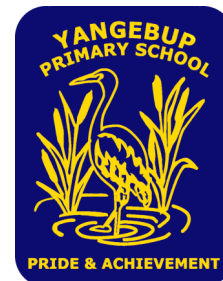




Department of
Education



YANGEBUP PRIMARY SPLIT CLASS POLICY

Updated September 2025

Sometimes parents express concerns when their child has been allocated to a split grade class and believe that it may be a disadvantage to their child. It is important that you, as parents, are aware that contrary to these beliefs there is no disadvantage to a student being in a split grade class.

In years gone by composite classes were formed by placing talented students in the lower grade level with lower achievers in the higher grade. This concept has long been abandoned. All classes are formed by teachers and school leaders sitting and placing students with a range of information available to make classes as balanced as possible (see our Class Placement Policy).

Why do you create split classes?

There will almost always be a need to have split classes at Yangebup Primary School. This is because of the way we are funded and the fact that we are a relatively small school. Funding is allocated to public schools on a per student basis and this is calculated by the number of students we have enrolled on the census date in March.

The size of each year's cohort can vary considerably depending on enrolments but we still only receive a total amount of funding for the overall number of students. This means that in order to ensure that all classes are an appropriate size, split grade classes may need to be formed.

How does the school decide the classes each year?

The principal and the staff take into consideration the student numbers and individual needs in each year group, the recommended class sizes for each year group and the total number of staff the budget can afford. Various scenarios are examined by staff and evaluated based on the needs throughout the whole school. The final decision is made by the principal.

How do teachers cater academically for more than one grade in a class?

Teachers are skilled at delivering the required curriculum. In addition, teachers must adapt the curriculum to suit the needs of individual learners within the classroom. A split grade class generally has very little extra variation in the needs of learners than a straight grade. Each year the curriculum builds on the curriculum from the year before so, in order to cater for the different needs of students, teachers are consistently teaching above and below that year's curriculum requirements. The difference in academic ability and maturity can vary by about 5 years across a straight grade class and 5 or 6 in a split grade class. Research by Professor John Hattie into the effect sizes of factors that influence achievement show that split grade classes make no difference to the academic outcomes of students. In fact, the factor that has the largest influence by a very large margin is teacher quality.

What about socially?

Children benefit enormously from having friends outside of their year group. It allows them to develop a wider group of friends which gives them more options in the playground, greater connections across the school and can

benefit them within the wider community. It helps them build social skills which has long term effects for building resiliency. Children in composite classes have nothing to fear but plenty to enjoy.

Excursions / Programs:

Excursions are generally organised by individual classes not by year groups. This is because excursions are related to class programs. Sometimes two classes will choose to coordinate aspects of their program and will plan excursions together. This does not mean that every child in that year level should be included in the excursion.

Some programs may be offered to year groups rather than classes when this is appropriate These may include swimming lessons, carnivals etc. Assemblies are also organised by classes not year groups. Again, some classes choose to combine, but it is still a class assembly not a year level one.

Still have concerns?

If you still have concerns, talk to your child's teacher about the program they are offering and how your child will be catered for.

Thank you for your understanding and ongoing partnership in your child's learning development.

Below is a link to an article from the Sydney Herald addressing this issue for parents:

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/education/many-parents-dislike-composite-classes-but-the-evidence-does-not-support-their-anxiety-20150413-1mk4g9.html>