



Class Creation and Student Transition Policy

OVERVIEW

As a school grows it is important to have a policy on developing additional classes which ensures every child, benefits from a positive experience and parents understand what is happening. Educators are in the best position to create **additional classes** with their extensive knowledge and understanding of child development and the academic, social and emotional needs of the children in their care. Historically, children have been mixed up every year. Research shows that often parents experience concern about their child changing classes, which is understandable but often not justified in reality. Children enjoy change, if it is managed well. However, we will only create new classes as the need arises when we have too many children to teach in one class. **From next academic year the children in Pre-KG to G5 will remain in their own class groups and just move to the next grade level.** This means that they are more likely to develop life-long friendships. There may be minor exceptions which will be discussed at length with parents and students.

When we create additional classes the only consideration, we have is that we **meet the needs of all learners**. There are multiple benefits to a school growing for all the children. Most importantly a growing school broadens the children's base of friends, enabling cross-class engagement in some areas. It also increases the diversity within the school and increases the staff team, bringing new teaching and extra-curricular skills into our community. It is exciting when a school grows.

PURPOSE

This policy is designed so that parents understand the school's stance on student placement and creating additional classes so that they are able to give their support to the changes which

inevitably occur when an additional class is created. By giving this support and by trusting the school to do what is best for every child, parents provide positive role models to their children and are better able to reassure their children and support the process of change. The policy also prevents the inequity which can arise when parents demand their child to be in a specific class.

Who should read this policy?

ALL members of the school community should read this policy, especially parents and class teachers. We are an inclusive school, which means that we consider every child's individual needs as well as collective and group needs. Whilst we take parents views into account, a policy such as this needs to be consistently applied to be in the best interests of all children.

RATIONALE

Moving to a new class is a normal rite of passage for every child. This happens all over the world and is seen by educators and psychologists as a very positive experience which leads to adaptability and independence. Young children are quick to form close friendships and just as quick to change or develop those friendships when they meet someone new. Being in a 'additional class' or a 'new class' is an exciting and expected part of school life. The important thing for parents and teachers is be clear on to how we support the process. We achieve this by:

1. Presenting a positive adult view of moving to a new class – if parents see this as a negative issue, children will become anxious.
2. Being very clear about the criteria used to determine parallel age classes;
3. Ensuring children in new classes know what to expect and have chances to say how they feel about the changes.

THE POLICY

1. Additional classes will be created at the start of the new academic year, if the numbers mean that we cannot continue with the same classes. If this is not appropriate at that time, additional classes will be created following a sensible break during the school year;
2. If new children register during the term and the existing classes are full, we will 'grow' a new class parallel to the existing classes;

3. When an additional class is created this will be based on four key factors:

- The age and stage of development of the children;
- Friendship groups;
- The need for a gender balance;
- Individual social and academic needs.

4. Where an additional parallel class is created mid-year, parents must expect that two equal sized classes will be created at the start of the new school year. Having one large class and one small class is not good practice for the children.

TEACHER-STUDENT RATIOS

The school wants to have the best possible teacher-student ratios for all grades. However, research shows that this is NOT a key factor in student achievement. It can actually be a significant problem for children if their class is too small. Whilst we try to uphold our expected ratios, this is not always possible when faced with a growing school and have children who need to be part of a larger group to support their learning and development. From time to time as we evolve, suggested ratios may be breached, in line with his policy. However, at all times we will ensure the needs of children are protected and the pace of growth is manageable. We expect to have 20-22 children in KG classes and 24-27 in all other classes. At times these ratios may be adjusted.

NOTIFICATIONS

Parents will be notified when:

- Enrolment numbers mean that a new parallel class will be created;
- Enrolment decreases mean that classes need to be combined
- If, for any reason there is a teacher change.
- There are very specific reasons, why a child is not achieving in the current class.

Transition

Children will move to their next grade level at the end of the school year. They may have a new teacher and they will almost certainly have some new friends. In order to ensure a smooth transition for children from one grade to another or one teacher to another we will gradually introduce the concept of moving and also enable children to work alongside their new friends and teachers so that when the change occurs, they are very comfortable. **We will no longer mix children up at the start of a new academic year.**

What should parents do to help this process?

The most important thing is for parents to understand this positive change for our children and encourage them to be positive too. Most children will naturally look forward with excitement to their new grade level. If they are joining a newly formed additional class they will be excited if the adults around them are positive.

Parents should start speaking to their children about their move to the next grade as soon as they know it will happen. This discussion should be light and positive. Drop into the conversation, 'when you get to your new class.... It is going to really exciting...you will make even more friends....you can show your teacher how well you write...' Make contact with your child's new teacher regularly so you are aware of how they are settling.

Reminder

Parents are not in the best position to choose a class for their child. Many try to do so. Please be reminded that the school will not move children to a different class at the request of a parent. With improved recruitment standards we can assure parents that our teachers are equally capable. We aim to ensure all teachers provide excellent English-speaking role models. **The only circumstances which may lead to a child moving classes are related entirely to learning and will only happen after a full educational discussion.**

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