



# Newsletter

No. 73 June 2023

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## CPSMA office is open throughout the summer months

CPSMA office remains open from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday, throughout the months of July and August. We look forward to assisting with any queries you may have over the summer. Please call us on 01-6292462 or email us on [info@cpsma.ie](mailto:info@cpsma.ie)

## Message from General Secretary

### Dear Members

We, in CPSMA, would like to shine a light on the many successes in schools, every day of the year. Much of the work in schools and on boards is done far from the public gaze and public affirmation, but we would like to acknowledge some important achievements this year:

- Our schools have provided education for almost 550,000 pupils in 2,800 schools throughout the country.
- The increasing number of children with additional learning needs in primary education and the enrolment this year of almost 10,105 additional students from abroad, reflect an absolute commitment to inclusion and diversity in our primary schools.
- Every day, schools across the country deliver on the three aims of primary education:
  - to enable a child to live a full life as a child;
  - to enable a child to develop as a social being through living and co-operating with others and so contribute to the good of society;
  - to prepare a child for further education and life-long learning.

These simply could not be delivered without dedication on the part of staff and boards. Our primary schools should be proud of their contribution to children, their families and local communities and also of their contribution to the State, both now and into the future.

On behalf of the Board and the Secretariat of CPSMA, I would like to thank you and your school community for the wonderful work you do in the service of all the pupils in our schools. I do hope you get a well-deserved break over the summer.

## CPSMA Ballraíocht

Is mian le CPSMA buíochas a ghabháil leat agus le do bhoird as ucht bhur dtacaíocht leanúnach agus bhur mballraíocht. Anois, tá na táillí ballraíochta de dhíth don scoilbhliain 2023/24 agus seolfar na sonraí athnuachan ballraíochta chugaibh go luath

I measc na mbuntáistí ballraíochta tá:

- Comhairle ar leith do scoileanna aonair- tré ghaeilge nó tré bhéarla
- Tréanáil do Bhoird Bainistaíochta
- Rochtain ar rannóg na mball ar láithreán gréasáin CPSMA
- Nuachtlitir CPSMA
- Seimineáir do Phríomhoidí
- Aip baill CPSMA

Ag súil go mór le bheith ag obair le boird bainistíochtaí agus le príomhoidí don scoilbhliain 2023/24.

## CPSMA Membership

CPSMA would like to thank you and your board for your continued support and membership. Our annual subscription for the 2023/2024 school year is now due and we will be writing to you shortly in relation to renewal of your membership. Membership benefits include the following:

- Specialised advice tailored to individual schools
- Board of Management training
- Access to the members section of the CPSMA website
- CPSMA Newsletter
- Seminars for Principals
- CPSMA Members' App

We very much look forward to working with principals and boards of management in the 2023/2024 school year.

## CPSMA Annual General Meeting 2023

The Minister for Education, Norma Foley attended the CPSMA AGM in Limerick last month. Members can listen to her address to delegates [here](#). Seamus Mulconry, General Secretary of CPSMA responded to her, raising issues of concern to members including the [administration overload of principals](#), the [underfunding](#) of primary schools and the [substitute crisis](#).



## Schoolbooks Grant Scheme

The Schoolbooks Grant provides for free schoolbooks, workbooks and copybooks for all children in recognised primary and special schools, including books which form part of the patrons' programmes.

Where surplus funds allow, the grant should be used to eliminate costs of related classroom items including pens, pencils and erasers. Any surplus grant can be used to purchase shared books, audio books and other materials to increase literacy (in English, Irish or other languages) and numeracy resources in a school. Alternatively the surplus can be carried forward to the next school year.

Parents will no longer be required to make any contribution towards the cost of schoolbooks, including the cost of any workbooks and copybooks.

The rate of funding will be €96 per pupil, based on the school's enrolment figures at the end of September 2022. Schools that have had exceptional increases in admissions after this date, may apply for additional funding, by emailing [freeprimaryschoolbooks@education.gov.ie](mailto:freeprimaryschoolbooks@education.gov.ie)

Details on the Schoolbooks Scheme [Guidelines](#), a [quick reference guide](#) and [information for parents are all available](#).

The Department of Education has put in place a grant payment, for schools, for administrative support. This grant can be used to employ an individual to work for a specified number of days from April through to August 2023 to carry out administrative work on the scheme. Payment must be dealt with by the school as payment of an individual(s)/employee(s).

