

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE
PRIMARY BRANCH**

**TO BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT, PRINCIPAL TEACHERS, AND ALL TEACHING
STAFF OF NATIONAL SCHOOLS**

Information regarding

Career Breaks

Temporary Teacher Exchange Arrangements

Leave for Overseas - Voluntary or Mission Leave

Job Sharing Arrangements

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Circular is designed

- **to inform Boards of Management, Principal teachers and all teaching staff of the deadline for the submission of applications to participate in the schemes mentioned hereunder:**

- (1) career breaks,
- (2) teacher exchanges,
- (3) leave for overseas - voluntary or mission work
- (4) job sharing arrangements

- **to notify teachers of the application procedures relating to each specific scheme,**
- **to remind Boards of Management of the steps which need to be taken when processing applications to participate in these schemes.**

1.2 It is especially important that there is strict adherence to the deadlines referred to in this Circular to ensure smooth management within schools.

2 CAREER BREAK SCHEME

2.1 A teacher is required to familiarise herself/himself fully with the conditions under which a career break is allowed. These conditions are contained in the Career Break Booklet.

2.2 Your attention is drawn to the fact that the maximum period for which a career break may extend is 5 years.

- 2.3 A teacher who intends to apply for a career break, or who wishes to extend an existing career break, is required to forward a completed application form to the Board of Management of her/his school before **1st May**. Further application forms are available on request from Primary Payments Section, Department of Education, Cornamaddy, Athlone, Co. Westmeath.
- 2.4 A Board of Management is required to process an application for a career break and to inform the teacher of its decision in writing as soon as possible but no later than **1st June**.
- 2.5 A Board of Management should only forward approved applications to the Department before **10th June**. The Board should also submit the completed Notification of Appointment of Temporary Teacher form (where applicable) at the earliest possible date.
- 2.6 The Department will not formally issue a letter sanctioning each individual application for a career break. However, the Department will examine each application to ensure compliance with the application procedures. The Department will only contact the Board of Management and the teacher if the applicant fails to satisfy the conditions under which a career break arrangement is allowed.

Late applications

- 2.7 In order that a Board of Management can process an application for a career break which is received after **1st May**, the teacher will be required to demonstrate that the circumstances giving rise to the application could not have been anticipated prior to the official closing date.
- 2.8 A Board of Management is required to consult with the Department before approving an application, which is received after the official closing date.
- 2.9 An application submitted after **31st July** will not be considered by the Department under any circumstances.

3 TEMPORARY TEACHER EXCHANGE SCHEME

- 3.1 A teacher who wishes to temporarily exchange with a teacher in another school should familiarise herself/himself with Circular 12/97.
- 3.2 A teacher who intends to apply to participate in a teacher exchange arrangement commencing on 1st September is required to forward a completed application form to the Board of Management of the school in which she/he serves no later than **1st May**. Application forms available on request from Primary Payments Section, Department of Education and Science, Cornamaddy, Athlone, Co. Westmeath.
- 3.3 A Board of Management is required to process an application and to inform a teacher of its decision as soon as possible but no later than **1st June**.
- 3.4 A Board of Management is required to forward an approved application(s) to the Department before **10th June**.
- 3.5 The Department will continue to formally sanction each individual application for a teacher exchange arrangement. The Department's sanction will issue directly to the Boards of Management of the schools in question only. It shall be a matter for the respective Boards to inform the teachers of the formal sanction.
- 3.6 Once approved, a teacher who has applied to participate in an exchange arrangement may not rescind her/his decision.
- 3.7 **Late applications**

An application for a teacher exchange, which is submitted to the Board of Management after the official closing date of **1st May** cannot be considered under any circumstances.

4 LEAVE FOR OVERSEAS - VOLUNTARY OR MISSION WORK

- 4.1 Although mission leave may commence at any stage during the school year, a teacher who intends to apply for this mission leave is required to forward an application to the Board of Management of the school at the earliest possible date.
- 4.2 The requirement specified in paragraph 4.1 applies also to a teacher who intends to avail of leave in order to work with APSO or similarly recognised organisations.
- 4.3 There is no formal application form for voluntary or mission leave. A teacher, however, is required to submit a written request to her/his Board of Management indicating the following:
- exact duration of leave sought,
 - precise purpose of the leave,
 - in the case of leave to work with APSO etc, a copy of the offer of a post with APSO is required.
- 4.4 A Board of Management is required to process an application and inform a teacher of its decision as soon as possible.
- 4.5 A Board of Management is required to forward all approved applications to the Department at the earliest possible opportunity. The Board should also submit the completed Notification of Appointment of Temporary Teacher form (where applicable) at the earliest possible date.
- 4.6 The Department will continue to formally sanction each individual application for voluntary and mission leave. The Department's sanction will issue directly to the Board of Management of the school in question only. It shall be a matter for the respective Boards to inform the teacher of the formal sanction.

5 JOB SHARING SCHEME

- 5.1 A teacher who wishes to job share is required in the first instance to be thoroughly familiar with the contents of Circular 32/97 and especially the provisions of paragraphs 4, 5, 6 and 7 of this Circular.
- 5.2 There is no specific application form for job sharing. A teacher is required to submit a written request together with the Plean Oibre to her/his Board of Management before **1st May**. (A teacher, however, should also receive approval in principle to job share from his/her Board of Management before **1st May** (Para 5 of Circular 32/97 refers)).
- 5.3 The Board of Management shall assess each job sharing application in accordance with the guidelines set out in Circular 32/97 and shall give its formal decision in writing to the teachers as soon as possible but no later than **1st June**.
- 5.4 A Board of Management is required to inform the Department of all approved applications for job sharing before **10th June**. The Board should also submit the completed Notification of Appointment of Temporary Teacher form at the earliest possible date.
- 5.5 The Department will not formally issue a letter sanctioning each individual application for job sharing. However, it will continue to examine the application for job sharing to ensure compliance with the procedures. The Department will only contact the Board of Management and the teacher if the applicant fails to satisfy the conditions under which a job sharing arrangement is allowed.

5.6 Teachers currently engaged in job sharing schemes and who wish to continue to job share in the following school year are reminded that the entire provisions of Section 5 apply to them also.

5.7 **Late applications**

An application for job sharing which is submitted to the Board of Management after the official closing date of 30th April cannot be considered under any circumstances.

6 QUERIES

Queries regarding any aspect of this Circular should be addressed to:

Primary Payments Branch,
Department of Education and Science,
Athlone,
Co. Westmeath.

Telephone (0902) 74621 or (01) 8734700
Fax (0902) 78024

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