

Meeting of the Teacher Supply Steering Group

Via WebEx

25 May 2023 @ 1400Minutes

In attendance:

Dalton Tattan, Asst. Secretary General, Department of Education (Chair)
Aoife Conduit, Asst. Secretary General, Department of Education
Yvonne Keating, Chief Inspector, 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 (for Fiona Chambers)
Seamus Mulconry, General Secretary, CPSMA
Antoinette Nic Gearailt, ACCS
Áine Doyle, Minister's Adviser

Also in attendance:

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

Apologies

Bernie McNally, Secretary General, Department of Education
Tomás Ó Ruairc, Asst. Secretary General, Department of Education
Deirdre Shanley, Asst. Secretary General, Department of Education
Lewis Purser, Director of Learning & Teaching and Academic Affairs, IUA
Fiona Chambers, Head of the School of Education, UCC

1. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

2. Teacher Supply Action Plan

- **Update on the impact of measures taken on teacher supply in the current school year**

The Group considered the impact of measures in the current school year, including the early issue to schools of staffing arrangements, the extension of the post primary teaching hours scheme, flexible ITE provision and the registration of student teachers under route 5.

The following points were noted:

- Feedback from schools suggests that the early issuing of staffing arrangement for 2023/34 has allowed many schools to complete the appointments process and offer posts to teachers.

- The availability of Route 5 registered student teachers to provide substitute cover has been beneficial to schools in 2022/23.
- There are some concerns regarding the potential impact of additional substitute hours worked on student teacher's engagement with their ITE programme.
- The Department intends to engage with the ITE providers regarding the flexible provision of programmes to support the availability of student teachers.
- The recruitment of teachers by schools in the greater Dublin area remains challenging.

The following points were agreed:

- The Department will consider communicating with the presidents of the HEIs requesting flexible ITE programme provision and increased places on ITE programmes.
- The Department will consider the timing of communications to schools regarding teacher supply measures to be implemented in 2023/24.

The Group discussed a number of other issues including contracts for newly appointed teachers, the deployment of SETs to mainstream classes due to teacher recruitment challenges and the impact on learning due to teacher absences.

The Group also considered potential supports for "career changers" seeking to become teachers, including:

- Supports to aid with their registration, including a specific guidance on the Teaching Council's website
- Flexible ITE provision
- Arrangements for recognition of prior learning.

Ongoing and future actions

The following points were noted:

Revised approach to data collection

- Statistics Section is engaging with the CSO to conduct a "signs of life" analysis of the register of teachers in order to obtain accurate data on teachers who are "economically active" in Ireland.

Research into the motivations of retired teachers

- The Department has engaged an independent researcher to explore the barriers that prevent retired teachers from returning to the classroom and possible incentives.
- The research is due to take place in the coming months.

Teacher sharing scheme pilot

- The Department is currently engaging with the post primary management bodies to put in place a pilot of the teacher sharing scheme in a small number of schools.
- The scheme has been available to schools since 2019 but to date there has been no uptake.

- An information note for schools is due to issue shortly.

Enhancements to Turas Abhaile

- The Department has recently agreed to provide additional funding to ACCS for the expansion of Turas Abhaile in 2023, which will allow for:
 - Additional recruitment drive and marketing campaigns, including online, social media, direct marketing, in person and virtual marketing campaigns and events.
 - Targeted recruitment and marketing in Northern Irish, Scottish and UK universities.
- The service will be open to all post primary schools.

Expand availability of FET route to ITE

- A number of programmes established under PATH 1 support access to ITE through an FET route (e.g. Turn to Teaching, MU). It is intended to consider explore the expansion of access to ITE through similar routes and access enabling programmes.

Development of a recruitment portal for long term teacher vacancies

- It is anticipated that the enhanced *educationpost.ie* portal will go live shortly.
- Some final GDPR issues are being addressed.
- The use of then portal will be optional for schools but will be encouraged.

3. Other updates

Review of primary teacher supply panels

- Teacher Allocations Section earlier this year reviewed the operation of the supply panels in the Dublin area.
- It is anticipated that some changes will be made to the operation of the panels in Dublin in 2023/24.

Teaching Transforms campaign

- The Teaching Transforms campaign continues to promote the teaching profession and encourage students to follow a career in teaching.
- The next phase of the campaign is due to take place shortly to coincide with the lead in to the CAO change of mind closing date (1 July).
- This phase of the campaign will include a focus on primary teaching.

Upskilling programmes – Irish and other subjects

- An RFT for a programme to upskill post primary teachers to meet the Teaching Council's subject criteria for Irish, to commence in 2024, will issue shortly.

- Consideration is being given to the provision of additional upskilling programmes for post primary teachers in other subjects.

4. Response to the Ukraine crisis

The following points were noted:

- As of 22nd March, there were 204 applications from Ukrainian teachers for registrations with the Teaching Council. Of these 107 have completed registration (8 x Route 1 (Primary), 98 x Route 2 (Post primary), 1 X Route 4 (Other)).
- The Teaching Council is engaging with the Migrant Teacher Project in relation to the provision of supports for Ukrainian teachers.

5. AOB

The Group considered the availability of grant funding for small scale capital costs to support teacher supply (e.g. provision of laboratory facilities and equipment).

6. Next meeting

To be confirmed