



Edenmore National School

Policy on Splitting Classes

1. Introduction

In the interest of providing the best education for all students, it may from time to time be necessary to divide and combine class groups into mixed classes, which are smaller in size and offer a better pupil-teacher ratio across the school. In 2025/26 there are 6 Mainstream class teachers and eight class groupings in Edenmore National School. Therefore, split classes are an inevitable part of our school and its operation and always have been.

2. Aims and Objectives of this Policy

- To provide a framework for the splitting of classes
- To outline the criteria on which children are selected to be placed in mixed or straight classes
- To outline the criteria for placing children in particular mixed-class groups
- To set out the supports which may be used to ensure the best learning outcomes for all children in mixed classes

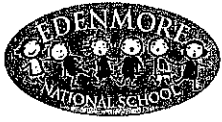
3. Framework for the splitting of classes

At the time of planning the classes for the coming year, the Principal will look at the overall numbers in each year group and the number of teachers available to teach them. They will decide how best to organise classes with a view to providing the best educational opportunities for all children.

- A class split is put in place for one school year. Enrolment numbers and staffing arrangements will dictate the arrangement in subsequent years.
- The split class will be together on the same yard for break times.

4. Important Points to Consider

- a. It is considered best to form mixed ability groups.
- b. The process of forming new friendships is a life skill which is important to develop.
- c. A positive and supportive attitude from parents is a key element.
- d. It will seldom be possible to satisfy all demands from pupil groupings or parents. This decision will lie ultimately with the Principal who must consider the needs of every child in the class.
- e. It would be the intention that once a new class group is formed, no alterations will be made thereafter, unless due to exceptional circumstances.



Edenmore National School

Policy on Splitting Classes

5. Criteria for forming Split Class Groupings

Step 1: The Principal will look at total **enrolment** number of the school with the aim of maintaining reasonably balanced numbers throughout the classes in the school.

Step 2: Additional Needs: Children who have additional needs will be placed in the most appropriate class grouping. Pupils who were/are in receipt of additional support or those who are gifted will be placed in the class grouping deemed best suited to their academic needs. The needs of children who require access to an SNA will be central to any allocation.

Step 3: Class Composition

Following consideration of overall enrolment and additional educational needs, the Principal, in consultation with class teachers and the Special Education Team will use professional judgement to determine the most suitable class groupings for the upcoming academic school year.

In forming split class groupings, certain factors may be considered. The Board of Management gives autonomy to the Principal with the task of splitting class groups and has asked that due consideration is given to gender balance and Special Educational Needs. If deemed necessary by the Principal, random selection will be resorted to, and this selection process will be carried out jointly by the Chairperson of the Board of Management and the Chairperson of the Parents Association.

Step 4: Review of Proposed Class Groupings

Once proposed class groupings have been developed, the Principal will review them to ensure that:

- The educational and wellbeing needs of pupils have been appropriately considered.
- Class groups are balanced and workable.
- The allocation supports the effective operation of the school.
- Decisions are fair, reasonable and consistent with the school's policies and ethos.

6. Communication of Class Splits

The Principal will aim to communicate class splits early in the last week of school.

7. Explaining to parents why their child is in a split class

The Department of Education and Skills (DES) allots one teacher to each group of 23 pupils at present. This is known as the *pupil-teacher ratio*. The ideal situation for teacher and pupil would be a single stream class at all class levels with no more than 20 pupils per class. However, the current system does not allow for this and schools accommodation poses restrictions on class sizes. Therefore, the Principal has overall responsibility for grouping or splitting the classes where numbers would otherwise be too large or too small in one class. The DES' objective is that class size should be as equitable as possible across all class levels. The pupil-teacher ratio is dictated annually by the government budget and schools have no control over this. However, the teacher will ensure that each



Edenmore National School

Policy on Splitting Classes

pupil in each class will be working on the set of skills from the national curriculum for the correct class.

8. Teaching and Learning

Classroom teaching is based on the curricular objectives for each class level. Pupil textbooks are used merely as a guide by the teacher. The primary curriculum (www.curriculumonline.ie) is primarily *skills-based* rather than *content-based*. All pupils will be taught in accordance with the National Curriculum and will use a variety of resources.

The Principal, the Class Teacher and Special Education team will consult on how best to organise support for the mixed class. In some cases, the S.E.T. may work in the classroom with the Class Teacher, in a team-teaching arrangement. It is possible that the S.E.T. may work in the classroom supporting one child or a small group of children, with the Class Teacher doing the main teaching of the lesson.

9. Enrolment of new children into split classes

The rationale behind this policy is for the formation of smaller classes within the recommended pupil-teacher ratio. The enrolment of new children into these classes is to be avoided as much as possible. In this case, due regard must be given to the school's enrolment policy, and the terms of Section 29 of the Education Act.

10. The allocation of teachers to mixed classes

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

11. Ratification:

This Policy on Splitting Classes was reviewed by the Board of Management on **11/6/26**

Signed: Stephan McQuillan
Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: 11/6/26

Signed: Catherine M. Cullen
Principal to the Board of Management

Date: 11/6/26