



# Downe Primary School

## Class grouping, setting & streaming policy

Revised: April 2024

To be reviewed: April 2027

### **The Pioneer Academy Vision**

We put children first, pioneering excellence and championing each and every child.

### **Class Grouping in the Early Years Foundation Stage**

Using prior information from a number of sources, such as nurseries, pre-schools, parents and external agencies such as the Educational Psychologist, the children are put into their first classes based on this initial information and SEND, birth term, gender and any other specific needs that have been identified. These measures aim to ensure that the early years foundation stage classes are well balanced in social, emotional and educational needs.

As the children develop, it can become apparent after a period of time that the children's needs might not match what was initially identified and therefore at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, classes may need to be reorganised. This will be done to ensure that every child's needs can be met to ensure that they reach or exceed their full learning, emotional and well-being potential. Children's friendship groups are taken into account. However, this is not the sole defining reason for children to be placed in classes. The following criteria will be used if classes are regrouped:

- Educational needs
- SEND and vulnerable groups
- Learning and general behaviour
- Gender and ethnicity
- Age
- Friendships

### **Class Grouping in Key Stage One**

Classes in Year 1 will only be reorganised if there is an imbalance of pupil characteristics the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (see above), such as gender balance or the school believes that it is in the best interest of all children to adjust the class groupings or the school identifies specific issues, which would be addressed through changes to the class groupings.

The school will reserve the right to make the decision to mix all children into new class groupings or move a smaller number of children from one class to another to rebalance the classes. Children's friendship groups are taken into account, however, we do not set classes by friendship groups alone, but by the importance of where children will learn best.

Consideration is given to pupils with SEND and other vulnerable groups to ensure they are in a place where they will learn best and to ensure that there is not a significant number of pupils with additional needs in any given class. We also consider multiple births (some siblings need to be together, but some are better apart). This is the one exception upon which we may consult parents. Consideration is also given to behaviour and the impact this may have in specific circumstances.

### **Class Grouping, Setting and Streaming in Key Stage Two Definitions**

- **Class Grouping:** mixed ability classes arranged to provide a balance of pupil characteristics.
- **Setting:** the grouping of pupils according to their attainment in a specific subject. Pupils join the set for lessons being taught in this specific subject.
- **Streaming:** a method of assigning pupils to classes on the basis of an overall assessment of their overall attainment. Pupils remain in the streamed classes in the majority of their lessons.

The school will reserve the right to make the decision to mix all children into new class groupings, or move a smaller number of children from one class to another to rebalance the classes. Children's friendship groups are taken into account and to accommodate this the children will be asked to nominate two friends and we will endeavour to place them with at least one of these friends, but this may not always be possible. We do not set classes by friendship groups alone, but by the importance of where children will learn best.

The school also reserve the right to set or stream the children according to attainment. This is the Head Teacher's decision based on the needs of the pupils in their individual school.

The following criteria will be used if classes are regrouped, set or streamed:

- Educational needs based on robust assessment data analysis
- SEND and vulnerable groups
- Learning and general behaviour
- Gender and ethnicity
- Age
- Friendships

### **Tailoring the Learning**

Within each class, whether mixed-attainment, setting or streaming, a teacher will have pupils covering a wide range of attainment. Modifying or tailoring the work means that children are given tasks that are appropriate to their academic attainment, level of understanding and readiness to learn. There are many different ways of tailoring work, including:

- **Task:** different tasks are set for children of different attainment levels. The teacher may prepare different maths tasks linked to the same concept – easy, moderate and difficult – to cover the

range of attainment in the class.

- Group work: the teacher splits the class into small groups according to their attainment, so they work on tasks with children who are at a similar level.
- Resources: this recognises that some children can work with more advanced resources than others.
- Pace: higher attaining children are sometimes held back by those who need longer to complete tasks. A classic example of tailoring by pace is where rapid learners are given an extension task.
- Teacher support and dialogue: this is one of the most commonly used methods of modifying work in primary schools. After the teacher has explained the lesson plan and learning objectives to the whole class, they will work with a focus group whilst also monitoring the rest of the class, for example a few children may experience difficulties with the instructions or the concept, then the teacher or additional adult may need to explain the task in more detail, offer guidance or give additional support.

### **Informing parents and carers**

In the interests of treating everyone equally, we cannot take into account requests from parents or carers about which class they would like their child to join, as it would be impossible to take all requests into account and we must take a decision that is in the best interests of all the children in the school both educationally, socially and emotionally.

As the decision about which class a child goes into is based on confidential information, we do not explain the full decision about regrouping, setting or streaming to parents or carers as this could mean discussing confidential matters about other children.

Information that is shared regarding plans for regrouping or streaming classes, establishing setting groups.

- We explain it to parents and carers when they are shown around the school before making the decision to apply for a place.
- We have a copy of this policy on each school's website and available to parents upon request.
- Parents and carers will be reminded of this policy when the need arises.
- All parents will be informed of outcomes of regrouping, setting and streaming as early as possible.

### **If parents and carers have a question about the class their child is in**

If a parent or carer has a concern about the class allocation of their child, they should make an appointment to share that concern with the Head Teacher as early as possible. It may well be that an early conversation can result in actions which will reduce or remove these concerns.

If a parent or carer has concerns about whether a child's learning needs will be met in the new class, then those concerns should be taken to the Head Teacher who will be able to explain how the school will organise teaching and learning to meet the needs of that child in the coming year.

If parents or carers are unhappy with the explanation from the Head Teacher, they should follow The Pioneer Academy's complaints procedure. Parents or carers should, however, be aware that regrouping, setting and streaming is a professional decision and parents' preferences cannot be taken into account.