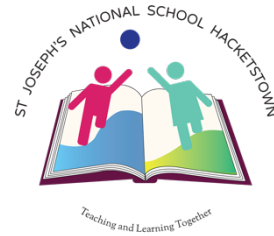


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# Job Sharing and Parental Leave Policy

## **Please note:**

In drawing up the policy on Job Sharing and Parental Leave, the welfare and educational needs of pupils take precedence over all other considerations.

## **Policy Statement:**

This document sets out the Job Sharing Policy for the above school. As defined in Circular 0075/2015 “the purpose of the job sharing scheme is to assist staff members in combining work with personal responsibilities or choices.” As outlined in Circular 0075/2015 each employer shall develop and maintain a policy statement specific to the needs of the school in relation to the approval of job sharing and parental leave arrangements.

## **Scope:**

This policy has been drawn up in consultation with the Board of Management and staff of the above school and has been approved and adopted by the Board of Management. The policy applies to the teachers and SNAs within the school.

## **Aims and Purposes:**

- To clarify the issues relating to job-sharing and parental leave for all the stakeholders - staff, board of management and parents.
- To ensure the smooth operation of the school whilst job sharing and parental leave is in progress.
- To ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the policy and the issues in relation to job-sharing and parental leave.
- To inform staff members of what is expected of them for the duration of the job-sharing and parental leave.
- To explain the criteria used to assess applications.
- To explain criteria used to select candidates if more than the permitted number apply.

**Procedures/Guidelines:**

In drawing up this policy, the relevant Circulars from the Department of Education and Skills (DES) were consulted to provide guidance in relation to all matters pertaining to Job Sharing and parental leave arrangements in the above school, and to ensure that the policy is in compliance with DES Guidelines. All persons wishing to apply for Job Sharing are expected to familiarise themselves with the details of the Job Sharing Scheme as outlined in all relevant Circulars from the DES (see [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)), which are subject to review by the DES from time to time. The same is expected of those wishing to apply for parental leave. This policy should be read and understood within the context of all current, relevant DES Circulars. The policy is specific to the needs of this school.

## Job Sharing

**Eligibility:**

All permanent teachers employed in St Joseph's NS with at least two years service in a permanent capacity, are eligible to apply for Job Sharing, with the exclusion of the Principal (the importance of the leadership function of a Principal precludes this role from being shared) and teachers on Probation. A Deputy Principal may apply for Job-Sharing but will be required to relinquish their post for the duration.

Teachers who are currently on secondment or are going on secondment cannot Job Share for the duration of the 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.

Job-sharing applications will only be considered from:

- (a) permanent staff members of St Joseph's NS who wish to share within the school
- (b) a staff member of St Joseph's NS who wishes to job-share in another school
- (c) a permanent staff member of St Joseph's NS who wishes to job share in this school with a probated teacher from another school.

It is a matter for staff members to find colleagues with whom they may wish to enter into a job-sharing arrangement.

The Board of Management will consider all applications on their merit and adjudicate on the matter.

**Number of staff members to be involved:**

The Board of Management will consider all applications on their merit and adjudicate on the matter, bearing in mind that the welfare and educational needs of pupils take precedence over all other considerations.

The Board of Management of St Joseph's NS has determined that no more than 2 teachers and 2 SNAs will be allowed to participate in job sharing arrangements in any one school year - i.e. there shall be one job-sharing position for teachers and one job sharing position for SNAs allowed in any one year.

It should be noted that the Board of Management is under **no obligation** to approve Job Sharing arrangements and can as it sees fit refuse some or all applications at its absolute discretion.

**Duration of Job Sharing Arrangement:**

The minimum period for which a job sharing arrangement may occur is **one 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.

**Applying for Job Sharing:**

A teacher seeking to job share must submit the prescribed application form JS1 attached to circular 0075/2015 to the Board of Management of St Joseph's NS not later than the **1st March** prior to the school year in which he/she proposes to commence/continue job sharing. A teacher who wishes to extend his/her job sharing arrangement must apply for this extension on an annual basis.

Each application to job share shall be considered on its own merits by the Board of Management within the context of the school's policy statement. The decision of the Board of Management shall be final.

Should the Board of Management of St Joseph's NS be the employer who hosts the teachers availing of the inter school job-sharing arrangement, it 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.

