

Thursday 25th May 2023

Re: Class Changes

Dear year one families,

Across the country, schools are communicating with parents about the mixing of classes. Some schools have set transition points where reshuffles happen, some do it every year and some like Lyndhurst do it as required to meet the needs of everyone.

We know that switching the classes that children are in can be very stressful for parents and pupils. It is something we do sparingly and only when it is in the best interests of all pupils. Sometimes this is because the distribution of needs within a year group has changed resulting in one class being unbalanced and the staff in that class being stretched too far, unable to provide the level of support we want to all children. Sometimes it is because combinations of children don't work and are having a detrimental impact on the rest of their class.

When we shuffle classes, we consider a range of factors. First and foremost, we consider the friendship dynamics. Will each child still have a good friend in the group? Will the friends they have in the new class support good learning behaviours? We then look to ensure a balance of gender, summer and winter born, attainment, SEND and SEMH need & ethnicity.

As you can imagine, it is not an easy task nor one we take lightly so we spend a lot of time ensuring that the changes we make will be beneficial for the long term.

We have made the conscious decision not to ask for parent or pupil input about people they would like to be with as in our combined experience that often

causes more emotional problems than it solves. Instead we will be using our knowledge of the year group both in class and in the playground.

Over the next few weeks we will be determining the new class groups and will share them with you in the fortnight after half term. For all of the reasons I've talked about, once we allocate the classes we cannot accommodate requests to change. We will however be happy to talk about your concerns and outline strategies to support your child or to discuss our rationale for the mix (where it is appropriate to do so).

It goes without saying that once we have confirmed the new classes we will implement a plan to support the children with the move, this will include but not be limited to, circle time sessions about friendship and change, activities in the new class groups, activities in the new classroom (in their classes) and stories about transition. In the new academic year, staff will continue to support pupils as they settle in the new groups and with the transition to their new year group and the new expectations that come with being at the top of their key stage.

Kind regards,

Tom Turnham