



etbi
Education & Training
Boards Ireland
*Bord Oideachais &
Oiliúna Éireann*

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Roll Number: 20529J

EPV DAY POLICY

BROADMEADOW COMMUNITY

NATIONAL SCHOOL



2022/2023

Principal: Miss J. Robinson

The Principal of Miss Jennifer Robinson is responsible for the implementation of this EPV Day Policy.

Staff Absences/Substitution/EPV Days Policy

Staff may be absent for a number of reasons including:

1. EPV Days (Extra Personal Vacation)
2. Teacher Absences
 - *Circular 54/2019*
Leave Schemes for Registered Teachers Employed in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools
3. SNA Absences
 - *Circular 60/2019*
Sick Leave Scheme for Special Needs Assistants employed in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools
4. Sick Leave Scheme & Substitution Cover for Teachers & SNAs : Certified & Self Certified Leave
 - *Circular 33/2013: Public Service Agreement 2013-16 (Haddington Road Agreement)*
 - *Supervision Scheme in Primary Schools*
 - *Information Note TTC/010/2020*
Partial Return to Work for Special Needs Assistants employed in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools – 20/21 School Year

It is essential that teachers and SNAs familiarise themselves with sick leave conditions: please consult the circulars listed above.

All staff absences are entered onto the On-Line Claims System for Departmental approval. All documentation relating to points 1-4 above (sick certs / copies of course attendance etc) are retained in the Principal's office and are available for inspection by the Department of Education and Skills.

Aims and Objectives of the Policy:

To ensure that:

- All staff members are clear about their responsibilities and entitlements with reference to points 1-4 above
- No teacher has too many children from other classes in his/her classroom when colleagues are absent
- Teachers and the Special Education Team are clear about the procedures to follow with

regard to dispersal, care and collection of children

Rationale:

This policy on staff absences has been drawn up to:

- Assist the smooth operation of the school
- Minimise disruption to classes
- Minimise the disruption to the SET
- Provide encouragement to teachers to undertake professional development courses which enhance their teaching and promote a standard of excellence throughout the school

1. EPV Days:

Broadmeadow CNS is aware of the importance of professional development for effective teaching and learning.

Where a teacher has, during the Summer break, attended a course approved by the Department of Education & Skills (DES), in accordance with Rule 58 (Rules of National Schools), personal leave may be taken on presentation of the necessary certificate and subject to Board of Management approval. EPV days will only be granted to permanent and temporary teachers but not to teachers covering maternity leave.

The BOM has delegated the authority to sanction EPV days to the school Principal, in conjunction with the BOM. Leave will be sanctioned on the usual basis of three days for attendance at a five-day course or as approved by DES. Four days consecutive leave for attending two/three courses or four days across the year will only be sanctioned by the BOM in exceptional circumstances due to:

- Provision of cover for classes
- Dispersal and collection of children from dispersed classes
- Overcrowding in classrooms
- Eroding into the teaching time of children with SEN whose SET teachers must either assist with dispersal/collection or cover the class for the day

Five EPV days will only be sanctioned by the BOM in what is deemed to be an exceptional case put to them.

Teachers must apply to the BOM to take four/five EPV days due to an exceptional circumstance. It is advisable that teachers take the majority of their EPV days before the end of May each year in order to ensure that there is an opportunity to sanction all EPV days. Where possible a notice period of 2 weeks should be given.

Procedure for applying for an EPV Day:

- All EPV certificates should be submitted to the school Principal in September, by teachers who are eligible for such leave.
- Written requests for EPV days should be made to the Principal as early in the year as possible. A minimum of two weeks' notice should be given for each EPV day. These days will be entered into the 'Sign-In' book by the Principal. This book is available to all staff. They are also highlighted on the Principals Yearly Planner. The form can be found in the school office.
- In exceptional circumstances, such as an application for four/five days leave, staff should apply to the BoM in advance of the school year to ensure they do not attend any unnecessary summer courses in the event of the request for EPV days are not sanctioned
- The allocation of EPV days will be sanctioned on a 'first come, first served' basis
- A maximum of one teacher per day may request an EPV day. This includes all teaching staff across the school and school Principal.
- Where a teacher has been sanctioned an EPV day and the school is closed for exceptional reasons, the teacher will forfeit that EPV day.
- Teachers should check in advance with the Principal which days are still available before booking flights/holidays, please check in advance which days are still available

The taking of EPV days will only be sanctioned in exceptional circumstances for the following:

- During the first two weeks of September and/or the last three weeks of the school year
- On staff meeting days
- On days when other classes are away on school tours, Sponsored Dance, Christmas Concerts, Sports Day etc.

Please Note:

If a teacher books an EPV day in the week leading up to, or following on from the February mid-term or Easter break caution should be exercised as per Department of Education & Skills Circular (0034/11). The BoM may be compelled to reduce the February mid-term break if the school has to close due to adverse weather conditions before Christmas or reduce the Easter break if the school has to close due to adverse weather conditions after Christmas, the teacher thereby forfeits their EPV day.

