

Enrolment, Class and Learning Group Size Policy and Procedure

Preamble

- 1.1. The German International School Sydney (GISS) aims to deliver outstanding educational outcomes – driven by a first class environment.
- 1.2. Being recognised as a German School Abroad by the German Government, GISS also recognises that there is an expectation to provide for temporary students from Germany in Sydney.
- 1.3. Entry is available in all grades depending upon vacancies; main entry grades to the School are the Preschool, Kindergarten, Year 7 and Year 11. The major commencement date is January, with additional intakes at the start and during each term (subject to availability).
- 1.4. To support the delivery of outstanding educational outcomes and to cater for the changing number of students, the following policy has been developed to guide class and learning group sizes.
- 1.5. This policy applies to all students and classes at GISS and the Principal is responsible for the implementation. Any deviation requires Board approval.

Learning Group Size Guidelines

- 2.1. Defining the target size of learning groups is influenced by several parameters:
 - a. Physical: area of a classrooms and its purpose; the current facilities at GISS are built for 24 students per class room; Preschool is built to cater for 39 students;
 - b. Level of individual support: more space in a class room is required, if students with (semi-)permanent support in form of additional teachers are present;
 - c. Level of differentiation: learning groups with a higher need for differentiation require more space in a class room than homogeneous learning groups;
 - d. Social: social competencies and cooperative learning is better achieved when learning groups are large enough to foster diversity in viewpoints;
 - e. Financial: a larger learning group with the same number of teaching hours delivers a better financial outcome for the school.
 - f. Licensing and Staffing ratio (Preschool only): the current children's services licence provides for a maximum of 39 children; under the National Quality Framework and its NSW-specific regulations, a minimum ratio of qualified teachers to students of 1:10 must be observed all the time; for compliance with this ratio, staffing must be one above ratio;

2.2. Target Learning Group Sizes ('target group size'):

- a. Pre-School: The maximum enrolment is 39 students per day (provided a minimum of 4 qualified teachers are with the students permanently).
- b. Years K to 10: **Learning groups aim not to exceed 22 students.**
An aim of 18 students applies to learning groups with students from different year levels (e.g. composite classes).
- c. Years 11 and 12: Learning groups aim not to exceed 18 students.

2.3. Target group sizes can be exceeded for up to six months with the following expanded group sizes ('expanded group sizes'):

- a. Pre-School: No oversubscription
- b. Years K to 10: **up to 25 students**
(the limit for learning groups with students from different year levels still applies)
- c. Years 11 and 12: up to 20 students

2.4. Where group sizes exceed the expanded group or expanded group sizes exist for more than six month, the learning group will be split (partitioned) in at least all subjects with 4 or more periods per week. Exceptions require Board approval.

2.5. Minimum learning group sizes:

- a. Students are able to elect either Religion or Ethics in Years 1 to 10. For the Religion learning group a minimum of 8 students is required.
- b. In Years 11 and 12, the minimum learning group size for standard level (SL) subjects is 5, for higher level (HL) subjects is 3. These limits do not apply for online courses.

Class streams: splitting and consolidation of classes

3.1. **Target class size** at GISS is **22 students**.

3.2. **Expanded class size** at GISS is **25 students** (at discretion of Principal).

3.3. Class sizes of **26 students and more require Board approval**

3.4. Splitting and consolidation of classes

- a. A minimum of 37 students per year group is required for a year group to be considered to be split into two classes (adding of a class stream). Decision to split/add a class requires approval by the Board.
- b. A year group with split classes will be combined into one class once the enrolments reduce to 28 students or less.

