

PLACEMENT OF STUDENTS IN CLASSES AT BURRENDAH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Outlined below is the process we use to place students in their respective classes, as well as answers to questions that parents may have about class placement. A copy of the Class Placement Policy, which is endorsed by the School Board, is included as an appendix. Burrendah Primary School staff are committed to meeting the educational needs of all students. A great deal of thought and planning goes into the placement of every child.

What are the criteria that we use to make up class lists?

Factors influencing how classes are structured are:

The educational needs of the students; the anticipated number of students in each year level; projected enrolments during the year based on past trends; the number of teachers employed at the school; and available resources and facilities.

Factors which are considered in the placement of students include:

academic performance; work habits, such as ability to work independently; behaviour; gender; siblings; twins; social network, social maturity and historical data such as previous split year level class.

Parent/guardian input regarding their child's educational needs will be considered if they meet the factors listed above. Requests in relation to choice of teacher will not be considered as a placement factor. Whilst parent/guardian input is considered, this does not guarantee a request for a child's class placement from parent/guardians can be met.

The Principal will invite parents/guardians to submit in writing their request for their child's class placement early November through Connect and the school newsletter. Parent/guardian input needs to be provided by the date requested. The Principal will provide a written response to parent/guardian input by the end of the school year. The Principal makes the final decision on class structures and class placement.

What is the process for placing students into classes?

A class structure is decided upon using the factors listed above. Teaching staff and the Leadership Team meet in Term 4 to establish classes for the following school year. Teachers of the current year level meet with their other year level colleagues to create class lists, for example Year 4 teachers develop Year 5 class placements.

Teachers ensure each new class has: a balance of academic ability; a balance of girls and boys and socially balanced groups. Children's past class placements are also taken into consideration. Unless requested by parent/guardians, students are not placed in split year levels in consecutive years.

Specialist teachers then review these class placements and provide further input if needed. Proposed class lists are then submitted to the Leadership Team and then the Principal for final ratification.

FAQS – Frequently Asked Questions

When will I know my child's placement?

Parent/guardians of children in Kindergarten are informed of their child's placement for the following year, mid-term 4, following the parent teacher orientation meeting.

Due to the unpredictability in enrolments at Burrendah Primary School in the week prior to students starting back at school, the school does not provide class placement lists in the preceding year. Class lists will be available to view on boards on the verandah between the School Hall and the Administration building from 1:00-3:00pm on the work day before students commence in the new year. Photographs of these lists must not be taken due to privacy reasons.

Pre Primary to Year 6 class lists will be displayed in the undercover area and on classroom doors by 8:15am on the students first day of the school year. Photographs of these lists must not be taken due to privacy reasons.

Class structures or teacher allocation may need to change if we have increased or decreased enrolments either prior of after the commencement of the school year.

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.

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

You may talk with one of the Leadership Team or Principal about your concerns and be assured that those concerns will be shared with the teacher so your child's anxieties will be addressed. Teachers have the skills to help students adjust to the new class setting.

The class placements are considered final. All information about students is valued and heard. Changes to placements rarely occur as it causes a chain reaction and impacts class balance, which in turn affects many students within the group. Consideration for every individual student is taken into account during the placement process. Parents/guardians must understand 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? Can we request a change then?

We will do everything we can to problem solve. Parent/guardians need to talk to the teacher, the Leadership Team or Principal, so the child's needs can be addressed. Each request will be taken into consideration.

What are split year level classes?

Split year level classes means two year levels are in the same classroom to meet government student number requirements for one teacher. Students are taught their year level curriculum. A split class is not for the older year level to repeat a year or the younger year level to skip a year level. As in all classrooms, lessons are differentiated to cater for an individual student's needs while operating within the scope of their year level curriculum.

Why are split year level classes common in Western Australian Schools?

The Department of Education funds per student not number of classrooms. The Department of Education expects classrooms to operate under the following student numbers, each having one teacher, when at capacity. Kindergarten: 20 students, Pre-primary: 27 students (purpose built), Year 1 –3: 24 students, Year 4 –6: 32 students.

