

RATIONALE

Subiaco Primary School creates its class structure based on the professional judgement of staff taking into account the students' academic, social and emotional needs. This Policy is endorsed by the School Board.

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 eg. twins, siblings

Classes are not streamed. Should there be more than one class in a particular year level, or the need to form a split grade class, the professional judgement of the Principal, Administration team and relevant teaching staff from the previous year will decide the placement of individual students.

Parent input regarding their child's educational needs will be considered. Requests in relation to choice of teacher **will not** be considered as a placement factor.

PROCESS

Based on the criteria listed above, teaching staff and Administration team meet late Term 4 to commence the process to establish classes for the following school year.

Administration and teaching staff confer and also use student class placement software, Class Solver, to help create well balanced classes.

Changes to class structure or teacher allocation may be made up until the week before the start of the school year if we have increased or decreased enrolments over the holiday period.

COMMON QUESTIONS

Subiaco Primary staff 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 happy, productive and successful.

Below are answers to questions that parents may have about class placement.

Why does the school have some split grade classes instead of having all straight year level classes?

As staffing is dependent upon the enrolment in each grade, multi-aged or combined classes may occur. This practice is well supported by research and our beliefs about how children learn. It is also often a practical necessity with our enrolment numbers.

The class distribution will be considered on the basis of student numbers. The distribution for the class numbers may change each year according to numbers in the school and the effects of different numbers in each class or year group.

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 the information we have to hand. While it is certainly true that parents know their children the best, when a parent requests a specific placement for their child, they do not have all the relevant information. Teachers, on the other hand, have the academic and social information about all children in a particular year level.

When will I know my child's placement?

Parents of children in Kindergarten are informed of their child's placement mid Term 4, at the Parent Teacher Orientation meeting. The Pre-Primary to Year 6 class lists are displayed in front of the Library on the Friday before the start of Term 1. Class lists are also communicated via Compass at this time.

Can I request a particular teacher for my child either in writing or through discussion with my child's present teacher?

No, this is not part of the Class Placement Policy.

Can I request my child's placement with another child's in the classroom? Or, can I request my child not be placed with another particular child?

It is acknowledged by all that friendships are important. However, to ensure balanced classes, friendship groups are not a primary determining factor in class placement and this is not part of our Class Placement Policy.

While some parents make a friendship request, the decision is complex. A number of times we have received a request from one family to place particular children together, while the second family requests that the same children be placed in separate classes. The final decision on placement rests with the Principal.

Often children placed with best friends will work and play exclusively with each other, and this does not promote the social interaction we try to foster. We also find young children change best friends.

When allocating children to classes, we endeavour to foster positive social interaction across a year group, by making socially balanced classes and to help prevent non-constructive relationships.

If your child is having difficulty with a student in his/her class, please inform the teacher or one of the Assistant Principals, so problem solving can take place. This is the aspect of the school experience where students learn to function socially with all kinds of people.



Do teachers request certain student placements into their classes?

No, as teachers are not assigned to a class until after the class placement process. Teachers focus on class balance to ensure a successful year for all classes.

We really like the teacher one of our children had. Now our other child will be entering that year level. Can we assume our second child will get that teacher?

It is a coincidence if this happens as the school does not use historical records when placing children. New relationships are constructive and help us grow. All children are different and may respond well to a different teacher.

When I get my child's class placement, can I request that it be changed?

You may talk with one of the Assistant Principals or Principal about your concerns and be assured that those concerns will be shared with the teacher so your child's anxieties will be addressed. Teachers are expected to have the skills to help children adjust.

The class placements are considered final. Changes to placements are rare due to the fact they often cause a chain reaction and impact on the class balance, which in turn is unfair to many students within the group. While we feel we consider the individual child during the placement process, parents must realise their child is part of a complex equation in school placements.

What if my child is having difficulty in his/her new placement after school has started? Can we request a change then?

We will do everything we can to problem solve. Parents need to talk to the teacher, the Assistant Principals or Principal, so the child's needs can be addressed.

I have noticed that a small group of my child's friends have been together in classes for a few years in a row, but my child has been in different classes. Is favouritism going on here?

If this is happening, it would be a coincidence. Please inform one of the Assistant Principals or Principal if this is the case.

Are my concerns for my child valued and heard?

All information about children is valued and heard. Teachers want to construct the smoothest transitions possible for the students for which they care so much.

Parents can help also by being as positive and encouraging as possible to their children in this process.

If you have any more questions please feel free to contact one of the Administration staff or your child's teacher.