



MILLFIELD

Preparatory School

MILLFIELD PREPARATORY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The Year Structure

Millfield Preparatory School is an independent preparatory school for boys and girls aged 2 to 13, that is Nursery to Year Eight inclusive. It is one of the two **Millfield Schools**, which also includes **Millfield Senior School**, Years 9-13 (year 3 to upper 6th).

Millfield Prep School year	NC year	Key Stage	Pupils' Age
N			2-3
K		F	3-4
R		F	4-5
1	1	1	5-6
2	2	1	6-7
3	3	2	7-8
4	4	2	8-9
5	5	2	9-10
6	6	2	10-11
7	7	3	11-12
8	8	3	12-13

Differentiation

'Differentiation' is the collective term used to describe the school's methods of meeting the varied educational needs of its pupils. It includes not only **streaming** and **setting** but also in-class differentiation methods, e.g. graded worksheets, extension work for able pupils etc. (In-class methods are referred to in the section on **Good Teaching Practice**).

Allocation of pupils on entry to groups is essentially determined by their ability in English, which is assessed by the use of **standardized tests** (see the section on **Standardized Tests** for details). **Bursary Examination results** are also referred to, as are reports from **previous schools** and reports by **educational psychologists**. An important factor in deciding on the appropriate group for a pupil is the extent to which **Extra English** help will be needed, and this is carefully assessed by the Head of the **Learning Development Centre (LDC)** through tests and interviews. (More detailed information on the role of the LDC in the school's admission process may be found in the **LDC Handbook**.) Another factor taken into account is the **foreign language ability** of the pupil.

The placement of a pupil is reviewed in the early part of the Autumn Term and thereafter at intervals to ensure that the group or set is the right one. The review process may include consideration of how well the pupil is integrated socially in his or her group, as well as strictly academic criteria.

According to their ability, pupils are placed in sets for Maths in all years and for languages in Years 6, 7 and 8. Some groups take two languages from a choice of **French, Spanish and Latin**; other groups take one language from the same range of choices. Pupils in those groups timetabled for intensive Extra English do not study a foreign language. In groups where less intensive Extra English provision is required, the whole group may follow a reduced foreign language timetable to enable them to attend two lessons of Extra English a week, or individual pupils may be extracted from foreign language lessons.

In the current academic year (2011-12) there are 27 groups in all, eight Year 8 groups, seven Year 7 groups, four Year 6 groups, three Year 5 groups, three Year 4 groups, and two Year 3 groups. The number of groups in a Year is reviewed annually. The maintenance of **small classes** is a major consideration in determining the number of groups.

Small Classes

Millfield Preparatory School is committed to **small classes** for all its pupils. The recommended group size is 16 pupils. Groups for pupils with learning difficulties who need intensive LDC provision may be significantly smaller, and such groups are divided into even smaller units for Extra English lessons.

While it is obvious that good teaching is the essential factor in promoting effective learning, it is also self-evident that small classes create learning conditions, which maximize learning opportunities for all pupils.

For example, more precise **differentiation** is clearly facilitated by small classes, and this fosters **systematic progression** because pupils can focus on clearly defined common tasks; the need for complex classroom management, a feature of large classes, is avoided, freeing time for teaching which **engages, challenges and motivates** all pupils, instead of routine matters; pupils receive more **individual attention** in various ways - the teacher is able to involve all pupils in **oral work** using a variety of questioning modes, thus encouraging **self-expression**, building **self-confidence**, and promoting **thinking skills** which go beyond mere recall of information; there are increased opportunities for reflection and elaboration of ideas in the context of orderly **discussion work** in which all pupils can participate and through which pupils learn to listen to each other and respect alternative points of view; the teacher can devote more time to **formative assessment** through **observation** of work in progress and to detailed **marking** of books which provides essential evaluative **feedback** to all pupils.

Other advantages of small classes, apart from the academic ones outlined above, include provision for highly sensitive and individualized **pastoral care** and close **communication with parents**, thus promoting one of the central aims of the school - **the achievement of individual potential within a caring environment.**