

St. Joseph's Secondary School

Newfoundwell, Drogheda, Co. Louth



Career Break Policy for Teachers

2024/25

Mission Statement:

Our school recognises that each pupil who enrolls in our school is unique and has different gifts as well as different needs. It is our wish that our pupils will leave us with enhanced self-confidence and with life skills and attitudes which will enable them to lead lives satisfying to themselves and which may contribute to the betterment of society. We recognise that a pupil's development is closely linked to a good self image and so we strive to present the school's total curriculum in such a manner as to allow all to realise their full potential. We see ourselves as working in partnership with parents to develop the gifts and to meet the needs of all. We regard our school as an educational establishment with a Christian community characterised by care and justice.

Policy context and rationale:

The Board of Management of St. Joseph's Secondary School values its staff members and is highly conscious of their welfare and the opportunities available to them, including opportunities available to them, including opportunities for ongoing professional development. The Board recognises the tremendous contribution made to the school by the staff and will consider fully any request received in a fair and just manner. Teachers returning from professional leave are actively encouraged to share ideas and experiences gained as a result.

While recognising the many benefits of the Career Break Scheme both to participating teachers and the school community, the Board is cognisant of the need to maintain stability within the staff to ensure the educational and pastoral welfare of the students.

Operation of this policy:

The Board will assess each case individually on its own merits. In facilitating any release of staff members on Career Break, the needs of the students and the school will take precedence over all other considerations. Any applications made must be approved by the Board of Management.

The Board of Management will consider applications in the context of the school's teacher allocation quota which is determined by the DES each year.

1. Applications for career breaks in 2024-2025 will be in accordance with Circular 0054/2019 Leave Schemes for Registered Teachers Employed in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools, Career Break Scheme, Chapter 7.
2. A teacher on career break is precluded from taking up an appointment in any capacity in any school within the State, but in exceptional circumstances a teacher on a career break may be employed as a substitute teacher for a maximum of 300 hours in a school year.
3. A written application for a career break, including details of the purpose of the career break, must be made on an annual basis to the Board of Management by 1st February on form Appendix A. See Chapter 7 of Circular 0054/2019:

<https://assets.gov.ie/31530/18a305c43c954e7d8bcada934e216522.pdf> . (In response to issues raised in relation to teacher supply, certain restrictions imposed in the Career Break Scheme have been suspended for the past number of school years. Information Note TC 0015/2021 advises that these restrictions are also suspended for the 2021/22 school year. A teacher who is on a Career Break may now be employed, in a substitute capacity only, without the restrictions imposed in the Career Break Scheme as contained in Chapter 7(Paragraph 8.1) of Circular 54/2019 for the 2024/25 school year. A teacher who is on career break and is employed in a substitute capacity will be paid at the same rate as a regular substitute.)

4. A teacher returning from career break is required to inform, in writing, the Board of Management by 1st February 2024 of his/her intention to return.
5. A teacher may apply for a career break where he/she is registered with the Teaching Council and will have completed, at the end of the school year in which they are applying, 12 months of continuous service with the employer. (It is the responsibility of the teacher returning from a Career Break to ensure that he/she is registered with the Teaching Council on the intended date of resumption. Please note that the Teaching Council registration process which includes vetting may take up to 12 weeks during the peak period of July and August. Additional police clearance requirements may also be applicable where teachers have lived abroad. Teachers are therefore advised to commence the registration process once they have notified the school of their intention to resume work.)
6. A teacher may engage in this scheme subject to an overall maximum absence of 10 years during his/her professional career.
7. A career break shall be a period of not less than 1 school year.
8. A career break may be extended on an annual basis provided the total period of the career break does not exceed 5 years at any one time.
9. A subsequent career break may not be taken until the teacher has served for a period equal to the duration of the previous career break. In the case of a teacher who wishes to avail of a career break to undertake voluntary service abroad, missionary, diplomatic, military, Oireachtas or study leave this requirement will be waived.
10. A career break shall commence from the start of a school year and a return to duty shall not be permitted other than at the start of a succeeding school year.
11. In exceptional circumstances, a Board of Management may authorise a teacher to commence a career break during the course of a school year and terminate not earlier than the end of a school year.

12. The duration of a career break shall not extend beyond the date of termination of a fixed term contract where the applicant is employed under such a contract or the date of compulsory retirement age.
13. The Board will consider each application on its own merits within the context of the school's policy on career breaks. The needs of the pupils shall take precedence over all other considerations.
14. During the redeployment process, the Boards of Management may carry out a recruitment process up to and including interview stage but are not permitted to appoint a teacher to fill a vacancy for the 2024-2025 school year until the Department has confirmed that the redeployment process is completed.
15. Due to the current shortage of teachers in some subject areas, the Board of Management will make the approval of an application conditional on the recruitment of a suitably qualified replacement teacher by 30th June 2024. The Board of Management will notify the teacher immediately following the recruitment of a suitably qualified replacement teacher. In the event that a suitably qualified replacement teacher cannot be recruited by 30th June 2024, however, the teacher should be advised that the career break cannot proceed.
16. A teacher returning from leave of absence in excess of two years must complete a pre-employment medical questionnaire with Medmark Occupational Health.

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

This policy was ratified on

Signature: Chairperson of the Board Of Management_____

Date:_____

Signature: Principal & Secretary to the Board of Management_____

Date:_____

Appendix 1: Application Form

The Application Form should be fully completed annually and submitted to the employer prior to commencing or seeking an extension to a Career Break and not later than 1st February.

PART 1A– TEACHER APPLICATION

Teacher's Name: _____ Contact No: _____

Home Address: _____

E-mail Address: _____

PPSN: _____

School Name: _____ Roll No: _____

Have you previously taken a Career Break? Yes No

If "YES" please provide dates of previous Career Break(s): _____

PART 1B - DETAILS OF PROPOSED CAREER BREAK

Proposed start date of Career Break: _____

Objective of Career Break (*please tick relevant box*):

- Personal Development
- Voluntary Service Overseas
- Accompany spouse/partner on Diplomatic/Military Posting
- Educational purposes
- Public Representation
- Family Reasons
- Self-employment
- Other

Additional Information to support Career Break application:

Declaration

I wish to apply for a Career Break in accordance with the Career Break Scheme as set out in Circular 0054/2019 titled '*Leave Schemes for Registered Teachers Employed in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools*'.

I confirm that the information provided in the application is true and accurate.

Signature of Teacher: _____ Date: _____

Data Protection Privacy Statement

The main purpose for which the Department requires you to provide this personal data to your employer is to enable your Career Break application to be processed. Your employer will retain your application form and accompanying documents in accordance with their Data Protection policy. Further information in relation to this policy is available on request from your employer.

The Privacy Notice outlining further information in relation to this application form can be found at: <https://www.education.ie/en/The-Department/Data-Protection/gdpr/gdpr.html> Full details of the Department's Data Protection policy setting out how we will use your personal data as well as information regarding your rights as a data subject are available at <https://www.education.ie/en/The-Department/Data-Protection/>. Details of this policy are also available in hard copy from Teacher/SNA Terms & Conditions, Department of Education & Skills,

PART 2 – EMPLOYER DECISION

I certify that I have approved/refused (delete as appropriate) the Career Break application in accordance with the Career Break Scheme as set out in Circular 54/2019 titled '*Leave Schemes for Registered Teachers Employed in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools*'. The following documents will be retained for audit purposes:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1) Application for Career Break | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2) Copy of Decision Notice issued to teacher | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Approved Career Break has been recorded on the OLCS/relevant ETB system

Signature: _____ Date: _____
(Employer)