

Dalystown National School: Job Share Policy

Introduction

This policy sets out the operation of the Teachers/SNAs Job Share Scheme in Dalystown National School. The policy was developed in consultation with school staff and the Board of Management of Dalystown National School. The policy complies with the most recent Circular (Circular 0054/2019) on Leave Schemes for Registered Teachers in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools 0054/2019. The policy should be read and understood in conjunction with the General Provisions for All Schemes, and Definitions and within the context of legislation relating to the Job Sharing Scheme for Teachers Circular 0054/2019, Chapter 8. The Circular on Leave Schemes for Registered Teachers in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools is available to download from www.education.ie

Rationale

Primary School teachers are entitled to apply for the job sharing scheme to assist them in combining work with personal responsibilities and choices. A job share arrangement also benefits pupils in a number of ways. These include:

- Pupils benefit from having two enthusiastic, energised teachers invested in their education.
- Pupils benefit from having access to two professional, dedicated teachers who will each bring their individual methodologies, affording the child the access to different learning experiences. This is appealing to a wider range of learners.
- Pupils benefit from being exposed to different personalities, behaviour management strategies and ways of problem-solving. This allows them to develop resilience and communication skills as the range of adults they are working with is widened.

This policy is specific to the needs of Dalystown National School.

A Special Needs Assistant may apply for a job-sharing where s/he:

- Has satisfactory completed, at the end of the school year in which they are applying 12 months continuous service in the school.

Aims

- To ensure compliance with relevant legislation relating to the implementation of the Job Share Scheme for Primary Teachers and SNAs.
- To ensure educational progress of pupils is not affected by the Job Share arrangement.
- To ensure the continued effective operation of the school where a job sharing arrangement exists.
- To inform staff members of their duties in relation to the job sharing scheme in Dalystown National School.
- To clarify issues in relation to the Job Share Scheme for Primary Teachers.

Definition

A Job Sharing teacher means a teacher who:-

1. is sharing a whole time post on a 50:50 basis or
2. Has applied to reduce their hours to 50% of a whole time post.

A Whole-time teacher means a teacher who is contracted for:-

28 hours 20 minutes per week in a Primary School

Eligibility

A teacher may apply to job share where he/she

- is registered with the Teaching Council
- 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
- holds a fulltime permanent post for the following school year which is equivalent to or over 50% of a whole time teacher (i.e. 14 hours 10 minutes per week).

A teacher on a Career Break or other approved leave of absence may apply to resume teaching duties on a Job Sharing basis.

The Principal is not eligible for Job Sharing.

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.

Job Sharing Options

There are two options for a job sharing arrangement.

A teacher may make an application to share a whole time post on a 50:50 basis or may apply to reduce their hours to 50% of a whole time teacher. This amounts to 14 hours 10 minutes per week.

Option 1: Share a whole time post on a 50:50 basis:

Share a whole time post on a 50:50 basis with an existing whole time teacher:-

- in the same school or
- in another school under an inter-school Job Sharing arrangement.

Where the arrangement results in an interschool job share with Dalystown NS as the host school the Principal and or Chairperson will meet with/interview the proposed job share partners to assess their compatibility and the suitability of the teacher from the outside school to Dalystown NS. The teacher from an outside school will provide an up to date curriculum vitae together with appropriate references pending interview, the Board may or may not decide to approve the job share.

Option 2: Reduction of whole time teaching hours to 50%

Reduction of whole time 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.

Application Procedures for Job Sharing in Dalystown National School

Teachers seeking to Job Share must apply to the Board of Management using the appropriate application form before the 1st February prior to the commencement of the school year in which they wish to begin job sharing.

A teacher who wishes to extend his/her job sharing arrangements must apply for the extension on an annual basis.

Approval of a Job Sharing Arrangement

The Board shall assess each job sharing application in accordance with the guidelines in the circular and within the terms of this Job Share Policy .Each Job Sharing application will be considered by the Board of Management on its own merits and within the context of Dalystown NS.

The Principal will be required to appraise the Board of Management in detail regarding a proposal to Job Share. Specifically the Principal will be asked to outline for the Board -

- the extent to which the two proposed Job Sharers are co-operative, flexible and complement each other's skills and professionalism.
- The level of organisational and communication skills displayed by the proposed partners, as well as their attendance records.

The Board of Management will 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 Board of Management is final.

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 teacher 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.

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.

The Board of Management is required to inform the Department of Education and Skills of all approved applications. All job sharing applications will be subject to the final approval of the DES.

If the Board of Management receives a Job Share application from a teacher(s) other than those involved in an existing Job-Sharing arrangement, this application will be given preference for the following academic year, ahead of an extension of an existing Job Share arrangement. In other words, there will be "first in, first out" approach to ensure fairness and equality for all teachers.

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 and its primary deliberations will reflect that teaching and learning is impacted positively.

It should be noted that Dalystown National School's Board of Management is under no obligation to approve Job Sharing arrangements. The Board of Management can as it sees fit, refuse some or all applications at its absolute discretion.