The specific duties are to be determined by the school management but can include the following: placing orders with school book shops and suppliers, checking delivery of orders from schoolbook shops and suppliers, covering schoolbooks, preparing and tracking sets of books and related classroom resources for individual classes/pupils, liaising with schoolbook shops and suppliers and classroom teachers.

Some of the key tasks involved are outlined in Appendix 2 of the [Guidelines](#) but this is not an exhaustive list.

The individual employed can be an existing member of staff of the school such as: the principal/ deputy principal, a teacher, a special needs assistant (SNA), the school secretary, or an individual deemed suitable by school management to carry out this role effectively.

The number of days allocated are based on the enrolment size of the school. The administration support grant will be paid separately to the schoolbook grant and will issue to primary schools before the end of June.



## Primary Inspectorate Update

In April 2023, the Inspectorate issued an update to schools which contained resources associated with the work of the Inspectorate which may be of assistance to schools, in particular, in relation to school self-evaluation.

[School Self-Evaluation: Next Steps, September 2022 – June 2026](#)

[School Self-Evaluation Information for primary pupils](#)

In addition, the following publications from the Inspectorate will be helpful to schools in relation to inspections and other areas .

[Code of Practice for the Department of Education Inspectorate \(2022\)](#)

[Guide to Inspection in Primary and Special Schools \(2022\)](#)

[Looking at Our School 2022 – A Quality Framework for Primary and Special Schools](#)

[Actions by Schools to Prevent and Tackle Bullying: Report on Focus Groups with Primary Pupils and Post-Primary pupils \(2022\)](#)

[Report on the Implementation of Aspects of Anti-bullying Measures in Schools \(2022\)](#)

## Employee Assistance Service (Spectrum Life)

The Employment Assistance Service (EAS), funded by the Department of Education, provides advice to all school employees and their families on a range of issues including wellbeing, legal, financial, bereavement, conflict and mediation.

This service also provides advice and support to managers and delivers interventions to help them deal with health and wellbeing issues in the workplace.

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 are 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.

Currently, Spectrum Life are providing the EAS and they also provide a series of webinars and presentations.

Members can read the [EAS Guide](#) to see what is available to employees and can access [Further information on the Employee Assistance Scheme](#) which may be of benefit to employees and their families in this last month of June or over the summer months.



# Recruitment

## **Filling permanent teaching positions (other than principal/deputy principal open competition positions)**

Most Dioceses have cleared their **Main Panels** at this stage and permanent positions which were not required for a CID holding teacher in the school, will have been filled from the Main Panel. (See [Circular 0006/2023](#), and [Frequently Asked Questions on Circular 0006/2023](#) in this regard).

Permanent positions not required for the Main Panel may be filled using the Supplementary Panel once these Panels have been released in the relevant panel area. (See [Arrangements for the Operation of the Supplementary Redeployment Panel for the 2023/24 school year FAQs to Circular 0074/2022](#)). Please note that fixed term positions may **not** be filled using the Supplementary Panel.

## **How does the Board engage with the Supplementary Panel?**

The Board of Management has **three** options for filling the permanent vacancy through the Supplementary Panel:

1. The Board of Management may select a teacher from the Supplementary Panel, without an interview process or;
2. Where there is more than one teacher on the Supplementary Panel, the Board of Management of the school can send a request by email inviting some or all of the teachers on the Supplementary Panel 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 or;
3. Schools have the option of using a website, i.e. [www.educationposts.ie](http://www.educationposts.ie) and [www.staffroom.ie](http://www.staffroom.ie) as a means of engaging with the Supplementary Redeployment Panel. This can be done by the school using the website as the means to invite teachers on the relevant Supplementary Panel to express an interest in a permanent post that falls to be filled from that Supplementary Panel. Teachers may only respond to expressions of interest from within their own relevant panel area. The school has the option of supplementing the list of teachers who express an interest in the post with other teacher(s) that are remaining on the Supplementary Panel (who had not responded with an expression of interest in the post).

## **Key requirements when using website to engage with Supplementary Panel**

- Teachers are to be given a period of 5 calendar days to express an interest in the post.
- A school is required to fill the post from the cohort of teachers that expressed interest in the post. However, the school has the option of supplementing the list of teachers who express an interest in the post with other teacher(s) that are remaining on the Supplementary Panel (who had not responded with an expression of interest in the post). The filling of the post in this manner may be done with or without an interview process.
- If no teacher(s) on the relevant Supplementary Panel express an interest in the post, the school is required to extend the period of time for seeking expressions of interest by an additional 2 calendar days.
- If at that stage there are still no teachers who have expressed interest in the post, the school may proceed to fill its permanent vacancy in the normal manner via the standard public advertisement.



