

Policy on Job-sharing/Career Break/Secondment

Jan 2026

1. How was this policy developed?

This policy outlines the rationale and procedure of St. Mary's. The policy has been developed following consultation between students, staff, parents, Principal and Board of Management. This policy relates to non statutory leave only. This policy will be reviewed regularly.

2. School Mission Statement

“St. Mary's Secondary School, Charleville is a voluntary catholic secondary school for girls only under the trusteeship of CEIST. The mission of St Mary's Secondary School is to provide holistic education, in the Catholic tradition, for all our students. We are committed to the academic, creative, emotional, spiritual and physical development of each student, in a caring and safe environment.”

3. Introduction

St. Mary's is committed to equality of opportunity for all its staff regardless of the number of

hours worked. In order to facilitate this, the Board of Management may create working arrangements whereby it can retain the valuable skills of existing employees who wish to work fewer hours and enable staff to retain career development opportunities while working fewer hours.

The welfare and educational needs of the students and the needs of the school will take precedence over all other considerations when considering applications for job-sharing. The Board of Management welcomes in principle the introduction of the Career-Break, Job-sharing, and Secondment scheme. In order to achieve this balance, the Board will consider all applications for Career-Break, Job-sharing, and Secondment considering its statutory obligations as outlined in the Department of Education and Skills Circulars 18/1998, 107/2006, 10/2011, 54/2019 and the Education Act 1998. In particular, the Board recognises that in drawing up this policy the welfare and educational needs of the pupils shall take precedence over all other considerations. Its policy for operating the scheme, outlined in Circulars 18/1998, 107/2006, 10/2011, 54/2019 and the Education Act 1998 by the Department of Education and Skills, is as follows: **3. Job Sharing Scheme**

The purpose of the Job-Sharing Scheme is to assist teachers in combining work commitments and personal responsibilities/choices.

For the purposes of this Policy;

a) A Job-Sharing teacher means a teacher who:-

i) is sharing a wholetime post on a 50:50 basis or

ii) has applied to reduce their hours to 50% of a wholetime post.

b) A wholetime teacher means a teacher who is contracted for:- 22 hours teaching per week in a Post Primary School.

3.1 Eligibility

A teacher may apply for a Job-Sharing arrangement where he/she:-

a) will have satisfactorily completed, at the end of the school year in which they are applying, 12 months of continuous service with the current employer. This requirement is waived where a

teacher is compulsorily redeployed into a school or where a school is amalgamated provided that he/she has worked at least one full year in his/her former school prior to redeployment/ amalgamation.

b) holds a post for the following school year which is equivalent to or over 50% of a wholetime teacher (i.e. 11 hours per week teaching in the case of a Post Primary teacher).

Job Sharing is not available to the following:

Post Primary: Principal, Deputy Principal, Home School Liaison Coordinator, teacher on secondment . A teacher on a Career Break or other approved leave of absence may apply to resume teaching duties on a Job-Sharing basis.

3.2 Duration of Job-Sharing Arrangement

The minimum period for a Job-Sharing arrangement is one school year. In exceptional circumstances, an employer may authorise a Job-Sharing arrangement to commence during the course of the school year and to terminate no earlier than the end of the same school year i.e. 31st August.

3.3 Job Sharing Options

A teacher may make an application to share a wholetime post on a 50:50 basis or may apply to reduce their hours to 50% of a wholetime teacher. This amounts to 11 hours per week teaching in the case of a Post Primary teacher.

There are 2 options for a Job-Sharing arrangement:

Option 1: Share a wholetime post on a 50:50 basis with an existing wholetime teacher in the same school

Option 2: Reduction of wholetime teaching hours to 50% with a teacher recruited by the employer for the balance of the available hours on a (fixed term) contract which will terminate at the end of the school year.

