

**OUR LADY'S
SECONDARY SCHOOL**



**Statutory and Non-Statutory Leave Policy for
Teaching Staff**



Our Lady's Secondary School is a Voluntary Catholic Secondary School operating under the trusteeship of CEIST according to the traditions of the Sisters of Mercy. We, the staff and students, enjoy working together to realise our full potential in a healthy, safe, stimulating and friendly environment where the atmosphere is one of mutual respect, cooperation and challenge. We take a holistic approach focusing on the well-being and development of each individual socially, culturally and academically. Within our school community, each student is treated equally. All are considered uniquely talented, with effort valued as much as excellence. On a day-to-day basis, the Christian message inspires everyone in the school to be charitable, inclusive and understanding.

CEIST Charter

The core values of CEIST are designed to support and nurture the lives of the people at the heart of our school: students, staff, and parents. Its key principles focus on:

- *Promoting spiritual and human development*
- *Achieving quality in teaching and learning*
- *Showing respect for every person*
- *Creating community*
- *Being just and responsible*

The Board of Management (hereinafter 'the Board') has consulted with the principal partners in the education of our students in forming this policy on Statutory and Non-Statutory Leave for teaching staff. This policy must be read with the Terms and Conditions of Employment for Registered Teachers in Recognised Primary and Post-Primary Schools (2nd Edition, 2017) and subsequent Department of Education circulars/information notes affecting teachers' terms and conditions.

It should be noted that Teaching Council Registration, Garda Vetting and Occupational Health requirements apply when applying for and returning from Board-approved leave.

Statutory Leave

The Board grants statutory leave in accordance with the above Terms and Conditions publications, Circular 54/2019 and subsequent circulars and information notes (see Appendix B).

Parental Leave

The Board grants Parental Leave in accordance with the Terms and Conditions publications. The Board reserves the right to authorise the postponement of Parental Leave, for justifiable school-related reasons as outlined under the considerations for non-statutory leave.

Rationale underpinning the School's Leave Policy

Under the general provisions set out in the Terms and Conditions publications, the Board, as employer of teaching staff, maintains a policy on teacher absences, including non-statutory schemes, specific to the needs of the school. In considering applications, the Board will have due regard to the Terms and Conditions and any Department publications affecting leave.

The Board has sought to balance the legitimate expectations of teachers with the needs of students. The health, safety, welfare and educational needs of students shall take precedence over all other considerations.

In achieving this balance, the Board will consider all applications for non-statutory leave, statutory obligations and the teacher's entitlements as outlined in the Terms and Conditions publications.

Considerations

- Student health, safety, welfare and educational needs have precedence.
- Availability of a suitably qualified replacement teacher.
- Career Break and Job-Sharing schemes are supported as family-friendly arrangements and for professional development.
- Teacher engagement with SEC work is recognised; however, continuity for students remains central.
- Personal circumstances and purpose of the leave request may be considered for non-statutory leave.
- Balance between staff needs, continuity of learning, professionalism and subject department stability.
- Overall number of teachers available to teach timetabled classes at any time.

- Job-sharing replacement capacity and CID implications (per CL 0023/2015).
- Board's right to postpone parental leave per Terms and Conditions publications.
- **Job-sharing may be timetabled across 5 days to protect continuity of learning.**

If the school's staffing allocation is in surplus (no replacement allocation available), the Board may use the above considerations to determine approval. Surplus can arise where pupil-teacher ratios change or enrolment falls.

Other Non-Statutory Leave not covered under the Terms and Conditions of Publications

1. Force Majeure / Illness in Family Leave and Bereavement Leave

Per Circular 58/2023 (Force Majeure & Illness in Family) and Circular 78/2022 (Bereavement), substitution cover is available for specific family events. Teachers should inform the Principal at the earliest opportunity using the applicable form (Appendix C of CL 58/2023). Day 1 cover falls under Supervision & Substitution at post-primary; subsequent consecutive days are eligible for paid substitution.

2. Secondment Leave (CL 29/2018)

Applications are considered per CL 29/2018 and any subsequent Department publications, alongside the general considerations for non-statutory leave.

