



## Integrated Classes Frequently Asked Questions.

### 1. Why are our classes split according to age?

We find that this is by far the clearest and simplest way to organise integrated classes. It means that the average age range within the class is approximately 8 months, which is of course significantly less than the 12 months that is common in single year group classes. This means that on average, the ability range as well as the range in the children's personal and social skills is narrower than in same year group classes. Therefore, it is simpler for teachers to deal with this smaller range. This system means that no judgement is made about any child as their class placement is done according to their age. Consequently, we have no classes that have all the high ability or low ability learners together; rather, we have a normal, natural mix of learners in each cohort.

### 2. How will two year groups be taught alongside each other in one classroom?

We have planned our curriculum with great care to take account of the fact that we have integrated classes in our school. Our Core Knowledge Domains, for example, are planned with a two year span in mind. White Rose Maths also provides facilities for the teachers to deal with the range of abilities involved. The key part of the answer to this question, however, is that teachers in all classes every day are making judgements about the level at which the learning will be pitched. This is the case regardless of whether or not the class is a single year group or an integrated one.

### 3. How do we ensure the children cope socially and emotionally with changes to their current class structures?

Our experience tells us that children thrive in integrated classes. They are very quickly able to form wider friendship groups and relate to broader groups of children. This in turn contributes to creating a classroom atmosphere in which children very quickly become a team together. Our staff are skilled in supporting children who may find the change anxiety inducing. Our approach here is very much one of saying, we will help a child who needs it, to cope with change, rather than one which aims to avoid all change, as this does not reflect the world in which we live.

### 4. What does the research say about integrated classes?

The research is positive. It says that children in integrated classes often attain more highly than those in single year classes. The main negative element highlighted by the research is that integrated classes can increase stress levels for staff if they are expected to teach two parallel programmes of learning for the year groups in their class. We do not operate the system in that way here, as we fully acknowledge this point.