Class Placement Policy

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Location

All Coburg High School policies are located under the 'community tab' on Compass, sub-section 'School Documentation' and then 'Policies.

Language Opportunities

If you require this document to be translated into another language, please contact:
info@coburg.vic.edu.au

Se si richiede che questo documento sia tradotto in un'altra lingua, si prega di contattare:
info@coburg.vic.gov.au

Εάν ζητήσετε να μεταφραστεί αυτό το έγγραφο σε άλλη γλώσσα, επικοινωνήστε με την ηλεκτρονική διεύθυνση
info@coburg.vic.edu.au

यदि आपको इस दस्तावेज़ को किसी अन्य भाषा में अनुवादित करने की आवश्यकता है, तो कृपया संपर्क करें:
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اگر شما نیاز دارید که این سند به زبان دیگری ترجمه شود ، لطفاً با این آدرس تماس بگیرید: info@coburg.vic.edu.au

หากคุณต้องการแปลเอกสารนี้เป็นภาษาอื่นกรุณาติดต่อ: info@coburg.vic.edu.au

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Purpose

To explain to our school community how we plan for, and approach class placements, both within the school year and for the upcoming year.

Policy

Coburg High School is a large secondary school and the organisation of classes, class structures and class compositions is a significant responsibility.

The Principal, in consultation with staff and after considering student numbers, determines the number of classes for each year, class sizes and the year levels of each class.

Under some circumstances the Principal may approve the reorganisation of classes throughout the year.

Core classes/Coburg Connect classes

The percentage of time students spend in their 'core' class is highest in Year 7 and gradually reduces through the years as students are afforded more choice via electives. As an example, a Year 7 student spends almost 90% of their week with the same group of peers, whereas a Year 10 student spends below 30% with the same group of peers.

The process of building core classes begins months before the end of the school year and involves consulting with Student Support, Wellbeing, Inclusion and Coburg Connect teams within the school, and feeder primary schools with regard to incoming Year 7s. Draft classes of students are created and consideration given to educational/academic/social/emotional/behavioural needs of the students, size and gender balance, class placements in previous years, and class observations. Year 7 is further impacted by the need to balance student numbers from our varying feeder primary schools; and both Year 7 & 8 core classes are further impacted by student choices regarding language and performing arts preferences; and literacy intervention needs. Our primary goal is to create balanced academic environments that support our school values of excellence, community, curiosity and integrity.

Elective class placement processes

Coburg High School runs a process for each year level whereby students can select their preferred electives for the upcoming school year within a given set of parameters. To support student understanding of their choices Coburg High School produces subject handbooks for Year 9 - 12 with information about subject offerings, and runs student assemblies to support key dissemination of information (including for students going into Year 8). Further supports to help with decision making include:

- Course counselling sessions for students going into Years 10 & 11; and opt-in course counselling sessions for students going into Year 12. Parents/guardians are encouraged to attend these sessions.
- Subject selection expo for students going into Year 11
- Parent Information Evening for students going into Years 9 - 11
- Access to Learning Area Leaders (including of Vocational Major) and Coburg Online Google Sites (COGS) to further support understanding of the curriculum and requirements
- Access to a full time Careers Adviser
- Year level excursions to tertiary providers (eg Melbourne, Latrobe and RMIT Universities) in Years 9 - 11; as well as opt in excursions to TAFE providers (eg Melbourne Polytechnic) and encouragement to attend tertiary Open Days to help students connect current studies to future pathways.

The volume of student requests impacts the number of electives run, as well as other constraints such as teaching and resource availability. When students have a 'clash' in electives (2 or more on at the same time) the computer program that is used to allocate students to electives makes a choice based on the students' ranking of those electives.

Students make these selections early in Term 3 and learn in Term 4 which electives they have been allocated for the upcoming school year. When there is a change of preference for an elective, a process exists in Term 4 to request a subject change. The ability to change electives depends on whether space is available and whether it aligns with the student's other subjects. It is only in rare circumstances that a student's electives are changed once the semester has commenced, and this must be approved by both the Student Support Team and the timetabler. Students cannot request to change the 'line' of their elective (for example a VCE student wishing to study Biology in Line 1 rather than Line 2) - only the subject itself. Students must provide reasoning for the request.

Requests for placement based on curriculum grounds

CHS is proud to offer a subject selection process that places student choice at its centre, supported by comprehensive information and access to a broad range of subjects. We understand that students' interests and goals may evolve, and therefore structured opportunities are provided—at the end of each academic year, and at the end of each semester for VCE students—to request subject changes. When submitted through this formal process, and where requests align with available resources and CHS's subject selection guidelines, every effort will be made to accommodate them. However, requests made outside these designated periods—including those related to ability- or choice-based subjects such as Spanish or Mathematics—will not be considered. This approach ensures consistency, fairness, and respect for the integrity of the school's curriculum planning and resource allocation processes.

We encourage students to engage thoughtfully in the selection process and to commit to the subjects they have chosen, recognising the value of following through with their decisions and learning from the full experience.

Students who arrive during the school year

Students who enrol at CHS during the year will be allocated to classes and electives where space is available, with the possible need to alter the placement once further information regarding the student is known.