3. State Examinations Commission Work during Term Time

- Applications to undertake paid/contracted SEC work must be made to the Board at the first Board meeting each academic year.
- Applicants should indicate substitution arrangements, the nature/time commitment of work, and professional development benefits.
- Marking during the term should be outside the regular school day.
- Lunch/break supervision and substitution duties to be arranged by the applicant.
- Applicants must be available to facilitate Junior Cycle CBAs as required.
- On success, details of the substitution cover for conferences/examining days must be confirmed to the Board. The substitution cover should be organised by the teacher on the SEC leave.
- Applicants must be available for parent-teacher meetings, staff meetings, in-service and additional hours under public service commitments.
- Appropriate work should be left for students and substitute teachers.

- Where multiple teachers in the same subject seek oral/practical/LCA examining simultaneously, rotations should be agreed; unresolved cases may be referred to the Board.

4. Casual Personal Leave

The Board may grant up to five school days per year for events outside the teacher's control. Personal leave will not be granted for holidays. A signed letter outlining reasons and cover must be submitted as soon as the dates are known. Absences should be notified to the Department in advance, where possible. Teachers must arrange S&S duties.

5. Marriage Leave

Seven consecutive calendar days of paid leave may be granted where marriage occurs during the term, including weekends and the date of marriage. If marrying during school vacation, the teacher resumes one week after the date of marriage or on reopening—whichever is later—no Department provision for paid substitution.

6. Jury Service Leave

A teacher is obliged to serve if summoned, unless the Registrar accepts a letter from the school indicating essential presence. A substitute may be employed for the period; Department recoupment applies.

Notification of Absences from School

In unforeseen circumstances requiring in-day absence, a member of SMT must be consulted in advance to ensure adequate provision. For daily absences, SMT must be notified as soon as the absence is likely, and no later than 8 am on the morning of the absence (indicate leave type). Medical leave is entered on OLCS as self-certified until medical certificates are received; revised certs are required if returning earlier.

Unexpected late arrival must be notified to SMT as soon as practicable, with the reason communicated to the Principal on arrival.

Applications for Non-Statutory Leave

Applications must be submitted on approved school forms by the prescribed dates outlined in the Terms and Conditions. Where no form exists, a signed letter outlining the purpose should be submitted well in advance. Applicants must be available for parent-teacher meetings, staff meetings, in-service and additional hours (pro-rata).

Date of next Review: November 2027

Chairperson of the Board of Management: _____

Henry Bogan

Date: 11th December, 2025

Appendix A

Assault Leave

Circular Letter	CL 61/2017
Purpose	Absence due to physical injury following an assault during duties/approved school activities.
Maximum Period	Up to 92 days full pay in rolling 4 years; in exceptional cases, a further period up to 91 days (overall 6 months/183 days).
Paid/unpaid leave for a teacher	Paid
Paid/Unpaid Cover	Paid substitute
Contract Type	Non-casual or casual depending on timing; OLCS entry

Adoptive Leave

Circular Letter	CL 47/2023 (superseding Ch.3 of CL 54/2019)
Purpose	Leave on placement for adopting mother/sole male adopter (or as provided).
Maximum Period	24 consecutive weeks paid from placement + up to 16 weeks additional unpaid.
Paid/unpaid leave for a teacher	24 weeks paid; 16 weeks unpaid (DSP benefit interaction per PRSI class).
Paid/Unpaid Cover	Paid substitute
Contract Type	Non-casual appointment; OLCS

Bereavement Leave

Circular Letter	CL 78/2022
Purpose	Leave on bereavement involving a relative.
Maximum Period	20 working days (spouse/child/domestic dependency); 5 working days (immediate relative); 1 day (other near relative).
Paid/unpaid leave for a teacher	Paid
Paid/Unpaid Cover	Paid substitute
Contract Type	OLCS

Career Break

Circular Letter	CL 54/2019 Ch.7 + Info Note TC/IN 0007/2023
Purpose	Unpaid leave for personal/professional development, study, public representation, etc.

