

*St Joseph's
National School
Rehins, Ballina,
Co. Mayo*



*Extra Personal Vacation (EPV)
Day Policy*

Introduction:

St. Joseph's National School strives to provide a child-friendly, secure environment catering for the needs of all students as far as is practicable and where respect is fostered in a culture which values diversity and difference. We are also aware of the importance of professional development to effective teaching and learning.

Where a teacher has, during the summer break, attended a course approved by DES, personal leave may be taken on presentation of the necessary **certificate** and subject to Board of Management approval. Leave will be sanctioned on the usual basis of 3 days for attendance at a 5-day course or as approved by DES. Further information in relation to number of days permitted can be found on page 172 of the CPSMA Handbook.

Rationale:

- a) To provide encouragement to teachers to undertake professional development courses which enhance their teaching and promote a standard of excellence throughout the school
- b) The need for the school to devise a policy on course days is primarily to assist in the smooth operation of the school
- c) To minimize disruption to classes.
- d) to ensure that all staff members are clear on the procedures.

Aims and objectives of the policy:

- To encourage continued learning which leads to the ongoing enrichment and motivation of teachers. This in turn provides multiplied beneficial effect to the children.
- To ensure that all staff members are clear on their entitlements to days 'in lieu' of courses (EPV days)
- To assist the Senior Management Team in ensuring that disruption to pupils is kept to a minimum
- To ensure that no teacher has too many children from other classes in their classroom.

Procedures:

- According to Rule 58, EPV days are **subject to the prior approval of the "Manager"** i.e., Board of Management. The BOM of *St. Josephs National School* has empowered the School Principal, in conjunction with her Deputy, to sanction EPV days. However, if referred to the BOM, the BOM will have the final decision.
- Staff are encouraged to take **1 day per term** as far as possible.
- **Verbal requests with completed EPV request form on Aladdin** are made in the first instance to the principal. This request will subsequently be discussed with the Deputy Principal. If granted, the day is noted on Aladdin.
- Where possible, prior **notice** of at least a week in advance should be given.
- Across the school, a **maximum of 2 EPV** days will be sanctioned in any full school day. Only in exceptionally circumstances will exemptions will be allowed with BOM approval.
- To ensure the smooth running of the school, as a general rule, it is recommended that only **one class** should be split on any particular day. The days will be sanctioned on a **'first come, first served'** basis. Date and time request for EPV is made and logged on Aladdin.
- In the event of **two or more applications for the same day**, the Principal & Deputy Principal will consult with the teachers concerned. Where it is unavoidable that both teachers need/wish to absent themselves on the same day, this will require that a member of the SET team (on a rotational basis) will take one of the classes for the entire day and the other class is divided.
- If the Principal is attending courses or on an EPV day only one class teacher may take their EPV days.
- Junior Infant classes will not be split before the October mid-term break. An EAL/SET teacher will cover the class.
- Where a class is split, they may be put together as one class for the day.
- Teachers should avoid, as far as possible, taking their EPV days on
 1. the first 2 weeks of September and the last 2 weeks of the school year.
 2. The week leading up to Christmas and Easter.
 3. Staff meetings and planning days.
 4. Days when other classes are away on school tours, Sports day or attending events.
 5. Days scheduled for standardised testing.

In preparation for leave, teachers should:

- Update absence folder. This should include a class division sheet and worksheets or list of work to be completed by the students.
- Rearrange yard duty (and morning/evening supervision) if necessary, by swapping with another staff member.
- **Divide the children** as specifically indicated on the **Class Division Sheet**. We aim to avoid the larger classes, more active' classes and teachers who have student teachers, who may not receive any pupils at all. This list should normally be placed in a plastic folder on your teacher's desk on the day of your intended absence or given to the principal teacher.
- **Prepare work** and photocopy (*if necessary*) for the day. This work should be given to each child or left on each child's desk. Infant teachers should ensure that each group has crayons/pencils etc.
- **Children should line up in the morning** in their normal line and the principal or member of the SET team will bring the children to their room where they will be divided.
- Similarly, a member of the SET team will collect the class before home time for safe dismissal from school.
- Children should NOT return to their own classroom during the day unsupervised.
- Furniture: To ease burden of furniture movement it would be advisable for each teacher to have one additional table that could be used for visiting children. Should additional furniture be required, you should move it the afternoon prior to your intended absence where possible.
- If a member of the SET team is taking a class all work should be outlined and prepared (photocopied where necessary) for covering teacher.

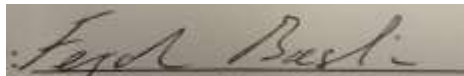
Review:

This policy will be reviewed as necessary but no later than 2027/2028.

Ratification and Communication:

This policy will be in operation in October of the school year 2025/2026, having been ratified by Staff (27th September 2025) and BOM (16th October 2025). All staff will be emailed a copy of this policy and it will be available on the school website, school shared drive and on request from the school office.


Signed:



Date: 16/10/2025

Chairperson of the board

Signed:



Date: 16/10/2025

Principal