

Class Organisation – Information for Parents

In deciding class organisation we make decisions based on our professional judgement about what would be most beneficial for each child and year group overall and a great deal of thought and time is put into this process.

Our primary focus is, of course, that all children are able to engage in learning and achieve their best. To this end we gather information about who their friendship groups are by observing children's interactions in class and at playtimes and by asking them to select children who they may like to be with (we will endeavour to ensure children are with at least one of these children). This information is used alongside assessment data and ensuring classes are balanced in terms of ability, gender etc. Please be assured that children's emotional wellbeing is part of this decision making.

Change of course is, and will always be, a normal part of life and our role is to enable children to build resilience. We pride ourselves on our family ethos and encourage the children to see the whole school as one community they are part of. We often work in mixed class groups to enable children to develop wider groups of friends and learn to work with different people in different contexts.

Preparing for change

We have a well tried and tested transition programme, planned to ensure that the children feel confident and secure about the move to their new class/school next year. This includes:

- PSHE lessons/circle times focusing on change, how this might make us feel and how to manage feelings.
- Activities to express and deal with worries about change/uncertainty.
- Transition sessions such as the Class Swap where children have visits to get to know the staff in new year groups/classes.
- Extra visits/activities/resources arranged for any child who may find change particularly challenging

How can I prepare my child for moving on?

- Start talking to your child about the fact that they will be moving to a new class or school now if you haven't already
- Keep the conversation casual and focused on the positives. Talk about change as a positive, exciting opportunity
- Avoid expressing your own doubts, negative thoughts or anxieties to your child.
- Remember that if we try to provide too much certainty and comfort, we are getting in the way of children being able to develop their own problem-solving skills. Overprotecting children from difficult or uncomfortable situations only fuels their anxiety
- If children tell you they are anxious/worried, normalise their feelings. Talk about how you sometimes feel this way too and that it's ok to feel this way. Help your child to develop resilience by talking through strategies to manage their worries. Help them to challenge negative thinking. (For example, you might remind them of how they made new friends last year or talk through how to ask someone to play etc.)
- Remind them that feelings are like clouds. They come and go. We can't stop them coming but we can choose how we look at them.
- Give your child opportunities to share their feelings about their new class/school by drawing pictures or writing messages to a family member or to a favourite toy.
- Prepare your child (and yourself) for the routines for getting to school and back home: tell them what the plan is clearly, including childcare arrangements.

Thank you for your continued support in ensuring your children have a smooth transition to their new class.

