Rahealty NS

 Retention of Pupils Policy

**1. Introduction**

This policy was developed by the staff and Board of Management (B.O.M.) of Rahealty National School. This policy is set out in accordance with the Department of Education and Skills recommendations in relation to the retention of pupils in the same grade, in particular Circular 32/03. The B.O.M. trusts that by so doing parents will be assisted in relation to retention matters.

**2. Rationale**

The B.O.M. and staff deemed that this policy was necessary for the following reasons:

• Clarifying the exceptional nature of a pupil being retained in a class (repeating a class)

• Outlining the D.E.S. position regarding the retention of pupils in the same grade

• To help maintain class size in line the D.E.S. guidelines regarding Pupil Teacher Ratio

• Having a documented procedure in place ensures that all pupils are treated fairly and equally.

• Such a procedure also ensures no exceptions or discrimination is possible

• Children are not entitled to an automatic right to repeat a class. Children repeating a class is exceptional not the norm.

**3. Relationship to school ethos**

Rahealty N.S., is a Catholic co-educational primary school in the dioceses of Cashel and Emly. The school has a catholic ethos and models and promotes a philosophy of life inspired by belief in God and the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The school aims to promote the full and harmonious development of all pupils; cognitive, intellectual, physical, cultural, moral and spiritual, including a living relationship with God and other people and promotes a Christian philosophy of life. It is felt that implementing a policy that is fair and non-discriminatory would only serve to complement the scene of equality that is promoted in the school.

**4.1 Background**

In line with D.E.S. guidelines, Rahealty recognises that the primary school curriculum is designed as an eight year course, including a two year infant cycle followed by six years in standards from first to sixth, 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 children’s needs. Considerable support is provided for pupils with learning difficulties including: learning support, resource teaching hours and special needs assistant. These supports are based on the individual child’s needs and are subject to D.E.S. funding. These provisions enable pupils to make progress, in keeping with their needs and abilities, and to move consecutively through the different class levels in the school along with their peers. The promotion of pupils to the next standard will normally take place at the beginning of the school year.

**4.2 Retention of Pupils**

Children will only be allowed to repeat a year for educational reasons and in exceptional circumstances. In such exceptional circumstances the Principal teacher, following consultation with the learning support teacher/resource teacher, class teacher and parent(s) may conclude that a pupil would benefit educationally by repeating a grade level. This is in keeping with D.E.S. guidelines (See Circular 32/ 03). A record outlining the educational basis for the decision to retain a child will be kept as well as instruction on how to better help the child succeed a second time round with reference to school support available for the child. These records will be retained within the school and filed in the office. If parents/ guardians do not consent to the retention of the pupil, we will not go against their wishes, but the principal will keep a record of their refusal to grant consent on file. No pupil will repeat a grade more than once in a primary school.

**4.3 Timeframe**

In order to achieve class size in line with D.E.S guidelines on pupil teacher ratio the B.O.M. must be aware of all pupils repeating a class by the closing date for enrolment.

**4.4 Pupils retained in Infants In line with D.E. S. Guidelines**

A pupil cannot be retained in an infant class beyond the 30th June next following the date on which he/ she has: - a) been enrolled in the school for one and a half years or b) reached the age of six and a half years, whichever is earlier.

4.5 Transfer of Pupils to another Primary School to Repeat Sixth Class

It is D.E.S. policy that pupils who have completed sixth class in one school must not transfer to another primary school to repeat sixth class. If the B.O.M. of Rahealty N.S. were to enrol pupils from another school to repeat sixth class, the pupils cannot be included as eligible pupils for staffing and other purposes. Capitation and other grants in respect of such pupils shall not be paid by the D.E.S. In all cases where the proposed retention of pupils has staffing implications the Primary Payments Section of the D. E. S. will be notified. An additional grade level will not operate through the retention of all or a substantial number of pupils at a grade level.

 **5. Communication**

Parents of pupils enrolled in the school will be informed about this policy via the regular Communications letters. This policy will be uploaded to the school website for all parents to read and refer to at their own leisure. Copies of this policy will be made available to any parent who requests one, once it has been approved and ratified by the Board of Management.

**6. Review**

This policy will be reviewed by the B. O. M on a regular basis and on the issue of new D.E.S. guidelines on the retention of pupils in the same grade. This policy will be changed where deemed necessary.

**7. Approval and Ratification**

This policy was ratified by the Board of management of Rahealty N.S.

**Approved by:**

**Chairperson:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Principal:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**