

CLASS PLACEMENT POLICY

Purpose

West Leeming Primary School is committed to forming balanced classes that support effective teaching, positive relationships and the learning and wellbeing of all students. Class placements are determined through a collaborative process involving teachers and the leadership team. Decisions are based on professional judgement, available information and the needs of each student within the context of the whole cohort.

School Context

West Leeming Primary School generally operates two classes at each year level, with three classes in some year levels. With a small number of classes available, there are limited ways to arrange a cohort while achieving an appropriate balance of learning, behaviour, wellbeing and support needs. A placement preference concerning one student may affect the options available for other students and the balance of several classes. The school therefore considers each student's needs alongside those of the whole cohort.

Class Structure and Composite (Split Year Level) Classes

West Leeming Primary School plans class structures each year based on student numbers, their distribution across year levels and the resources available. Government funding is based on student enrolments and learning needs, rather than the number of classes. This means that creating an additional class does not automatically attract additional funding to employ a teacher.

When determining class structures, the school considers:

- confirmed and projected enrolments
- the distribution of students across year levels
- available funding and staffing
- applicable class-size provisions
- available facilities and resources.

Student numbers do not always divide evenly into separate classes for each year level. Composite classes allow the school to organise students into classes that meet class-size requirements within available staffing and funding. They are a normal part of public school organisation and may be formed at any year level.

A composite class, sometimes called a split class, includes students from two year levels in one classroom. For example, a Year 2/3 class includes both Year 2 and Year 3 students. Students remain in their enrolled year level and are taught the curriculum appropriate to that year level, with teaching adjusted to meet their learning needs.

All classes, whether straight year-level or composite, include students with a range of abilities and learning needs. Teachers work collaboratively across year levels to plan teaching and assessment. They use whole-class instruction, flexible grouping and differentiated tasks to provide appropriate support and challenge. Students in composite classes also have opportunities to maintain friendships with their year-level peers through play, shared activities and school events, while developing connections with students from another year level.

The same placement considerations apply to straight year-level and composite classes. A student's previous class placements are considered as part of this process; however, students may be placed in a composite class more than once during their primary schooling.

Class Placement Process

Class placement is a careful and collaborative process.

1. Classroom teachers contribute their knowledge of each student's learning, social, emotional, behavioural and support needs, including relevant information shared by families throughout the year.
2. Current teachers work with their cohort colleagues and the leadership team to develop balanced class groupings. They consider students' learning needs, work habits, friendships, peer dynamics and the students who work well together.
3. The leadership team reviews proposed groupings, with input from other relevant staff where needed.
4. Adjustments may be made to improve the balance of classes or respond to enrolment, staffing or student needs.

Teachers may not have been allocated to particular classes when student groupings are developed. Classes are not formed around anticipated teacher allocations.

CLASS PLACEMENT POLICY

Placement Considerations

When forming classes, staff consider a range of factors, including:

- individual learning needs and achievement
- health and additional support needs
- social, emotional and behavioural needs
- work habits and independence
- positive peer connections and broader social dynamics
- the distribution of academic achievement, learning needs and support requirements across classes
- gender balance, where practicable
- significant family circumstances, including siblings where relevant
- previous class placements, including recent composite placements
- projected enrolments, class sizes, staffing, resources and facilities.

No single factor determines a student's placement. Each factor is considered in relation to the individual student and the needs and balance of the cohort as a whole.

Information from Parents and Carers

We value the information families share about their children and recognise that parents and carers bring an important understanding of their child's learning and wellbeing. Parents and carers are encouraged to discuss concerns about their child's learning, wellbeing or peer relationships with the current class teacher as they arise, so that support can be provided. Current teachers draw on their knowledge of students and information shared throughout the year when contributing to placement decisions. Families do not need to repeat information already shared unless circumstances have changed or there are further details for the school to consider.

As part of the planning process for the following year, the school provides a Class Placement Parent Information Form in Term 4. This optional form gives parents and carers an opportunity to share significant additional information about their child's learning, wellbeing or family circumstances that may be relevant to class placement. Its purpose is to help the school understand individual needs and circumstances.

Information shared by families is considered alongside staff knowledge and the needs of the whole cohort. Information should relate to the needs and circumstances of their own child. A preference for a child to be placed with, or apart from, another student can affect placement options for both students and other children across the cohort. Families' preferences may differ; for example, one family may prefer two children to be placed together, while the other would prefer them to be in separate classes. With generally two classes at each year level, these preferences can make it difficult to maintain balanced classes.

Completed forms must be submitted by the published closing date in Term 4. Instructions for accessing and submitting the form, including the closing date, will be communicated to families at that time. Information received after the closing date will only be considered where new or exceptional circumstances arise. By submitting the form, parents and carers acknowledge that the school determines class placements and that providing information does not guarantee a particular placement outcome.

Final Placements and Transition

Considerable time and professional judgement go into forming balanced classes. Once formally confirmed, individual placements are considered final.

Where possible, class placements will be communicated before the end of Term 4. Changes in enrolments over the summer holidays or at any time during the school year may require the school to restructure classes. This may result in changes to previously communicated placements.

The school provides transition activities to help students prepare for their next year of schooling and build positive connections with peers and staff. Where concerns arise about a placement, the school will work with the student and family to support a positive transition. If a student experiences difficulties after the school year begins, parents and carers are encouraged to speak with the class teacher. The leadership team and Student Services Team can provide additional support where needed.

CLASS PLACEMENT POLICY

Appendix 1: Further Reading – Composite Classes

Families who would like to learn more about composite classes may find the following resources helpful. They explain how composite classes can support learning, friendships and social development, and the importance of effective teaching in meeting students' needs.

- University of Technology Sydney – My child is in a composite class. Is this a good thing? (February 2023)
Dr Katherine Bates explains why schools form composite classes and addresses common parent questions. The article discusses potential social and emotional benefits, acknowledges varied research findings about academic outcomes, and highlights the importance of teaching quality and communication between families and schools.

[Read the article by Dr Katherine Bates](#)

- Australian Primary Principals Association – Composite Classes: Stages, Not Ages (December 2024)
A short explainer outlining potential benefits of composite classes, including opportunities for individualised learning, collaboration, leadership and social development. It also highlights the importance of quality teaching.

[Read the APPA composite classes explainer](#)

These resources provide general information. For details about class structures, curriculum and placement processes at West Leeming Primary School, please refer to this policy or speak with school leadership.

Appendix 2: Class Placement Parent Information Form

Parents and carers may use this form to share significant additional information about their child's learning, wellbeing or family circumstances that may assist the class placement process.

The form can be accessed using the link or QR code below. Families will be notified through the school newsletter when the form opens and advised of the closing date.

Please read the Class Placement Policy before completing the form.



[Class Placement Parent Information Form – Fill in form](#)