

Splitting Classes

Rationale: In schools such as St. Oliver Plunkett N.S which do not have 8 mainstream class teachers, it is necessary to divide and combine class groups into mixed classes.

Aims and Objectives of this Policy

- To provide a framework for the splitting of classes
- To outline the criteria on which children are selected to be placed in mixed or straight classes
- To outline the criteria for placing children in particular mixed-class groups
- To set out the supports which may be used to ensure the best learning outcomes for all children in mixed classes

The allocation of teachers to classes

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

Framework for the splitting of classes

At the time of planning the classes for the coming year, the Principal and teachers will look at the overall number in each year group and the number of teachers available to teach them. They will draw up a number of possible class groupings for the following year to be discussed at a staff meeting.

The Principal will decide how best to organise classes with a view to providing the best educational opportunities for all children. As the constitution of individual classes may change over the eight years of Primary School splits may be introduced to classes which have not been split before, as the need arises.

Criteria for placing children in particular class groups

When dividing a class into groups, to be placed in separate classes, there are certain criteria to be taken into consideration:

1. When a class has to be split the older children will join the more senior class and the younger children will join the more junior class and vice versa if the class needs to be split again at a later stage.
2. We will endeavour not to have any class grouping of less than six children in a mixed class setting.
3. Children who have special learning, behavioural, emotional or social needs may be exempted from the above process. The Principal, following consultation with the relevant teachers, will determine the appropriate class for them.

Parents will be notified before the summer holidays of class divisions.

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

The Principal, the class teacher and the Special Education team will consult on how best to organise extra support for mixed classes. In some cases a Special Education Teacher (SET) may work in the classroom with the Class Teacher, in a team-teaching arrangement. It is possible that the SET 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. Another arrangement for extra support which may suit the class is for either the Class Teacher or SET to withdraw small

groups of children. All of these arrangements will be considered on a class by class basis, from year to year.

Ratification and Implementation:

Following consultation with all the partners in education the original policy was ratified by the Board. This policy has been reviewed and updated by all the partners in education when necessary.

It is available to view on www.newcastlens.blogspot.ie

Signed: *Rita Keane*

Chairperson, BOM

Date: 11th March 2021