Plean Oibre

In a Job Share arrangement the teachers shall present a proposed plan of work (Plean Oibre) for the approval of the Principal.

The Plean Oibre must adequately address the need for continuity and consistency in curriculum planning, record keeping, classroom organisation, teaching methodologies and the need for an agreed approach to discipline matters and parent teacher contact.

The Plean should provide for the use of combined talents of both teachers as well as assigning responsibility.

The Plean Oibre should comply with School Policy.

The Plean should outline the frequency of out of school meetings to plan and discuss their work.

The Plean should address the need for continuity in the case of brief absences (as Job Sharing teachers cannot substitute for each other).

The Plean should outline the availability of teachers for relevant staff meetings and for relevant meetings with parents (Parent Teacher meetings, additional Public Service Agreement hours)

A calendar outlining the days in which each teacher/SNA will be in the school must be provided to the Board of Management along with the application for Job Share. Once the calendar has been agreed it cannot be changed. The Board of Management will not allow ad hoc swapping of days to take place.

In the exceptional circumstance where a teacher/SNA needs to exchange a day with their partner teacher/SNA prior approval of the Chairperson of the Board of Management must be requested in writing, along with a reason for the requested change.

The Board should be satisfied that the Plean Oibre adequately addresses all of the key issues outlined above.

The Principal will be centrally involved in all stages of the planning of the Job Sharing arrangement including approving the Plean Oibre.

The above will apply in so far as appropriate to the Special Education team teachers involved in Job Sharing.

Duties

The job sharing partners will establish appropriate communication processes which must be approved by the Board of Management. The method of communication may be electronic or hand written and must be available to the Principal at all times.

Both job sharing teachers will attend Parent/ Teacher meetings. Scheduled Parent Teacher meetings are held once a year in November.

Any matters relating to pupils must be dealt with in accordance with School Policy and in a timely way.

Both job sharing teachers will complete the End of Year Reports.

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.

In Service/School Planning Days

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 hours' commitment under the current Public Service Agreements.

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. Substitution for such days is not paid by the Department.

Extra Personal Vacation Days

Job Sharing teachers in Dalystown NS can take up to two EPV days each up to a maximum of 4 between the two teachers Job Sharing.

Classroom Planning

Job Sharing teachers are expected to complete planning in line with School Policy. Job Sharing teachers are expected to complete termly and fortnightly plans and Monthly Progress Reports at the end of the month. Monthly Progress Reports must be submitted to the Principal at the end of the month. Job Sharing teachers must prepare a weekly timetable and present a copy to the Principal. A copy of the timetable must be kept in the Substitute Information folder.

Job Sharing teachers are required to keep a diary in which records of progress, behaviour issues, meetings with parents, payments of money, friendship concerns and other relevant events must be recorded.

Both teachers will be mindful of Assessment of and for Learning and its important place in pupil progression.

Both teachers must be present for the drawing up of Support Plans with members of the SET team.

As a general principle both teachers will display significant flexibility in relation to the class's participation in school events so that they will continue without interruption.

Termination: The arrangement may be terminated at any time if it is not operating in the best interests of the pupils.

In the event of the termination of a Job Share arrangement, the Board of Management will communicate this in writing to both teachers.

Class levels/Teaching Duties

The welfare and educational needs of the children will take precedence over all other considerations in deciding the teaching duties assigned to the Job Share partners. The decision of the Principal is final in assigning teaching roles to teachers. Special account must be taken of pupils who might be regarded as vulnerable or have special needs.

The allocation of classes/teaching duties must take account of Job Sharing applications and remains the absolute prerogative of the Principal.

Time Sharing Arrangement

The Board is only prepared to endorse either of two options - week on/week off or the split week.

Informing parents

As soon as the Board of Management has decided to allow job sharing and classes have been allocated parents should be informed that their child(ren) would be taught by job sharing teachers in the relevant school year. The Board will notify parents at the earliest possible opportunity. Both teachers shall present, along with the principal, an information session for parents explaining the strategy employed to manage, teach and access the class through a job sharing scheme.

Handover Arrangements between Job Sharing Teachers

Both teachers will meet/speak at the end of each teaching shift to discuss and prepare the necessary handover. This meeting can be done in person or remotely using Zoom/ Microsoft teams or by phone. A logbook/diary must be available

for Job Share teachers to facilitate written communication. The exact nature of Handover Arrangements must be detailed in the Plean Oibre.

The Principal will be available to the Job Sharers if necessary. It is the responsibility of the Job Sharing teachers to convey any communications made to staff to Job Sharing partner.

Supervision:

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

Evaluation

There will be ongoing evaluation of all aspects of the Job Sharing arrangements. The Principal will report to the Board of Management each term regarding the implementation of the Job Share

Communication: A copy of the policy will be available to all members of staff and will be posted on the school's website.

Parents whose children are to be taught by Job Sharing teachers will be given copies at the time of informing them of same.

Implementation: This policy will be implemented from September 2023 and reviewed annually thereafter.

Ratification:

This policy was ratified by the Board of Management of Dalystown NS in February 2023