



Scoil Mhuire

School Policy re Division of Classes

Rationale:

The number of teachers in the school set against the number of pupils will dictate that there may be times when some class groupings will be organised into multi grade settings.

Guidelines:

The following guidelines are applied but are open to modification if, in the professional judgement of the Principal and staff, this is required.

- Allowance will be made so that, where possible, siblings will not be in the same classroom (with the exception of twins).
- Due consideration will be given to having a mixed gender and on the basis of a fair ratio of boys and girls in the classroom mix.
- Consideration will be given to the number of SEN children in a classroom.
- Both groups will be of mixed ability.
- The number of children in the other class in the classrooms involved will also be a factor.
- A child will be assigned to a combined class as seldom as possible but due to the varying numbers in our classes, certain groupings may have to be split more than once as they move through the school. In this case it is not desirable that the same split would be made more than once.
- Where a class is to be divided, the selection will be broadly done on an alternate alphabetical basis, taking into account the factors mentioned above.

- In the case of the incoming junior infants, where they are to be split into two separate classes, parents and guardians will be asked to give the name of one child that their own child is friendly with beforehand and, where practicable, we will try to facilitate this. However, the school considers it unrealistic for any parent to expect that all their child's friends will always be in the same class and we regard the development of new friendships as an important life skill to develop.

Multi-class in practise:

If a child is placed in a combined class the teacher will ensure that each pupil in each class will be working on the set of skills from the national curriculum for the correct class.

Classroom teaching is based on the curricular objectives for each class level. Pupil textbooks are used merely as a guide by the teacher and are only one of the many resources a teacher uses to deliver the curriculum. The primary curriculum (www.curriculumonline.ie) is primarily **skills-based** rather than **content-based**. Consequently, for practical operational reasons, the split class may use some different textbooks but they are learning the same set of skills.

In Mathematics there is a separate set of content and skills for each individual class. To cater for this, we endeavour to involve the Learning Support teachers in delivering the maths curriculum, often in a team-teaching arrangement.

For other subjects the content is menu-based and teachers can choose content suitable for their class. The teacher is a professional who is trained to tailor the curriculum and differentiate the content and expected outcomes for each individual child. Although the class may be using a textbook as a guide, the teacher is dealing with each child as an individual learner.

Classes that have been split reunite daily to play together in the playground during breaks and participate in all activities in which their class group is involved.

This policy is subject to periodical review

Reviewed and approved by the Board of Management on _____

Signed: _____ (Chairperson, BoM)

_____ (Principal)