



# Gaelscoil Choráin Eochail

## Polasaí Saoire Neamhláithreachta/Leave of Absence Policy

### Réamhráiteas & Réasúnaíocht/Introduction & Rationale

This policy has been drawn up in consultation with the Board of Management and staff of Gaelscoil Choráin. In drawing up this policy, the relevant circulars from the Department of Education and Skills (D.E.S.) were consulted to provide guidelines in all matters pertaining to Leave of Absence in order to ensure that the policy is in compliance with D.E.S. guidelines.

Statutory and non-statutory leave entitlements for teachers, special needs assistants (SNAs) and other education sector staff can be found at:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/service/56e999-breaksleave/>

Staff members must apply to the Board of Management for Leave of Absence. Prior to applying for Leave of Absence all staff are advised to familiarize themselves with the relevant circulars from the D.E.S. pertaining to each leave. The link above is correct as of the date of ratification of this policy. However, it is also the responsibility of staff members to keep themselves informed of updates to these and other relevant circulars.

### The Number of Teachers and SNA's on leave

The granting of application for Discretionary Leave (Career Break, Job Sharing, Secondment, Teacher Exchange) is at the discretion of the Board of Management. 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 maximum number of teachers and SNA's on Leave (including Career Break, Exchange, Leave of Absence, Study Leave, Job Sharing and Secondment) in any school year shall not exceed 20% of the teaching staff and 20% of the SNA staff. Exceptions to this quota may be made where specific personal/family circumstances prevail.

Applications for leave that require the approval of the BOM will be considered on receipt of appropriate documentation in accordance with the following criteria, in no particular order:

- Number of teachers or SNA's on leave or seeking leave

- Type(s) of Leave of Absence sought
- Purpose of proposed leave, as outlined on the official application form
- Availability of qualified suitable substitute/temporary teachers or SNA's
- Length of service in the school
- The suitability of the partner in the case of job sharing/teacher exchange for the class concerned.

**Brief Absences** may be approved at the discretion of the Chairperson including short term unpaid personal leave with suitable substitution being a critical factor.

**Members of Staff applying for leave of absence must:**

1. Apply in writing in time to the Chairperson where applicable
2. Comply with terms laid down by the DES, BOM and relevant legislation. Applicants may be asked to attend a BOM meeting to further inform the Board if necessary.

**The Board of Management will:**

- Process each application for leave of absence as quickly as possible and comply with the terms of reference laid down by the DES, this policy statement and the law
- Inform the applicant of the Board's decision, within one week of its decision
- Respect the confidentiality of all applicants request for leave
- Facilitate the granting of leave in all circumstances that in the opinion of the Board do not adversely affect the process of education the school.

**Extra Personal Vacation (EPV) Leave**

Notification must be given at the beginning of the school year by staff that are entitled to such leave. As substitute cover is not allowed for Extra Personal Vacation (EPV) days, the following terms will apply:

- Generally, only one mainstream class teacher will be entitled to EPV leave on any one day. A Special Educational Needs (SEN) teacher and a mainstream class teacher will be entitled to EPV leave on any one day. Priority will be given to the first request for such leave. For all planned absences, as well as making the necessary alternative yard duty arrangements, the teacher should assign ample, appropriate work for the class. Lists of pupils assigned to individual classes should be given to the Principal, who will be responsible for dividing the class. SEN teachers should advise the relevant class teachers of their planned absence.
- Ample notice, generally a fortnight should be given to the Principal, in advance of taking an EPV leave day.

### Sick Leave

School staff are asked to contact the Principal, Deputy Principal or school office in the order hereunder, as soon as they are aware of their inability to attend school. It is important to make every effort to communicate all absences in as timely a fashion as is possible so as to factor in time required to source suitable substitution, to allow school management to make necessary arrangements and to allow for time in which Principal, Deputy Principal and secretary are travelling to work, if contact is made in the morning. Please note the following agreed protocol on notification of sick leave:

1. Phone or text the Principal in person on (087 0905196). The Principal will aim to respond to text message within fifteen minutes on receipt of text and in the event of a missed call she will aim to respond within fifteen minutes on receipt of a call.
2. In the event that you have failed to contact the Principal or haven't received a response text or call within fifteen minutes of sending a text or making a call please phone or text the Deputy Principal on (086 1637025). The Deputy Principal will aim to respond to text message within fifteen minutes on receipt of text and in the event of a missed call she will aim to respond within fifteen minutes on receipt of a call.
3. If it should prove impossible to contact either the Principal or the Deputy Principal or if they have not responded to text message sent within the timeframes specified, please phone the school office on 024 93547.

Please note that all absences are logged on the OLCS system and all leave is subject to the approval of the Board of Management.

Where a teacher or SNA is absent on uncertified sick leave for more than three consecutive days, a medical certificate is required for the total period of the absence.

All certified absences are substitutable. Where a teacher or SNA is absent on sick leave prior to and after a weekend or before and after a school closure, a medical certificate is required to include the inclusive period of absence.

### General Principles

1. As a general principle, every effort will be made by the BoM to facilitate applications for Career Breaks and other forms of leave from members of the teaching and SNA staff.
2. Applications for any form of Discretionary Leave must be submitted to the Board of Management for approval on an annual basis. Each member of staff is required to submit a written request to the Board of Management before the stated due date on the relevant circulars.

3. While recognising a teacher's or SNA's desire to take Leave for whatever reason, it will be recognised that the welfare and educational needs of pupils shall take precedence over all other considerations.
4. Where the number of applications for any form of long-term Leave (including the extension of existing arrangements) exceed the available quota, such applications will be considered on their merit by the BOM, under the following criteria:
  - Length of service in this school
  - previous leave of absence(s)
  - reasons for leave and
  - other relevant information.
5. All leave of absence is granted on condition that a suitably qualified member of staff for the role being replaced is available to replace the member of staff on leave.
6. The following are links to the various terms and conditions for teachers and SNA's.

Terms & Conditions of Employment for Registered Teachers in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/collection/9bfbaa-teacher-employment-terms-and-conditions-web-book-archive/>

Teacher/SNA Terms and Conditions Section:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation-information/06a308-teacher-and-snas-terms-conditions/>

### **Monatóireacht ar Cur i bhFeidhm an Pholasaí/ Monitoring the Implementation of the Policy**

The implementation of the policy shall be monitored by the Principal and the Board of Management of Gaelscoil Choráin.

### **Athbhreithniú & Measúnú an Pholasaí/ Reviewing & Evaluating the Policy**

The policy will be reviewed and evaluated after 2 years. On-going review and evaluation will take cognisance of changing information or guidelines and legislation. The views and opinions of the partners in education re welcome at all times.

Daingniú & Cumarsáid/ Ratification & Communication

Ratified at the BOM meeting on 28.02.2023 and signed by Chairperson. Secretary recorded the ratification in the Minutes of the meeting.

Síniú:

Antóin Ó Laoire  
Cathaoirleach An Bhoird Bhainistíochta

Dáta:

28.02.2023