

Meeting of the Teacher Supply Steering Group

Via WebEx

30 March 2023 @ 2 p.m.

Minutes

In attendance:

Dalton Tattan, Asst. Secretary General, Department of Education (Chair)
Tomás Ó Ruairc, Asst. Secretary General, Department of Education
Deirdre Shanley, Asst. Secretary General, Department of Education
Anne Looney, Executive Dean, Institute of Education, DCU
Lynn Ramsey, Director, Teaching Council
Anthony Finn, University of Glasgow
Declan Kennedy, School of Education, UCC
Seamus Mulconry, General Secretary, CPSMA
Antoinette Nic Gearailt, ACCS
Eoin Murphy, Minister's Adviser
Lewis Purser, Director of Learning & Teaching and Academic Affairs, IUA

Also in attendance:

Séamus Keating, PO, Department of Education
Damien O'Neill, APO, Department of Education

Apologies

Bernie McNally, Secretary General, Department of Education
Aoife Conduit, Asst Secretary General, Department of Education
Yvonne Keating, Chief Inspector, Department of Education
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 26 January 2023 were agreed.

2. Teacher Supply Action Plan

The following completed actions were discussed:

- *Release of teachers seconded to the teacher support services and minimise CPD to reduce substitute demand*

It was noted that both of these actions had a positive impact on reducing unfilled substitute vacancies.

- *Develop a teacher sharing scheme using remote teaching*

It was noted that a pilot scheme is planned for 2023/24 in accordance with Circular 0015/2019.

It is hoped to have draft proposals for this scheme in the coming weeks.

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

It was noted that schools have been informed of the increase in additional teaching hours that can be undertaken by a post primary teacher.

- *Allow NQTs qualified abroad to undertake induction in Ireland.*

The following points were noted:

- Applications are open and teachers must apply no later than 1 February 2024 to be eligible.
- The Teaching Council will engage with student teachers, HEIs and teaching bodies in the UK to create awareness of this arrangement.

- *Issue teacher allocations as early as possible in 2023*

The Department provided details of the staffing arrangements for the 2023/24 school year to primary and post primary schools before the end of January. This will facilitate schools to begin recruitment for the 2023/24 school year earlier than in 2022.

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

The Group welcomed the recently approved 610 additional places on primary ITE programmes over the next two academic years. It was noted that some HEIs are in discussions with Postgraduate Applications Centre (PAC) regarding potential extension of deadline dates for PME and TEG applications.

- *Departmental engagement with Primary and Post Primary Management Bodies and Unions*

The Group welcomed the Department's formal engagement on a monthly basis with the primary and post primary management bodies and teacher unions.

- *Produce regular data dashboard to supplement teacher supply projection model*

It was noted that while progress is being made on this some work remains in terms of clarification on data sharing. It is hoped that this will be progressed in the coming weeks.

- *Explore the option to pay retired teachers at a higher point on the pay scale.*

Pensions Unit and ESR are liaising with DPER on this measure.

Work to identify motivations for / obstacles to retired teachers returning to the classroom has begun.

- *Provide for greater flexibility on the deployment of cooperating teachers*

Further consideration is being given to the potential for cooperating teachers to provide substitute cover.

- *Teacher Supply Action Plan*

There are a number of actions being considered in relation to the Action Plan and these are being reviewed on an ongoing basis.

3. Other Updates

- *Data forum and post primary subject teacher demand and supply report*

The Department recently held two data forums to consider (1) subject teacher demand in post primary schools and (2) demand for and supply of substitute teachers in primary schools. It was agreed that it was a worthwhile examination of the relevant data and feedback and interaction from stakeholders was very constructive. It was agreed that the deployment of teachers and behavioural choices of teachers in both sectors needs further investigating and examination. It is hoped that regional workshops will be carried out in the future to discuss these matters amongst others.

- *Review of primary teacher supply panels and learnings*

The Group was informed that the Department conducted a survey in December 2022 of supply panels in the Dublin area to better understand the challenges and identify areas that could assist the recruitment of teachers. A number of suggestions are currently being considered by the Department as to their feasibility for implementation. A further end of year review will assess the level of efficiency in terms of usage of the supply panel teachers on individual panels.

- *Teaching Transforms campaign*

The following points were noted:

- Two distinct campaigns for the PME and CAO closing dates ended in early February with significant success in both. The campaigns used online/ digital video and display, social media, national press and radio.
 - The Group was informed that a promotion of the July CAO change of mind campaign will commence soon.
 - 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*

The Group was informed that IPPN are currently making minor updates to the online recruitment portal, and are aiming to launch the portal in May 2023.

- *Upskilling programmes – Irish and other subjects*

It is hoped to have the RFT for an Irish upskilling programme launched soon. It was acknowledged that the timelines may be challenging for the programme to commence in January 2024. Other potential upskilling programmes are also being considered.

4. Response to the Ukraine crisis

The following points were noted:

- Increased demand for EAL and SEN teachers as well as SNAs is very significant.
- To date the Teaching Council has registered 107 Ukrainian teachers, of whom 98 are post primary and 9 primary.
- It was noted that the impact of Ukrainian students on mainstream teacher demand may take effect in terms of next year's enrolments.

5. AOB

It was noted that an ASTI survey on teacher supply will be published in the next couple of weeks.

It was also noted that teacher union conferences will be taking place after Easter and this may lead to some media attention on teacher supply issues.

6. Next meeting

25 May 2023, 2pm.