



Guidance for Deciding on Class Placements for Twins and Multiples



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Purpose and principles

There is no single class-placement approach that is right for every set of twins or multiples. Norbury Manor Primary School will consider each case on its own merits and will work in partnership with parents and carers. Where appropriate, the views of the children will also be taken into account.

The focus is not simply on whether children should be placed together or separately, but on how best to support each child's wellbeing, learning, independence, relationships and individual development.

Factors to consider

- The relationship between the children
- The individual needs of each child
- The views and preferences of each child, where appropriate
- Previous experience of separation
- Pre-school or early years experience
- Friendships and social relationships beyond the twin or multiple relationship

If twins or multiples are placed in the same class

- Use different groups, partners and activities so that each child can build friendships and work independently.
- Discuss each child's progress, strengths and needs as an individual, rather than in comparison with their sibling.
- Where helpful, provide opportunities for parents and carers to discuss each child separately.
- Encourage the children to celebrate one another's successes without creating unnecessary competition.
- Review the placement regularly to make sure it continues to meet the needs of both or all children.

If twins or multiples are placed in separate classes

- Continue to provide appropriate opportunities for the children to work, play or take part in activities together.
- Plan suitable transition support, particularly if school will be the children's first significant experience of separation.
- Monitor wellbeing, friendships, confidence and progress.
- Review the placement regularly to make sure separation continues to be appropriate.

General best practice

- Address each child by name and speak to them as individuals.
- Expect and encourage each child to speak for themselves where appropriate.
- Recognise each child's individual personality, strengths, interests and needs.
- Ensure staff can distinguish between the children and agree helpful strategies with parents or carers if needed.
- Avoid comparing one child's achievement, behaviour or progress with the other.
- Avoid routinely referring to the children collectively as "the twins" or "the multiples".

Considering the relationship between twins or multiples

Relationships between twins and multiples can change over time. Class-placement decisions should therefore be reviewed rather than treated as permanent. The descriptions below can support professional discussion; children may not fit neatly into one category.

Relationship pattern	Possible characteristics	Considerations for class placement
Highly individual	May prefer separate friendships or activities; may strongly assert an individual identity; competition or conflict may sometimes be evident.	Separate classes may be appropriate in some cases. If separated, retain suitable opportunities to work or socialise together where beneficial.
Comfortably independent	Enjoy being together but can also function confidently as individuals; may have shared and separate interests and friendships.	May be comfortable either together or apart. Consider the wider needs of each child and review over time.
Closely connected	May strongly prefer to be together; may rely on one another for reassurance; may have had little previous experience of separation.	Separation may need careful transition planning. Gradual opportunities to develop independence can be considered without assuming that full separation is necessary.

Questions for discussion

- How do the children respond when one is upset, praised or corrected?
- Do they support and encourage one another?
- Is there evidence of over-reliance, dominance or unhealthy competition?
- Do they have opportunities to develop their own friendships and interests?
- How do they respond when they are apart?
- Have they previously experienced regular separation?
- Does either child's learning, communication, wellbeing or independence appear to be affected by the current arrangement?
- What are the views of the parents or carers?
- What does each child say they would prefer, where they are able to express a view?

Together or Apart - Review Checklist

This checklist can be used when considering placement at the start of school or when reviewing arrangements during the school year. It is intended to support discussion and professional judgement rather than produce a score.

Observation	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
If one child is ill or upset, are the other child(ren) affected?				
If one child is corrected, do the other child(ren) react or become affected?				
Do the children combine forces to be helpful?				
Do they combine to be creative?				
Do they combine in ways that can make behaviour more difficult to manage?				
Does one child frequently check what the other child(ren) are doing or receiving?				
Do they frequently compare themselves in sport or physical activities?				
Do they compare themselves in appearance?				
Do they compare popularity or peer approval?				
Do they compare adult approval?				
Is competition between them affecting wellbeing, learning or relationships?				

Individual needs

Area	Child A	Child B	Child C	Child D
Speech and language				
Writing				
Reading				
Number skills				
Fine motor skills				
Gross motor skills				
Other				

Children's views

Where appropriate, record what each child has said about class placement. Children's views should be considered alongside their age, development, individual needs and the professional judgement of the school.

Preference	Child A	Child B	Child C	Child D
To be in the same class				
To be in separate classes				
No strong preference				
Not yet able / not asked				

Decision-making record

Reasons that may support placement together

Reasons that may support separate placement

Parent/carer views

Children's views

School observations and professional considerations

Agreed placement and review date