



Newsletter

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Dear Chairpersons and Principals,

This time last year, we did not think that we would still be grappling with the complexities that COVID-19 has presented to our schools. Challenges still remain and our school leaders and communities have adapted superbly to the rapidly changing circumstances. This school year has called for foresight, strategy and resilience from our school leaders and I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your commitment and dedication in ensuring that schools are open and as safe as possible for our pupils and staff.

We hope that this Newsletter is helpful and please contact our team at CPSMA if we can be of assistance or support to you.

CPSMA has recently elected an experienced school principal and chairperson as its new Chairperson and I would like to welcome Anne Fay to her new position and wish her well in her role. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank her predecessor, Dr Andrew McGrady for his dedication to his work with CPSMA.

I know this will be a busy time of year and wish you all a safe and rewarding last term for the pupils and staff in your schools.

Kind regards,

New Chairperson for CPSMA – Anne Fay



Anne Fay (nee Ryan) is a native of Cappawhite in Co. Tipperary where she attended primary school – the family moved to Doon in Co. Limerick, where she completed her secondary schooling. Anne attended Maynooth University prior to training as a “Wilson’s Grad” in Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. She taught in Presentation Primary School, Fermoy for 23 years before taking on the role of teaching principal in St. Joseph’s NS, Fermoy, where she worked until retiring some years ago. During her teaching career, she was involved in the INTO at local and national level and was President of that organisation in 2012/2013. Anne is a member of Cloyne Diocesan Council and as a delegate to the Munster Provincial Council, has attended the AGM of CPSMA for many years. She was elected to the Board of Directors in 2018 and as Chairperson of the CPSMA Training Committee has worked with the Board and the CPSMA team to provide relevant training for Boards of Management. Anne is chairperson of two Cloyne primary schools. She is married to Michael and has two daughters. She is also the proud grandmother of four boys and one girl.

HSE Webinar on COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control Guidance for Schools

The HSE hosted a webinar on 26th March 2021 in relation to infection control in schools. If you didn't get a chance to see it at that stage, the link is included [here](#) which gives access to the webinar and the slides. Please note that the password for the webinar itself is KreAGm5w.

Introduction to Circular 0019/2021 – Staffing Schedule

The purpose of [Circular 0019/2021](#) is to inform schools of the level of teaching staff that they are entitled to for the 2021/2022 school year.

Just before Easter CPSMA prepared a [Podcast](#) and a [Brief Guide to the Staffing Circular](#) which may be of assistance to members.

Members should note that the Department of Education has published two supporting FAQ documents – [one in respect of Circular 0019/2021](#) itself, and the second one is in relation to the [Redeployment Arrangements for Permanent & CID holding teachers through the Main Panel](#).

Detailed guidance on Circular 0019/2021 is set out below which should be read in conjunction with these two FAQ documents.

Detailed Guidance on Staffing Schedule

Mainstream Posts

[Appendix A](#) of the circular contains two tables.

The first table refers to the appointment and retention figures for mainstream classroom teachers (MCT) in ordinary mainstream schools, Gaelscoileanna and Gaeltacht schools. The figure for the appointment of an additional teaching post is always higher than the figure needed to retain a post. The numbers referenced in Appendix A are the valid enrolments on the 30th September 2020, as per the October 2020 POD (Primary Online Database) returns to the Department of Education, and are based on a pupil teacher ratio of 25:1.

The second table gives the appointment and retention figures for mainstream classroom teachers in DEIS Urban Band 1 National Schools for the 2021/22 school year.

These figures are based on a reduced pupil teacher ratio of 19:1 for schools with Junior classes only, 23:1 for schools with Senior classes only, and 21:1 for vertical DEIS Urban Band 1 schools.

The criteria for the appointment of Administrative Principal and Administrative Deputy Principal posts are based on pupil numbers. The relevant enrolment thresholds are outlined in [Appendix B](#) of the Circular.

Special Education Posts

Schools will find their SET allocation for 2021/2022 in [Appendix C](#) of the circular. The allocation will be exactly the same as last year. The Department is maintaining the same level of SET provision as last year. This also applies to the permanent EAL posts that were allocated last year – the schools will retain these resources.



