

Renfrewshire Council Information on Structuring Classes in the Primary School

STRUCTURE OF CLASSES

- Primary schools have pupils at seven broad year stages, Primary 1 to Primary 7. A year stage is a group of pupils entering primary education at a common date.
- Pupils are organised within single year classes eg. Primary 3 or in composite classes, eg. Primary 3/4 which contain more than one year group.
- Schools are staffed to agreed standards based on the total number of pupils within the school regardless of the numbers of pupils at each year stage. This means that head teachers need to organise classes to make best use of available staff, resources and space. Balancing up the various factors involves both educational and organisational considerations.
- Renfrewshire Council's normal maximum number of pupils in a single year class is 25 for P1, 30 for P2 and P3, 33 for P4-7 and the maximum number of pupils in a composite class is 25.
- The head teacher is responsible for structuring classes on the basis of advice given by the council.
- In all classes, pupils working at broadly the same pace and level in language and/or mathematics are grouped together. This arrangement uses teaching resources most effectively and supports continuity for pupils.

SELECTION OF PUPILS

- Where a composite class is being formed, specific criteria have been provided by the council.
- In forming new classes, full account must be taken of existing successful groupings of pupils. Schools should use language and/or mathematics groupings as the basis for allocating children to classes. Within this broad guideline a language or mathematics working group could be described as:

“A number of pupils with broadly the same attainment levels who show the capacity for working well as a learning group”.

- Where a single year class and a composite class are being formed at the same stages, the head teacher, class teacher and, where appropriate, pre-five colleagues, will make use of their professional judgement and all available information to form the two classes.

COMMUNICATION

- Normally, classes will be formed before the start of a new school year so that all involved know what class structures exist for the new school session.
- In certain circumstances, class restructuring may have to take place during the summer break or after a school session has started.
- Parents have been informed of the arrangements for annual class structuring arrangements.
- The head teacher will be happy to meet with you to answer any questions on class structure or any other matter.

IN CONCLUSION

- You should be confident that the professionalism of the staff in your school will ensure that your child will always work within a programme appropriate for his/her age, ability and aptitude. At both school level and education authority level quality assurance procedures exist to ensure that your child is making good progress within the nationally agreed curriculum guidelines.
- The national guidelines on the curriculum indicate that pupils should proceed through learning experiences tailored to fit their personal level of attainment. This means that pupils in all classes will follow programmes constructed to help them progress from their own level.
- The school makes every effort to involve pupils in any one year group in activities which bring the whole year group together. In this way, pupils will be able to continue to identify with children of the same age, especially at important times such as transfer to secondary school. At the same time, the school ensures that the natural identity of each primary class group is maintained.