



Streetsbrook Infant & Early Years Academy



Policy for Class Organisation

Streetsbrook Infant & Early Years Academy

'Learning for Life'

At Streetsbrook, we strive to provide an equal chance for all to become responsible and caring citizens who lead happy and fulfilled lives, and are equipped with the skills and abilities to shape the world they live in.

Our Values are:

- **Self-Belief**
- **Belonging**
- **Respect**

These are embedded into our Nurturing Principles



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Please read this policy in conjunction with our Admissions Policy

INTRODUCTION

Streetsbrook Infant & Early Years Academy is committed to providing a nurturing, inclusive and structured learning environment that meets the individual needs of every child. This policy outlines the principles and procedures for organising classes in Reception, Year 1, and Year 2 at Streetsbrook Infant & Early Years Academy. It ensures that class groupings support high-quality teaching, learning, and pastoral care, while complying with statutory requirements. This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Admission Policy.

STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

Streetsbrook Infant and Early Years Academy is a two from entry Infant School with an admissions number of 60 children each academic year. This means that there are two classes in each year group – Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. Class sizes at Streetsbrook will not exceed 30 pupils, in accordance with the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, unless we are directed to by Solihull MBC

PRINCIPLES FOR CLASS ORGANISATION

Class groupings will be designed to:

- Promote balanced and inclusive learning environments
- Support individual needs and development
- Foster positive peer relationships
- Ensure gender, ethnicity and ability balance
- Comply with staffing and resource constraints

CRITERIA FOR CLASS ALLOCATION

Children are grouped based on the following considerations:

- Gender
- Academic ability
- Social and emotional development
- Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND)
- Term of birth
- English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- Observations and recommendations from professionals working within Streetsbrook Infant & Early Years Academy
- Friendship groups within school (considered but not guaranteed); friendship groups out of school (not considered)

In line with our Admissions Policy, from Reception to Year 2, twins are placed in separate classes. In the case of 3 children joining from the same family, ie. triplets or twins with close cousins, the Headteacher will liaise with parents to determine the best way forward.

PROCESS

Class allocations are reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) in consultation with teaching staff. Decisions are always made in the best interests of the child and the cohort as a whole.

This approach ensures that each child benefits from a diverse and inclusive learning environment that supports the needs and development of all children. While we understand the importance of friendships, class groupings are not based on existing friendship groups. Our priority is to create balanced classes that promote equality, diversity and inclusivity and the best possible outcomes for every child.

Friendship in early childhood is deeply human. It's shaped by brain development, early relationships and everyday experience. Our job is not to force it. Our role is to guide, coach and play alongside children as they figure out what it means to be a friend and to find their own way there.

How children make friends by Dr Alistair Bryce Clegg

Nursery

Children who attend Nursery for 15 hours are shown on the register as 'Acorn' and children who attend Nursery for 30 hours are shown on the register as 'Oak'. This is however, for registration purposes only and all children are based in one room together, as 'Nursery'.

Once the children are settled in Nursery, they are split equally into family groups. Each group is led by a designated member of staff who is responsible for supporting and guiding the children within that group. Although each family group has a specific adult leader, the class teacher maintains overall responsibility for all groups. The teacher oversees the organisation and progress of the groups and ensures that they spend time working with each group regularly throughout the year.

Family groups provide opportunities for children to take part in activities within smaller groups. This approach helps to create a supportive environment where children feel comfortable to communicate, contributing to the development of their speaking and listening skills. Working in smaller groups also allows staff to give more focussed attention to each child and support their individual needs. In addition, family groups help children to build positive relationships with the member of staff leading their group. This consistent interaction supports children's sense of belonging, well-being, and confidence within the Nursery environment.

Family groups are created primarily at random to ensure fairness and to encourage children to build relationships with a wide range of peers. When allocating children to groups, staff also consider the balance of the class to ensure that each group has, as far as possible, an equal number of boys and girls. Where appropriate, any significant needs are also considered so that groups remain well supported and balanced. This approach helps to create inclusive groups in which all children can participate fully and benefit from small group learning opportunities.

Children in Nursery continue to take part in a range of learning opportunities beyond their family groups, which includes whole class teaching sessions led by the class teacher. In addition, staff provide other planned small-group activities and targeted support where appropriate. Children may also work one-to-one with adults to support individual learning, development, and well-being. This combination of whole-class, small group and individual interactions ensures that all children receive a balanced range of learning experiences and opportunities for support.

