



Creating a Composite Class

June 2026

Falkirk Council Guidance

The Scottish Government acknowledges composite classes as a method of class organisation available to Head Teachers. Nationally, there is an agreement that composite class size should not exceed 25 pupils.

To create a composite class, we follow Falkirk Council guidance (Service Circular 08):

3. Forming a Composite Class

3.1 The formation of a composite class is at the discretion of the head teacher in consultation with the class teacher. The allocation of pupils to a composite class should be for sound educational reasons based on the headteacher's professional knowledge of the school and individual pupils.

Criteria which should be considered are: age; ability; physical, emotional and psychological development; previous learning record; sibling rivalry; peer group relationships; maintenance of a reasonable balance between genders; and educational history of the class.

A composite class cannot be over 25 pupils.

P1	P2 and P3	P4 – P7
25	30	33

Questions

Why is there a need for the composite classes?

- Schools are resourced annually on the total number of P1-P7 students, not on the number of pupils in each individual stage.
- The school was allocated 12 classes for next session by the Forward Planning Team based on current confirmed pupil numbers. In session 25-26 we had 11 classes and the planning team have increased this to 12 for 26-27. Therefore, there was a need to create a composite P4/5 and a composite P6/7 this year.

Will they be in a composite class through their school time until they go to high school now?

- Pupil numbers vary year to year due to various factors including migration in and out of the catchment area, placing request applications from non catchment pupils, the new P1 pupil intake and P7 pupils who leave to transition to Secondary school.
- A decision on the number of classes required by any school, and therefore the class structure, will be made during the annual class configuration exercise which is undertaken by **Children Services Forward Planning** team in May/June.
- Every session there could be a change of classes or new composite classes formed depending on the school roll. Equally there is a chance that a class can continue to the next year as a composite or straight class.



Research

‘New research shows that many school pupils who study in composite classes perform better than those in single year cohorts.

The study finds evidence that, for early years pupils, the gains created by composite classes are roughly equivalent to the attainment gap between the average pupil and a pupil in one of the 20% most deprived data zones in Scotland.

Composite classes – where children from different year groups are taught together – are widespread in Scotland in both urban and rural areas, with one in five primary school pupils in Scotland attending a composite class. These multi-grade classes are also common in the US and France.’

[New research shows composite classes can boost pupil attainment | University of Strathclyde](#)



This session

- We have two composite classes: P4/5 split and P6/7 split.
- In Carron we do not work solely as classes – we also work within stage, level and department.
- Throughout the school year the children mix with a broad range of children in their year group and level, to meet learners needs.
- Friendships are always fluid in a school, **our role, as a school, is to develop social skills.**
- Friendships can be developed and sustained out with school also.
- By using age as the initial criterion, the age gap within the composite class is far smaller.



Differentiation

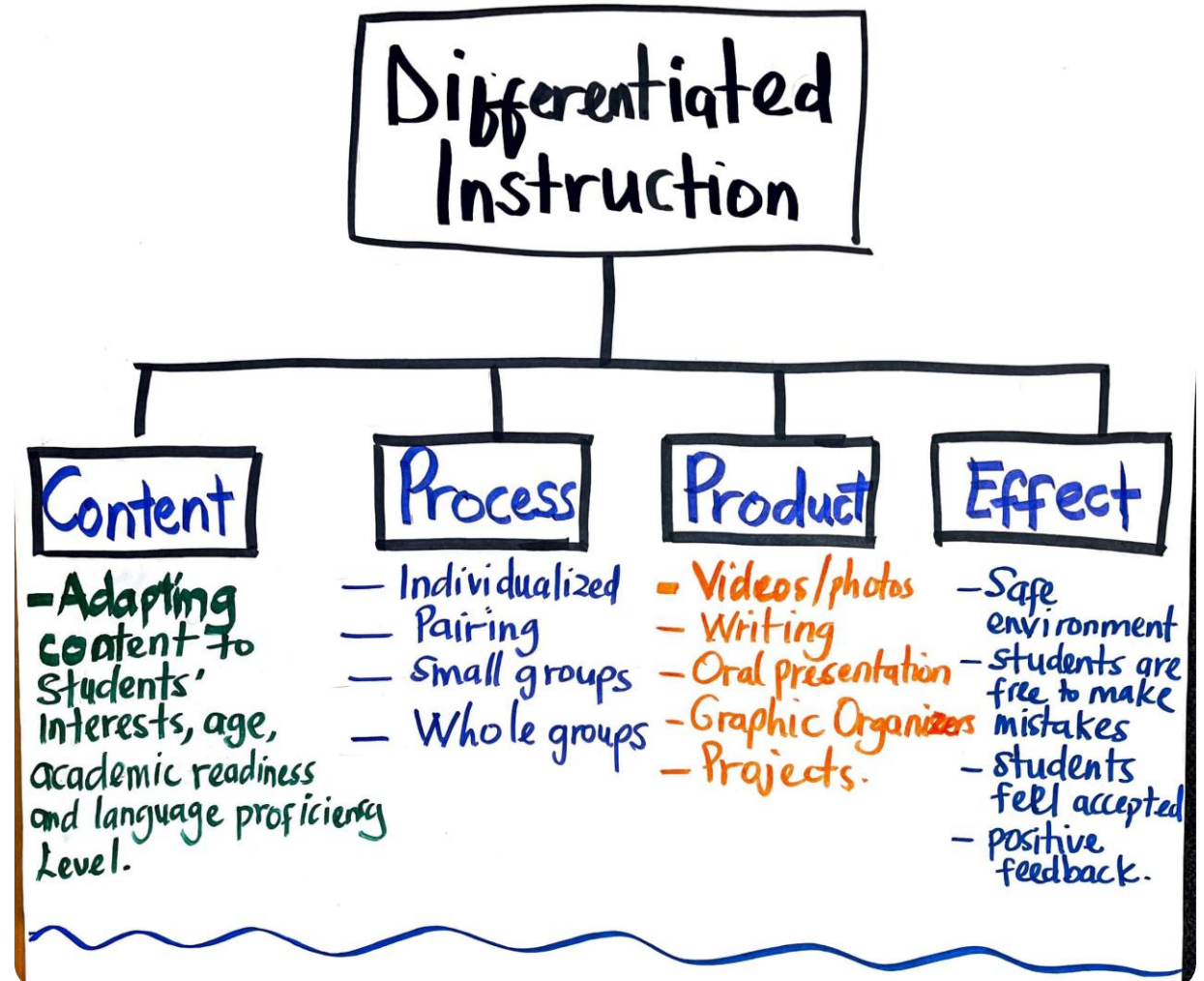
All classes are composites as children learn as individuals. A P7 class can have early to third ability levels.

What is differentiation?

Is a **skill** unique to teaching. It is planned by the class teacher to meet all learners needs depending on where there are in an area of learning, based on judgements, knowledge of the curriculum, how children learn and assessment of progress.

How?

- By task – level of challenge and expectations
- Questioning techniques
- Feedback – teacher, self, and peer assessment
- Peer support
- Cross stage or level working
- Targeted support
- Universal support
- Prompts and visual aids



Unique events...

Throughout the school year there will be events unique to the stage, this will be managed depending on the event e.g. Nativity, IDL projects, Transition programmes, sports day, school trips, parties and discos etc.

