



St Francis National School

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Career break, Job Share and Leave Policy

This Policy was devised and formulated by the whole school community, involving Board of Management, Parents and Staff of St. Francis NS, in accordance with circular 54/2019 and the provisions of the Education Act 1998, Rules and Regulations of the Department of Education.

The Career Break, Job-sharing & Leave Policy recognises and endeavours to adopt the values that are set out in the ethos of the school for those at work in the school. It attempts to support and sustain a harmonious environment in which the potential of all staff is nurtured through the co-operation between staff, pupils, parents, board members and all other relevant parties

The Career Break, Job-sharing & Leave Policy aims to:

- Develop and maintain a policy statement specific to the needs of the school in relation to the approval of career breaks, job-sharing, and other leave.
- Ensure the welfare and educational needs of the pupils takes precedence over all other considerations in relation to the sanctioning of career breaks, job-sharing, and other leave.
- Ensure that career breaks, job-sharing and other leave have due regard to the capacity of the school to meet its obligations to its pupils and therefore apply a reasonable limit to the number of its teaching/SNA staff that may be absent on career break or on leave at any one time.
- Clarify the school's procedures in relation to career breaks, job-sharing, and other leave.

Career Breaks

A career break means special leave without pay.

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 in the school.

A Special Needs Assistant (SNA) may apply for a career break where he/she:

- Has satisfactorily completed, at the end of the school year in which they are applying, 12 months of continuous service in the school.

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/SNA may engage in this scheme subject to an overall maximum absence of 10 years during his/her professional career.
- A career break shall be a period of not less than 1 school year and may be extended on an annual basis, provided 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/SNA has served for a period equal to the duration of the previous career break. In the case of a teacher wishing to avail of a career break to undertake voluntary service abroad/ missionary/ diplomatic/military/Oireachtas/or study leave this requirement will be waived.
- A career break shall commence on 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/SNA to commence a career break during a 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/SNA seeking a career break must submit a written application to the Board of Management not later than the 1st of February of each school year prior to that in which s/he proposes to commence/continue the career break. (see circular 54/2019 chapter 7)
- 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/SNA who wishes to extend his/her career break must apply for this extension on an annual basis.
- Each application for or 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/SNA after their next meeting after the February deadline and submit notice of the career break absence to the Department, via the Online Claims System, on or before 1st May.
- The principal will list the names of all teachers/SNAs availing of a career break on the annual 'Change of staff' form.
- Taking account of the extent of arrangements to be put in place by the Board of Management to cater for the career break, an applicant shall not be permitted to withdraw his/her application after the 14th of April. In exceptional circumstances the Board of Management, in its sole discretion, may consider a later withdrawal of a career break application.

Resumption of Duty following a Career Break

- A teacher/SNA must notify the Board of Management by the 1st of February of his/her intention to return to teaching from a career break at the beginning of the next school year.
- Failure to do so may result in the return being deferred for a further school year (e.g., in the event that the late notification resulted in contractual difficulties for the Board of Management)
- It is the responsibility of the teacher/SNA returning from a career break to ensure that s/he is registered with the Teaching Council on the intended date of resumption
- A teacher/SNA returning from a career break in excess of two school years shall be screened by Medmark. It is a pre-requisite for the restoration of salary that the teacher/SNA is deemed medically fit for teaching duties by the Medmark before s/he is permitted to resume his/her teaching post
- A teacher/SNA 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 a career break

Resignation while on Career Break

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

Job-Sharing

Job-sharing, in this school's context, is when two teachers or two SNAs share a whole-time post on a 50:50 basis.

