



St. Patrick's Junior School

TENNIS COURT LANE, SKERRIES, CO. DUBLIN.

K34 D799

Principal: Máire Ní Chróinín

Deputy Principal: Lynsey Dungan

Roll Number: 16333Q

RCN: 20118839

POLICY ON NON STATUTORY LEAVE FOR STAFF

Introductory Statement

This policy was formulated by school staff and the Board of Management of the school in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Department of Education and Skills and the Catholic Primary Schools Management Association. All members of staff had an opportunity to contribute to the formulation of this policy.

Ethos

St. Patrick's Junior School is a welcoming and inclusive community that is holistic, respectful and tolerant of all religious traditions and beliefs. The school community strives to create an atmosphere of love, respect, security and trust. Teachers are sensitive to the needs and circumstances of each pupil. We work in close collaboration with the family. Good communication between parents and teachers is essential to the nurturing of this positive, supportive environment.

Objective

The objective of this policy is to set out procedures related to the granting of leave in the school. In drawing up this policy, "the welfare and educational needs of the pupils shall take precedence over all other considerations" (Leave Schemes for Registered Teachers, Circular 0054/2019).

This Policy was approved by the Board of Management on the 10th of October 2023.
It will be reviewed ever three years or sooner if necessary.

Very Rev. Fr. Melvyn Mullins,
Chairperson, Board of Management.



Categories of Leave

The following categories of leave are available to teachers on application to the Board of Management.

Long Term Leave of Absence:

Career Breaks	Leave Schemes for Registered Teachers Circular 0054/2019
Job-Sharing	Leave Schemes for Registered Teachers Circular 0054/2019 (amended by Information Note 0002/2023)
Temporary Reassignment Scheme for Teachers	Leave Schemes for Registered Teachers Circular 0054/2019
Carer's Leave*	Leave Schemes for Registered Teachers Circular 0054/2019
Maternity Leave* (Paid and Unpaid)	Leave Schemes for Registered Teachers Circular 0054/2019
Adoptive Leave*	Leave Schemes for Registered Teachers Circular 0054/2019
Secondment	Circular 0011/2002
Study Leave	Rule 116, Rules for National Schools

Short Term Leave of Absence (available where applicable):

Exam Leave/Study Leave	Circular 0018/2000
Unpaid Leave	Leave Schemes for Registered Teachers Circular 0054/2019
E.P.V. Leave	Circular 0037/1997
Parental Leave*	Leave Schemes for Registered Teachers Circular 0054/2019
Parent Leave*	Parents' Leave and Benefit Act, 2019
Brief Absences	Circular 0032/2007
Bereavement Leave	Circular 0078/2022
Paternity Leave*	Leave Schemes for Registered Teachers Circular 0054/2019
Assault Leave	Assault Leave 0061/2017
Family Illness (Teachers)	Leave Schemes for Registered Teachers Circular 0054/2019

*These forms of leave are a statutory entitlement. Please refer to www.education.gov.ie for the most up to date leave circulars.

The text of circulars etc. outlining terms and conditions of "Leave of Absence" for teachers are available on the Department of Education and Skills website www.education.ie and on the INTO website www.into.ie.

The statutory entitlements in the above circulars are not impacted by this policy document.

Special Needs Assistants may apply to the Board of Management for the following types of leave:

Maternity/Paternity Leave*	Circular 0017/2013 amended by IN/TC 0024/2021
Adoptive Leave*	Circular 0019/2013
Parent Leave*	Circular 0035/2021
Parental Leave*	Circular 0027/2013
Job Share	Circular 0041/2014 as amended by TC/I N 0002/2023
Carer's Leave*	Circular 0035/2019
Brief Absences	Circular 0032/2010
Bereavement Leave	Circular 0079/2022
Assault Leave	Assault Leave 0062/2017
Unpaid leave - maximum 10 days/year	Circular 0032/2010

*These forms of leave are a statutory entitlement. Please refer to www.education.gov.ie for the most up to date leave circulars.

School Secretary/Caretaker may apply to the Board of Management for the following types of leave:

Maternity/Paternity Leave*	Parental/Adoptive Leave*
Carer's Leave	Brief Absences
Force Majeure Leave	Career Break
Job Share	Unpaid leave - maximum 10 days/year

*These forms of leave are a statutory entitlement.

Long Term Leave – General Principles

It is the responsibility of a member of staff applying for any type of statutory or non-statutory leave to apply for the leave within the time frame set out in the relevant circular and using the correct application form.

