



Newsletter

No. 62 December 2020

Contents

CPSMA Training	2
Supplementary Redeployment Panel for 2021/22 school year	2
Child Protection	3
Communication/Teaching & Learning Platform	3
Recording and reporting COVID-19 primary pupil related absences	4
Student placement update	4
Ventilation in schools	4
Collaboration with parents in primary schools	4
CPSMA COVID-19 Resources	5
Information on Copyright	5
Arrangements for the end of term – Christmas 2020	5
FSSU	5
Allianz – Winter Readiness Tips for Schools	5
Catholic Schools Week 2021	6
Recent Information Notes and Circulars	7

Message from the General Secretary

Dear Members,

As no doubt you will agree, this has been a year like no other. On behalf of the Board and staff of CPSMA I would to thank you for everything you have done to ensure that our children get the high quality education they need and deserve through this most challenging of times.

The work of principals, teachers and staff in schools has been tireless and professional to the last, and chairpersons and board members have supported school communities through a most difficult period. Working together, schools have ensured that children continue to receive a high standard of education.

This is an incredible achievement of which you should be proud.

Next term will bring its own challenges. Although schools will be familiar with the protocols, school communities will have to be reminded of their importance, when children return to school in the New Year. Although we are hopeful of the arrival of vaccines, it will be some time before everybody will have benefitted in this regard.

I encourage you all to take a good break over the Christmas period, where possible, to recover from the unprecedented stresses and strains of this year.

Pope Francis recently said that the Christmas season provides a reason for hope during the Coronavirus pandemic and that the symbols of Christmas – like the tree and the Nativity, are signs of this hope, especially in this difficult period.

I hope that you and your families, wherever they are this Christmas, stay safe and well. On behalf of the team here in CPSMA, I wish you all a very happy Christmas and we look forward to continuing our work on your behalf in the New Year.

Kind Regards



CPSMA Training

Since face to face training was suspended, in March of this year, CPSMA has concentrated on providing online support to members, through live webinars and recorded webinars, which can be accessed on the Webinar section of our website.

These include:

The Board as a Corporate Entity

- [Webinar 1: BOM Functions & Responsibilities](#)
- [Webinar 2: Roles & Responsibilities](#)
- [Webinar 3: Board of Management Meetings](#)

Teacher Recruitment:

- [Webinar 1: Preparation: Advertising](#)
- [Webinar 2: Shortlisting](#)
- [Webinar 3: Interview](#)
- [Webinar 4: Post Interview Administration](#)

[School Admissions \(28/04/2020\)](#)

[Reopening of Schools \(12/08/2020\)](#)

[Schools Pathway for Covid-19: the Public Health Approach \(17/09/2020\)](#)

[School Finances and the role of the Treasurer \(03/12/2020\)](#)

While there are many benefits to online training, in terms of access and convenience, the absence of interaction is certainly a challenge. However, we will continue to work on models of delivery that will provide as many opportunities as possible for interaction. In some cases, this might entail follow up communication with attendees, particularly when there is a high number of participants. We always welcome feedback at training events, so that we can provide our members with a positive online training experience.

Supplementary Redeployment Panel for 2021/22 school year

The purpose of this Circular ([0078/2020](#)) is to set out the arrangements for access to the supplementary redeployment panels for the 2021/22 school year for eligible registered primary teachers in fixed-term/temporary positions (this includes substitute positions) and part-time positions in recognised primary schools.

Completed forms must be received in the Department on or before **Friday 18th December 2020** at the following address: Primary Teacher Allocations Section, Department of Education, Cornamaddy, Athlone, Co. Westmeath N37 X659. Alternatively a signed and scanned copy of the application form can be sent by email to supplementarypanel@education.gov.ie before **5pm on Friday 18th December 2020**.

It is important to note that under no circumstances will late applications be considered for inclusion on these panels. Proof of postage should be retained by the teacher.



