

Meeting of the Teacher Supply Implementation Group
07 December 2023 @ 2 pm
Via Teams
Minutes

In attendance:

Bernie McNally, Secretary General
Dalton Tattan, Assistant Secretary General (Chair)
Deirdre Shanley, Assistant Secretary General
Tomás Ó Ruairc, Assistant Secretary General
Lynn Ramsey Director, Teaching Council
Séamus Keating, PO, Teacher Education Policy (Teacher Supply)
Paraic Joyce, PO, School Governance/ Teacher Allocations
Jill Fannin, PO, Teacher Education Policy (ITE and Professional Development)
Sinéad Keenaghan, PO, Payroll
Michael Donoghue, PO, Payroll
James Walsh, PO, Teacher/SNA Terms & Conditions
Paul Alexander, PO, Statistics
Martin McLoughlin, PO, Special Education.
Caroline Galvin, PO, Pensions
Mark Bohan, PO, External Staff Relations
Clare Connolly, APO Teacher Education Policy (Teaching Council)
Róisín Collier, APO, Communications Section
Leona DeKhors, APO, Curriculum & Assessment Policy Unit

Also in attendance:

John Egan, HEO, Teacher Education Policy (Teacher Supply)
Tom Slevin, APO, Teacher Education Policy (Teacher Supply)

Apologies:

Yvonne Keating, Chief Inspector
Aoife Conduit, Assistant Secretary General
Noreen Finnegan, PO Teacher Education Policy (Teaching Council)
Evelyn O'Connor, PO, Curriculum & Assessment Policy Unit

1. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 27 October were agreed.

2. Update on specific actions:

Research into retired teachers

The external researcher has presented Teacher Supply and the Department's Communications Unit with a final draft of the report on the motivations and barriers for retired teachers returning to teaching.

It is hoped to share the report with the Group in the near future.

Actions to increase substitution by retired teachers

- The extension of the pension abatement waiver for a further 2 years was acknowledged at the meeting.
- It was agreed that a communication campaign to clarify issues with retired teachers, especially around abatement waiver scheme, should be prioritised.

Primary teacher supply panel arrangements 2023/24

- For the 2023-24 school year supply panels were extended to 166 Panels, with 12 new panels created in Dublin and 4 elsewhere.

Turas Abhaile

- An update on activity was provided to the meeting. 55 teachers had been placed since May 2023.
- Turas Abhaile has engaged with HEIs in Northern Ireland and Scotland regarding teacher placements in Ireland.

Upskilling programmes– Irish and other subjects

- The RFT process for the Irish upskilling programme has concluded and letters of Award and Intent will be issued before Christmas.
- It is expected that the Irish upskilling programme will be in place for September 2024.
- Teacher Supply section have commenced work on establishing evaluation panels for upskilling courses in French, computer science and politics and society.

Teacher supply data project (data dashboards) & Teaching Council register research

- The Statistics Unit reported progress on the Teacher Supply Data Project with a launch expected in the following week following some further testing.
- It was agreed that the data will be updated and refreshed regularly.
- The work on the Teaching Council's Register of teachers was also near completion.
- It is expected that both these projects will be discussed in more detail at the Teacher Supply Consultative Forum taking place on 8 December 2023.
- The Sec Gen and the Group thanked the Statistics Unit and all stakeholders involved for their work on these projects.

PME incentive

- Those newly qualified teachers who graduate with a PME will, subject to some conditions, be eligible for an incentive payment of up to €2,000.
- This incentive payment will be paid to eligible primary and post-primary teachers in 2025. Some preliminary work on a potential on-line application process has begun.
- Further details of this incentive scheme will follow in the coming months.

Access to Droichead for supply panel teachers

- The Teaching Council informed the Group that the mechanism for supply panel teachers to access Droichead went live in Q4 of 2023.
- To date 28 NQTs have applied and the Teaching Council is working closely with Oide on this matter.

3. Teacher supply in special education settings

The meeting was informed that:

- Pressures in special education settings seem to have stabilised since the beginning of the school year.
- Schools are directly contacting NABMSE with their issues regarding supply.

4. Communications and promotion of the teaching profession

Teaching Transforms – update

- Teacher Supply Section and the Department's Communications Unit have progressed the design of a new promotional campaign for the CAO and PME deadlines with a new creative agency. Six teachers have been lined up to date to participate in the next promotion campaign.

Consultative Forum plans

- The Teacher Supply Consultative Forum will take place on 8 December 2023.
- The Group was informed that the Forum will have presentations on the following:
 - Teaching Council Update
 - Department of Education Statistical Reports Update
 - Diversity in the teaching profession.

5. Draft Teacher Supply Action Plan (including potential actions to be considered for inclusion)

Droichead arrangements for NQTs trained outside Ireland

- The Teaching Council are consulting with legal advisors on the implications of the Proportionality Directive regarding the extension of the COVID Amendment Regulation (CAR) beyond the current deadline of February 2024 for two more years.

Review the incremental credit scheme to recognise post-primary teaching service

- The Department is considering ways to progress the expansion of the incremental credit scheme to post-primary.

Survey of substitute teachers

- Statistics Section reported that they have received 155 responses on a survey on the work patterns and experience of substitutes. The target is 197 responses
- Teacher Supply have publicised the survey through the various groups supporting teacher supply.

Consideration of FE pathway to primary ITE

- The expansion of FET routes to Primary initial teaching courses was discussed.
- It is hoped that a proposal acceptable to all parties will be made by the end of Q2 2024.

Further education teachers in post primary schools

- The Department is engaging DFHERIS to identify any available capacity to use further education teachers at post primary level, particularly, for practical subjects.

Review Teacher Sharing Scheme

- Teacher Supply are arranging meetings in early 2024 with various stakeholders to discuss the potential benefits for more teacher sharing schemes between schools to be implemented across the country.

Review of actions, responsibilities and timelines

- The group was informed that Statistics Section are planning an updated report on Teacher Demand and Supply Model for Q2 2024.

6. Department response to the Ukrainian crisis

There were no significant updates on the Department's response to the Ukrainian crisis. Almost 18,000 Ukrainian pupils have been enrolled in schools across Ireland to date.

7. AOB

None

8. Date of next meeting

TBC

Teacher Supply Secretariat
January 2024