Schools that are in an existing clustering arrangement do not need to notify the Department as these clusters will remain in place for 2021/22 school year.

Schools with part-time hours may enter into a cluster arrangement to achieve a full-time permanent post (25 hours) through sharing arrangements with other neighbouring school(s). The base school in the cluster should submit the Form S.E.T.Cluster2021 ([Appendix D](#)) to the Primary Allocations Section by Wednesday **21st April 2021**.

Having reviewed Appendices A, B and C, what action should be taken?

1. If there is no change to your mainstream class teacher allocation and you have no permanent vacancies in the 2021/2022 school year, your main obligation relates to the Staff Planning Form, which will be issued to all schools by the Primary Allocations section of the Department of Education. You must complete this form and return it to Primary Allocations by Thursday **29th April 2021**.

If your staffing allocation remains the same, but you have permanent vacancies arising from resignations/retirements etc., as well as submitting this information on the Staff Planning Form, you must also notify your panel operator of these vacancies.

Each Diocese is a panel operator, so you need to contact your Diocesan secretary to advise him or her of all permanent and fixed term vacancies that are *for the full school year* or which are sanctioned on or before the first working day of November and are for the duration of the remainder of the school year.

These notifications should be made by **21st April 2021**. Vacancies arising after this date should be notified to your panel operator within 5 working days of the vacancy becoming known to the school.

2. If you are due to lose a teacher, because of falling numbers, the most junior permanent/CID holding teacher in the school will be required to be redeployed. The Main Panel Form (MPF) at [Appendix E](#) of Circular 0019/2021 should be completed in respect of this teacher and returned to the Department's Primary Teacher Allocations Section by **21st April 2021**.

This allows the Department the opportunity to compile the Main Redeployment Panel lists for all of the Panel Operators and the lists will be released to the Panel Operators in the middle of May 2021.

3. If you are due to gain an additional teacher as a result of the Staffing Schedule , you will firstly have to consider any obligation that you might have to a teacher who has been, or is due to be awarded a contract of indefinite duration.

A Contract of Indefinite Duration (C.I.D.) affords an employee the same rights as a permanent member of staff.

A teacher may acquire entitlement to a C.I.D. by completing successive teaching contracts in a fixed term capacity with the same school. Eligibility for a C.I.D. will be determined by the Department of Education and the following factors will be taken into consideration:

The teacher should be qualified to teach in the primary sector and appropriately registered with the Teaching Council. He/she must also have in excess of two year's continuous employment with the same school. Having satisfied these two eligibility criteria, the deciding factor is the type of



contract that arises in the third year. [Circular 0023/2015](#) deals with CID's. If you have any queries in relation to this area, please contact our office for assistance.

The application form for a CID – CIDApp (21/22) – can be found at [Appendix H](#) of the Circular and should be to be submitted to Primary Allocations, by **21st April 2021** having been completed by the teacher, Principal and Chairperson of the Board of Management.

[Appendix G – CID Declaration Form](#) must be completed in respect of existing CID holding teachers in the school and should also be submitted to Primary Allocations by **21st April 2021**.

4. If you have a school that is growing exponentially, you may qualify for an additional teacher under the *Developing School Criteria* that are set out in Section 1.3 of the Circular.

Essentially, this means that if your growth in numbers from September 30th 2020 to September 30th 2021 fulfils the following criteria, an additional post will be sanctioned provisionally from the beginning of the next school year.

Under Section 1.3, for schools with Principal + 6 class teachers or less, there must be a minimum increase of 15 pupils from September 30th 2020 and the projected enrolment must be 5 pupils above the appointment figure. An average of class size in excess of 25 pupils must also apply.

For schools with Principal + 7 class teachers or greater, there must be a minimum increase of 25 pupils from September 30th 2020 and the projected enrolment must be 5 pupils above the appointment figure.

Wednesday 21st April is the closing date for schools to submit their [Application for Developing School Posts](#) on the basis of their projected enrolments for September 2021.

