

Class Formation & Teacher Allocation Policy

The following policy has been developed with reference to the DET policy *Leading and Managing the School*.

Rationale

There needs to be a clear and consistent policy in the formation and allocation of classes at Austinmer Public School so that students and teachers are treated equitably, according to their needs within the organizational structure of the school.

Class Structures

The school structure and the formation of classes at Austinmer Public School is constrained by the Department of Education and Training staffing formula. A school structure that best meets the needs of students and teachers will be designed by staff and ratified by the Principal.

The Principal has the delegated authority to determine the final make up of classes.

Student Allocation Process

Students will be allocated to classes by the school executive, with the assistance of all classroom teachers.

The following criteria are used to ensure that the classes that are formed are in the best interests of **ALL** the students. These criteria are not in order of importance.

- Friendships - students who need support from another close friend.
- Friendships - students who are too friendly with another student and are best separated so both students can concentrate on their studies.
- Behaviour problems - students who are best separated so their learning and the learning of other students is not affected.
- Language - students who need to be together to provide language support for each other.
- Learning Difficulties - students who are experiencing difficulties are spread between available classes so they can be withdrawn in small groups for specialist support.
- Special Needs - these may be social, intellectual, emotional or physical.
- Cultural Balance - each class is formed to have a range of nationalities and cultures.
- Personalities - in some special cases the personalities of both teachers and students are considered before a decision is made regarding the placement of a student.
- Gender Balance - we also like to keep a balance of boys and girls in each class.
- Consideration is given to whether a teacher and student have been together before.
- Student Leadership - in Year 6 a balance of the elected leadership is to be maintained across grade classes.

As well as the above criteria, all classes will be formed to be academically and socially balanced.

Identification of Needs:

The identification of these needs will be achieved through:

- Professional deliberations of staff who are familiar with students.
- Professional discussions with our Support Teacher Learning Assistance.
- Academic and welfare data.
- Students educational history (previous classes, special circumstances)
- Significant information that may be supplied by parents (history, social of emotional factors).

Allocation of Teachers:

The allocation of teachers to classes is determined after a consultative process that takes into consideration:

- Teacher preferences.
- Past experience, professional skills and expertise of teachers.
- Professional learning goals of staff.
- The creation of effective, balanced stage teams.
- The needs of new teachers to the school.
- The needs of graduates new to the teaching profession. Where ever possible these new graduates need to be allocated a class upon which they feel most comfortable and where they can be mentored by a more experienced colleague.

These considerations are not in priority order.

Kindergarten Classes

Children commencing their school life are grouped in comprehensive classes. Teachers of Kindergarten will undertake a series of observations during Kindergarten Orientation days. The information gained – English language proficiency, academic, personality, learning needs, social skills etc will be used to form classes that are as even as possible.

In some cases, pre-school information will also be used to ensure the most appropriate class placement.

Composite Classes

Composite or multi-aged classes are formed when numbers of children in the grade are such that two complete classes cannot be formed. Classes will be formed using the same criteria as the comprehensive classes using data from the current year's assessment. The teachers forming the classes will give consideration to the independent work habits of the children and their ability to work in a multi-aged environment. Consideration is also given to those children who have been in a composite class in the previous year.

In some cases, where a minority group is formed in a composite class, in the interest of all students in a stage group, consideration will be given to creating all composite classes within the stage.

Parent Enquiries and Privacy

Whilst any parent is entitled to know how their own child came to be placed in a particular class, the school is required to maintain the privacy of the needs of other students and is not able to outline the particular reasons as to why other students have been placed in particular classes.

Although specific parent requests can be made, due to the complexity of the placement process, these requests are not a priority when placing children in classes. The Principal will have the final decision as to the placement of a student.

Timeline

- During Term 4 information will be collected from class teachers regarding the class placement needs and recommendations for the following year.
- Due to the unpredictable nature of enrolment numbers in the Austinmer area, students will resume the school year in the classes from the previous year.
- As soon as is practicable, new classes will be formed.
- Once a child is placed in a class they will not be moved on a request from parents.

Paul Petersen
Principal