

# **Oakwood Primary School**

## **Classroom Placement Protocol**

Oakwood Primary School is a two-form entry school.

We have a PAN (Published Admission Number) of 60 in each year group.

When there are 60 children placed in each year group, we are **full**, and potential new admissions go on a waiting list. All admission procedures, including our policy, PAN and waiting list are handled on our behalf by Southampton City Council.

Once children have a place at Oakwood, it is the school's decision which class they are placed in.

### **Coming from pre-school into Year R**

We visit as many of the pre-schools as we can. We will visit all pre-schools which have at least five children coming to Oakwood, or have children with special needs, unless there are unavoidable circumstances which make this impossible. If we are unable to visit, we will have a comprehensive telephone discussion with the pre-school lead and key workers where possible.

When we place children in the two classes, we find a balance between ability, term of birthdays, and gender, and we make sure that some children from each pre-school go into each class. This is part of the social aspect of starting school and getting to know new children from different places. We listen carefully to the advice of the pre-school about which children are friends and which children get on well, and which children work together the best. Occasionally, a pre-school might advise that "best friends" are not the best working partnership, and we take that into account too.

Parents often make specific requests about class placements and, while we listen to these, it is pre-school key workers' advice and the other criteria mentioned above which drive our decisions.

It is very unlikely that a child will be placed in a class without some of their pre-school friends, but it is equally unlikely that they will be placed in a class with **all** of their pre-school friends.

As our Year R classrooms are open plan, children get used to working with new friends and partners very quickly, whilst maintaining their friendships from pre-school, and making new ones.

Once the two classes are decided, changes are not made.

### **Moving from Year R to Year 1**

When we have known the children for a year, we will consider whether we need to mix the two classes as they move into Year 1.

Often this is not necessary and we will only do so if there have been leavers and new starters which have left the classes imbalanced, either socially or academically, or if there is any other issue which affects a significant number of children.

We do not consider parents' requests to move individual children to either be with, or not be with, other children, or requests for a particular teacher.

### **Moving from Year 1 through to Year 5**

Our aim is that we try to keep the same classes once children are in Year 1, all the way through to Year 5.

We will **only** mix classes at the end of an academic year if we feel it is appropriate. The same criteria apply as when we decide how classes move up to Year 1 - namely, if any kind of educational or social imbalance has arisen through children leaving and arriving, or if there is any other issue affecting a significant number of children.

If we mix classes, we ask the children to choose three or four friends who they would like to be in a class with, but we don't guarantee they will be in a class with all of those friends - some strong social friendships are not productive for work and progress.

We will try to avoid mixing classes when children move from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 to ease transition.

If two teachers have shared a class for a year, we will always move those children into a class with a single teacher for the following year, unless this is unavoidable.

We do not consider parents' requests to move individual children to either be with, or not be with, other children, or requests for a particular teacher.

## **Moving from Year 5 into Year 6**

Our long-term aim is to maintain three smaller classes of 20 in Year 6. We will also work in ability sets for English and Maths. This means that we will **always** have to create new classes in Year 6.

This helps with preparation for Key Stage 2 testing, allows more individualised attention, assessment and feedback for children, but it also good preparation for secondary school, when children work with more than one teacher and have to work successfully with a much wider peer group.

When we mix into Year 6, we listen to the advice of the Year 5 teachers, look at assessment data and the social mix of children. We also try to keep a gender balance. We also ask children to choose three of four friends who they would like to be in a class with, but we don't guarantee they will be in a class with all of those friends.

As is always the case, we do not consider parents' requests to move individual children to either be with, or not be with, other children, or requests for a particular teacher.

## **Our outcomes**

Our outcomes in Early Years, Year 1 phonics testing, Year 2 assessments and the "SATs" at the end of Year 6 are all amongst the highest of any school in the city and in neighbouring Hampshire.

Our attendance is the highest of any primary school in the city.

We believe that the approach we take at all transition points contributes to this success, and we would expect parents to support our experience and professionalism for the benefit of their children.