



JOB SHARE/ CAREER BREAK POLICY



Job Share/Career Break Policy Jonah Special School

This policy has been developed in accordance with Department of Education Circular 54/2019 – Leave Scheme for Teachers, Circular 0041/2014 – Job Sharing Scheme, and Circular 22/2012 – Special Needs Assistants in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools. These circulars are referenced throughout this policy and should be consulted for further clarification where required.

Aim/Purpose of this Policy

The purpose of this policy is –

- Provide clarity regarding arrangements for job-sharing arrangements and career breaks for all stakeholders, including the Board of Management, staff, and parents/guardians.
- Ensure that applications for job-sharing arrangements and career breaks take account of the school's capacity to meet students' educational and care needs and establish reasonable limits on the number of Teachers and SNAs who may be absent at any one time.
- Support the effective and efficient operation of the school during periods when job-sharing arrangements or career breaks are in place.
- Ensure all stakeholders are informed of the procedures and requirements relating to job-sharing arrangements and career breaks.
- Outline the expectations and responsibilities of Teachers and SNAs participating in job-sharing arrangements or career breaks.
- Set out the criteria used by the Board of Management in considering applications for job-sharing arrangements and career breaks.
- Outline the selection criteria that may be applied where the number of applications exceeds the number that can be accommodated by the school.

Guidelines

- In developing this policy, the Board of Management of Jonah Special School has ensured it reflects the specific needs and circumstances of the school.
- In establishing a policy position on job-sharing arrangements and career breaks, the Board recognises that the welfare and educational needs of students must take precedence over all other considerations.
- In implementing this policy, due regard must be given to the school's capacity to continue meeting its obligations to students. Consequently, a limit will apply to the number of staff who may avail of job-sharing arrangements or career break schemes at any one time.
- The Board will also take into account the likely availability of suitably qualified replacement staff, as well as the long-term interests of the school as a stable educational environment and workplace, when considering applications.
- The decision of the Board of Management shall be final.



CAREER BREAK

Basis of the Career Break Scheme

- A Career Break is a period of unpaid special leave for a minimum of one school year. It may be extended on an annual basis, provided the total period does not exceed five years at any one time, and ten years in total during a Teacher's or SNA's career.
- The purpose of the Career Break Scheme for Teachers is to facilitate personal or professional development, including voluntary service overseas, accompanying a spouse or partner on diplomatic or military posting, educational purposes, public representation, family reasons, personal development, or self-employment.
- For SNAs, the Career Break Scheme is intended to facilitate education, personal development, or childcare.
- Teachers and SNAs may apply for a career break in accordance with the relevant Department of Education circulars. A career break is unpaid in all circumstances.
- Further information is available in Circular 54/2019 (Teachers) and Circular 22/2012 (SNAs).

Eligibility and Application for Career Break

- Teachers and SNAs must have completed at least 12 months of continuous service in the school to be eligible to apply.
- The duration of a career break may not extend beyond the termination date of a fixed-term contract.
- Applications must be submitted to the Board of Management on or before 1st February (Teachers) or 1st March (SNAs), where the career break is intended to commence the following September.
- Applications must include a written statement outlining the applicant's reasons for requesting a career break for the following school year.
- Applications for an extension of a career break must also be submitted by the same dates, provided the total period does not exceed five years at any one time.
- Where approval of a career break is conditional on the recruitment of a suitably qualified replacement, this will be clearly stated in the approval letter.
- Teachers and SNAs on career break must notify the Board in writing of their intention to return by 1st February (Teachers) or 1st March (SNAs).
- All applications are subject to a qualified replacement being secured by 30th June of the year of the application.

Criteria for Career Break

The Board of Management shall carefully consider the following factors when determining whether to approve a career break –

- The welfare and educational needs of the students and any anticipated impact on those needs.
- The likelihood of securing a suitably qualified replacement.
- The anticipated benefits arising from the career break and the potential impact of these on students.
- The amount of leave previously granted to the applicant.

The welfare and educational needs of the students will take precedence over all other considerations.



The Board of Management of Jonah Special School shall determine annually the number of Teachers and SNAs who may be granted a career break. Approval of career breaks is not guaranteed and is subject to change from year to year, based on the operational needs of the school.

As a general guideline, no more than **one Teacher** and **one Special Needs Assistant** shall be approved for a career break in any one school year. This guideline does not constitute an entitlement and may be varied or withdrawn at the discretion of the Board of Management, including in exceptional circumstances.

