

Tuesday June 25th 2019

Dear Parents and Carers of all children,

CLASS ALLOCATION 2019-2020

Many of you will be aware that tomorrow, the children will be taking part in shuffle up morning and we will be mixing the classes.

What do the children say?

THEN: 'I was fine but when I found out who I was with, I was upset because there weren't any children who I hang around with.'

NOW: 'I like it, I'm used to it and I like hanging out with them and I still hang out with people from my old class.'

We are aware that some parents feel unsure or uncomfortable about this. They worry that their children will be separated from friends or that because they have all been together for two years, or in the case of reception, one year, that somehow relationships will be damaged. However, all of our professional experience tells us entirely the opposite and having now had many years of seeing this process through, we can speak with assurance that for the vast majority of children, this has been a very positive experience and we ask you to trust us with this, just as you do with the rest of their schooling.

The staff have already been working hard to ensure a smooth transition and we feel that working with new children and different adults is an important life skill and it is the responsibility of us all to ensure our children are resilient.

Because of our experience from previous years, we are able to provide you with some reassuring quotes from children and parents. These are the very same people who over the years had the same concerns as you may have now and we hope these will help to ease your minds, if you are at all worried.

We have decided the new allocation based on the following:

- Children's views on friendships
- Teachers' views on friendships
- Working groups
- Ability
- Gender
- Teaching assistant allocation for children requiring additional support

What do the parents say?

In general, all positive. I had always wished they would do it – there are too many cliques and strong groups. They know each other too well so they know which buttons to press to wind each other up.

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What do the parents say?

In a few years' time, they are going to be in a completely new mix of people and we, as parents, need to get used to that. Swapping around in an already secure environment where everything is familiar to the children is good preparation for that'.

What are the benefits for the children?

- Better resilience in developing friendships in a safe, comfortable environment
- Widening working groups
- Being part of a year group and not just a class
- For some children a better match to a working group

It is impossible for us to accept requests of "I don't want my child with x, y or z child." We know and are aware of personality issues which occur each year and these are one of the reasons we mix classes to alleviate these situations and it is also important to recognise that every child deserves a place in our school regardless of ability, gender, faith, behaviour or Special Educational Need and it is our duty to ensure this happens.

You will also be aware that many of the teachers have not moved year groups for some time too. Therefore, some, not all, teachers will change year groups tomorrow.

We thank you for entrusting us with these important decisions that affect your child and please be assured that we will deal with this with the utmost sensitivity and with the children's best interests at heart. Your child will receive a letter at the end of the day tomorrow informing you of the class and teacher they will be with next year.

Yours sincerely,

Jamie Dodson,
Headteacher

What do the children say?

THEN: 'I wasn't too keen on the idea and I had to pick 5 people to go in with. I was annoyed that I would lose some of my friends. I would have picked the whole class.'

NOW: 'I haven't lost any of my friends. When I think about it, it's a lot better as I can have a relationship with more people.'

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