

St. Joseph's N.S. Brackloon

Class Organisation Policy

Introduction

This policy was developed by the staff of Brackloon NS. in consultation with the parents and Board of Management of the school

Rationale

Teachers are appointed to St. Joseph's NS. Brackloon in accordance with the Department of Education and Skills staffing schedule. In the context of this policy it should be noted that Brackloon N.S. is a multi-class school. A multi-class grouping can have between two and four classes in a room.

In the interest of providing the best education for all students, it may from time to time be necessary to split class groups in the interest of a better pupil-teacher ratio so as to optimise educational opportunities for all children.

Aims and Objectives of this Policy

- To provide a framework for the splitting of 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. He will decide how best to organise classes with a view to providing the best educational opportunities for all children.

Procedure for creating class groups

- A list of the children and class and their dates of birth will be drawn up.
- The teachers involved and the principal will divide the children into groups so that there is
 - (a) An age balance.
 - (b) A gender balance.
 - (c) A mixture of abilities.
 - (d) Consideration to compelling educational or other reasons.
- Sociograms will be used to assist the school in considering friendships.
- Concerns and issues brought to the principal will be discussed and dealt with accordingly.
- Once the groups have been decided, letters will be sent to the families concerned giving details of their child's placement.

The teachers who are teaching the same class levels will endeavour to plan together and complete as much of the same content per term as possible.

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.

Process for splitting classes

1. A list of children in the class is compiled and ordered by age and gender.
2. Working with one gender grouping at a time, children will be placed into Group A or B, starting with the eldest.
A being 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th, 9th, 11th etc. oldest from the group.
B being 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th, 10th, 12th etc. oldest from the group
3. The classroom that Group A and B will join will be chosen through random selection.
4. Changes are made accordingly – e.g. friendships, siblings in classroom, emotional maturity etc.
5. Groups are checked by all staff at a designated meeting.
6. Parents of the children in the split class will be informed towards the end of the school year.

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 multi-class with more than two classes. 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 or a complete class grouping. 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.

Review

This policy will be monitored and revised where necessary.

Signed: _____

Chairperson. Board of Management

Date: _____