The resulting post cannot be confirmed until the numbers on the 30th September 2021 reach the projected figures and any contract issued to a teacher at the start of the school year should make provision for this. Section 2.7 of the Circular gives direction on filling a provisionally approved post.

It is important to note that if a school decides to increase the number of it's intake classes and create a new stream, the school must have received prior approval for such expansion from both the school Patron and from the Planning and Building Unit of the Department of Education.

5. The school may consider appealing it's allocation of staff to an independent Appeals Board. Details of the appeal process and application form are available in [Appendix F](#) of Circular 0019/2021 and are discussed below.

Appeals

Appendix F outlines the seven categories that a school may utilise, to seek an appeal of its staffing allocation for the forthcoming year.

Criterion A – Exceptional Accommodation Difficulties

The school must demonstrate to the Appeals Board's satisfaction that an additional teaching post is warranted to meet the exceptional accommodation difficulty.

Criterion B – Additional Enrolments in October 2020

Here the school must satisfy the Appeals Board that on the basis of verifiable evidence, the required pupil numbers were enrolled in the school in September or October 2020, but due to circumstances outside the control of the school they were not enrolled on the 30th September 2020.



Criterion C – Developing Post based on Additional Enrolments after 30th September 2021

(For October 2021 Appeals Board Meeting Only)

This criterion applies to schools provisionally sanctioned for a developing post(s) but which did not reach sufficient enrolments on 30th September 2021 in order to retain the teaching post. As this criterion relates to verification of actual enrolment on 30th September 2021, the Appeals Board can only consider appeals under this criterion at the October Appeals Board meeting.

Criterion D – English as an Additional Language (EAL) Teaching Posts

Where at least 20% of the total enrolment of the school is made up of pupils who require English as an additional language support, the school may lodge an appeal for a review of the proposed allocation for pupils requiring EAL support.

Criterion E – Small Schools appeal

This appeals criterion is set out in detail in Appendix F of the circular.

Criterion F – School losing 3 or more Posts

Where a school is losing 3 or more permanent posts, an application can be made to the Appeals Board to seek to have a portion of the loss of posts deferred until the 2022/23 school year on the basis that it is impacting on a school's overall allocation in a particularly adverse manner.

Criterion G – Alleviating pressure on class sizes at infants level

This permits an appeal which would alleviate some of the pressure on class sizes at infants level, for schools that make a significant contribution by absorbing demographic growth.

It is important that a school carefully selects which category it will use as part of its appeal, as it can only use one criterion on which to lodge its appeal.

All necessary paperwork should be verified and submitted in full to the Primary Staffing Appeals Board of the Department of Education by Wednesday **21st April 2021**.

The Staffing Appeals Board will hold meetings in **April, June and October 2021**.

Filling a Vacancy

Schools cannot fill a teaching vacancy by open recruitment until:

1. They have checked that the post is not required to meet obligations to existing teachers in respect of their eligibility for a C.I.D. and
2. The redeployment process has been successfully completed in their Diocese.

Primary Allocations will issue regular updates on the redeployment process, following the release of the Main Redeployment Panels in mid-May.

How do I engage with the Main Redeployment Panel?

As mentioned above, all vacancies that are for the duration of the full school year, should be notified to your Panel Operator, i.e. your Diocesan Secretary. If you get a late notification of a retirement etc, you should notify your Panel Operator within 5 days.

There are three ways to fill a permanent vacancy:

- A teacher can be selected from the Main Redeployment Panel, without an interview process.
- Some or all of the teachers on the Main Redeployment Panel can be invited to interview. A teacher must respond to an invitation to interview within three calendar days. The school is required to fill the post from the cohort of teachers called to interview.



- Schools have the option of using a website (educationposts.ie or staffroom.ie.) to invite teachers on the relevant Main Redeployment Panel to express an interest in a permanent post. Teachers can only respond to expressions of interest from within their own relevant panel area and have 5 days to express an interest. The school may also consider other teachers on the Main Panel before filling the post. If no teachers on the relevant Main Panel express an interest, the school is required to extend the period of time for seeking expressions of interest by an additional 2 calendar days. If there are still no teachers who have expressed interest in the post then the school should inform the Panel Operator.

