

Job-sharing Scheme for Second Level Teachers.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Minister for Education and Science is pleased to advise the managerial authorities of second level schools that a revised job-sharing scheme is being introduced for second level teachers for the 1998/99 school year. It replaces the pilot scheme which commenced in the 1993/94 school year.
- 1.2 Applicants for the scheme will have their applications assessed and approved, in the first instance, by the managerial authority. The managerial authorities are urged to consider favourably applications for the scheme. In this regard, the managerial authorities are required to develop a policy on job-sharing specific to the needs of the particular school so that staff may be fully aware of the managerial authority's position in this matter. In developing a policy the welfare and educational needs of the pupils will take precedence over all other considerations. The managerial authorities should consider other factors such as the number of approvals in any school year and the arrangements available for the teaching of classes.

2. Basis of scheme

- 2.1 The scheme provides that:
 - (a) A permanent wholetime teacher may make application to share a wholetime teaching post on a 50:50 basis. S/he will be time-tabled to teach eleven hours per week.

OR

The post may be shared between two permanent wholetime teachers in the same school or within a V.E.C. scheme, or if a permanent wholetime teacher wishing to participate in the scheme does not have a job-sharing partner s/he will be time-tabled to teach eleven hours per week.

- 2.2 The term "job-sharing teacher" as referred to in this Circular means a permanent wholetime teacher who opts to job-share a teaching post for a minimum period of one school year.

3. Eligibility to participate in the scheme

- 3.1 All permanent wholetime teachers with the exception of holders of posts of Principal, Deputy Principal and Home School Liaison teacher are eligible to

participate in the scheme. Teachers cannot job-share during their year on probation.

4. Duration

- 4.1 A teacher must participate in the scheme for a minimum period of twelve months from the beginning of a school year. Each job-sharing arrangement must be approved annually by the managerial authority and sanctioned by the Department of Education and Science.
- 4.2 Applications for job-sharing from new or existing job-sharing teachers in Secondary and Community/Comprehensive schools should be made on the standard form (JS.1) to the school management authorities by 1st March of the preceding school year. Applications which have been approved by the management authorities should be forwarded to the Department not later than 31st March of that school year. Applications for job-sharing from teachers employed by Vocational Education Committees should be made to the Chief Executive Officer. The CEO should forward a list of the teachers approved for job-sharing annually to the Department.
- 4.3 A teacher on career break or other approved leave of absence may apply to job-share on resumption of teaching duties but the application must be submitted in accordance with the terms outlined in Paragraphs 1.2 and 4.2.
- 4.4 Any teacher whose application to job-share in a particular school year is approved may not normally withdraw from the scheme after the 17th June of the preceding school year. The timetable arrangements for job-sharing teachers should be designed within the spirit of the scheme to facilitate the teacher so far as is practicable. The particular needs of teaching posts will largely determine what patterns of job-sharing are possible. Every effort will be made to notify job-sharing teachers in advance of their timetabled hours and the pattern of job-sharing. The managerial authorities shall determine the particular attendance regime to apply to each shared post.
- 4.5 A job-sharing teacher shall resume full-time employment at the end of the agreed job-sharing period. Teachers resuming full time employment shall be subject to the terms of any existing redeployment scheme or any redeployment scheme agreed from time to time between the management authorities, teachers representatives and the Department.
- 4.6 In exceptional circumstances, applications for an earlier return to full-time employment may be considered by the managerial authorities if the applicant can be accommodated within the approved staffing allocation. The Department should be notified.

5. Duties

- 5.1 It will be a matter for the Principal and the management authorities to satisfy themselves that those sharing a wholetime post make satisfactory arrangements for consulting with each other to fulfil the responsibilities of the wholetime post to the satisfaction of the managerial authority.
- 5.2 A job-sharing teacher must be available for parent meetings, staff meetings, etc. in accordance with school policy and agreements.

