

Policy on Class and Classroom Allocation

Introductory Statement:

This policy was formulated as a result of a collaborative approach between the Principal and ISM Staff.

Link to School Ethos:

St Ailbe's N.S is committed to enabling children grow and develop into confident, mature adults with high self-esteem. We also strive to ensure children maximise their academic and social potential. This policy is geared towards those aims through offering all children exposure to a variety of teaching methodologies and skills.

Rationale:

This policy ensures that teachers get the opportunity to expand their skills through teaching a range of different ages and topics. It also offers the teaching staff and children flexibility within the system and there is provision in the policy for children to have access to teachers with specific skills in particular subjects. St Ailbe's has two special ASD classes.

Aims and Objectives:

The policy also facilitates the allocation of rooms suitable to the needs of the children;

- To facilitate the smooth, efficient running of the school
- To enable the teaching staff to professionally develop themselves through exposure to different age groups and curricula
- To maximise the learning opportunities of the children through prudent class allocation which utilises to the optimum, the range of individual teaching skills within the staff

Policy Content

Class Allocation:

The allocation of teaching duties within the school is a matter for the Principal. However, it is the policy of the school to reach collective agreement and consensus when distributing teaching duties. The Principal facilitates this process in a fair and equitable way. *"The Principal is responsible for the creation, together with the Board, parents of students and the teachers, of a school environment which is supportive of learning among the students and which promotes the professional development of the teachers"*. (Education Act – Section 23)

- St Ailbe's National School has 5 mainstream classes and two ASD classes. Currently there are no split classes however in the event of a class needing to be dividing, consideration will be given to ensure balanced classes in accordance with the terms of DES circular 20/07. The criteria for dividing the class will rest ultimately with the BOM. These criteria will serve future situations where composite classes will be necessary.

Criteria for Splitting Classes

1. **Age, maturity and gender balance- equally weighted**
 2. **Teacher input - taking special needs into account**
 3. **Fluctuating enrolment**
 4. **Classroom accommodation**
- The Special Education Team has the option of returning to mainstream after 5 years, should they indicate such a preference. Alternatively, they may wish to remain in Special Education for a further 5 years. Should a mainstream teacher indicate a desire to join the Special Education Team, this wish may be facilitated if a Special Education Teacher has asked for a move in the opposite direction. If not, collective agreement is sought with options such as deferring a move for a year being put on the table. Courses completed in Special Education will also have a significant bearing on allocation
 - The Principal will allocate classes according to the class preference form completed by the teaching staff. The Principal will also take other factors into account when making these decisions such as;
 - Experience
 - Contribution to overall school policy development in relation to teaching and learning
 - Range of classes already taught / not taught
 - Motivation
 - Personality
 - Domestic and social situations
 - Special talents
 - Opportunities for development such as Special Education, shared teaching etc.
 - Some teachers may have larger classes than colleagues. This normally 'evens itself out' over a number of years, so that an equitable workload is achieved. Consideration of splitting classes is made to facilitate class sizes and classroom size.
 - Class allocation relies heavily on compromise and consensus. If this is not possible to reach, the Principal will make an informed decision based on suitability, experience (whether a particular teacher has had the class before), special talents, courses taken and what is in the best interests of the children concerned. An interview is not held
 - Class allocation is completed in May of every year. There is no special exemption for teachers in relation to First Communion and Confirmation classes.

Classroom Allocation:

- It is not the policy of the school to move classes from specific rooms unless in exceptional circumstances such as teacher request, physical damage to room or health and safety issues
- The design of the school allows for ease of access to the Learning Support/Resource room for all classrooms
- St Ailbe's NS is currently undergoing planning permission for building works for Sept 2017. An ASD unit will be built on to the current extension that houses the fifth and sixth class classroom. This is currently the largest classroom. There are three smaller mainstream classrooms approx 30 Sq mtr and two larger classrooms 48 sq mtr. It is envisaged in 2018 that classrooms will be reallocated taking into account class sizes and age.

Roles & Responsibilities:

All staff, under the guidance of the Principal participates in and contributes to the implementation of an effective and equitable class allocation policy. Grievances are dealt with at a Principal/teacher level and will only transfer to the Board if a compromise cannot be reached.

Success Criteria:

The school evaluates the success of the policy through;

- a) Participation of all staff in the policy
- b) Smooth hand over of classes
- c) Feedback from all staff
- d) Staff satisfaction
- e) Parental satisfaction

Timetable for Review:

A review will be conducted based on the success criteria outlined.

Ratification and Implementation:

This policy was drafted in May 2017. It will be ratified by the BOM in Sept 2017 and will be redrafted following the completion of the extension.

References

Education Act 1998 – Sections 22 and 23
Circular 16/73
CPSMA - Board Members handbook p.234

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on _____.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Chairperson

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Principal