



St. Fintan's National School

Policy on construction of class groups

This policy is issued by the Board of Management of St. Fintan's National School with the aim of clarifying arrangements for how class groups are constructed.

Guiding principles of class construction / composition in St. Fintan's NS:

- To ensure an equal balance of boys and girls in each class group in so far as is possible
- To ensure balance of ages in each class group in so far as is possible
- To ensure balance of numbers in each class group in so far as is possible – up to an absolute maximum number (as set by the Board of Management) in any class from senior infants to sixth class
- To ensure fairness and equality of treatment of all pupils involved
- To ensure, in a balanced way across class groups, the lowest pupil teacher ratios possible

Considerations and Class Construction System:

In general, St. Fintan's National School has 2 class groups of maximum 30 pupils from infants up to sixth class. From September 2025, classes starting from senior infants, will have a maximum of 28 pupils.

At junior infant level however, the school offers 3 class groups. The maximum number per class group is set by the school annually, depending on enrolments and the size of the classrooms available. This number never exceeds a total intake of 56 (from September 2024)

At point of entry to junior infants, places in each class group are allocated as follow:

- Oldest boy x 3 into each of the class groups in sequence
- Oldest girl x 3 into each of the class groups in sequence

The above process is continued until the agreed maximum numbers for each class group are reached.

At the end of junior infants, the smallest class group is then split and merged into the 2 larger class groups, before beginning senior infants. These 2 larger class groups continue up to sixth class. This class splitting is managed as follows:

- Oldest boy from smallest junior infant class into bigger class 1
- Oldest girl from smallest junior infant class into bigger class 1
- Oldest boy from smallest junior infant class into bigger class 2
- Oldest girl from smallest junior infant class into bigger class 2

The above process is continued until the smaller class is fully merged with the two larger classes. Parents are informed of the above arrangements in advance of their child starting in junior infants. In term 3 of junior infants annually, the pupils in the smaller junior infant class group usually join with their future classmates for some activities, as agreed by the teachers.

In very rare instances, for example to facilitate necessary arrangements for children with diagnosed special needs, the Principal may deviate from the above system. In the matter of class placement of pupils, the decision of the Board of Management is final.