

Meeting of the Teacher Supply Steering Group

Via WebEx

26 January 2023 @ 10.00 a.m.

Minutes

In attendance:

Dalton Tattan, Asst. Secretary General, Department of Education (Chair)
Tomás O Ruairc, Asst Secretary General, Department of Education
Deirdre Shanley, Asst. Secretary General, Department of Education
Aoife Conduit, Asst Secretary General, Department of Education
Anne Looney, Executive Dean, Institute of Education, DCU
Phil Fox, Acting Director, Teaching Council
Anthony Finn, University of Glasgow
Declan Kennedy, School of Education, UCC (for Fiona Chambers)
Seamus Mulconry, General Secretary, CPSMA
Antoinette Nic Gearailt, ACCS

Also in attendance:

Séamus Keating, PO, Department of Education
Conor McCourt, APO, Department of Education

Apologies

Bernie McNally, Secretary General, Department of Education
Yvonne Keating, Chief Inspector, Department of Education
Lewis Purser, Director of Learning & Teaching and Academic Affairs, IUA
Fiona Chambers, Head of the School of Education, UCC
Áine Doyle, Minister's Adviser

1. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 08 December 2022 were agreed.

2. Current priority teacher supply measures

The Group considered current priority teacher supply actions:

Release of teachers seconded to the teacher support services to fill substitute posts

It was noted that the Department has adjusted the provision of CPD by the teacher support services to reduce the need for substitution and that the support services have released seconded personnel to provide substitute cover to schools.

Develop a teacher sharing scheme using remote teaching.

It was noted that the Department is engaging with the school management bodies with a view to implementing a pilot of the teacher sharing scheme in 2023/24. The pilot will operate in accordance with Circular 0015/2019.

It was agreed to consider targeting the teacher sharing scheme at teachers of priority subjects, having regard to trends in graduate numbers in these subjects and other factors

Increase additional teaching hours that can be undertaken by a post primary teacher.

It was noted that an information note for schools is being finalised which will provide for an increase in additional teaching hours for the remainder of the current school year

Allow NQTs qualified abroad to undertake induction in Ireland.

The following points were noted:

- Teachers who have qualified outside of Ireland are eligible to apply for registration and complete their induction in Ireland.
- The required regulatory amendment order was signed on 26 January.
- Applications will open shortly and teachers must apply no later than 1 February 2024 to be eligible.
- The Teaching Council will engage with student teachers and HEIs to create awareness of this arrangement.

Explore incentives for retired teachers.

The following points were noted:

- An information note clarifying abatement rules and encouraging retired teachers to return to teaching is being finalised for inclusion in retired teachers' payslips due to issue in March.
- Defining part of a day as a full day for the purposes of the 50 day abatement waiver for post primary teachers limits the effectiveness of the waiver and may be a disincentive to retired teachers returning to teaching.
- The Department will engage with retired teachers to identify barriers/ disincentives to their returning to teach.

Produce regular data dashboard to supplement the teacher supply projection model.

The following points were noted:

- A data dashboard to inform teacher supply planning is being developed to include key statistics on teaching posts filled, teacher absences and substitute cover.
- It was agreed to consider the inclusion of data on regional demand and supply in the dashboard where possible and to consider conducting case studies in an area/ particular schools for context.
- A reliable data dashboard should allow the Department identify substitution and leave trends, and provide for a geographical overview of teacher demand and supply.
- It is intended that the dashboard will be updated on a regular basis, the frequency of which will be given further consideration by the Data WG

(iii) Higher Education

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

Provide for greater flexibility on the deployment of cooperating teachers.

The following points were noted:

- At the request of the Minister, for 2022/23 HEIs introduced flexibilities in the delivery of initial teacher education programmes to allow student teachers to provide more substitute cover
- Consideration is being given to increasing the numbers on primary ITE programmes in state funded HEIs, which are subject to Ministerial approval
- Further consideration is being given to the potential for of cooperating teachers to provide substitute cover.

The following points were agreed:

- To contact the heads of schools of education to thank the HEIs, student teachers and their colleague teachers for their cooperation in implementing this measure
- To explore the option of requesting HEIs to increase their student numbers in post primary ITE programmes in targeted subjects

The Group considered the supply of post primary teachers of practical subjects, particularly in the greater Dublin area

The following points were noted:

- ITE provision for practical subjects takes place mainly in the West of Ireland, although a programme recently commenced in the East.
- It is important to ensure that supply measures targeted at short term demand do not lead to longer term adverse consequences.

3. Updates

Post primary subject teacher demand and supply report

It was noted that it is intended to publish the report and the timing of this is under consideration.

Primary teacher supply panels

It was noted that the supply panels are currently being reviewed with a view to ensuring that their future operation is as efficient as possible.

Teaching Transforms campaign

The following points were noted:

- Two distinct strands of the campaign are currently underway, aligned with PME and CAO closing dates.
- As previously, the campaign is using online/ digital video and display, social media, national press and radio.
- Initial campaign metrics are very positive.

The Group considered options to encourage and support ITE entry for persons with experience of industry

It was agreed to give further consideration to this issue

Development of a recruitment portal for long term teacher vacancies

It was noted that the new recruitment portal for long term teaching posts is due to go live shortly.

Plans for engagement with guidance counsellors

The following points were noted:

- A series of meetings have been scheduled with AHECS, IGC and AGA in 2023 and the Teaching Council will attend the IGC conference.

- The Teaching Council has produced new leaflets with information on how to become a teacher, which have been shared with the guidance counsellor organisations.

Attendance at careers fairs in 2023

To date the Teaching Council is scheduled to attend 19 careers fairs in 2023, including in Northern Ireland.

Upskilling programmes

The following points were noted:

- The Department agreed to extend funding for upskilling programmes for maths, physics and Spanish to 2023 and to provide for additional capacity
- Almost 350 places are being made available on the programmes this year
- It is intended to issue an RFT for an Irish upskilling programmes in the coming months.
- Consideration is being given to upskilling programmes in additional subjects
- It is important to review the classroom deployment of graduates of the upskilling programmes to inform the structure of future programmes and to determine that that they are teaching the targeted subject in a recognised school.

Review of school placement guidelines/ implementation of Working Group report

The following points were noted:

- The review did not recommend the development of a centralised system for school placement
- A school placement noticeboard has been piloted with IPPN.
- The TPLG continues to meet regularly and the Implementation Group, which has oversight of the implementation of the review recommendations, met for the first time in December.

Teaching Council review of the impact of the reconfigured ITE programmes

It was noted that the review has gone to tender.

Teacher Supply Action Plan

The following points were noted:

- The draft revised Teacher Supply Action Plan will be circulated to the TS Implementation Group, chaired by the Secretary General.
- It is intended to circulate the revised plan to the Steering Group for observations subsequently.

4. Response to the Ukraine crisis

The following points were noted:

- The additional enrolments of Ukrainian pupils have not led to a significant mainstream class teachers but additional demand for EAL and SEN teachers as well as SNAS is very significant
- To date the Teaching Council has received 181 applications from Ukrainian teachers for registration, of which 97 have been registered

5. AOB

The Group considered options to create awareness of the range of teacher supply actions being implemented

It was noted that the Department has met recently with the school management bodies and the teacher unions and that further sectoral engagement is planned.

The Group noted the impact on substitute teacher demand of job sharing teachers who are also availing of parental leave.

6. Next meeting

30 March 2023

**Teacher Supply Secretariat
February 2023**