



## **Job Sharing and Career Break Policy**

This policy was devised and formulated in consultation with the teaching staff, In-school Management team and the Board of Management of St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' School, Clontarf, Dublin 3, in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Department of Education Circular 0054/2019. This policy is specific to the needs of St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' School and in framing this policy, the welfare and the educational needs of the pupils takes precedence over all other considerations. The policy was revised and updated in December 2023, in light of the teaching recruitment crisis. It also includes details of the Board of Management's capacity to provide for Career Breaks.

### **Aims of this Policy:**

- To ensure that the educational progress of pupils is not compromised by the job-share/career break arrangement.
- To ensure the continued effective and smooth operation of the school where a job-sharing/career break arrangement exists.
- To ensure that all staff members are aware of the policy, procedures and structures in place in relation to Job Sharing and Career Breaks in St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' School.

### **Conditions:**

- Job Sharing/ Career Break is not a statutory entitlement. The Board of Management is under no obligation to approve a Job Sharing/Career Break Arrangement and can, as it sees fit, refuse some or all of the applications at its own discretion. The decision of the Board of Management is final.
- The maximum number of approvals for Leave in any school year shall not exceed four.

## Job-Sharing Arrangements

### Eligibility:

All teachers registered with the Teaching Council, with at least two years of service in a permanent capacity in St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' School, are eligible to apply to Job Share with the exclusion of the Principal.

The Board are reluctant to consider Intra-School Job-Sharing Applications. However, the Board may consider applications whereby there are extenuating circumstances that merit an exception being made to the above position.

### Application Process:

All persons applying to Job Share are expected to familiarize themselves with the details of the Job Sharing Scheme as outlined in Circular 0054/2019. An application to job share must be made prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> February of the year in which the teacher is applying to job share.

An application form and a cover letter must be submitted to the Principal and the Chairperson of the Board of Management. The application form is an appendix to the DES Circular 0054/2019.

A draft/proposed Plan (Plean Oibre) must be submitted to the Principal and this should outline ways in which the job share partners will collaborate with one another in partnership to cater for the needs of the children and to fulfil their role as a member of staff.

The Plean Oibre must address:

- The need for continuity
- The need for planning for an agreed methodology
- An agreed approach to school related matters.

The Plean Oibre should also provide for the use of the combined talents of both teachers as well as assigning responsibility.

The Plean Oibre should outline the frequency of out-of-school meetings between the applicants to plan and discuss their work.

The Plean Oibre should also outline the availability of the teachers for relevant staff meetings and for relevant meetings with parents.

The Board of Management should be satisfied that the Plean Oibre adequately addresses all key issues as outlined above.

The Principal will be centrally involved in all stages of the planning of the job sharing arrangement, including the Plean Oibre.

**A calendar outlining days to be worked by each job share partner including a plan for brief absences must also be submitted to the Principal on or before the first day of the academic year.** The two teachers shall work on the basis of week on – week off or a split week.

### **Assessment of Job Share Proposals:**

Each application for a Job Sharing Arrangement will be considered by the Board of Management on its own merits, taking into consideration the exigencies and the needs of the school at the time of application with particular regard to:

- The overall number of temporary teachers within the school due to teachers availing of, or applying for, special leave of absence (eg. job sharing, career break, study leave, secondment etc.)
- The capacity of the school to recruit and retain suitably qualified temporary replacement teachers.

The Principal will advise the Board of Management of the most appropriate class or special needs area for each job sharing arrangement. In appraising the Board of the details regarding a proposal to job share, the Principal will be asked to outline the extent to which the proposed job sharers are compatible, co-operative, flexible and complement one another's skills and professionalism.

The Board will consider the levels of organisational and communication skills displayed by the proposed partners.

### **Number of Job Sharing Arrangements in the School in any one year.**

The welfare and care needs of the pupils take precedence over all other considerations. The school will consider its capacity to meet its obligations to pupils and therefore apply a limit to the number of staff that can avail of the scheme in any one year.

### **Approval:**

Once the Board of Management is satisfied that a proposal to job share conforms with the Board's stated policy on job sharing arrangements, it will indicate its approval in principle to the proposed arrangement, subject to the preparation of a detailed Plan Oibre.

The Board of Management will issue a decision in writing to approve or refuse the application to the teachers, no later than March 1st. The decision of the Board of Management is final. Staff who are granted a job sharing arrangement can withdraw their application up until the 14<sup>th</sup> April.

### **Working Arrangements:**

#### ***Class Levels/ Teaching Duties***

The allocation of classes remains the absolute prerogative of the Principal. A job sharing arrangement may take place in a mainstream class, SET or special class.

#### ***Time Sharing Agreement***

The Board of Management is only prepared to endorse either of two options – week on/week off or the split week.

### ***Supervision***

Job sharing teachers will engage in supervision duty with both teachers sharing one post.

### ***Extra Personal Vacation Days***

Due to concerns regarding the total number of teaching days which would be lost if job sharing teachers were to avail of the fulltime allocation of EPV days, a maximum of 2 EPV days per job sharing teacher per academic year may be granted.

### ***Communication between job share teachers***

Record keeping is highly significant and an essential feature of job sharing, the monitoring of which is the responsibility of the Principal. Job sharers are required to maintain a communication diary or pupil profile in which records of progress and important events are noted.

As a minimum, it is expected that both teachers will have a formal conversation once a week to hand over information relating to the pupils' well-being, educational development and to discuss planning and preparation. These meetings must be documented as proof of good communication and a commitment to the job sharing arrangement. Evidence of the weekly notes on communication may be sought by school management.

