
Crosskeys National School

Crosskeys

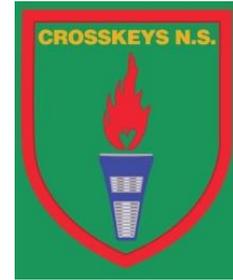
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30th April 2026

CLASS SPLITTING POLICY

This policy will be communicated to staff and the school community as appropriate and will be subjected to regular review.

Rationale:

In schools such as *Crosskeys National School* which do not have eight class teachers, it is necessary to have a mixture of straight classes and multigrade classes. This has always been the case in *Crosskeys National School*. Some class groups may need to be split. A class split is put in place for one school year. These arrangements are made year to year. This is in the interest of providing the best education for all children by offering classes which are smaller in size and offer a better pupil-teacher ratio. Lower pupil-teacher ratios ensure the best possible teaching and learning environment and has the most positive impact on a child's achievement. Numbers and staffing arrangements will dictate the arrangement in subsequent years. In short, a class may be split once, more than once during their time in primary school or perhaps not at all.

Principles Guiding Class Formation:

The formation of split classes is guided by the following principles:

- Fairness, transparency, and equity for all pupils
- The social, emotional, and educational wellbeing of each child
- The professional judgement of school leadership and teaching staff
- Compliance with Department of Education guidelines and school staffing allocations

Process for Allocating Children to Classes:

- Where split classes are required, pupils are assigned to classes on a mixed ability basis. This approach is used to ensure fairness and consistency for all children.
- As part of the allocation process, the school is mindful of pupils' existing peer connections within the class group, as maintaining a familiar social link can support children's confidence and wellbeing when moving into a new class setting.

- To ensure that the process is fair and manageable for all families, requests from parents/guardians regarding class placement or peer groupings cannot be accommodated.
- Decisions regarding class allocation are made by school management and teaching staff, drawing on their professional experience and with the overall wellbeing of pupils in mind.
- 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.
- Classes that have been split reunite daily to play together in the yard during breaks so they can maintain existing friendships as well as make new friends in the new group. This increases their circle of friends and their abilities to form new friendships.

Younger and Older Groups within the Split:

- Pupils may be assigned to either the younger or the older group within the split class.
- The school affirms that there are no adverse educational, social, or developmental effects associated with placement in either group.
- Teaching and learning are differentiated appropriately to meet the needs of all pupils, in line with the Primary School Curriculum.

Teaching and Learning:

- Teachers plan and deliver instruction in accordance with the Primary School Curriculum, ensuring continuity and progression for all class levels within the split.
- Differentiation strategies are employed to cater for varying ages, stages, and learning needs.
- Mixed-age interaction is viewed as a positive feature, supporting peer learning, cooperation, and social development.

Communication with Parents/Guardians:

- Parents/guardians are informed in advance when a split class arrangement is necessary.
- The rationale and procedures for class formation are communicated clearly and respectfully.
- While parental concerns are listened to carefully, final decisions rest with the school, in the best interests of the overall school community.

Review of the Policy:

- This policy is reviewed as often as needed by school management to ensure it remains consistent with best practice, Department of Education guidance, and the needs of the pupils.

The allocation of teachers to split/mixed classes:

It is the duty of the principal as per Circular 16/73 to assign teaching duties and organise class splits.

This policy was approved by the Board of Management of *Crosskeys National School* on 30th April 2026.

Signed:

Fr. Donal Kilduff

Chairperson, Board of Management – 30th April 2026

Niall Gurhy

School Principal – 30th April 2026