

St Thomas More Catholic Voluntary Academy

St Thomas Aquinas Academy Trust



Love One Another as I have Loved you
John 13:34

Class setting policy

Policy Date:	May 2023				
Policy Review Date:	May 2025		Charlotte Crosse	June	2023
Ratified by Governing Body:					
Chair of Governors Bernard Attard					

Mixed aged classes

We are aware that having children in mixed age class or in a class where a child is not with all of their friends can be a concern for parents. We work hard to ensure that children are not disadvantaged by which class they are in. For example:

- Teachers plan themes together and our curriculum is knowledge and skills based to ensure all children are receiving appropriate challenge.

In addition, teachers arrange theme days and trips throughout the year when children from different classes get the opportunity to work together. Our school house system, school council and chaplaincy team allow children of different year groups in different classes to get together

In order to ensure parents are aware of the way we set classes:

- We explain to parents when they are shown round school before making the decision to apply for a place at St Thomas More Catholic Academy.
- We explain this system when we discuss transition to our parents
- We have a copy of this policy on our school website.

At St Thomas More Catholic Voluntary Academy we have an intake of 40 pupils per year group. This means that there are too many children for one class per year group. All children will experience a mixed year class at some point in their time at St Thomas More.

Class setting in Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Key stage One

In EYFS and Key Stage 1 we have four classes:

- EYFS
- EYFS and Year 1
- Year 1 and Year 2
- Year 2

The children in the EYFS are usually split between the two classes depending on their birthday, with the 10 oldest children going into the EYFS and Year 1 class. However, further consideration may be given to children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and multiple births.

Class setting in Key Stage two

In Key stage 2 we have five classes:

- Year 3
- Year 3 and Year 4
- Year 4 and Year 5
- Year 5
- Year 6

From Year 1 children are split between the classes taking into account the following criteria: (this list is not hierarchical)

- Term of birthday
- Academic ability
- Social groups
- Balance of children in the class based on staff knowledge and experience of them.
- Behaviour- pupil clashes / groups of pupils clashing
- Multiple births – taking into account the individual needs of the children and whether being in the same or different classes is most suitable at that time This is the one exception upon which we may consult parents.

- Exceptional circumstances that will affect a child's emotional or educational well-being.
- Detailed consideration is given to pupils with SEND to ensure they are in a place where they will learn best and to ensure they can be appropriately supported.

Children will be asked for three friends they would like to be in the same class with in the following year. Class teachers will explain that they will be with at least one of these friends. We do not set classes by friendship groups alone, but by the importance of where they will learn best.

Request from parents

We do not take into account requests regarding preferences from children or parents about which classes they would like their child in. This is because, it would be impossible to take all requests into account and we must make a decision that is in the best interests of all the children in school both educationally, socially and emotionally.

As the decision about which class a child goes into is based on confidential information, we cannot always explain the full contextual decision about class setting to parents or children as this would mean discussing confidential matters about other children.

If parents have a question about the class their child is in:

- They should make an appointment to see the Headteacher, who will answer any questions to the best of their ability. Parents must understand that we will not speak with them about decisions made regarding children other than their own.
- If parents are unhappy with the explanation from the headteacher, they are able to follow the school's complaints procedure.
- Parents must be aware that class setting is a professional decision and parental preferences will not be invited.

It is important to remember that any decisions made by school are in the best interests of the children and the school and to create the best learning environment for all.