It should be noted that Section 6 of the FAQ document [Redeployment Arrangements at Primary Level for Surplus Permanent and CID Holding Teachers](#), gives further detail on the operation of the Panel and gives the required wording for the expression of interest advertisement and more detail in relation to redeployment of staff in special education settings.

All teachers on the Main Redeployment Panel must be redeployed before permission is given by the Department of Education to fill any remaining permanent vacancies or to advertise for any fixed term vacancies.

Supplementary Redeployment Panel

When the Main Redeployment Panel is cleared, the Supplementary Redeployment Panel in each Diocese will come into operation. Teachers on the Supplementary Redeployment Panel will get preference for any remaining permanent positions in the Diocese, through a similar process as exists for the Main Redeployment Panel. Teachers on the Supplementary Redeployment Panel have no entitlement to fixed term vacancies. The Supplementary Redeployment Panel ceases to have effect after the first working day in November each year.

Additional points

From September 2021, Deputy Principal vacancies in schools with 6 Mainstream teachers or more must be filled through open competition. You will find information on this process in Section 2.5 of [Circular 0019/2021](#).

Teaching Principals will continue to have 37 Principal Release days per year. Principal Release Day Clusters will remain in place for the 21/22 school year.

Details in relation to the Teacher Supply Panels will be notified to schools in term 3.

Key Dates to note

- **21st April 2021** – Date for return of [Appendix E](#) – Main Panel Form
- **21st April 2021** – Date for return of [Appendix D](#) – Clustering of part time SET hours.
- **21st April 2021** – Date for return of [Appendix G](#) – Application for CID
- **21st April 2021** – Date for return of [Appendix H](#) – Notification of CID teachers
- **21st April 2021** – Date for return of [Appendix F](#) – Appeal on staffing allocation
- **21st April 2021** – Date for return of [Developing School Application](#)
- **29th April 2021** – Date for return of Staff Planning Document which is being sent to each school.



Child Protection Oversight and Board of Management Meetings

Members are reminded about the requirements in relation to the provision by the Principal of a Child Protection Oversight Report (“CPOR”) to the board of management, where board of management meetings are held remotely.

The general rule is that a CPOR is not permitted to be provided at any board meeting that is held remotely. Accordingly, a face to face meeting of the board must be held at least once in every school term, in order for the CPOR report, along with required supporting documentation, to be provided to the board and for the board to resume and continue to carry out its important oversight role. A Board meeting for these purposes is considered essential work.

The following shall apply to such a meeting;

- The face to face meeting may be convened to deal solely with the CPOR.
- A quorum must be physically present at the face to face meeting.
- No members are permitted to join remotely.
- The relevant requirements of the procedures must be adhered to in full in respect of the CPOR, including those in relation to the provision and recovery of documents at the meeting.
- The CPOR submitted shall set out under each of the required headings, the number of cases arising since the last CPOR was provided to the board.
- Appropriate social distancing and other relevant public health measures and guidance must be followed.

The CPOR shall not be provided at any board meeting that is held remotely **except in circumstances where**, since the last CPOR was provided to the board, there have been no cases arising under **each** of the headings set out in sections 9.5 to 9.7 inclusive of the procedures. This is the only exception to the general rule prohibiting the provision of the CPOR at remote meetings. This exception has been made because the procedures do not require any supporting documentation to be provided in circumstances where the CPOR does not contain any cases under sections 9.5 to 9.7 inclusive.

Child Protection Training

CPSMA has prepared four webinars for boards and principals in relation to Child Protection. They are as follows:

Webinar 1 – [Introduction to Child Protection](#) (12:25 mins)

Webinar 2 – [Child Protection Oversight Report](#) (16:40 mins)

Webinar 3 – [Child Safeguarding Statement](#) (14:46 mins)

Webinar 4 – [Child Protection](#) (48:33 mins)

In addition, there is a link to [PDST Child Protection Training](#) which ideally should be viewed after Webinar 1.