### ***Croke Park Hours***

The obligation to provide additional hours, under existing public service agreements is pro-rata for teachers who are job sharing. The 32 hours will be divided equally amongst teachers who are participating in a job sharing arrangement at the beginning of the academic year in which the job share will take place.

### ***Inservice/Planning Days/Meetings***

Teachers who are job sharing are required to participate in and attend relevant staff meetings and relevant parent/teacher meetings, School Development Planning and Inservice training during the course of the school year whether these meetings take place within, or outside of, Croke Park Hours. Both job sharing teachers must attend the Croke Park planning day, the day before the school officially opens.

### ***Planning***

The job sharing teachers must complete plans in line with St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' School whole school planning arrangements. All plans must be submitted to the Principal's office and a copy of all plans must also be kept in a planning folder in the teachers' classroom.

Both job sharing teachers will complete End of Year Reports together.

## **Evaluation**

There will be ongoing evaluation of all aspects of the job sharing arrangement. The Principal will report these evaluations to the Board of Management in her Principal's report under the heading "Staffing arrangements" for the academic year.

## **Termination of a Job Sharing Scheme**

The Board of Management of St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' School reserves the right to terminate a job sharing arrangement if the arrangement is not operating in the best interests of the pupils or the smooth running of the school. Should such a situation arise during the school year, a job sharing teacher must resume full time teaching if directed to do so by the Board of Management. The temporary replacement teacher will also be made aware at interview that their appointment may be terminated in such circumstances.

## **Resignation while job sharing**

The minimum period of a job sharing agreement is one full school year. Therefore, a teacher cannot resign from a job sharing agreement to return to teach full time in St. John the Baptist Junior Boys' School during the academic year.

A job-sharing teacher who wishes to resign from his/her teaching post during the year, must give notice in writing in accordance with the teacher's terms of employment. The remaining job sharing teacher must then resume full-time duties.

## **Career Break**

A career break is a period of special leave without pay. The main objective of the Career Break Scheme is to facilitate applicants where possible, in relation to areas such as:

- Personal Development
- Voluntary Service Overseas
- Accompany spouse/partner on Diplomatic/Military posting.
- Educational Purposes
- Public Representation
- Family Reasons
- Self-Employment

## **Eligibility**

A teacher may apply for a career break where s/he:

- Is registered with the Teaching Council and
- Has satisfactorily completed, at the end of the school year in which they are applying, 12 months of continuous service with their current employer.

### **Posts of Responsibility**

- A teacher on career break will retain eligibility to apply for a Post of Responsibility which occurs in the school, and s/he shall be notified of any vacancies by the Board of Management.

### **Duration of Career Break**

- A teacher may engage in this scheme subject to an overall maximum absence of 10 years in the course of his/her professional career.
- A career break is for a period of not less than 1 school year and may be extended on an annual basis provided that the total period of the career break does not exceed 5 years at any one time.
- A subsequent career break may not be taken until the teacher has served for a period equal to the duration of the previous career break. In the case of a teacher wishing to avail of career break to undertake voluntary service abroad/missionary/diplomatic/military/Oireachtas/or study leave this requirement will be waived.
- A career break must commence at the start of a school year and a return to duty in the school which granted the career break shall not be permitted other than on the start of a succeeding school year.
- In exceptional circumstances, the Board of Management may authorise a teacher to commence a career break during the school year and terminate not earlier than the end of that school year. This is deemed to be a one-year career break.

### **Operation of the Scheme**

- A teacher seeking a career break must submit a written application to the Board of Management not later than 1<sup>st</sup> February of each school year.
- The application must provide clear details of the exact purpose of the career break. A late application may be considered by the Board of Management in exceptional circumstances.
- A teacher who wishes to extend his/her career break must apply for this extension on an annual basis.
- Each application for an extension of a career break shall be considered on its own merits by the Board of Management. The decision of the Board of Management shall be final.
- The Board of Management shall issue a written notice of approval or refusal to the teacher by 1<sup>st</sup> March at the latest and submit notice of the career break absence to the Department of Education (via the OLCS system).

- Taking account of the extent of the arrangements to be put in place by the Board of Management to cater for the career break, an applicant shall not be permitted to rescind his/her application after 14<sup>th</sup> April. In exceptional circumstances, the Board of Management, in its sole discretion, may consider a later rescinded career break application.

### **Resumption of Duty following a Career Break**

- A teacher must notify the Board of Management by 1<sup>st</sup> February of his/her intention to return to work from a career break at the beginning of the next school year.
- It is the responsibility of the teacher returning from a career break to ensure that s/he is registered with the Teaching Council on the intended date of resumption.
- A teacher returning from career break in excess of two school years shall be screened by the Occupational Health Service (OHS). It is a pre-requisite for the restoration of salary that the teacher is deemed medically fit for teaching duties by the OHS before s/he is permitted to resume his/her teaching post.
- A teacher returning from career break must comply with the garda vetting regulations in operation at the time of return.
- The terms and conditions of teachers in general including the terms of any redeployment scheme existing at time of return shall apply to a teacher resuming duty after career break.

### **Resignation while on Career Break**

- A teacher on career break who wishes to resign from his/her post must notify the Board of Management in writing in accordance with the teacher terms of employment.
- If a teacher fails to resume duty at the end of an approved period of career break, the Board of Management shall immediately notify the Department of Education so that incremental salary shall not issue. The Board of Management shall also take timely action to establish the position and may if appropriate initiate agreed disciplinary procedures.

This revised policy was ratified by the Board of Management on

Eaine McKeenan.

Chairperson 16/1/24,

