Teacher Class Allocation Policy

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Introductory Statement

This policy review has been conducted in Spring 2025 as a result of requests from the ISM team to enhance policy and bring school practice up to date.

Rationale

This policy ensures teachers get the opportunity to teach in a range of classes and in doing so expand their skills and knowledge of the curriculum. It ensures children have access to teachers who have specific skills or expertise in a particular area.

Background

The allocation of teaching duties within a school is a matter for the school principal. The Education Act (1998) 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 states “The principal should arrange a fair distribution of teaching duties among the staff taking into account the needs of the pupils and the abilities, experiences, personalities and preferences of each teacher. The principal should utilise the services of staff teachers with special qualifications or aptitudes.

Guidelines for Primary Schools Supporting Children with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Classes 2024 states the principal should “ensure that the children with the greatest level of need receive the greatest level of support ideally from special education teachers with the most relevant expertise” and that teachers are deployed “who have the appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding to special education teaching roles”

Aims and Objectives

* To facilitate smooth and efficient running of the school
* To enable 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.

Policy Content

Criteria for Class Allocation

The principal will allocate classes based on the following criteria:

* The best interests of the children
* Preferences indicated on the Class Allocation Form
* Experience
* Continuous Professional Development
* Length of time spent teaching a particular class group- Ideally a teacher will spend a maximum of 3 years with a particular class before allocation of a new placement.
* Contribution to overall school policy development in relation to teaching and learning
* Teachers completing the Droichead process
* Length of time in current position
* Personal situations of staff members
* Special talents
* Opportunities for development such as special needs education, shared teaching.
* Teachers in a special education teaching role will remain in place for 3 years after which time they may indicate a preference to return to a mainstream class. If a teacher has gained a considerable knowledge of Special Education through experience of Continuous Professional Development or possess a specific contract, they may be given the option to remain in another Special Education teaching setting.
* Should a teacher indicate a desire to join the special education team, this wish may be facilitated. Courses completed in Special Education and/or a willingness to undertake Continuing Professional Development will have a significant bearing on allocation.
* Teaching Seniority and/or holding a post of responsibility does not give any staff member additional rights or priorities.

Class Allocation

Classes for the upcoming school year will be formulated by the principal in February. A class allocation preference survey will be distributed to staff in March. The following four categories of classes will apply

* Infants
* 1st to 3rd Class
* 4th to 6th Class
* Special Education Teaching comprising of all special education roles allocated to the school

Teachers will be asked to state their preferences from 1 to 4 with 1 being the preferred choice.

The survey will also seek the teachers previous 5 years teaching roles within the school and a section where relevant continuous professional development can be communicated to the principal will also be included. These surveys will be maintained in the school office for a minimum of 7 years

Should a teacher wish to speak to the principal regarding allocations this conversation will be accommodated.

All surveys must be returned to the Principal by the 31st March.

The principal will take the month of April to consider the contents of the class preference survey and will also use this time to consult with the deputy principal. The final decision regarding class allocation remains with the principal.

A date will be set within the first week of May whereby the principal will notify teachers of the next years class allocation. All staff are expected to respect the allocation process’ confidentiality by not discussing roles of teacher’s upcoming teaching role until the parent body have been notified. Parents will be informed of class allocations for the upcoming year in June.

This policy was ratified