

Hill House International Junior School



Class Grouping Policy

Introduction

Hill House acknowledges the diversity of its pupils in terms of background and ability and wants to ensure that they all reach their full potential. This is primarily achieved by keeping classes small to support each pupil as best as possible as they progress through the school. A variety of factors, such as social interaction, friendships, pastoral or health issues, choice of Secondary school and academic performance, also influence school groupings.

Small class groupings of 15 maximum, give all children an opportunity to maximise learning at all levels and enables teachers to meet the needs of each child. This has particular importance in later years when catering for SEN learners or high achievers who will sit very different entrance exams for their next school. This system enables individual pupils to receive adequate support or be purposefully stretched accordingly.

From Reception to Year 4 children are taught in mixed gender and mixed ability groups to grow in confidence and develop social skills without academic pressure. From Year 5, boys and girls are taught separately due to the different requirements of the 11+ and 13+ examinations. Girls take the 11+ exam at the end of Year 6 and boys take the 13+ exam at the end of Year 8. In Years 5 and 6 groups are semi-streamed and pastoral/ friendship issues still represent an important factor in the selection process. In Years 7 and 8 the system is tightened to have Low, middle and high ability groups based purely on academic grounds. By the time academic streaming is introduced pupils have become confident learners and can easily cope with the implications such a system entails.

From Small School to Upper School the majority of pupils stay in the same class for the following reasons:

- The children remain familiar with their classmates' strengths and weaknesses.
- Friends stay in groups for another year and continue offering support and care.
- Starting a new academic year with an existing nucleus of a group benefits the class dynamic in a positive way.
- Class identity, pride and a strong sense of belonging can be developed.
- Peer tutoring techniques can be used to encourage respect amongst the children and develop an ability to share knowledge and help classmates.
- Children continue to develop an eagerness to learn and strive for success through intrinsic motivation.
- Boys and girls are evenly distributed to maintain a variety of interests and needs.

From Upper School to Upper Transitus (girls) and Upper Sixth (boys) academic grouping is progressively introduced in line with pupils' ability and choice of Secondary school.

- With pupils being grouped according to their academic ability, each class is exposed to a different pace of work.
- This motivates them to work together and help each other improve.
- Children of low ability are better supported by their teachers and the SEN department if put in the same group as the pace of lessons is adapted to their ability and needs.
- Children in high ability groups are exposed to a faster pace and higher standard of work that should stretch them and encourage them to want to achieve even more.

Grouping process

Small School - Reception Year (EYFS)

- Random selection by Head of Year and Academic/ Pastoral Director based on age, gender and alphabetical name distribution.
- Movement through the year is considered as a behavioural management strategy in certain cases.
- Baseline data as well as information from orientation is also referenced to group children.

Cadogan Gardens - Lower School (Year 1)

- Fluctuating 6 - 8 classes of up to 15 children.
- Academic/ Pastoral Director, Heads of Year, SEN teachers and class teachers meet to discuss class clusters of smaller groups that should remain a nucleus of a class.
- Groupings are based on an even spread of gender, social and behavioural type personalities.
- New children are split evenly across the year group.
- It is the result of professional discussions and the input from the class teachers.
- The groups are finalised once they are an even mix of children that will all contribute to the group reaching its full potential.
- Pupils have subject specialist teachers in Music, Sports, Art, Drama and French.
- Classes are allocated to a class teacher. The Head of Year oversees the whole section.

Cadogan Gardens - Middle School (Year 2)

- Same as Year 1

Cadogan Gardens - Upper School Kappa and Delta (Year 3)

- 8 classes of up to 15 children across two sections.
- Same process as Years 1 & 2
- Pupils have subject specialist teachers in every subject.
- 8 classes are spread out evenly across two sections and each section is allocated to a Senior Tutor.

Cadogan Gardens - Upper School Beta and Gamma (Year 4)

- The existing groups from Year 3 remain the nucleus of the 8 classes.
- Same process as Year 3

Main School - Lower Senior School (Year 5 boys)

- 4/5 classes of up to 15 boys across the Section.
- Directors of Studies, Senior Tutors and SEN teachers to meet and discuss.
- Academic ranking starts according to Maths, English and Science.
- Rank the boys according to combined average for the year in Maths, English & Science.
- Start distributing the first boy and second boy into the two classes.
- Place the third /fourth boy with the first boy and the fourth/third boy into the class with the second boy. This can be reshuffled if there are clashes. It could also work as 1, 2 in one class and then a strong core group of positions 3,4,5 in the second class.
- Continue this formula for boys in position 5 and 6, 7 and 8 etc. up to position 32.
- This should result in 2/3 top tier classes with a similar class average (based on the results used to rank them).
- The same formula applies to the second tier of 2/3 classes.
- Pay attention to pace at which they are able to work independently, personality types, social confidence, behaviour concerns, any specified academic or health needs.
- Spread the children with particular needs across the classes.