The employer shall issue a written notice of approval or refusal, which will set out the basis of the refusal, to the teacher by **1st April** at the latest.

Taking account of the extent of arrangements to be put in place by the Board of Management to cater for a job sharing post, the applicant will not be permitted to withdraw his/her application after **1st May**, or from once the replacement teacher's contract has been signed, whichever happens first. This should be included in the notice from the school to the teacher.

Only in exceptional circumstances can an application for withdrawal from a job sharing scheme and/or an earlier return to full-time employment be considered by the Board of Management. However, such an application may not be considered after the start of the school year.

As this is a discretionary type of leave, the Board of Management must list the names of all teachers availing of job sharing arrangements on the annual change of staff form that is returned to the Dept of Education and Skills. The job sharing application must be retained in the school.

An outside teacher who wishes to job share within the school must include a written reference from his/her Principal. This teacher may be invited to attend the school for an interview to ascertain his/ her suitability. This teacher will have to submit a record of attendance with their application.

### **Plan of Work:**

Teachers wishing to Job Share should submit a written **Plan of Work** to the Board of Management before the **1<sup>st</sup> of May** of the preceding academic year. Teachers already engaged in a job sharing scheme must also abide by this requirement on an annual basis.

The **Plan of Work** must address in an appropriate manner the following issues:

- the need for continuity
- the need for planning for an agreed methodology
- an agreed approach to disciplinary matters
- School Calendar
- Attendance at school events (Parent/Teacher meetings, School Concerts, School Fundraising events etc)
- Attendance at Croke Park hours and staff meetings

It should also provide for the use of the combined talents of both teachers as well as assigning responsibility. The Plan of Work should comply with School Policies and should address the need for continuity in the case of brief absences.

In considering applications for Job Sharing, the Board shall satisfy itself that the **Plan of Work** adequately addresses all of the key issues outlined above.

### **Approval of Job Sharing:**

The Principal will be required to inform the Board of Management in detail regarding a proposal to Job Share. Specifically, the Principal will be asked to outline for the Board (where both teachers are from St Joseph's NS):

- The extent to which the two proposed Job Sharers are compatible, co-operative, flexible, and complement each other's skills and professionalism.
- The levels of organisational and communication skills displayed by the proposed partners.

The Board of Management will consider all applications on their merit and adjudicate on the matter, **bearing in mind that the welfare and educational needs of pupils take precedence over all other considerations.** It should be noted that the Board of Management is under no obligation to approve Job Sharing arrangements and can as it sees fit refuse some or all applications at its absolute discretion.

The Board will consider each application and will convey a decision in writing before **1<sup>st</sup> April.**

The Board of Management reserves the right to terminate a job-sharing arrangement, in the event that it is not operating in the best interests of the pupils and the school.

### **Time Sharing Arrangements:**

In deciding the time sharing arrangements to be adopted the welfare and educational needs of pupils take precedence over all other considerations. These will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

### **Handover arrangements between job-sharing teachers**

Both teachers will communicate either by phone/email or in person for a sufficient period of time at the end of each teaching shift to discuss and prepare the necessary handover. It is the responsibility of the job-sharing teacher to convey any communications made to the staff at Croke Park Hours etc. to the other teacher.

### **Planning for the class of job-sharing teachers**

Job sharing teachers shall prepare together:

- A full year's work-plan in consultation with the Principal. This may be presented termly if agreed by the Principal.
- A fortnightly scheme for the class. These must be handed up to the Principal/ Acting Principal at the beginning of each fortnight and signed and kept in the office.
- At the end of each month both teachers shall complete a detailed report of the curriculum taught and the progress made by the children during the month under both teachers. This will be handed up to the Principal.

- Copies of the long-term plan, short-term plans and monthly reports shall be presented to the Principal Teacher at the appropriate times.
- Together, both teachers shall prepare an agreed weekly and daily timetable. A copy of this must be given to the Principal and kept in his/her office with a copy retained in the classroom to be made available for a substitute teacher.
- Job sharers are required to maintain a shared diary in which records of progress, behaviour issues, meetings with parents, payments of money, and all other relevant events shall be noted.
- Job Sharing Teachers are required to be available for relevant Parent/Teacher Meetings.
- Plans, profiles, record keeping files etc. should be made available for substitute teachers.
- At the end of the school year both teachers shall prepare the school reports together

As a general principle both teachers will display significant flexibility in relation to the class's participation in school events so that they shall continue to happen normally.

