

Composite Classes in SBC Primary Schools

What is a composite class?

A composite class is one where children from two or more year groups are taught together.

Headteachers must meet national maximum class sizes and Scottish Borders Council's Admissions Policy. The national maximum class sizes are:

Primary 1	up to 25 children	Primary 4 – 7	up to 33 children
Primary 2 – 3	up to 30 children	Composite classes	up to 25 children

The number of teachers allocated to each school is based on the total number of children on the school roll. So, for example, if a primary school is allocated 5 teachers covering primary 1-7, some or all of its classes will be composite classes.

How are children chosen for composite classes?

Headteachers will follow the Council's "Class Composition Policy"

(http://www.scotborders.gov.uk/downloads/file/3465/class_composition_policy) when allocating children to classes. The priority order is:

1. Combining whole year groups together (usually only possible in smaller schools).
2. Dividing year groups on the basis of **Age**. For example, if a school had 40 children in P3 and 45 children in P4, the oldest 11 children from P3 would be put into a composite class with the youngest 13 children from P4 to give a P3 class of 29 children, a P3/4 composite class of 24 children and a P4 class of 32 children.

Consideration will be given to other exceptional factors as detailed in the policy.

Continuing composite classes

When a composite class involving the same year groups has to continue from one year to another (eg P3, P3/4 and P4 one year, P4, P4/5, and P5 the next year) there will be a *presumption* that the same children will remain in the composite class.

How are children taught in a composite class?

Teachers will ensure that all children are working at the right level for their age, aptitude and ability. Your child will not be "held back" or "struggle to keep up" in any class.

Will there be opportunities for children to mix with friends in other classes?

Yes. Activities will be planned which involve whole year groups, working groups within and across classes, and buddy systems when pupils at different stages come together.

When are classes formed?

Classes are almost always formed in the summer term for the coming school year, and pupils and parents will be informed as quickly as possible.

What if I am concerned about the class to which my child has been allocated?

Concerns should be shared with your headteacher who will be able to reassure you about your child's allocated class.

May I refuse to have my child in a composite class?

Generally, no. However, whilst there is no formal right to appeal against a decision on a child joining a composite class, we will always provide parents with the reasons for the establishment of the composite class and the headteacher's rationale as to how pupils were allocated to a class.

If a parent feels that a school has not adhered to the Scottish Borders Council "Class Composition Policy (February 2012)" they can raise that in the first instance with the headteacher and, if still not satisfied, they should raise their concerns with the Education and Lifelong Learning Department, Council Headquarters, Newtown St Boswells TD6 0SA or via the website: www.scotborders.gov.uk