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Oatlands Primary School

Policy on Reconstitution of Classes

Rationale

In the interest of increasing the sense of school community, broadening the friendship base for students and ensuring a spread of abilities and personalities across classes, classes may be reconstituted at least once during a student's eight years in Oatlands Primary School.

Reconstitution will provide the pupils with the opportunity of meeting and getting to know as many of the pupils as possible in their own year group throughout their primary school life. This is very important for the social development of each child and links into the SPHE program. It helps the pupils to get used to change within a safe environment and with support. It also improves the probability of children knowing a wider group of friends when they begin Secondary School.

Please note, in response to management issues or enrolment issues in the school and, in the interest of providing the best education for all the students, it may from time to time be necessary to divide and/or combine class groups.

The school will contact parents in term 3 if it deems that making any changes to a class level is necessary and will take place for the following school year.

Aims and Objectives of this Policy

- To provide a framework for the reconstitution of classes.
- To outline the criteria on which children are selected to be placed in a particular class.
- To set out the supports (if needed) which may be used to ensure the best learning outcomes for all the children in the reconstituted class.

Framework

When planning classes for the coming school year the Principal will look at the overall numbers in each year group and the numbers of teachers available to teach them. The Principal will decide how best to organise classes with a view to providing the best educational opportunities for all children. If a reconstitution of classes is considered appropriate or necessary, the Principal will inform the Board of Management in the first instance. The parents of the children involved will be informed when the decision is formally taken to reconstitute a class or classes.

Criteria and Considerations for Placing Children in Particular Class Groups

When dividing a class into groups to be placed in separate classes there are certain criteria to be taken into consideration.

- Pupil-Teacher ratio. Classes need to have a balance of numbers.
- Mixed-ability groups. It is considered best to form mixed-ability groups in each class. A good balance of abilities in each class is the ideal. Standardised test results and class teachers' reports will be used to assess ability levels.

- The dynamics of the new class(es) must be considered. Emotional, behavioural and social factors, which could alter the dynamic of the new class, should be taken into consideration when forming new groupings.
- The needs of children with S.N.A. access will be central to any allocation.
- Friendship/Social Patterns.
- The final decision will lie ultimately with the Principal, who must consider the needs of every child in the class.

School Method for Reconstituting Classes

- The reconstitution of classes usually takes place in Oatlands Primary School at the end of Junior Infants going into Senior Infants. There may be times where the school needs to remix a class after this time. This will be based on the professional judgement of the staff and school management. It will only take place if the school deems it absolutely necessary to ensure the provision of a sound and well-balanced education to the students of that particular class level. The criteria mentioned above will inform this decision.
- In exceptional circumstances, the school may decide not to reconstitute a class at the end of Junior Infants and postpone it to a later class level. The school may use their professional judgement and decide that it would not be in the best interest of the students to reconstitute classes. Each class level is different and students have varying needs. Therefore, it is necessary to have flexibility with this process.
- In consultation with the class teacher, and if necessary, in consultation with previous teachers of the classes involved, a list of possible groupings and then placements will be drawn up. The criteria listed above will be used to form these groupings.
- Oatlands Primary School places a strong emphasis on the development of positive friendships using a variety of contexts such as discrete lessons within the SPHE programme and informal discussions as required. Information gathered from the children and teacher observations of their social interactions during the year will guide the reconstitution process. Teachers at all class levels will keep all relevant work samples and observation records as part of this process.
- It will seldom be possible for large groups of friends to be kept together.
- The Principal, class teachers and SEN team in each class group will then meet as a group to discuss the formation of their groupings into classes.
- The ability of the pupils to interact positively with one another will also be a factor in the formation of these groupings and the placing of these groupings to form a class.
- The Principal may make alterations to these groupings in consultation with the teachers.
- This process is carried out with great care and professionalism, with the interests of every pupil carefully considered.

Role of Parents

If parents are positive about this change, it is highly likely that your child will be excited and they will look forward to making new friends. A positive and supportive attitude from parents is a key element in achieving a successful outcome for the pupils in these new groups.

We have a mixture of two or three classes at each class level. Therefore, your child's new class will have at least one third of their class moving into the new class with them.

Supports for children and teachers in reconstituted classes

The Principal, Class Teacher, and the Learning Support Team will consult on how best to offer extra support, if deemed necessary, to reconstituted classes. Extra support for maths or literacy may be required for large groups and the Learning Support Team may be able to facilitate in-class group teaching if needed.

The school will endeavour to organise activities that will allow for classes and students to mix at a whole class level. This will ensure that students continue to mix with their classmates from their previous class group and also get to know as many pupils from their year group as possible. Doing this both prior to and following the reconstitution of classes will support the process for all of the students.

Allocation of Teachers to Reconstituted Classes

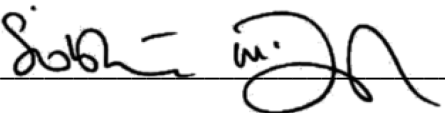
It is the duty of the Principal as per Circular 16/73 to assign teaching duties.

Review

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed by the Board of Management once in every three school years, or as needed.

Signed 
Chairperson, Board of Management

Date 28/06/2023

Signed 
Principal

Date 28/06/2023