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Job Sharing Policy

Statement

This Job-Sharing Policy has legislative underpinnings, which are contained in Section 24 of the Education Act (as amended), which directs employers to implement the regulations and procedures, as stated, for eligible registered teachers employed in approved teaching posts funded by monies of the Oireachtas. As per DES Circular 0054/2019, the purpose of the Job-Sharing Scheme is to assist teachers in combining work commitments and personal responsibilities/choices' (p. 109). As outlined in DES Circular 0054/2019 'each employer shall develop and maintain a policy on teacher absences, including non-statutory schemes e.g. Job Sharing, Career Breaks, Unpaid Leave, specific to the needs of the school authority. In drawing up this policy, the welfare and educational needs of pupils must take precedence over all other considerations and must be in accordance with the rules of this circular' (p. 3).

Policy Development Procedure

In drawing up this policy, the relevant legislation and DES Circulars were consulted – 11/03, 0054/2019. A policy was drafted by Scoil Chaitríona's Board of Management. The Job Share Policy was ratified by the Board of Management on ~~21/01/20~~ 21/01/20 and is open to review as the need arises. Any teacher wishing to apply for Job Sharing is expected to familiarise themselves with this policy, and relevant legislation and DES Circulars, all of which are available on DES website: www.education.ie.

Aims and Purposes

- To clarify the issues relating to Job-Sharing for all the stakeholders including school staff, the parent body and the Board of Management.
- To ensure the smooth operation of the school whilst Job Sharing is in progress.
- To ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the policy and any issues related to Job-Sharing.
- To inform staff members of what is expected of them for the duration of the Job-Sharing.
- To inform staff of criteria used to assess Job-Sharing applications.
- To inform staff of DES regulations regarding Job-Sharing.

Eligibility

- All teachers employed in Scoil Chaitríona with two years teaching service or more in a permanent capacity, are eligible to apply for Job Sharing.

- The Principal, Home School Liaison Teachers (where applicable) Supply teachers (where applicable) and teachers on probation (where applicable) are excluded from Job-Sharing.
- A Deputy Principal may apply for Job Sharing but will be required to relinquish the post for the duration of the Job Share arrangement.
- Teachers who are currently on secondment or are going on secondment cannot Job Share for the duration of the secondment.
- A teacher on a Career Break, secondment, or other approved leave of absence may apply to resume teaching duties on a Job-Sharing basis. Any teacher returning to their post, and wishing to apply for a Job-Sharing arrangement, must apply to Scoil Chaitríona's Board of Management in the normal way, and follow the same procedures as any other Job-Sharing application.

Job-sharing applications will only be considered from :

- Teachers (2) of Scoil Chaitríona who wish to Job Share within the school.
 - Teacher of Scoil Chaitríona who wishes to Job Share in another school.
 - Teacher of Scoil Chaitríona who wishes to Job Share in this school with a teacher who has at least two years teaching experience from another school.
- *No more than 2 staff can engage in job share within the school. i.e one job share post
- **No more than 2 staff can engage in job share in other schools.

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

Number of Teachers to be involved:

The Board of Management of Scoil Chaitríona has determined that, due to size, there can only be one Job Sharing arrangement in house in any one academic year. No more than two teachers will be permitted to participate in job sharing arrangements in any one school year. Job Share will be viewed in conjunction with other forms of leave. No more than two staff will be allowed to take these types of leave in a school year - i.e Two job share / two career break / one job share and one career break.

It should be noted that Scoil Chaitríona Board of Management is under no obligation to approve Job Sharing arrangements. The Board of Management 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 it 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 of Management decides that a Job-Sharing arrangement should be terminated in the best interests of the pupils. Teachers in a Job-Sharing arrangement cannot apply for Parental Leave in the academic year that they are engaging in a Job-Sharing arrangement. As already referred to in DES Circular 0054/2019, the purpose of the Job-Sharing Scheme is to assist

teachers in combining work commitments and personal responsibilities/choices' (p. 109), and Scoil Chaitríona Board of Management sees this as a very significant accommodation in and of itself, for teachers to combine work commitments and personal responsibilities/choices.

Applying for Job Sharing:

- A teacher seeking to Job Share must submit the prescribed application form (DES 0054/2019, Appendix A) to the Board of Management no later than February 1st, prior to the commencement of the following academic school year in which she/he 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, in the normal way as outlined in DES Circular 0054/2019.
- If the Board of Management receives a Job Share application from a teacher(s) other than those involved in an existing Job-Sharing arrangement, this application will be given preference for the following academic year, ahead of any extension of an existing Job Share arrangement. In other words, this approach will ensure fairness and equality for all teachers. 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 and its primary deliberations will reflect that teaching and learning is impacted positively. There is no obligation on the Board of Management to grant a successive year of Job Share. Where such requests are made, the previous year's performance of such a job-sharing arrangement will be taken into account. The decision of the Board of Management shall be final.
- Should the Board of Management of Scoil Chaitríona be the employer who hosts the teacher 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. This is in addition to the Job Sharing Contract. The employer shall issue a written notice of approval or refusal, which will set out the basis of the refusal, to the teacher by March 1st 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 April 14th, 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. In exceptional circumstances, if the applicant 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 November 1st.
- As this is a discretionary type of leave, the Board of Management must list the names of all teachers availing of a Job Share arrangement on the annual change of staff form that is returned to the DES. The job-sharing application will be retained in the school.
- An external 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 with the principal and chairperson to ascertain his/ her suitability. In the case that the chairperson is not available for this interview, a board member designated by the board,

will attend this meeting. This teacher will have to submit an up-to-date Curriculum Vitae, Garda Vetting Form, Teaching Council Registration Form and include at least three professional references as well as a record of work attendance with their application.

