

Setting Policy



St John's College, Cardiff

SETTING POLICY

This policy applies to all sections of the School:

Sixth Form, Senior School, Junior School,
Infant School & Nursery.

Version: September 2025

Rationale

The academic organisation of St John's College reflects the needs of all pupils to fulfil their educational potential. The academic, pastoral and co-curricular provision overlap with each other to ensure holistic and individual care for all pupils.

Since many of our pupils are in the top half of the national ability range, it benefits the pupils to be taught most subjects in mixed ability classes in Key Stage 2 and 3.

Differentiation is embedded within lesson plans to enable pupils of all abilities to flourish.

Setting in Mathematics is introduced in R9 and in the Sciences in R14. Setting in these subjects benefits the academically weak by providing practice and support, especially in reinforcing of skills; the academically stronger pupils also benefit by having increasing breadth and scope for independent research and exploration.

Nursery & Infants

In Infants, pupils are taught in one mixed ability form group. Nursery may have a mix of R4 and R3 pupils; the balance of which is dependent on admission numbers

Junior Section

Pupils are in mixed ability form groups (one form in R8 and R9, R10 and two forms R11). A balance of girls and boys in each class is considered, and form groups are revisited and changes are made when there are two forms in a year group each academic year.

All subjects are taught in the form groups up to and including R11 (with the exception of Mathematics which is set from R9. In R8, the groups are more fluid according to pupil need and topic).

Senior Section

Between 20 and 30 new pupils join the School in the senior section each year. Pupils are sorted into three form groups to achieve a balance of gender, academic, musical and sporting ability and friendship groups.

From R12 to R14, all subjects are taught in these groups, with the exception of setting in English and Mathematics in R13 and the Sciences in R14. Setting is based on Baseline Assessment data, internal assessment data, professional judgement, where available.

In Mathematics, R12 pupils are initially taught in their form groups but are grouped, if necessary, during the Lent term. There is then some movement as we move into R13 to accommodate the needs of the pupils. In R14, pupils are set based on expected tier of entry for GCSE, with the expectation that all pupils in Higher groups will sit their GCSE

Mathematics and GCSE Numeracy examinations at the end of R15. Parents are contacted via letter when plans have been made.

In R15, setting continues in English. For Science, pupils are set in R14, however, all pupils study the common Science syllabus in the first year. The results of the R14 internal examinations are used by the Science department to decide which pupils who will be invited to sit the Separate Science qualification. Sets are then reviewed at the start of R15.

All Option subjects are taught in mixed ability groups.

Setting is kept under frequent review and pupils are moved if the need arises. However, frequent moving up and down sets is not advantageous to learning and is avoided. Parents are always consulted by telephone if a set move is thought to be necessary.