Preparation for EPV Leave

Teachers Should:

- Compile a class dispersal list at the start of the year to determine which classes small groups of children should visit in the teacher's absence, taking into consideration siblings, cousins and Learning Support.
- A class split list should be provided to the Principal in August and a copy left on display in the class.
- Make two copies of the dispersal list, one for the Sub-pack and one for the Principal
- Always prepare work and photocopy (if necessary) for the day
- Swap yard duties with a colleague
- Always take note of the names of the children visiting the class. This is to ensure that all children will be accounted for in the event of an emergency evacuation /fire drill
- Leave a note explaining the laminated Daily Roll sheet on your desk
- Under no circumstances allow children to return to their own classroom alone during the day
- Ensure that children attending Learning Support are returned by the SET teacher and admitted by the class teacher to which they are visiting for the day
- Ensure that all duties and responsibilities are covered for the EPV day that you are taking. This will be the whole responsibility of the staff member and not the Principal.
- Inform via email all details to the Principal in relation to cover.

The teacher who dispersed the class should reassemble the class at 1.10p.m for home-time.

Preparation to facilitate Dispersal:

In order to facilitate the smooth dispersal of children for the SET / Principal, teachers taking an EPV Day are requested to please leave the following ready:

- Dispersal list on teacher's desk
- Early morning seated activity on children's desks e.g. news, worksheet / workbook or a structured play activity for Junior Infants (September-December)
- Workbooks / sheets /copies ready for taking to other classrooms on each child's desk
- Crayon tubs with all colours and pencils on front of each child
- On the day before taking an EPV day, Junior Infant teachers should send each dispersal group's crayon tubs in a basket to the room to which the group is assigned

Arrangements in respect of 2021/2022 School Year (Impact of COVID-19)

The BOM considers it a priority that:

- The integrity of class "bubbles" is maintained. During the academic years affected by COVID-19 the BOM considers the safety of staff and students to be paramount, and will not disperse classes.
- The impact of teacher absences during this period is managed carefully.

Information note 0008/2020 advises that where it is not possible to accommodate the taking of EPV Days in the 2020/21 academic year, due to the impact of COVID-19 on managing the school, EPV days may be carried over to the next school year (2021/2022).

The BOM considers that it must be mindful of –

- excessive days being claimed in the academic year 2021/2022, and
- ensuring the education of children with Special Education Needs (SEN) is not unduly affected by sanctioning any days carried forward

Therefore, it may be unworkable to sanction all applications next year until after the pandemic passes.

In an effort to accommodate as many requests as possible and to ensure the education of children with SEN is minimally impacted for the school year 2021-22 due to the requirement of SET's to cover classes, the Board has decided:

- The SET team will cover 3 EPV days for each of the classes they support
- A fourth EPV day will **only** be sanctioned if the DES allow for a one days paid substitution of EPV days as granted during the 2020-21 school year
- Five EPV days may be **only** granted in exceptional circumstances – for example where a SET will be asked to cover the class if a Teacher is getting married.

However, these situations will need to be exceptional, and such requests may be **only** considered if a Teacher has a student teacher in their classroom.

This information was communicated to teachers in an email attached Appendix 3 entitled "EPV Days 2021-22" on the 12th of April 2021.

2. **Teacher Absences**

Substitution is provided for teachers in accordance with DES Circular 54/2019. It is the responsibility of all teachers to familiarise themselves with circulars and the regulations governing brief / long term absences from school.

3. **SNA Absences**

Substitution is provided for SNAs in accordance with DES Circular 60/2019. It is the responsibility of all SNAs to familiarise themselves with these circulars and the regulations governing brief / long term absences from school.

4. **Sick Leave Scheme and Substitution Cover for Teachers and SNAs regarding both Certified & Self Certified Leave**

The Department of Education and Skills will not provide substitution cover for teachers on self-certified sick leave or EPV Days. The use of SET will be required to cover this.

If an SNA is absent, a substitute SNA can be appointed immediately, without the provision of a cert. The Principal, Deputy and Assistant Principal each have a substitute list of teachers and SNAs whom they can ring when a teacher or SNA is absent. When it is not possible to employ a substitute teacher, classes are dispersed in accordance with *'Preparation for EPV Leave'* procedures above. If a substitute SNA cannot be employed, the Principal or Deputy / Assistant Principal will re-timetable the remaining SNAs on the staff to optimise support for the children who have access to SNA support.

