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Job Sharing Policy

Policy Statement

This document sets out the Teacher Job Sharing Policy for Scoil Mhuire gan Smál. As defined in Circular 0075/2015 "the purpose of the job sharing scheme is to assist teachers in combining work with personal responsibilities or choices." As outlined in Circular 0075/2015 each employer shall develop and maintain a policy statement specific to the needs of the school in relation to the approval of job sharing arrangements.

Scope

This policy has been drawn up in consultation with the Board of Management and staff of Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál and has been approved and ratified by the Board of Management. The policy applies to the teaching staff within the school.

Aims and Purposes

- To clarify the issues relating to job-sharing for all the stakeholders - staff, board of management and parents.
- 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 the issues in relation to job-sharing.
- To inform staff members of what is expected of them for the duration of the job-sharing.
- To explain the criteria used to assess job-sharing applications.
- To explain criteria used to select candidates if more than the permitted number apply.

Procedures/Guidelines

In drawing up this policy, the relevant Circulars from the Department of Education and Skills (DES) were consulted to provide guidance in relation to all matters pertaining to Job Sharing in Scoil Mhuire gan Smál , and to ensure that the policy is in compliance with DES Guidelines. All persons wishing to apply for Job Sharing are expected to familiarise themselves with the details of the Job Sharing Scheme as outlined in all relevant Circulars from the DES (see www.education.ie), which are subject to review by the DES from time to time. This Job Sharing Policy should be read and understood within the context of all current, relevant DES Circulars. The policy is specific to the needs of Scoil Mhuire gan Smál . In drawing up the policy on Job Sharing, **the welfare and educational needs of pupils take precedence over all other considerations.**

Eligibility

All permanent teachers employed in Scoil Mhuire gan Smál with at least two years service in a permanent capacity, are eligible to apply for Job Sharing, with the exclusion of the Principal (the importance of the leadership function of a Principal precludes this role from being shared) and teachers on Probation. A Deputy Principal may apply for Job-Sharing but will be required to relinquish their post for the duration.

Teachers who are currently on secondment or are going on secondment cannot Job Share for the duration of the secondment. However, a teacher on a Career Break, secondment, or other approved leave of absence may apply to resume teaching duties on a Job Sharing basis.

Job-sharing applications will only be considered from:

- (a) permanent staff members of Scoil Mhuire gan Smál who wish to share within the school
- (b) a teacher in Scoil Mhuire gan Smál who wishes to job-share in another school
- (c) a permanent staff member of Scoil Mhuire gan Smál who wishes to job share in this school with a probated teacher from another school.

The Board of Management will consider all applications on their merit and adjudicate on the matter.

Number of Teachers to be involved:

The Board of Management 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.

The Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál has determined that no more than 4 teachers will be allowed to participate in job sharing arrangements in any one school year - i.e. there shall be two job-sharing positions allowed in any one year.

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.

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 the Board 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 decides that a Job Sharing arrangement should be terminated in the best interests of the pupils.

Applying for Job Sharing:

A teacher seeking to job share must submit the prescribed application form JS1 attached to circular 0075/2015 to the Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire gan Smál not later than the 1st February prior to the school year in which he/she 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.

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. The decision of the Board of Management shall be final.

Should the Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál be the employer who hosts the teachers 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.

The employer shall issue a written notice of approval or refusal, which will set out the basis of the refusal, to the teacher by 1st March 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 14th April, 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 1st November.

As this is a discretionary type of leave the Board of Management must list the names of all teachers availing of job sharing arrangements on the annual change of staff form that is returned to the Dept of Education and Skills. The job sharing application must be retained in the school.

An outside 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 to ascertain his/ her suitability. This teacher will have to submit a record of attendance with their application.

Teachers wishing to Job Share should submit a written a **Plean Oibre** to the Board of Management before the 1st of February of the preceding academic year. Teachers already engaged in a Job Sharing Scheme must also abide by this requirement on an annual basis.

The Plean Oibre must address in an appropriate manner the following issues: the need for continuity, the need for planning for an agreed methodology, and 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 (as Job Sharing teachers cannot substitute for each other).

The Plean Oibre should also outline the availability of the teachers 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 preparation of the Plean Oibre.

In considering applications for Job Sharing, the Board shall satisfy itself that the Plean Oibre adequately addresses all of the key issues outlined above.

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 (where both teachers are from Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál):

- The extent to which the two proposed Job Sharers are compatible, co-operative, flexible, and complement each other's skills and professionalism.
- The levels of organisational and communication skills displayed by the proposed partners.

The Board of Management 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 reserves the 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 is prepared to endorse a Monday, Tuesday every second Wednesday/Thursday, Friday every second Wednesday option.

Handover arrangements between job-sharing teachers

Both teachers will meet for a sufficient period of time at the end of each teaching shift to discuss and prepare the necessary handover. The Principal/Deputy Principal will be available to the job-sharers at this time, if necessary. It is the responsibility of the job-sharing teacher to convey any communications made to the staff at Croke Park Hours etc. to the other teacher.

