

Bishopton Primary School

Mixed-Age Classes Policy



Policy Written by: Mrs V Charman

Approved by: Governing Board – Mrs S Smith (Chair)

Date adopted:

Review date:

1. Policy Intent

At Bishopton Primary School, our intent is to provide a high-quality, inclusive and ambitious education for all pupils, regardless of class structure. Mixed-age classes are organised strategically and carefully to ensure that:

- All pupils access the full National Curriculum
- Learning builds coherently over time without unnecessary repetition
- Teaching meets pupils' academic, personal and developmental needs
- No year group's needs are prioritised at the expense of another

Mixed-age classes are not used by default, but where leadership and governors judge that they best meet the needs of pupils now and over time.

This policy reflects our commitment to:

- Equity and inclusion
- Strong curriculum leadership
- High expectations for learning and behaviour
- Effective use of staffing and resources

2. Leadership Decision-Making and Rationale

Intent

Senior leaders and governors ensure that class organisation decisions are deliberate, informed and in pupils' best interests, rather than driven by convenience.

Implementation

Each year, leaders:

- Analyse pupil numbers and cohort trends
- Review individual academic, social and emotional needs
- Consider staffing expertise, deployment and workload
- Model multiple structural scenarios across current and future years
- Evaluate financial sustainability and value for money

These options are discussed with the Governing Board, ensuring appropriate challenge and accountability.

While single-year classes are generally simpler and preferred where possible, mixed-age classes are adopted when they offer a stronger educational experience for pupils.

Impact

- Class structures are stable, purposeful and responsive
- Staffing is deployed efficiently without compromising quality
- Pupils' needs across the school are met equitably

3. Curriculum Intent in Mixed-Age Classes

The school's curriculum in mixed-age classes is designed to ensure:

- Breadth, depth and ambition for all pupils
- Clear progression within and across year groups
- Secure coverage of National Curriculum requirements

Mixed-age teaching does **not** dilute expectations or reduce challenge.

4. Curriculum Implementation

Foundation Subjects

- The wider curriculum (e.g. history, geography and art) operates on a two-year rolling programme
- Leaders ensure that all statutory content is taught in the correct phase (KS1, Lower KS2, Upper KS2)
- Knowledge builds progressively without unnecessary repetition

English

- English is taught as a shared lesson wherever appropriate
- Year-specific objectives and outcomes are clearly identified
- Pupils receive teaching that is matched to curriculum expectations for their year and attainment

Mathematics

- Mathematics is taught using specific year group planning and children will be taught the content specific to their year group.
- Teaching sequences ensure secure conceptual understanding and progression

Science

- Curriculum planning will match year group for pupils
- National Curriculum objectives are year-specific, these are taught to the year group
- Assessment ensures prior learning is identified and built upon

Avoiding Repetition

- Curriculum planning is mapped across two years
- Where National Curriculum objectives are year-specific, these are taught to the correct cohort
- Assessment ensures prior learning is identified and built upon

5. Teaching, Learning and Classroom Practice

Implementation

- Lessons are planned with clear learning intentions and age-appropriate success criteria
- Teachers use a combination of whole-class teaching, targeted input and independent learning
- Teaching Assistants are deployed strategically to support learning, not replace teacher input

- Differentiation is achieved through:
 - Task design
 - Scaffolding and support
 - Extension and challenge

Teachers ensure that:

- Older pupils are not completing simpler work
- Younger pupils are not pushed beyond appropriate expectations

Impact

- Pupils demonstrate confidence, independence and resilience
- Engagement is high, and learning behaviours are positive
- Pupils make strong progress from their starting points

6. Assessment, Progress and Accountability

Implementation

Progress in mixed-age classes is monitored with the same rigour as in single-year classes through:

- Ongoing formative assessment
- Termly summative assessments
- Pupil Progress Meetings held three times a year
- Book scrutiny and cross-team moderation
- Lesson observations and learning walks
- Targeted interventions where needed

Staff appraisal systems link:

- Quality of teaching
- Pupil progress over time
- Achievement of professional targets

Governors receive regular reports on:

- Attainment and progress
- Disadvantaged and vulnerable groups
- Trends over time

Impact

- Any issues in learning or progress are identified early
- Pupils receive timely and effective support
- Governors are informed and able to hold leaders to account

7. Inclusion, SEND and Emotional Wellbeing

Intent

Bishopton Primary is an inclusive school. Mixed-age classes support:

- Pupils with additional needs
- Pupils working below or beyond age-related expectations
- Strong pastoral support and nurture

Implementation

- Teaching is adapted to individual needs
- Year-specific expectations are clearly explained to pupils
- Differences in work are normalised and discussed positively
- Emotional needs are monitored daily and through PSHE

Parents are encouraged to contact school promptly if concerns arise, enabling early intervention.

Impact

- Pupils feel safe, supported and valued
- Anxiety around comparison is minimised
- Relationships are positive and respectful

8. Behaviour, Relationships and Personal Development

Monitoring shows no significant difference in behaviour or relationships between mixed-age and single-year classes.

Mixed-age classes promote:

- Co-operation and mutual respect
- Positive role modelling
- Broad friendship groups

Behaviour expectations are consistent across the school, and pupils develop strong social skills regardless of class structure.

9. Organisation, Grouping and Spellings

- Seating and groupings are organised to best support learning
- Pupils are grouped flexibly according to task and need
- Spellings are assigned by year group, with adaptations as required
- Pupils are assessed only on content appropriate to their year

10. Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed regularly by senior leaders and governors to ensure that:

- Mixed-age provision continues to meet pupils' needs
- Curriculum intent, implementation and impact remain strong
- The school remains inspection-ready