A permanent member of staff of St. Patrick's Junior National School may apply for non-statutory leave, as per the conditions set out in the relevant circulars. Applications will be dealt with in accordance with the relevant circulars and taking the following additional points into consideration:

- As a general principle, every effort will be made by the Board of Management to facilitate applications for career breaks and other forms of leave from eligible members of the teaching staff.
- The maximum number of teachers on leave (including Career Break, Leave of Absence, Job Sharing and Secondment) in any school year shall not exceed **25%** of the permanent teaching staff (i.e. full-time teaching positions).
- The maximum number of SNAs on leave (including Career Break, Leave of Absence, Job Sharing and Secondment) shall not exceed **25%** of the SNA staff.
- Leave applications by the school secretary / caretaker are dependent on the need for and availability of suitable staff for substitution / replacement during the period of leave.
- In making decisions on applications for long term non-statutory leave, the overall number of staff on statutory and non-statutory leave will be taken into consideration.

- While recognizing a staff member's wish to take leave for whatever reason, the welfare and education needs of pupils shall take precedence over all other considerations. (Leave Schemes for Registered Teachers Circular 0054/2019).
- Where the number of applications for any form of long-term leave (including the extension of existing arrangements) exceeds the available quota, the Board of Management will review these applications individually. If possible, the Board will attempt to facilitate applications in these circumstances, but in making a decision, the interests of the school and pupils will be paramount.
- The decision of the employer shall be final. In the event of an oversubscription of applications a rotational system will generally be put in place. However, the Board of Management reserves the right to consider each application on its own merits.
- Teachers must re-apply for long term leave on an annual basis. (Leave Schemes for Registered Teachers Circular 0054/2019).
- The latest date for withdrawal of an application for non-statutory leave is set out in the applicable circular. It is the sole responsibility of the staff member to check the relevant circular in force and withdraw their application by the date specified there. Once the replacement teacher's contract has been signed the teacher can no longer withdraw the application for leave.
- "In exceptional circumstances the employer, in its sole discretion, may consider a later withdrawal of a career break application." (Leave Schemes for Registered Teachers Circular 0054/2019).

Guidelines for the Assessment of Applications for Long Term Leave

Applications for leave that require the approval of the Board of Management will be considered on receipt of appropriate documentation in accordance with the following criteria (No official order):

1. Number of teachers on leave or seeking leave – to a maximum of 25% of the permanent teaching/SNA staff. Exceptions to this quota may be considered in exceptional circumstances at the sole discretion of the Board of Management.
2. Family/Health circumstances of the applicant(s).
3. Years of service in the school.
4. Rotation using the following to calculate:

$$\frac{\text{years of leave}}{\text{years of service}} * \frac{100}{1}$$

The higher the percentage, the lower on the list the staff member goes.

5. The suitability of the partner in the case of job sharing/teacher exchange for the class concerned.
6. Availability of suitably qualified replacement teachers/SNAs.

Approval of any leave application is at the discretion of the board and ensuring the interests of the school and students is paramount.

Members of Staff applying for Leave of Absence must:

- Apply in writing in time, as per relevant circulars, to the Chairperson where applicable.
- Comply with terms laid down by the Department of Education and Skills, the Board of Management and relevant legislation.

- Applicants may be asked to attend a Board of Management meeting to further inform the Board if necessary.

The Board of Management will:

- Process all applications for leave of absence at the next Board of Management meeting after the final date for receipt of leave applications in line with governing circulars and in compliance with the terms of reference laid down by the Department of Education and Skills, this policy statement and the law.
- Inform the applicant of the Board's decision by the date specified in the relevant circular.
- Respect the confidentiality of the applicant's request for leave.
- Facilitate the granting of leave in circumstances that in the opinion of the Board do not adversely affect the process of education in the school.

Job Share Arrangements:

All permanent teachers/SNAs employed in St. Patrick's Junior National School with at least one years' service in a permanent capacity are eligible to apply for Job Sharing, with the exclusion of the Principal and teachers on probation.

If the Deputy Principal is granted a Job Share position, he/she must relinquish his/her post of responsibility and the appropriate allowance for the duration of the Job Sharing arrangement.

It should be noted that the Board of Management is under no obligation to approve Job Sharing arrangements and may, as it sees fit, refuse some or all applications, based on the selection criteria.