Child Protection

The Inspectorate of the Department of Education has recently issued [Circular 0072/2020](#) and an updated [Guide to Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspections](#). For primary schools, the Guide remains similar but clarifies a few anomalies from the previous document and includes a review of the schools Acceptable Use Policy in its remit.

Further [guidance](#) has just issued to boards in relation to Child Protection Oversight Reports (CPOR) in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Boards are now required to hold one face to face meeting per term to enable a CPOR to be brought. A CPOR should not be provided at a board meeting held remotely, except in circumstances where, since the last CPOR provided to the board, there have been no cases arising under any of the headings in sections 9.5 to 9.7 inclusive, of the procedures.

Communication/Teaching & Learning Platform

Arising from Public Health Emergency 2020, this [Circular \(0074/2020\)](#) requires all schools to have in place a communication and learning platform that supports schools to respond in the event of a partial or full school closure in the future.

To support schools, the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) Digital Technologies team has developed a range of materials to assist them in using an online platform to support teaching, learning and assessment. Materials available in this regard include [information and resources](#) for commonly used platforms for teaching, learning and assessment, [short video tutorials](#) exploring how digital platforms and tools can be used effectively for remote learning purposes and clarity regarding how chosen platforms can be effectively used for assessment and feedback purposes.

The [online conferencing section](#) of the PDST Digital Technologies remote learning webpage also explores how various platforms can be used for communication purposes to support remote learning and facilitate remote staff or board of management meetings. Should a school wish to avail of tailored school support from a PDST advisor in the areas highlighted above, or with regards to remote/blended learning approaches generally, applications for support can be made at www.pdst.ie/schoolsupport.

Rules governing the expenditure of the €40m ICT grant are contained in [Circular 0031/2020](#) and information on expenditure for the top-up funding of €10m is contained in [Circular 0032/2020](#). This €50m of funding issued under the ICT Grant Scheme in respect of the 2019-2020 school year. A further €50m will issue in the current school year.

Separately, the Department also funds broadband connectivity to schools. The PDST Technology in Education Broadband Service Desk is the single point of contact for schools for all broadband related issues, providing information, advice and support to schools. Schools can also contact ictadvice@pdst.ie regarding queries about their infrastructure (more information on technology can be found on the PDST (Technology in Education) website www.pdsttechnologyineducation.ie).

See [Circular \(0074/2020\)](#) Appendix 1 (Guidance to support remote learning) for further information and links to relevant resources, and Appendix 2 (Links to Resources and Support) which has a collated list of all relevant links to resources and support. Queries on this circular should be emailed to the following address: ictpolicy@education.gov.ie.



Recording and reporting COVID-19 primary pupil related absences

The Department of Education has recently issued [guidance](#) on the Recording and Reporting of COVID-19 primary pupil related absences.

The purpose of this information note is to outline the arrangements for reporting absenteeism of pupils in the context of COVID-19 related absences for schools. The Education (Welfare) Act, 2000 requires the reporting of pupil absenteeism in certain circumstances to Tusla Education Support Service (TESS), in particular pupil absences of 20 days or more during the school year.

Notwithstanding the current COVID-19 related environment that schools are now operating in, the statutory requirements for reporting pupil absenteeism will continue as normal. In this respect the Education (Welfare) Act requires the principal of a recognised school to maintain records of the attendance or non-attendance on each school day of each pupil registered at that school.

It is important that there is early intervention by Tusla Education Support Services (TESS) where necessary to support those pupils at risk of not returning to school.

Student placement update

The Department of Education and the Teaching Council have just published [guidance](#) on student placements in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, after recent engagement between the education stakeholders, including CPSMA, where the value of the role of schools in facilitating placements was acknowledged by all parties.

