St. Patrick’s N.S.

Drumshanbo,

Co. Leitrim.

Roll No: 19423J

**Class & Classroom Allocation policy**

**Created: November 2020**

**Ratified: December 2020**

**Full review: 2025**

**St. Patrick’s National School**

**Class & Classroom Allocation Policy 2020**

**Introduction**

This policy was created in 2015 was reviewed following an ISM meeting in November 2020. The policy was due for review in 2020 and teachers were due to change classes at the end of the 2020 – 2021 school year. Following discussions with the management team we agreed to defer re-allocation of classes for an extra year, meaning that this change will now come in the 22 -23 school year.

We took this decision because

* The closure of schools and remote teaching from March 2020 – June 2020 created a great deal of difficulty for teaching staff
* The current school year is proving to be very stressful; also teachers are not getting to implement much of what they had planned to do in their classes because of the current restrictions
* Our main focus now is on implementing our Digital Strategy as well as introducing and consolidating two remote learning platforms in the school – Seesaw and Google Classroom. We want to make this an integral part of our teaching and learning. In order that teachers can give this their full commitment, we feel it is better that they remain will their current class allocation for an extra year.
* In any event, we did not intend to re-allocate SETs or teachers in Laochra and Cairde. These teachers have worked very hard to upskill in their particular areas and it would not be in the best interests of the school to re-allocate them at this time.

**Rationale and link to School Ethos**

St. Patrick’s NS is committed to providing children with a high standard of education and exposing them to a variety of teaching styles and methodologies. We also feel that it is important to allow teachers a wide teaching experience which should help to keep motivation levels high. This policy ensures that teachers get the opportunity to expand their skills through teaching a range of different ages and topics. It also offers the teaching staff and children flexibility within the system and ensures that there is provision in the policy for children to have access to teachers with specific skills in particular subjects/aspects of education.

**Background**

The allocation of teaching duties within a school is a matter for the principal.

The **Education Act** (1998) Section 22 (2) (d) (i) states that ...

Subject to the terms of any applicable collective agreement and their contract of employment [teachers shall] carry out those duties that ... are assigned to them by or at the discretion of the principal...

**Circular 16/73:** **13.**

He/she should arrange a fair distribution of teaching duties among the staff, taking into account the needs of the pupils and the abilities, experience, personality and preference of each teacher. He/She should utilise the services of staff with special qualifications or aptitudes in an organising or advisory capacity (CPSMA Management Board Members Handbook, 2007).

**Education Act (1998) Section 23**

The Principal shall...

(c) be responsible for the creation, together with the Board, parents of students and the

teachers, of a school environment which is supportive of learning among the students and which promotes the professional development of teachers.

**Aims and Objectives**

**The main aims of this policy are**

* To facilitate the smooth, efficient running of the school
* To enable the teaching staff to professionally develop themselves through exposure to different age groups and curricula
* To maximise the learning opportunities of the children through prudent class allocation which utilises to the optimum, the range of individual teaching skills within the staff
* The policy also facilitates the allocation of rooms suitable to the needs of the children

**Class Allocation**

The allocation of teaching duties within the school is a matter for the Principal. However, it is the policy of the school, as far as possible, to reach collective agreement and consensus when distributing teaching duties. The Principal will facilitate this process in a fair and equitable way.

* St. Patrick’s National School has 9 mainstream classes. Currently, there are no split classes because the extra teacher is used to support classes with large numbers. there are no split classes. This may change and if there is a class with exceptional needs, we may feel that it is in the best interests of the children to split the class.
* It is school policy to rotate classes every 3 years in so far as this is achievable. With the exception of 2021 – 22, this will continue to be the policy.
* At the beginning of the third year, all teaching staff will complete a form in which they list the 3 classes they would like to be assigned to for the coming year in order of preference. If a teacher has a valid reason for not wishing to change classes, this will be taken under consideration and may be upheld so long as it does not impact upon preferences stated by others or cause the general rotation to be stymied.
* The Special Education Team has the option of returning to mainstream after 3 years, should they indicate such a preference. Alternatively, they may wish to remain in Special Education for a further 3 years. Should a mainstream teacher indicate a desire to join the Special Education Team, this wish may be facilitated if a Special Education Teacher has asked for a move in the opposite direction. If not, collective agreement is sought with options such as deferring a move for a year being put on the table. Courses completed in Special Education will also have a significant bearing on allocation
* Where teachers do not have an Irish teaching qualification, they will have the option of resource teaching or working in the ASD classes. This will be worked out on a consensual basis. As with other members of the SEN team, teachers will work in 3 year cycles.
* The Principal will allocate classes according to the class preference form completed by the teaching staff in so far as this is possible. The Principal will also take other factors into account when making these decisions such as;
	+ Experience
	+ Skill set
	+ Contribution to overall school policy development in relation to teaching and learning
	+ Range of classes already taught / not taught
	+ Motivation
	+ Personality
	+ Domestic and social situations
	+ Special talents
	+ Opportunities for development such as Special Education, shared teaching etc.
* Some teachers may have larger classes than colleagues. This normally ‘evens itself out’ over a number of years, so that an equitable workload is achieved.
* Class allocation relies heavily on compromise and consensus. If this is not possible to reach, the Principal will make an informed decision based on suitability, experience (whether a particular teacher has had the class before), special talents, courses taken and what is in the best interests of the children concerned. An interview is not held.
* Class allocation is completed in May of every third year. There is no special exemption for teachers in relation to First Communion and Confirmation classes. Special arrangements are put in place if a teacher’s religious beliefs preclude preparing children for religious ceremonies.
* Teachers who are shared with other schools may exempt themselves from policy so as to cause minimum disruption to the cluster.

**Classroom Allocation:**

* Junior and Senior Infant classes are allocated rooms near the second exit door for ease of collection and because they have integrated toilets.
* First class has a classroom with integrated toilets.
* It is not the policy of the school to move classes from specific rooms unless in exceptional circumstances such as teacher request, physical damage to room or health and safety issues.
* All classrooms are of similar dimensions, thus eliminating space considerations.
* When a teacher changes class he/she moves room as opposed to the class moving to the teacher’s room.

**Roles & Responsibilities**

All staff, under the guidance of the Principal participate in and contribute to the implementation of an effective and equitable class allocation policy. Grievances are dealt with at a Principal/teacher level and will only transfer to the Board if a compromise cannot be reached.

**Success Criteria**

The school evaluates the success of the policy through;

1. Participation of all staff in the policy
2. Smooth hand over of classes
3. Feedback from all staff
4. Staff satisfaction
5. Parental satisfaction

**Implementation/Ratification and Review**

This policy will be presented to the teaching staff before Christmas 2020. If they are satisfied with the provisions in the policy it will be presented to the BOM for ratification at a subsequent meeting. If ratified, it will become school policy and will be published on the school website. It is due for full review in 2025. However, changes in personnel, pupil numbers may necessitate an earlier review. Following the changes in class allocation at the end of 2021/22, some amendment to the policy may also be warranted.

When it is ratified, it will be published on the school website/blog.

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**Ratification of policy for St. Patrick’s NS**

**Martin McGowan 03/12/2020**

**Chairperson Date**

**Máirín O’Keeffe 03/12/2020**

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**Principal Date**