



*Déanann Dícheall Gaisce*

## **Class Formation and Reconstitution Policy**

### **Introduction**

This policy on class formation and reconstitution was drawn up, following consultation with the Teaching Staff and the Board of Management of Scoil Eoin.

### **Rationale**

In keeping with the Mission Statement, the school is committed not only to the intellectual, physical, moral and spiritual development of each child but also to their emotional and social development. It is in this context that we promote the importance of positive relationships and endeavour to equip the pupils with the skills to form and sustain friendships with their peers.

The Principal and teachers of Scoil Eoin wish to ensure that year-on-year, classes are mixed to ensure the most productive learning environment that can be achieved. Sometimes an uneven mix can have unsatisfactory consequences for everybody, which is why the school values the opportunity to change class groupings each year. A system and a list of criteria for the formation and reconstitution of classes have been agreed by staff which it considers fair, inclusive and considerate of children, parents, teachers and the BOM. Reconstituting classes is therefore a necessary and traditional process carried out at the end of each school year. As part of this process, we are committed to reconstituting classes at the end of each year from Senior Infants to 5<sup>th</sup> Class.

The benefits of annual reconstitution include:

- Children are given the opportunity, over the years, to meet and get to know a wide range of children of similar age. This is very important for their social development and this links into the SPHE programme.
- It contributes to the development of each child's sense of self and self-identity.
- It is good preparation for secondary school, as it helps children to be familiar with change within a safe environment, and with the support of friends.
- When they move on to secondary school, they are more likely to be in the same class as children they know well and from whom they can get support. It will also facilitate friendships-formation.

## **Aims**

The principle aims of reconstituting classes at the end of each year from Senior Infants to 5<sup>th</sup> Class are:

- to maximise the learning outcomes for each child
- to develop the children's social skills and to better equip them to form friendships
- to ensure that each child has the opportunity to mix with a larger number of their peers
- to facilitate mixed-ability groups
- to minimise tensions where difficult relationships exist

## **Procedures for Allocating Children to Classes**

### **Junior Infants**

- As children coming in to Junior Infants are new to the school, it is impossible to ensure that each class has an even spread of abilities. However, we endeavour to have a balance regarding the number of children with specific educational needs and children for whom English is not their first language.
- We also consult with the parents of twins to establish their preference for placing the siblings in the same class or separating them.
- Friendships formed in playschool are also taken into consideration when forming Junior Infant classes.
- At the end of Junior Infants, it is the norm for each class to move on as a unit to Senior Infants to a new teacher.

### **Senior Infants -5<sup>th</sup> Class**

- The teachers from each class level will divide the boys in their classes, bearing in mind the criteria for reconstitution of classes listed below.
- The class teachers and SETs will then meet to discuss the reconstitution of the new classes.
- Each teacher is required to sign off on the new class list ensuring that the list is correct (each boy has been assigned to the correct class) and that each child has at least one good friend in his new class.
- These proposed class groupings, once finalised, are then presented to the Principal for his consideration.

- The Principal may make alterations to these groupings in consultation with the teachers.
- The Principal's decision will be final.

### **Children who are enrolled during the school year**

Unless there are extenuating circumstances, children who are enrolled in the school during the course of the school year will be allocated to the age-appropriate class with the fewest number of students, at the time of enrolment.

### **Framework for class formation and reconstitution**

At the time of planning classes for the coming year, the Principal will look at the overall numbers in each year group and the number of teachers available to teach them. He will decide how best to organise classes with a view to providing the best educational opportunities for all children. It may be necessary to divide and combine classes into multi-grade groups.

**The following criteria may be considered in the formation or reconstitution of classes:**

- the class will be of mixed ability
- teacher knowledge of pupils
- teacher's professional opinion
- individual needs of children
- classroom dynamics which may change from year to year
- friendships – every effort will be made to ensure each child will have **at least one good friend in his class**, with this information coming from the children, in writing
- the process of forming new friendships is a life skill which is important to develop. A positive and supportive attitude from parents is a key element in achieving a successful outcome in the new class.
- maturity including social, emotional, physical and interpersonal skills
- family considerations e.g. twins, brothers, uncles, cousins etc
- classroom accommodation
- pre-school information
- other considerations which may arise at the discretion of the Principal

## **Conclusion**

Children and teachers know their new class by the end of the school year, before they go on holidays.

This policy was formulated to ensure that the formation and reconstitution of classes is carried out in the best interests of all pupils.

Parents know that this process is carried out with great care and professionalism, and that each and every child's interests are carefully considered. Children adapt very easily and become very open and flexible in their social interactions with their new classmates. We have seen positive results from this process down through the years.

Once class lists have been finalised, the class is non-negotiable and there will be no re-arranging to suit individual parents, as this is school policy.

## **Review**

This policy will be reviewed in two years or when necessary.

Approved by the Board of Management on 04/04/2022.

Signed: Anne Sweeney 4/4/22

Chairperson

Bord Scoil Eoin