



# Bundoora Primary School

## Repeating a Year Level - 2020

*This policy has been developed using the DET Policy Portal and follows all DET requirements.*

*The majority of the text in this policy applies to all Victorian Government schools, and does not need to be tailored to our school community.*

### PURPOSE

This Policy explains the Department's policy on students repeating a year level.

### SCOPE

Schools should regularly promote students to the next year level with their peer group. Schools use their professional expertise and judgement in relation to these matters.

Students are retained only in exceptional circumstances where a school considers it is required for the long-term benefit of the student, for example, considering their social, welfare and academic needs. Schools must ensure that parents/carers are fully advised of the options that the school considers to best meet individual student needs. Students however should not be retained without the consent of parents/carers.

Schools should avoid practices and policies that have the effect of restricting admission.

### POLICY

The Repeating a Year Level Policy is in line with research that indicates that repeating a year level can be associated with negative wellbeing, engagement, achievement and school retention, and disproportionately affects disadvantaged students.

### Impact of repeating a year

Studies on students repeating a year level suggest that:

- Students who repeat a year are unlikely to catch up with peers of a similar level who move on, even after completing an additional year's schooling
- Students who repeat a year are more likely to drop out of school prior to completion
- Negative effects are disproportionately greater for disadvantaged students, for culturally and linguistically diverse students, and for students who are relatively young in their year group

## Decision making — repeating a year

Principals use their professional expertise and judgment in relation to student progression. When making this assessment, principals should consider:

- the student’s social, wellbeing and academic needs
- whether repeating a year may prevent the student from ultimately being able to complete a senior secondary school certificate at the school because of maximum school age limitations

The final decision about progression and/or repeating a year level rests with the principal. Schools do not need parent/carer consent for a student to progress.

Where the principal determines that repeating a year level is required for the long-term benefit of the student, the principal must obtain parent/carer consent for the student to repeat the year level.

Schools must ensure that parents/carers are advised of all options available to best meet individual student needs to assist them in making a decision about consenting for the student to repeat the year.

## Requests for students to transfer to another school to repeat a year

Where a parent requests that their child transfer from one government school to another government school with the purpose of repeating a year level, the decision about which year level the student will be enrolled in rests with the principal of the enrolling school.

When making this decision, principals should consult with the parent/carer and if appropriate, the student, to understand the basis of the request to repeat a year level. Where the enrolment has been accepted (but the year level not decided upon yet), the principal may also consult with the principal of the transferring school on the appropriate year level to place the student. Where the parents do not want the enrolment to proceed until a decision is made about year level, the principal must seek parent/carer consent before consulting with the student’s current principal.

## Parent/carer complaints

If parents/carers have requested that their child repeat a year level and are not satisfied with the principal’s decision, they can lodge a complaint following the school’s Complaints Policy. To view the Department’s complaints policy refer to [Complaints — Parents](#).

The final decision about extending the student’s enrolment rests with the principal. The principal must consult with the student’s parent/carer to determine that extending the student’s enrolment is in the best interest of the student.

## Resources

[Research on repeating a year level](#)

For evidence on repeating a year level, refer to the following research:

**Teaching and Learning Toolkit, Evidence for Learning, The Education Endowment Foundation (2020). [Repeating a year](#)**

Summary of findings:

- In the majority of cases, year level repetition is harmful to a student's chances of academic success.
- Repeating a year level has greater negative effects for students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Repeating a year is likely to lead to greater negative effects when used in the early years of primary school, for culturally and linguistically diverse students, or for students who are relatively young in their year group.
- Students who repeat a year make an average of four months' less academic progress over the course of a year than students who progress to the next year level.
- Students who repeat a year are unlikely to catch up with peers of a similar level who move on, even after completing an additional year's schooling.

**Visible Learning.** Hattie, J., (2018). [Visible Learning](#)

Summary of findings:

- Hattie ranked 138 influences that are related to learning outcomes from very positive effects to very negative effects. Retention (holding students back) is an intervention with a significant negative effect of -0.32.

**'To be or not to be retained ... That's the question!' Retention, self-esteem, self-concept, achievement goals, and grades.** Peixoto, F., Monteiro, V., Mata, L., Sanches, C., Pipa, J. and Almeida, L.S. (2016). *Frontiers in Psychology*, 7(1550), 1-13. [To be or not to be retained](#)

Summary of findings:

- Repeating a year level has long term negative impacts that remain even when students recover academic achievement and the experience is in the distant past.
- Students who repeat a year can lose confidence in their learning, develop negative attitudes towards school and learning, have low self-esteem, and increased aggressive and disruptive behaviours.
- Year level repetition can increase the risk of not completing school and decrease the likelihood of participation in tertiary education.

**Effects on Retention in Elementary Grades on Grade 9 Motivation for educational Attainment.** Cham, H., Hughes, J.N., West, S.G. and Im, M.H. (2015), *Journal of School Psychology*, 53, 7-27. [Effects on Retention](#)

Summary of findings:

- Repeating a year level is an expensive intervention with minimal evidence of benefits to the retained student.

**Social Promotion or Grade Repetition: What's Best for the 21st Century Student?** Dr. Jeanne Hernandez-Tutop, May 2012, USA. [Social Promotion or Grade Repetition](#)

Summary of findings:

- This American research is critical of the No Child Left Behind policy which recommended that students be required to demonstrate a set standard of achievement before progressing to the next grade level.

**Holding back and holding behind: Grade retention and students' non-academic and academic outcomes.** Martin, A. J. (2011). *British Educational Research Journal*, 37(5), 739-763. [Holding back and holding behind](#)

Summary of findings:

- Repeating a year level has negative implications for academic motivation, academic engagement, academic self-concept, and general self-esteem.
- Repeating a year level increased student maladaptive motivation and weeks absent from school.

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

*For support with specific queries relating to students repeating a year level, schools may contact the relevant Senior Education Improvement Leader in the applicable regional office. For regional office contact details refer to [Our office locations](#).*

## REVIEW PERIOD

The *BPS Repeating a Year Level Policy* will be reviewed regularly, as part of the school's policy review process.

This policy was last updated in October 2020 and is scheduled for review in 2024 or as required.