
Blaenbaglan Primary School - Ysgol Gynradd Blaenbaglan

Headteacher: **Mr. D.Burrows**

Deputy Headteacher: **Mrs. E. Palmer**

Maes-Ty-Canol, Baglan, PORT TALBOT. SA12 8YF.

Tel: **01639 769775** Fax: **01639 769776** e-mail: [**blaenbaglan@npt.school**](mailto:blaenbaglan@npt.school)

'Together, we believe, achieve & succeed'



Mixed Age Classes Policy

2026/27

Per Short
Signed:
Date: 26.03.26
Review Date: Spring '27



1. Introduction

Mixed-age classes are a common and effective organisational structure within primary schools in Wales. This policy outlines the principles, expectations, and approaches used at Blaenbaglan Primary School to ensure high-quality teaching and learning for all pupils, regardless of age or year group.

Our approach aligns with the **Curriculum for Wales**, the **Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018**, and Welsh Government guidance on curriculum design, progression, and inclusion.

2. Rationale for Mixed-Age Classes

Mixed-age classes may be formed for several reasons, including:

- Balancing class sizes across the school
- Ensuring appropriate staffing ratios
- Responding to fluctuating cohort numbers
- Supporting continuity and progression
- Maintaining a broad and balanced curriculum for all learners

Mixed-age classes are not a reflection of ability. All pupils have equal access to high-quality teaching, support, and opportunities.

3. Organisation of Classes

Priority Order

- Combining whole year groups together (this is only possible in small cohorts)
- Mixed age classes will be established on the pupil's age, for example if there is a cohort of 45 pupils in both Year 3 and 4, there would be a straight Year 3 class, a straight Year 4 class and a mixed class consisting of 15 of the eldest Year 3 pupils and 15 of the youngest Year 4 pupils

Other factors taken into account when establishing mixed classes will include:

- Gender balance – if there is an imbalance of boys and girls
- Holistic Educational Requirements – where, in the professional judgement of the Headteacher, a pupil requires a specific placement to support their engagement with the curriculum or their overall readiness for learning
- The placement of siblings (including twins, triplets etc.) in a mixed class will be discussed and agreed with parents/carers

While we recognise social stability is important, friendship groupings are not a primary criterion for class organisation. Our mixed age structure is designed to foster broader social networks and resilience. Staff are experienced in supporting all children to form new friendships and maintain existing ones during break times and shared year group activities.

4. Principles of Teaching and Learning

Teaching in mixed-age classes is grounded in the following principles:

4.1 Equity and Inclusion

- All pupils receive learning experiences that match their developmental stage.
- Differentiation ensures that tasks, expectations, and outcomes are appropriate for each learner.
- Pupils with ALN receive support in line with their Individual Development Plans (IDPs).

4.2 Progression-Led Planning

- Planning is based on **progression steps**, not age alone.
- Teachers identify where each learner sits within the progression continuum and plan accordingly.
- Learning experiences are designed to challenge, support, and extend all pupils.

4.3 High-Quality Teaching

- A blend of whole-class, group, and individual teaching is used.
- Activities are structured to allow for independent, collaborative, and teacher-led learning.
- Clear learning intentions and success criteria are shared with all pupils.

5. Curriculum Design

5.1 Curriculum for Wales

The school's curriculum is designed to ensure that all pupils in mixed-age classes:

- Access the **four purposes**
- Engage with the **six Areas of Learning and Experience (AoLEs)**
- Develop cross-curricular skills (literacy, numeracy, digital competence)
- Make progress along the **three progression steps** relevant to primary education

5.2 Long-Term and Medium-Term Planning

- Long-term plans ensure full curriculum coverage across the two-year cycle.
- Medium-term plans identify shared themes or contexts suitable for multiple ages.
- Teachers map learning to ensure no repetition or gaps.

5.3 Short-Term Planning

- Daily and weekly plans include differentiated tasks and outcomes.
- Assessment for learning (AfL) informs next steps for individuals and groups.
- Teachers adapt plans responsively based on pupil progress.

6. Organisation of Learning Within Classes

6.1 Grouping

Pupils may be grouped by:

- Stage of development
- Progression step
- Ability or need (flexibly and fluidly)
- Social or collaborative considerations

Grouping is **not fixed** and may change regularly at the discretion of the class teacher.

6.2 Classroom Management

- Routines are consistent and clearly communicated.
- Resources are accessible to promote independence.
- Classroom environments support multi-level learning.

6.3 Use of Support Staff

Teaching assistants may:

- Support targeted groups
- Deliver intervention programmes
- Facilitate independent learning
- Assist with assessment and observation

Support staff work under the direction of the class teacher.

7. Assessment and Progression

7.1 Assessment Approaches

Assessment is ongoing and includes:

- Observations
- Formative assessment
- Pupil voice
- Work scrutiny
- Summative assessments where appropriate

7.2 Tracking Progress

- Progress is tracked against the school's progression framework.
- Teachers identify pupils requiring additional challenge or support.
- Parents receive regular updates through reports and meetings.

8. Communication with Parents and Carers

The school will:

- Explain the rationale for mixed-age classes when they are formed
- Provide reassurance that mixed-age teaching is effective and evidence-based
- Share curriculum information and expectations
- Maintain open communication regarding pupil progress

Parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns with the class teacher or senior leadership.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

9.1 Headteacher

- Oversees class organisation
- Ensures staffing and resources meet the needs of mixed-age classes
- Monitors teaching quality and pupil progress

9.2 Class Teachers

- Plan and deliver high-quality learning for all pupils
- Ensure progression and differentiation
- Maintain accurate assessment records

9.3 Support Staff

- Assist with learning, assessment, and classroom organisation
- Support pupils with ALN or targeted needs

9.4 Governing Body

- Monitors the effectiveness of mixed-age provision
- Ensures compliance with statutory requirements

10. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every **two years** or sooner if:

- Welsh Government guidance changes
- Curriculum requirements evolve
- School organisation or cohort numbers change

Monitoring will include:

- Lesson observations
- Planning scrutiny
- Pupil progress data

- Feedback from staff, pupils, and parents

11. Conclusion

Mixed-age classes are a positive and effective part of our school structure. Through careful planning, high-quality teaching, and a strong focus on progression, Blaenbaglan Primary School ensures that all pupils thrive, achieve, and develop as ambitious, capable learners.