



## Policy on splitting classes

Bekan National school

## **Policy on splitting classes**

### **Introductory Statement:**

This policy was formulated as a result of a collaborative approach between the Principal, Staff and Board of Management of Bekan National School.

### **Link to School Ethos:**

Bekan National school is committed to enabling children grow and develop into confident, mature adults with high self-esteem. We also strive to ensure children maximize their academic and social potential. This policy is geared towards those aims through ensuring all children are placed in classes which will enable them to participate and learn to the best of their ability.

### **Rationale**

In the interest of providing the best education for all students, it may from time to time be necessary to divide and combine class groups into mixed classes, which are smaller in size and offer a better pupil-teacher ratio.

### **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

### **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 children.

### **Criteria on which Children are selected to be placed in mixed or straight classes**

In consultation with the class teacher, and if necessary with previous teachers of the classes involved, lists of possible groups are drawn up. Children who to date have shown an ability to work independently are considered able to cope better in a mixed class. Children who require full-time access to an SNA will be assigned to a class where there is no other child with a full time SNA.

### **Criteria for placing children in particular class groups**

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

- Initial split of the classes will be based on **age** with the older members of the class moving on to the next classroom.
- It is considered best to form mixed-ability groups. Therefore there may *be some amendment* to the age based rule to help maintain a mixed ability class. The ability of the pupil will be determined by teacher observation, and test results.
- The dynamics of the class must be considered. Emotional, behavioural, gender balance and social factors which could upset the dynamic of the new class will be taken into consideration when forming new groupings
- This decision will lie ultimately with the Principal, who must consider the needs of every child in the class

### **The supports which could be made available to children and teachers in mixed classes**

The Principal, the Class Teacher and Learning Support team will consult on how best to organise the learning support for the mixed class. In some cases, the Learning Support Teacher may work in the classroom with the Class Teacher, in a team-teaching arrangement. It is possible that the Learning Support 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. Another arrangement for Learning Support which may suit the class is for either the Class Teacher or the Learning Support Teacher to withdraw small groups of children.

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

## **The allocation of teachers to mixed classes**

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

### **Ratification and Implementation:**

This policy was originally ratified by the Board in December 2015

**Reviewed** in January 2020

### **Timetable for Review:**

A review will be conducted based on the success criteria outlined, or where consensus and compromise is not achieved.

**This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2020.**

Signed on behalf of the Board of Management:

Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **References**

Education Act 1998 – Sections 22 and 23

Circular 16/73

CPSMA - Board Members handbook p.234