

Policy on Splitting classes

Rationale

In the interest of providing the best education for all pupils it may from time to time be necessary to divide class group into mixed classes, which are smaller in size and offer a better pupil-teacher ratio. The pupil teacher ratio is dictated annually by the DES and schools have no control over this.

Aims and Objectives of this policy

- To provide a framework for the splitting of classes
- To outline criteria for placing children in mixed class groupings
- To set out supports which may be available to ensure the best learning outcomes for all children in mixed classes
- To set out arrangements for books and schemes for split classes.

Framework for the splitting of classes

At the time of planning the classes for the coming year 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 the children.

Criteria

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 to form mixed ability groups
- 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. The decision will lie ultimately with the principal, who must consider the needs of every child in the class.
- Classes will be split in an open and transparent manner, by alphabet, giving due consideration to gender balance. For 2019-2020 the first group of children alphabetically will be part of second third and fourth class and the second group of children alphabetically will be part of the fourth fifth and sixth class group. We will also ensure a gender balance.

The supports which may be made available to children and teachers in split classes

The principal class teacher and special education teachers will consult on how best to organise the learning support for the mixed class.

The Special Education Teachers may work in the classroom with the class teacher in a team teaching arrangement.

The Special Education teacher may work in the classroom supporting one child or a small group of children, with the class teacher doing the main teaching of the lesson

The Special Education Teachers may take one of the class groupings separately for the teaching of certain core subjects.

These arrangements will be considered on a class by class basis, from year to year.

Arrangements for books and schemes of work for the split classes

The prescribing of books and planning schemes of work will be differentiated for the core subjects Numeracy Literacy and Gaeilge thereby each class level will work from textbooks specific to their class level.

The class teacher will differentiate the remaining curricular subjects using the various methods of differentiation recommended by the NCCA

Where books are to be bought/used by pupils the class teacher will take due regard of the history of the class groupings to date and the materials and schemes previously covered by their incoming class groupings.

The allocation of teachers to split/mixed classes

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

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management at a meeting on 15/05/19. We endeavour to update it every second year or whenever the need arises.

Chairperson: Matt O'Donnoghue, 15/05/19.

Principal: Brid Heneghan