**Leave of Absence Policy**

**Teachers** may apply to the Board of Management for the following types of Leave of Absence. Circulars outlining terms and conditions of the various types of absence on the Department of Education website [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie) and on the IPPN website under Supports & Services – DES Circulars.

**Exam Leave/Study Leave** Circular 32/2007

**Brief Absences** Circular 32/2007

**EPV Leave** Circular 35/2009

**Teacher Exchange** Circular 12/2018

**Secondment** Circular 29/2018

**Career Breaks** Circular 54/2019

**Job-sharing** Circular 54/2019

**Parental Leave** Circular 54/2019

**Maternity Leave** Circular 54/2019

**Adoptive Leave** Circular 54/2019

**Paternity Leave** Circular 54/2019

**Carer’s Leave** Circular 54/2019

**Sick Leave** Circular 54/2019

**Unpaid Leave** Circular 54/2019

**Force Majeure Leave** Circular 58/2023

**Illness in Family Leave** Circular 58/2023

**Special Needs Assistants** may apply to the Board of Management for the following types of absence:

Maternity/Paternity Leave

Parental Adoptive Leave

Carer’s Leave

Force Majeure Leave

Brief Absences (Circular 32/2010)

Applications for leave that require the approval of the BOM will be considered on receipt of appropriate documentation in accordance with the following criteria, in no particular order:

* Number of teacher on leave or seeking leave
* Type(s) of leave of absence sought
* Purpose of proposed leave, as outlined on the official application form
* Availability of qualified suitable substitute/temporary teachers
* Length of service in the school
* The suitability of the partner in the case of job sharing/teacher exchange for the class concerned

Applications for leave must be submitted to the BOM by February 1st.

The BOM must provide a written decision not later than March 1st.

Application can be withdrawn by April 14th.

Any refusal decision must include grounds for refusal.

**Brief Absences** may be approved at the discretion of the Chairperson including short term unpaid personal leave with suitable substitution being a critical factor.

**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, 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’ requests for leave.
* Facilitate the granting of leave in all circumstances that, in the opinion of the Board, do not adversely affect the process of education in the school.

**EPV Leave**

Notification must be given at the beginning of the school year by staff who are entitled to such leave. As substitute cover is not allowed for Extra Personal Vacation Days, the following terms will apply:

* Generally, only two 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 sufficient, appropriate work for the class. Lists of pupils assigned to particular classes should be given to the principal for dividing the class. Learning Support/Resource teachers should advise the relevant class teachers of their planned absence.
* EPV days should not be taken in June. The final month of the school year is punctuated with school tours, sports events etc., and teachers’ efforts to complete their annual programme of work can be hindered by the responsibility of having additional pupils in their classroom at this time of year. Teachers with a specific request for a June EPV day should apply in writing to the Chairperson of the Board of Management by May 1st of the same school year.

**Sick Leave**

School staff are asked to contact the Principal or Deputy Principal as soon as they are aware of their inability to attend school. A text message will not suffice – personal contact must be made. This will give school management the opportunity to secure substitute cover for the class at the earliest notification. The Board of Management can employ a substitute teacher from the second consecutive day of absence on uncertified sick leave. Where a teacher is absent on sick leave for more than three consecutive days, a medical certificate is required for the total period of absence. All certified absences are substitutable. Where a teacher 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 entire period of absence.

**General Principles**

1. As a general principle, every effort will be made by the BOM to facilitate applications for Career Breaks and other forms of leave from members of the teaching staff.
2. While recognising a teacher’s desire to take leave, for whatever reason, it will be recognised that the welfare and educational needs of pupils shall take precedence over all other considerations.
3. Should a teacher wish, the reason for taking need only be made known to the Principal and/or the Chairperson of the BOM.
4. The maximum number of teachers on leave (including Career Break, Exchange, Leave of Absence, Study Leave, Job Sharing and Secondment ) in any school year shall currently be on a yearly basis due to the crisis in teacher recruitment. Exceptions to this may be made where specific/family circumstances prevail.
5. Where the number of applications for any form of long-term Leave ( including the extension of existing arrangements) exceed the schools’ capacity to grant such applications will be considered on their merit by the BOM, under the following criteria:

* Length of service in the school
* Previous leave of absence(s)
* Reasons for leave
* Other relevant information

1. All leave of absence is granted on condition that a suitably qualified teacher if available to replace the teacher on leave.

Please see Circular 54/2019 for further information and conditions.

Ratified by BOM on: 08/02/2024

Chairperson: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Colette Fitzgerald