Class Organisation Guidelines

Brize Norton Primary School

We SHINE for ourselves and each other with kindness.

Strive, Help, Inspire, Nurture, Excel

Adopted by school LGB:	**Brize Norton Primary School**
Date:	**May 2026**
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Rationale

Brize Norton Community Primary School is a smaller than average primary school with 5 classes.

As the primary curriculum (including Reception), involves 7 year groups within 5 class groups, we will always need to have mixed year groups, apart from our Reception class. Due to the PAN (published admission number) being 20, and class sizes being 30, children in their 2nd and 5th academic year (year 2 and Year 5) will always be split. At some stage, every child will spend at least one year in the same classroom: this does not mean they are repeating a year – they are remaining in the same room and will be taught the appropriate curriculum for their academic age and/or individual needs.

Class structure

Due to the constant need for our mixed classes, the teaching team has a clear understanding of the needs of mixed year groups and provides a differentiated curriculum to address the fact that children will inevitably have to stay in the same classroom for two years at some stage during their time at the school. Time is given to this.

Criteria used to split year groups

The school will use **age as the primary criterion** when making decisions about how to split year groups. We believe that age is the fairest and most objective criterion because all other criteria involve subjective judgements. A child's ability and friendship group may change over time, but a child's date of birth remains constant. In addition to this, consideration will also be given to creating a balanced gender split as far as possible.

The school believes that basing these decisions on age, rather than ability, supports children as individuals and protects their emotional wellbeing. We take the view that it can be damaging to a child's self-esteem to think that they are not moving to the next class because they are "not clever enough". Ensuring that children feel valued, confident, and secure is central to our approach.

Exceptions may be made only if parents/carers request that siblings should not be in the same class. Consideration will also be given to children with special educational needs, where it is deemed that a particular class would better meet their holistic needs and promote their overall wellbeing.

After considerations have been made about the whole cohort of children, and with a commitment to class sizes remaining at 30, it may be necessary for some children who are chronologically older to remain in the lower classes to accommodate movement. Any such decisions will always be made with the wellbeing of the children as the highest priority.

In all cases, the headteacher's decision is final.

To support this policy, the school carefully tracks each child's progress to assess their level of attainment and the gaps in their knowledge and understanding. This is used as a tool to inform planning and teaching and, therefore, ensures that children are taught according to their individual needs, not to their class or year group. Time for careful tracking and planning is given via staff meetings every year.

Parents/carers who have concerns should speak to the class teacher first, and then the Headteacher, who will explain how the curriculum will be differentiated.

Pupils joining the school during an academic year will be placed in the class that has room, appropriate to their year group, but not necessarily according to their age.

Other activities and privileges that are afforded to children as they progress up the school will be awarded to year groups, and will therefore not be affected by class organisation decisions.