

# Multi-age or composite classes 2015-2018

Hattie's (2003) synthesis of research states that teacher quality is the greatest influence on student achievement rather than class composition and numbers.

Multi-age classes are made up of students drawn from different year levels. They may be established because of the uneven pattern of enrolment in the school, because of the small size of the school or where it is considered that mixing students of different ages is academically and socially advantageous.

These multi-age classes are often designed to match the organisation of the syllabus, which is based on 'stages' running over two years.

## Research about multi-age classes

Three findings stand out in the research:

- Class organisation "...will not determine either educational advantage or disadvantage..." (NSW DET 1997).
- The most important factors in determining student success are the quality of the teacher and his or her teaching.
- Multi-age classes may benefit students both socially and emotionally.

The number of multi-age classes and children in these classes in each NSW public primary and infants school can be accessed on the NSW Education Datahub. Note: datasets relating to students in support classes, or schools without multi-age classes are not currently available.

## NSW students are performing at a high level

NSW consistently performs above the national average in NAPLAN testing. In 2017:

- the proportion of NSW students performing at or above the national minimum standard for Reading and Numeracy was above the national average in all four testing years.
- NSW is mostly ranked in the top three jurisdictions, along with ACT and Victoria, on the proportion of students at or above minimum standard and the proportion of students achieving results in the top two bands for NAPLAN performance.

## More information

Visit [data.cese.nsw.gov.au](http://data.cese.nsw.gov.au) to download datasets on multi-age classes.