

Avoca Beach Public School

Class Formation & Teacher Allocation Policy

The following policy has been developed with reference to the DoE policy Leading and Managing the School.

Rationale

There needs to be a clear and consistent policy in the formation and allocation of classes at Avoca Beach Public School so that students and teachers are treated equitably, according to their needs within the organisational structure of the school.

Class Structures

The school structure and the formation of classes at Avoca Beach Public School is constrained by the Department of Education staffing formula. A school structure that best meets the needs of students and teachers will be designed by staff and ratified by the Principal.

The principal has the delegated authority to determine the final make up of classes.

Student Allocation Process

Students will be allocated to classes by the school executive, in consultation with the teachers, Learning and Support Teachers (LASTs) and School Counsellor.

The following criteria are used to ensure that the classes that are formed are in the best interests of ALL the students. These criteria are not in order of importance.

Learning Needs - students who are experiencing difficulties or are identified and gifted and talented are placed in an appropriate class to provide personalised and specialist support.

Special Needs - these may be social, intellectual, emotional or physical.

Behaviour problems - students who are best separated so their learning and the learning of other students is not affected.

Personalities - in some special cases the personalities of both teachers and students are considered before a decision is made regarding the placement of a student. Friendships - students who need support from another close friend or who need separation to establish further friendships.

Friendships - students who are too friendly with another student and are best separated so both students can concentrate on their studies.

Gender Balance - we like to keep a balance of boys and girls in each class where possible. Some consideration may be given as to whether a teacher and student have been together before.

As well as the above criteria, all classes will be formed to be academically balanced.



Identification of Needs

The identification of these needs will be achieved through:

- Professional deliberations of staff who are familiar with students.
- Academic and welfare data.
- Students' educational history (previous classes, special circumstances)
- Significant information that may be supplied by parents (history, social or emotional factors).

Allocation of Teachers

The allocation of teachers to classes is determined after a consultative process that takes into consideration:

- Student need
- Teacher preferences.
- Past experience, professional skills and expertise of teachers.
- Professional learning goals of staff.
- The creation of effective, balanced stage teams.
- The needs of new teachers to the school.
- The needs of graduates new to the teaching profession. Where ever possible these new graduates need to be allocated a class upon which they feel most comfortable and where they can be mentored by a more experienced colleague.

These considerations are not in priority order.

Kindergarten Classes

Children commencing their school life are grouped in comprehensive classes. Teachers of Kindergarten will undertake a series of observations during our “Headstart” kindergarten orientation program. The information gained – academic, personality, learning needs, social skills etc will be used to form classes. In some cases, pre-school information will also be used to ensure the most appropriate class placement.

Multi-age Classes

Multi-aged or composite classes are formed when numbers of children in the grade are such that two complete classes cannot be formed. Classes will be formed using the same criteria as the comprehensive classes using data from the current year's assessment. The teachers forming the classes will give consideration to the independent work habits of the children and their ability to work in a multi-aged environment. Consideration is also given to those children who have been in a multi-age class in the previous year.



In some cases, where a minority group is formed in a composite class, in the interest of all students in a stage group, consideration will be given to creating all composite classes within the stage.

Parent Enquiries and Privacy

Whilst any parent is entitled to know how their own child came to be placed in a particular class, the school is required to maintain the privacy of the needs of other students and is not able to outline the particular reasons as to why other students have been placed in particular classes.

Although specific parent requests will be sought in Term 4 each year and can be made in writing to be considered by the class formation committee, due to the complexity of the placement process, these requests are not a priority when placing children in classes. The class formation committee led by the principal will have the final decision as to the placement of a student.

Timeline

- During Term 4 information regarding the possible staffing of the school will be communicated to parents.
- During Term 4 information will be collected from class teachers regarding the class placement needs and recommendations for the following year.
- During Term 4 information will be collected from parents regarding special needs of their child (eg history, social or emotional factors).
- Students will resume the school year in the classes from the previous year but as soon as practicable, new classes will be formed.
- Once a child is placed in a class they will not be moved on a request from parents.

Review

The principal or delegated staff will review this procedure annually.