



## **Policy: Distribution of Students procedure.**

### **Introduction**

Scoil Mhuire Lourdes is committed to enabling and supporting each child to recognise their gifts and to achieve their full potential, while at the same time preparing them to become caring and active members of society. This policy is the product of whole-staff, Board of Management and parental collaboration in Scoil Mhuire Lourdes.

### **Rationale**

In the interest of providing the best education for all students, this procedural document ensures that distribution of students is achieved in a fair and open way facilitating optimum outcomes for the whole school community.

### **Aims and Objectives of this Policy**

- To provide a framework that is efficient in the smooth running of the school when distributing students to classes
- To outline the criteria on which children are selected to be placed in mixed or straight classes
- To maximise the learning opportunity for the girls through prudent student distribution

### **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 and take account of the Allocation of Teachers (DES circular) for Scoil Mhuire Lourdes. This is usually published in January each year and reflects any changes to the pupil/teacher ratio in the previous Budget. An appeal will be lodged, if there are grounds. Pending an appeal, the Principal will decide how best to organise classes with a view to providing the best educational opportunities for all children (Circular 16/73). The Principal will explore all options and class combinations in collaboration with the teaching staff.

The principal has overall responsibility for grouping or splitting a class where numbers would otherwise be too big or too small in one class. The DES' objective is that class size should be as equitable as possible across all class levels. However, 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.

### **Criteria for placing children in particular class groups**

We group the children 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:

- Children joining the school in Junior Infants are distributed into classes so that there is a fair distribution of:
  - Numbers in the class
  - Age
  - English as an Additional Language Need (as informed by parents)

*There will also be opportunity for station teaching in core subjects, particularly in Junior class levels. The divided class will be given daily opportunity to come together. The learning support team will support the class teacher using strategies and methodologies such as parallel / team teaching and differentiation.*

- In subsequent years, effort is made to ensure fair distribution as set out above, but also the fair distribution of:
  - Academic ability
  - Personality types and characteristics

This means it is not always possible to keep friends together but the teachers of each class are consulted with on these issues and much work will go into the planning stage of the arrangement prior to the summer holidays and beyond. Classes that have been split will reunite daily to play together on the playground during breaks so they can maintain existing friendships as well as make new friends in the new group. This increases their circle of friends and their abilities to form new friendships.

**This decision will lie ultimately with the Principal, who must consider the needs of every child in the class and thoroughly explore all groupings with middle-management and teachers. Consultation with children or parents will not be entered into, the decision is final.**

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

All teachers, under the guidance of the Principal, participate in and contribute to the implementation of effective and equitable student distribution.

Parents and Guardians inform the school of Special Educational Needs that their daughter may have/ which may come to light as the children progresses through the school. Parents and Guardians support the school's decision regarding student distribution and class allocation.

### **Success Criteria:**

The school evaluates the success of the procedural document through:

- Participation of all staff
- Smooth running of classes
- Feedback from all staff
- Student Satisfaction
- Parental Satisfaction

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

*Marie Coen*

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