

Setanta School Policy on Class and Classroom Allocation

Introductory Statement:

This policy was formulated as a result of a collaborative approach between the Principal and Staff. It evolved over the years and was recently redrafted during an in-school development planning day.

Link to School Ethos:

Setanta is committed to enabling pupils grow and develop into confident, mature adults with high self-esteem. We also strive to ensure children maximise their academic and social potential. This policy is geared towards those aims through offering all pupils exposure to a variety of teaching methodologies and skills.

Rationale:

This policy ensures that teachers get the opportunity to expand their skills through teaching a range of different ages and topics. It also offers the teaching staff and children flexibility within the system and there is provision in the policy for pupils to have access to teachers with specific skills in particular subjects.

Aims and Objectives:

The policy also facilitates the allocation of rooms suitable to the needs of the pupils;

- To facilitate the smooth, efficient running of the school
- To enable the teaching staff to professionally develop themselves through exposure to different age groups and curricula
- To maximise the learning opportunities of the pupils through prudent class allocation which utilises to the optimum, the range of individual teaching skills within the staff

Policy Content

Class Allocation:

The allocation of teaching duties within the school is a matter for the Principal. However, it is the policy of the school to reach collective agreement and consensus when distributing teaching duties. The Principal facilitates this process in a fair and equitable way. *"The Principal is responsible for the creation, together with the Board, parents of students and the teachers, of a school environment which is supportive of learning among the students and which promotes the professional development of the teachers"*. (Education Act – Section 23)

- Setanta School has nine special classes and consequently there are no split classes. It is school policy, as far as is practicable, to rotate classes every 2 years.
- The Principal will allocate classes according to the class preference form completed by the teaching staff. The Principal will also take other factors into account when making these decisions such as;

- Experience
 - Contribution to overall school policy development in relation to teaching and learning
 - Range of classes already taught / not taught
 - Motivation
 - Personality
 - Domestic and social situations
 - Special talents
 - Opportunities for development such as Special Education, shared teaching etc.
- Some teachers may have larger classes than colleagues. This normally 'evens itself out' over a number of years, so that an equitable workload is achieved
 - Class allocation relies heavily on compromise and consensus. If this is not possible to reach, the Principal will make an informed decision based on suitability, experience (whether a particular teacher has had the class before), special talents, courses taken and what is in the best interests of the children concerned. An interview is not held
 - Class allocation is completed in July of every year. Special arrangements are put in place if a teacher's religious beliefs preclude preparing children for religious ceremonies.

Classroom Allocation:

It is not the policy of the school to move classes from specific rooms unless in exceptional circumstances such as teacher request, physical damage to room or health and safety issues

Roles & Responsibilities:

All staff, under the guidance of the Principal participate in and contribute to the implementation of an effective and equitable class allocation policy. Grievances are dealt with at a Principal/teacher level and will only transfer to the Board if a compromise cannot be reached.

Success Criteria:

The school evaluates the success of the policy through;

- a) Participation of all staff in the policy
- b) Smooth hand over of classes
- c) Feedback from all staff
- d) Staff satisfaction
- e) Parental satisfaction

Timetable for Review:

A review will be conducted based on the success criteria outlined, or where consensus and compromise is not achieved.

Ratification and Implementation:

This policy was ratified by the Board in September 2009.

References

Education Act 1998 – Sections 22 and 23
Circular 16/73
CPSMA - Board Members handbook p.234