- Pay careful attention to any personality clashes or sensitivity between any children and move them in clusters, if necessary, between classes of a similar ability range.
- 4 or 5 Classes with according to the academic strength and needs of the year group, 2/3 in the top banded tier and 2/3 in the standard band.
- All 4/5 classes are allocated to 1 Senior Tutor and 1 section

Main School - Lower Transitus (Year 5 girls)

- 3/4 classes of up to 12 girls across the section.
- Same process as Year 5 boys

Main School - Upper Senior School (Year 6 boys)

- 4/5 classes of up to 15 boys across the section.
- Directors of Studies, Senior Tutors and SEN teachers to meet and discuss.
- Similar nucleus of Year 5 class groupings with slight alterations if needs be.
- Academic ranking is reviewed according Maths, English and VR with reference to Science for clarification. GL data should be used to support decisions.
- Ranking the boys according to combined average in Maths, English, VR and Science.
- Pay attention to pace at which they are able to work independently, personality types, social confidence, behaviour concerns, any specified academic or health needs.
- Spread the children with particular needs across the classes.
- Pay careful attention to any personality clashes or sensitivity between any children and move them in clusters, (if necessary) between classes of a similar ability range.
- All 4/ 5 classes are allocated to 1 Senior Tutor and 1 section.

Main School - Upper Transitus (Year 6 girls)

- 3/4 classes of up to 12 girls across the section.
- Same process as Year 6 boys

Main School - Lower Sixth (Year 7)

- 3/4 classes of up to 15 children.
- Directors of Studies, Senior Tutors, Head of 6th Form to meet to discuss.
- Pupils are divided into classes according to their academic ranking in Maths, English, VR and Science. Ranking is extended to other exam subjects for border line pupils.
- Progress made since taking the GL assessments and choice of schools is also taken into consideration.
- In some very rare instances behavioural/pastoral issues or health conditions may be taken into consideration.
- This results in a high ability class, 1/2 middle ability classes and one low ability class.
- Due to the majority of pupils in the low ability group having SEN needs, this class is kept as small as possible (often 8 to 10 pupils with a maximum of 12) to ensure they get appropriate in-class support (as well as one to one support from the SEN teachers)
- Other SEN pupils who are performing academically are allocated to any of the other 2/3 groups while still receiving additional support if necessary.
- All 3/ 4 classes are allocated to 1 Senior Tutor and 1 section.
- The Head of Sixth Form oversees both Year 7 and Year 8 sections and guides parents in their choice of Secondary school.

Main School - Upper Sixth (Year 8)

- 4 classes of up to 15 children.
- Directors of Studies, Senior Tutors, Head of 6th Form meet to discuss.
- Choice of Secondary school and academic performance, especially the way pupils perform under exam conditions, are paramount at this stage. It takes priority over pastoral/ behavioural issues in most cases, with very few exceptions made.
- Pupils are divided into 3 classes according to their ranking in the end of Year 7 assessment in all Common Entrance subjects. Motivation, level of effort and progress made throughout the year are also taken into consideration for border line pupils.
- The 4th group is a mixed ability class for pupils who intend to take Dulwich/ Emmanuel/ Alleyn's/ Whitgift or any other school's own entrance exam. The teaching is tailored to these different exams with a focus on Maths, English, Science and VR/ Non VR.
- This results in 1 high ability class, 1 middle ability classes, 1 low ability class for Common Entrance/ Scholarship pupils and 1 mixed ability class for the Dulwich/ Emmanuel/ Alleyn's/ Whitgift candidates.
- Due to the majority of pupils in the low ability group having SEN needs, this class is kept as small as possible (often 8 to 10 pupils with a maximum of 12) to ensure they get appropriate in-class support as well as one to one support from the SEN teachers
- Some SEN pupils may go to any other group if they are performing well academically or intend to go to Dulwich/ Emmanuel/ Alleyn's/ Whitgift. They may still receive additional support if necessary.
- All 4 classes are allocated to 1 Senior Tutor and 1 section.
- The Head of Sixth Form oversees both Year 7 and Year 8 sections and guides parents in their choice of Secondary school.

Authorised by	Resolution of the Proprietors
Signed on behalf of the Proprietors	Edmund Townend
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