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

As staffing is dependent upon the enrolment in each grade, split year level classes often occur at Burrendah Primary School. For example, if there are 112 Year 4 students and 111 Year 5 students, the classes could be combined to have three Year 4 classes of 32 students, three Year 5 classes of 32 students and one Year 4 /5 class with 16 Year 4 students and 15 Year 5 students of 31 students.

Is a split year level class a disadvantage to my child's learning?

Sometimes parents/guardians express concern when their child has been allocated to a split year level class and believe that it may be a disadvantage to their child. It is important that you, as parents/guardians, are aware that contrary to these beliefs there is no disadvantage to a student being in a split year level class. The practice of split year level classes is well supported by research and our beliefs about how children learn.

How do teachers cater academically for more than one year level in a class?

Teachers are trained and skilled at delivering the required curriculum to each of the year levels. Each year the curriculum builds upon the curriculum from the year before so, in order to cater for the different needs of students, teachers are consistently differentiating the curriculum to suit all student's individual needs.

If there is a restructure of classrooms during the year do I have an opportunity for input into my child's class placement?

At times the school has had to restructure after the commencement of the school year. Restructures usually occur at the start of a new term. The usual process is for teachers, the Leadership Team and the Principal to make this decision on class placements without further input from parents/guardians. If considerations can be made by asking for parent/guardian input, then the Principal will request this. Whilst parent/guardian input is considered, this does not guarantee a request for a child's class placement from parent/guardians can be met.

On occasions of a restructure historical data is taken into account, such as prior years' parent/guardian input and if a child has moved classes due to a restructure the previous year. Teachers ensure the smoothest transitions possible as they care about each student's wellbeing. Parent/ guardians can help by being as positive and encouraging as possible with their children during this process.

6th November 2020

CLASS PLACEMENT POLICY

Rationale:

Burrendah PS has a procedure in place for allocating students to classes each year. In making a decision, our Leadership Team and teaching staff will make a professional judgment that acknowledges the overall academic, social, emotional, psychological and physical well-being of every student. Although class placements can be a sensitive issue, the interests of all children are paramount to the decisions made by the school. The Principal is responsible for the final decision on class structures and student placement.

Aim: This policy aims to:

- Ensure equitable outcomes for all students
- Provide a clear framework to be applied by the Leadership Team and teaching staff for class placements of students
- Provide parent/guardians with information on the procedure and where appropriate opportunities for input to the process

School Commitment: The School commits to supporting the Class Placement Policy by:

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

Parent/Guardian Commitment: Parent/guardians commit to supporting the school's Class Placement Policy by:

- Supporting and accepting decisions made by the School; and
- Being positive with their child about the class placement decision that has been made

During the Year Restructure:

Under exceptional circumstances the Principal may reorganise classes during the course of the year. This restructure would normally occur at the commencement of a new term.

Factors influencing class structures are:

- The educational needs of the students
- The projected number of students in each year level
- The number of spilt year levels throughout the school
- Projected enrolments during the year based on past trends
- The number of teachers employed at school; and
- The constraints of resources and facilities

Factors which are considered in the placement of students include:

- The placement of students identified with *special needs*
- Academic performance
- Work habits, such as ability to work independently
- Behaviour
- Gender, siblings, twins, EAL/D
- Social network
- Social maturity
- Historical data, such as previous split year level class

Additional information

1. Parent/guardian input regarding class placement will only be considered if they meet the factors listed above. Whilst parent/guardian input is considered, this does not guarantee a request for a child's class placement from parent/guardians can be met. Parents/guardians must understand their child is part of a complex equation in school placements.
2. Every effort will be made not to exceed DoE recommendations regarding class sizes
3. Enrolments throughout the year will be placed where there are vacancies and after consultation with the Leadership Team.
4. The Principal will invite parents/guardians to submit in writing their request for their child's class placement early November through Connect and the school newsletter. Parent/guardian input needs to be provided by the date requested. The Principal will provide a written response to parent/guardian input by the end of the school year. The Principal makes the final decision on class structures and class placement.

Process:

Based on the factors above, teaching staff and the Leadership Team meet mid Term 4 to establish classes for the following school year. An opportunity for parent input is provided. Teachers of the current year level cohort discuss class placement. Specialists teachers and the Leadership Team review all year level cohort recommendations. Class placements are submitted to the Principal for final ratification. Class lists will be made available no later than the first day of the student's school year

6th November 2020