Reception

The following factors are taken into consideration when determining Reception classes:

- Gender
- Academic ability (In line with the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum)
- Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND)
- Age and term of birth and children who have been born prematurely
- Ethnicity
- English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- Observations and recommendations from professionals working within Streetsbrook Infant & Early Years Academy
- Individual personalities of children in the Nursery and who learns and plays well together
- A balance of children from our Nursery, Childcare setting and those who are new to setting

This process begins at the start of the Summer 1 after Reception places have been confirmed; this includes many children new to the school.

- After careful observation and based on a thorough understanding of the children, the Nursery teacher begins to reorganise the current nursery children into two groups.
- Once happy with the two groups, the Nursery TAs look at the proposed classes and share their own professional views; this may result in some changes, but the factors outlined above are at the heart of any decisions.
- The proposed classes are then trialled within the teaching time in Nursery to see how the children work together; this is reviewed by the staff and any necessary changes made.
- The afternoon wraparound team are also consulted, and their professional views are also taken on board
- Once all staff members are in agreement with class choices, the proposed classes continue to be trialled in both the morning and afternoon sessions.
- The EYFS Lead is also consulted and proposed classes become agreed.
- Classes are allocated Snowdrops or Bluebells.
- Children from our Childcare setting are provided with several opportunities to join the two groups in Nursery to ensure they are familiar with their new classmates and discussions are held with Childcare staff to support class allocations
- Children who are new to setting are invited to a settling in session where staff meet with parents and children. Reception staff and the EYFS lead then use the interactions made on this day, alongside completed information forms, 'all about me' transition books and information provided by previous settings to allocate the children to a class.

Year 1

Usually, once children have been allocated to their Reception classes, they remain in these classes until they leave Streetsbrook at the end of Year 2. However, this is discussed annually by Senior Leaders in the summer term and should the class groupings not be supporting the principles outlined above, this may result in the two classes being reconfigured.

In exceptional circumstances, adjustments to class groupings may be made mid-year.

Year 2

At the end of Year 2, the vast majority of our children transition to our feeder junior school, Sharmans Cross. As staff at Streetsbrook know the children exceptionally well, they are asked by Sharmans Cross to divide the children into either three or four classes, in line with the number of Year 3 classes Sharmans will be operating in the new academic year. The Year 2 staff take responsibility for organising the children into their new classes with input from the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher.

As outlined above, the following considerations are taken into account:

- Gender
- Academic ability
- Social and emotional development
- Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND)
- English as an Additional Language (EAL)
- Observations and recommendations from professionals working within Streetsbrook Infant & Early Years Academy

In addition, the children are asked to identify four friends that they would like to be with in their new class. However, please this is not an order of preference listing. Streetsbrook staff will do everything they can to ensure each child is placed with **one** of their choices but unfortunately, we are unable to guarantee this.

Parents are given advanced notice of when children will be asked to make their 'friends' request so that families have an opportunity to discuss the process with their child and help them prepare for this decision. Should parents have a particular request regarding class placement this must be made in writing to the Headteacher and in advance of the 'friends' request session for children. Streetsbrook staff, supported by SLT will consider all such requests but cannot guarantee an outcome.

If a child is transitioning to a school other than Sharmans Cross, we are unable to offer these options.

Once the classes have been determined, this is sent through to Sharmans Cross who then take responsibility for finalising their Year 3 classes with children from their other feeder school.

Please be aware that once the classes have been finalised and submitted to Sharmans Cross, Streetsbrook staff are **unable** to make any changes and would respectfully request that you do not ask us to do so.

Families will be informed of their child's Year 3 class by Sharmans Cross /chosen Junior School

COMMUNICATING CLASS ORGANISATION DECISIONS TO PARENTS

Streetsbrook parents are informed of class arrangements at the end of each academic year via a letter from the Headteacher.

Whilst requests from parents regarding classes are considered, they are not guaranteed.

TRANSITION AND SUPPORT

Children will participate in a range of activities to support their transition between classes, including having a dedicated Transition morning for children in Nursery, Reception and Year 1.

All children in Year 2 benefit from having a Buddy Morning and a Transition Day at Sharmans Cross Junior School. Children moving to other schools also benefit from transition activities.

In addition to this, we recognise that some children need more support with transitions within and between schools. Individual and small group support is planned and implemented as appropriate. Parents are encouraged to support their child's transition positively.

THE WAY FORWARD

This Policy will be reviewed in the Spring Term of 2027.

This policy was ratified by Trustees on 24 March 2026.

Signed:..........Chair

Signed:..... Headteacher