



### **Leave policy**

This policy applies to all staff and clarifies procedures and decisions regarding staff leave.

#### **General Principles**

As a general principle, every effort will be made by the BoM to facilitate applications for leave from members of staff. While recognising a staff members desire to take leave for whatever reason, the welfare and educational needs of pupils shall take precedence over all other considerations. 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 BOM, under the following criteria:

- Length of service in this school
- Previous leave of absence(s)
- Reasons for leave and
- Other relevant information.
- All leave of absence is granted on condition that suitably qualified staff is available to replace the staff on leave.

#### **Brief absence**

A brief absence from school for various circumstances and situations may arise throughout the school year, for example, for reasons of bereavement, force majeure, testifying as a witness in court etc. Such absences can be paid or unpaid / substitutable or non-substitutable. Circulars outlining terms and conditions of the various types of absence are available on the Department of Education website [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)

#### **Sick Leave**

Staff must ring the school mobile at 8am on the morning of absence. A text message will not suffice – a phone call must be made. This will give the school management the opportunity to secure substitute cover for the class at the earliest notification. Staff must state the reason for their absence. If absent for more than three consecutive days, a medical certificate is required for the total period of the absence. Where a staff member 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.

#### **Assault leave**

Refer to Circular 61/2017 and 62/2017. Staff who wish to avail of assault leave are solely responsible for submitting the paperwork in a timely manner.

#### **Members of Staff applying for leave of absence must:**

1. Apply in writing in time to the Chairperson where applicable
2. Comply with terms laid down by the DES, Board of Management (BoM) and relevant legislation. Applicants may be asked to attend a BoM meeting to further inform the Board if necessary.

#### **The Board of Management will:**

- Process each application for leave of absence as quickly as possible and comply with the terms of reference laid down by the DES, this policy statement and the law
- Inform the applicant of the Board's decision, within one week of its decision
- Respect the confidentiality of all applicants request for leave
- Consider leave requests in line with the best interests of pupils and
- Try to facilitate the granting of leave if doing so does not adversely affect the process of education the school. The welfare and educational needs of pupils shall take precedence over all other considerations.



### EPV Leave

Where a teacher has, during the summer break, attended a course approved by DES, personal leave may be taken on presentation of the necessary certificate and subject to Board of Management approval. As substitute cover is not allowed for Extra Personal Vacation days, the following terms will apply:

- Requests must be made in writing six weeks in advance of leave.
- Only one teacher will be entitled to EPV leave on any one day and priority will be given to the first request for such leave.
- For all planned absences, as well as making the necessary alternative yard duty arrangements, the teacher should assign ample, appropriate work for the class. Lists of pupils assigned to individual classes should be given to a member of the ISM team
- Consideration will be given to the number of staff on pre-approved absences before granting EPV days e.g. attending a course
- EPV days will not be granted during planned school events, e.g. sports day, sacraments
- EPV days will not be granted:
  - In September or June.
  - If staff are on planned leave e.g. attendance at a course.
  - The week leading up to Christmas, Easter and summer holidays.
  - Staff meeting and/or planning days
  - Days when other classes are away on school tours, Sports Day, Confirmation, Communion etc.
- In preparation for leave, teachers should arrange class dispersal.

### Job Sharing

A member of the permanent staff may apply to work on a job sharing basis under the conditions set out in **Circular 54/2019 and Circular 41/2014**. The following points outline additional factors influencing any job sharing arrangement:

- As a guiding principle, the welfare & educational needs of the children will be the underpinning factor in all issues around Job Sharing.
- The maximum number of applications for approved Leave is at the discretion of the Board of Management.
- 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 pupils and school.
- Staff shall be notified in writing of the Board's decision.
- Staff applying for a job sharing arrangement should apply in pairs to the Board of Management.
- **The following principles apply when teachers are job sharing:**
  - Both teachers shall prepare together a full year's work-plan as well monthly plans.
  - 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.
  - Copies of the long-term plan, short-term plans and fortnightly reports shall be presented to the Principal Teacher at the appropriate times.
  - Together both teachers shall prepare an agreed weekly and daily timetable.
  - Both teachers shall meet for sufficient period of time after school at the end of each "teaching shift" to discuss and prepare the necessary handover.
  - As a general principle both teachers will display significant flexibility in relation to absences, holidays and also ensuring the class's participation in school events shall continue to happen normally.
  - Both teachers shall be present for any scheduled parent/teacher meetings.
  - End of year school reports shall be jointly filled out by both teachers for each child.
  - Teachers on a job sharing arrangement can take a maximum of two EPV days each.



## St Vincent's Special National School



### **All staff who have been granted a job sharing arrangement:**

- Shall attend staff meetings.
- Shall attend School Development Planning.
- Shall attend In-Service training/ Continual Professional Development courses.

### **Career breaks**

Applications for a career break will be considered by the Board of Management in line with Circular 54/2019 and Circular 35/2019

### **Ratification & Communication:**

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management on the 11<sup>th</sup> November 2021 and communicated to the school community thereafter.

### **Review Timetable:**

This policy will be reviewed in 2 years' time and amended as necessary by means of a whole school collaborative process.