Teachers cannot Job Share while on Secondment. However, a teacher on a Career Break, Secondment, or other approved leave of absence may apply to resume teaching duties on a Job-Sharing basis.

Where the Job Share application is for the reduction of full time hours and the employment of a temporary teacher, approval of the arrangement would be contingent on the availability of a suitable substitute teacher who was fully qualified, probated and Teaching Council registered, preferably with a minimum of two years' teaching experience. All vetting and GDPR obligations must be met.

The temporary teacher would commit to the Job-Sharing Scheme for the duration of the full school year. However, the Board of Management reserves the right to review and – if deemed necessary – to terminate a Job-Sharing arrangement during a school year if the Board decides that the arrangement is not operating in the best interests of pupils. At the time of his/her appointment, the temporary (Fixed Purpose) replacement teacher will also be made aware that his/her appointment shall be terminated if the Board decides that a Job-Sharing arrangement should be terminated in the best interests of the pupils. Leave Schemes for Registered Teachers Circular 0054/2019

If, for any reason, the temporary teacher left the Job-Sharing post, the permanent teacher would return to his/her teaching post on a fulltime basis immediately, until another temporary teacher is appointed.

The Board shall assess each Job-Sharing Application in accordance with the guidelines set out in the relevant Department of Education and Skills circulars and in accordance with the terms of this policy and shall give its formal decision in writing to the teachers not later than 1st March of the same year. In the event of applications being received in excess of the number of Job-Sharing places available in any school year, the Board of Management will decide on the matter by using the selection criteria listed in this non-statutory leave policy.

The Time-Sharing Arrangement to be adopted

In deciding the time-sharing arrangements to be adopted the welfare and educational needs of pupils take precedence over all other considerations. With this in mind, the Board will consider applications for the split week or full week options.

Each Job sharing staff member must be present for relevant staff meetings, planning meetings and parent meetings. The obligation to provide additional hours under the existing public service agreements is pro rata.

Resignation while Job-Sharing

The minimum period of a Job-Sharing arrangement is one full school year. Therefore, a teacher cannot resign from a Job-Sharing arrangement to return to teach full time in his/her school during the course of the school year.

A Job-Sharing Teacher who wishes to resign from his/her teaching post (as opposed to resigning from their Job-Sharing arrangement) must give the Board of Management (or Boards of Management where an Inter-School Job Sharing Scheme exists) sufficient notice in writing in accordance with the teacher's terms of employment. The remaining Job-Sharing Teacher must seek another permanent teacher to job share with or alternatively must resume full time teaching. The temporary replacement teacher should also be made aware that his/her appointment shall be terminated arising from the resignation of one of the Job-Sharing Teachers.

Attendance at In-Service Courses (Including Curriculum Courses), "Croke Park Days/Hours, School Planning Days.

The arrangements and requirements regarding the following issues/responsibilities are outlined in the relevant Circulars from the Department of Education. These circulars should be consulted by teachers considering applying for a Job Sharing arrangement to ensure clarity of understanding regarding same.

Extra Personal Vacation (EPV) Days

Job sharing teachers may take up to four days between them, where both teachers have completed approved courses.

Supervision

Job Sharing Teachers shall engage in supervision duty with both teachers sharing one post.

Inter-School Job Sharing (teachers)

If a member of St. Patrick's Junior National School teaching staff applies to Job Share with a teacher from another school but based in St. Patrick's Junior National School, the following conditions will apply re the other applicant. These are in addition to all the relevant requirements included in Department of Education Circulars and as detailed elsewhere in this policy.

- The teacher will supply a copy of his/her Curriculum Vitae with up-to-date references and names of referees.
- The teacher will be required to attend for Interview
- The decision of the Board of Management in adjudicating on the suitability of the applicant for a Job-Sharing arrangement will be final.
- As every Job-Sharing arrangement shall be reviewed annually, the teacher from outside St. Patrick's Junior National School may be required to attend for interview again if a further application to continue in a job sharing arrangement is submitted.

If a member of St. Patrick's Junior National School staff applies to Job Share with a teacher from another school and the other school is the base school, then the Job Share Policy of the base school applies.

Additional matters re-Inter-School Job Sharing Scheme

In the case of an Inter-School Job Sharing arrangement, appropriate consultation with the Board of Management of the partner school on all matters relating to the proposed arrangement will be an integral part of the processing of the application.

