



Class Placement Administrative Procedures

Early Light Academy has a procedure in place for allocating students into classes each year. The procedure ensures that the professional judgment of the School Leadership Team and Teaching Staff is informed by input from parents and care-givers and that available information is applied to the placement process. Although class placements can be a sensitive issue, the interests of all children are paramount to the decisions taken by the school.

PURPOSE

Individual class placements are based on professional judgments about meeting the student's educational needs, circumstances, and interests.

This policy aims to:

- Provide clarity to the Early Light Academy community regarding the process for class placement of students;
- Ensure an equitable outcome for all students;
- Provide each student with the opportunity to be part of a class that will allow them the best opportunity to learn;
- Form well-balanced classes of students that take into account the social, emotional, and academic characteristics of each student;
- Ensure classes are formed to provide the best possible learning environment for students within the constraints of the resources available to the school;
- Provide a clear framework to be applied by the School Leadership Team and Teaching Staff when determining class placements for students; and
- Provide parents and care-givers with information on the procedure and opportunities for their input to the process.

Rationale

Class placements are based on professional judgments about meeting a student's educational needs, circumstances, and interests.

Individual class placements can have significant effects on a student's attainments and must be based on professional judgements about the student's educational needs, circumstances, and interests.

A clearly defined process for the placement of students into classes will lead to greater efficiency, increased understanding, and improved opportunities for learning.

Process

- The Principal and Leadership Team make decisions about the number and structures of classes for the forthcoming year, based on student enrollments and school resources.
- The allocation of staff to classes is determined after consideration of the following:
 - ✓ Teacher preferences
 - ✓ Past experience, professional skills, and expertise of teachers
 - ✓ Professional learning goals of staff
 - ✓ The creation of effective, balanced teams
 - ✓ The need for new teachers at the school
 - ✓ The strategic plan and goals of the school
- Parents are invited, via a notice in the newsletter, to supply relevant information regarding the perceived needs of their children during the placement process by filling out a “Learning Disclosure.” These letters will be dated upon receipt. Where relevant information is supplied by the due date, this will be considered based on individual and school needs. If issues or information supplied is of an ongoing nature, requests need to be made on an annual basis. Requests inform decisions made by the school or determine, but do not guarantee a certain outcome. Requests for particular teachers constitute only one component of the comprehensive process, but that information is considered.
- Staff members, including those currently teaching particular cohorts, confer regarding placements for the following year, taking into consideration the criteria listed below:
 - ✓ Gender balance
 - ✓ Behavior
 - ✓ Academic performance
 - ✓ Special abilities and needs
 - ✓ Social and physical maturity
 - ✓ Special considerations regarding family situations.
 - ✓ Support of children for whom English is a second language
 - ✓ Information supplied by parents and/or relevant support personnel
 - ✓ Social networks/dynamics
 - ✓ Previous class placements – Where possible students should not be placed in composite classes in consecutive years.
- Decisions are made with a view to establishing balanced and equitable class groups that will work well together.
- Staff members will not encourage parents to request certain teachers.
- Class lists are submitted to the administration for review and final ratification.
- Staff members will not disclose the composition of proposed classes prior to any formal announcements.
- Once class lists are published, given the rigorous and meticulous nature of the comprehensive placement process, requested changes will be considered only under exceptional circumstances.
- The ultimate decision for student and teacher placement rests with the administration. Under exceptional circumstances, the administration may re-organize class placement throughout the year.
- Children who enroll at the school during the year will be temporarily allocated to classes, with the possible need to alter their placement once further information is known about the child.

- Where students enroll after classes have been established, they will be allocated to a class based on class numbers and availability.
- Class lists will not be distributed to parents due to privacy reasons.

PARENT AND CARE-GIVER COMMITMENT

Parents and care-givers commit to supporting the school's Student Placement Procedure by:

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

SCHOOL COMMITMENT

The School commits to supporting the Student Placement Procedure by:

- Using informed professional judgement when deciding class placements; and
- Considering all available information, including that received from parents and care-givers, to assist the process.

COMMON QUESTIONS:

- 1. Why is class placement the sole responsibility of the school?** As professional educators, we strive to make the right choices by 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 judgments to meet the needs of every student.
- 2. Can I request my child to be placed with another child or not placed with another child?** Parents may request this but need to give clear reasons why this is being requested. Again, while requests are considered, they do not determine outcomes. We want children to be able to work and socialize with a variety of other children and build skills to make new friends. In addition, sometimes we may get competing requests from parents, where one parent wants their child to be in a class with a friend but the friend's parents have requested that they not be in the same class. Friendships can change throughout elementary school -students leave, more students arrive, and so it is important for your child to develop friendship skills rather than always having the same friends. Near the end of every year, parents are reminded that they can write to the school requesting student placement based on educational issues - not friendship groups or choice of teacher. While the requests are considered, the final decision is made by the school.
- 3. When will I know my child's placement?** Parents of children in grades 1-6 are able to see their student's class placement in Aspire approximately one week before the start of school. Parents of kindergarteners will be notified of class placement upon completion of kindergarten testing.
- 4. What if my child or I am unhappy with my child's placement?** Class placements are considered final. Changing one student 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 may talk to the administration about their concerns, but changing a

student's placement is rare. The administration and the classroom teacher will work with the parents and students to help them positively adjust to their new class.