

Board of Management Policy re Career Breaks for SNA

A permanent member of the SNA Staff of Scoil Chiaráin Naofa, may apply for a Career Break, or other forms of leave, as per the conditions set out in Circular 22/2012. While referring to this Circular, an application for a Career Break and other forms of long-term Leave, will be examined under the additional points laid out in this policy:

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 SNA staff.
2. While recognising an SNAs 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.
3. Should an SNA wish, the reason for taking Leave need only be made known to the Principal/DP and/or Chairperson of the BoM.
4. A special needs assistant seeking a career break must submit a written application to the Scoil Chiaráin Naofa, not later than the 1st March of the school year prior to that in which he/she proposes to commence/continue the career break. The application must provide clear details of the exact purpose of the career break. A late application may be considered by the employer in exceptional circumstances.
5. A special needs assistant who wishes to extend his/her career break must apply for this extension on an annual basis not later than the 1st February. As per circular 20-2012, a special needs assistant must notify the employer by the 1st March of his/her intention to return to work from a career break at the beginning of the next school year.
6. Taking account of the extent of arrangements to be put in place by the employer to cater for the career break, the applicant shall not be permitted to withdraw his/her application after 14th April. In exceptional circumstances the employer in its sole discretion may consider a later withdrawal of a career break application.
7. Each application for a career break shall be considered on its own merits by the employer within the context of the school's policy statement. The decision of the employer shall be final.
8. A special needs assistant may engage in this scheme subject to an overall maximum absence of 10 years in the course of his/her career.

9. 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.
10. A subsequent career break may not be taken until the special needs assistant has served for a period equal to the duration of the previous career break.
11. A career break shall commence on the start of a school year and a return to duty in the school/VEC which granted the career break shall not be permitted other than on the start of a succeeding school year. In exceptional circumstances, an employer may authorise a special needs assistant to commence a career break during the course of a school year and terminate not earlier than the end of that school year. This is deemed to be a one year career break.
12. Scoil Chiaráin Naofa, shall issue a written notice of approval or refusal to the special needs assistant by 1st April at the latest and submit notice of the career break absence to the Department (via the OLCS)/VEC on or before 1st May. In the case of special needs assistants paid on the Departments payroll, Scoil Chiaráin Naofa, must also indicate the names of those availing of a career break on the NTS Appointment Position Form.

Signed:

Chairperson

Date: