



St Francis National School

Rock Road, Blackrock, County Louth, A91 NHOV

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Composite Classes/Split Classes Policy

In reading this policy, it should be noted that the term "Parent(s)" also includes Guardians and should be interpreted as such.

Background and Rationale

Composite Classes:

Where the school does not meet pupil enrolment requirements for another class teacher, composite classes must be implemented. These numbers are in accordance with staffing guidelines as stated by the Department of Education. These guidelines are available for review at www.education.ie. This may require a class to be composed of mixed levels (e.g. 3rd and 4th class together)

Split Classes:

In the case where the total enrolment meets the criteria outlined in the most recent staffing Circular, additional teaching posts may be sanctioned. The Board of Management, in considering the context of every class in the school, will determine where best to allocate any additional teaching posts, taking into account the criteria below. This allocation will be reviewed annually.

Criteria for composite/split classes:

The children will be grouped in such a way so as to maximise the learning outcomes for each child. When dividing a class into groups, to be placed in separate classes, there are certain criteria to be taken into consideration:

- It is considered best to form mixed-ability groups
- Distribution of boys/girls in classes
- The dynamics of the class must be considered. Emotional, behavioural, special needs and social factors will be taken into consideration when forming new groupings.
- The needs of children with Special Educational Needs (including SNA access) will be central to any allocation.
- Parent input – taking siblings into account
- Classroom accommodation
- Where possible, friendships will be considered.

(The process of forming new friendships is a life skill which is important to develop as it may not always be possible to keep friends together. A positive and supportive attitude from parents is a key element in achieving a successful outcome in the new groups. It will seldom be possible to satisfy all demands for groups of friends to be kept together. This decision will ultimately lie with the Board of Management, who must consider the needs of every child in the class.)

Communication

This policy will be available in the Plean Scoile and on the school website.

Responsibility for Review:

All members of staff, Parents Association, BoM.

Timeframe for Review:

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or as required to meet the needs of the school.

Next review: June 2026

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Ratified by the Board of Management on 13/6/2023 (Date)

Signed:  (Chairperson, Board of Management)