



Children's Wellbeing in School

Sometimes parents find it hard to accept and understand why children do not always stay in the same classes with their best friends in school and feel that this is important to their child's wellbeing. The style of learning as children go through Y1 to Y6 is very much independent to friendships, in fact within the more formal learning environment friendships can sometimes be a significant distraction to learning.

A child's wellbeing in school is about many factors that we take into consideration. A child's wellbeing in school is not just about being with their friends or children of their parents' friends. School years are key to developing social and emotional skills, knowledge and behaviours. Many factors are taken into consideration:

- The importance of helping children to develop resilience. Supporting young people to build emotional resilience can help them to cope with and bounce back from adversity, and can ultimately help to prevent the development of mental health problems in later life.
- The importance of helping children to develop social skills and wider friendship circles. It's good for children to learn how to make new friends and find common ground with all kinds of people. It helps them develop their all-important social skills, confidence, and to be more open-minded as they interact with different kinds of people. Making new friends is a good thing.
- Helping your child to develop and understand a tolerance of different children/people is a very important life skill.
- Developing more self-confidence through making and exploring new friendships.
- Motivational (e.g. being able to bounce back from failure in order to work towards goals)
- Children learn to work and grow independently.
- Ensuring their current learning needs are met and with whom these needs are best matched.
- The skills of the teacher concerned and best match to pupils' needs.
- Developing children's ability to manage and understand the emotions of mood, anxiety, fear and fun.

It is only natural that parents want to protect their children. One of the best forms of protection is to help your child build the life skill of resilience and move forward when things don't always go their way and events happen that upset them. Help them to see the opportunities of making new and wider friendships.

We ask you as parents to support your child's movement to a new class and social circle in a positive way, encouraging them to see the opportunities and excitement of a new adventure. The school knows how your child works with their peers and knows if they need a different dynamic or work better with a different teacher.

Many parents have discovered that close friendships in class can hinder their child's learning opportunities and concentration, through distraction and therefore not focusing on the learning and expectations of the class teacher. Friendships are great during unstructured times such as playtime and out of school.

The guidance for safe teaching with Covid-19 expects traditional front-facing layouts in classrooms. Children will be actively discouraged from social interactions and facing each other for conversations. Friendships and social interactions will only happen during playtimes and lunch break.

Although following government guidance we will have class bubbles, we are also going to have social bubbles based around year groups or phases to ensure the children have wider opportunities for socialising with their friends. This is something we are very aware that children have missed during the past 5 months.