

Retention Policy
St. Joseph's National School,
Moneygall, Birr, Co. Offaly.
Roll Number - 17003A
Patron – Bishop of Killaloe

RETENTION POLICY

Regulations governing the retention of pupils in Primary Schools is outlined in the Department of Education Circular 11/01

Introduction

1.1 This Circular outlines the regulations governing the retention of pupils in Primary Schools.

2. Background

2.1 The Department's policy on the promotion of pupils is set out in Rule 64 of the Rules for National Schools, and in Department Circular 10/67:

Rule 64 (7) states “As a rule, a pupil should not be retained in an infant’s class beyond the 30th June next following the date on which he 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 the earlier

Rule 64(10) states “The promotion of pupils to the next standard should normally take place at the beginning of the school year”.

Circular 10/67 states “The normal procedure should be that a pupil is promoted to a higher standard at the end of each school year. There may be cases, however, where the principal teacher feels that a pupil would benefit educationally by being held back for a second year in a class. In regard to such cases it is felt that by reference to educational principles they should be minimal, that no pupil should be held back for longer than one year throughout his/her national school career, and that usually the retention should take place only in the third or fourth standard”.

■ 3. Current Policy on Retention

3.1 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 childrens’ needs.

3.2 Under the Department's policy, children should only repeat a year for educational reasons and under no circumstances should an additional grade level operate through the retention of all or a substantial number of pupils for a second year at a grade level.

3.3 The Department is providing considerable support for pupils with learning difficulties in schools. Learning support teachers, resource teachers, special needs assistants and a wide range of resources under the various schemes for schools in areas designated as disadvantaged are among the forms of provision allocated to schools for these pupils. 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 class levels in the school in keeping with their peers.

3.4 There may be cases where a Principal teacher, following consultation with the learning support teacher and class teacher and parents of the pupil, conclude that a pupil would benefit educationally by being held back for a second year. A record outlining the educational basis for the decision to retain a child in class for a second year should be kept for any pupil so retained. In addition, there should be a clear programme outlined for such a pupil that records precisely what new approach will be used for her/him and what its expected benefit will be. These records should be retained within the school and should be brought to the Inspector's attention by the Principal when s/he visits the school. A pupil should not be held back for longer than one year in a primary school.

3.5 In all cases where the proposed retention of pupils has staffing implications the Primary Payments Section of the Department of Education & Science should be notified.

4. Transfer of Pupils to another Primary School to Repeat Sixth Class

4.1 Pupils who have completed sixth class must not transfer to another primary school to repeat sixth class. In the event that a school were to enrol pupils from another school to repeat sixth class the pupils shall not be included as eligible pupils for staffing and other purposes. Capitation and other grants in respect of such pupils shall not be paid.

5. Elimination of Nine Year Cycle

5.1 A school must not operate a repeat middle infants class or a repeat sixth class/ seventh class. Schools must not enrol any pupils in these classes. In the event that a school were to continue the practice of enrolling pupils in a repeat class after the 1st September, 2001 the Department will discount the pupils in such classes for the purpose of determining the valid enrolment of the school. Capitation and other grants in respect of such pupils shall not be paid.

- The Department is providing considerable support for pupils with learning difficulties in schools. Learning support teachers, resource teachers, special needs assistants and a wide range of resources under the various schemes for schools in areas designated as disadvantaged are among the forms of provision allocated to schools for these pupils. 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 class levels in the school along with their peers.

- **Under the Department's policy, children should only be allowed to repeat a year for educational reasons and in exceptional circumstances. For example**
 - (a) **The child has not achieved sufficient levels of literacy or numeracy**
 - (b) **The child has missed a significant level of schooling**
 - (c) **The child has emotional/behavioural issues that impeded their learning during the course of the year.**

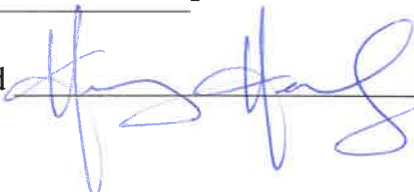
Social immaturity is not considered reason for a pupil to repeat a class. In such exceptional circumstances a Principal teacher, following consultation with SET and class teacher and parent(s) may conclude that a pupil would benefit educationally by repeating a grade level.

- (a) **Following consultation, a record outlining the educational basis for the decision should be kept. (Appendix 1)**
- (b) **A letter needs to be submitted to the school from parents requesting that the child repeat a year. (Appendix 2)**
- (c) **Once the decision to retain the child is made, a Support Plan should be drawn up indicating what interventions would be put in place for the child to maximise the learning experience. It should record precisely what new approach will be used and what the expected outcomes will be.**
- (d) **These records should be retained within the school and should be brought to the Inspector's attention by the Principal when s/he visits school.**
- (e) **(e) No pupil should repeat a grade more than once in a primary school.**

- **In all cases where the proposed retention of pupils has staffing implications the Primary Payments Section of the Department of Education & Science should be notified.**

Ratification and Review

This policy was reviewed and ratified by the Board of Management on _____

Signed  Chairperson, Board of Management

Signed  Principal/Secretary, Board of Management

12/3/2026

RETENTION DISCUSSED
St. Joseph's National School
Moneygall
17003A

Name of pupil:

Date of birth:

Pupil's Nationality:

Class teacher:

Date of Discussion:

Reasons why a retention was considered:

Reasons why the retention was not granted:

Staff members involved in decision:

Signed:

Date:

Principal Teacher

REQUEST FOR RETENTION
St. Joseph's National School
Moneygall

Date of Request:

Name of pupil:

Date of birth:

Pupil 's Nationality:

Class:

Home Address:

We, _____
request that our child _____ repeat _____ Class.
I/We have discussed this matter at length with

We are aware that a Support Plan will be drawn up indicating what interventions will be in place for _____ to maximise his/her learning experience. It will record precisely what new approach will be used and what the expected outcomes will be.

Yours sincerely

_____ (Parent's signature 1)

_____ (Parent's signature 2)