

St. Patrick's N.S.

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Class Allocation Policy

Introduction

This Policy was devised to address the matter of class allocation in St. Patrick's NS. It was developed during 2019 following collaboration between the in-school management team, whole staff and the Principal.

Rationale

This policy ensures teachers get the opportunity to teach a range of classes and in doing so expand their skills and knowledge of the curriculum. It ensures children have access to teachers who may have specific skills or expertise in a particular area.

Aims and objectives:

- 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 the range of individual teaching skills within the staff

Policy Content

Background:

The allocation of teaching duties within a school is a matter for the principal. The Education Act (1998) Section 22 (2) (d) (i) states that ... subject to the terms of any applicable collective agreement and their contract of employment [teachers shall] carry out those duties that ... are assigned to them by or at the discretion of the principal...

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)

Circular 16/73 states *"The Principal should arrange a fair distribution of teaching duties among the staff taking into account the needs of the pupils and the abilities, experiences, personalities and preferences of each teacher. The Principal should utilise the services of staff teachers, with special qualifications or aptitudes."*

The Principal will allocate classes assisted by the class preference form completed by the teaching staff. The Principal will also take other factors into account when making these decisions such as;

- a) The best interests on the children
- b) Preferences indicated on the Class Allocation Form
- c) Experience
- d) Continuing Professional Development
- e) Teachers completing Probation
- f) Range of classes already taught / not taught
- g) Length of time in current position
- h) Motivation
- i) Personality
- j) Domestic and social situations
- k) Special talents
- l) Opportunities for development such as team teaching, small group teaching, knowledge of Literacy Lift Off and Mata sa Rang etc.

Class allocation

St. Patrick's NS has 7 mainstream classrooms. It is school policy to rotate classes every 3 years. Where a teacher demonstrates an exceptional talent with a particular class and no other teacher indicates a preference to teach that class, s/he may remain in their current class if it is in the best interest of the children.

The Special Education Team will remain in place for 3 years after which time they may indicate a preference to return to a mainstream class. If a teacher has gained a considerable knowledge of Special Education through experience and/or Continuing Professional Development, they will be given the option to remain in Special Education.

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 also. If not, collective agreement is sought with options such as deferring a move being considered. Courses completed in Special Education will have a significant bearing on allocation.

Teachers will be given the opportunity to select their top 3 placement preferences. The Principal will make an informed decision based on the criteria listed above. Class allocation relies heavily on compromise and consensus. If consensus is not achieved, the Principal will make an informed decision in the best interests of the children concerned. Teachers will normally be informed about the class allocation for the following year by May.

Notifying parents

Where feasible, parents will be notified of the next year's class/teacher allocation before the end of the academic year. All decisions made in respect of class/teacher allocation may be subject to change at any stage before and during the school year.

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) Positive learning experiences for the children

Ratification and Review

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on the February 18th 2020 and will be implemented immediately.

This policy will be reviewed after 3 years or earlier if necessary.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Kieran Leahy (Chairperson)