
SHELL COVE PUBLIC SCHOOL

Class Placement Policy

RATIONALE

Classroom teachers and the leadership team work together to determine class placements based on social, emotional and academic needs of students to ensure classes are balanced and will provide optimal learning and teaching for all.

Although class placements can be a sensitive issue, the interests of all children are paramount to the decisions made by the school.

PROCESS

The school leadership team and teaching staff establish class structures for the following year based upon anticipated enrolments. There is a need to acknowledge that the determination of classes, prior to confirmation of enrolments at the commencement of the school year, is not always reliable as student numbers may change. If enrolments change, then the class structure may change.

Factors staff take into consideration when allocating students to classes include the following:

- projected number of students in each year level and past trends
- gender ratio
- spread of students with respect to academic performance, social development and classroom behaviour
- the best educational needs of the student
- special circumstances such as twins or individual family members
- classroom observations

Forming composite/multi-age classes:

- independent work habits
- student maturity and behaviour
- social development
- previous class placements
- special needs such as twins and family situations
- Learning Support Team recommendations

What is the process for placing students into classes?

Based on the criteria listed above, teaching staff and the leadership team meet mid-Term 4 to establish classes for the following school year. Teachers of the current year level meet with colleagues to create the class lists (i.e. Year 2 teachers decide Year 3 placements etc.) for the following school year.

Proposed class lists are submitted to the Principal and leadership team for final approval.

It is acknowledged by all, that friendships are important. However, to ensure balanced classes as outlined above, friendship groups are not a primary determining factor in class placement. More information regarding this is available within this policy.

PARENT REQUESTS

Parents and carers may provide the school with specific information about their child's learning or social needs that they believe the school may not be aware of. **Such information would not include a request for a particular teacher.** The information should be provided in writing (letter or email) to the Principal by the end of Week 5, Term 4.

This information will be referenced, along with other available information, during the class placement process. Please see the below information.

- Parents are able to make a class placement request based on educational needs.
- Parents need to send a written submission with their reasons, addressed to "The Principal" and marked "Confidential" by the above set date.
- All written parent requests that arrive by the due date will be considered based on educational merits and in relation to the class structure process outlined above. **Any late submissions will not be considered.**
- The school cannot guarantee that parent requests will be met.

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. While it is certainly true parents know their children, when a parent requests a specific placement for their child, they may not have all of the relevant information.

Teachers, on the other hand, have the academic and social information about **all** children in a particular year level.

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. All teachers at Shell Cove Public School are caring and committed educators who strive to ensure that all students are provided with a high quality education.

Whilst we appreciate that you may wish your child be placed in a class with a particular teacher, we are generally unable to accommodate these requests. Our school's leadership team, which includes classroom teachers, leaders from each year level, the Assistant Principal and Principal, has an in-depth understanding of each teacher's strengths. We will always endeavour to place our students with teachers who best suit individual needs. We do not re-allocate students to different classes during the school year, unless exceptional circumstances arise. Parents will be advised of the situation if and when this occurs.

Can I request my child is placed in the same class as another child? Or, can I request my child not be placed with another particular child?

We recognise the importance of fostering and maintaining friendship groups. We also understand that it is equally important for students to mix and learn with peers who have different interests. When allocating children to classes, we endeavour to foster positive social interactions across a year group, by making socially balanced classes and to help prevent non-constructive relationships.

Occasionally, we receive a request from one family to place particular children together, while the second family requests the same children be placed in separate classes. The final decision on placement rests with the classroom teacher, Assistant Principal and Principal.

If your child is having difficulty with a student in his/her class, please inform the classroom teacher, Assistant Principal or the Principal, so that the concern can be investigated. This is an aspect of the 'school experience' where students learn to function socially with all kinds of people.

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

Class placements are considered final. Changes to placements are rare due to the fact that they often cause a chain reaction and impact on the class balance. While we consider the individual child during the placement process, parents must realise their child is part of a complex equation.

Please discuss any concerns with the Assistant Principal or Principal and be assured that those concerns will be shared with the teacher as they have the skills to help children adjust.

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

Parents need to talk to the classroom teacher in the first instance. They may then speak with the Assistant Principal or Principal, so the child's needs can be addressed and the issue resolved. We acknowledge that the start of the academic year can be a challenging time for students. We ask that parents give their child and the classroom teacher at least five weeks to settle into a new class before any requests are made regarding a change. Teachers and students need to have a sufficient period of time to learn about each other, develop relationships and establish routines.

Parents play a significant role 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 your child's classroom teacher, the Assistant Principal or the Principal.

Sailing the Sea of Excellence

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