



# Class Placement Procedures for Students

## Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to provide all members of the school community with information regarding class placement of students, which in turn enhances clarity, transparency and consistency.

## Guiding Principles

The staff members of Kinross PS are committed to nurturing all aspects of every child to their full potential. Foundational to this is the trust that parents / carers hold that the school will do the very best for their child/ren. Only valid educational reasons will be taken into consideration by the school in decision making following any 'requests' made by parents for the following year's class placement. Parents / carers who present such reasons and translate these into 'requests' should do so on the understanding that the request will be listened to and discussed with the appropriate personnel, but not necessarily acted upon in the way requested.

Whilst the concerns of parents, based on valid educational reasons, are important, requests based solely on teacher preference will not be considered. Furthermore, no requests are guaranteed. All communication relating to class placement needs to be in writing and addressed, in the first instance, to the child's current teacher. This will be passed on to the Principal or School Leadership Team by the class teacher.

It is not to be assumed that information provided to a school in the past in relation to class placement will be considered in current discussions. Previous requests are not kept on record and need to be voiced to teachers yearly, if necessary. The teachers who form the year level / grade team, in collaboration with the Learning Support Team (and other key stakeholders, when and where appropriate), will work together to determine classes for the following year. Placement of children in classes will be made considering the following, where relevant, for both the student and the cohort:

- Class size
- Academic ability / learning needs
- Gender mix
- Peer groups
- Sibling divisions
- Behavioural needs
- Cultural considerations
- Special family circumstances
- Social or emotional needs
- Cohort dynamics
- Teachers assigned to the year level (if known)

*We believe all children are capable of, and should be given the opportunity to make new friendships in new classrooms. It also helps develop resilience in children where they learn to challenge themselves and experience real life situations where they need to use and develop skills in working with new peers and teachers. This prepares them for real life beyond primary school, including high school, university or TAFE and work life. The classroom is a place for learning and all teachers are suitably qualified to*

*cater for each child's unique needs and interests. Parents are encouraged to support the school and child in their class placement, as often the parent's anxiety can be transferred to the child.*

## Phase One

Draft lists will be developed and shared with the teachers for the following year. Any amendments will be made in consultation with the placement committee which at this stage includes specialist teachers.

The Principal, in conjunction with the school's Leadership Team, will have the final say in the placement of children in classes.

## Parent Input into the End of Year Draft Class Lists Process

When the staff is about to commence drafting class lists for the following year the Principal will notify parents in the school newsletter. Parents may write to "The Principal", outlining in detail the important and relevant information they believe should be considered in the placement of their child or children for the following year. The substance of the letter may be discussed confidentially with the class teacher making the next year class placement recommendation. The letter is to be received by the close of business (3.30pm) Friday Week 4, Term 4, which can be either handed into the administration or emailed to Kinross Primary School.

It is important for parents to know:

- This is not an opportunity for them to choose a teacher by name or gender
- This is not an opportunity for them to request their child not be placed in a **composite year level** class (split year level class).
- They are to write to "The Principal" outlining in sufficient detail the placement reasons they would like considered by staff in the drafting process.

## Composite grades

The school is funded on the number of students enrolled and student allocations are made based on the recommended class sizes. Therefore, depending on the number of enrolments for each year, it is likely there will be a number of composite (split classes)

When forming composite classes at Kinross PS, other factors are considered:

- A student's work habits; for example, the ability to work independently.
- Behaviour.
- Social maturity.
- Academic performance.
- Previous class placements.

## What are the positives about composite grades?

Research, which has been predominantly conducted in primary schools, suggests there is no discernible difference between composite and straight grade classrooms in terms of academic performance. However, benefits relating to student independence, responsibility and study habits have been highlighted. For example, younger children within a composite grade generally aspire to emulate older children in their work, and older children enjoy leadership and mentoring opportunities that lift their self-esteem. Some say composite classrooms are more flexible; allow children to work at their own pace; offer a wider range of friendship opportunities; and encourage more co-operation and tolerance. Proponents of composite classrooms adhere to the theory that children should be taught "by stages, not ages", pointing out that in life, age stratification does not exist. Many acknowledge, however, that composite grades suit some students more than others and that positive outcomes are more dependent upon quality teaching than anything else. Teaching staff will make the decisions on which students are suitable to be placed in composite classes, not parents.

## PHASE 2- Commencement of the School Year

By the commencement of the school year staff will have completed many weeks of adjustment to the draft class lists which will be made available on classroom doors, outside the administration and via the Kinross Parent Connect community two days before students return for Term 1.

### Reviewing the Class Placement of Your Child

If a parent wishes to seek an alternative class placement for their child they will need to do so in writing to "The Convener, Class Placement Panel" clearly stating their reasons for an alternative class placement and submit their letter to the administration.

The Class Placement Review Panel

- The Principal
- A Deputy Principal
- Two teaching staff members

## Class Placement Review Timeline

Parents have until the close of business (3.30pm) on the second day of Term 1, to lodge their letter with the administration which can be either handed into the administration or emailed to Kinross Primary School.

- The Class Placement Panel will meet to consider the review request and parents will be advised of the outcome in writing by the end of Week 1, Term 1.
- If the panel supports an alternative class placement the child will be moved to the new class in the morning of Monday Week 2, Term 1.

*Please note: Phone calls will not be received in relation to changing class placements*

## Special Needs

Special needs students will be allocated to classes taking into account the physical layout of the class and most suitable placement for the child. All staff involved in transition, past and present, given opportunity to share information, past strategies and future plans.

## Repeating

The DET policy and research evidence strongly supports students not being repeated or accelerated except in extreme extenuating circumstances. Decisions in regards to this will be considered by placement committee in consultation with the Principal and School Psychologist and the final decision will rest with the school Principal.

## Transition/New students

Each year in Primary school, children are faced with a new environment of buildings and classrooms, new teacher expectations, new academic challenges, and acceptance into a new peer group or school.. They are required to function independently, develop relationships with staff and peers, and to behave in ways that are appropriate for their class and school and involve conforming to rules. Therefore, it is important to identify school factors associated with children's transition to school that may influence the learning community and to implement strategies that promote rather than hinder learning.

Consideration should be given to:

- Preparation for transition
- Facilitation of access to the new environment
- Participation in the new environment.
- Peer group allowances
- Communication with past teachers and parents
- Transport of resources
- Collaboration on past programs
- Transition of IEP's etc.

## Extra Notes

The Class Placement Policy, with accompanying guidelines and procedures, shall be made available to all in the community via the school website. It shall further be referred to in the school Newsletter towards the latter part of Term 3.

**Revised 2018** *Therese Gorton*