

Belgrove Senior Girls' School

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Introduction

This policy is the product of a whole staff collaboration in conjunction with parents, teachers and the Board of Management of Belgrove Senior Girls' N.S.

Reconstituting classes benefits all children from a social, developmental, behavioural and academic point of view. It is desirable that, in the early years of Primary School, children should have the opportunity to be classmates with as many of the children as possible from their own year. This is important for the social development of each child.

Reconstituting classes affords children the opportunity to get used to change within a safe environment, and with the support of teachers, parents and their peers. It also allows the children to gain a broader experience of other children with different personalities within their school. The process of forming new friendships is a life skill which is important to develop.

Rationale:

Belgrove Senior Girls' is committed not only to the intellectual and spiritual development of each pupil, but also their emotional and social development. It is in this context that we promote the importance of positive relationships and endeavour to equip the pupils with the necessary skills to form and sustain friendships with their peers via our Reconstitution Policy.

The benefits of Reconstitution include:

- (i) Facilitate mixed ability teaching & learning.
- (ii) Provide pupils with the opportunity to get to know other pupils within their year group.
- (iii) Afford new opportunities where difficult peer relationships have developed.
- (iv) Children experience and learn to cope with change in a safe and secure environment.
- (v) Provide preparation for secondary school.

Aims and Objectives of this policy

- To provide a framework for the Reconstitution of our second classes;
- Maximise learning outcomes for each pupil;
- Develop children's social skills and better equip them to form new friendships;

Procedure for reconstituting classes

The process of forming new friendships is a key life skill that is important to develop. The positive and supportive attitude from parents has been a key element in achieving successful outcomes in previously reconstituted classes.

During the second term of second class, the SPHE programme has a focus on 'Friendship'. Teachers teach a series of lessons on the importance of friends and what friendship means. This acts as the precursor to the Reconstitution process. Furthermore, pupils from the three second classes begin to mix on a regular basis for certain subjects and activities in order to get to know pupils outside of their immediate class.

Moreover, it is important to note that the school prioritises friendship throughout a pupil's tenure in Belgrove Senior Girls'. The building and maintaining of friendships each and every year across all year groups within the school is a key objective for staff. This is highlighted in themed weeks such as *Friendship Week* in Term 1 along with our Religious Education and Weaving Wellbeing lessons throughout the year.

In term 3, the teachers in conjunction with their class assigned SET teachers and the school Principal will formally discuss the reconstitution of classes and new class formation.

The initial step in the process will use individual pupil scores from assessments conducted during term time to randomly assign pupils based on their individual scores to three separate classes. This will ensure a broad variety of mixed academic abilities across each new class.

There are several other factors outside of academic ability (listed below) which must be considered when reconstituting a class and which cannot be quantified. Therefore, the class teachers involved, in consultation with relevant school staff, as professionals, can make changes to these initial classes, if there is good reason, but the elements listed below must be maintained.

- Balance of educational abilities.
- Emotional and behavioural requirements.
- Class dynamics
- Medical needs.
- Family considerations e.g. twins

Thus, staff involved in the Reconstitution process will have the authority based on their prior knowledge of pupils, professional discretion and opening observations of the mixed – ability classes initially created, to move pupils from one class to another, in order to ensure balance across all three classes.

Class lists are finalised at the end of this process and are sent to parents/guardians in June. Where possible, the school will endeavor to make parents aware of their daughter's newly reconstituted class teacher prior to the summer holidays. Please note, this may not always be possible to change based on current teacher shortage, main redeployment panel etc.

A social event allowing the pupils and parents from the newly reconstituted classes the opportunity to officially meet for the first time in their new classes will be organised by the school for the end of June.

Conclusion

This policy was formulated to ensure the formation and reconstitution of classes is carried out in the best interests of all pupils and in a fair and transparent manner.

Once class lists have been finalised, there will be no scope to re-arrange, as this is school policy and was accepted as a condition of enrolment when entering second class.

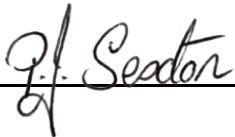
Parents know that this process is carried out with great care and professionalism and that each child's interest are carefully considered. Children adapt very easily and become very open and flexible in their social interactions with their new classmates.

Review

The policy of Reconstitution has been in operation since the school year 2020 / 2021. This newly adopted policy will supersede the previous policy for the school year 2023 / 2024 having been ratified by the Board of Management on **26-02-24**.

This policy was officially adopted by the Board of Management of Belgrove Senior Girls' N.S. on **26-02-24**. Date of next policy review: **February 2026** or sooner if deemed necessary.

Signed on Behalf of the Board of Management:

Signed:  Date: 26-02-24

Dr. P.J. Sexton

Chairperson of the Board of Management

Frequently Asked Questions:

Why can my daughter no longer list the names of her friends to ensure she has one good friend in her new class?

Feedback from parents who have gone through the Reconstitution Process to the BoM over the last two years have highlighted that the procedure of listing friends for the *friendship circle* (required in previous reconstitution process) caused a lot of unnecessary stress and anxiety for the children and requested it be removed.

Will the Board of Management seek feedback on the Reconstitution Process?

The Reconstitution Policy will be reviewed every two years by the Board of Management. During the review process, a Google Forms document will be sent to parents of the most recent year group to be reconstituted in order to collect feedback which will in turn be analysed.

What can I do to help my daughter settle into her new class?

In our experience, we believe proactive parenting by organising play dates over the summer months can be very beneficial and help re-affirm / create new friendships with pupils from the second class year group.