Eligibility

A teacher may apply for job-sharing 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 in the school
- holds a post for the following school year greater than 50% of a whole-time teacher. (i.e., 14 hours 10 minutes per week)

A SNA may apply for a job-sharing where s/he:

- has satisfactorily completed, at the end of the school year in which they are applying, 12 months of continuous service in the school

Job sharing is not available to the following:

- Principal
- Teachers on secondment
- HSCL

Posts of responsibility

- Where a primary school Deputy Principal is approved for job sharing, he/she must relinquish his/her post of responsibility and the appropriate allowance for the duration of the job sharing arrangement.
- An Assistant Principal may retain his/her post of responsibility allowance while job sharing provided the Board of Management decide that the duties of the post can be performed in full. Where a Board of Management decides that it is not possible for the job-sharing teacher to perform the full duties of Assistant Principal Post, an acting Assistant Principal Teacher may be appointed, and the allowance will be shared equally between the two teachers (i.e., the acting post holder and the job-sharing teacher.) The allowance shall be restored to the actual post holder on resumption of fulltime duties.

Duration of Job-sharing Arrangement

- The minimum period for which a job-sharing arrangement may occur is one school year.
- In exceptional circumstances, a Board of Management may authorise a job-sharing arrangement to commence during the school year and terminate not earlier than the end of that same school year.

Basis of the Scheme

- A teacher/SNA may make an application to share a whole-time post on a 50:50 basis or may apply to reduce their hours to 50% of a whole-time teacher/SNA. This amounts to 14 hours 10 minutes per week in the case of a teacher or 16 hours per week in the case of an SNA.
- Teachers/SNAs in the school may only share a whole-time post within the school i.e., two whole-time teachers or two whole-time SNAs employed the school may apply to job share.

Operation of the Scheme

- A teacher/SNA seeking to job-share must submit the prescribed application form attached to the relevant circulars (54/2019) to the Board of Management not later than the 1st of February prior to the school year in which he/she proposes to commence/continue job-sharing.
- A late application may be considered by the Board of Management in exceptional circumstances.
- A teacher/SNA who wishes to extend a job-sharing arrangement must apply for this extension on an annual basis.
- Each application for or extension of a job-share arrangement 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 after the March meeting of the Board of Management.
- As soon as it is possible after a Board of Management has decided to allow job-sharing, parents should be informed that their child(ren) would be taught by job-sharing teachers in the relevant school year. The Board is required to notify parents at the earliest possible opportunity by way of a special meeting called by the Principal/Board of Management. Teachers whose job-sharing applications have been approved by the Board are required to attend such a meeting. The requirement for the special meeting should not be replaced by other means of communicating to parents the information regarding job-sharing arrangements.
- Taking account of the extent of arrangements to be put in place by the Board of Management to cater for the career break, an applicant shall not be permitted to withdraw his/her application after the 14th of April or from once the replacement teacher/SNA's contract has been signed, whichever happens first. This shall be included in the notice from the school to the Teacher/SNA.

- The Principal must list the names of all teachers availing of job-sharing arrangements on the annual change of staff form. The job-sharing application must be retained in the school.
- A copy of an approved job-sharing SNA application should be submitted to the Non-Teaching Payroll Section of the Department by 1st May. In addition, the principal must list the names of all special needs assistants availing of job-sharing arrangements on the Non-Teaching Staff Appointment Position Form.
- A teacher/SNA on a career break or other approved leave of absence may apply to resume duties on a job-sharing basis.

Termination/Resumption of Duty following a Job-sharing

- The Board of Management, through provision of and access to this policy, ensures that teachers/SNAs participating in the job-sharing scheme are aware that the arrangement may be terminated at any time if it is not operating in the best interests of pupils.
- It is the responsibility of the Board of Management to ensure that the Payroll or Non-teaching Payroll Section of the Department is informed in advance of the date of termination of the job-sharing arrangement of the teacher and the date of termination of the employment of the replacement teacher in order to avoid any overpayments of salary.
- Where a Board of Management decides to terminate a job-sharing arrangement of two SNAs, this must be enforced by 1st November of the year of the job-sharing contract.
- In exceptional circumstances if a teacher/SNA wishes to withdraw from the scheme, it can be accommodated within the approved staffing allocation and subject to contractual arrangements, an application for withdrawal from a job-sharing scheme and/or an earlier return to full-time employment may be considered by the Board of Management. However, such an application may not be considered beyond 1st November.

Resignation while Job-sharing

- A teacher/SNA on a career break who wishes to resign from his/her teaching post must notify the Board of Management in writing in accordance with the teacher's terms of employment.