Review of Child Safeguarding Statement

The Child Safeguarding Statement should be reviewed annually. In this regard, schools must use the Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment templates issued by the Department of Education. These templates were updated on **29th March 2021**. Mandatory Template 1 and Mandatory Template 2 have now been combined so that the risk assessment is included in the Child Safeguarding Statement.

The updated templates should be used by schools when next undertaking the review of their Child Safeguarding Statement. While it is important that a review be undertaken annually, it should also be undertaken if there is a need to review it for any reason.

Following the completion of the review of the Child Safeguarding Statement, the date of the review should be inserted on the Child Safeguarding Statement. Please note that this is a requirement even if no change has been made to the Child Safeguarding Statement following the review.

There are 3 templates. Mandatory template 1 is available in portrait or landscape layout. The content of each template is exactly the same and using either version will meet the requirements of the Child Protection Procedures.

- [Mandatory Template 1: Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment Template](#)
- [Mandatory Template 1: Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment Template \(Landscape version\)](#).
- [Mandatory Template 2: Checklist for Review of the Child Safeguarding Statement](#)
- [Mandatory Template 3: Notification regarding the Board of Management's review of the Child Safeguarding Statement](#)

Members are reminded that the Department has developed an number of optional templates and supporting documents for use by schools which are available [here](#).

The Guide to Child Protection and Safeguarding Inspections is available [here](#).

Information on Child Protection Monitoring by the Inspectorate is available [here](#).



Circular 0021/2021 – Coronavirus (COVID-19): Arrangements for Teachers and Special Needs Assistants

[Circular 0021/2021](#) supercedes Circular 0049/2020 and Information Notes TC 0007/2021, TC 0008/2021, TC 0009/2021, TC 0010/2021 and TC 0011/2021 and now all arrangements relating to COVID-19 related leave are contained in one document.

During the partial re-opening period for schools, temporary leave arrangements were made available to employees relating to the Parental Leave Scheme and the Unpaid Leave Scheme. Upon the full re-opening of schools, these temporary arrangements are no longer available. An employee in the High Risk group (including an employee over 60 years of age) who is medically fit for work must now attend the workplace. Boards may of course still consider applications for leave under these schemes.

However, it should be noted that the Department of Education is awaiting clarification in relation to pregnant teachers and Special Needs Assistants and that pending such clarification, pregnant teachers and special needs assistants may continue to work from home.

Section 2.5 deals with the situation where employees are on Extended Special Leave with Pay beyond 28 days for reasons relating to COVID-19.

Chapter 5 contains a list of the various types of leave and whether or not they are substitutable and will be a helpful reference document for schools.

Standardised Testing – Circular 0018/2021

[Circular 0018/2021](#) contains information in relation to Standardised Testing and other matters for the academic year 2020/2021 and subsequent years. Sections 1 and 2 of this circular set out important information for schools regarding Standardised Testing returns in respect of the 2020/21 academic year. Sections 3 to 13 provide updates on a number of curriculum and other matters which are relevant to primary schools and special schools.

While standardised tests were not administered during the 2019/20 school year due to school closures as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, these tests should be administered as normal for the 2020/21 school year. The tests should be carried out during May or early June in accordance with Circulars [0056/2011](#) and [0018/2012](#). The results of these tests must be uploaded onto the Esinet portal on or before **23rd June 2021**.

Employee Assistance Service

The EAS provides advice to all school employees on a range of issues including wellbeing, legal, financial, bereavement, conflict, mediation etc. The EAS also provides advice and support to managers and delivers interventions to help them deal with health and wellbeing issues in the workplace. Spectrum Life has been appointed to provide these services to schools.

Where appropriate, short-term counselling is available to employees and their family members. A family member includes a spouse, civil partner or dependent, where the family member can be described as a person over the age of 18 and residing at the family home. In addition, online cognitive behavioural therapy is also provided to employees.



A bespoke wellbeing portal and app is available offering a host of online services with access to live chats, videos, podcasts and blogs on topics around mental health, family life, exercise and nutrition. The platform is available via Web, iOS App or Android App.

As part of the EAS, a Mental Health Promotion Manager is also available to develop and deliver evidence based mental health and wellbeing initiatives. Spectrum Life also provides a series of webinars and presentations to promote wellbeing in schools.

