

Stanhope Barrington CofE Primary School

Restructuring of Classes 2021

Information for Parents & Carers

What is a Learning Zone?

A Learning Zone describes a 'Classroom' in which there may be children who are from more than one year group. The Learning Zone allows us to individualise teaching and learning to meet the needs of individual children to allow them to flourish in the most appropriate learning environment.

Why are you introducing Learning Zones now?

Learning Zones are being introduced for our youngest children (Nursery, Year 1 and Year2) to allow us to respond to the need to support children returning from lockdown. We believe that if children are in the most appropriate learning environment they will flourish quicker and make accelerated progress. If a child is in an environment in which they feel safe, secure and comfortable they are in a better place mentally to learn. It is inevitable that every one of our children will have some learning gaps and we will be able to plug these gaps and deliver targeted catch up interventions more effectively if the children are happy and are mentally ready to learn with lower rates of anxiety or emotional/mental health needs.

Is this a plan to save money?

Yes, this plan will allow us to address our current deficit budget and we are not shying away from that fact. We need to put a structure in place which allows us to move forward and respond to the challenges of the Covid legacy in a financially secure and sustainable way. This plan allows us to do our very best by our children and our teaching team as it negates the need for redundancies for the foreseeable future.

Will my child be held back if they are in a mixed age Learning Zone?

It is understandable that some parents may feel that their child is being 'held back' or 'moved up' but these are terms which we are not using and are not appropriate. This plan will allow us to deliver teaching and learning based on the individual needs of each and every child. Our Learning Zones will provide challenge for the more able and support for those who need a little more adult intervention to help them to fulfil their potential.

How will the teachers be able to teach two different age groups in one class?

Until about four or five years ago, our school was made up entirely of mixed age classes and our teachers are very experienced at teaching to children's individual ability. All children will cover the national curriculum requirements for their age group. The same targets can be taught in a wide range of different ways and this is a real

strength of our teaching team that they have the skills and knowledge necessary to deliver this individualised teaching. In fact, in 2013 when Ofsted judged our school to be 'Outstanding' we had mixed age classes throughout all key stages.

How will decisions be taken about which Learning Zone to allocate a child?

No child will be allocated to a Learning Zone based solely on their academic ability. We will consider each child individually and take into account:

- Social learning group
- Need for continuous provision
- Emotional development
- Readiness to learn
- Stage of learning
- Gender and age (to ensure a balance)
- Any additional needs or exceptional circumstances

What are the benefits of the Learning Zones?

This plan has been very carefully thought through. There are a range of benefits:

- Children can become experts, ambassadors and role models for their peers and this can help to boost confidence and self-esteem and will help to develop their skills and knowledge too
- Our Learning Zones will provide a wider range of opportunities for children to work with a wider group of peers and develop their social and cooperation skills
- For some children, continuous education with the same teaching team can allow them to make accelerated progress
- The teaching team can develop a deeper understanding of individual children's needs and strengths and therefore be in a stronger position to support the child's learning
- Deeper trust and a continuous relationship with their teacher can encourage children to 'have a go' and develop resilience ready for their next transition
- This plan allows us to increase our adult to child ratios to enable more targeted adult support where it is needed
- Children will benefit from the different learning styles available within each Learning Zone

Could my child get 'stuck' in a Learning Zone?

No definitely not. Each Learning Zone will only contain children from two year groups.

How will the Superpowers work?

The Superpowers have been specifically chosen to be progressive and to build on prior skills and knowledge. Each Learning Zone will focus on one Superpower and by the time the child leaves that Learning Zone they will have acquired that specific Superpower. By the end of Year 6 our children will be 'secondary ready' and

transition will focus on how they can use all of their superpowers to help them to face life after Primary School.

We believe that education is not just about academic achievement but is about ensuring our children are given a toolkit of skills which will help them throughout their lives.