Enrolment Procedure

- 1.1. GISS enrolment is coordinated by the Registrar.
- 1.2. Applications for enrolment must be submitted using the official forms, meeting all requirements (as per 1.3), including supporting documentation, payments, signatures¹, etc.²
 - a. An application is considered 'received' by the school on the date all requirements are met. Once 'received' the application will be processed and can be taken into account for GISS planning (not before).
 - b. No commitments of GISS are made before the application is 'received' as planning depends on factors that GISS can't influence.
- 1.3. Enrolment requirements:
 - a. For students to have the full benefit of the school's academic program, certain language skills in either English and/or German are a prerequisite.
 - b. Students may be required to provide evidence of language proficiency. The School reserves the right to perform its own assessment.
 - c. An offer of enrolment may be conditional on the student attending additional language classes outside of normal school (cost not covered by school fees), if the school deems this necessary.
- 1.4. The following age limits apply for enrolments:
 - a. Preschool students must be at least 3 years old;
 - b. Kindergarten: must be at least 5 years old on 30 January of the year Kindergarten commences; students who turn 5 years before 30 June of the year Kindergarten commences, may be accepted (parents can apply for early enrolment and the student is assessed by GISS).
- 1.5. **Three times during the year, received applications are reviewed to inform school planning (31 March, 31 May and 31 August).** GISS aims to complete the respective planning cycle within a month (including Board discussion) – with **information on results/enrolment status as per 1.9 going to parents**
 - a. in the first week of May,
 - b. in the first week of July and
 - c. in the first week of October.

¹ Unless a parent has sole custody, the application must be signed by both parents.

² Any change of address and/or telephone number must be notified to the School Registrar in writing. The School cannot guarantee to maintain any place on respective lists, if correspondence concerning enrolment is unanswered.

- 1.6. Transition from 'Pre-School to Kindergarten' and 'Year 6 to Year 7' requires **confirmation of continuing enrolment** from parents to allow for school planning. This confirmation is to be requested from parents by 1 March and confirmation is to be **received by GISS by 31 March** (for the respective planning cycle).
- Current Pre-School and Year 6 students are guaranteed a place, if their confirmation is received by 31 March.
 - Where confirmations are not received by 20 March, the GISS registrar follows up with parents individually to ensure the request has been received and the potential implications of missing the 31 March deadline are understood.
 - A transition fee will be charged and will be non-refundable if student does not transition.
- 1.7. GISS aims **to process urgent applications** (immediate school starts within the following 2 months) **in between these dates**. Though depending on the context, including other applications received, GISS might not be able to confirm enrolment and commencement date immediately.
- 1.8. **Student applications at these review dates are prioritised by the date the application was 'received' (refer to 1.2.a), according to the following prioritisation** (from first to last priority):
- Existing students (Playgroup, Preschool to IB) have priority and are considered enrolled for all years as applicable to them (refer to 1.6 for additional requirements).
 - Siblings, if a sibling is enrolled³ or once it has been offered a place.
 - Company sponsored GISS students.
 - New GISS students.
- 1.9. **Student enrolment**, including enrolment status
- After completion of the assessment, the School will: offer a place; or offer a place on the waiting list; or decline to accept the application for enrolment. Should a place be offered, a Letter of Offer of Enrolment will be sent for completion and payment of the Enrolment Fee will be required. Enrolment is only completed if the Acceptance of Offer is returned and the Enrolment Fee paid within the period of offer as stated on the Letter of Offer of Enrolment.
 - If a student receives a place on the waiting list, the student will be considered for an offer, as per the waiting list, when the number of students falls under expanded/target class size.⁴ The student can then decide to join immediately or within the timeframe suggested by the school. If the student has been offered a place and does not start with the next school year, it will be removed from the waiting list and the application will be cancelled. The same applies if no decision has been made by the parents four weeks after the place has been offered.
 - If any student declines an offered place, the application will be cancelled. In these cases a new application and application fee is required should they wish

³ Subject to all fees for enrolled students are paid.

⁴ Includes cases where a class stream is added to a year and the average class size is thus reduced in this year.

to re-apply. Any application priority for a child is lost and the student is considered a 'new GISS student'.

- 1.10. By signing the application form parents / guardians have to confirm that all information provided are complete and correct, especially in regards to disclosure of medical and other considerations for inclusion. Failure to fully disclose all information requested with the application may result in the School declining, delaying or terminating a student's enrolment.

Document Management

Policy name	D-03 Enrolment, Class and Learning Group Size Policy and Procedure
Version	3.0
Version history	Based on v2.0 of the document with refinements on enrolment priorities (1.8)
School responsible	Principal
Board portfolio	D) Pedagogical and School Community
Related documents	
Status	Approved on 27 June 2016
Approved by	Erhard Seifert (Principal) and Dr. Ralf Dicke (Director)

The information contained in this document is proprietary to the German International School Sydney. Any distribution or copying without the written consent of the German International School Sydney is prohibited.