

RATIONALE

Ardross Primary School creates its class structure based on the professional judgement of staff, considering the students' academic, social and emotional needs. Impacting the number and composition of classrooms is a range of factors inclusive of student enrolments, local boundaries, pre-compulsory versus compulsory schooling and industrial requirements surrounding class sizes.

SCHOOL COMMITMENT

The school commits to supporting the Ardross PS Class Placement Guidelines by:

- Using informed professional judgement when deciding class placements; and
- Considering all available information to assist the process.

PARENT AND CARER COMMITMENT

Parents and carers commit to supporting the Ardross PS Class Placement Guidelines by:

- Supporting and accepting the school's professional decisions and
- Being positive with their child about the class placement decision that has been made.

GUIDELINES

Factors influencing class structure are:

- industrial implications around class sizes
- the projected number of students in each year level
- the ratio of gender
- projected enrolments during the year based on past trends
- the number of teachers employed at the school; and
- the constraints of resources and facilities.

Factors which are considered in the placement of students include:

- academic performance
- work habits e.g. ability to work independently
- behaviour
- gender
- social network and social maturity
- special considerations e.g. twins, siblings, medical or disability factors

PROCESS

1. The Executive Team determines structure options for the following year based on anticipated enrolments, trends, and the need for flexibility.
2. Parents and carers are invited to provide specific information about their child's learning needs that may not be known to the school. This information must be provided in writing to the Principal by COB Friday, Week 3, Term 4. Parents are informed that requests for a particular teacher, split vs straight class, or friendship groups will not be considered as a placement factor. The information parents provide is referenced alongside other relevant information during the class placement process. It's emphasised that while these requests are considered, they are not guaranteed to be accommodated.

Ardross Primary School Classroom Placement Guidelines

3. Staff members in each year level meet to determine the placement of their current students for the following year, taking into consideration the guidelines above.
4. Class lists will be formed and then reviewed by all staff.
5. Class lists are submitted to the Executive team for further review and then finalised.

On the morning of the first day of school, the Executive team will be available to direct parents to their child's assigned class. Class formation in the new school year will remain as published subject to exceptional circumstances, i.e., a significant increase in the overall school population or within year groups. In the advent of any alteration, all relevant parties will be notified before any change.

The final decision on class placement remains with the principal.

Sue Mikkelsen-Taylor
Principal
September 2024

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

One Line Budget Schools operate with a one-line budget and are funded through the student-centred funding model (SCFM). This means that they are funded per student enrolment at a given point in time (usually February). The school needs to work with the allocated funds to ensure all salaries, facilities and ongoing costs are met. When considering class structures, schools need to effectively plan to ensure that their proposed model is economical and the best use of funds. For example, small class sizes are very costly to a school and the school needs to determine if this is the best use of their funds and within their budget for any given year.

Why does the school have some split grade classes instead of all straight classes?

As a Public School, every student who resides in our boundary, between Years Pre-primary and 6, is guaranteed an enrolment place, so numbers will never balance perfectly for straight classes.

As staffing is dependent upon the enrolment in each grade, multi-aged or combined classes may occur. This practice is well supported by research and our beliefs about how children learn. It is also often a practical necessity with our enrolment numbers and maximum class sizes, as per relevant Industrial Awards and Agreements

What is a reasonable class size?

The Department of Education has recommended maximum class sizes for various year levels, hence split class become unavoidable. Our school always starts the year within these recommendations. If numbers increase during the year, additional support is provided to teachers, usually in the form of additional relief days or education assistants. On very rare occasions, schools may need to restructure their classes to accommodate student growth throughout the year.

Maximum recommended class sizes

Kindergarten - 20	Pre-primary - 27	Yr. 1-3 - 24	Yr. 4-6 = 32
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How do teachers cover multiple year level curriculums?

The curriculum acts as a guide of what teachers must cover in a given year. More importantly however, is that students receive the curriculum content that allows them to progress and achieve. This might mean modifying or extending the curriculum. It is quite common that in any given class, a teacher will need to support, or extend students who may be up to two years ahead, or behind the given curriculum. This is done through group or individual plans. As such, being in a split class is less of a factor, than receiving the curriculum content that is needed and teachers are highly skilled and supported at achieving this.

When will I know my child's placement?

Parents of children in Kindergarten are informed of their child's placement mid-term 4. The Pre-primary to Year 6 will receive a Connect notice notifying them of their child/ren class. Classes are always subject to change as new enrolments are common in the first weeks of the year.

Can I request my child's placement with another child in the classroom or not be placed with another particular child?

While some parents make a friendship request, the decision is complex. A number of times a request is received from one family to place particular children together, while the second family requests that same children be placed in separate classes. The final decision on placement rests with the principal. Often, children placed with best friends will work and play exclusively with each other, and this does not promote the social interaction we try to foster. We also find young children change best friends.

Ardross Primary School Classroom Placement Guidelines

When allocating children to classes, we endeavour to foster positive social interaction across a year group, by making socially balanced classes.

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

If the school considers there is an error, the placement will be changed immediately. In all other cases parents, carers and the child will be asked to undertake a 'cooling off' period of 4 weeks to try the placement. A follow up conversation will be scheduled after 4 weeks.

Changes to placements are rare, due to the fact they often cause a chain reaction and impact on the class balance, which in turn is unfair to many students within the group. While we feel we consider the individual child during the placement process, parents must realise their child is part of a complex equation in school placements.

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

We will do everything we can to problem solve. Parents need to talk to the teacher so the child's needs can be addressed.

My child has been in a composite class this year; will they avoid one next year?

Teachers will consider factors such as history of split classes, but research does show there is no negative impact academically, from being in split classes. Parent concern regarding consecutive years in split classes, tends to focus on friendship groups, hence staff will consider this each year.