



Diocese of Broken Bay FUTURE LEARNING



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**AS A LEARNING ORGANISATION,
THE BROKEN BAY COMMUNITY OF
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IS COMMITTED
TO DISCIPLINED INQUIRY TO BUILD
DEEP UNDERSTANDING.**

We acknowledge the need for agile minds and ingenuity in our rapidly changing world and seek the latest research on learning and the advancements in technology to ignite curiosity and wonder of our community.

In our ongoing quest to respond adeptly to the diversity of our learners' individual needs as they progress towards intellectual independence, we are seeking more flexible learning infrastructures that support equity and excellence for every student.

It is our top priority to meet every learner at his or her point of challenge which is not defined by chronological age, particular grade or even stage. Flexible structures such as open learning spaces, multi-age groupings and co-teaching partnerships will assist us to be more dynamic in our response to students and create respectful and rigorous learning opportunities for learners.

In addition, greater flexibility will contribute to our ability to design more opportunities for meaningful collaboration, critical and creative thinking and assist students to develop the positive dispositions that will foster their success and confidence as learners.

We look forward to partnering with you as we embrace the opportunities of the future of learning in Broken Bay.

Definitions

Straight grade – Regular class with one teacher, eg. Year 3, Year 4 etc

Multi-age, composite or vertical group – Class includes students from two or more grade levels, usually with the one class teacher. These can include staged classes (eg. 1-2, 3-4), cross-stage classes (eg. 2-3, 4-5) or multi-stage classes (eg. K-1-2)

Large class – Larger group with more than the usual number of students which attracts extra teacher support during peak learning times

Open classroom – Class that includes 2 or more class/grade groupings with multiple teachers, usually in a more agile learning space.

FAQs

WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SAY ABOUT OPEN, CREATIVE LEARNING SPACES?

Research suggests innovative learning environments work best when students are able to take ownership of their learning, work with some autonomy and interact directly and indirectly with peers, teachers, technologies and the physical environment. Evidence suggests that creative learning environments have a positive impact on student motivation, engagement, concentration and social/emotional development.

HOW CAN WE ENSURE THAT STUDENTS WON'T BE OVERLOOKED?

Student-teacher ratios remain constant but additional teacher support provides more flexibility to work with groups and individuals. This can encourage student independence and the development of critical and creative thinking skills. Each student's progress is tracked through an ongoing assessment cycle and feedback provided to move them to the next step in their learning.

Students and teachers usually co-construct classroom routines and learn to negotiate and reflect on their learning. The flexibility of the spaces allows staff to continually monitor

students and move the furniture to suit their needs. Students also have opportunity to find a comfortable space or quiet area to work to aid focus when needed.

HOW IS STUDENT LEARNING PLANNED AND ASSESSED?

Teaching programs are based on NSW syllabus documents and arranged in stages over two years (Stage 1: Year 1 & 2; Stage 2: Year 3 & 4 etc.), apart from Early Stage 1 (Kindergarten). Student learning is assessed in the classroom and tracked at school leadership level to monitor student growth. School report grades assigned by teachers reflect the year group the student is in rather than the class grouping they are a part of.

HOW CAN WE CATER FOR STUDENTS WHO REQUIRE LEARNING SUPPORT AS WELL AS HIGH POTENTIAL LEARNERS?

NSW syllabus documents describe learning progressions from Kindergarten - Year 10. Teachers use syllabus outcomes and content to develop learning programs and can access content and processes both above and below the stage to meet different learning needs. Differentiated instruction is used to meet

FAQs

individual needs and may include open tasks, challenges and learning scaffolds. Learning Support teachers assist class teachers to make adjustments to meet the wide variety of learning needs in each class. The CSO provides Education Officers in Curriculum, Learning Support and Gifted Education to support schools.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR EACH STUDENT IN AN OPEN CLASSROOM?

Class teachers will have shared responsibility for the classroom learning and communication. If there is more than one teacher, the breakdown of the components will be clearly articulated to parents so that they know who the best contact person is regarding their child. It will always be a priority for teachers to collaborate and communicate to ensure a full and current understanding of each child's personal development and progress across the whole curriculum.

DO OTHER SCHOOLS AND SYSTEMS HAVE MULTI-AGE CLASSROOMS?

Most local State schools commonly use multi-age classes as they enrol students on a similar basis to local Catholic schools. Therefore, they modify school organisational structures each year to suit their intake numbers, not

the reverse, giving them greater enrolment flexibility. Many independent schools also utilise more flexible learning structures in line with contemporary education.

HOW ARE STUDENTS SELECTED TO GO INTO A MULTI-AGE CLASS?

School leaders carefully consider class placement for students and teachers in classes each year, regardless of their configuration. Things taken into considerations include: gender, academic needs, behavioural/emotional needs, socialisation and the physical environment. These classes may be designed for the full range of abilities or have a needs based focus that would be communicated by the school.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN STUDENTS HAVE TO SIT A FORMAL TEST SUCH AS NAPLAN?

With formal testing, such as NAPLAN, strict protocols and uniform processes and procedures will be followed to ensure all students complete the tests under similar conditions in order to maintain the integrity of the test. As far as NAPLAN achievement, research indicates that the quality of the teacher is the most influential factor, not the classroom structure.