

# Class Organisation and Transition Procedures

## Lady Joanna Thornhill (Endowed) Primary School

### Introduction

This document outlines how classes are organised at Lady Joanna Thornhill (Endowed) Primary School and how pupils are supported through transitions during their time at the school.

The school admits 60 pupils into Reception each year, making it a two-form entry school in the infant phase. From Year 3 onwards, the statutory infant class size limit of 30 pupils no longer applies, allowing the school to admit additional children. At Lady Joanna Thornhill, this means classes can increase by a few pupils in each class. Transitions are carefully planned to ensure that children continue to feel secure and make strong academic, social and emotional progress.

### Class Organisation

Class organisation aims to support both academic progress and personal development. Pupils are encouraged to develop knowledge and skills through the National Curriculum while also learning to work collaboratively, build confidence and develop positive relationships.

The school recognises the benefits of children working with different peers. Changes in class groupings allow pupils to develop new friendships, broaden their experiences and build resilience. This also prepares them for the important next step in their education from year 6-7.

### Reception Class Organisation

When children join Reception, staff consider information from parents, pre-school settings and external agencies where appropriate. Staff may visit pre-school settings to meet children before they start school.

Children are then organised into two registration classes by the end of the first term. Classes are balanced where possible, taking into account ability, gender and social dynamics. The placement of twins is discussed with parents.

### Mixing of Classes

Classes may be reorganised at key transition points. For example:

- Year R into Year 1
- Year 3 into Year 4 (as we take more children in year 3)

Classes may also be reorganised at other times if pupil numbers/dynamics change.

When creating classes, staff consider ability, gender balance, maturity, special educational or pastoral needs and friendships. Children are also asked which peers they enjoy learning and playing with.

Reorganising classes helps maintain balanced learning environments and supports pupils in developing wider friendships and adaptability.

### Increase in Intake from Year 3

From Year 3 onwards our admission number can change, as the legal limit of 30 in infant classes is removed. This allows additional pupils to join the school at the start of Key Stage 2, which is a natural transition point.

Admitting pupils at this stage helps support families moving into the area and allows new pupils to integrate alongside existing pupils as they begin the junior phase. Where additional pupils join, classes may be reorganised to ensure balanced class sizes. We are therefore, likely to mix classes at the end of Year 3.

**Responsibility for Class Organisation**

Senior leaders are responsible for organising classes each year. Decisions are based on pupil numbers, staffing and continuity of learning, with the aim of ensuring pupils are placed in classes where they can thrive. Teaching and support staff play a significant role in reorganising classes.

**Supporting Pupils During Transitions**

Children are supported through transition by meeting their new teacher, spending time in their new classroom and taking part in transition activities before the end of the summer term.

**Pupil Voice**

We value pupils' views and recognise the importance of pupil voice during transition and class organisation.

As part of the process, pupils may be asked to share which classmates they enjoy learning and playing with. Staff use this information to help understand friendships and social dynamics within the year group.

Teachers and senior leaders then work together to consider this information alongside other factors such as learning needs, gender balance, maturity and overall class dynamics when forming classes. We aim to ensure that each child is placed with at least one friend from the list they share.

Pupils also continue to spend time together as a year group during playtimes and other shared activities, so friendships across the year group can continue even if children are placed in different classes.

**Parental Involvement**

We recognise that parents and carers play an important role in supporting successful transitions and view them as partners in their child's learning and development.

There are many opportunities throughout the year for parents to share important information about their child with school staff, such as through conversations with class teachers or parent consultations.

At key transition points, including when classes may be reorganised, parents may wish to share any additional information that may support their child, for example relating to friendships or wellbeing. While it may not always be possible to accommodate every request, this information will be considered carefully. Parents are encouraged to speak with their child's class teacher or phase leader if there is anything they feel the school should be aware of.

**In-Year Admissions**

Parents may apply for a school place during the year through the In-Year Common Application Form. When a pupil joins the school, parents and the child are invited to visit and discuss arrangements for a smooth start.

Pupils are allocated to a class within their year group. Every effort is made to maintain balanced classes while considering factors such as gender, ability and individual needs. New pupils are supported through induction activities and may be allocated a buddy.

