

West Lodge Primary School

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Headteacher: Mr Jim Dees

Dear Parents/Carers,

At the end of this academic year we will be mixing the current classes in Year 1, Year 3 and Year 5. We made the decision a few years ago to mix up the classes more frequently, this has involved mixing the classes every two years (at the end of Year 1, Year 3 and Year 5) which has proved to be successful. We have thought about this very carefully and feel that the children in these cohorts will benefit in a number of ways from the mixing of classes.

Our rationale for mixing classes is outlined in the four points below:

- To create opportunities for children to learn and play with a wider variety of peers
- To enable greater social interaction between children as they move through the school
- To ensure that the classes remain balanced
- To promote a greater sense of community in a large three-form entry primary school

We are aware that some parents may feel unsure about this. I can understand that there will be some concerns, however our experience as professionals is that, although initially there will be a degree of uncertainty for the children, over time this is a positive experience with many benefits.

The benefits for the children include:

- Better resilience in developing friendships in a safe and comfortable environment
- Opportunities to learn with a wider variety of peers
- Feeling a sense of being part of a year group and not just a class

The staff will work hard to ensure a smooth transition and will be mixing the classes at different times, so that the children start to experience what it is like to meet new friends and work with different children. We feel that this is an important life skill and it is the responsibility of us all to ensure our children are resilient learners.

The arrangements for class mixing will be based on the professional judgements of the Year 1, Year 3 and Year 5 staff, members of the Leadership Team and the Headteacher. A key priority, as we mix the classes, will be the happiness and welfare of the children and we will aim to take into account existing friendship groups when we create new classes.

A lot of time and careful consideration will go into the process. Throughout next term, the adults in each year group will spend time observing the children at work and play to support their decisions. Class teachers have been meeting regularly to discuss the mix with the aim of ensuring that each class reflects the diversity of our school and has: a good balance of friendships; a range of educational, social and personal needs; a



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good gender balance and a good balance of maturity levels. Our class swap day is on Monday 11th July and we will be informing parents and children of the classes on Friday 8th July.

We thank you for entrusting us with these important decisions that affect your child. Please be assured that we will deal with this with the utmost sensitivity and with the children's best interests at heart. If you have any queries, concerns or have anything that you would like to share with us please don't hesitate to speak to your classteacher or a member of the leadership team.

Yours sincerely,

Jim Dees

