



Student Class Placement Guidelines

Background

The purpose of these Guidelines is to provide clarity and transparency around the development of classroom structures and the placement of students therein.

For the purpose of the Guidelines:

- 'Class structure/s' refer to how year groups across the school are allocated into classrooms, ultimately forming the whole school classroom structure. Class structures are not class lists, and do not name or allocate individuals.
- 'Class placements' refer to the allocation of an individual student within a class structure.

Rationale

Classes are to be structured in such a way as to best meet the needs of the students within the constraints of the resources provided for or available at Mount Claremont Primary School.

The Department of Education allocates funding based on total enrolments from Kindergarten to Year 6 students. Depending on student numbers at each level, it is often necessary to have some composite classes.

Considerations influencing class structures include:

- the projected number of students in each year level;
- projected enrolments during the year based on past trends; and
- the constraints of resources and facilities.

Recommended Class Sizes

When planning class sizes, the school must manage its class sizes within the school resources, facilities, and recommended class sizes.

Year Level	Recommended Class Size
Kindergarten	20
Pre-primary	25 (Non-purpose-built/transportable)
Kindy/Pre-primary Composite	20 (On a given day)
Years 1 -3	
<i>Straight classes</i>	24
<i>Composite classes</i>	23
Years 4-6	
<i>Straight classes</i>	32
<i>Composite classes</i>	31

Enrolment

Kindergarten

Kindergarten enrolments are subject to accommodation in an early childhood classroom. Kindergarten classes are structured in even groups. As part of the enrolment process the school contacts parents to complete a form for preference for a group/day of attendance eg Red group (Mon, Tues, Wed) or Blue Group (Wed, Thurs, Fri). Students will have a place in a kindergarten group, but it may not be the parents first preference.

Pre-primary to Year 6

Students from Pre-primary to Year 6, residing in Mount Claremont's local intake area are eligible for enrolment at the school and must be accommodated.

Class Placement Process

- The principal will establish class structure option/s for the following year based upon anticipated enrolments, historical data, and the need for flexibility, in discussion with relevant staff members and the School Board.
- The principal will advise parents of proposed class structures for the new school year as soon as is reasonably practicable, but prior to the end of the preceding school year, noting that class structures may be subject to change should unanticipated matters arise such as a change in enrolments or teaching staff.
- Parents may elect to provide written submissions with respect to student class placements, to the principal. Submissions are to be based on educational reasons and any of the Class Placement Considerations listed.
- The principal will consider parent submissions at their sole discretion, and they may not necessarily be accommodated.
- The principal will make the final decision on student placements and class structures.

Class Placement Considerations

Once an anticipated class structure is known, staff members currently teaching particular year groups will confer regarding placements for the following year. Staff will endeavour to form classes that are homogeneous with respect to academic performance, social development, behaviour and gender balance as far as is practicable.

In addition to considerations around class dynamics, gender balance and school resourcing, considerations which may influence student placement are:

- a student's development
- specific educational needs of the student (such as educational needs, disability, learning difficulties or disorders, English as Additional Language/Dialect)
- multiple siblings (twins)
- the need to separate some students.
- a student's ability to work independently.
- class placements in previous years
- school psychologist's recommendations
- 'Friendship lists' will not be considered.

Publication of Class Lists

- Final class lists will be published on the first School Development Day of term 1 on Connect/Compass and displayed in the school's undercover area.
- Once published, any changes to class placements will only occur in extenuating circumstances at the sole discretion of the principal.
- Fluctuations in student enrolments may result in the re-structuring of classes.

Composite Classes

Composite classes have existed in WA schools since schools were established. Schools aim to deliver a high-quality education whilst making efficient use of resources. A student-centred funding model, recommended class sizes and the needs of the student cohort guide the formation of composite classes. To support these objectives, schools must put in place a class organisational structure which may include composite classes from time to time.

What is a composite class?

Composite classes include students from two or more-year levels are grouped together. They can be found in schools of all sizes. These are also known as 'split' classes. In smaller schools, composites are common. Where possible our school will try to have a minimum of 6 pupils at a year level within a composite class.

Why does the school have composite classes?

Schools are staffed based on enrolment numbers. Composite classes are usually formed to better meet the needs of the student cohort and because of the uneven pattern of enrolments at the school.

Composite classes assist schools by:

- Providing more options for placing students and teachers.
- Providing flexibility in class structures to cater for needs of individual children and identified groups.
- Enabling balanced class sizes and factors such as gender, ability ranges, maturity and social considerations across classes may be considered.

Will my child have a different learning experience in a composite class?

No. Teachers have always been expected to organise the teaching and learning program to meet the needs of individuals who have a range of ability levels within a class (straight or composite) class.

If my child is placed in a composite class will this continue throughout their primary school education?

A child placed in any class will not necessarily progress through school with the same group of students. Class organisation is likely to change from year to year. This can result from a change in student numbers, or from the maximum class sizes that can be formed at different year levels.

If my child is placed in a composite class will there be opportunities for my child to continue to work and socialise with their friends?

Yes. Students will continue to meet and interact with classmates at social times during the school day or during class times through teaching arrangements. There may be opportunities for students to work together on projects, camps, choir, sport and class events.

Can I refuse to have my child taught in a composite class?

No. The management of class organisation in schools is the responsibility of the principal. Teachers will consult regularly with parents regarding their child's progress. Where there are specific concerns about a student's learning or progress, teachers will communicate with individual parents on a more frequent basis.

How do teachers manage and teach different years levels?

Year levels indicate the length of time spent at school and not the knowledge, skills and experience of students in a year level. Classes/groups of students are made up of individuals operating at different rates and different levels. All teachers are very much aware of each student as an individual. They focus on what each student knows and needs to know. They use strategies such as modelling, explicit teaching, cooperative learning, peer tutoring, ability groups and one to one instruction.

What are some of the benefits of a composite class?

Composite classes provide opportunities for students to:

- Work together and learn from each other.
- Develop modelling and leadership skills.
- Work at their own rate, experience success and acknowledge the success of others.
- Accept, value and care for others as individuals.
- Foster a 'sense of community' as they share the responsibility of learning.

Composite classes provide opportunities for students to learn from each other by:

- Modelling appropriate behaviour, cooperation, sharing, understanding and tolerance.
- Sharing knowledge of classroom routines, rules, and organisation.
- Verbalising the learning process, sharing strategies and different ways to use equipment.
- Sharing enthusiasm and enjoyment

When students work with older/younger students, understandings are clarified and developed through sharing, explaining, and exploring with others.

These experiences enable students:

- To develop skills in cooperation, communication, and leadership
- To build self-esteem
- To accept and value differences in each other.

Composite classes provide an ideal setting for the teachers and the classroom program to:

- Challenge the range of students across the levels using open-ended tasks, high-level questioning, and development of their creative and critical thinking skills.
- Involve students in planning a program that reflects their interests and experiences.
- Work in a variety of ways, including whole class, small group, and individuals.

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- Develop independence to work cooperatively and take responsibility for their learning.