

similar size, thereby ensuring that they all have an equal share of the teachers' time. This means the splitting point for each year group may vary from year to year according to the numbers of pupils within the cohort and within the cohorts above and below the split class. With an admission number of 35, KS2 classes will not be mixed and be taught as a whole cohort.

There may be times when they will be taught by the same teacher especially in the first year. When the pupils spend a second year with the same teacher, they do not do the same work as all our classes run on a rolling curriculum plan that ensures that topics are not repeated and that all pupils cover the required work for each age group. In the core subjects our pupils are and will be taught according to their individual ability and needs and in line with the curriculum appropriate to their age range. The key is targeted learning opportunities and individualised assessment leading to a thorough understanding and knowledge of each individual pupil.

There are many proven benefits to mixed age teaching, such as: pupils form wider friendships and relate to broader groups of other children; younger pupils get the benefit of experiencing being the oldest in their class and the responsibilities that go with this, rather than always being seen as the youngest; there is greater flexibility; and there is better differentiation because of the focus on individualisation.

## **What happens when your child goes into a mixed age class?**

### **Things that do happen!**

They do make good progress, have individual attention, maintain friendships, make other friendships, play together, work together in smaller classes and experience another year group.

### **Things that don't happen!**

They are not kept down or held back and they definitively do not miss out. Just as children reach all their baby milestones at different rates, their stages of learning will progress differently.

### **Contacts**

Class organisation is a whole school process and arrangements involve the full teaching team. We encourage parents to discuss any issues about mixed age teaching with their class teachers. Please don't hesitate to talk to us!

### **Teachers' Responsibilities**

All teachers are responsible for the individual development of every child in their class. Mixed year group classes do not change this responsibility. At St. Peter's there is already a wide range of needs within each class and year group and the teachers are already proficient at adapting the curriculum to meet the pupils' individual needs across the curriculum.

In mixed year group classes the teachers take the objectives and plan a programme of study to teach these objectives

Within their mixed age class, at times pupils will work at the same tasks but at different levels of ability and at other times the pupils will do completely different work specific to their needs within that area of learning. At all times the teacher is finding out about each individual child's abilities and is planning and evaluating accordingly in terms of the differentiated outcomes of the tasks the teacher is asking the children to perform.

### **Whole School Approach**

We work hard throughout the school to ensure that all children in a particular year group maintain their group's identity. Opportunities will be created for all children in the year group to work together, take part in workshops, sit together at dinner time and play together. We hold a transition day for the children to meet their new teachers and spend time preparing them for the changes that will happen in the Autumn term.



## **Parents' Guide to Mixed Age Classes**

### **Why mixed age teaching?**

Schools come in many shapes and sizes and there are advantages and disadvantages in all systems of education. There have been a number of studies into the effectiveness of mixed age teaching in schools over the years. These studies have concluded that there is no empirical evidence to suggest that curriculum provision in these primary schools less effective to that found in single or double cohort schools. In fact, there is no national data to suggest that there are any negative impacts on pupil progress due to mixed age classes. The factors which keep the positive impact on pupil progress are: the size of the school; the more in-depth knowledge of the pupils; greater flexibility in staffing.

Since 2018, we have operated as mixed classes in KS1 and EY. At St. Peter's our ultimate aim is to develop well-rounded children. We want to develop their social skills and life skills alongside their academic achievement. The question is can we achieve even more for our children with a richer curriculum with smaller classes providing more personalised learning?

Our teachers are extremely experienced and split the cohorts using a range of holistic reasons – ability, social, friendships, family. Although we have had some parents questioning decisions at times, please trust them as they know your child very well amongst other children in the cohort.