#### **Class Levels:**

In deciding the Class Levels which may involve a job sharing scheme, the welfare and educational needs of pupils take precedence over all other considerations. Special account must be taken of pupils who might be regarded as vulnerable or having special needs. The allocation of Classes/Teaching Duties must take account of job sharing applications and **remains the decision of the Principal.**

Where possible the Principal will try ensure that in mainstream settings, pupils will have job sharing arrangement maximum once, during their time at St Joseph's NS.

#### **Appointment of a replacement teacher:**

Where a replacement teacher is to be employed, the position must be filled in accordance with current rules for teacher recruitment. Where a replacement teacher is to be employed he/she shall be offered a specified purpose (fixed term) contract. Such a contract must include a condition that the contract will terminate on the job sharing teacher resigning, retiring or returning to full time employment or the following 31st August whichever happens first.

#### **Holiday Entitlements:**

Entitlements arising to a job sharing teacher from e.g. bank holidays, will accrue to the teacher who would otherwise be scheduled for duty on the day in question.

**Parental Involvement:**

The parents of the class(es)/pupils involved with a job sharing scheme will be informed at an appropriate time that their children will be taught by Job Sharing Teachers in the following year. This will normally happen in Term 3 by means of a letter to parents advising them of the decision.

In the case of Learning Support/Language Support and Resource Teaching, parents will normally be informed at the beginning of the school year to which the Job Sharing Scheme applies when the pupils concerned have been identified as meriting access to teachers of the Special Education Team.

**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) notice in writing in accordance with the teachers' terms of employment. The remaining Job Sharing Teacher must resume full time teaching as the partnership has effectively been dissolved. The temporary replacement teacher should also be made aware that his/her appointment will be terminated arising from the resignation of one of the Job Sharing Teachers.

**EPV Days:**

It is imperative that teachers involved in a Job Sharing Scheme do not take more than 2 EPV ('Course') Days each due to concerns about the total number of teaching days which would be lost if Job Sharing teachers were to avail of at least six EPV days during the School Year.

**Supervision:**

Job Sharing Teachers shall engage in Supervision Duty with both teachers sharing one post.

**Posts of Responsibility:**

A special duties Post of Responsibility holder may be allowed to job-share. However, they must relinquish their post for the duration.

### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

It is the responsibility of all the stakeholders (staff, parents and BOM) to familiarise themselves with the terms of this policy and to contribute positively to its on-going implementation within the school setting.

### **Evaluation/Review:**

The policy will be subject to evaluation/review on an annual basis and amendments may be made to the policy in light of:

- Feedback from the stakeholders
- The efficient and smooth operation of Job Sharing Scheme(s)
- Benefits to the school arising from the implementation of the Job Sharing policy.
- Revised/New DES Circulars and Guidelines.
- Changes within the school re: Staffing, SEN allocations, SNA allocations, Pupil numbers etc.

The Principal will report to the B.O.M. at least once each term, to assess compliance with school policy and to ensure the welfare and education needs of the pupils are met.

## **Parental Leave**

This policy has been drawn up in accordance with the following:

<https://www.education.ie/en/Education-Staff/Services/Breaks-Leave/Terms-and-Conditions-of-Employment-for-Registered-Teachers-in-Recognised-Primary-and-Post-Primary-Schools.pdf>

### **Eligibility:**

“A teacher is entitled to 22 weeks Parental Leave in respect of each child up to the age of 13 years or the age of 16 years in the case of a child with a disability and/or long-term illness.

For the purposes of the Parental Leave Acts:

*“disability means an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment of the child such that the level of care required for the child is substantially more than the level of care that is generally required for children of the same age who do not have any such impairment.”*

*“a long-term illness, the effect of which is that the level of care required for the child is substantially more than the level of care that is generally required for children of the same age who do not have any such long term illness.”*

There is no obligation however to take the full 22 weeks leave. Applicants who have taken 18 weeks previously may now apply for an additional 4 weeks provided they still meet the entitlement criteria.