- In such a scenario, the school is required to state explicitly in the public advertisement the date that expressions of interest were sought, the date it was extended and confirmation that the school is now proceeding to fill the vacancy through open recruitment.
- There is a prescribed wording on page 8 of [FAQs to Circular 0074/2022](#) which should be used in any advert placed by a school seeking expressions of interest from teachers on the relevant supplementary panel, and any follow up advert by the school extending the timeframe of the initial advert by two calendar days, and any subsequent advertisement to fill the position through open recruitment.

Contact with teachers on the Supplementary Panel in relation to invitation to interview/offer of a post should be through **email**. Failure to respond to any invitation to interview within three calendar days will mean the teacher will forfeit his/her place on the Supplementary Panel and s/he will be removed from the Supplementary Panel.

Once there is more than one teacher on the Supplementary Panel, a Board of Management has the right to interview. Teachers that are invited to interview by a school must attend the interview if the school is of the same patronage as the teacher's Supplementary Panel area and is within 45km of the teacher's base school. If a teacher does not attend the interview, s/he will forfeit his/her place on the Supplementary Panel and s/he will be removed from the Supplementary Panel.

Boards of Management should note that the Supplementary Panel is not used to fill fixed term positions in schools. Teachers on the Supplementary Panel are not entitled to be redeployed into fixed term vacancies.

Boards of Management are referred to [FAQs to Circular 0074/2022](#) for further details in relation to the operation of the Supplementary Panel.

Once a teacher has been selected for appointment from either the Main or the Supplementary Panel, schools should issue the teacher with a [Letter of Offer for a Panel Appointment](#) (Checklist available [here](#)).

When written confirmation of the acceptance of the terms and conditions outlined in the Letter of Offer has been received by email, the Board of Management must notify the Panel Operator within the following 24 hour period.

The school should arrange for the [Main Panel update form](#) or the [Supplementary Panel update form](#) to be completed and forwarded to the Department's Primary Teacher Allocations Section. [The 2023/2024 Primary Teacher Appointment Form](#) should then be sent to the Primary Teachers Payroll Section of the Department of Education.

### **Filling Principal and Deputy Principal (open competition) positions**

These positions are not subject to the Panel and must be filled in accordance with the procedures set out in [Circular 0044/2019](#). It is important to note that the consent of the Patron is required, if these positions are to be advertised during July or August.

Once a principal or deputy principal has been selected for appointment, schools should issue a [Letter of Offer for a Principal \(Open Competition\)](#), or [Letter of Offer for a Deputy Principal \(Open Competition\)](#) (NB first log into cpsma.ie to access) (Checklist available [here](#)).

[The 2023/2024 Primary Teacher Appointment Form](#) should be sent to the Primary Teachers Payroll Section of the Department of Education.



### Fixed term positions

It is important to note that fixed term positions may now be advertised in Dioceses where the Main Panel has cleared and the Department has given the Diocese the authority to proceed with the advertising of fixed term positions. The positions should be filled in accordance with [Circular 0044/2019](#).

Once a teacher has been selected for appointment, schools should issue a [Letter of offer for a fixed term contract](#) (NB first log into cpsma.ie to access) (Checklist available [here](#)) and a [Fixed Term contract of employment](#) (Checklist available [here](#)). A [2023/2024 Primary Teacher Appointment Form](#) should be completed and returned to the Primary Teachers Payroll Division of the Department of Education.

### Substitute positions

Substitute positions covering maternity, parental and other such specified purpose leave may be advertised **without** reference to the Panel. Such recruitment must be in accordance with [Circular 0044/2019](#). Once a teacher has been selected for appointment, schools should issue a [Letter of offer for specified purpose contract](#) (Checklist available [here](#)), and a [Contract for specified purpose](#) (Checklist available [here](#).)

### Garda Vetting of teachers

Schools should ensure that all teachers have complied with Garda vetting requirements (set out in [Circular 0031/2016](#)) *prior* to taking up employment with the school. The Teaching Council processes the vetting of teachers and teachers should be requested to share a link to their Garda vetting with the school via the Digitaly CORE software provided by the Teaching Council. This will be in the form of an email containing a link, which when clicked on, will display the vetting disclosure. The school should print a copy of the vetting disclosure to keep on file.