3.4 Operation of the Scheme

It is a matter for the employer to decide the Job-Sharing arrangement(s) which it is prepared to

endorse e.g. week on/week off, split week. Post Primary schools, for example, **may** require a Job-Sharing teacher to be timetabled over 5 days per week. Subject to the employer's responsibility in this regard, timetable arrangements for Job Sharing teachers should be designed within the spirit of the scheme to facilitate the teacher, so far as is practicable.

In exceptional circumstances, the employer may permit a Job-Sharing teacher to withdraw from the Job Sharing Scheme and return to his/her original teaching post earlier than expected if he/she can be accommodated within the approved staffing allocation, subject to contractual arrangements. However, such an application may not be considered beyond 1st November. Board of Management may consider making the approval of an application conditional on the recruitment of a suitably qualified replacement teacher by 30th May 2026. This conditional approval should be confirmed in a written letter of approval, and the Board should seek confirmation in writing of acceptance of such conditions from the teacher. The Board of Management should notify the teacher immediately following the recruitment of a suitably qualified replacement teacher. However, in the event that a suitably qualified replacement teacher cannot be recruited by 30th May 2026, the teacher should be advised that the job-sharing cannot proceed.

3.5 Status while Job Sharing

Each year of Job-Sharing service given, will reckon as one year of service for promotion and incremental purposes. Employers 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.

3.6 Employment while Job Sharing

A Job-Sharing teacher may not

- a) engage in any substitute teaching
- b) act as a special needs assistant in the school in which he/she is employed or any other school
- c) engage in paid employment without the consent of the employer. The employer will not approve

outside employment where a conflict with the teacher's current role exists.

3.7 Leadership and Management Posts

The entitlement to fill a Leadership and Management Post and/or appointment to and payment in respect of Acting Leadership and Management Posts will be in accordance with relevant Department publications and/or other regulations.

The employer should keep the operation of Leadership and Management posts held by Job Sharing teachers under review to ensure responsibilities are adequately discharged.

a) An Assistant Principal I or Assistant Principal II may retain his/her Leadership and Management post allowance while Job Sharing provided the employer decides that the duties of the post can be performed in full.

b) Where an employer decides that it is not possible for the Job-Sharing teacher to perform the full duties of the Assistant Principal I or II post, he/she shall forfeit the allowance for the duration of the arrangement.

The allowance shall be restored on resumption of full-time duties.

c) The acting post holder will not establish personal entitlement to the allowance and will therefore relinquish same when the Job Sharer resumes full-time duties. Where a post holder has carried out the role for a period in excess of 5 consecutive school years, refer to the relevant Department publications in relation to Recruitment/Promotion and Leadership.

Where there is a change in the job-sharing arrangement i.e. the teacher is carrying out full duties or has returned to his/her original teaching post, the employer is reminded to notify the Paymaster.

3.8 Maternity Leave/Adoptive Leave

A full-time teacher on Maternity/Adoptive Leave, opting to Job Share in the next school year, will be paid at the full-time rate of pay up until the beginning of the next school year at which point the teacher will be paid the Job-Sharing rate of pay for the remainder of the leave.

A Job-Sharing teacher on Maternity/Adoptive Leave, opting to return to fulltime duties in the next school year, will be paid at the Job-Sharing rate of pay up until the beginning of the next school year at which point the teacher will be paid the full-time rate of pay for the remainder of the leave.

3.9 In Service/School Planning Days

A Job-Sharing teacher who is required to attend courses/school planning days on days he/she is not rostered shall be granted leave in lieu for such days. Leave in lieu will not be granted where the teacher's attendance on such days is part of the additional hour's commitment under the current public service agreement. Where leave in lieu is granted, confirmation of attendance at the course/school planning day should be submitted in writing to the employer who must notify the Department via the OLCS system. Substitution for such days is not paid by the Department.

3.10 Redeployment

Job Sharing teachers will be subject to the same conditions of redeployment as full-time teachers.