- A teacher may be eligible for Parental Leave where he/she has completed one year's continuous employment with the employer from whose employment the leave is taken.
- This requirement is waived in the case of a teacher compulsorily redeployed into a school provided that he/she has completed one year's continuous employment in his/her former school before being redeployed.
- In circumstances where, on the latest day for commencing a period of Parental Leave, the teacher has less than one year but more than three months continuous teaching service with the employer from whose employment the leave is to be taken, the teacher shall be entitled to Parental Leave for a period of one week for each month of continuous service completed with his/her employer at the time of the commencement of the leave.
- A teacher who is on or due to be placed on a panel for redeployment may not apply for Parental Leave beyond the end of the school year in which his/her post is to be withdrawn.
- Entitlement to Parental Leave shall cease on the expiry of the contract of employment and that contract not having been renewed.

**Number of staff members to be involved:**

The Board of Management will consider all applications on their merit and adjudicate on the matter, bearing in mind that the welfare and educational needs of pupils take precedence over all other considerations.

The Board of Management of St Joseph's NS has determined that no more than 1 teacher (2 if engaging in a job share type arrangement) and 1 SNA (2 if engaging in a job share type arrangement) will be allowed to participate in parental leave at one time. - i.e. there shall only be one teacher or one SNA on parental leave from the school at any given time.

It should be noted that the Board of Management is under **no obligation** to approve parental leave arrangements and can as it sees fit postpone some or all applications at its absolute discretion.

**Applying for Parental Leave:**

Application for Parental Leave should be made by a teacher/SNA to his/her employer at least 6 weeks in advance of commencement of the leave on the prescribed application form which is attached.

**(Appendix A)**

In the case of parental leave taking a job share type arrangement, the teacher must apply no later than 1<sup>st</sup> March prior to the school year in which he/she proposes to commence/continue the arrangement.

Each application for job-share-type parental leave shall be considered on its own merits by the Board of Management within the context of the school's policy statement. The decision of the Board of Management shall be final.

The employer shall issue a written notice of approval or postponement, which will set out the basis of the postponement, to the teacher by **1st April** at the latest.

Taking account of the extent of arrangements to be put in place by the Board of Management to cater for a job-share-type arrangement, the applicant will not be permitted to withdraw his/her application after **1st June** the previous year.

Only in exceptional circumstances can an application for withdrawal from an agreed parental leave arrangement and/or an earlier return to full-time employment be considered by the Board of Management.

### **Plan of Work:**

Teachers wishing to avail of a job-share-type arrangement for parental leave should submit a written **Plan of Work** to the Board of Management before the **1st of May** of the preceding academic year.

The **Plan of Work** must address in an appropriate manner the following issues:

- the need for continuity
- the need for planning for an agreed methodology
- an agreed approach to disciplinary matters
- School Calendar
- Attendance at school events (Parent/Teacher meetings, School Concerts, School Fundraising events etc)
- Attendance at Croke Park hours and staff meetings

It should also provide for the use of the combined talents of both teacher and substitute teacher as well as assigning responsibility. The Plan of Work should comply with School Policies and should address the need for continuity in the case of brief absences.

In considering applications for a job-share-type arrangement for parental leave, the Board shall satisfy itself that the **Plan of Work** adequately addresses all of the key issues outlined above.

### **Approval of Job Sharing:**

The Principal will be required to inform the Board of Management in detail regarding a proposal to take parental leave. Specifically, the Principal will be asked to outline for the

- The extent to which the proposed members of staff are compatible, co-operative, flexible, and complement each other's skills and professionalism.
- The levels of organisational and communication skills displayed by the proposed members of staff.

The Board of Management will consider all applications on their merit and adjudicate on the matter, **bearing in mind that the welfare and educational needs of pupils take precedence over all other considerations.**

The Board will consider each application and will convey a decision in writing before **1<sup>st</sup> April.**

The Board of Management reserves the right to terminate a job-sharing type parental leave arrangement, in the event that it is not operating in the best interests of the pupils and the school.

### **Time Sharing Arrangements:**

In deciding the time sharing arrangements to be adopted the welfare and educational needs of pupils take precedence over all other considerations. These will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

### **Handover arrangements between teachers engaged in job-share-type parental leave arrangement:**

Both teachers will communicate either by phone/email or in person for a sufficient period of time at the end of each teaching shift to discuss and prepare the necessary handover. It is the responsibility of the job-sharing teacher to convey any communications made to the staff at Croke Park Hours etc. to the other teacher.

