

HAMPTON PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

STUDENT PLACEMENT POLICY

Hampton Park Primary School has a rigorous process to place students in classes for the start of each year. Staff at Hampton Park Primary School 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

Hampton Park 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
- the number of teachers employed
- available resources and facilities

Factors that are considered in the placement of students include:

- academic performance
- work habits e.g. ability to work independently
- behaviour
- gender
- social network
- social maturity
- special needs
- family situations e.g. twins, siblings
- special family considerations outlined to the Principal, prior to class placement procedures

PROCESS:

Toward the middle of Term Four, the teachers use their professional judgement to place attributes into a computer program for each child.

These attributes cover:

- academic ability
- behaviour
- language background
- gender
- birth date - early, mid or late birth date
- special needs
- relationships - three to five friends are listed, and if required, names of children who shouldn't, for a variety of reasons, be placed together the following year

After the information has been input, the program assigns the children into the suitable classes. This ensures each new class has:

- a balance of academic ability
- gender balance
- socially balanced groups (students are not always put with best friends to enable new friendships and social skills to develop)

Class placements are then approved by the Principal and Admin team. Parents may write to the Principal to request a particular placement based on their child's educational needs.

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 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 with consideration to the whole year cohort.

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 appropriately sized classes. The practice of combining grades in one class is well supported by research and our beliefs about how children learn. 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 up to five years across a straight 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 as to why this is necessary. The requests need to be made in writing to the Principal prior to the end of Week Five Term 4. It is important to consider that the school knows your child's friendships and that placing them without a particular friend may be so that your child has the opportunity to expand their friendship circle. We want children to be able to work and socialise with a variety of children and build skills to make new friends.

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. The school has common break times where existing friendships can continue.

In addition, sometimes we receive conflicting requests from parents e.g., 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.

When will I know my child's placement?

Parents of children in Kindergarten are informed in Term 4 at the orientation meeting which class their child will be in for the following year. This is because the children only attend five days per fortnight and the parents often have find child care for the other days.

Pre-Primary to Year 6 class lists are displayed on the windows of C5, (adjacent to the Admin Building) and on the school web page before school starts in Term 1, usually two school days before school recommences. Sometimes there are changes to enrolments over the holidays that may require changes to our class structure.

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

Once the process is completed class placements are final. Parents are encouraged to speak with the Principal or Deputy Principals about their concerns if they are unhappy about their child's placement. The Principal or Deputy, together with the classroom teacher will work with the parent to help students adjust to their new class.

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

Changing one student at the request of a parent can mean that many other changes need to take place to continue to meet the needs of all of the other students. Class placement requires a complex balance of factors.