

Some wisdom about Class Allocations

Each year when we begin the process of setting class lists for the following year we invite parents to let us know if there are particular educational needs their child has which might impact class placement. Over the past few years the majority of requests we receive are regarding the child's social group or a parent preference for a particular teacher.

School is the formative place for young people to begin to explore a world beyond the home. They begin to discover the differences between being friends and being friendly, how to work with people that might have different views and skills, how to develop positive, respectful relationships with a broader range of people and how to deal with change.

The hope for all parents and educators is that we can best equip our young people for a world where they can be effective and affective, can work to bring change in the world and demonstrate a respect and care for all. They will move into a variety of working lives and research shows that each is likely to have a much larger number of jobs and job types than their parents.

For a child changing classes at the end of the year brings uncertainty, a little reluctance, a little excitement, a little nervousness and a little anxiety. It also brings opportunity to practice the skills they will need to enter a new workplace and form effective working relationships with co-workers.

As adults we are aware that a change of workplace means leaving those friendships we have developed in our work life. Some friendships are strong and continue outside of our work life and are nurtured and maintained in our social life. Others are replaced by new working friendships which support and engage us in our new workplace but may or may not last beyond that placement.

This is exactly what children have an opportunity to learn as they change class. Being kept with only the same group, or the same teacher robs them of the learning about how to experience change, to grow relationships, to become more quickly comfortable in new situations and to take control of what is possible in their environment.

We hope that our parents trust that we know our students well; both individually and collectively. We plan classes with great care and discussion balancing the wellbeing, learning and social aspects of each child and class. We consider teacher skills and styles, support requirements and opportunities as well as the requests of the children as to their preferences for peers in their new class.

When the conversations in your house turn to next year please look at the opportunity given to you to discuss how changing workplaces is a reality and how we grow as people each time we form new working relationships with peers and bosses. Talk to them about your experiences, about the things that worked well and please avoid tales of woe!