The guidance reiterates that school placement is essential for Initial Teacher Education and for schools, as it prepares students for the reality of daily classroom life and helps to ensure a sufficient supply of teachers to meet the identified needs of the system. While it is the prerogative of each board of management to decide upon individual placement applications, the Department and Teaching Council strongly encourage all schools to continue to host student teachers on school placement during the 2020/2021 school year.

Further guidance will issue early in the New Year regarding assessment arrangements for such school placements.

Ventilation in schools

The Department of Education has recently issued a document entitled [Practical Steps for the Deployment of Good Ventilation Practices in Schools](#) which contains some important recommendations about ventilation practices in schools.

Collaboration with parents in primary schools

The Department of Education has recently issued guidance on [Supporting collaboration with parents in primary schools](#) which advises on parent teacher meetings and otherwise engaging with parents in this pandemic.



CPSMA COVID-19 Resources

CPSMA has listed documents and guidance for schools in relation to COVID-19 in the “Return to school” section in the COVID-19 yellow tab <https://www.cpsma.ie/return-to-school/>

CPSMA also has a COVID-19 FAQ document which is available [here](#).

Information on Copyright

Copyright law provides that certain performances, may be shown to an audience of pupils and teachers of an educational institution for the purposes of education without the requirement for a specific licence. Schools showing music/films for educational purposes are exempt from the requirement to pay for such a licence and should reference such exemption in response to any requests for payment of a licence fee in this regard. Schools which show music/films for reasons other than educational are required to purchase a [licence](#) for such activities.

Arrangements for the end of term – Christmas 2020

End of term celebrations have always been important for schools as they support the positive well-being of pupils and teachers. This year, the Department has issued [guidance](#) to schools to ensure that any such plans are implemented in line with public health guidance.

FSSU

Members should note that FSSU have issued two recent Guidance Notes to schools in relation to security measures around the [Online Claims System \(OLCS\)](#) and in relation to the use of [credit cards](#).

Allianz – Winter Readiness Tips for Schools

In recent years, many schools have suffered loss or damage to their property (including the contents contained therein) arising from weather related events. In addition to the financial cost associated with losses of this nature, significant disruption to the activities of schools are often encountered. In many instances the losses could have been prevented or reduced by the implementation of good loss prevention measures. [Here](#) are some basic loss prevention measures which can be implemented with minimal cost but which could greatly reduce your susceptibility to a weather related loss.





CELEBRATING

Catholic Schools Week 2021 in Your School

The theme for Catholic Schools Week this year is
Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith and Resilience.

As we live through an unprecedented time of challenge and uncertainty, our faith and our resilience can be tested. We can ask questions like ‘Will things ever be the same again? When can we get back to normality? Where is God in all of this?’. In response to this, we reflect upon how Catholic schools are communities of faith and resilience. In Catholic schools, we are called to support each other and to have faith in the promise of the Good News. Catholic schools are inspired by the belief that God has created each one of us with a capacity to give love and receive love. This love is bound in faith and is more resilient than any virus.

While each Catholic school is such a community, every Catholic school fosters the holistic development of its students, promotes their wellbeing and offers them cultivation of a deeper, loving relationship with God. Jesus teaches us to love one another as he has loved us. This week, we celebrate the gifts and talents we have in following Jesus’ teaching. This year we celebrate how we are called to be communities of faith and resilience, through our thoughts, words and actions. In doing so, we live out the meaning of the beautiful hymn *Ubi caritas et amor, Deus ibi est.*

Where charity and love are, God is there.

