**Division of Classes Policy**

**Bishop O’Brien National School**

**Introduction**

This Policy has been prepared by the Board of Management and will be emailed to parents and appear on the school website in draft form for consultation and input from all the relevant stakeholders.

**Rationale**

Bishop O’Brien National School currently has four mainstream classroom teachers. In the 2019/2020 academic year we will have five mainstream class teachers. With the allocation of this additional class teacher we will have to divide class groupings differently which will have the positive effect of lowering the pupil teacher ratio in all classes. We may also have to split classes for other reasons in the future.

**Aims and Objectives of this Policy**

* To provide a framework for the splitting of classes
* To outline the procedure used when 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

**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.  She will decide, in consultation with teachers, how to best organise classes with a view to providing the best educational opportunities for all children.

**Considerations for Placing Children in Particular Class Groups**

When dividing a class into groups, to be placed in separate classes, there are certain criteria to be taken into consideration. These are outlined as follows:

* It is in line with best educational practice to form mixed-ability groups.
* The process of forming new friendships is a life skill which is important to develop. A positive and supportive attitude from parents is a key element in achieving a successful outcome in the new groups
* It will seldom be possible to satisfy all demands for groups of friends to be kept together. This decision will lie ultimately with the Principal, who must consider the needs of every child in the class.
* As far as it is reasonably possible every effort will be made to bring split classes together for outings and non-classroom based activities. However it must be noted that this is not always possible due to numbers/supervision limitations.
* Gender balance will be taken into consideration when forming new groupings.

**Procedure for dividing a class**

The Board of Management reserve the right to divide classes in the interests of the children.  Classes will be divided by the Principal in consultation with the staff and the Board of Management.

**Methods of division which may be used :**

* alphabetical order
* date of birth order

In all cases of class division, the Principal’s discretion to place a child in a particular

grouping will be applied if it’s deemed beneficial to the child.  This decision will be

made by the Principal in consultation with the Class Teacher and Special Education

Teachers.

**The allocation of teachers to classes**

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

This policy was ratified by Board of Management May 2019.

Signed: Helen Arnold         Signed: Joanne O’Brien Kennelly

              Chairperson                                                      Principal

Date of next review: This policy will be reviewed annually as needed.