

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
Multi–Age Classes

Question	Answer
What is the difference between a composite class and a multi age classes?	A multi-age class is one class comprised of two or more grade levels. Unlike the old idea of a <i>composite class</i> , where two or more grade levels were taught different grade specific content within the same class, a multi-age class is more holistic and learning is organised around big ideas and concepts.
What is a multi-age class?	A multi-age class is one class comprised of two or more grade levels. A multi-age class is more holistic and learning is organised around big ideas and concepts. It could be said that every class is a multi-age class; catering for a wide range of ages, learning styles and learning needs.
Why were Years 5 and 6 selected to be the multi-age class?	The Year 5 and Year 6 classes are the two consecutive year groups with the smallest numbers in 2017.
Why is a multi-age class necessary?	Staffing from Catholic Education is calculated on average class size across the school. There has been a decline in student enrolment numbers in 2015 and 2016 which has resulted in a reduction to the staffing allocated to St Bede’s by Catholic Education for 2017. Enrolments have reduced in a number of CE schools and equity needed to be maintained across all CE schools.
What is the size of the class?	At the time of writing, the Year 5/6 class enrolment for 2017 is 32. No more enrolments will be accepted for this class for 2017.
Who will be the teacher of the multi-age class?	Mrs Katie Horsburgh
Do other local Catholic Education schools have multi-age classes?	Yes. The Catholic Education primary schools in the inner south all have at least one multi-age class. St Benedict’s, Narrabundah Sts Peter and Paul, Garran Holy Trinity, Curtin Sacred Heart, Pearce.
What has the school done to prepare for multi-age classes? What has the school done to prepare teachers for multi-age classes?	All leadership and teaching staff have been involved in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of an integrated, connected curriculum • The development and enhancement of teacher skills, understandings and practice • A focus on learning through an inquiry approach • Tracking individual student learning to address individual student needs • Enhancing the classroom environment to be more engaging and flexible to inquiry learning • Collaboration on curriculum, planning for learning and teaching strategies • Providing additional support to larger classes in key learning time • Working across grades in programs such as ‘Swap Time’, ‘Lunch Clubs’ and ‘Challenge Days’ • Improving communication and opportunities to connect parent, students and teachers.
Will Year 6 students still have their student leadership responsibilities and privileges?	Yes. Year 6 student will continue to hold student leadership roles and associated responsibilities. They will have leadership shirts and celebrate graduation and other significant end of primary school events. Year 5 will support the Year 6 students in their leadership teams.
What might the learning environment look like?	The learning space will look the same as a current classroom space. Year 5/6 will be one class in one classroom with the option to utilise the spare classroom as required for lessons and activities.

Will there be grade specific opportunities for class bonding?	Yes, that is the hope. Opportunities will be explored during 2017.
Will the buddy system for year 5 continue?	Yes.
Will the curriculum be covered for each grade? How will the teacher teach two different grades?	The curriculum is organised on a two year cycle through an integrated curriculum. The content for all grades is mapped against 'curriculum organisers' and taught through an inquiry model where learning is connected to key concepts. In this way learning can be targeted to the needs of each student, with the teacher focussing on progressing student's skills, understandings and knowledge from where they are to their next learning milestone.
Will my child repeat curriculum content? Will there be gaps in the curriculum for my child?	No. The curriculum is mapped and will be covered in a two year cycle.
How will Mathematics be taught?	Mathematics is taught sequentially in line with the development of student understandings and skills. This will mean that some differentiation of grade content will be necessary in Mathematics.
How will multi-age work in challenging my child in their learning? How will student's individual needs be addressed?	Multi-age learning uses in an inquiry model of teaching. In this model of learning can be targeted to the needs of each student, with the teacher focussing on progressing student's skills, understandings and knowledge from where they are to their next learning milestone.
Will there be additional support and resources for the multi-age class?	Yes. The multi-age class will be a high priority when allocating support staffing, particularly to be used in the key areas of English and Mathematics.
Will Year 6 students be prepared for high school?	Yes. Students will be prepared through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • well-developed skills, understandings and knowledge in the key learning areas of English and Mathematics; • inquiry learning – asking questions and seeking connected and researched answers; • building independence as learners; • engaging, challenging and open assessment tasks; • the school leadership program and • the development of organisational skills.
Will younger students feel intimidated?	St Bede's works hard to have a culture of respect and cooperation and children work and play together regularly across the grades.
Is there further reading I can access to better understand multi-age classes?	Yes. Two documents will be emailed to parents and will also be found on the school website.