### **Planning for the class of teachers engaged in job-share-type parental leave arrangement:**

Teachers shall prepare together:

- A full year's work-plan in consultation with the Principal. This may be presented termly if agreed by the Principal.
- A fortnightly scheme for the class. These must be handed up to the Principal/ Acting Principal at the beginning of each fortnight and signed and kept in the office.
- At the end of each month both teachers shall complete a detailed report of the curriculum taught and the progress made by the children during the month under both teachers. This will be handed up to the Principal.
- Copies of the long-term plan, short-term plans and monthly reports shall be presented to the Principal Teacher at the appropriate times.
- Together, both teachers shall prepare an agreed weekly and daily timetable. A copy of this must be given to the Principal and kept in his/her office with a copy retained in the classroom to be made available for a substitute teacher.

- Teachers are required to maintain a shared diary in which records of progress, behaviour issues, meetings with parents, payments of money, and all other relevant events shall be noted.
- Teachers are required to be available for relevant Parent/Teacher Meetings.
- Plans, profiles, record keeping files etc. should be made available for substitute teachers.
- At the end of the school year both teachers shall prepare the school reports together

As a general principle both teachers will display significant flexibility in relation to the class's participation in school events so that they shall continue to happen normally.

### **Class Levels:**

In deciding the Class Levels which may involve this model of parental leave, the welfare and educational needs of pupils take precedence over all other considerations. Special account must be taken of pupils who might be regarded as vulnerable or having special needs. The allocation of Classes/Teaching Duties must take account of job sharing/parental leave applications and **remains the decision of the Principal.**

Where possible the Principal will try ensure that in mainstream settings, pupils will have a job sharing/parental leave arrangement maximum once, during their time at St Joseph's NS.

### **Appointment of a substitute teacher:**

Where a substitute teacher is to be employed, the substitute teacher must be made aware of the calendar for the period and of the expectations for the role.

### **Holiday Entitlements:**

Entitlements arising to a job sharing/parental leave teacher from e.g. bank holidays, will accrue to the teacher who would otherwise be scheduled for duty on the day in question.

### **Parental Involvement:**

The parents of the class(es)/pupils involved with a job-share type parental leave scheme will be informed at an appropriate time that their children will be taught in this way in the following school year.

In the case of Learning Support/Language Support and Resource Teaching, parents will normally be informed at the beginning of the school year to which the scheme applies when the pupils concerned have been identified as meriting access to teachers of the Special Education Team.

### **Resignation while job sharing**

Teachers who have committed to this arrangement and have applied to take parental leave in this way must remain in the arrangement for the duration of the agreed time. Only in exceptional circumstances will changes be considered by the board of management. Where a substitute has been employed, if the arrangement is dissolved, his/her position will be terminated.

In the case of maternity leave, the arrangement will be terminated and a full time maternity leave substitute employed in accordance with normal practice.

### **EPV Days:**

It is imperative that teachers involved in a job-share-type parental leave arrangement do not take EPV ('Course') Days due to concerns about the total number of teaching days which would be lost and the disruption already felt by relevant stakeholders.

### **Supervision:**

Teachers availing of this parental leave arrangement shall engage in Supervision Duty with both teachers sharing one post.

### **Posts of Responsibility:**

A special duties Post of Responsibility holder may be allowed to avail of this parental leave arrangement. However, they must relinquish their post for the duration.

### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

It is the responsibility of all the stakeholders (staff, parents and BOM) to familiarise themselves with the terms of this policy and to contribute positively to its on-going implementation within the school setting.

### **Evaluation/Review:**

The policy will be subject to evaluation/review on an annual basis and amendments may be made to the policy in light of:

- Feedback from the stakeholders
- The efficient and smooth operation of scheme(s)
- Benefits to the school arising from the implementation of the scheme.
- Revised/New DES Circulars and Guidelines.
- Changes within the school re: Staffing, SEN allocations, SNA allocations, Pupil numbers etc.

The Principal will report to the B.O.M. at least once each term, to assess compliance with school policy and to ensure the welfare and education needs of the pupils are met.

**Policy Approval**

This policy was reviewed and accepted by the Board of Management of St Joseph's NS on \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ted Forde  
Chairperson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Doireann Hester  
Secretary

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

***Policy Review Date: June 2020***