



Scoil Naomh Lorcán O'Tuathail

(St. Laurence O'Toole's National School)

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Class Distribution Procedures

Introduction

This policy has been developed by the Board of Management of St Laurence O'Toole's National School to ensure that distribution of pupils into classes is done in a fair and open way. The overarching aim of this policy is to ensure that all teachers and parents understand the process of class distribution and class allocations from a year to year basis.

School Ethos

St Laurence O'Toole's National School ethos affords equal value to all pupils thus encouraging mutual respect and concern for each other in a safe and happy environment. The school staff members strive to develop a good sense of moral values in our pupils which can form a framework for developing self-esteem, healthy personal relationships, and age-appropriate level of participation thus setting them on their way to becoming responsible members of society.

The school aims to provide a challenging, yet supportive environment to stimulate, maintain and develop inquiring minds encouraging all to reach their full potential to become independent learners with a positive attitude to life-long learning. This procedural document is geared towards those aims.

Aims and Objectives

- To facilitate the smooth, efficient running of the school
- To maximise the learning opportunities of the children through prudent student distribution
- To set out the specific processes for class distribution and class allocations throughout the school
- To enable teaching staff to professionally develop themselves through exposure to different age groups and curricula
- To facilitate the allocation of rooms suitable to the needs of the children
- To ensure that parents are familiar with the processes for class distribution and class allocations within the school

Class Distribution

Class distribution is the responsibility of the Principal. The organisation of pupils within the school is a matter for the Principal. Circular 16/73 states that the Principal *“in consultation with the staff, should decide on the organisation of the pupils for teaching purposes.”*

Children joining the school in Junior Infants are distributed into classes so that there is a fair distribution of:

- Number per class
- Gender equality and balance
- Age
- English as an Additional Language (as informed by parents)
- Special Educational Need (as informed by parents)

In subsequent years, effort is made to ensure fair distribution of pupils, as set out above, but also fair distribution of:

- academic ability
- personality types and characteristics
- age, maturity and gender balance, equally weighted
- benefits of inclusion in a multi-grade class

Process of Class Distribution (Senior Infants – 6th classes)

1. Teachers consult with pupils regarding friendship groups and ability. Pupils are encouraged to provide a list of 5 friends which will inform the teacher of the friendship circle of the child. While every effort is made to ensure that each child feels friendship towards other children in his/her class, **it is not possible to deliberately place children with a particular friend.**
2. Teachers contribute to the implementation of effective and equitable class distribution by making recommendations to the principal in writing, regarding distribution of their classes, where relevant depending on school numbers, for the following academic year. This process will take place before Easter.
3. **Class sizes** will be determined by the number of children enrolled in the school in any given year. Decisions regarding class sizes will take into account the following:
 - Total number of pupils across a particular class grouping
 - Total number of pupils in the school
 - Number of classrooms / space in classrooms
 - Needs of particular classes/pupils across the whole school
4. Pupils will be assigned to classes based on all the criteria above. The Board of Management will consult with the principal regarding class numbers and will sign off on class distribution and allocation.
5. Consultation with children or parents will not be entered into once a decision has been made and **the principal's decision is final.**

Role and Responsibilities

- Parents and guardians must inform the school of any Special Educational Needs or changes in needs for their children.
- Parents and guardians support the school's decision regarding class distribution and class allocation.
- Teachers support the principal's decision relating to class distribution and class allocation, understanding that the overall needs of the pupils in the school are being taken into consideration.
- The Board of Management considers the class distribution and class allocations as presented by the Principal and ratifies decisions, once finally agreed by the Board. The Board satisfies itself that all appropriate processes have been adhered to and the distribution of pupils and class allocations have the best interests of the child to the forefront.

Success Criteria

The school evaluates the success of the procedural document through:

- Participation of all staff
- Smooth running of classes
- Feedback from all staff
- Student satisfaction
- Parental satisfaction

Ratification



Signed:

Date: 10th March 2020

Jamie Fitzmaurice (Chairperson of the BOM)