- Again, to reiterate, it is a matter for teachers to find colleagues with whom they may wish to enter into a job-sharing arrangement. If a teacher in Scoil Chaitríona wishes to partner with a teacher in another school, it is the responsibility of the teacher to have this partnership in place before the February 1st application deadline. Both parties are required to have their application and relevant documentation in good order.
- Teachers wishing to Job Share for the 2022/23 academic year, should submit a written Plean Oibre to the Board of Management before May 1st, 2022. The Plean Oibre must address in an appropriate manner the following issues:
 - the need for continuity,
 - the need for planning
 - an agreed methodology
 - an agreed approach to disciplinary matters.

It should also provide for the use of the combined talents of both teachers as well as assigning responsibility. The Plean Oibre should comply with School Policies and should address the need for continuity in the case of brief absences. The Plean Oibre should outline the availability and willingness of the teachers to be in attendance for relevant Staff Meetings and for relevant meetings with parents (Information Meetings, Parent/Teacher Meetings, etc.). The Principal will be centrally involved in all stages of the planning of the Job-Sharing arrangement, including the oversight of the Plean Oibre.

- Both teachers are expected to keep each other fully informed of communications, notifications and outcomes of meetings from the principal, inschool management (ISM) and staff meetings, and to check Aladdin message and the staffroom notice board.
- In considering applications for Job Sharing, the Board of Management shall satisfy itself that the Plean Oibre adequately addresses all of the key issues outlined above. The Plean Oibre detail will be incorporated into the Job Share Contract in addition to any other requirements the Board of Management deems appropriate and necessary.

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:

- The welfare and educational needs/profiles of the pupils
- The extent to which the proposed Job Sharers possess the skills required to address and satisfy the duties required for a mainstream/SET setting.
- The levels of organisational and communication skills recorded and displayed by the proposed partners, previous to application.

The Board 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 March 1st. The Board of Management's written decision will include its 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. With this in mind the Board of Management is prepared to endorse a week on/week off option only. The two teachers will work on the basis of a week on and a week off, with the 'week on' commencing on a Wednesday.

Handover arrangements between Job-Sharing teachers

There must be a one hour, face-to-face planning meeting or 'hand-over' meeting every Friday. The Principal/Deputy Principal can be available to the jobsharers at this time, on request. It is the responsibility of the Job-Sharing teachers to convey any communications, training resources or decisions made by the staff meetings or during Croke Park planning hours.

Operational Workings of Job Share as set out in Job Sharing Contract

- Teachers wishing to Job Share should submit a written Plean Oibre to the Board of Management in the term preceding the relevant academic year.
- Calendar Days to be worked out and given to the principal by August 24th prior to Job Share commencement.
- There must be optimal face-to-face planning between teachers completed before September. The two teachers will work on the basis of a split week on and a week off, with the 'week on' commencing on a Wednesday and concluding on a Tuesday. There must be a one-hour face-to-face planning meeting or 'hand-over' meeting every Tuesday in the relevant classroom.
- Teachers on Job Share are required to coordinate their own meetings between class teacher/SET teacher every six weeks.
- Teachers to e-mail Principal at the end of every month with any concerns, comments or issues arising.
- All correspondence/communication with parents is to be shared.
- Any appointments with parents to be arranged through school secretary. The school secretary will then communicate that information to both teachers. Notes from any phone-calls or meetings must be logged in the handover copy. Teachers are not to act unilaterally. Both teachers will be present for any scheduled parent/teacher meetings.
- All staff meetings will be attended by both of the teachers. Each job sharing teacher will complete 18 hours under the DES Circular 0042/2016 which outlines a review of terms of Croke Park Agreement.
- **Uncertified leave to be covered by each other if possible.**

Note on COVID-19 measures: The restriction of engaging in substitute work imposed in the Job Sharing Scheme (as contained in Paragraph 9.1 of Circular 41/2014) will be suspended for the remainder of the 2021/22 school year due to teachers and SNA supply issues.

