

Dear Parents/Carers

Classes for session 2024/2025

Children for the most part of their education will attend a school within the school zone/catchment area close to where their family lives. That said, parents can request that their child attends a school in another zone and this is known as making a 'Placing Request'. Whilst Parents have an element of choice in relation to schools they wish their child to attend, parents are unable to choose which class, teacher or pupils should or should not be in their child's class. The decision regarding placing pupils in classes lies with school staff. This is one of the very few decisions which is ours and our decisions in relation to this matter are final. One decision out with our control is the fact that we are going from having 11 classes to 10 classes in August.

During this term, planning is undertaken for the configuration of classes for next session and the necessary adjustments to current classes. Many of you are used to these changes to classes, and understand the reasons behind them, but some new families may be unclear as to why their child's class cannot just go on as it is for next session. We trust the following information will support you in having a greater understanding of factors affecting the configuration of classes in schools.

As is the case in almost all Aberdeenshire schools, we have some composite classes, one of which is our current Primary 6/7. This class will see 9 pupils move to the Academy leaving a group of 13 pupils. Clearly, we cannot operate with a class of 13 pupils as our staffing allocation does not facilitate classes of this size. This naturally has a knock-on effect as we need to move pupils to join this group.

There is also, always, an additional knock-on effect at the other end of the school as Primary 1 classes have a maximum of 25 pupils and once these pupils move on to Primary 2 etc maximum class sizes go up therefore classes must be adjusted accordingly. In addition to this, as previously mentioned, we are dropping from 11 classes to 10 classes next session. Moving all our current classes on as they stand cannot be done therefore, as in previous years, a reorganisation of all classes is necessary.

As always, Fishermoss School receives many placing requests from out of catchment/zone families, in addition to new families moving into the area, and all of whom are to be allocated classes. These new pupils have individual needs which are as important as the needs of our current cohort of pupils and they are also to be included in decisions made in relation to classes.

Our **261** Fishermoss pupils are to be divided into **10** classes and the range of criteria to be considered include the following:

- Levels of attainment and achievement
- Additional support needs
- Working groups (i.e., groups of children who are together for the greatest part of their curricular experience)
- Social groups
- Primary 1 maximum size 25 pupils
- Primary 2 & Primary 3 maximum size 30 pupils
- Primary 4 to Primary 7 maximum size 33 pupils
- Composite classes at any stage maximum size 25 pupils e.g. Primary 2/3 or Primary 6/7

Teachers and Early Years Practitioners are actively involved in the decision-making process regarding necessary changes to classes to reach the best possible decision. As a school we make careful considered, informed decisions regarding classes and we are grateful for your support here by

reassuring your child that we have made the best decision we can and that they will have a good year with their new class and teacher. We do not make these decisions casually. Every parent and every pupil in our school will have their own opinion and preference however this decision lies with school staff and they are to consider all pupils and their very differing needs.

As some parents, and pupils, may have questions about composite classes we created a leaflet of 'Frequently Asked Questions'. This leaflet was created by parents, staff and pupils for parents and pupils through our Parent Staff Council and is available on our website. Please select the tab Documents → Leaflets → Composite Classes.

Teachers for next session are as follows:

P1/2 Miss Sang

P1/2 Mrs McDonald

P2/3 Mrs Taylor

P3 Mrs Cameron (Mon-Wed)/Mrs Rennie (Thu & Fri)

P3/4 Miss Blacklaws

P4 Miss Airlie

P5 Mrs Muir

P5/6 Mrs Rennie (Mon)/Mrs Morrison (Tue-Fri)

P6/7 Mrs McRae

P7 Mrs Middleton

Mrs Storey, Mrs Bryson & Miss Anderson will be providing non class contact time cover for teachers.

To ensure that pupils can play with all pupils in their year group, regardless of which class they are in, breaks & lunches will be as follows:

P1-P4 10:30-10:50 break & 12:20-1:20 lunchtime

P5-P7 10:50-11:10 break & 12:50-1:50 lunchtime

Pupils will be informed of, and will meet with, their new class and teacher on Tuesday 2nd July. We will send home written confirmation by way of an email of your child's/children's class/es and teachers.

Thank you as always for your continued support.

Kindest regards

Mrs Margaret M Ferguson

Head Teacher