



Coinnigh an solas ar lasadh

St Patrick's National School

Slane, Co. Meath

(041) 982 4229

office@slanens.ie

www.slanens.ie

Roll No: 18040L

Principal: Paul O'Donnell

Revision No. 3

Date: May 2026

Pupil Class Allocation Policy

Introduction

This policy outlines the procedures and principles governing the division of pupils into classes within the school. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that class groupings are created in a fair, balanced, transparent, and educationally appropriate manner, while supporting the wellbeing and learning needs of all pupils. The policy has been developed in line with the provisions of the Department of Education and relevant circulars and guidance applicable to primary schools in the Republic of Ireland.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- The formation of classes at all class levels.
- The allocation of pupils to mainstream classes.
- The allocation of pupils where multi-grade classes are necessary.
- The annual review of class groupings.
- The transfer of pupils between classes where required.

Guiding Principles

The school aims to:

- Create balanced classes that support effective teaching and learning.
- Prioritise a lower pupil-teacher ratio in younger classes, to give children the best possible educational start.
- Promote positive social and emotional development.
- Ensure fairness and equity for all pupils.
- Support inclusion and diversity.
- Maintain flexibility to respond to changing enrolment patterns and staffing allocations.
- Respect the professional judgement of school staff.

Class division decisions are made in the best interests of the pupils and the overall educational needs of the school.

Authority and Responsibility

The principal, in consultation with relevant staff, has responsibility for:

- Determining class structures annually.
- Assigning pupils to classes.
- Assigning teachers to classes.
- Reviewing class arrangements as necessary.

The Board of Management supports the implementation of this policy.

Factors Considered in New Class Configuration

When forming and implementing new class configurations, the school will consider a range of factors, including:

Educational Considerations

- Special educational needs.



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- Balance of age and gender.

Social and Emotional Considerations

- Positive peer relationships.
- Social compatibility.
- Emotional wellbeing.

Practical Considerations

- Class size guidelines.
- Distribution of pupils requiring additional supports.
- Staffing arrangements.
- Accommodation constraints.
- The possible requirement for multi-grade classes.

No single factor determines placement decisions.

Procedure

- In some instances, a class level may be subdivided into two smaller classes at the same grade. In other instances, it is necessary to subdivide two full classes for the purpose of multi grade teaching.
- Where a class level is divided into two classes of the same grade, pupils will be allocated on the basis of age while also seeking to maintain an appropriate gender balance in each class. For both boys and girls, the oldest pupil will be assigned to Class A, the next oldest to Class B, and this alternating pattern will continue until all pupils have been assigned.
- Where two consecutive class levels are organised into three classes (for example, junior infants, a combined junior and senior infant class, and senior infants), pupils in each class level will be divided into three groups based on age while also seeking to maintain an appropriate gender balance across all classes.

Within each class level, pupils will be allocated sequentially by age into three groups, with the oldest pupil assigned to Group 1, the next oldest to Group 2, the third oldest to Group 3, and this pattern continuing until all pupils have been assigned.

For the duration of the three-class arrangement, one of the three groups from each class level will form the combined multi-grade class each year.

The number of pupils in each multi grade combination will be decided by the numbers of pupils in the grades above and below and the gender mix of those groups.

- In both instances above, parents of twins or triplets will be given the option to have their children allocated together or separately on a one-off basis.
- In both instances above, the placement of children with additional needs will be considered separately, after consideration of individual requirements.

Annual Review of Class Groupings

Class groupings may be reviewed annually due to:

- Changes in enrolment numbers.



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- Staffing allocations from the Department of Education.
- The formation or dissolution of multi-grade classes.
- Educational or pastoral needs.

Confidentiality

Information considered during the class formation process will be treated confidentially and managed in accordance with the school's data protection obligations and relevant legislation.

Communication with Parents/Guardians

Parents and children will be notified each June about the subdivision of classes for the following school year.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically by the Board of Management and school leadership to ensure compliance with current legislation, Department of Education guidance, and the evolving needs of the school community.

Signed on Behalf of the Board of Management

Chairperson: *Fr. Richard Matthews*

Date: *27th May 2026*



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