Oversubscription

All applications for career breaks will be considered on their merits in accordance with the criteria set out in this policy. If more than one Teacher or more than one SNA applies for a career break in the same school year, and the number of applications exceeds the number that can be accommodated –

- A fair and transparent selection process will be applied.
- Names of all eligible applicants will be entered into a lottery.
- The lottery will take place in March, supervised by the Principal, and witnessed by a representative of the Board of Management and either a member of An Garda Síochána or another independent witness.
- Names will be drawn by the independent witness or Garda.
- One Teacher and one SNA will be selected.
- Applicants will be notified of the outcome as soon as possible.

JOB SHARE

Basis of the Job Sharing Scheme

The job-sharing scheme enables Teachers and SNAs to combine work commitments with personal responsibilities or choices.

The scheme supports family-friendly working arrangements and provides opportunities for personal or professional development, which may also directly benefit students.

Eligibility and Application for Job Share

- A Teacher or SNA may apply to share a whole-time post on a 50:50 basis.
- Teachers and SNAs must have completed at least 12 months of continuous service to be eligible.
- Applications must be submitted to the Board of Management on or before 1st February (Teachers) or 1st March (SNAs) where the job-share arrangement is intended to commence the following September.
- Applications must include a written statement outlining the applicant's reasons for requesting job-sharing for the following school year.
- Staff members shall apply on an individual basis. All applications will be considered on their merits, and no decisions will be made until all applications have been received.
- Staff members granted leave may not withdraw their application after 14th April or from the date on which the replacement contract has been signed, whichever occurs first.
- All applications are subject to a qualified replacement being secured by 30th June of the year of the application.
- Due to the complex nature of the students' needs, no job-share arrangement will be permitted that incorporates a Teacher or SNA from another school.



Criteria for Job-Share Arrangements

The Board of Management shall carefully consider the following factors when determining whether to approve a job-sharing arrangement –

- The welfare and educational needs of students and any anticipated impact.
- The likelihood of securing a suitably qualified replacement.
- The anticipated benefits arising from the job-share arrangement and the potential impact on students.
- The amount of leave previously granted to the applicant.
- Applicants already job-sharing will not be given priority over new applicants.

The welfare and educational needs of students take precedence over all other considerations.

The Board of Management of Jonah Special School shall determine annually the number of Teachers and SNAs who may be granted job-sharing arrangements. Approval of job-sharing is not guaranteed and is subject to change from year to year, based on the operational needs of the school.

As a general guideline, no more than **one Teacher** and **two Special Needs Assistants** shall be approved for job sharing in any one school year. This guideline does not constitute an entitlement and may be varied or withdrawn at the discretion of the Board of Management, including in exceptional circumstances.

Oversubscription

All applications for job-sharing will be considered on their merits in accordance with the criteria set out in this policy. If more than one Teacher or more than two SNAs applies for job-share in the same school year, and the number of applications exceeds the number that can be accommodated –

- A fair and transparent selection process will be applied.
- Names of all eligible applicants will be entered into a lottery.
- The lottery will take place in March, supervised by the Principal, and witnessed by a representative of the Board of Management and either a member of An Garda Síochána or another independent witness.
- Names will be drawn by the independent witness or Garda.
- One Teacher and two SNAs will be selected.
- Applicants will be notified of the outcome as soon as possible.

Operation of the Scheme

- The Board of Management determines the structure of job-sharing arrangements (split week, alternating days, or week-on/week-off) and will notify staff of the specific working days no later than 31st July.
- The Board of Management of Jonah Special School shall delegate responsibility for the class placement of all staff engaged in a job-sharing arrangement to the Principal.
- Job-sharing Teachers and SNAs generally receive pro-rata arrangements in relation to pay and conditions of employment, consistent with full-time colleagues.
- Any changes to agreed days, even on a once-off basis, must be approved in advance by the Principal.
- Job-sharing Teachers and SNAs must be available for relevant staff and parent meetings, and both Teachers must attend formal review meetings. The obligation to provide additional hours under



existing Public Service agreements, including Haddington Road hours, is applied on a pro-rata basis.

- The Board reserves the right to terminate a job-sharing arrangement if it is not operating in the best interests of the students or the school.
- Each job-sharing arrangement will be reviewed at the end of each school year.

Additional Work by Job-Sharing Teacher and Special Needs Assistant

Job-sharing Teachers and SNAs may not engage in outside employment without the consent of the employer. The employer will determine whether such employment conflicts with the staff member's ability to fulfil their duties. If a conflict is deemed to exist, approval will be withheld.

Resignation from Post while Job-Sharing

A Teacher or SNA participating in a job-sharing arrangement who wishes to resign from their post must provide written notice to the employer in accordance with their terms of employment.

Jonah Special School

Job Share/Career Break Policy

This policy was adopted by the Board of Management of Jonah Special School at its meeting held on:

Ratified by the Jonah Board of Management on: _____

Date

Signed: _____

Principal

Signed: _____

Chairperson, Board of Management

Next Review Period: *September 2029*