



Bassingbourn
Community Primary School



Bassingbourn Community Primary School
Brook Road, Bassingbourn, Royston SG8 5NP
Telephone: 01763 242 460
Website: www.bassingbourn.cambs.sch.uk
Email: office@bassingbourn.cambs.sch.uk

Headteacher: Amy Luu
Deputy Headteacher: James Fraser

15th May 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

Re: Mixed Year 1 and Year 2 Class for the Next Academic Year

We are writing to inform you of an important change to the class structure for the upcoming academic year. Due to a decrease in Reception pupil numbers over the last few years, we will be combining Year 1 and Year 2 into three mixed-age classes from September 2025.

This decision has not been taken lightly. The reduction in pupil numbers has had a direct impact on the school's budget, and unfortunately, it is no longer financially viable to maintain two separate classes for Years 1 and 2. After careful consideration and in consultation with the Local Authority and the senior leadership team, the Headteacher and Governing Board believe that a mixed class arrangement is the most sustainable and educationally sound way forward.

We understand that you may have questions or concerns about how this change will affect your child. We would like to invite parents and carers of pupils in these year groups (**current Reception and Year 1**), as well as prospective parents and carers of children of the 2025 Reception cohort, to a meeting at the school on **Wednesday 4th June from 3:30pm to 4:15pm**, where we will provide further information and address any queries you may have.

Our priority remains the quality of education and wellbeing of all our pupils. Mixed-age classes are not unusual and, with the right planning and teaching strategies, can offer many benefits, including personalised learning and peer mentoring.

More information on the financial landscape in education

It is important to understand that these challenges are not unique to Bassingbourn Primary School. Education unions are forecasting that over 75% of primary schools and 90% of secondary schools across the country will need to implement significant budget adjustments in the coming years. Unfortunately, these pressures are forcing us to make some difficult decisions to ensure the long-term financial stability of our school and the continued high quality of education for your children.



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For several years, we have been facing increasing financial strain driven by factors such as lower increases in government funding compared to rising costs, significant increases in operating costs, including catering and maintenance, and unfunded increases in staff pay, National Insurance, and the National Living Wage.

Although the government has provided some funding for schools to cover the National Insurance increases, it does not cover the full amount, and thus as a school we have had to take money from other areas to fill this deficit. Furthermore, Cambridgeshire schools are further affected by lower funding levels compared to many other areas across the country, including for pupils with special educational needs.

We continue to look for ways to be make further savings, and as it stands the school cannot afford to support two class years in Year 1 and Year 2 with the current number of pupils (base funding is on a per-pupil basis).

This is not a decision we have taken lightly – ultimately, we believe that schools should be receiving more funding to tackle these challenges and offer greater support for our pupils. We and the education unions are highlighting this with the government.

If you were not aware of the significant funding pressures facing schools, we strongly encourage you to contact your Member of Parliament to raise these concerns ahead of the government's upcoming Spending Review in June. Your voice can make a difference and could help ensure schools are better funded in the future.

We appreciate your understanding and continued support as we adapt to the challenges facing our school.

At the bottom of this letter, you will find a list of frequently asked questions related to mixed-age classes.

Yours sincerely,

H E Siphthorp *A. J. R. Ives*

Hayley Siphthorp and Andrew Ives
Co-chairs of Governors



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Frequently Asked Questions – Mixed Year 1/2 Class

1. Why is the school merging Year 1 and Year 2 into 3 classes?

The primary reason is a decline in pupil numbers, which has impacted school funding. The bulk of our school funding comes from pupil numbers. Combining the two-year groups helps the school remain financially sustainable while still delivering high-quality education.

2. Will my child still receive teaching appropriate to their year group?

Yes. Teachers already plan lessons that are differentiated to meet the needs of all children, and this will be no different next year. This will ensure that Year 1 and Year 2 pupils access the curriculum appropriate to their age and stage of development. To note, year groups are already mixed for the teaching of phonics and therefore this concept will not be new to the children.

3. How will the curriculum be delivered in a mixed class?

Teachers use a variety of strategies to deliver the curriculum, including small-group work, differentiated tasks, and targeted support, so that each child progresses at their own pace within the National Curriculum expectations for their year group.

4. Will my child be held back or pushed too hard in a mixed class?

No. The class teacher will carefully plan lessons to ensure all children are challenged and supported appropriately. Mixed-age settings can benefit children by allowing more flexible and personalised learning.

5. Are mixed-age classes common in primary schools?

Yes. Many schools across the UK, including some Ofsted Outstanding schools, operate mixed-age classes successfully. Ofsted recognises that effective teaching can happen in any class structure.

6. Will the change be reviewed in the future?

Yes. The school will continue to monitor pupil numbers, finances, and the effectiveness of the mixed class structure. The class structure will be under regular review.

7. Who can I speak to if I have more concerns?

We welcome your questions. You are invited to attend the parent meeting on



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Wednesday 4th June, 3:30–4:15pm, please contact the Governing Board clerk, Lisa White: lisa.white@cambridgeshire.gov.uk