



Knocknacarra Educate Together
National School

Job-Sharing, Career Break and Other Non-Statutory Leave Policy

This policy has been formulated by Knocknacarra ETNS to provide guidance for the Board of Management and teachers regarding application and approval of non-statutory leave.

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Introduction:

This school policy on job sharing, career breaks and secondment as well as other forms of non-statutory leave was written in consultation with staff and approved by the Board of Management of Knocknacarra Educate Together NS.

Background and Rationale:

Knocknacarra Educate Together NS recognises that teachers, for various personal, professional and family reasons, may wish to avail of approved long-term leave. This policy provides guidance to the Board of Management to ensure that teachers' applications for leave of a non-statutory nature, which is at the discretion of the BOM, including career breaks, job sharing, study leave, carer's leave, teacher exchange and secondment are considered through the lens of the best interest of the school community, especially the children of the school.

Relationship to School Ethos:

Knocknacarra ETNS follows the key principles of Educate Together: equality-based, co-educational, child-centred and democratically run. In short, decisions regarding applications for non-statutory leave will be considered in a fair, democratic and transparent manner while equally remembering that the long-term interests of the pupils of the school must inform all decision-making.

Aims and Objectives:

- To provide clarity regarding the process for teachers in making an application for leave.
- To describe the process and criteria used when the Board of Management considers such applications.
- To establish clear procedures for teachers in communicating with the Board regarding the extension or completion of leave arrangements.

Policies and Procedures:

The Board of Management will consider applications for non-statutory leave from staff members who have been probated and permanent for two years or more in the school, with the exception of teachers taking positions through the redeployment panel.

Applications to the Board should be made before March 1st of the current school year. A decision will be made by the Board at their March meeting and will be communicated in writing to applicants after that meeting. Applications are submitted to the Department of Education and Science before April 1st. Late applications will not be considered, except in exceptional circumstances.

All requests will be dealt with subject to the following DES Circulars: 10/03 (Career Breaks), 11/03 Job Sharing, Rule 116 Study leave, 05/03 Carer's leave, 12/03 Teacher Exchange, 11/02 Secondment.

The BOM shall review enrolment, curricular needs and staffing allocation in order to determine a quota of Career Breaks and/or Job Sharing etc. Non-statutory leave will be granted to no more than 25% of teaching posts at any one time. The maximum number of teachers on non-statutory leave, including career breaks, job sharing, study leave, carer's leave, teacher exchange and secondment in

any school year shall not exceed this quota. Exceptions to this quota may be made where specific personal/family circumstances prevail at the discretion of the Board of Management.

The following shall be considered when determining the request:

- Individual circumstances of the applicants
- Number of staff currently on non-statutory leave
- Post holders being accommodated within the base school
- Class allocation
- Curricular needs
- Availability of suitable substitutes
- Any potential conflicts of interest between the employment in which a teacher may wish to engage in and the educational purposes of our school
- Preference will be given in the following order of priority:
 1. Care for dependent relative or other special family circumstances
 2. Study leave relevant to future work in the school
 3. Voluntary work overseas
 4. Study leave not relevant to future work in the school
 5. Travel or other work experience for self-development

Where the number of applications for any form of non-statutory leave (including the extension of existing arrangements) exceeds the available quota, applications will be considered on their merit. However, in keeping with our school ethos, considerations of compassionate need or specific circumstances may influence a decision in granting leave. To aid the Board in its decision-making process applicants may be asked to declare their reasons for applying for non-statutory leave.

Career Breaks

Career breaks may not be taken for less than one school year. (If teachers require part of a school year they are obliged by the DES to take the full school year as a career break.) Career breaks may not extend beyond the end of school year following the teacher's 60th birthday, may not last longer than 10 years and must be applied for on an annual basis.

While on approved leave, a teacher remains a member of staff and will be informed about developments in the school. A teacher is entitled to apply for any vacant post of responsibility, which arises during the course of the career break. The Principal will inform the teacher of the vacancy in writing at the same time as advertisements are posted in the staff room. If the teacher is successful, the post may be filled in an acting capacity until the teacher returns from career break. It is a matter for the Board of Management if it requires the successful teacher to return to school at the end of the year in which s/he is appointed to the post of responsibility.

A teacher who intends to return to teaching from a career break must notify the Board of Management not later than 1st March in the year the teacher intends to return using the resumption from a career break form. If the teacher was appointed to his/her post after 1st August 1998 and is returning after two or more years, s/he must complete an online Medmark application.

Career breaks for Inclusion Support Assistants (ISAs) will be considered according to the guidelines found in Circular 22/2012 and revisions made in Circular 35/2019. It is at the sole discretion of the Board of Management, who will consider the needs of the children first, as to whether non-statutory leave will be granted. ISAs must have completed 12 months of service in the school to be eligible. The rules of duration mirror those for teachers, and the timeframe for making application is the same. Of note, time spent on career break for ISAs does not count as reckonable service for seniority purposes.

Job Sharing

Due to the nature of job sharing the following has been decided:

1. The welfare and educational needs of the children will be the underpinning factor in all issues relating to job sharing. Teachers applying for job sharing will be interviewed together to assess the viability of their proposed arrangement.
2. Job sharing will not be permitted in Junior Infants.
3. Teachers involved may opt for week-on/week-off (Monday to Friday or Wednesday to Tuesday) or a three-day/two-day week. Splitting the day would be permitted only in the instance of a learning support/resource teacher role.
4. Job-sharing teachers are required to work an additional 18 hours per school year (50% of the requirement for full-time employees). The BOM has prioritised staff meetings and teacher collaboration meetings to be attended. These meetings should cover most of the extra hours; however, job-sharers are encouraged to attend all CPD opportunities.

Teachers who job-share will be expected to:

- ✓ Present, along with the principal teacher, an information meeting for parents explaining the strategy employed to manage, teach and assess the class through the job-sharing scheme. This will be presented in written form by teachers working in a learning support/resource setting.
- ✓ Long-term and short-term plans will be prepared collaboratively. The Cuntas Miosúil will be given to the principal each month.
- ✓ Work together in preparing the daily and weekly timetable.
- ✓ Be flexible in relation to absences and holidays and ensure the children's participation in school events is uninterrupted.
- ✓ Have a weekly handover meeting in the school. This will include a detailed report on the curriculum taught and progress made by the children.
- ✓ Jointly fill in the end-of-year reports for each child.
- ✓ Be available in the school for parent-teacher meetings, staff meetings and school development planning in-service designated for curricular and administrative needs of the school.
- ✓ Avail of ongoing professional development.
- ✓ It shall be the responsibility of the school management to notify staff on leave of parent-teacher meetings, relevant in-service training, staff meetings and staff development.

ISAs are also eligible for job-sharing. The procedure application is the same as that for teachers, as explained in Circular 24/2014. An ISA is eligible for job-sharing after completing 12 months of service. The application must be submitted to the Board of Management by 1st March. The permission to job-share is sanctioned for a one-year period and a new application must be submitted for each

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subsequent year. Job-sharers must complete 50% of the regular hours as well as 50% of the additional hours (36 per annum) as specified in the circular.

Resignation

A teacher who fails to resume duty at the end of the approved period shall be deemed to have resigned as per clause 19.2 Circular 10/03. A teacher wishing to resign his/her teaching post while on leave must do so in writing to the Board of Management.

The same policy applies to ISAs on approved leave.

Implementation and Review:

The policy has immediate effect and will be reviewed no later than 2023.

Ratification and Communication:

The policy was ratified by the BoM on the date below. It will be posted on the school website.

Paul Adams, chairperson

Date of ratification: 10/02/2020