

EPV / Course Days Policy

St Fiacc's 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. Per DES guidelines set out in Circular 35/2009, leave will be sanctioned on the basis of 3 days for attendance at a 5-day course or as approved by DES.

Rationale

- To encourage teachers to undertake professional development courses which enhance their teaching and promote a standard of excellence throughout the school
- To assist in the smooth operation of the school
- To minimize disruption to classes
- To ensure that all staff members are clear on their entitlements to days 'in lieu' of courses (EVP days)
- 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. Fiacc's* has empowered the School Principal, 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.
- Requests for EVP days are made to the Principal through The Aladdin Communication Platform GROW. The Principal will, in time, approve or refuse the request through GROW.
- Where possible, prior notice of at least a week in advance should be given.
- Generally a maximum of 3 EPV days will be sanctioned in per academic year. In exceptional circumstances additional days may be sanctioned.
- To ensure the smooth running of the school, as a general rule, only *two classes* should be split on any particular day. The days will be sanctioned on a 'first come, first served' basis.
- 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.

- *Teachers in the Junior Infants classroom(s) are discouraged from taking EPV days in Term 1. In the event of this occurring a member of the SET team will be requested to take the class.*
- Teachers should avoid, as far as possible, taking their EVP days on
 - o the first 2 weeks of September and/or the last 2 weeks of the school year
 - o the week leading up to Christmas and Easter
 - o Staff meeting and/or Planning days
 - o days when other classes are away on school tours, Sports Day or attending events.
- Teachers will have work prepared/photocopied for three days minimum and this should be readily available to the Deputy Principal.
- Teachers must have their split plans approved in advance with the Deputy Principal to avoid overload in large classes or inexperienced teachers.

In preparation for leave, teachers should:

- Divide the children as specifically indicated on the Class Division Sheet (emailed to the Deputy in September annually), giving 3 children to class teachers. We aim to avoid the larger classes. This list should normally be placed on the teacher's desk on your intended absence and given to the Deputy Principal teacher in advance by email.
- Prepare work and photocopy (*if necessary*) for the day. This work should be given to each child, their 'adopted' teacher and the Deputy Principal. In the case of a member of the SET team being absent, appropriate work should be left for each of their groups.
- *Classes* should line up in the morning in their normal line and the designated teacher will bring the children to their room where they will be divided up. Similarly the class will be reunited before hometime for safe dismissal from school.
- Children should NOT return to their own classroom during the day.
- Furniture: To ease the burden of furniture movement it would be advisable for each teacher to have one additional table that could be used for visiting children.

Ratification and Communication

This policy will be in operation in the school year 2024/2025, having been ratified by Staff and BoM. Every teacher will be provided with a copy of this policy for their files.

Signed on Behalf of the Board of Management:

Chairperson: _____

Date: _____