



**BOWDON CHURCH SCHOOL**

**Class Mixing Policy**

**Approved by Governors: June 2023**

**Review Summer 2026**

## **Statement of Intent**

At Bowdon Church School we are committed to ensuring an effective learning environment for all pupils as part of our vision of *'having life and having it in abundance'*. The balance of pupil characteristics and needs in each class across a year group can have a profound effect on the progress and happiness of each individual. This policy has been put in place to ensure that we fulfil our commitment, within the limits of our resources, to the best of our ability. With children's best interests in mind, the school will mix classes as pupils' transition from EYFS to Year 1 and from Year 2 to Year 3.

The school will reserve the right to mix at any other point in a year group's time at Bowdon should the school feel it is in the pupils' best interests.

Schools take in-year applications and we are fortunate to have a waiting list; as a result, children join us throughout the year, and we place them in classes where there is availability. By the end of an academic year, with children joining and leaving, classes can become quite unbalanced in terms of month of birth, gender, physical & cognitive development, communication & language, personal, social & emotional development, SEND (Special Educational Needs & Disability) and friendships.

We have a policy at Bowdon Church School of mixing up the three classes across a cohort at the end of Year 2/Key Stage 1 as children transition into Year 3/Key Stage 2, to maintain three balanced classes throughout this next phase.

Going forward, to maintain the balance further, the school will be mixing at another key transition point across a child's time at Bowdon: at the end of their Reception year into Year 1/Key Stage 1.

Mixing up of classes will automatically take place at the two points mentioned and occasionally may happen at other points if necessary - such as at the end of Year 4/lower KS2 into Year 5/upper KS2.

## **Rationale for the approach:**

- To create opportunities for children to learn and play with a wide variety of peers
- To develop relationships with a wider group of friends
- To further develop children's collaborative skills for learning
- To enable improved social interaction and the development of social skills between different sets of pupils as they move through the school
- To ensure that classes remain balanced in response to pupil transfer (mobility) in regards to characteristics mentioned previously and to changes to individual needs within each class
- To promote a greater sense of community in a large three-form entry primary school (being part of a year group, not just a class)
- To prepare children for secondary school where they will be taught in different classes throughout the year

## **Principles**

Class mixing will automatically take place at two key transition points:

- End of Reception
- End of Year 2

Class mixing will be considered and the decision made by the school at:

- End of Year 4
- The arrangements for class mixing are based on the professional judgements of class teachers, the Inclusion team and the senior leadership team

- Though decisions will not be made based on parental choice, the school will always consider a parent's viewpoint and will act in the best interests of a child
- The school will always consider what is in the best interests of the classes and cohort as a whole
- The school will communicate the criteria for class mixing in an open and transparent way
- The school will always consider the happiness and welfare of children and will take into consideration existing friendship groups
- The children will be asked to name three other children (in Reception the school may also ask parents) they may like to be in a class with. When teachers allocate children into new classes, they will ensure that each child is in a class with at least one of the children they have named

## Process

- Class Teachers and Teaching Assistants observe the children's friendships at work and play
- Class Teachers meet together to plan new classes to ensure a good balance of '*month of birth, gender, physical & cognitive development, communication & language, personal, social & emotional development, SEND ( Special Educational Needs & Disability) and friendships*'
- Class Teachers will consider the list of friends that children have nominated
- Senior leadership team meet with Class Teachers to discuss and finalise groupings (June)
- Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team meet and approve classes
- New Classes are shared with parents and children in the summer term (July) in preparation for transition activities for the new school year

## Criteria for Class Mixing

Classes will be mixed to achieve a good balance according to the following criteria:

- Month of birth
- Gender
- Physical & Cognitive development
- Range of special educational need & disability
- Stage of learning English as an additional language
- Personal, social and emotional development
- Friendships\*

*\*Friendships: Over the course of their Primary years, children will have a range of friendship experiences. Some friendships can be very fluid, whilst others can stand the test of time. Taking this into account, staff will consider the children's relationships with their peers both in the classroom and in the playground and the children's list of friends they have named. Mixing Classes can prevent clique groups and give the opportunity for new friendships to develop.*

Once class lists have been finalised, changes will not be possible as this would make the process unmanageable. The new class lists will be based on the professional judgements of our team, with the best interests of the children at the centre of decisions made.

## REVIEW

The Senior Leadership Team and Headteacher will review the process and criteria for each year's class mixing arrangements at the beginning of each Summer Term ahead of the following year's class mixing.