- All certified leave to be covered by a substitute teacher. Only two 'course days' (EPV days) can be taken by each teacher during a single academic year. Only two-Family Illness Days can be taken by each teacher during a single academic year. As stated in DES Circular 0032/2007: 'the prior approval of the Chairperson of the Board of Management must be granted for all absences. Absence for part of a school day constitutes an absence for a full school day. Teachers are not allowed to absent themselves from school for the purpose of transacting private or personal business such as consultation with a solicitor or bank manager, signing of contracts, attending interviews etc. Any absence without reasonable cause and the approval of the Board of Management will involve loss of salary' (p. 1-2).
- As a general principle, both teachers will display significant flexibility in relation to absences, leave, holidays, ensuring that their class's participation in school events will continue to happen as normal.
- Both teachers will be present, along with the principal teacher, at an information session in June for parents, explaining the strategy employed to manage, teach and assess the class through a job-sharing scheme. Both teachers will prepare together a full year's work-plan as well as a short term plan for their class using an agreed school format. At the end of each month, both teachers will complete the Cuntas Míósúil together. This will outline the curriculum taught, and the progress made by pupils. Copies of the long-term, short-term plans and Cuntais Mhíosúla will be presented to the Principal at the appropriate times.
- Both teachers will prepare an agreed weekly and daily timetable.
- End of year school reports will be jointly filled out by both teachers for each pupil.
- Both teachers are responsible to prepare an Emergency Work Pack for their pupils by mid-September, and need to replenish as necessary.
- Teachers on Job Share are required to coordinate their own meetings between class teacher/SET teacher every six weeks. The class teacher and SET teacher are responsible for identifying targets and reviewing every six weeks. These can be held at mid-term and end of term. A Student Support File is opened for any child moving from a Classroom Support File to individual or group support (Student Support File). There is a collaborative approach in developing the SSF between school and home. A School Support Meeting is held in November each year for any child receiving individual support sessions, with a follow up, School Support Review Meeting in February of the same academic year. The parents, class teachers, and both SET teachers involved in Job Sharing attend these meetings.
- A Job Sharing Log is required to record day-to-day notes from groups, plans, profiles, record keeping files, work covered, any correspondence with parents, any concerns regarding each child, any meetings etc.

Duties:

- The Principal shall endeavour to optimise appropriate communication processes between teachers sharing a post in order for them to fulfil the responsibilities of the post.
- A job-sharing teacher must be available for relevant staff and parent meetings in accordance with school policy and agreements.
- Job Sharing Teachers shall engage in Supervision Duty with both teachers sharing weekly supervision duties.

- Each Job Sharing teacher will complete 18 hours under the DES Circular 0042/2016 which outlines a review of terms of Croke Park Agreement.

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. Job-sharing teachers in Scoil Chaitríona will not teach Junior & Senior Infants or fifth & sixth class.
- Special account must also 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 ensure that in mainstream settings, pupils will have a maximum of one job-sharing year/arrangement during their time at Scoil Chaitríona.
- 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.
- The Job Sharing teachers calendar days are to be scheduled and submitted to the Principal for review by the beginning of the last week in August. This schedule is not open to change following agreement. The board cannot allow for teachers in a Job Sharing arrangement to 'swap' days in an incidental manner. In the exceptional circumstance where a teacher needs to exchange a day with their partner teacher, prior approval of the Chairperson of the Board of Management must be requested in writing, along with a reason for the requested change.

Parental Involvement:

- The parents of a class 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 school year. This will normally happen in Term 3.
- A letter will be sent to parents advising them of the decision and inviting them to attend a meeting in the school in June, if they wish to have further information/ clarification regarding the Job-Sharing scheme. Both class teachers whose Job-Sharing Applications have been approved by the Board are required to attend such a meeting. Both teachers will present, along with the Principal teacher, an information session for parents explaining the positive aspects, strategies to be employed when managing, teaching and assessing the class through a job-sharing scheme. Should the job-sharing scheme extend to more than one year an information meeting will be held for each year of the scheme's operation.

Posts of Responsibility -

- The Deputy Principal is required to relinquish his/her post of responsibility for the duration of a job-sharing post. Such duties will be offered to other permanent teachers

Appointment of a replacement teacher.

- Where a replacement teacher is to be employed, the position must be filled in accordance with current DES directives 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 or retiring and will normally terminate by end of August in any academic year.

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 seek another permanent teacher to job share with or alternatively must resume full time teaching.

Evaluation/Review of Policy

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

1. Feedback from the stakeholders
2. The efficient and smooth operation of the Job-Sharing Scheme
3. Benefits to the school arising from the implementation of the Job-Sharing policy.
4. Revised/New DES Circulars and Guidelines/Directives.
5. The level of collaborative engagement and commitment by both job sharing teachers to ensure smooth efficient and continuity of teaching is delivered to pupils
6. The spirit and level of commitment shown by both teachers to the job share arrangement, which is an accommodation by the school, and is therefore expected to be respected by the participating teachers.
7. If any factors within the control of the two teachers (e.g. continuity of quality teaching being delivered to pupils, consistent face to face handovers outside school hours as agreed, attendance by both teachers at Staff/Parent Teacher meetings, full attendance on your rostered days and any other requirements deemed necessary) are not met, the Board of Management will take such matters very seriously and factor into any decisions pertaining to the ongoing operation of the job share arrangement.

The Principal will report to the Board of Management at every board meeting, to assess compliance with school policy and to ensure the welfare and educational needs of the pupils are met. In other words, the Job Share arrangement will be on each and every board of management meeting agenda while the arrangement is in place.

Policy Approval :

This policy has been ratified by the Board of Management of Scoil Chaitriona on

Signed: Pato Tool Chairperson

22-4-2023