6. Pay

- 6.1 Job-sharing teachers participating in the scheme in general enjoy pro-rata arrangements with their full-time colleagues in relation to pay, teaching hours and conditions of employment.
- 6.2 The scale of pay applicable to a job-sharing teacher is a scale, each point of which shall represent 50% of the corresponding point on the scale of pay appropriate to a whole-time teacher.
- 6.3 A job-sharing teacher will qualify for incremental credit on a scale of pay as described in paragraph 6.2 of this scheme and subject to regulations in force from time-to-time.
- 6.4 Qualification allowances shall be included on a pro-rata basis in the calculation of pay entitlements.

7. Post of Responsibility Holders and Job-sharing

- 7.1 In considering applications from Assistant Principal or Special Duties Teacher post holders the undertaking of the post duties of the job-sharing applicant must be effected satisfactorily.
- 7.2 An Assistant Principal or a Special Duties Teacher can retain his/her Post of Responsibility allowance whilst job-sharing provided the managerial authority decides that the duties of the post can be performed in full by the person.
- 7.3 If the managerial authority decides that it is not possible for the job-sharing teacher to perform the full duties of the post for the period of the job-sharing arrangement, s/he shall forfeit the allowance. The allowance shall be restored on resumption of full time duties. An Acting Assistant Principal or Special Duties Teacher may be appointed to perform the full duties assigned to the post and be paid the full allowance for the duration of the job-sharing arrangement. The acting post holder will not establish personal title to the allowance and will relinquish same when the job-sharing post holder resumes full time duties.
- 7.4 An acting-up allowance will not be paid in respect of a Post of Responsibility where the post is not warranted by reference to the schedule for Assistant Principal and Special Duties Teacher posts.
- 7.5 A job-sharing teacher returning to full time employment will be assimilated to the scale appropriate to a whole-time teacher on the basis that each twelve months of job-sharing service given, will reckon as six months full-time service for incremental purposes.

8. Promotion:

- 8.1 A job-sharing teacher will be eligible for promotion, subject to the following conditions:-
 - (i) for the purpose of reckonable service, credit will be given for job-sharing service upon the same basis as full-time service.

- (ii) an offer of appointment to a post of Principal or Deputy Principal will be conditional on the teacher concerned undertaking to perform on a full time basis the duties as determined from time to time of the new post.

9. Leave [Teachers employed by VECs]

- 9.1 Leave will be granted in accordance with the conditions laid down in Memo V7 as amended by Department Circular letters.

Leave {Teachers in C & C and Secondary schools}

- 9.2 Leave will be granted in accordance with the conditions laid down by the Minister for Education and Science from time to time.

Personal Leave:

- 9.3 In exceptional circumstances payment of salary may be allowed to a job-sharing teacher for occasional brief absences. The number of absences allowable will be pro-rata the current allowance. "Brief absences" is a phrase used to describe short term exceptional absences which are permitted for personal reasons, subject to the approval of the managerial authority and the Department.

9.4 Compassionate Leave:

Three days leave with pay is allowable if the job-sharing teacher is scheduled to be in attendance on the days that the compassionate leave is sought. The prior approval of the managerial authority must be obtained.

10. Sick leave:

- 10.1 Incremental salary may continue to be paid to a job-sharing teacher during absence owing to illness for a period, or periods, which in the aggregate do not exceed 365 days in any four consecutive years subject to the conditions listed hereunder:

- (i) In the case of job-sharing teachers in attendance for 167 days annually each working day's absence on grounds of ill-health counts as one day's sick leave.

In the event that a job-sharing teacher is not required to be in attendance for 167 days annually each day's absence on grounds of ill-health on which the teacher is scheduled to be in attendance counts as two days sick leave subject to a maximum of five days sick leave being reckoned for five school days in any week.

- (ii) Where sick leave absences span weekends, each intervening weekend shall count as two days.
- (iii) In reckoning the aggregate sick leave, casual absences will be taken into account, as will periods of school closure occurring in the course of a teacher's absence, unless a Medical Certificate is furnished indicating the date of termination of sick leave.

- 10.2 The period of sick leave after which the production of a certificate from a duly qualified medical practitioner is required in order to obtain payment of salary will be as for full time teachers where the teacher is in attendance for 167 days annually. Where a job-sharing teacher is not required to be in attendance for 167 days annually a medical certificate must be supplied if a teacher is absent for more than two consecutive days on which s/he is scheduled to be in attendance. The maximum uncertified sick leave allowance in any twelve month period will be as for full time teachers in the case of teachers in attendance for 167 days. In the case of teachers in attendance for less than 167 days the uncertified sick leave allowance will be pro rata the current allowance.