The Board of Management of the base school for an Inter-School Job Sharing arrangement is considered to be the employer for both Job Sharers for the duration of the Job-Sharing period and the teacher should sign a Form of Agreement with the Board of Management.

Parental Leave

The Board of Management recognizes the value of parental leave in supporting families to maintain a work life balance. The same general principles considered by the Board in regard to other forms of long term leave apply to parental leave.

- Parental leave may be postponed by the Board in circumstances where granting the leave "would have a substantial adverse effect on the operation of the school" (Leave Schemes for Registered Teachers Circular 0054/2019).
- Board of Management approval of an application for parental leave will therefore be dependent on the number of staff already on all forms of leave.
- Where postponement is deemed necessary, the Board will notify the teacher in writing and "ensure that the postponement is not any longer than 6 months from the original date on which the parental leave was due to commence" (Leave Schemes for Registered Teachers Circular 0054/2019 / Circular 0027/2013 (SNAs)).

Short Term Leave/Brief Absences

Applications for short term leave / brief absences are to be made to the principal via email.

All short term leave is approved at the discretion of the Chairperson, including short term unpaid personal leave, with the availability of suitable substitution for the applicant being a critical factor.

Extra Personal Vacation Leave

Teachers' entitlement to Extra Personal Vacation is dependent on successful completion of one or more approved summer courses. Certificates of completion of courses eligible for EPV should be returned via email to the principal/deputy principal to show eligibility for EPV days. No EPV days will be granted until the relevant certificate has been received by school management. The entitlement is to a total of three days on completion of one summer course, a total of four days on completion of two summer courses and a total of five days on completion of three summer courses.

To ensure the fair management of EPV days the teaching staff of St. Patrick's Junior School have agreed the following policy:

- One teacher from each of any two of the following three categories may take EPV days on the same day:
 - (1) Junior and Senior Infant teachers,
 - (2) First and Second Class teachers,
 - (3) Learning Support/Resource teachers.
- Should more than one teacher require the same day at the same level "first come first served" will apply.

- If days are not used during that year they are lost.
- As much notice as possible should be given but no less than a week.
- The first and last two weeks of the school year should not be taken.
- EPV days should not be on in-service / staff meeting days where possible.
- First and Second class teachers are asked not to take EPV days in the week before the celebration of First Holy Communion.
- Should special circumstances arise leave will be at the discretion of the principal. "Special circumstances" are to include family issues & attendance at funerals.
- Requests for an EPV day to be sent via email to the principal. All requests will be dealt with as soon as possible.
- It is the responsibility of each individual teacher to check if the requested day is available.
- On receipt of approval, it is the teacher's responsibility to post the date on the EPV grid and the INTO year planner in the secretary's office, or to any other agreed system used to notify staff absences.
- Job sharing teachers may take up to four days between them.
- All leave is ultimately subject to B.O.M. approval.

Classes will be split as follows: Junior and Senior infants go to Junior and Senior infant classes only. First and Second go to First and Second classes only.

In exceptional circumstances where it is necessary to do so, a class may be split throughout the school.

In general, all classes will accommodate children whose class has been split; however, depending on circumstances prevailing and with the agreement of all teachers, a particular class may be excused from accommodating children whose class has been split.

Class lists will be compiled at the beginning of the year and the same children will go to the same classes each time. Worksheets will be prepared.

Where applicable, a substitute for playground duty should be arranged by the teacher taking leave.

Sick Leave

Teachers: The terms of the sick leave scheme for teachers are set out in Leave Schemes for Registered Teachers Circular 0054/2019

SNAs: The terms of the sick leave scheme for SNAs is set out in Circular 0060/2019

Members of staff are asked to contact the Principal or Deputy Principal as soon as they are aware of their inability to attend school. A WhatsApp/text message will suffice. If you do not receive a reply, please phone the school. Early notification will give the school management the best opportunity to secure substitute cover for the class.

Where a teacher is absent on sick leave for more than three consecutive days, a medical certificate is required for the total period of the absence. All certified absences are substitutable. Where a teacher is absent on sick leave prior to and after a weekend or before and after a school closure, a medical certificate is required to include the inclusive period of absence.

Where a teacher or SNA is absent on sick leave for more than six successive days (excluding Sunday), they are required to submit a form IB1 and a form Med1 directly to the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection in order to claim illness benefit. If the staff member is eligible to claim illness benefit this will be paid directly to them by the DEASP. They will receive their DES salary minus the sum of illness benefit paid by the DEASP.