



RATIFIED BY THE HOLLYWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL BOARD: August 2021

REVIEW DATE: June 2024

Outlined below is the process we use at Hollywood Primary School to place students in classes for the start of the year. Also included are answers to questions that parents may have about class placement. Staff at Hollywood Primary School are committed to meeting the educational needs of all students. A great deal of thought, planning and time goes into placing children into classes each year. Every effort is made to place each child in a learning environment that is productive and successful.

RATIONALE

Hollywood Primary School creates its class structure based on the professional judgement of staff taking into account the students' academic, social and emotional needs.

GUIDELINES

Factors influencing class structure are:

- the educational needs of the students;
- the projected number of students in each year level;
- the ratio of girls to boys;
- projected enrolments during the year based on past trends;
- the number of teachers employed at the school; and
- resources and facilities.

Factors which are considered in the placement of students include:

- academic performance – judgements over time
- work habits e.g. ability to work independently
- behaviour
- gender
- social network
- social maturity
- special needs
- family situations e.g. twins, siblings
- special family considerations outlined to the Principal, prior to class placement procedures

Classes are not streamed. Should there be more than one class in a particular year level, or the need to form a multi-age grouping grade class, the professional judgement of the Principal, administration team and relevant teaching staff will decide the placement of individual students.

Parent input regarding their child's educational needs will be considered. Requests in relation to choice of teacher will not be considered as a placement factor.

PROCESS

Based on the criteria listed above, teaching staff and administration meet Term 4 to establish classes for the following school year. Teachers of the current year level confer regarding the class groupings (i.e. Year 2 teachers decide Year 3 placements, and so on.)

Teachers ensure each new class has:

- a balance of academic ability
- gender balance
- socially balanced groups and children from existing classes, so new friendships can be formed.

Class placements are then approved by the Principal and Admin team. Parents may write to the Principal to request a particular placement based on their child's educational needs.



Common Questions

Why do we ask parents to leave class placement in the hands of the teaching staff?

As professional educators we strive to make the right choices taking into account all of the information we have about all students. Parents do know their children best, however teachers have all of the academic and social information about every child and can make sound judgements to meet the needs of every student with consideration to the whole year cohort.

Why does the school have some multi-age grouping instead of having all straight year level classes?

Staffing is dependent on the enrolment numbers which can vary between year levels. Therefore, split grade classes are often necessary to ensure that we have appropriate sized classes.

The practice of combining grades in one class is well supported by research and our beliefs about how children learn. That is, research shows us that students are not disadvantaged by being in a split grade class. The difference in students' academic ability and maturity can vary by about 5 years across a straight grade class and this is not much different for a split grade class. The added advantage of a split grade class is that students make friendships across grades.

How do teachers progress learning in a multi-age grouping?

At HPS our teachers are highly skilled in differentiation. In any of our classrooms we have students working at individual levels, and teachers are required, and confident, in progressing their students at each individual point of need. Our data collection processes, consisting of NAPLAN, PAT, On Entry and various others allow us to ensure that every child is making optimal progress.

When will I know my child's placement?

Parents of children in Kindergarten are informed of their child's placement in Term 4, at the parent teacher orientation meeting or by mail. Pre Primary to Year 6 class lists are displayed on the school site and off site locations before school starts in term 1. This is because we often have enrolments over the holidays and may have to change our class structure. On occasions class lists may be made available at the end of the school year for the following year, however they may need to be changed if enrolments change over the school Christmas vacation period.

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.

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

Parents may request this but need to give clear reasons why this is necessary. It is important to consider that the school knows your child's friendships and that placing them without that particular friend may be so that your child expands their friendship base. We want children to be able to work and socialise with a variety of other children and build skills to make new friends.

While some parents make a friendship request, the decision is complex. A number of times we have received a request from one family to place particular children together, while the second family requests that the same children be placed in separate classes. The final decision on placement rests with the Principal and the leadership team.

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 of embracing new peers and making new friendships. We also find young children change best friends.

When allocating children to classes, we endeavour to foster positive social interaction across a year group, by making socially balanced classes and to help prevent non-constructive relationships.

If your child is having difficulty with a student in his/her class, please inform the teacher or one of the Associate Principal or Principal, so problem solving can take place. This is the aspect of the school experience where students learn to function socially with all kinds of people.

Do teachers request certain student placements into their classes?

No, as teachers are not assigned to a class until after the class placement process. Teachers focus on class balance to ensure a successful year for all students.

We really like the teacher one of our children had. Now our other child will be entering that year level. Can we assume our second child will get that teacher?

It is a coincidence if this happens as the school does not use historical records when placing children. New relationships are constructive and help us grow. All children are different and may respond well to a different teacher.

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

Given the exhaustive process undertaken class placements are generally considered to be final. Changing one student's placement at the request of a parent can mean that many other changes also need to take place to continue to meet the needs of all of the other students. Parents can talk to the Principal or Associate Principal about their concerns, but changing a student placement would be rare. The Principal or Associate Principal and the classroom teacher will work with the parent to help the student adjust to their new class.

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. Parents need to talk to the teacher, the Associate Principal or Principal, so the child's needs can be addressed and be assured that those concerns will be shared with the teacher so your child's anxieties will be addressed. Teachers are expected to have the skills to help children adjust.

We want to stress that all information about your children is valued and heard. Teachers want to construct the smoothest transitions possible for the students for which they care so much.

Parents can help also by being as positive and encouraging as possible to their children in this process.

If you have any more questions, please feel free to contact one of the administration staff.

Parents / Caregivers role in the process

In order to make the best decisions we need as much information as possible. Class teachers have an excellent knowledge of your children, particularly in relation to their social and academic needs in the classroom and school setting.

As stated previously the setting of classes requires a great deal of time and thought. Staff will use their professional judgement and expertise, along with relevant information provided by parents in an effort to achieve effective class groups that satisfy, where possible, the needs of the individual and the needs of the group. No single factor determines placement, or will necessarily be acted upon.

Parents may submit written input with respect to class placements. The submissions are to be based on **educational reasons**, addressed to “The Principal” and marked “Confidential.” All written parent submissions will be given consideration but not automatically accommodated. Class placement throughout the year will be at the discretion of the leadership team.

The following will not be considered:

1. Requests to have or not to have particular teachers.
2. Requests not to be placed into multi age group classes.
3. Requests not to be placed with specific students without sufficient educational context and evidence.
4. Any requests provided after the due date.

NB The provision of this information should not be seen in anyway as a guarantee that requests can or will be met.