Purpose:
The policy is to assist staff when repeating or acceleration of a child is presented as a possibility by a parent or when the class teacher considers repeating or acceleration should be considered.

Guidelines:
The following procedures should be followed if repeating or acceleration is presented or considered as an option.

- At the commencement of Term 3 the child needs to be presented as a possible retention / acceleration issue to Student Welfare.
- Student Welfare will provide the classroom teacher with a checklist to help guide their professional judgement.
- Parents are contacted regarding areas of concern. A specific educational program is put in to place.
- During Term 3 Student Welfare is presented with issues relating to retention / acceleration.
- The classroom teacher, parents and principal meet to go through the 'Thinking of Repeating' checklist (attached)
- The parents talk with their child about how they feel about retention / acceleration.
- Decision is reached and transition procedures are set up for implementation during Term 4.

* If staff are approached by parents in Terms 3 or 4 promoting the idea of retention or promotion the above procedures need to commence at the fourth point.
THINKING OF REPEATING / ACCELERATING?

SOME POINTS TO CONSIDER:

Teachers will be contemplating upcoming placement for pupils in the following year. Some children may be considered for in-grade repetition or acceleration. It is essential that each child is evaluated independently and that the following factors are regarded fully by teachers and parents.

1. FACTORS RELATING TO THE CHILD:

(a) Physical Size:
If a child differs greatly in size from their peers, additional problems may occur. i.e. bullying, poor self concept.

(b) Physical Disabilities:
Consider vision difficulties, hearing loss, speech problems which may affect learning.

(c) Academic Potential:
Has the child the ability to achieve at a higher level, is their lack of progress due to a temporary situation, which would be resolved by retention.

(d) Maturity Level – Social:
Does the child exhibit immature patterns of behaviour eg. thumb sucking, inability to attend for more than a few minutes, plays with younger children or alone, inability to take turns.

(e) Maturity Level – Neurological:
Immature behaviour here could include:-
- High levels of inactivity
- Gross and fine motor co-ordination difficulties
- Language difficulties
- Distractibility
- Lack of establishment of handedness

(f) Child’s Self Concept:
Knowledge of the child is essential – will retention reinforce an already poor self-concept or will it foster his achievement and enhance his self-concept?

(g) Chronological Age:
This should be considered in conjunction with the previously mentioned maturity levels.

(h) Nature of the Person:
Retention should not be considered if the primary concern relates to behavioural or emotional problems.

(i) Basic Skills:
If the child’s basic skills are deficient, diagnostic assessment should be undertaken prior to considering retention as an option.
(j) Child’s Attitude Towards Retention:
Depending on the age of the child it is always worth listening to their views on retention.

2. FACTORS RELATING TO THE FAMILY

(a) Geographical Moves:
Learning patterns may not be established for a child who has undertaken many moves. Retention may be preferable – even in higher classes – to having secondary school unprepared.

(b) Parental Attitude towards Retention:
This is a crucial factor. There may be cultural or family pressures on the parents or even a personal history aspect (parents retained at school), which will affect their perception towards retention. It is important that they be contacted early about the school’s concerns and is involved in all interventions. The attached checklist may help achieve a rational approach.

(c) Siblings:
It is potentially devastating for a child to be retained and find their sibling in the same class.

(e) Chronic Absenteeism:
If this is due to medical reasons or a family disturbance retention may be an option.

3. FACTORS RELATING TO THE SCHOOL

(a) Teaching Staff:
What has been the quality of the program provided this year? What can be offered next year? If the child is to repeat, is a different teacher available? It is often better to have a different teacher in order to break the failure pattern. A different school may need to be considered.

(b) Classroom Factors:
What options can the school provide:–

- Straight class
- Composite class
- Open plan
- Multi-age

Is the option conducive for/against retention?

(c) Historical Factors:
What additional help has been offered to date? Has there been consistency of teachers and teaching?

(d) Timing of Retention:
Most research indicates that it is preferable for retention to occur in the earliest years of schooling i.e. Prior to Grade 3.

(e) Support:
A child repeating a class may need services over and above the regular classroom program. Can the class teacher gain support
(i) within the school – D.P., Special Needs
(ii) Outside the school – S.S.C – the S.S.U.

(f) **Previous Retention:**
If one retention, either at pre-school or school has not been successful, it is highly unlikely that a second retention would be successful.
THINKING OF REPEATING

CHECKLIST

ADMINISTRATION

The following check list has been developed to help you consider all the necessary factors before deciding whether to retain a child or not:-

- Parents and teachers meet together to complete checklist.
- Each factor is discussed fully (using attached information sheet) and then check placed in the appropriate column.
- When completed, the number of checks in each column will give you an indication of whether retention is an option.
- If additional support is required in making the decision then report back to Student Welfare for further referrals.
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<tr>
<th>FACTORS</th>
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