11. Maternity Leave / Adoptive Leave

- 11.1 The arrangements applying to teachers in relation to maternity leave and adoptive leave are, in general as specified in the Maternity Protection Act, 1994 and Adoptive Leave Act, 1995 and the relevant Statutory Instruments. There is no distinction in the Acts between staff who are working full-time and staff who are job-sharing. The general conditions that currently apply to teachers on maternity leave and adoptive leave are as outlined in Circulars 21/97 / 22/97 or as may be determined from time to time.
- 11.2 In the Maternity Protection Act, 1994 the period of leave is defined by reference to the expected date of confinement; in the Adoptive Leave Act, 1995 the period of leave is defined by reference to the date the child is placed with the adoptive parents. While on maternity leave or adoptive leave, any salary paid to a job-sharing teacher will be at the job-sharing rate in accordance with the provisions regarding payment during maternity leave or adoptive leave in force at the time.
- 11.3 Where a teacher commencing job-sharing in a particular school year is absent on maternity leave or adoptive leave which overlaps the school vacation in the previous year, the teacher will be granted full leave in lieu entitlement at the full time rate. If a job-sharing teacher, absent on maternity leave or adoptive leave which overlaps school vacation in a particular year, returns to full-time teaching in the following school year, the teacher will be granted leave in lieu entitlement at the job-sharing rate.

12. Recruitment of staff

- 12.1 Vacancies arising from a job-sharing arrangement may, in certain circumstances, be filled on a part-time, or temporary incremental/wholetime basis. The Department's prior written approval will be required to fill a 'vacancy' arising from a job-sharing arrangement where a school or VEC scheme has teachers funded by the Department in excess of the authorised teaching allocation as determined by the pupil teacher ratio.
- 12.2 Where a part-time teacher is recruited to fill the vacancy created by a wholetime teacher opting to job-share, the part-time teacher shall if s/he fulfils the requirements be awarded a fixed-term contract for one school year with pay and conditions of employment of an eligible part-time teacher. Prior to entering into a part-time arrangement, a teacher shall hold a written statement of the terms of his/her pay and conditions of employment. The termination of appointment shall be subject to notice in accordance with law and/or existing regulations.

13. Outside employment

- 13.1 It is not permissible for a job-sharing teacher to engage in outside employment without the consent of the managerial authority, which must normally be obtained beforehand, and that consent will only be given where it is clear that such outside employment will not affect the teacher's work under the managerial authority or be in conflict and or competition with it.
- 13.2 Job-sharing teachers may not engage in regular part-time or longterm substitute teaching.

14. Superannuation

- 14.1 A job-sharing teacher who is a member of the Secondary Teachers' Superannuation Scheme or the Local Government (Superannuation Revision) (Consolidation) Scheme, 1986 or the Local Government (Superannuation) Act, 1956 (Consolidation) Scheme, 1987 shall be eligible for superannuation benefits on the same basis as full-time staff, save that each year of service given in a job-sharing capacity will reckon as six months full-time service for superannuation purposes. Pensionable salary will be based on full-time salary.
- 14.2 The superannuation regulations applicable for a permanent teacher appointed on or after the 5th April 1995 paying Class A contributions and who opts subsequently to job-share are outlined in Circular 1/96 or 2/96 as appropriate.

15. General

- 15.1 Enquiries about the scheme should be made to Post-Primary Teachers Branch, Floor 1, Department of Education, Cornamaddy, Athlone, Co. Westmeath.
- 15.2 You are requested to provide a copy of this Circular to parents' and teachers' representatives on Boards of Management.

16. Review

- 16.1 The job-sharing scheme may be reviewed at the request of the Minister for Education and Science or the Minister for Finance, the recognised managerial authorities of second level schools or the recognised teacher unions representing teachers in second level schools.

**John Dennehy,
Secretary General.**

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