Maximum Period	Max 5 consecutive years at a time; overall career max 10 years.
Paid/unpaid leave for a teacher	Unpaid
Paid/Unpaid Cover	Paid substitute*
Contract Type	RPT (fixed-term)

Carer's Leave

Circular Letter	CL 54/2019 Ch.6
Purpose	Unpaid leave to provide full-time care and attention to a relevant person (per DSP criteria).
Maximum Period	Up to 104 weeks in respect of one relevant person.
Paid/unpaid leave for a teacher	Unpaid (Carer's Benefit may apply)
Paid/Unpaid Cover	Paid substitute
Contract Type	Non-casual appointment; OLCS

COVID-19 Special Leave With Pay

Circular Letter	CL 38/2022 + Info Note 0004/2023
Purpose	SLWP for COVID-19 symptoms/positive test aligned to HSE guidance.
Maximum Period	Max 5 consecutive days per instance; thereafter Sick Leave Scheme applies if unfit.
Paid/unpaid leave for a teacher	Paid (subject to scheme rules)
Paid/Unpaid Cover	Paid substitute
Contract Type	OLCS

Force Majeure Leave

Circular Letter	CL 58/2023 (replacing 17/1999)
Purpose	Urgent family reasons due to illness/injury of a family member necessitating the teacher's presence.
Maximum Period	Up to 3 days in 12 months or 5 days in 36 months; combined annual cap with Illness in Family = 5 days.
Paid/unpaid leave for a teacher	Paid
Paid/Unpaid Cover	Day 1 via S&S; subsequent consecutive days paid substitute
Contract Type	S&S / Paid substitute; OLCS

Illness in Family Leave

Circular Letter	CL 58/2023 (replacing 19/2000)
Purpose	Certified illness of a family member requiring constant care during recuperation.
Maximum Period	Within combined cap of 5 days per school year with Force Majeure.
Paid/unpaid leave for teacher	Paid

Paid/Unpaid Cover	Day 1 via S&S; remaining days paid substitute
Contract Type	S&S / Paid substitute; OLCS

Job-Sharing

Circular Letter	CL 54/2019 Ch.8 + Info Notes
Purpose	Facilitate work-life balance via shared post/timetable.
Maximum Period	Normally one school year; renewals per scheme.
Paid/unpaid leave for a teacher	Pro-rata
Paid/Unpaid Cover	Timetabled cover
Contract Type	RPT (fixed-term) teacher appointment

Jury Service

Circular Letter	Sector practice: Primary CL 18/2000 informs
Purpose	Compliance with Jury Summons unless Registrar accepts essential service letter.
Maximum Period	As required by Court.
Paid/unpaid leave for a teacher	Paid
Paid/Unpaid Cover	Paid substitute (DE recoupment)
Contract Type	OLCS

Marriage Leave

Circular Letter	No DE post-primary circular; local policy; Primary CL 18/2000 context
Purpose	Teacher's own marriage/civil partnership during term or vacation per rules.
Maximum Period	7 consecutive calendar days (includes date of marriage and weekends).
Paid/unpaid leave for a teacher	Paid (7 days); option of further unpaid period at Board's discretion
Paid/Unpaid Cover	No DE provision for paid substitution (internal cover/S&S)
Contract Type	No substitution (DE) – internal cover

Maternity Leave

Circular Letter	CL 54/2019 Ch.2 + Info Notes 0010/2024; 0001/2025
Purpose	Leave on birth or where pregnancy reaches threshold; ante-natal rights included.
Maximum Period	26 weeks paid + 16 weeks unpaid; premature-birth extension; stillbirth/miscarriage threshold 23 weeks or 400g; postponement permitted due to serious health condition.
Paid/unpaid leave for a teacher	Paid/Unpaid (DSP Maternity Benefit deduction for Class A)

Paid/Unpaid Cover	Paid substitute
Contract Type	Non-casual appointment

Parent's Leave

Circular Letter	CL 58/2024 (supersedes CL 50/2022)
Purpose	Leave to provide/assist in the care of a child.
Maximum Period	9 weeks per relevant parent (min block 1 week), for eligible birth/placement dates.
Paid/unpaid leave for a teacher	Unpaid by DE (DSP Parent's Benefit may apply)
Paid/Unpaid Cover	Casual substitute
Contract Type	OLCS

