



4.2.1

## St Leonard's Primary School Class Grouping Policy

### **Rationale:**

Learning experiences need to be structured to acknowledge prior learning and to enable children to move from the known to the unknown.

For successful learning to occur it is important that children are:

- Confident in their ability to succeed
- Motivated to learn
- Encouraged to take risks
- Encouraged to share in the responsibility for their own learning and co-operation with others
- Actively engaged in their own learning
- Challenged to think

Learning experiences need to be:

- Relevant to the learner
- Purposeful
- Interesting
- Appropriate for all ability levels

### **Aims:**

To place children in well balanced class groups where children are encouraged in a supportive environment, which allows them to be successful learners. Such an environment helps build a healthy self-concept in the children, which enables them to grow in terms of their spiritual, physical, intellectual, social, emotional and aesthetic needs.

The School aims to provide a comprehensive and challenging learning program to meet the needs of all students. Students' learning is enhanced when classes are small and comprise students with a variety of abilities and interests.

- The school should make maximum use of available rooms and staff to form the smallest classes possible.
- Each class should include students with a wide variety of abilities and interests.
- Foundation classes should be as small as practical.
- Where possible composite classes will not cross AusVELS levels.
- The following issues will be considered when allocating students to classes.
  1. Need or otherwise for a balanced number of girls and boys
  2. Need for a well balanced academic group
  3. Need for a socially compatible group
  4. Need to redistribute certain groups of students
  5. Possible conflict situations eg. Student/student, student/teacher or parent/teacher
  6. Students with particular learning needs or behavioural concerns
  7. Varying degrees of independence.
- The school will provide the best arrangement for staff to plan and execute curriculum. This is where possible a composite arrangement so as to involve a larger group of teachers.

### **Benefits of grouping**

- Multiage/composite groups supports younger children constantly having a model of how older children cope and act in a variety of situations and so learn consciously and subconsciously acceptable standards of work and behaviour.
- Composite classes provide an opportunity for students to relate socially to at least one other age group as well as their own.
- Older children have the opportunity to become good role models showing responsibility, understanding, care, concern, awareness and respect for different levels of development.
- It is believed that children in well balanced structured classes have greater self esteem, feel more successful, like school better and have better attitudes to school work. Well structured classes develop qualities of leadership, independence, mutual support and co-operative learning.
- Teaching in a multiage/composite class compels the teacher to think of children as individuals who differ in their rate of progress and to create situations which contribute to the child's self-discipline and positive self concept.
- The image of the teacher in a single role of instructing, organising and supervising is no longer a true image. The teacher today has multiple roles to play with a focus on interaction between student, teacher and the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes.
- The level of teamwork between staff is increased when working in a common level.

### **Implementation:**

- At the beginning of term 4 the principal will make a presentation to staff as to the possible classroom arrangements for the following year based on the August census information.
- The Principal in consultation with the School Leadership Team will make the final decision on the class structure.
- Parents will be advised through the weekly Link publication of the class structures for the following year. At the same time they will be invited to contact the principal directly if they have issues in regards to the placement of their child based on Educational reasons.
- The principal will make no guarantees and assurances at this time but will however take note of all requests and do his/her best to accommodate when the basis of the request is on educational grounds.
- Children choose 5 friends they think will support them in their social and academic learning for the following year. Children will be guaranteed at least one friend from their list. This may be affected by parental requests for their child to be placed with a particular teacher.
- Teachers will finalise class lists and submit to the principal for final approval.
- Children will receive verbal notification towards the end of the year as to which class they will be in for the following year followed by a 45 min class orientation with their new class teacher.
- Parents will receive formal notification included in the end of year report as to which class their child has been placed for the following year.

### **Evaluation:**

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's review cycle.

**This policy was reviewed by the School Leadership Team in 2014. It will be reviewed again in 2017.**