



Tuesday 27th October 2020

Re: CLASS PLACEMENTS FOR 2021

Dear Parents and Caregivers

Class placements over the last few years have become more and more challenging and complex.

I think it's crucial for you to understand the process we go through to place children, and know how much time and thought goes into making sure your child has the best possible year ahead. I am also including advice in this letter on how you can communicate any essential information regarding your child, prior to classes being confirmed.

Key points to note:

- We have 360+ children to place into classes for the start of the year. We forecast this to grow over the year and need to make provision for this too.
- We consider the needs of each and every one of the children.
- All staff are involved and spend hours assisting with the process, putting a huge amount of thought in.
- "One simple change or request" at a late stage in the process creates a domino effect and significantly impacts on previous decisions and creates new issues.
- Teacher numbers are allocated to schools by the Ministry of Education and are directly related to roll numbers. It is our job to effectively use our allocation as best we can.
- That said, we have finite options of classes and combinations.
- Children will make and establish friends and settle into a class way better than we often think, as long as they get lots of encouragement and support, and do not hear negative reactions to classes they have been placed in.
- Teachers for syndicates and classes have not yet been confirmed for 2021.

CHILDREN'S VOICE

Each year we try to place each child with at least one friend so we ask for some suggestions from children. This year we are asking you to talk with them about who will help them to learn, not just who they socialise with.

On the last page there is a slip for you to fill out, with your child, and return to their class teacher by **Wednesday 4 November**.

PARENTS VOICE

We will consider information that is considered "**important and critical**" about a child's academic, social or pastoral care needs.

Please let us know in writing (or by email) by filling in the form over the page and advising the school by **Wednesday 4 November**. This is the **CLOSING and FINAL** date, please do not make "suggestions" after this date requesting us to make changes as it is too late.

This information must be about your child's needs, **not about your preferences for choosing a teacher**. If information is sensitive, you may make an appointment to come and talk to me or Neil Preston, Deputy Principal. Please let us know in writing in an envelope to the office or in an email to the address below

The email to send this information to classes2021@greytown.school.nz

CONSIDERATIONS

I will take into account children's and parents' voices as best I can, but will not promise to fulfil every suggestion. That is just not possible, nor is it always appropriate.

STAFF EXPERTISE AND PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE

From here Senior Leaders and teachers take into consideration suggestions, friend requests etc, however most of our decisions are based on years of professional knowledge and expertise of teaching and personal knowledge of all the children in our school.

We look at

- Social eg: friends, different combinations of personalities, children to separate
- Academics eg: specific learning needs
- Gender and Year group balance
- Leadership and/or role models
- Pastoral care needs
- Strengths of teachers

TRIAL RUNS

Once our placements are made, we will have a trial run and have children group together in their new class. Changes made following this trial will be made **only** on the ground of issues identified by the **school staff**. It is not a second chance to seek changes. It is parents and caregivers' responsibility to encourage their children to enjoy and make a success of their new class.

FINALLY

I ask parents to please respect this process. Previously, classes were not announced until the day before school went back in the new year. I would not wish to return to this, as I love children having a voice and firmly believe in the idea that children can be prepared and get excited over the holidays.

Please trust and support us to use our professional skills and personal knowledge of your child. Our goal is exactly the same as yours – to have your children happy, learning and succeeding as best they possibly can. As stated above we create classes that your child will succeed in.

Thanks

Patrice O'Connor

Principal

One slip per child in the family - Further copies in the office available.

PLEASE GIVE THESE TO YOUR CLASS TEACHER

CLASS 2021 FRIEND INFORMATION FOR CHILDREN

Please talk with your child and help them to identify 4 friends or children that they would like to have at least one of in their class next year.

My Child's name:

Current 2020 Class:

I would like to learn with

1.
2.
3.
4.

Please return this slip back to your classroom teacher by **Wednesday 4th November.**

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