**Transition Between Year Groups**

To support smooth transitions, pupils take part in shuffle-up sessions to meet their new teacher and classroom. Some pupils may spend time learning with their new class during the summer term.

Parents are invited to view classrooms and pupils complete an "All About Me" sheet to share information with their new teacher. Staff meet to pass on important information to ensure continuity of support.

**Reception to Year 1 Transition**

The school is committed to the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum, which provides the foundation for later learning. Transition from Reception to Year 1 is planned carefully to ensure continuity between the EYFS and the National Curriculum. Further details are outlined in the EYFS policy.

**Transition from Year 6 to Year 7**

The school supports pupils moving to secondary school through meetings with parents, opportunities to visit secondary schools and participation in induction days.

Additional support is provided for vulnerable pupils through meetings with secondary schools and SENCO discussions where appropriate. Pupils also explore transition to secondary school through PSHE lessons.

# Frequently Asked Questions about Class Re-organisation

**1. Why do some schools reorganise classes?**

Classrooms are complex environments and positive relationships are key to children's success. Sometimes a cohort would benefit from being reorganised for a variety of reasons, including friendship groups, class size, gender balance, SEND needs, behaviour, family circumstances or the admission of new pupils. Schools use their knowledge of the children to create balanced classes that support both learning and wellbeing.

**2. Why are classes being reorganised at Lady Joanna Thornhill?**

At Lady Joanna Thornhill, classes may be reorganised at key transition points to ensure classes remain balanced and continue to meet the academic, social and emotional needs of all children.

From Year 3 onwards, the statutory infant class size limit of 30 pupils no longer applies, allowing us to admit additional children into the year group. This makes Year 3 a natural transition point at which classes may be reorganised to ensure balanced classes and positive learning environments for all children.

**3. What are the benefits of reorganising classes?**

Reorganising classes can help children develop wider friendship groups, build confidence and develop resilience. It provides opportunities for children to work and learn alongside a wider range of their peers and helps prepare them for future transitions, including moving to secondary school.

**4. Are there any disadvantages?**

Some children naturally feel anxious about change and may initially be worried about being in a different class. To support children through this process, we provide carefully planned transition opportunities before the start of the new academic year.

As with any class organisation, there is always the possibility that some group dynamics may not work exactly as expected. However, decisions are based on staff knowledge of the children, previous information and careful consideration of individual needs.

**5. What about my child's friendship group?**

We understand how important friendships are to children.

As part of the process, children will be asked to identify up to five classmates from across the year group they enjoy learning and playing with. Staff carefully consider this information when creating classes and aim to ensure that every child is placed with at least one friend.

Children will also continue to see their wider friendship groups during playtimes, lunchtimes and other shared activities.

**6. How are decisions about classes made?**

Class teachers, support staff and senior leaders work together to create balanced classes. They consider friendships, learning needs, gender balance, social and emotional wellbeing, SEND and pastoral needs, and overall class dynamics.

The aim is always to create classes where children can thrive both academically and socially.

**7. My child is happy in their current class. Why change it?**

We recognise that many children are happy in their current class and value their friendships. However, children benefit from learning to adapt to change in a supportive environment. Reorganising classes provides opportunities to develop new friendships, work with different peers and build confidence while remaining within the security of a familiar school community.

**8. How will children be supported through the transition?**

Children have already been working in a variety of mixed groupings throughout the summer term, allowing them to work with a wider range of their peers and helping staff make informed decisions about class organisation.

In addition, children will have opportunities to meet their new teacher, spend time in their new classroom and take part in transition activities before the end of the school year.

**9. Would classes ever be reorganised during the academic year?**

No. Any reorganisation of classes would take place at the end of an academic year, allowing children to begin the new school year with their new class and teacher.

**10. Would children be grouped according to ability?**

No. Classes are not organised solely on the basis of academic ability. When creating classes, we consider a range of factors to ensure balanced cohorts that support children's learning, wellbeing and social development.

**11. I have made close friendships with other parents in my child's class and don't want this to change.**

There is no reason why these friendships cannot continue. In fact, class reorganisation can provide opportunities to meet additional families within the year group. Parent groups, school events and wider year-group activities help maintain existing friendships while building new connections.