



## Class placements at Fremantle PS

### RATIONALE

Fremantle Primary School creates its class structure based on the professional judgement of staff **to ensure the best learning environment for each student** taking into account their social and emotional, academic, physical wellbeing, and all the resources available to us. Once class structures have been finalised, generally mid-Term 4, teachers meet to establish class lists for the following year. The process is as follows:

- The Administration decides the class structures (as in which classes need to be split or not) for the following year based on available resources, and the anticipated enrolments according to the [School Education Act Employees General Agreement 2017](#) (Article 12). This number can fluctuate regularly and at times significantly enough that the class structure needs to change. This is why we ask families to confirm their intentions for the following year in Term 3.
- Parents/carers are encouraged **to speak with teachers** about particular arrangements or placements based on **academic needs**. Please ask any questions or share **any other concerns** you may have with the teachers from now if you haven't already. Requests in relation to choice of teacher will not be considered as a placement factor.
- Teaching staff then allocate students to classes based on factors including student preferences (students are asked to share confidentially their feelings about students with whom they work) discussions with students, behaviour, gender, year levels and social factors as well as considerations around access, resources and facilities. While parents know their children best, in the school environment, teachers are best placed to be aware of all relevant academic and social information about all the children in their particular year level. All this information is vital for a successful classroom and the good running of the school.
- Teachers then provide their lists to the school administration to review and ratify.
- Parents will be notified of class placement in the final week of Term 4 of the preceding year.

I acknowledge that classroom placements can cause anxiety for some. At Fremantle Primary School, children's wellbeing is a priority. If your child is having difficulty in relationships, please help us support them, and talk to the class teacher if needed. Rest assured that we are with your child every step of the way to help teach them the skills to adapt to change and manage relationships. We encourage you to support the school nurture this resilience, which will serve them well in the school and beyond. If students have doubts, your encouragement to seek, and focus on, the positives can be all that is needed to make the change a rewarding and successful experience.

### Frequently Asked Questions:

**Can I request for my child to be (or not to be) with a particular child?**

No. If your child is having difficulty with a student in class, please inform the teacher in the first instance, so that the matter can be resolved.

Managing relationships is an aspect of the school experience where students learn to function socially with all kinds of people. We don't need to be friends with everyone, but it's important to be friendly!

**Can I request a particular teacher for my child in writing or through discussion with my child's current teacher?**

No, this is not part of our school's policy.

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

You may talk with the teacher about your concerns and be assured that those concerns will be shared with the principal so any issue, such as your child's anxieties, will be addressed. Teachers have the skills to help children adjust. Changes to placements are rare due to the fact they often cause a chain reaction across the school, impacting on the balance and groupings in other classes. While we take much care in catering for the individual child during the placement process, it is important to know that your child is part of a complex equation that involves a considerable number of other children.

**Can my child repeat a year?**

Parent requests and special circumstances will be given full consideration in consultation with classroom teachers, Learning Support Coordinator, the School Psychologist and Principal. However, we do not encourage the repeating of students in a year level. This is based on current research that indicates it is not beneficial to the student to repeat a year level for social and academic reasons. Indeed, it may even hinder them further.

**Why do we have split classes?**

Split classes are formed where there are insufficient (or excessive) numbers in a single year level to maintain single grade classes. This is common to many schools in Australia, especially one the size of ours.

These classes are formed to have a similar spread of abilities to a single grade class, and represent no disadvantage or advantage over single grade classes. Research shows that multi-age classes have a positive impact on social and academic development as it allows for peer mentoring which can foster both areas.

**Teachers differentiate learning in all classes (single or split years) to meet the needs of all students.**

Students in split classes will have opportunities to learn alongside their peers throughout the year and will be accessing their level in the curriculum. Teaching and assessment of students in the same years is moderated between teachers to ensure consistent judgements about learning.

As well as the above, the following will be taken into consideration when forming split classes:

- Work habits e.g. the ability to work independently; and
- Previous class placement.

If you seek further information, please see your teacher.

Additionally, as the size of classes are capped (see below), split classes, such as a 1/2 class for example, allow for future enrolments of Year 1 and Year 2 students without needing to restructure potentially all the classes. Restructuring classes can be hugely disruptive to the learning program across the school when

done during the school year.

*Recommended maximum class sizes*

Kindergarten – 20 students per group

Pre-primary – 27 for purpose built early childhood classrooms (ours are purpose built)

Years 1-3 – 24 students

Years 4-6 – 32 students

In planning for classrooms, teachers will also try to ensure that students are not placed in split classes for consecutive years so that they have a chance to be with other peers.

**What if my child is having difficulty in her/his new placement after school has started?**

It is important to give your child time to adjust to her/his new surroundings, and we will do what we can in partnership to facilitate that adjustment. Parents need to talk to and work with their teacher, so that the child's needs can be addressed and the issue resolved.

Parents play a significant part in this process by being as positive and encouraging as possible to their children. It can be daunting to be in a new class and new environment, which is why it is so important that both families and teachers work together to support this transition with patience and an open mind. The skills of making new friends, managing relationships, and adjusting socially to new spaces and situations are essential to successful schooling.

Please know that teachers deeply care about the students, and they strive to ensure the best learning conditions and smoothest of transitions for all of them. If you have any more questions, please feel free to contact one of the administration staff or your child's teacher.

This policy is supported by the School Board.