How do I access the EAS?

The EAS is accessible through the dedicated **Free-phone Confidential Helpline** at **1800 411 057** and is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Alternatively, text 'Hi' to 087 369 0010 to avail of EAS support on SMS & WhatsApp. Employees can access the Spectrum Life wellbeing portal as follows:

- Sign Up link at: <https://wellbeingtogether.spectrum.life/login?org=yIVIIU17>
- Organisation code will be pre-populated. If not, organisation code is yIVIIU17
- Log in thereafter at: <https://wellbeingtogether.spectrum.life/login>
- Access the Wellbeing Webinar Calendar via the online portal at: <https://wellbeingtogether.spectrum.life/personal/my-company>
- Access the weekly Wellbeing Live Events at: <https://wellbeing.spectrum.life/wellbeing-series-2020/>

Member schools should ensure that all employees are made aware of the services provided by Spectrum Life.

Energy in Education – Spring 2021

The deadline for submitting energy usage and related data is Friday **16th April 2021**. To assist you in completing your report a range of supports and resources are available at <https://www.seai.ie/business-and-public-sector/public-sector/monitoring-and-reporting/for-schools/>.

The SEAI Monitoring and Reporting helpdesk is available at mandr@seai.ie or 01-8082012

Climate SOS – Available in Irish

Climate SOS or Aeraid SOS is now available in Irish. Free online workshops are available where a facilitator will join your class for a live online workshop with games, quizzes and experiments. Visit the SEAI website [seai.ie/climatesos](https://www.seai.ie/climatesos). You can order this and other free teaching resources, posters and stickers from SEAI online at www.seai.ie/schools.



Free online teacher and student workshops available

SEAI offers free teacher CPD for primary and post primary teachers online. These one hour workshop will give you some tools and ideas on how to engage your class on the topics of energy and sustainability. At the student workshops a facilitator can join your class for a live online workshop. The workshop will include games, online quizzes and experiments. For details and bookings visit the [SEAI website](https://www.seai.ie).



Recent Circulars

- 0001/2021 [Arrangements for Inspectorate Engagement with Primary and Special Schools January - June 2021](#)
- 0003/2021 [Waiver of Abatement of Public Sector Pensions](#)
- 0008/2021 [Graduate Certificate in the Education of Pupils on the Autism Spectrum \(AS\) for teachers working with Pupils on the AS in Special Schools, Special Classes or as Special Education Teachers in mainstream Primary and Post-Primary Schools, 2021/2022](#)
- 0009/2021 [Post-Graduate Diploma Programme of Continuing Professional Development For Special Education Teachers, 2021/2022](#)
- 0010/2021 [Teacher Fee Refund Scheme 2020](#)
- 0011/2021 [Post-Graduate Certificate/Diploma Programme of Continuing Professional Development for Teachers working with Students with Special Educational Needs \(Autism Spectrum Disorder\)](#)
- 0012/2021 [Primary schools and Special Schools in Gaeltacht Language-Planning Areas participating in the Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme, Ongoing Implementation of the Scheme \(2021 - 2022\)](#)
- 0014/2021 [Invitation to Primary Schools in Gaeltacht Language-Planning Areas to Consider Joining the Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme](#)
- 0016/2021 [Prescribed Material for the Junior Cycle Examination in 2023 and Leaving Certificate Examination in 2023](#)
- 0017/2021 [Revision of Grant Rates in 2021 for Boards of Management of Recognised Primary Schools or by ETBs in Community National Schools using Ancillary Services Grant funding](#)
- 0018/2021 [Standardised Testing and Other Matters 2020/2021 Academic Year 2020/21 and Subsequent Years](#)
- 0019/2021 [Staffing arrangements in Primary Schools for the 2021/22 school year](#)
[Appendix A](#)
[Appendix B](#)
[Appendix C](#)
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[Appendix E](#)
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[Appendix H](#)
[FAQ](#)
[Info Note: Temporary teacher allocation \(covid-19 support measures\) for primary schools during the 2021/22 school year](#)
- 0021/2021 [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Arrangements for Teachers and Special Needs Assistants](#)

