

Meeting of the Teacher Supply Steering Group

18th September 2019 @ 2.00 pm

G06 Dublin and Conference Room 1 Athlone

Minutes

Attendees:

- Seán Ó Foghlú, Secretary General, DES (Chairperson)
- Ruth Carmody, Asst. Secretary General, DES
- Tara Carton, PO, DES (for Ned Costello)
- Tomás Ó Ruairc, Director, Teaching Council
- Lewis Purser, Director Academic Affairs, Irish Universities Association
- Seamus Mulconry, CPSMA
- Antoinette Nic Gearailt, ACCS
- John O'Halloran, Deputy President and Registrar, UCC
- Paul O'Toole, CEO, HEA
- Louise Callinan, HEA
- Prof. Anthony Finn, University of Glasgow
- Prof. Aidan Mulkeen, Registrar, Maynooth University (for Eithne Guilfoyle)

Secretariat attendees:

- Conor McCourt, Teacher Supply, DES
- Damien O'Neill, Teacher Supply, DES

Apologies

- Eithne Guilfoyle, Vice President Academic Affairs (Registrar), DCU
- Chris Kelly, PO, Teacher Education Policy, DES
- Ned Costello, Asst. Secretary General, DES
- William Beausang, Asst. Secretary General, DES
- Mark O'Doherty, Minister's Advisor
- Harold Hislop, Chief Inspector, DES

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 23rd May were agreed.

2. Update on recent developments

(a) Data to support teacher supply planning

The Group was updated on the Technical Report being prepared by Statistics Section.

The following points were noted:

- The Report uses data from a range of sources including the Deployment of Teaching Resource Returns, the DES Payroll and the Teaching Council
- The report is expected to be completed in the coming months.

The following key data were noted:

Primary

- Primary student enrolments are projected to have peaked in 2018.
- By 2025, 60k less enrolments are projected in primary schools, falling further to 2036.

Post Primary

- Post primary student enrolments are projected to peak in 2024, with an additional 40k more students.

It was agreed that

- The report will be a document for consultation with the relevant stakeholders
- The data and assumptions need to be tested further
- The report will be published before the end of the calendar year, possibly for consideration at the Consultative Forum in November 2019.

(b) Communications & promotion of the teaching professions

The following points were noted:

- The Department, the Teaching Council, the management bodies and the HEA are attending the National Ploughing Championships as part of the campaign to promote the teaching profession.
- The Department and the Teaching Council are attending the Higher Options event.
- The substitute teacher recruitment portal being developed by IPPN and NAPD is due to be launched at the end November 2019.
- The next Teacher Supply Consultative forum is scheduled for 25th November.
- Further regional focus groups are planned in 2020.
- Consultations with primary and post primary school students are scheduled to take place in early October, in conjunction with the Teaching Council and DCYA.
- DCU is holding the Teachers Inspire awards event in October including a collaborative award for team teaching with the Teaching Council.
- FÉILTE is to take place in NUIG on the 27th & 28th September 2019.
- The Minister visited the UAE in June 2019 to engage with Irish teachers resident there.

The Group noted and welcomed the increased collaboration between stakeholders in the implementation of the various communications actions.

The Group also noted and welcomed the launch by the post primary school management bodies of a portal to facilitate the recruitment of post primary teachers working outside Ireland (*Turasabhaile.com*). More than 40 appointments were made through this system in

the summer of 2019 and it was noted that the initiative has the potential to contribute significantly to the recruitment of teachers in future years.

It was also noted that the Teaching Council is planning a webinar in 2020 for teachers resident abroad on the qualification assessment and registration processes.

(c) Higher Education

The following points were noted in relation to 2019 CAO applications:

- 1.5% increase in overall Level 8 applications compared to 2018
- 12% increase in 1st preference for applications for post primary ITE programmes
- 1% decrease in 1st preference applications for primary ITE programmes

It was also noted that, in relation to Action 11B of the Teacher Supply Action Plan:

- The DES is considering the potential alignment between the HEA proposal for the review of the impact of reconfigured programmes and the Teaching Council study of the experiences of NQTs.
- The HEA proposal for a longitudinal study of the outcomes for graduates from ITE programmes is currently being considered by the CSO.

Upskilling programmes.

The Group was updated by the HEA on the call for programmes to upskill teachers in priority subject areas.

The following points were noted and agreed:

- Programmes are intended to meet the short/ medium term needs of the sector.
- Programmes should be delivered on a flexible basis.
- There should be no cost to participants.
- The languages and STEM strategies would be factors in determining which subjects to include in the call

It was also agreed that:

- Although the Teaching Council does not currently accredit CPD programmes, including upskilling, it will work closely with the HEA and successful HEIs to ensure the relevant subject criteria are satisfied in the upskilling programmes.
- The next step would be to determine which subjects to include in the call
- The use of digital badges as additional recognition for undertaking upskilling programmes will be considered.
- Further consideration would be given to the development of return to teach programmes.

The Group considered how the requirements of Irish medium post primary schools might be met, including the potential inclusion of an Irish element in all PP ITE programmes. It was

noted that that school placements can take place in Irish-medium schools and that immersion in an Irish medium setting for upskilling programmes is also a possibility.

Student supports

It was noted that an additional €1m will be provided to the Student Assistance Fund for ITE students in 2019/20 and that other supports for ITE students are under consideration.

(d) Policies and arrangements for schools and teachers that impact on teacher supply

The following points were noted:

Teacher Supply Panels

- Sub teacher supply panels for primary schools are being set up in 6 locations and base schools have been identified.
- The supply panels are expected to be operational in early November.
- The panels will operate in conjunction with the new online substitute recruitment portal.

It was also noted that:

- There was no uptake from schools for the teacher sharing scheme for 2019/20.
- The teacher unions are seeking a decision on the possible suspension of the restriction on teachers on career break undertaking sub teaching,

The Group considered the impact of CPD arrangements and of SEC related employment on the demand for sub teachers.

It was noted that:

- Teacher leave entitlements are impacting significantly on schools generally.
- Certain actions in the action plan are targeted at maximising teacher presence in the classroom.

School Placements

It was noted that the Report from the Teaching Council's School Placement Working Group is expected in the coming months.

Ward Report

It was noted that the implementation of the recommendations of the Ward Report has successfully led to teachers with CIDs acquiring permanent positions.

3. AOB

The management bodies updated the Group in relation to the recruitment of teachers in post primary schools.

The following points were noted:

- There are ongoing difficulties filling particular subject vacancies including in Irish, Home Economics, Guidance, French, Spanish and SEN.
- Dublin schools and schools on the east coast are having particular difficulties in filling vacancies.
- There has been an increase in the use of digital technology in interviewing for posts.

It was agreed that an updated teacher supply newsletter will be issued.

The Chairperson thanked Paul O'Toole for his contribution to the Steering Group in light of his forthcoming retirement.

4. Next meeting:

The date of the next meeting (4th December) was noted.

**Teacher Supply Secretariat
November 2019**