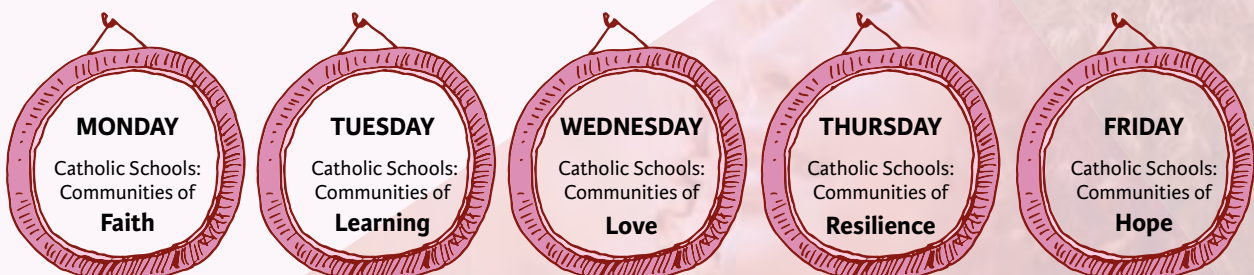
The daily themes are as follows:

As in previous years, the daily themes contain resources for the class groupings: Junior and Senior Infants/Primary 1 and 2; First and Second Class/Primary 3 and 4; Third and Fourth Class/Primary 5 and 6; and Fifth and Sixth Class/Primary 7.

The relevant strands and strand units of the *Catholic Pre-School and Primary Religious Education Curriculum for Ireland (2015)* are also listed for each class grouping at the beginning of the lesson plans. On Wednesday we celebrate Grandparents’ Day. On that day we offer some suggestions for class activities. Given the unique and unprecedented circumstances schools face this year, schools are encouraged to celebrate this day in a manner they deem the most appropriate and manageable.

A prayer service, for use in the school or classroom, is also available, as well as suggestions for parish celebrations. All resources are available to download online at: www.catholicschools.ie

CSW 24th–31st January 2021



Recent Information Notes and Circulars

Information Notes

- TTC 002/2020 [Information Note for the Filling of Internal Leadership and Management Positions in Primary Schools during the Period of Covid-19 Restrictions](#)
- TTC 003/2020 [Information Note for the filling of Special Need Assistant vacancies during the Period of Covid-19 Restrictions](#)
- TTC 004/2020 [New Employee Assistance Service \(EAS\) Provider 'Wellbeing Together: Folláine le Chéile'](#)
- TTC 005/2020 [Changes to the Job Sharing Scheme for Registered Teachers employed in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools – 2020/21 School Year](#)
- TTC 0006/2020 [Information Note for the Recruitment of Teachers in Primary Schools for the upcoming school year.](#)
- TTC 007/2020 [Changes to the Career Break Scheme for Registered Teachers employed in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools – 2020/21 School Year](#)
- TTC 0008/2020 [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Revised arrangements for Primary Schools in respect of Substitution and Extra Personal Vacation \(EPV\) Leave for the 2020/21 School Year](#)
- TTC 009/2020 [Extension of the Employee Assistance Service \(EAS\)](#)
- TTC 00010/2020 [Partial Return to Work for SNAs-2020.21 School Year](#)

Circulars

- 0068/2020 [Emergency Works Grant Scheme: Migration to On-Line Applications and Minor Revisions of Scheme](#)
- 0069/2020 [New Arrangements and Procedures for Appeals under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998 effective from 12 November 2020 onwards](#)
- 0072/2020 [Updated Guide to Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspections in Primary and Special Schools](#)
- 0074/2020 [Arrangements for schools to have in place appropriate contingency measures to ensure that schools are prepared to continue to support teaching and learning in the event of a partial or full closure of schools arising from Public Health advice](#)
- 0077/2020 [Grant Scheme for ICT Infrastructure – 2020/2021 School Year](#)
- 0078/2020 [Panel Access for fixed-term/temporary \(this includes substitute\) and part-time teachers to the Supplementary Redeployment Panel for the 2021/22 school year](#)

Please note that CPSMA office phone lines will be closed from Wednesday 23rd December and will re-open on Thursday 7th January 2021

Nollaig shona agus athbhliain faoi shéan is faoi mhaise daoibh go léir ó CPSMA

CPSMA wishes all chairpersons, principals, board members, school staff, pupils and parents a very happy Christmas and best wishes for the New Year.

