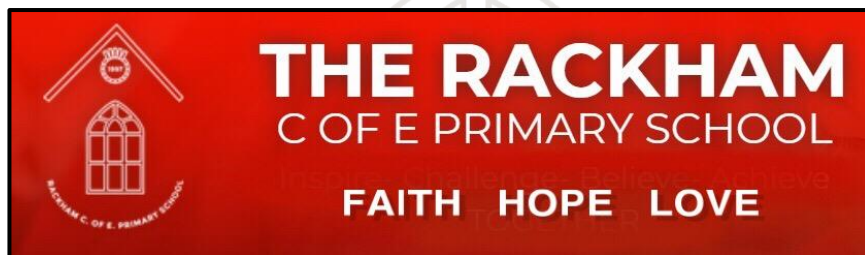


# Rackham (CE) Primary School



## Mixing Classes Policy

**Policy Number:**

**Date:** June 2021

## Mixing Classes within a year group

Due to the complexities of the ever-changing pupil admission number (PAN) at Rackham, we have worked closely with the Local Authority to devise a policy for how our classes will be mixed.

Each year the School Leadership Team will discuss year groups and pupil numbers with the Local Authority before deciding how to structure our classes for the following academic year.

The mixing of year groups is normal practice for a school of this size and allows the school the greatest flexibility to address the needs of our typical PAN. From experience, we know that mixed classes throughout our school improves the depth and diversity of relationships. Over a child's journey through Rackham (CE) Primary School it is likely they will experience this up to three times and be given the opportunity to connect and re-connect with all the children in their year group, building wide, positive relationships.

## Benefits for the Children of Mixing Classes

At Rackham, we have always reaped the benefits of mixed classes and seen first-hand the positive impact of this on our pupils' development. We believe that regular, routine mixing of classes helps the children's relationships, balances the classes, and limits any interpersonal issues detrimental to learning. It allows children to develop resilience and build broader friendships in a safe and comfortable environment. By mixing a year group, pupils have the opportunity to make friends across the year groups and see themselves as a wider year group team rather than just a class, thus building a stronger school community and pride in our school.

Having mixed classes allows Rackham pupils to:

- have opportunities to learn and play with a wide variety of peers.
- develop greater social interaction between peers as they move through the school.
- develop social resilience in a safe, comfortable environment – particularly helpful in preparing in the older year groups before moving to secondary school where being taught in various groups is the norm.
- be part of a year group team and not just a class.
- build a wide social circle with children across their year.
- settle more quickly and confidently when they are new to our school.
- feel a greater sense of community in a large primary school.
- learn from their older peers during years where they are the younger year group in that class.
- experience mentorship as part of their personal development when they are the older children in their class.

More broadly, mixing our classes strengthens the wider school community by allowing families the opportunity to develop relationships with other families within the year group. We strongly believe that mixed classes have a positive impact on standards of achievement.

At Rackham (CE) Primary School we will review classes each year and mix classes dependent on the needs of the school and the children.

## Principles

The arrangements for class mixing are based on the professional judgement of Class Teachers in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the Headteacher.

We will always consider what is in the best interests of individual children and classes when making decisions. We will always consider the happiness and welfare of the children and will take into consideration existing friendship groups when we create new classes.

The School's decision is final and only in circumstances where a safeguarding concern is present will the school consider moving a pupil to a different class.

## Key Stage 1

Criteria for KS1 (including Reception classes):

In Key Stage One pupil age and not ability is the deciding factor when dividing children into classes. Friendship choices do not override age for class mixing in KS1.

Process in KS1:

- Class teachers order pupils in order of their date of birth and allocate classes accordingly.
- Class teachers meet to ensure a reasonable gender balance is present in each class.
- SLT meets with Class Teachers to discuss and finalise groupings.
- Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team meet and approve classes.
- New classes are shared with parents and children in July.

## Key Stage 2

We aim to place children where they will achieve maximum academic progress and develop well socially and personally. Each year the current class teachers, who know each child very well, will work together to draw up the classes for the following year.

Criteria for KS2:

- Teachers views on friendships\*
- Range of educational, social, and personal needs
- Age and level of maturity
- Balance of Gender
- Balance of Special Educational Needs
- Balance of English as additional language
- Balance of Ability
- Family relationships, such as in year siblings/staff children

*\*Friendships: Over the course of their Primary years, children will have a range of friendship experiences. Some of these can be fluid, whilst others stand the test of time. Moreover, children often choose to socialize with different children in school to those their parents may observe them with elsewhere. As we prepare to draw up the class lists, we will use our observations of the children in the classroom and at playtimes and lunchtimes to inform decisions.*

Process in KS2:

- Class Teachers and Teaching Assistants observe the children's friendships at work and play.
- Class Teachers meet to ensure a good balance of friendships, range of educational, social, and personal needs, gender and maturity are represented in each class.
- SLT meets with Class Teachers to discuss and finalise groupings.
- Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team meet and approve classes.
- New classes are shared with parents and children in July.

Timescales:

- Class Teachers and Teaching Assistants discuss their observations of friendships in the Spring/Summer Term.
- Observations are considered along with the criteria listed above after May half-term.
- Class lists are drawn up by teachers and shared with SLT (June).
- Class lists approved by Headteacher before transition days. Please note transition days vary each year and dependent on when local secondary schools hold theirs.
- Class lists communicated to parents and children in July as part of the end of year reporting arrangements.

This policy will be reviewed and agreed in line with Government guidelines by the Governing Body.

**Approved and signed by:**

**Headteacher**

**Signed:**

**Date:**

**Chair of Governing body**

**Signed:**

**Date:**



RACKHAM C. OF E. PRIMARY SCHOOL