Requests for placement with/without certain teachers

Teachers at Coburg High School are committed educators and Coburg High School strives to ensure that all students are provided with a high quality education. We are generally unable to accommodate any requests for a student to be with/without a particular teacher. If there are exceptional circumstances regarding a request (for example, the student is directly related to a teacher) this must be brought to a member of the Principal team.

Teachers are afforded opportunities to express interest in teaching particular year levels and subjects. The Learning Area Leaders consult with the Timetabler to ensure a balance of experience and expertise occurs across all year levels and works with the Assistant Principal of Teaching and Learning to provide Professional Development for teachers to continuously improve their craft.

Requests for placement with/without certain students

Coburg High School, by default, does not accommodate requests for students to be placed with friends or to be grouped or separated.

Coburg High School recognises the importance of fostering and maintaining friendships, and we actively support students in strengthening these relationships both within and beyond the classroom. At the same time, we believe it is equally important for students to engage with peers who have different interests, personalities, and perspectives. This helps to build essential skills such as communication, collaboration, adaptability, and conflict resolution.

Forming class groups based on friendships can lead to a range of challenges, including unfairly disadvantaged class dynamics, reduced academic focus, limited social development, increased risk of exclusion and cliques, and insufficient preparation for life beyond school. These concerns also apply when requests are made for students to be placed together for support reasons. All students have the right to pursue their education to the fullest extent, and Coburg High School maintains that it is not appropriate to place the burden of care or support on another child. Instead, we provide structured adult support through our teaching staff, Student Support, and Wellbeing teams.

Similarly, determining or changing class groupings to avoid unresolved conflict between students is not an appropriate or constructive approach. If students or families have concerns about conflict between students placed in the same class, they must inform the Student Support team who will then work to address these concerns through our established processes, including restorative practices that set clear expectations for respectful behaviour within learning environments. Teachers of the involved students will support this process. Please note that class change requests related to unresolved conflict will not be considered unless we have been given the opportunity to work through the concerns raised.

We recognise that some students experience anxiety related to their class groupings, which can affect their school attendance and overall wellbeing. While we understand that these feelings are very real and can be distressing, we do not make changes to class placements based on this alone. Instead, we work closely with families and refer students to appropriate support services, such as the school wellbeing team, to help them develop strategies to manage their anxiety and feel more confident in the school environment.

Community partners, such as doctors and psychologists, externally employed by families, may have suggestions which are based on the child they are treating and which do not encompass the entirety of the school's requirements. Coburg High School takes these into consideration, but families should be aware that not all of these exceptions or changes can occur.

Requests for students to repeat a year level

Our school will follow the Department of Education and Training policy in the Department's *Policy and Advisory Library* on Year Level Movement – see Repeating a Year Level policy.

We will regularly promote students to the next year level and will exercise our professional expertise and judgement in relation to these matters. Students are only able to repeat a year level in exceptional circumstances where Coburg High School considers it is required for the long-term benefit of the student e.g. considering their social, wellbeing and academic needs. We will ensure that parents/carers are advised of the options that we consider best meet individual student needs. Students will not repeat a year level without the consent of parents/carers.

Transition support

At the end of the year Coburg High School runs a 'Step Up' program that serves to prepare students for the learning they will be doing in Semester 1 of the upcoming year and receive any holiday homework tasks to be completed prior to Day One. It does not replicate the upcoming year's schedule or staffing as it is built using the current year schedule and staff; however it gives students the opportunity to meet new peers and the school the opportunity to test groupings of students and whole class dynamics. The school may make changes to classes based on observations made during a given time period. It is made clear to students that requests won't be received nor decisions made until after a transition period has occurred and been undertaken by students.

To commence each school year, further transition activities are organised in class, particularly in Coburg Connect, to support increased confidence amongst the new group.

All incoming Year 7s are supported through both a transition day towards the end of Grade 6 and a start up program at the commencement of Year 7 that focuses on the building of relationships and high school expectations. Some students receive additional transition support sessions in November and December if identified as being of greater need for this support.

Supporting young people who are anxious about class placements

Coburg High School recognises that transitions can be a time of heightened stress for some students and requests that students and families maintain respect for the professional judgment of the teachers in this process.

In cases where the school and families or students disagree on class placements, we encourage all parties to remember our shared goal, supporting the education and wellbeing of young people, even if the decision or outcome is different than desired.

Our classroom teachers, Coburg Connect staff, Student Support and Wellbeing teams are all available to assist students who may experience stress or anxiety related to class placements.

Families and external supports can help by fostering resilience, encouraging adaptability, and promoting a positive outlook on change. Emphasising the opportunities to maintain strong friendships across different classes and embracing the benefits of meeting new people can make transitions smoother for students.

Further Information and Resources

- Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership: Settling into a new class
- Headspace: transition from primary to secondary school - supporting your young person
- Victorian Department of Education: tips for starting school
- Education NSW: 5 things parents can do to make school transitions easier

Communication

- This policy will be communicated to our school community via the website and on Compass under School Documentation.
- This policy may also be discussed at parent information and transition events

Policy Review and Approval

Policy last reviewed	2025
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	2029