

Class Placement Policy

Outlined below is the process we use at Cottesloe Primary to place students in classes for the start of the year. Also included are answers to questions that parents may have about class placement. Staff at Cottesloe Primary are committed to meeting the educational needs of all students. A great deal of thought, planning and time goes into placing children into classes each year. Every effort is made to place each child in a learning environment that is productive and successful.

RATIONALE

Cottesloe Primary School creates its class structure based on the professional judgement of staff taking into account the students' academic, social and emotional needs.

GUIDELINES

Factors influencing class structure are:

- the educational needs of the students;
- the projected number of students in each year level;
- the ratio of girls to boys;
- projected enrolments during the year based on past trends;
- the number of teachers employed at the school; and
- the constraints of resources and facilities.

Factors which are considered in the placement of students include:

- academic performance
- work habits eg. ability to work independently
- behaviour
- gender
- social network
- social maturity
- special needs
- family situations eg twins, siblings

PROCESS:

Staff meet mid fourth term to establish the classes for the following school year. Teachers of the current and past year levels make the decision about where to place those students for the following year.

Teachers ensure each new class has:

- a balance of academic ability
- gender balance
- socially balanced groups (students are not always put with best friends so new friendships can be formed).

Class placements are then approved by the principal. Parents may write to the principal to request a particular placement based on their child's educational needs. Requests in relation to choice of teacher will not be considered as a placement factor.

COMMON QUESTIONS:

Why do we ask parents to leave class placement in the hands of the teaching staff?

As professional educators we strive to make the right choices taking into account all of the information we have about all students. Parents do know their children best, however teachers have all of the academic and social information about every child and can make sound judgements to meet the needs of every student.

Why does the school have some split grade classes?

Staffing is dependent on the enrolment numbers which can vary between year levels. Therefore split grade classes are often necessary to ensure that we have appropriate sized classes.

The practice of combining grades in one class is well supported by research and our beliefs about how children learn. That is, research shows us that students are not disadvantaged by being in a split grade class. The difference in students' academic ability and maturity can vary by about 5 years across a straight grade class and this is not much different for a split grade class. The added advantage of a split grade class is that students make friendships across grades.

Can I request my child to be placed with another child or not placed with another child?

Parents may request this but need to give clear reasons why this is necessary. It is important to consider that the school knows your child's friendships and that placing them without that particular friend may be so that your child expands their friendship base. We want children to be able to work and socialise with a variety of other children and build skills to make new friends.

In addition, sometimes we may get competing requests from parents where one parent wants their child to be in a class with a friend but the friend's parents have requested that they not be in the same class.

Friendships can change throughout primary school, students leave, more students arrive and so it is important for your child to develop friendship skills rather than always have the same friends.

When will I know my child's placement?

Parents of children in kindergarten are informed late term 4 by mail.

Pre Primary to Year 6 class lists are displayed in the front of the library before school starts in term 1. This is because we often have enrolments over the holidays and may have to change our class structure.

What if my child or I am unhappy with my child's placement?

Class placements are considered final. Changing one student at the request of a parent can mean that many other changes also need to take place to continue to meet the needs of all of the other students. Parents need to understand that it is a complex balance that cannot just be solved by moving their child. Many other changes are likely to be needed in addition. Parents can talk to the principal or deputy principal about their concerns but changing a student placement would be rare. The principal or deputy and the classroom teacher will work with the parent to help students adjust to their new class.

If your child is unhappy with their placement, we as parents must speak to them positively and model how we want them to face disappointment now and in their future. Learning how to positively deal with disappointments builds resilience in children.

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