Staff members are requested to:

- Inform the Principal at the earliest opportunity, preferably the night before the first day of absence or, at the latest, before 7.45 a.m. on the day of absence
- Advise the Principal of the likely duration of the absence as soon as possible
- Advise the Principal whether the first day's absence will be certified or uncertified. If the leave is uncertified, staff MUST clarify under which category the leave will be taken e.g. uncertified, family leave / force majeure etc. at the time of notifying the Principal of pending absence. The response will be recorded on the OLC's system and will facilitate the employment of a trained substitute teacher where applicable or allow the Principal adequate time to organise the dispersal of the class in accordance with *'Preparation for EPV Leave'* procedures above
- In the absence of the Principal, an emergency protocol folder has been completed. (Please see document)

Substitute and Information Packs

- Teachers should compile a Substitute Information Pack for their class and submit it to the Principal by the second week of September. The Principal will provide each class teacher with a 'checklist' to ensure all the relevant information relating to the class is included in the pack for a substitute teacher. (Appendix 1). This list is not exhaustive. Teachers may add to it at any time. A routine information sheet about the school is also included in the pack. (Appendix 2) Substitute Information Packs are stored on a shelf in the Comm's Room beside the bi-monthly resource packs for each class level.
- It is the responsibility of the teacher who has been absent to replenish and return the Substitute Information Pack to the Principal upon return to work.
- It is the responsibility of each class teacher to check that their Sub-pack is up to date upon return to work and to ensure that it is returned promptly to the Comm's Room.
- A small "information pack" for substitute SNAs is compiled by the Principal and is stored alongside the other information packs

Substitute Teachers / SNAs

Substitute teachers must provide a copy of their *Statute of Declaration* and the *Form of Undertaking* in accordance with Department Circular 63/10: *Recruitment Procedures - requirements for Garda vetting*. They should also bring their Teaching Council and PPS Numbers, a copy of their Garda Vetting Approval, and an up-to-date CV and present them to the Principal upon arrival at the school.

Substitute teachers will be given an information pack and a relevant bi-monthly substitute pack. The Principal/Deputy Principal will briefly give relevant information to the substitute teacher. The substitute SNA will be given a small information pack about the school and will be briefed by the class teacher as to the support they can provide for the child with Special Needs during the day.

Ratification and Implementation

This policy was reviewed by the Board of Management on 26th April, 2021.

The Board of Management reserves the right to add to or amend this policy from time to time as is deemed necessary.

Signed: Jennifer Robinson Principal
13.12.22

Ann Graves 13.12.22
Chairperson,
Board of Management.

Appendix 1

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Substitute Information Pack

Information to be put into A4 folder by each teacher for substitutes:

- List of children's names
- 3 sets of labels with children's names (and classroom number to which class is being dispersed)
- Timetables for learning and language support
- List of children who attend above
- Timetable for the day
- List of children who have any medical problems
- If you have children who are from one-parent families, please add: "There are a number of children who are from one-parent families due to a combination of factors (separation/ bereavement) in our class, please be sensitive to this when teaching"
- Normal procedure for the day- lunch time, yard and toilet arrangements
- Procedures for breaks and home time, where children line up in the yard etc.
- How breaks are supervised on wet days
- Where books, copies, paper etc. are stored
- Sample of homework given: amount and where it is written
- Worksheets for the children
- Samples of English and Irish poems and songs
- Information on whiteboard/laptop etc.
- List of children who go to crèche/after school care if required
- Location of window key

Appendix 2

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Routine Information for Substitute Teachers

- Please sign-in and complete the Covid-19 Questionnaire in the Main Foyer area
- School hours are from 8.40am to 1.20pm.
- First break is from 10.25am to 10.40am. Lunch break is from 12.15 to 12.45pm Play time is from 12.30pm to 12.45pm.
- Food is eaten indoors. Litter must be placed in bins. Children go to the toilets before going to the yard
- Playing on the grass is prohibited
- First Aid for the Junior Infant Yard is kept in the first aid bag taken out by the teacher on duty. Main first aid set is located in Junior Infants or the Office.
- Serious accidents must be recorded in the accident book (located in the office and reported to the Principal. Parents will be contacted in the event of all bangs to the head with the form to be sent home.
- Running on the corridors is not permitted. Pupils should stand back to allow adults enter and exit doors at all times
- Parents names, addresses and phone numbers are kept in the office/available on Aladdin
- If a child is absent a note must be given to the teacher, and if a child is collected early the parent should wait in the Foyer area while the secretary collects the child from his/her classroom
- If a child is absent, and there are notes to be distributed, write child's name on the note and give it to the child upon return to school
- If in doubt about anything, please check in /ask the teacher beside you for advice. They are always willing to help
- Roll is called 9.00am. The substitute teacher should let the office know at the first break which children are absent so that the office can upload the information onto Aladdin
- The Daily Roll Sheet (located near the door of each class) should be completed daily and brought with the teacher in the event of an emergency
- All emergency protocol is found on the back of the classroom door.
- Staff Toilets: Located in the office block near the staffroom.
- Please ensure there are no children left in the toilets when going to yard/PE/nature walks etc.
- Before you leave, please ensure the secretary has you PPS details for payment

Thank you for subbing with us today