**Kildangan NS**

**Reconstitution of Classes Policy**

**Introduction**

The Board of Management of Kildangan National School hereby sets out its Reconstitution of Classes Policy. This policy was formulated and agreed by staff in May 2012.

**Rationale**

Kildangan National School is a country school which has experienced consistent growth over the past number of years. Class sizes have continued to grow and class levels have had to be mixed annually in line with the teaching resources provided by the Department of Education and Skills. Reconstituting classes is therefore a necessary and traditional process carried out at the end of each school year.

The Principal and teachers of the school wish to ensure that year-on-year, classes are mixed to ensure the most productive learning environment that can be achieved. Sometimes an uneven mix can have unsatisfactory consequences for everybody which is why the school values the opportunity to change class groupings each year. A system of reconstituting classes has been agreed by staff which it considers fair, inclusive and considerate of children, parents, teachers and the BOM.

The benefits of an annual reconstitution include:

Children get the opportunity over the years of meeting and getting to know a wide range of children of similar age. This is very important for the social development of each child and links into the SPHE programme

It is good preparation for secondary school, as it helps children to get used to change within a safe environment, and with the support of friends.

**Method for Reconstituting Classes**

* In the second-term, as part of the SPHE curriculum, teachers will focus on a series of lessons about friendship. The children will then fill out a ‘Friendship Worksheet’, where they write the names of their friends. Teachers keep these worksheets so that they can refer back to them when the reconstitution process begins.
* In the third-term, using the worksheets and other assessment data, each teacher divides their class into four [or five] co-operative learning groups of approximately 6/7 children. Each working group should have the following elements:
  1. A good balance of abilities according to a range of assessment data including MicraT/SigmaT Standardised Tests
  2. As good a gender balance as can be achieved
  3. At least **one good friend** for each child, with this information coming from the worksheet provided by the children.
  4. Children with behavioural/emotional problems in different groups where possible, but always with some friends.

* In May/June, the teachers and the principal will discuss class formation and debate which cooperative groups will be put together to make new classes, based on their own professional experience and judgement. At this stage, classes have not been allocated to any individual teacher, so it is in everybody’s best interest to get it right.

* Class lists are finalised at the end of this process. Children and teachers know their new classes by the end of the school year before they go on holidays.
* Parents know that this process is carried out with great care and professionalism, and that the interests of every child carefully considered.

**Evaluation**

The system should be evaluated annually by the teachers and changed slightly if this is seen to be necessary. The original method may change somewhat as fine-tuning takes place. Parents should be informed of the process each May and it should also be mentioned in the school information booklet so that parents are fully aware of the system when they enrol their child in the school.

**Review Procedure**

The policy will be reviewed every four years. Next review of this policy will occur before or during the school year of 2015/2016.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_