

Meeting of the Teacher Supply Implementation Group

29 June 2023 @ 3.00 pm

Via Teams

Minutes

In attendance:

Dalton Tattan, Assistant Secretary General
Tomás Ó Ruairc, Assistant Secretary General
Yvonne Keating, Chief Inspector
Paraic Joyce, PO, School Governance/ Teacher Allocations
Mark Bohan, PO, External Staff Relations
Lynn Ramsey Director, Teaching Council
Sinéad Keenaghan, PO, Payroll
Séamus Keating, PO, Teacher Education Policy (Teacher Supply)
James Walsh, PO, Teacher/SNA Terms & Conditions
Edel Harte APO, Pensions
Róisín Collier, APO, Communications Section
Paul Alexander, PO, Statistics
Noreen Finnegan, PO Teacher Education Policy (Teaching Council)
Sinéad Middleton, APO, Teacher Education Policy (ITE and Professional Development)
Evelyn O'Connor, PO, Curriculum & Assessment Policy Unit

Also in attendance:

John Egan, HEO, Teacher Education Policy (Teacher Supply)

Apologies:

Bernie McNally, Secretary General (Chair)
Deirdre Shanley, Assistant Secretary General
Aoife Conduit, Assistant Secretary General
Clíodhna O'Neill, PO, Communications Section
Jill Fannin, PO, Teacher Education Policy (ITE and Professional Development)
Caroline Galvin, PO, Pensions
Frank Hanlon, PO, Special Education.

1. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 01 June 2023 were agreed.

2. Draft Teacher Supply Action Plan

Review of actions, responsibilities and timelines

Séamus Keating thanked the Group and colleagues for their continued work on these actions and updating of the Teacher Supply Action Plan. It was requested that Teacher Supply would be advised if any actions required amendments to expected outcomes or target completion dates, in order to

ensure that the Action Plan remains updated and accurate. Teacher Supply section will contact sections again in the coming weeks regarding updates.

The current working draft version of the Teacher Supply Action Plan was reviewed.

3. Update on specific actions:

Research into the motivations of retired teachers

The Group was informed by Communications Section that an independent researcher is working with the Retired Teachers Association of Ireland (RTAI) to recruit retired teachers as research candidates. It was noted that a report is expected to be available in late August/ early September.

Teacher sharing scheme pilot

The Group was informed that two schools have expressed interest in forming a cluster for the purpose of the teacher sharing pilot scheme for 2023/24.

Enhancements to Turas Abhaile

An update on the activities of *Turas Abhaile* website since the expansion of the service in May was provided. *Turas Abhaile* is currently promoting vacancies and 27 schools have signed up seeking key positions. It is hoped that more information and feedback will be available for the Group in September.

Review of primary teacher supply panels

Teacher Allocations informed the Group that it intends to carry out an efficiency review of primary substitute teacher supply panels at the end of the school year to ensure consistency and best practice and inform guidelines for next school year. It was clarified that this is distinct from a separate review of Dublin panels where the greatest challenges exist in filling positions. The Group discussed various issues regarding supply panels and it was agreed that Teacher Allocations and Teacher Supply should discuss further outside of this forum.

Upskilling programmes – Irish and other subjects

The Group was informed that an RFT for the provision of an upskilling programme in Irish for post-primary teachers was published on *eTenders* on 01 June. The Group was also informed that some research work on the need for upskilling courses in other subjects is currently being carried out by Teacher Supply.

Production of data dashboard & research on Teaching Council register

Work is still ongoing internally on the creation of a data dashboard. Also, Statistics section are working with the CSO on a “signs of life” analysis of registered teachers with the Teaching Council.

Development of a recruitment portal for longer term teacher vacancies

The Group was informed that the recruitment portal went live on Monday 26 June. The enhanced portal will allow teachers, including those resident abroad, to apply for teaching positions and facilitate schools to administer the recruitment process. The Group thanked the Irish Primary Principals’ Network (IPPN) for their work on this project.

An information note for schools has been issued by Teacher/SNA Terms and Conditions.

4. Potential actions to be considered for inclusion in TSAP:

Implementation of 2022/23 actions in 2023/24

Suspension of restrictions applying to teachers on career break and job sharing teachers

- It was agreed to discuss this measure further in the coming weeks.

Additional hours for post primary teachers

- It was also agreed to discuss this measure further in the coming weeks. It was suggested that the Inspectorate be involved in the review of the operation of this measure.

Droichead arrangements for NQTs trained outside Ireland

- Teaching Council will carry out an examination on uptake of this policy data by NQTs trained outside of Ireland. This will give a better indication of whether policy should be continued beyond Feb 2024.

ITE providers supporting the availability of student teachers

The Group was informed that ITE and Professional Development section met with HEIs on 06 June. Feedback from the HEIs on their experience of introducing this measure in 2022/23 is awaited.

Consideration of existing terms & conditions, and non-statutory leave arrangements

The Group discussed a number of various terms & conditions and non-statutory leave arrangements for teachers and the possible effect of any modifications to these on teacher supply issues. It was noted that there were sensitivities around many of these issues and further discussion was needed.

Consideration of FE pathway to primary ITE

The possible expansion of the FET entry route to ITE was discussed. The Group was informed that an initial meeting with HEI representatives was positive. Next step is a discussion document and a

working group to look at how to progress. This will require input from Inspectorate and Teaching Council, as well as HEIs and DFHERIS.

Review the role of various support roles

The Group was informed that Teacher Supply have discussed support roles in schools e.g. Home School Community Liaison Officers, and a possible review of such roles with Social Inclusion section. Discussions will continue.

Consideration of PME incentives

It was noted that the cost of the PME has been raised by stakeholders at various engagements and it was agreed that this matter should be given further consideration.

5. Communications and promotion of the teaching profession

Communications Unit and Teacher Supply Section are currently developing a campaign for the CAO change of mind closing date of 01 July. It is expected to have feedback on the campaign for next meeting.

It was noted that new promotion material will be required for the CAO/PME campaign in December/January in order to refresh and strengthen the campaigns.

6. Department response to the Ukrainian crisis

The Group was informed it is estimated that almost 600 mainstream posts have either been newly allocated or retained in schools due to increased numbers of new Ukrainian arrivals.

It was noted that approximately 15,500 Ukrainian students are in the Irish educational system and feedback from Ukrainian teachers in the system has been positive. At this stage it is hard to estimate the demand on teacher supply at a regional level for the 2023/24 school year.

It was also noted that there has been 237 applications from Ukrainian teachers with 121 registered with the Teaching Council (10 Primary, 110 Post Primary and 1 other).

7. What more can be done?

It was agreed that a lot of new areas for discussion were dealt with already in the meeting.

It was noted that many HEIs have their graduations in the autumn during weekdays, thus taking a number of NQTs away from their schools for those days. It was suggested that the HEIs could look at having graduation ceremonies on non-school days as this may alleviate some pressures on schools in terms of substitution etc. ITE & Professional Development section were asked to follow this issue up with HEIs.

8. AOB

None.

9. Date of next meeting

14 September

**Teacher Education Policy (Teacher Supply)
September 2023**