



Policy on Splitting Classes

Rationale

In the interest of providing the best education for all students, it may from time to time be necessary to re-distribute pupils in classes of any particular year group.

This may be the result of a number of factors:

1. Smaller class sizes at infant level mean that three classes may become two classes at subsequent class levels, depending on teacher allocation from the Department of Education.
2. An additional class at a particular level may be added resulting in classes which are smaller in size and offer a better pupil-teacher ratio.
3. There may be an unequal divide of abilities and needs across the children in any particular year group. This may be addressed through a re-distribution of the pupils across existing classes.

Aims and Objectives of this Policy

- To provide a framework for the re-distribution of pupils
- To outline the criteria on which children are to be re-distributed

Framework for the splitting of classes

At the time of planning classes, the Principal will look at the overall numbers in each year group and the number of teachers available to teach them. She will decide how best to organise classes with a view to providing the best educational opportunities for all children.

Criteria on which children are selected to be placed in particular classes for Junior Infants

When children are enrolled in Junior Infants the following criteria are used for the distribution of pupils across the classes at that level:

1. Pupils with known needs are divided across all available classes
2. Pupils are placed with at least one pupil from their pre-school setting where applicable
3. Pupils are allocated randomly between the two classes.

Criteria for re-distributing children across particular classes in a year grouping

We group the children in such a way so as to maximise the learning outcomes for *each child*. When dividing a class into groups, to be placed in separate classes, there are certain criteria to be taken into consideration:

- It is considered best practice to form mixed-ability groups
- Distribution of boys/girls in classes

- The process of forming new friendships is a life skill which is important to develop. A positive and supportive attitude from parents is a key element in achieving a successful outcome in the new groups
- It will seldom be possible to satisfy all demands for groups of friends to be kept together. This decision will lie ultimately with the Principal and School Management, who must consider the needs of every child in the class

This means it is not always possible to keep friends together but the teachers of each class to be split are consulted on the above issues and much work goes into the preparatory stage of the arrangement prior to the re-distribution.

Classes that have been split reunite daily to play together on the playground/sports field during breaks so they can maintain existing friendships as well as make new friends in the new group. This increases their circle of friends and their abilities to form new friendships.

Explaining to parents why their child's class has been re-distributed.

All parents of the pupils involved in a re-distribution will be informed by letter. This will outline the rationale and reasons for the re-distribution as well as the criteria used to decide on the new class groupings.

The allocation of teachers to classes

It is the duty of the Principal as per Circular 16/73 to assign teaching duties.

We will endeavour at all times to work with all pupils and parents to ensure a smooth transition. The final decision will ultimately be with the Principal and the Board of Management.

Review

This policy will be reviewed in February 2025.

Signed: Susan Kenny
(Chairperson of Board of Management)

Date: 2/2/2022

Signed: Patricia Alessi
(Principal)

Date: 2/2/2022