

ASHBURY PUBLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL

Class formation policy

RATIONALE

The process of forming classes to maximise the learning and development opportunities of children is critical to the success of a school. This process is often complex and involves consideration of a variety of factors that should draw on the knowledge of students, teachers and parents. The factors that should be considered for classes include social, emotional, academic and gender.

POLICY STATEMENT

To define for parents, students and teachers the collaborative process and criteria for the formation and allocation of classes at Ashbury Public School so that students are treated equitably, according to their needs and within the organisational boundaries of the school. The policy aims to describe a process that places each child in a class that will allow him or her the best opportunity to learn.

IMPLEMENTATION

Class Structures

The school structures and the formation of classes at Ashbury Public School are based on the Department of Education staffing formula. The number of teachers allocated to the school is directly related to student enrolment numbers. A school structure that best meets the needs of students and teachers is designed by the school and ratified by the Principal each year. Wherever possible, the school aims to achieve the following class sizes:

Stage	Class Size
Kindergarten	20 children
Year 1	22 children
Year 2	24 Children
Years 3 & 4	30 Children
Years 5 & 6	30 Children

Stage/Multi-age Classes

Each year, class groupings are configured based on student enrolments across all year levels and consistent with average class sizes. This includes both straight year level and multi-age classes to achieve optimal learning communities. Current research indicates neither advantages nor disadvantages to students being placed in multi-age classes. The wide range of student abilities is similar to those found in most classrooms. Research by leading global education researcher, Professor John Hattie, on the effect of multi-age classes confirms there is little correlation between class structure and student learning and achievement.

Class Allocation Process

Teachers are well placed to make education decisions about student groups in the formation of classes. Parents and carers can provide important insights into their children that can be an important part of the class formation process and are encouraged to provide information concerning the needs of their children including emotional, social, personal, specific learning needs, positive friendships and other confidential information which could have an impact on their child's placement.

Students will be asked to identify a small group of peers with whom they work well. This feedback will be given more weight for children in stages 2 and 3. Teachers will attempt to ensure that each child is placed in a class with at least one identified friend.

In the allocation of students to a particular class, the following factors will primarily guide the decision-making process:

- an effective distribution of student's abilities and genders across classes;
- social, intellectual, emotional or physical needs;
- current interventions and support provided; and
- student and peer relationships

Allocation of Teachers

Teachers are allocated to classes after the class formation process and therefore the school cannot fulfil requests for specific teachers.

The allocation of teachers to classes is determined after a staff expression of interest process that takes into consideration a range of factors including:

- whole school staffing requirements;
- student needs and developmental levels;
- professional skills and expertise; and
- professional learning goals of staff.

The Principal is responsible for allocating teachers to classes in consultation with the school executive team.

Additional notes

The following parent requests are unable to be accommodated, requests:

- to be / not to be in a multi-age class
- related to teachers in the class formation and planning process. (for example, teacher gender or role, preference for / not for specific teachers)

Timeline

Students will be assigned to their class for the following year, including teacher placements (subject to enrolment and staffing changes) by end November.

The School aims to have a transition day at the end of term 4 where students meet their teacher and classmates for the following year.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Principal's role is to:

- Communicate with parents and teachers the timeline for forming classes for the following year
- Request appropriate input from parents about the school structure and classes for the following year
- Seek expressions of interest from teachers for classes for the following year
- Communicate to parents the process for addressing and dealing with feedback from parents
- Review and address parent feedback on class formation
- Ratify the final composition of classes

The teacher's role is to:

- Share information about each student with their new teacher
- Request input from students about class formation preferences, for example peer groups

- Consider and respond to the different needs of each child
- Consult with parents about methods to address any information provided by parents to assist in aiding the learning of children

Parents' and carers' roles are to:

- Provide information and feedback concerning their child's individual needs prior to the formation of classes
- Respect the process of class formation and understand that the school will not always be able to accommodate all requests

The student's role is to:

- Identify 3-5 peers with whom they work well and would like to be placed in the same class for the following class year
- Respect the process for class formation

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

The policy will be monitored by the School Council, every three years, and 12 months after implementation.

The school will send a survey to parents and carers on the class formation process to assist in the review of this policy and to improve class formation processes.