Parental Leave

Circular Letter	CL 54/2019 Ch.5 + Info Note 0010/2023
Purpose	EU Parental Leave scheme for the care of young children.
Maximum Period	26 weeks unpaid per child; usable up to the child's 16th birthday (from 8 Jan 2024).
Paid/unpaid leave for a teacher	Unpaid
Paid/Unpaid Cover	RPT/fixed-term replacement
Contract Type	OLCS

Paternity Leave

Circular Letter	CL 54/2019 Ch.3 + Info Note 0004/2022
Purpose	Available to relevant parent on birth/placement.
Maximum Period	2 consecutive weeks within 26 weeks of birth/placement.
Paid/unpaid leave for a teacher	Paid (DSP deduction per PRSI class where applicable)
Paid/Unpaid Cover	Paid substitute
Contract Type	Casual appointment; OLCS

Personal Days (Discretionary)

Circular Letter	DE website guidance/local policy
Purpose	Events outside the teacher's control (e.g., funerals, graduations, specialist appointments).
Maximum Period	Up to 5 school days per school year.
Paid/unpaid leave for a teacher	Local (not a statutory entitlement)
Paid/Unpaid Cover	No DE paid substitution – internal cover/S&S
Contract Type	No paid substitution (DE)

Secondment

Circular Letter	CL 29/2018 + Secondment to European Schools
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Purpose	Temporary assignment to external organisation/approved body.
Maximum Period	Max 5 years to outside organisation or Department-funded programme.
Paid/unpaid leave for a teacher	Paid by host organisation
Paid/Unpaid Cover	Paid substitute*
Contract Type	RPT (fixed-term) appointment

Sick Leave

Circular Letter	CL 13/2024 (replaces earlier references)
Purpose	Absence due to illness/injury; includes Critical Illness Protocol and OHS referral rules.
Maximum Period	Ordinary Illness: 92 days full pay + 91 days half pay in a year (overall 183 days in rolling 4 years). Critical Illness: up to 183 days full + 182 days half (overall 365 days in rolling 4 years). TRR may apply thereafter.
Paid/unpaid leave for a teacher	Full pay → Half pay → TRR (if eligible) → Unpaid
Paid/Unpaid Cover	Self-cert day cover via S&S; otherwise paid substitute per scheme
Contract Type	OLCS / Paid substitute

Unpaid Leave (Exceptional Circumstances)

Circular Letter	CL 54/2019 Ch.11
Purpose	May be granted where the Board is satisfied there is a compelling obligation.
Maximum Period	Up to 10 school days per school year.
Paid/unpaid leave for a teacher	Unpaid
Paid/Unpaid Cover	Paid substitute
Contract Type	Casual appointment; OLCS

Voluntary Search & Rescue

Circular Letter	CL 25/2023 (supersedes CL 1/2019 limits)
Purpose	Leave for approved voluntary SAR bodies (e.g., Coast Guard) when called out on operations.
Maximum Period	Up to 14 days per school year.
Paid/unpaid leave for a teacher	Paid
Paid/Unpaid Cover	Paid substitute
Contract Type	Casual appointment; OLCS

Partial Absence – Medical-Related Appointments

Circular Letter	CL 37/2023
Purpose	Paid partial-day absences for medical-related appointments; schedule outside class time where possible.

Maximum Period	As approved (partial-day).
Paid/unpaid leave for a teacher	Paid
Paid/Unpaid Cover	Covered via S&S at post-primary
Contract Type	S&S / OLCS

Domestic Violence Leave

Circular Letter	CL 59/2023
Purpose	Leave to address domestic violence situations (e.g., access to supports, medical/legal appointments, relocation, court, safety planning).
Maximum Period	Up to 5 days in any 12 months.
Paid/unpaid leave for a teacher	Paid
Paid/Unpaid Cover	Paid substitute
Contract Type	OLCS

Breastfeeding Breaks

Circular Letter	CL 52/2023
Purpose	Paid breastfeeding breaks; pattern agreed locally.
Maximum Period	Up to two years from the date of birth.
Paid/unpaid leave for a teacher	Paid
Paid/Unpaid Cover	Covered via S&S/timetable adjustments
Contract Type	S&S / Timetable

