

WICKLOW EDUCATE TOGETHER NATIONAL SCHOOL CLASS FORMATION POLICY

Introduction and Rationale

This document sets out the policy of Wicklow Educate Together for the formation of classes in double stream classes. A class formation policy was created in 2015 as a response to double stream classes becoming more the norm in Wicklow Educate Together. This policy was due for review in 2017 / 2018.

Double stream classes may consist of two classes of the same year grouping, e.g. two 4th classes, two 5th classes or may be multi-grade classes, e.g. one full 4th and one 4th / 5th.

Classes are reconstituted from the end of junior infants to the end of 4th class. As a general rule classes are not reconstituted at the end of 5th class, although the principal may make the decision to do so, having regard to the specific needs of a year group.

Our experience is that the reconstitution of classes benefits children socially as it promotes friendships and cohesion within each class group. Treating each year as a year and not as separate classes is coherent with Educate Together ethos and encourages equality for all children as they develop through the school.

Aims and objectives

The principle aims of re-forming classes are

- To ensure mixed ability groups
- To maximise the learning outcomes for each child
- To ensure that each child has the experience of being in class with a wider number of their peers
- To develop the children's social skills and to better equip them to form and sustain friendships
- To minimise tensions where difficult relationships exist
- Balance of support required by classes in terms of English as an Additional Language and Resource/Learning Support needs.

Compliance with school ethos

- This policy is formulated with the 4 core principles in mind
- WETNS strives to enable each child to develop to his/her full potential

Process for class formations

The process for class reconstitution starts in the third term.

1. Parents **may furnish the school with any information they believe to be relevant.**
2. Relevant staff, e.g. teachers, support teachers and principal will come together for class formation meetings.
3. The following will be considered in determining the new class formations:

- Balance of abilities
- Gender balance - Friendships
- Other needs in the classroom.

4. Class lists are finalised at the end of this process. Parents and children will be notified if their child is in the Blue or Green class.

It will seldom be possible to satisfy all demands for groups of friends to be kept together. This decision will lie with the Principal, who must consider the needs of each child in the class.

Timeframe for Implementation

- This policy will be reviewed during 2021 / 2022. Any changes made will then be ratified by the Board of Management.

Ratification and Communication

This code was ratified by the Board of Management on 29 November 2019

This code will be communicated to the school community via

- School website
- Staff meetings
- A link to the website in the newsletter