

## **Frequently Asked Questions Composite Classes**

### **What is a composite class?**

A composite class has two-year groups formed together to make one class, for example P1 and P2.

### **Why are composite class formed?**

This might happen when the numbers at year stage are too large or too small to form a class but not large enough to form two classes in a year group. (e.g. 5 P1 and 20 P2).

### **How are composite classes formed?**

The head teacher will structure classes based on policy and advice given by educational authority. Guidelines for schools from the Communities and Families Department state that the criteria, which has recently been updated, for which to configure composite classes includes: Meeting learners needs, Age (stage appropriate), Friendships, Gender balance and Exceptional circumstances When forming the P1/2 all of these criteria will be taken into consideration as well as input from our current Primary 1 Class teacher and nursery staff.

### **How common are composite classes?**

Many schools in Edinburgh will have a composite class or classes at some stage and many children will be taught in a composite class at some point in their school career

### **How is the curriculum taught in composite classes?**

As with all classes the key requirement is for teachers to meet the needs of individuals, groups and all pupils within a generally approved curricular framework. Composite classes follow the same curriculum with the same assessments. Children are taught at their own level and assessments are carried out when a pupil reaches a particular level rather than a particular age. Teachers group pupils of similar learning abilities for learning and teaching purposes in all classes. All teachers are trained to adapt their teaching methods to ensure that they deliver a curriculum that meets the needs of all learners. Every class whether composite or not will contain pupils of different abilities. You may be worrying that the

older children will be held back due to being with the younger children. However, all pupils will progress through learning experiences tailored to their own personal attainment levels.

### **Can I choose my child's class?**

No, it is not possible to cater for individual requests. Head Teachers will agree which class a child will join, this will be in line with the Department's procedures where applicable.

### **Can I appeal the Head Teacher's decision?**

No, there is no appeals process. Provided the Department's procedures have been followed, the Head Teacher's decision will be final.

### **When will we find out our child's class?**

Class organisation and staffing are complex matters. However, head teachers will finalise their class structure and inform parents and Parent council as soon as the information is available, this is normally June.

### **What can parents/carers do to help support children through the transition to a new class?**

Much of friendship building happens outside the classroom. Invite classmates old and new to play sessions and parties, this will help reinforce existing friendships and help build new ones. When a new child joins the school, encouraging children to befriend their new classmate and extending play and party invitations will make their transition to a new school easier.

### **What happens in school to help my child adjust to new class arrangements?**

We are very aware of the importance of your child's social contact while at school, there are opportunities in school and at playtime for children to interact with friends from other classes. Our experience is that children adapt well and that their social skills generally allow them to make new friendships as well as maintaining old ones. If your child is in a composite class this will give him/her the opportunity to make a wider circle of friends within the school which can benefit their own personal development.