Rationale
There needs to be a clear and consistent policy in the formation and allocation of classes at Newtown North Public School. This is to ensure that students and teachers are treated equitably and according to their needs within the organisational structure of the school as defined by DET policy and guidelines.

Forming classes
The school structure and the formation of classes at Newtown North Public School must meet Department of Education and Training Policy and Guidelines. The Principal, in consultation with teaching staff, designs a school structure that best meets the needs of students. Class structures are proposals based on the projected numbers for the following year. This process begins in Term 4 and involves a great deal of analysis and discussion. Generally final structures cannot be decided until the total school enrolments are known in the following year.

The main factors taken into consideration are:
1. DET Guidelines, policies and current educational research:
   • projected numbers and staffing formula
   • various DET policies designed to address equity issues for particular student groups
   • current research about the organizational structures and management options that best cater for particular learning needs
2. The student(s): their educational, social and emotional needs and background
3. Organizational alternatives and decisions: class structures are formed in the best interests of ALL students and the school. The principal has the delegated authority and responsibility to determine the final make up of classes.

1. DET Policy, Guidelines and current educational research

DET Guidelines
Schools are staffed according to the total number of students. There is no allowance made for the number of students in a particular year. The total number of enrolments determine the class structures that must be adhered to according to the Department of Education Class Size Reduction Program.
Currently classes are formed as follows:
• 20 students in kindergarten classes
• 22 students in Year 1 classes
• 24 students in Year 2 classes
• 30 students in Year 3 to 6 classes
Classes numbers are averaged out across the state so classes can exceed the recommended number.

DET Policy and current educational research
The DET has policies in relation to particular student groups, (e.g. English Second Language, Special Needs, Gifted and Talented,). The purpose of identification is always to better cater for the particular learning needs of students, NOT to label students. DET policies are based on best practice and current research. In forming class structures these policies must be taken into consideration along with equity issues such as
• available staff
• resources and space
• the balance of linguistic, gender, religious and cultural diversity
2. The student(s)

In Term 4 the Principal begins the consultation process with teachers. The educational, social and emotional needs and background learning needs of individual students and particular student groups (e.g. Special Needs, Gifted and Talented, English Second Language, Language Support etc) are taken into consideration:

**Educational needs**
- academic performance, particularly in Reading as this subject underpins all other subject areas
- strengths, abilities and areas of need in different subject areas
- readiness, interests and learning preferences

**Considerations relating to students’ social and emotional needs**
- ability to work independently and co-operatively
- interpersonal and intrapersonal characteristics
- general observations from teachers about student groupings
- student leadership - balance of the elected leadership is to be maintained in senior classes
- personalities
- friendship groups
- whether a teacher and student have been together before

**Parent requests**
- Parental requests and any special considerations are to be made by Week 7 of Term 4.
- Parents need to direct their request to the school principal in writing. Written requests can be emailed to the school or delivered to the school office.

*Please note:* All requests will be given due consideration but there is no guarantee that the school will be able to accommodate parental or student requests.

4. Organizational alternatives and decisions:

There are many different models for organising classes and managing student instruction. At Newtown North Public School classes will be formed as follows:
- Students will be allocated to a class with one teacher for the year.
- Most classes will contain a mix of students of different abilities, interests, learning preferences and needs.
- Students who will benefit from being placed as a small group or ‘cluster’ (4 – 6 students) will be placed in a ‘mixed ability’ classroom so that they have a mini cohort.
- Clusters will consist of children with ‘like’ learning needs e.g. reading level
- The school will review and evaluate their processes at the end of each year.

Class structures are formed in the best interests of ALL students and the school. The principal has the delegated authority and responsibility to determine the final make up of classes.

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1 Where appropriate the placement with a friend will be given consideration as long as the relationship is not a distraction from the focus on the curriculum. Where teachers feel that a relationship, though strong, is not in the best interest of a child’s personal, social or academic development placement will be made in separate classes. It should be noted that helping a child develop a broad circle of friends is in the long term best interest of students.