3.11 Termination of Job-Sharing arrangement

Employers must ensure that teachers participating in the Job-Sharing Scheme are aware that the arrangement may be terminated at any time if it is not operating in the best interests of the pupils.

It is the responsibility of the employer to ensure that the Paymaster is informed in advance of the termination date of the relevant teacher's Job-Sharing arrangement and the termination date of the replacement teacher's employment in order to avoid any overpayments of salary.

4. Career break

- a. A teacher may engage in this scheme subject to an overall maximum absence of 10 years in the course of his/her professional career.
- b. A career break shall be a period of not less than 1 school year and may be extended on an annual basis provided the total period of the career break does not exceed 5 years at any one time.
- c. 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 wishing to avail of a career break to undertake voluntary service abroad, missionary, diplomatic, military, Oireachtas this requirement will be waived.

- d. A Career Break must commence at the start of a school year. A return to duty in the school which granted the Career Break or to the school where the teacher has been redeployed is not permitted other than at the beginning of a succeeding school year.

5. Secondments

- a. To avoid disruption to the work of the school, the minimum period for which a secondment may be granted shall normally be one school year commencing on 1st September and ending on the following 31st August. In exceptional cases, where a secondment commences after 1st September, the period of secondment shall end on the following 31st August.
- b. Where the services of the secondee are required for a period longer than one school year the period may be extended in increments of one full year. In such cases approval shall be subject to the following maxima being adhered to:
- (1) A maximum period of ten school years for secondments to Department-approved national programmes;
 - (2) A maximum period of nine school years for secondments to European Schools subject to terms and conditions of appointment to those schools;
 - (3) A maximum period of five school years for all secondments in other cases

6. Application Procedures

A teacher seeking Job Share/Career Break/Secondment must submit, on an annual basis, the completed Application Form at Appendix A of the Circular, to his/her employer not later than 1st February prior to the school year in which he/she proposes to commence or (in the case of a teacher wishing to extend an existing arrangement) continue Job Share/Career Break/Secondment. Each Job Share/Career Break/Secondment application must be considered on its own merits by the employer within the context of the school's policy on teacher absences.

The employer must issue a decision in writing to approve or refuse the application (including the basis for refusal, where applicable), to the teacher no later than 1st March. The decision of the employer is final.

Taking account of the extent of arrangements to be put in place by the employer to cater for a Job Share/Career Break/Secondment post, the teacher should 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.

7. Replacement Teacher

The position of a replacement teacher must be filled in accordance with current rules for teacher recruitment. He/she shall be offered a fixed term contract.

Such a contract must include a condition that the contract will terminate if the Job Share/Career Break/Secondment teacher resigns, retires or returns to full-time employment (provided this return to full-time hours takes place prior to 1st November and can be accommodated as outlined).

The replacement teacher may apply for any available hours including substitution in any school up to the maximum of a wholetime post.

8. Resignation while Job Share/Career Break/Secondment

A teacher engaged in a Job Share/Career Break/Secondment arrangement who wishes to resign from his/her teaching post must notify the employer in writing in accordance with the teacher's terms and conditions of employment.

9. Secretaries and Caretakers:

- The particular needs of the school will determine what patterns of job-sharing are possible.

10. Implementation of Policy:

Each application shall be considered by the Board of Management in the light of this policy.

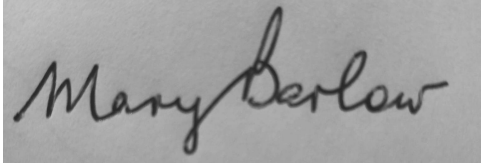
11. Monitoring:

The Principal will monitor the operation of the Job Share/Career Break/Secondment Scheme.

12. Review:

The Board of Management will review the Job Share/Career Break/Secondment Scheme regularly.

Signed (Chairperson, Board of Management): _____

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light grey background. The signature is written in a cursive style and reads "Mary Berlow".

28-5-26