Policy
- The Anti-bullying Policy
- Teaching & learning Policy

8 Monitoring

8.1 It is the responsibility of the Governing Body to monitor the effective deployment of this policy. This has been delegated to the Headteacher.


8.2 This policy will be reviewed bi annually.

Document Control

Revision History

Version	Revision Date	Revised By	Revision
1.0	July 2019	Ann Pelham	Policy created
1.1	Autumn 2019	Full Govs	ratified
1.2	Autumn 2020	Full Govs	Updated & Reviewed
1.3	Autumn 2021	Full Govs	Updated & Reviewed
1.4	Autumn 2022	Full Govs	Updated & Reviewed
1.5	Autumn 2024	Full Govs	Updated & Reviewed

Signed by

	Name	Signature	Date
Headteacher	Ann Pelham		December 2024
Chair of Governors	Clare Hegarty		December 2024

Distribution

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff via school server• Parents via Website• Governors via committee meetings

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