



Why are composite classes formed?

- Primary Schools have pupils at seven year stages, P1 to P7. A year stage can therefore be defined as a group of pupils entering primary education at a common date.
- Composite classes occur where children from two or more year stages are grouped together in the one registration class.

Why are composite classes formed?

- Schools receive a basic complement of teaching staff in accordance with the total number of pupils on the roll. No account is taken of the way in which pupils may happen to be distributed across age bands.
- The national conditions of service for teachers currently set a maximum number of 33 pupils for single year stage classes in primary schools and a maximum number of 25 pupils for classes of more than one year stage. North Lanarkshire is currently working to the proposed contractual maximum of 25 pupils in P1, 30 pupils in P2-3 and 33 pupils in P4-7.
- It is, therefore, normally possible to form single year stage classes when the number of pupils at each year stage is the contractual class maximum or below, or a multiple of the appropriate maximum. Where numbers are very small or where they are slightly larger than contractual size, it is usually necessary to form composite classes, perhaps at several stages.

Selection of pupils to classes, including composite classes

- All classes have a variety of working groups to meet the needs of the learners. These groups work at levels appropriate to the learners attainment and achievement within Curriculum for Excellence. In the formation of new classes full account must be taken of existing successful groupings of pupils. Schools should use language and/or mathematics groupings as the baseline for decisions as to which class children are allocated. Within this broad guideline a language and/or mathematics working group could be defined as:
 - A number of pupils of broadly the same attainment who have shown the capacity of working well as a learning group
 - The use of language and/or mathematics working groups as a criterion carries particular advantages
- Working groups ensure the continuity and progression appropriate to the ability and aptitude of the children.
- Cohesive class groupings will **largely** be kept together thus minimising concerns for pupils and their parents.
- By implication the use of language and/or mathematics working groups as the guiding principle will mean that account can be taken of a balance of ability groups across the classes thus reassuring parents that no pupil is being discriminated against e.g. "kept back" or "pushed on" inappropriately.

Final responsibility for decisions on class formation

- Responsibility for the decision on class classification rests with the Head Teacher who must be able to produce documented educational and organisational evidence to support final structures.
- Head Teachers should consult with promoted staff and teachers to inform the final decision on composite class formation.
- Where any extreme organisational difficulty exists Head Teachers should make contact with Education Headquarters.

Communication

- Staff, parents and pupils must be informed about class formation and where appropriate, the criteria used for allocating pupils to classes.
- It would always be our intention and to ensure effective transition that the school informs parents/carers and children of their class/teacher for next session. However, in certain circumstances class restructuring may have to take place during the summer break, after a school session has started, or in very exceptional circumstances at any point during the year. However, such cases will be very exceptional.

Head Teacher's Role

- Make available any authority guidance, including the attached advice leaflet, for parents, on the formation of classes.
- Inform parents of likely re-classification of classes at the earliest possible opportunity to allow for appropriate discussion to take place.
- Inform Education Headquarters of ongoing developments in relation to the formation of classes.
- Monitor planning, programmes of study and assessment to demonstrate equality of provision across all classes.

Good Practice

- Eastfield Primary School follows advice from North Lanarkshire Council in that the delivery of the curriculum in composite classes is the same as that in classes of a single year stage i.e. Curriculum for Excellence and school programmes of work to support planning for children's development in all areas of the curriculum.
- Head teachers should consult with promoted staff and teachers at parallel stages to make decisions regarding the curriculum content, effective grouping and organisation for teaching. Consultation should ensure that pupils

in composite classes undertake programmes of study which are demonstrably equivalent to those followed by pupils in single year stage classes.

- The school procedures for assessment, recording and reporting should be followed for composite classes and many issues surrounding pupils in such classes surrounding pupils in such classes addressed in the normal manner.

This leaflet has been created in partnership with the Parent Council.