

Dear Parents/Caregivers

A Note on Composite Classes

We are aware that there has been some discussion amongst you, on the subject of composite classes. Perhaps this will help to explain the situation:

As you know, we are a growing school. How the school is funded and staffed is dictated largely by the Ministry of Education. For most of this term we have been negotiating with MoE for more staffing to allow for this growth, without success –as part of their fiscal policy they have tightened up considerably, and are not allowing any leeway.

For this reason we have to operate within the restrictions this places on us.

The numbers of children, particularly in the middle school, mean that we have had to return to composite classes –otherwise some of the classes would have been significantly over 30 children, with all the disadvantages this brings –more crowded rooms, more noise, less opportunity for teachers to work with individual children.

You will know that we have always had composite classes –most of the junior classes and all of the Year 7-8 classes have been so for many years. It is only recently that “straight” classes have been used in the middle school.

Be assured that contrary to myth there is no research available that indicates that there is any advantage in straight classes. It is quite possible in fact to get a greater range of maturity, behaviour and academic level in a straight class than is shown in the children’s chronological ages over two year levels.

One of the strengths of our teachers is that they teach to the levels and needs of the children –this is more relevant than the child’s year level.

There is no doubt that if we were allocated more funds, more staffing and more facilities we would manage this differently –but we can only work within what is provided to us by the Ministry of Education.

Regards

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