Planning for the class of job-sharing teachers

Job sharing teachers shall prepare together:

- A full year's work-plan in consultation with the Principal. This may be presented termly if agreed by the Principal.
- A fortnightly scheme for the class. These must be handed up to the Principal/ Acting Principal at the beginning of each fortnight and signed and kept in the office.
- 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. This will be handed up to the Principal.
- Copies of the long-term plan, short-term plans and monthly reports shall be presented to the Principal Teacher at the appropriate times.
- Together, both teachers shall prepare an agreed weekly and daily timetable. A copy of this must be given to the Principal and kept in his/her office with a copy retained in the classroom to be made available for a substitute teacher.

- Job sharers are required to maintain a shared diary in which records of progress, behaviour issues, meetings with parents, payments of money, and all other relevant events shall be noted.
- Job Sharing Teachers are required to be available for relevant Parent/Teacher Meetings.
- Plans, profiles, record keeping files etc. should be made available for substitute teachers.
- At the end of the school year both teachers shall prepare the school reports together

As a general principle both teachers will display significant flexibility in relation to the class's participation in school events so that they shall continue to happen normally.

Duties

The Principal shall ensure that appropriate communication processes are in place 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. The obligation to provide additional hours under the existing Public Service Agreements is pro-rata for teachers who are job sharing.

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 Mhuire Gan Smál will not teach Junior Infants or Sixth Class. Special account must 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 job sharing arrangement maximum once, during their time at Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál.

Appointment of a replacement teacher.

Where a replacement teacher is to be employed, the position must be filled in accordance with current rules 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, retiring or returning to full time employment or the following 31st August whichever happens first.

Public Holiday Entitlements.

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. In such cases however, the normal attendance regime will, where necessary be varied slightly by the employer with a view to allowing both job sharing partners to benefit equally from school closures.

Parental Involvement:

The parents of the class(es)/pupils 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 by means of a letter to parents advising them of the decision and inviting them to attend a meeting in the school if they wish to have further information/ clarification regarding the Job Sharing scheme.

Both 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 strategy

employed to manage, teach and assess 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 schemes operation.

In the case of Learning Support/Language Support and Resource Teaching, parents will normally be informed at the beginning of the school year to which the Job Sharing Scheme applies when the pupils concerned have been identified as meriting access to teachers of the Special Education Team.

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. The temporary replacement teacher should also be made aware that his/her appointment may be terminated arising from the resignation of one of the Job Sharing Teachers.

EPV Days

It is imperative that teachers involved in a Job Sharing Scheme do not take EPV ('Course') Days due to concerns about the total number of teaching days which would be lost if Job Sharing teachers were to avail of at least six EPV days during the School Year.

Supervision:

Job Sharing Teachers shall engage in Supervision Duty with both teachers sharing one post.

Posts of Responsibility

A special duties Post of Responsibility holder may be allowed to job-share. However the Board of Management should examine the duties of the post to examine whether the duties can be carried out in full during the periods of attendance of a job-sharing special duties teacher. Where it is decided that the duties can be performed the special duties teacher will continue to perform the full duties of the post and will be paid accordingly.

Post-holders who are job-sharing and who opt to retain the full post-holder's allowance, shall attend all meetings relevant to that post-holders duties. When applying to job-share, the post-holder should outline in a separate document to the Board of Management exactly how they intend to carry out each aspect of their post.

Seniority for Job-Sharing Teachers

Seniority of teachers is determined by the B.O.M. based on the date of appointment to the school. Job-sharing service is reckoned as full-service for the purpose of seniority.

Brief Absences

Subject to the approval of the B.O.M., job-sharing teachers are entitled to take leave under the terms of Circular 18/00 (Brief Absences) for days in which they are scheduled to teach. Job-sharing partners may not substitute for each other in the case of occasional short absences

Long Term Absences

The B.O.M. will take cognisance of the directives of the D.E.S. on job-sharing arrangements for Bereavement Leave, Carer's Leave, Sick Leave Maternity, Adoptive and Parental Leave as set down in Cir 11/03 or any other relevant circular issued by the D.E.S.

Sick Leave

The sick leave arrangements applying to job-sharing teachers covering self-certified sick leave, certified sick leave and the Occupational Health Strategy are outlined in Cir 0036/2013.

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all the stakeholders (staff, parents and BOM) to familiarise themselves with the terms of this policy and to contribute positively to its on-going implementation within the school setting.

Evaluation/Review

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

- Feedback from the stakeholders
- The efficient and smooth operation of Job Sharing Scheme(s)
- Benefits to the school arising from the implementation of the Job Sharing policy.
- Revised/New DES Circulars and Guidelines.

The Principal will report to the B.O.M. at least once each term, to assess compliance with school policy and to ensure the welfare and education needs of the pupils are met.

Policy Approval

This policy has been reviewed and accepted by the Board of Management of Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál.

Signed: *Breda Hickey*, Chairperson, B.O.M.

Date: 4/2/19

To be reviewed in 2023