



Crookfur Primary School & Nursery Class



Formation of Composite Classes

Policy

Introduction

Composite classes have been a feature of class organisation in a number of East Renfrewshire schools and schools across the country for many years. This policy serves as a guide for the steps to be taken and considerations when forming composite classes.

Crookfur Primary School is staffed in relation to the school roll. East Renfrewshire Council complies with the statutory maximum number of children in classes which is 25 in P1, 30 in P2-3 and 33 in P4-7. For composite classes, the maximum number is 25 children.

In staffing a school, account is taken of required teacher: pupil ratios, school roll numbers and the way pupil numbers are distributed across age bands. The allocation of staff may be adjusted if necessary to ensure equality and fairness. In forming classes, the Head Teacher and authority must consider the needs of children as well as staffing, the availability of accommodation and Scottish Government policy/legislation.

Responsibility for Decisions on Class Formations

East Renfrewshire Council Education Department recognises that the Head Teacher and relevant staff are best placed to make decisions about the most appropriate class arrangements in their school. It is therefore the responsibility of the Head Teacher to manage class organisation supported by advice from the Education Department. The formation of classes is agreed between the Head Teacher and the authority as part of the annual staffing exercise.

Composite Classes

Composite classes occur when children from two or more different primary stages are grouped in one register class. This will happen when the number of children at a single stage are greater than the national statutory maxima (i.e. exceed 25 at P1, 30 at P2-3 or 33 at P4-7). This can also occur when the total number of children at a stage is very small.

This may be the case at several stages within a school.

Consultation

The Head Teacher will consult with school stakeholders to agree on the criteria on which the formation of composite classes will be based.

This information will be included in the school handbook and this policy will also be made available for parents/carers on the school website.

The Parent Council will be kept informed of ongoing developments in relation to the formation of classes.

Parents and carers will be informed of the likely re-classification of classes at the earliest possible opportunity. This will allow for discussion and promote openness with parents/carers to ensure their understanding and support. This will usually take place in the summer term, however there may be rare occasions when a re-classification of classes has to take place at the start or mid-term, for example where the roll of a school has markedly risen or decreased during the school year.

Class Formation

In forming classes, the Head Teacher considers a number of factors. These include but are not limited to:

- The need for continuous, progressive education which will build on the attainment and achievement of all children (e.g. attainment groups for literacy & English and/or numeracy & Mathematics)
- Learning and support needs of all children
- The class size maxima at each stage of the school
- Effective use of resources including staffing and accommodation
- Social factors which will support a child's continuous development, e.g. close friendships

The Head Teacher will consult with class teachers about the successful groupings of pupils. If appropriate children may be asked to indicate a friend they would like to be in a class. However, the need to ensure progression in learning, achievement and attainment is the major consideration in deciding class formation.

Traditionally, teachers group children of similar ability for learning and teaching purposes at each stage. The guiding principle is to ensure that the individual learning needs of every child are met.

Assessment information is carefully considered as part of the formation of all classes. Cohesive groupings will largely be kept together thus ensuring smooth transition from one class to the next for children and staff.

In the case of a composite including P1 children, information from pre-5 establishments will also be used.

Curriculum, Learning and Teaching

The delivery of the curriculum in composite classes is the same as for classes of a single stage, i.e. based on national and authority guidance, programmes of study are planned and delivered to meet the learning needs of all children.

The Head Teacher plans rigorous monitoring and tracking systems to ensure that all children are making appropriate progress.

As in single stage classes, children may work in groups based on attainment, social factors, in mixed ability and pairs, groups or as individuals. These are determined by the tasks and activities which are planned; the teaching methodologies deployed; and, are balanced over a period of time to meet the

learning styles of all children. In Crookfur Primary School, where there is more than one class at a stage, joint planning between class teachers is facilitated. This practice ensures that teachers at parallel stages are able to ensure children across stages have a similar comparative curriculum and learning experiences. This will also be true of teachers of composite classes, and joint planning time will be facilitated with teachers across all stages.

Opportunities will be planned to ensure that age groups work together across shared events, programmes and outings. Opportunities will also be created for age groups to socialise together.

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