



JUNIOR SCHOOL

Together we make a difference

School's Class Move Policy

(pupils moving classes or mixing of classes)

Reviewed: October 2023

Review date: October 2026

Policy Aims

This policy aims to give clarity for parents, carers, pupils and staff about when pupils may change classes, for what reasons and how the process will be managed by the school.

Organisation of Classes at Dobcroft Junior School

Typically there are 3 classes per year group in our school (approximately 96 pupils) and wherever possible classes are balanced with regards to pupil numbers. We recognise the importance of providing pupils with stability and consistency in relation to friendships and peers, but also are mindful of preparing pupils for secondary school where they will face mixed classes and regular change of teachers.

Transition to Year 3

Approximately 90 pupils transition from Dobcroft Infant School in 3 classes and between 4 and 6 pupils join the junior school from a different key stage 1 settings in September. Wherever possible we endeavour to keep the pupils in the same class group as they were at Dobcroft Infant School in year 2. We believe that moving to a new school with familiar friends and peers ensures the transition is smoother and children settle more quickly to life at the junior school. In some circumstances and in conjunction with Dobcroft Infant School staff it may be that we mix classes during transition for the overall benefit of all pupils. Pupils joining the junior school from a different infant school will be placed in one of the 3 classes. Factors that will be taken into consideration of all pupils when making this decision include but are not limited to:

- Pupil numbers
- Gender
- SEND needs
- EAL needs
- Social emotional and behaviour needs

Class Mixing within Key Stage 2

We recognise the value of pupils mixing classes during their time at the junior school and our overall aim is for this to happen at least once; either at the end of Year 3, 4 or 5.

Some of the benefits of mixing classes include: opportunity for pupils to form new friendships, ensure a continued balance/mix of pupils, responding to the growing needs of pupils as they develop and mature, prepare pupils for change at secondary school, develop pupil's resilience.

We aim to mix the classes at the end of year 3, however due to other factors this may not always be feasible, in which case we would aim to mix them at the end of year 4 or year 5.

Creating New Classes

Mixing classes is a logistical challenge with many factors to consider. The decision on whether or not to mix classes is made by the senior leadership team with the relevant class teachers usually in the spring term.

- Parents & carers are informed of the decision to mix the classes in the early part of the summer term.
- Pupils are asked to name up to 3 children they would like to be with in their class next year
- Our aim is for at least 1 of the pupil preferences to be met
- Parent and carers are given the opportunity to write to the Head Teacher regarding any 'negative preference' with whom they do not wish their child to be placed with and why
- Wherever possible this request will be met, but it will be considered with all other deciding factors

Class teachers of the current year to be mixed will create the 3 new classes taking into account the following (in no particular order):

- Balance of gender
- Balance of EAL needs
- Balance of SEND needs
- Balance of social, emotional and behaviour needs
- Balance of pupil numbers
- Consider the friendships of pupils
- Consider the friendship requests of pupils
- Consider any negative preferences made via the Head teacher
- Ensure discussions with relevant staff are included in the decision making process
- Any other relevant factors

The new class allocations will be shared with pupils at least 2 school days before the transition day in school. This allows children the time to process who they are going to be with the following year, shortly followed by a transition day with their new class teacher and peers. This normally takes place within the last 2 weeks of the school year.

Parent & Carer Concerns

We recognise that mixing classes may cause anxiety for pupils and parents/carers. If parents and carers are unhappy about their child's new class allocation then they should in the first instance discuss the decision with the child's current class teacher. This way they can gain an understanding of how decisions were made and how their child's needs have been considered. We would urge parents and carers to allow time for their child to settle in their new class, form new friendships with their peers and relationships with adults. Their child's future class teacher will monitor and communicate with parents/carers to ensure a plan is in place to help their child integrate into their new class setting. If parents/carers still have concerns, they can raise these under school's complaints procedure.

Individual Class Moves

At times there are exceptional circumstances that means individual pupils may need to change classes, either mid-way through the year or at the end of a school year (when the other pupils are not mixing). This situation may arise:

1. By school recommending to parents and carers that their child change classes
2. By parents and carers requesting their child change classes

Such exceptional circumstances may include but are not exclusively:

- Ongoing relationship challenges (e.g. bullying, persistent friendship difficulties)
- Consideration of a broad range of pupil's needs in addition to the pupil who needs to change classes
- Safeguarding and child protection
- External school factors (e.g. home circumstances)

The request for a child to change classes should be made in writing to the Head Teacher, clearly outlining the reasons why and the impact that the class change is expected to have upon the pupil.

The head teacher will then discuss the request with the relevant members of staff and consider the reason for the change. In the first instance efforts will be made to improve the current situation in order to mitigate the need to change classes. In the event of the class change being necessary the Head teacher will also discuss the impact upon other relevant pupils with staff in school. For example, if a pupil is being bullied is it the perpetrator or the victim who should change classes; if the reason is because of friendship difficulties should more than one pupil change classes and would a change leave another pupil isolated? The decision to move a pupil or pupils from one class to

another will only be discussed with the parents or carers of those pupils. As with mixing classes the following factors (but not exclusive) will be considered when making a final decision:

- Pupil numbers
- Gender balance
- SEND needs
- EAL needs
- Impact upon all pupils in both classes

An overall judgement is made by the head teacher, in conjunction with the relevant staff as to the holistic benefits of the child remaining in their current class versus moving to a new class. The rationale for the judgement will be recorded by the school on CPOMs.

In the event school considers it necessary for a pupil change to classes, parents and carers will be invited to discuss the issue with the Head Teacher, where the reasons for the exceptional change will be explained and the proposals to integrate the pupil into their new class setting. If parents and carers are unhappy with the school's decision, then the matter will be managed under the school's complaint policy.