

What if my child's friends are in another class?

* You should be assured that your child's teacher will be sensitive to the needs of all children in his/her class and will be encouraging the pupils to develop good working relationships and friendships. Children usually make new friends very quickly and can cope far better with change than adults imagine. Pupils will also spend time in the playground mixing with all of the school's other pupils.



If you would like to find out more about how best to support your child's learning, visit our class blogs at...

www.whitelees.n-lanark.sch.uk

or

Education Scotland Parentzone at...

www.educationscotland.gov.uk/parentzone

What learning opportunities will my child experience?

- * 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.
- * As in classes of a single year stage, pupils will work in social groups, mixed ability groups and ability groups according to the tasks in which they are involved and the teaching methodologies employed. Effective management of personnel, resources and teaching space are critical in the final decisions on classes, organisation and overall management of the school.
- * Children in all classes will follow programmes designed to help them progress at their own level, regardless of whether or not they are in a composite or single stage class. Professional standards ensure our teachers are well trained and able to plan and deliver experiences that match each learner's needs.
- * In addition, the school will make every effort to involve children of any one year group in activities which bring them all together. However, it is also important that the natural identity of each class is maintained and the school will ensure that this happens.



WHITELEES PRIMARY SCHOOL

COMPOSITE
CLASSES

Parent Guide



What is a composite class?

- * Primary schools have pupils at seven year stages, Primary 1 to Primary 7. 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.

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.

The formation of classes, including composite classes

- * A number of professional considerations are taken into account when designing class configurations.
- * In particular consideration is given to ensuring that due account is taken of available resources of personnel for the effective management of the school.
- * It is important for learning and teaching in the school as a whole that classes allow for effective deployment of promoted and specialist staff together with the effective use of resources and teaching space.
- * The maximum number of pupils in any composite class may not exceed 25.

Selection of pupils to classes, including composite classes

- * In the formation of new classes full account is taken of existing successful groupings of pupils. In Whitelees, we use literacy, numeracy and/or health and wellbeing groupings as the baseline for decisions as to which class children are allocated, as well as Teacher Judgement on which social settings will best develop the child's potential as a learner. Within this broad guideline a 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 literacy, numeracy and/or health and wellbeing 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 literacy/numeracy/health and wellbeing 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.

