

Gaelscoil Mhuscraí

Policy on split classes

Introduction:

This policy was put together by staff, school management and The Parents' Association in May 2011.

Rational:

In order to provide the best possible education for all pupils, classes may, on occasion be split into two groups. This would lead to smaller class sizes and a lower pupil – teacher ratio. The classes will split, when necessary following the direction of the Department of Education & Skills, as laid out in circular 0021/2010.

Aims & Objectives of the Policy:

- To provide a framework for the splitting of classes when necessary
- To clearly outline the criteria in relation to the selection of certain pupils to be placed in certain class groups
- To clearly outline the particular classes or class sizes which may have to be split
- To outline the support that will be in place for split classes.

Framework for splitting classes:

At the end of the school year, the Principal Teacher will look at the numbers in each class group for the following September. The Principal Teacher will look at the number of mainstream class teachers available in the school to teach mainstream classes. The Principal Teacher will then make a decision on how to best to lay out the classes in order to provide the best possible educational opportunities for all pupils.

Criteria for dividing pupils:

The pupils will be divided or split in a correct, fair and transparent manner. The pupils will be split according to date of birth. Two halves will be made from the class group, where possible, two equal halves will exist. The older group of pupils will be grouped with an older or higher class (ie: one class level higher up). The younger group of pupils will be put with a lower or younger class group (ie: one class level below).

Support available to the pupils & to the teachers in the split classes:

- It will be discussed how to best arrange learning support for a split class. The principal teacher, the learning support teacher and the appropriate class teachers will all have an input.
- On occasion, team-teaching will take place between the class teacher and the learning support teacher.

- In other cases, the learning support teacher will take full responsibility for a subject or subjects studied by the split class group. The class group will then come together to study this subject.
- These arrangements may vary from year to year, depending on the classes in question & depending on the teachers' opinions.
- All efforts will be made to recognise the split class as one class group on a social level.
- All efforts will be made to keep the split class group together for trips during the year and for the school tour.
- For as much as possible efforts will be made to keep the split class group together for hurling training, swimming practice etc.

Planning:

- Comprehensive planning of work will take place for the split class group.
- The teachers of the split class groups will come together at the beginning of each term and they will meet during each term, as often as they see fit, in order to review their planning.
- All efforts will be made to cover the same curriculum strands and themes in the same term.
- The appropriate curriculum will be correctly covered by the two split class groups at the end of the school year.
- The teachers of the split class groups will plan the standardised testing together at the end of the year.
- The two split class groups will work from the same book, appropriate to their class level, especially for the core subjects.
- The two split class groups will get the same amount of homework and the same style of homework.

Distribution of teachers to split classes:

It is the duty of the principal teacher to distribute teaching duties to the school staff, according to circular 0016/1973.

Review:

This policy has been reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management in May 2018.