



Brooklands Close, Bury St Edmunds, IP33 3JX

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Monday 6th July 2026

Dear Parent/Carer,

Information about Classes and Year Groups for September 2026

As we begin preparing for the new school year, we are currently finalising our class lists. We would like to reassure you that this process has been carefully considered, with a great deal of thought given to creating balanced classes that support the academic, social, and emotional needs of all of our children.

Decisions are made using a range of factors, including learning needs, friendships, class dynamics, and ensuring each class has the best possible mix of pupils. This is a complex process, and we appreciate your trust in our professional judgement.

Children will meet their new teacher and spend time with their new class on our transition afternoon. This will take place on Monday 13th July. The children will spend the afternoon in their new classroom with their new teacher. At the end of the day, there will be an Open Classroom Session where you will be able to visit the new classroom and meet your child/ren's new teacher.

There will be a few staffing changes next year.

Unfortunately, Mrs Fenn will be leaving us at the end of the school year. She has a new job, at a school much closer to her home. We thank her for all she has done during her time at Westgate and wish her all very best for the future. Mrs Bates will take over as Key Stage 1 Phase Leader from September.

Both Mrs Sawyer (SENDCo) and Mrs Dalgoutte (Teacher of the Deaf) will be increasing their time from September 2026. More information will be sent out to you about this once we have finalised working days.

Mrs McGhee (Deputy Head/Early Years Lead) will be working 4 days a week and will not be working Mondays. As Mrs Eley remains on long-term absence, Mrs Piggott will continue teaching in Reception from September. We are delighted to have her as part of the team.

We welcome Mrs Vaughan to Westgate. She will be teaching Hawks as Mrs Fenning's maternity cover. We also welcome Mrs Peters who will teach in Hedgehogs alongside Mr Scott one day a week. She will also teach 2 mornings a week in Year 3 alongside Mrs Knowles.

We have made a few changes to our class structure for the new academic year, which is detailed below. As with all decisions we make, this has been done with the children's best interests at heart. We are confident that our pupils will have a positive and successful year ahead and that our plans will deliver what we at Westgate always strive to do – give the children the best education and support they need as individuals, alongside our excellent pastoral care.

Reception Classes (Year R)

Ladybirds – Mrs McGhee (1 day) and Mrs Piggott (4 days)

Butterflies – Mrs Heuer (3 days) and Mrs Lingwood (2 days)

Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2)

Year 1/2 Wagtails – Mrs Bates (3 days) and Mrs McLean (2 days)

Year 1/2 Finches – Miss Howe

Year 1/2 Robins – Mrs Gaught (3 days) and Mrs Cleaver (3 days)

Children will be taught in separate Year 1 and Year 2 classes every morning so that they can be taught Reading/Phonics, Writing and Maths within their individual year group.

Children will register in their mixed classes (see above) and then move into their morning class, where they will stay until lunchtime. In the afternoons, they will return to their mixed year group class to be taught the other curriculum subjects. These subjects are already organised into Key Stage 1 (Year 1/2) objectives, so it fits well with the use of mixed-age classes.

In the mornings, the Year 1s will be taught by Mrs Bates and Mrs McLean, and the Year 2s by Mrs Cleaver/Mrs Gaught and Miss Howe.

Lower Key Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4)

Year 3/4 Otters – Mrs East (formerly Miss Buono)

Year 3/4 Hedgehogs - Mr Scott (4 days a week) and Mrs Peters (1 day a week)

Year 3/4 Foxes – Mrs Grahm

Children will be taught in separate Year 3 and Year 4 classes every morning so that the children can be taught Reading, Writing and Maths within their individual year group.

Children will register in their mixed classes (see above) and then move into their morning class, where they will stay until lunchtime. In the afternoons, they will return to their mixed year group class to be taught the other curriculum subjects. These subjects are already organised into Lower Key Stage 2 (Year 3/4) objectives, so it fits well with the use of mixed-age classes.

In the mornings, the Year 3s will be taught by Mrs Knowles/Mrs Peters and Mrs East, and the Year 4s by Mrs Mr Scott/Mrs Peters.

Upper Key Stage 2 (Years 5 and 6)

Year 5/6 Falcons – Mrs Linstead

Year 5/6 Eagles - Miss Nichols

Year 5/6 Hawks – Mrs Vaughan

Children will be taught in separate Year 5 and Year 6 classes every morning so that the children can be taught Reading, Writing and Maths within their individual year group. There will be two Year 5 classes (taught by Mrs Linstead and Mrs Vaughan).

Year 6 (mornings only) - Mrs Dalgoutte (Teacher of the Deaf) will continue to teach English and Maths to a smaller teaching group who require targeted support. The rest of the Year 6s will be taught by Miss Nichols.

Children will register in their mixed classes (see above) and then move into their morning class, where they will stay until lunchtime. In the afternoons, all Year 5 and Year 6 children will go back to their mixed year group class to be taught the other curriculum subjects. These subjects are already organised into Upper Key Stage 2 (Year 5/6) objectives, so it fits well with the use of mixed-age classes.

Mixed age teaching has been in place and worked well for a couple of years now. For those of you who have children in Reception and have not yet had experience of your children being taught in mixed age classes, please refer to the final page of this letter for more information.

Please rest assured that these decisions have been carefully considered and all options have been reviewed before any final decisions were made. These conversations have also included our School Governors.

Although these arrangements have been led by pupil numbers and the school budget, as always, we have put the needs of the pupils at the heart of our decisions and believe these arrangements are the very best option and will give the children the opportunity to thrive.

Additional transition support will be put in place for those children we feel will benefit from additional reassurance and support. This may include ELSA checks in/sessions, additional visits to the new classroom and extra opportunities to meet the adults with whom they will be working next year. If you think that your child may benefit from this, please do speak to your child's class teacher or contact Mrs Sawyer, our SENDCo.

If you would like to discuss this further or ask any questions, please contact the School Office to make an appointment.

Kind regards,

Mrs Rhonda Kidd (Headteacher)

Mixed Age Teaching Information Sheet

What is Mixed Age Teaching?

Mixed age teaching is when two or more year groups are combined to create one class of children.

What happens when your child goes into a mixed age class?

Things that do happen!

They do make good progress, have individual attention, maintain friendships, make other friendships, play together, work together and get experience of another year group.

They all access the correct curriculum for their year group, age and stage of development, although the pathways to the same learning will be different according to the class teacher, resources and needs of the pupils in the classes.

The curriculum is taught on a two-year programme, so children never repeat any topic. This is a natural progression from the National Curriculum as objectives are already organised into Key Stage objectives, so they fit well with the use of mixed-age classes.

Things that don't happen!

They are not kept down or held back, and they definitely do not miss out. Just as children reach all their baby milestones at different rates, so too the stages of their learning journey will progress differently as they move through the school.

Ultimately, the most important factor is how they complete that learning journey by the end of two years.

What are the benefits to mixed age teaching?

There are many proven benefits to mixed age teaching, such as:

- Pupils form wider friendships.
- Pupils relate to broader groups of other children.
- There is greater flexibility of learning opportunities.

What are the teachers' responsibilities when teaching mixed age classes?

All teachers are responsible for the individual development of every child in their class. Mixed year group classes do not change this responsibility. There is already a wide range of needs within each class and year group and the teachers are already proficient at adapting the curriculum to meet pupils' individual needs across the curriculum.

In mixed year group classes, the teachers take the objectives and plan a programme of study to teach these objectives effectively across the ability range of the class. At times, pupils will work at the same tasks but at different levels of ability and at other times the pupils will do completely different work specific to their needs within that area of learning.