Duties

- Appropriate communication processes must be in place between the two teachers or two SNAs sharing a post in order for them to fulfil the responsibilities of the post
- A job-sharing teacher/SNA must be available for relevant staff and parent meetings in accordance with school policy, practices, and agreements.
- The obligation to provide additional hours under the existing Public Service Agreements is pro-rata for teachers/SNAs who are job sharing.

Position regarding Extra Personal Vacation (EPV) Days/Discretionary Days while Job-sharing

Teachers involved in a job-sharing scheme can take up to 3 EPV days each at the discretion of the Board of Management. However, the school provides for job-sharing teachers to make arrangements to 'cover for the other teacher' as the need arises during the school year, with both teachers working an equal total number of days by the end of the school year. This is subject to it operating in the best interests of pupils and is at the discretion of the Board of Management.

Similarly, the school provides for job-sharing SNAs to make arrangements to 'cover for the other SNA' as the need arises during the school year, with both SNAs working an equal total number of days by the end of the school year. This is subject to it operating in the best interests of pupils and is at the discretion of the Board of Management.

Other Leave

Leave of absences included under 'Other Leave'

Type A	Type B
Adoptive Leave	Brief Absences
Assault Leave	Extra Personal Vacation Days
Carers Leave	Sick leave
Maternity Leave	
Paternity Leave	
Parental Leave	
Unpaid Leave	

Type A Leave

- All the above 'Type A' leaves will be subject to their relevant circulars as per the Department of Education website (www.education.ie).
- They require direct notification to the Board of Management.

Type B Leave

All the above 'Type B' leaves will be subject to their relevant circulars as per the Department of Education & Skills website (www.education.ie).

- They require direct notification to the principal.

Limitations of sanctioning of career breaks, job-sharing & other leave

As a general principle every effort will be made by the Board of Management to facilitate applications for career breaks, job-sharing, and other forms of leave from members of the teaching staff.

The maximum number of teachers on leave (including career break, exchange, job-sharing, secondment and Type A 'Other Leave') in any school year shall not exceed one quarter of the teaching staff. Exceptions to this quota may be made where specific personal/family circumstances prevail.

The maximum number of SNAs on leave (including career break, job-sharing, and Type A 'Other Leave') in any school year shall not exceed one quarter of the SNA staff. Exceptions to this quota may be made where specific personal/family circumstances prevail.

Where the number of applications for any form of long-term Leave (including the extension of existing arrangements) exceed the available quota, such applications will be considered on their merit by the Board of Management. The Board of Management may enlist the help of an independent assessor/advisor.

Success Criteria

Our Career Break, Job-sharing & Other Leave Policy will be seen to be working well when:

- We receive positive feedback from members of the school community.
- The school community are clear about and are committed to the principles are outlined in this policy and correct procedures are being implemented.
- Develop and maintain a policy statement specific to the needs of the school in relation to the approval of career breaks, job-sharing, and other leave.
- The welfare and educational needs of the pupils takes precedence over all other considerations in relation to the sanctioning of career breaks, job-sharing, and other leave.

- The sanctioning of career breaks, job-sharing and other leave have due regard to the capacity of the school to meet its obligations to its pupils and a reasonable limit to the number of its teaching/SNA staff that may be absent on career break or on leave at any one time is applied clarify the school's procedures in relation to career breaks, job-sharing, and other leave.

Roles and Responsibilities:

All members of staff and BoM.

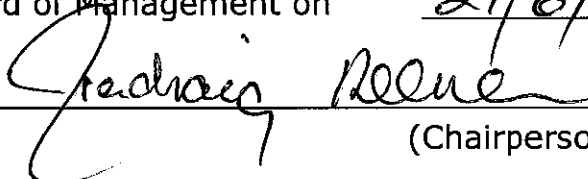
Timeframe for Review:

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or as required to meet the developing needs of the school.

Next review: February 2025

Job-sharing Policy

Ratified by the Board of Management on 21/6/2022

Signed: 
(Chairperson, Board of Management)