Unpaid Leave for Medical Care Purposes

Circular Letter	CL 50/2023
Purpose	Unpaid leave to provide personal care/support to specified relatives.
Maximum Period	Up to 5 days per 12-month period.
Paid/unpaid leave for a teacher	Unpaid
Paid/Unpaid Cover	Paid substitute
Contract Type	OLCS

Appendix B – Primary References (as of Sept 2025)

- CL 54/2019 – Leave Schemes (Maternity, Paternity, Parental, Carer's, Career Break, Job-Sharing).
- CL 13/2024 – Sick Leave Scheme for Teachers.
- CL 47/2023 – Adoptive Leave Scheme.
- CL 58/2024 – Parents' Leave Scheme (replaces CL 50/2022).
- Info Note TC/IN 0010/2023 – Parental Leave: age extended to 16 (from 8 Jan 2024).
- Info Note TC/IN 0010/2024 – Maternity: stillbirth/miscarriage threshold (23 weeks or 400g).
- Info Note TC/IN 0001/2025 – Maternity: postponement due to serious health condition.
- CL 59/2023 – Domestic Violence Leave.
- CL 58/2023 – Force Majeure & Illness in Family Leave.
- CL 37/2023 – Partial Absences for Medical-Related Appointments.
- CL 52/2023 – Breastfeeding Breaks (two years).
- CL 78/2022 – Bereavement Leave Scheme.
- CL 61/2017 – Assault Leave.
- CL 25/2023 – Voluntary Search & Rescue leave (14 days).
- CL 38/2022 + Info Note 0004/2023 – COVID-19 SLWP.

Quick Reference Summary (At-a-Glance)

Leave Type	Headline Entitlement	Paid?	Cover	Key Ref
Assault	Up to 3m full pay; extendable to 6m in exceptional cases	Paid	Paid sub	CL 61/2017
Adoptive	24w paid + 16w unpaid	Paid/Unpaid	Paid sub	CL 47/2023
Bereavement	20d spouse/child; 5d immediate; 1d near relative	Paid	Paid sub	CL 78/2022
Career Break	Up to 5y at a time; max 10y career	Unpaid	Paid sub	CL 54/2019 Ch.7
Carer's	Up to 104w	Unpaid	Paid sub	CL 54/2019 Ch.6
COVID-19 SLWP	Max 5 consecutive days per instance	Paid	Paid sub	CL 38/2022 + IN 0004/2023
Domestic Violence	5d per 12 months	Paid	Paid sub	CL 59/2023
Force Majeure/Family	Up to 5d/yr combined cap	Paid	Day 1 S&S; then sub	CL 58/2023
Job-Sharing	Usually 1 school year	Pro-rata	Timetabled	CL 54/2019 Ch.8
Jury	As required by Court	Paid	Paid sub	Sector practice
Marriage	7d paid (calendar)	Paid	Internal cover/S&S	Local policy

Maternity	26w paid + 16w unpaid; threshold 23w/400g; postponement	Paid/Unpaid	Paid sub	CL 54/2019 + INs
Parent's Leave	9w (min 1w blocks)	Unpaid (DSP)	Casual sub	CL 58/2024
Parental Leave	26w unpaid; up to age 16	Unpaid	RPT/fixed-term	CL 54/2019 + IN 0010/2023
Paternity	2w within 26w of birth/placement	Paid (DSP deduction)	Paid sub	CL 54/2019 + IN 0004/2022
Personal Days	Up to 5 discretionary	Local	Internal/S&S	Local policy
Secondment	Up to 5y (host-paid)	Host-paid	Paid sub	CL 29/2018
Sick Leave	Per scheme; CIP; OHS; TRR	Paid/Unpaid	Paid sub	CL 13/2024
Unpaid (Exceptional)	Up to 10 days/yr	Unpaid	Paid sub	CL 54/2019 Ch.11
Voluntary SAR	Up to 14d/yr	Paid	Paid sub	CL 25/2023
Partial Absence	Paid partial-day for medical appts	Paid	S&S	CL 37/2023
Breastfeeding	Breaks to 2y	Paid	S&S/Timetable	CL 52/2023
Unpaid Medical Care	5d/12 months	Unpaid	Paid sub	CL 50/2023