**Retention of Pupils**

**Introduction**

The Board of Management of St. Colman’s N.S. drew up this Policy on Retention of Pupils in consultation with the staff and Parents Council.-It has been revised and amended accordingly in consultation with all the relevant parties.

**Policy Aim**

* To provide guidance for the school management team and teaching staff in the event of a request by parents or guardians for a pupil to be retained in the same grade for another school year.

**Mission/ Rationale**

The primary school is designed as an 8 year course comprising of 2-year infant cycle followed by 6 years in standards from 1st to 6th, with children progressing to the next grade at the end of each school year. The primary curriculum is flexible and child centred and can be adapted to meet the children’s needs. The Department of Education and Skills provides considerable support for pupils with learning difficulties. This includes special education teachers working with children individually, as part of a group, or in class situations special needs assistant support,. The level of provision available should enable pupils to make progress in keeping with their needs and abilities and to move consecutively through the different grade levels in the school along with their peers. In very exceptional circumstances it may be educationally beneficial for a pupil to repeat a grade level.

**Procedures.**

In St. Colman’s N.S. the following procedures apply for retention of a pupil in the same grade for a further year.

* DES policy is that children should only be allowed to repeat a year for educational reasons and in exceptional circumstances (circular 32/03)
* Applications for retention will be considered on a case by case basis-however it is proposed that in keeping with Early Intervention it is preferable that retention occurs only (if possible ) in the Junior Classes.
* No pupil will be retained in 6th class unless in exceptional circumstances
* No pupils who have completed 6th class in another school will be enrolled in St. Colman’s N.S. (unless in exceptional circumstances))
* No pupil will be held back for longer than 1 year throughout his/her primary career.
* In accordance with circular 32/03 the school will not operate a repeat 6th class
* Parents must sign the appropriate form/letter requesting their child be retained-stating clearly the reasons why.
* A record outlining the educational basis for the decision to retain the child will be kept for any pupil retained. A clear programme will be outlined for such a pupil that records precisely what approaches will be used the following year. These records will be retained in the school in the pupils file.

**Factors to consider**

**T**he following factors will be considered by the principal in reaching a decision on whether a pupil will be retained in the same grade

* The age of the pupil
* The educational benefit to the pupil to be retained in the same grade
* The present number of pupils in the class in question
* Class test results for the pupil (if applicable)
* Standardised test results for the pupil (if applicable)
* Psychological report if available
* Present resources in place, such as learning support and SNA support
* What other educational supports may be put in place or are likely to be obtained
* The pupils previous/present application to work in school
* Parental Support-co-operation
* Compliance with the schools Code of Behaviour
* Attendance
* Disciplinary Record of the pupil
* Any potential detrimental/adverse effect of the pupil’s retention on the teaching/learning of other pupils in the class in question
* Any potential threat to the health and safety of other pupils and staff by the pupil’s retention
* Potential effects of retention on the pupil in terms of self-confidence, self-esteem and loss of friends,
* Any other issues that may affect the pupil, the class in question or the staff

**Consultation**

The principal will consult with the following in reaching a decision

* The deputy principal
* The class teacher of the pupil
* The resource teacher, learning support and/or SNA of the pupil (if applicable)
* Parents/Guardians of the pupil
* Board of Management

**Decision Process**

After considering all the factors that relate to a specific retention application, the principal will reach a decision after consultation with the relevant personnel listed above. The principal and/or class teacher will then arrange a meeting with the parents/guardians of the pupil in question to inform them of the decision-explaining reasons for the decision.

The allocation of classes and promotion of pupils are the responsibility of the principal and her decisions in this matter are final.

**Evaluation**

The Board of Management will monitor the implementation of all aspects of this policy, which will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Policy Approval/Ratification

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of St. Colman’s N.S. February 2015,reviewed 2019

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