

Meeting of the Teacher Supply Implementation Group

19th January 2023 @ 2.00 pm

Via WebEx

Minutes

In attendance:

Dalton Tattan, Assistant Secretary General (Chair)
Bernie McNally, Secretary General
Deirdre Shanley, Assistant Secretary General
Tomás Ó Ruairc, Assistant Secretary General
Paraic Joyce, PO, School Governance/ Teacher Allocations
Jill Fannin, PO, Teacher Education Policy (ITE and Professional Development)
Mark Bohan, PO, External Staff Relations
Deirdre Cullen, PO, Statistics
Phil Fox, Acting Director, Teaching Council
Martin McLoughlin, PO, Special Education
Sinéad Keenaghan, PO, Payroll
Séamus Keating, PO, Teacher Education Policy (Teacher Supply)
James Walsh, PO, Teacher/SNA Terms & Conditions
Deirdre Naughton, PO, Payroll

Also in attendance:

Conor McCourt, APO, Teacher Education Policy (Teacher Supply)
John Egan, HEO, Teacher Education Policy (Teacher Supply)
Damien O'Neill, APO, Teacher Education Policy (Teacher Supply)
Oliver Brennan, APO, Teacher/SNA Terms & Conditions

Apologies:

Yvonne Keating, Chief Inspector
Aoife Conduit, Assistant Secretary General
Aisling Curley, PO, Pensions

1. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 1st December 2022 were agreed.

2. Priority teacher supply actions

The Group considered the priority teacher supply actions

(i) Policies and arrangements for schools and teachers that impact on teacher supply

The following points were noted:

- Release of teachers seconded to the teacher support services
- Minimise CPD that gives rise to substitute demand.
 - The teacher support services have been asked for proposals to suspend the delivery of CPD to reduce sub teacher demand and support teacher supply
 - Available seconded teachers who are not required to fill a sub post on a given day must be employed in the support service on that day.
 - Some potential for release has been identified and scope for expansion of this is to be explored
 - Teacher Ed Policy will monitor the deployment of seconded teachers to sub posts.
- Develop a teacher sharing scheme using remote teaching.
 - Discussions with the management bodies on this issue are ongoing.
 - There are several examples of remote teaching which could act as the basis of further discussion with the management bodies
 - Consideration will be required regarding the employment of a second person in the remote classroom and how the Department could support a refreshed initiative.
- Increase additional teaching hours that can be undertaken by a post primary teacher.
 - It has been decided to increase the number of additional hours a teacher may teach from 20 hours.
 - Teachers can only avail of the additional hours when they have exhausted their hours under the S & S scheme
 - The change will require IT payroll development
 - An information note for schools on the scheme will be developed
- Explore the option to pay retired teachers at a higher point on the pay scale.
 - Pensions Section are engaging with DPER on this issue.
 - The potential to use incremental credit as a mechanism was raised
- Allow NQTs qualified abroad to undertake induction in Ireland.
 - The Teaching Council is meeting on 23rd January to consider this issue.
 - An SI will be required and the Council expects to be in a position to accept applications approximately two weeks after the SI is made
 - The Teaching Council is exploring options to create awareness of this measure amongst student teachers resident abroad
- Issue teacher allocations as early as possible in 2023.

- It is intended to issue primary and post-primary teacher allocations shortly, and by early February at the latest

The following points were agreed:

- To explore central registration on Sub Seeker for seconded teachers
- To ask the management bodies for proposals for a teacher sharing scheme using remote teaching
- To ask the management bodies for proposals for a pilot for an “in-person” teacher sharing scheme, in accordance with Circular 15/2019
- To draw up an information note for schools setting out the various teacher supply measure currently in place

(ii) Data to support teacher supply planning

- Determine data is requirement to inform decision making for inclusion in data dashboard.
- Produce regular data dashboard to supplement teacher supply projection model.

The following points were noted:

- Work is ongoing to identify data for inclusion in the dashboard with a focus on those most urgently needed
- Data will focus on substitute teacher demand and supply at a national level, acknowledging that supply data in particular is incomplete and assumptions will be required
- Statistics Section are developing a prototype dashboard to be circulated to the Group for observations

(iii) Higher Education

- Increase availability of undergraduate and PME ITE students through engagement with the HEIs.

The following points were noted:

- The Minister met with a number of ITE providers on this issue.
- At the request of the Minister, ITE providers are adopting a variety of flexible approaches in the delivery of their programmes to support the availability of student teachers to substitute in schools.

The Secretary General, on her own and the Minister’s behalf, extended her appreciation to the ITE providers for their positive and timely responses.

- Provide for greater flexibility on the deployment of cooperating teachers.
 - It was agreed that further discussion on this issue is required between the Teaching Council and Teacher Supply.

(iv) Communications and promotion of the teaching profession

- Retired teachers
- Engage with retired teachers to identify motivations for / obstacles to returning to the classroom and key messages for a communications campaign

The following points were noted:

- A communications campaign will be implemented to clarify abatement rules and encourage retired teachers to take up substitute positions, including amendments to the Department website and direct mailshots (via payslips) to retired teachers in early March 2023.
- Retired teachers employed in certain roles in the SEC and certain retired employees in the HSE are paid at a rate higher than the lowest point of their pay scales.

It was agreed to explore the potential of engaging with retired teachers to determine why many, although registered, are not available to fill sub positions.

- Explore the communications requirements for priority actions with owners and develop necessary items and actions.

It was noted that the Communications Unit will support the implementation of the various teacher supply actions as required.

3. Revised Teacher Supply Action Plan

The Group considered potential actions for inclusion in the next phase for implementation, including incremental credit arrangements, review of Teaching Council processes for the assessment of qualifications, adjusting the cap on ITE student numbers and early issue to schools of 2023/24 SET allocations.

The following points were agreed:

- the next phase of actions for implementation needs to be identified and progressed
- the Action Plan will be updated and circulated to the Group for observations

4. Department response to the Ukrainian crisis

The following points were noted:

- Over 800 EAL posts and 130 SEN posts have been allocated to schools in respect of Ukrainian pupil enrolments.
- A small number of additional mainstream posts have been put in place in accordance with the staffing schedule.
- 97 Ukrainian teachers have been admitted to date to the Teaching Council register to date.

It was agreed to explore the potential for ESOL tutors to provide English language support in schools.

5. AOB

It was agreed that the Teaching Council will consider whether NQTs could undertake Droichead when employed on supply panels

Ahead of her retirement, the Group thanked Deirdre Cullen, Senior Statistician for her significant contribution to the work on teacher supply in recent years.

The Secretary General noted with thanks the commitment of the various Department sections to addressing teacher supply challenges

6. Date of next meeting

2nd February 2023 @ 3.30pm

Teacher Education Policy (Teacher Supply)
February 2023