

FAQ for mixed Reception/Year 1

Why are we having mixed-age classes?

Shrivenham is a 1.5 form entry school. We currently have 45 reception children (in 2 classes) and we have over 30 new reception joining the school in September.

Reception class cannot exceed 30 children per qualified teacher. As per the EYFS statutory framework: (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/670fa42a30536cb92748328f/EYFS_statutory_framework_for_group_and_school_based_providers.pdf)

3.47 Reception classes in maintained schools and academies are subject to infant class size legislation, which is limited to 30 pupils per school teacher (subject to permitted exceptions) while an ordinary teaching session is conducted. 'School teachers' do not include teaching assistants, higher level teaching assistants, or other support staff. Consequently, in an ordinary teaching session, a school must employ sufficient school teachers to enable it to teach its infant classes in groups of no more than 30 per school teacher.

Where will the classrooms be?

All Reception/Year 1 classes will be based in the Early Years corridor of the school. All classes have their toilets within the classroom and have access to outdoor learning space. Willow class and Hazel class will enter through the double gates by the Reception outdoor playground. Cherry class will enter through the single gate towards where the current Pre-School is.

How will the split of the children be decided?

The current Reception have been split into three groups. The key decision making behind this was ensuring the children remained with the friends they had made in Reception and also, so we had a mix of abilities and needs. The new Reception children have been split into three groups based on any friendship groups we are aware of. During the Stay and Play session, the staff observed the interactions of the children and got to know some personalities to check the classes were balanced.

Where will the children play at morning break and lunchtime?

Year 1 children will play on the main playground alongside the older children in the school for breaktime and lunchtime. The new Reception children will initially play in the Reception outdoor area. They will always have morning break here however, we will be encouraging play on the main playground after the first term with our new OPAL play lunchtimes (<https://outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk/opal-programme/introduction/>)

How does the teacher manage two curriculums at once?

Teachers in mixed classes use careful planning, differentiation, and grouping to ensure each child is supported. Teaching assistants often help by working with small groups or individuals. The team of teachers are highly experienced and have all been teaching 20+ years each.

What will the structure of the day and learning look like in a mixed age group class?

Phonics, group reading and Maths will be delivered to the year groups separately. This is to ensure the coverage of our whole school schemes of work. Some of our learning will take as a mixed class in the

afternoons. We have created a mixed plan curriculum for this year to ensure a structured approach for the year 1 children and a play-based approach for Reception.

What curriculum will my child follow?

The children in Reception follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum whilst the children in Year 1 follow the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum. Teachers plan using the **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)** for Reception and the **Key Stage 1 National Curriculum** for Year 1. Activities are differentiated to meet individual learning needs, ensuring both age groups are challenged appropriately.

Will my Reception child be expected to do Year 1 work?

No. Reception children will continue to follow the EYFS curriculum. Play-based learning, child-initiated activities, and structured teaching will all be used appropriately for their age and stage.

Will my Year 1 child be held back by younger Reception children?

Not at all. Year 1 children receive teaching tailored to their age and stage of development. They will continue progressing through the National Curriculum with opportunities for challenge and independence.

Will children mix together all day?

There will be times when the whole class is together, and other times when children are split into groups for more focused, age-appropriate activities. This flexible approach supports all learners.

How do you assess progress in a mixed class?

Each child is assessed against the expectations of **their year group**. Experienced teachers use observations, classwork, and formal assessments to track individual progress and plan next steps.

Are there any benefits to being in a mixed-age class?

Yes! Mixed-age settings often encourage:

- Greater independence and confidence
- Peer learning (older children model behaviour and skills)
- Stronger relationships and social skills
- More personalised teaching

Will this affect my child's transition to Year 2?

No. Year 1 children in a mixed class are still taught the full Year 1 curriculum and will be well prepared for Year 2.

Who can I talk to if I have concerns?

Please speak to your child's class teacher in the first instance.

How will I know how my child is doing?

You'll receive regular updates through:

- Parent consultations usually Nov/Feb
- Reports in July
- Informal conversations
- Learning journals (for EYFS)
- Opportunities to see work and discuss progress
- Class dojo – letters will be sent home in September to access this

All things are possible for one who believes