



6 July 2018

Dear Parents and Carers

## Class arrangements for KS1

Despite our efforts, we have been unable to secure the necessary teaching staff in KS1 for the next academic year. Teacher recruitment is an issue across schools in the borough and not just specific to Monks Orchard Primary. We had filled teaching positions but since then some candidates have pulled out due to personal reasons.

We know consistent and continuous teaching is important for children's development and therefore we have taken the decision to make a change to the way we organise our classes.

Given our current Reception (48 children) and Year 1 (69 children) classes are quite small, following discussions with staff and the Governing Body, it has been agreed that rather than put in interim supply teaching arrangements, from September we will have a mixed-age Year 1 and Year 2 class.

KS1 Class 2018/19	Year Group	Teacher
Potter Class	Year 2	Miss Pulyk
Blake Class	Year 2	Miss Green
Kerr Class	Year 1	Mr Sonar
Cooke Class	<i>Mixed-age Year 1 and Year 2</i>	Miss Allen-James *

\* Miss Allen-James is a very experienced KS1 teacher joining us in September 2018.

Mixed-age classes are not uncommon and there are many schools that use this model. Our children are already used to working in mixed-age groups, as that is how we teach phonics (Read, Write, Inc.), so we feel mixed-age classes will work well.

Mixing different ages in the same class has many benefits. For example, older children can benefit from sharing their skills and experience with younger children and younger children benefit from having older children challenging and supporting them (like a big brother or sister). Another benefit is that, with four classes in KS1, we would be able to release all of our Year 1 and Year 2 teachers to do Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) at the same time. This will help us ensure even better consistency across KS1 and provide even more opportunities for teachers to share their ideas and resources.

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The Year 2 children in the mixed-age class will still be in Year 2. They will still cover the Year 2 curriculum, will still work with other Year 2 children, will still do the Year 2 assessments at the end of the year, and will still move to Year 3 at the same time as their peers.

The current Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 teachers are working out the groupings now. The draft class lists will be discussed and agreed by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and we will tell you about the groupings at the beginning of next week. All decisions will be based on what we believe is in the best educational interests of the children. To maintain balanced classes, we will think about the children's:

- Ability
- Maturity
- Social skills
- Friendship groups

We believe that this new arrangement is the best way of organising KS1 in the present circumstances and have based all of our decisions on what we think is best for our children's education. Change can be challenging, and we know that some of you will have questions and concerns. If you do, please speak to your child's current class teacher, in the first instance or find one of the SLT on the gate at the start or end of the school day. We will be in touch again next week to confirm the groupings.

Thank you for your continued support.



Guy Fairbairn  
Headteacher



Sony Nair  
Chair of Governors