### Recruitment of SNAs

SNAs should be recruited in accordance with [Circular 0051/2019](#) and [Circular 0026/2023](#). Once an SNA has been selected for appointment, subject to vetting and Medmark approval, they should be issued with a contract of employment available from [CPSMA](#). A completed [SNA Appointment Form](#) should be sent to the Non Teaching Staff Payroll Division of the Department of Education.

### Garda vetting of SNAs

All SNAs are required to be vetted by the school in which they are to be employed via the local Diocesan Education Office. They must complete a Statutory Declaration and Form of Undertaking prior to commencing employment with the school. (See [Circular 0031/2016](#) in this regard).

### General Matters

It is important that letters of offer and contracts, where relevant should be issued and completed before an employee commences employment in a school. Please note that in the case of permanent positions, there is no permanent contract required and a letter of offer signed by both parties will suffice.

CPSMA has designed step by step [Training in Recruitment](#) for all positions which may be helpful to schools.

**Tá teacht ar na conarthaí agus seicliostaí ar fad as Gaeilge ar ár leathanach Cheapacháin Múinteoirí.**



## Standardised Testing and Reports

The results of standardised tests must be uploaded onto the Esinet portal on or before **Wednesday 21st June 2023**. Schools are referred to [Circular 0022/2023](#) for more information in this regard.

### Reporting and Using the Results of Assessments to Improve Pupil Learning

Schools are reminded of their reporting obligations as per Part 7 of [Circular 0056/2011](#).

These include:

- Reporting to parents: Schools are reminded that they should issue a written report, explaining the results to parents in sufficient time, before the closure of the school for the summer vacation, to allow parents a reasonable opportunity to seek meetings with the teacher(s) and/or principal to discuss the written report, if necessary.
- Using report card templates: All primary schools must use the standard report card template (available at [www.ncca.ie](http://www.ncca.ie)) for reporting to parents on pupils' progress and achievement at school;
- Reporting information from standardised tests to their board of management;
- Transferring assessment data in instances when pupils move to a different school;
- Reporting standardised test results to the Department of Education via Esinet portal – [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)

### Transitions – Primary school to Post Primary school

Since 2014/15, schools are required to use the Education Passport materials to support the reporting and transfer of pupil information at the end of sixth class. Schools should ensure that an Education Passport for each pupil is sent to the relevant post primary school following confirmation of enrolment and, ideally, by the end of June. All materials supporting this process are available at [www.ncca.ie/transfer](http://www.ncca.ie/transfer).

The transfer of children in need of additional support can be facilitated through the NEPS Student Transfer Form which should be completed and signed by parents before sending to the relevant post-primary school.

To ensure the allocation of specialised resources, such as special needs assistants, assistive technology or school transport, in a timely manner NCSE application deadlines should be considered. All materials supporting this process are available [here](#).

## New Boards of Management

Next term, CPSMA will be reminding schools and boards of management that the current term for boards of management will come to an end in November 2023 and new boards will require to be elected. In the new school year, we will be providing step by step guidance and advice to schools on the relevant election procedures and timelines to ensure boards are in place when required.





## Scholarship for Remick Masters in Educational Leadership

Congratulations to Andrea Long, Principal, Lower Illies National School, Ballymangan, Co. Donegal and Clíona Galvin, Principal, Scoil Mhuire, Newbridge, Co. Kildare who have been awarded full scholarships to study for a Masters in Educational Leadership on the Remick Masters in Educational Leadership Programme, at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana.

Clíona and Andrea were members of the second cohort of the ACE Ireland Emerging Leaders Fellowship, run in collaboration with CPSMA, the Scottish Catholic Education Service (SCES) and the Catholic Schools Trustee Service in Northern Ireland.

The Emerging Leaders Fellowship seeks to provide the next generation of school leaders with the skills, strategies and networks to shape and lead transformational Catholic schools. The fellowship brings together a talented group of twenty- four emerging leaders from all over Ireland and Scotland each year, for a series of innovative courses in the major domains of Catholic school leadership: Instructional Leadership, Executive Management, School Culture and Integrated Leadership.

Upon completing the Fellowship, Clíona and Andrea were accepted onto the Remick Masters in Educational Leadership Program and will travel to Notre Dame this summer to begin their study on campus. The Remick Programme blends on-campus summer classes with applied online coursework during the academic year. They will join Kieran Kelly, Principal of Togher Boys National School in Cork, who is returning for his second summer and we wish them all every success in their studies.

The third cohort of the Emerging Leaders began their Fellowship in March of this year, with a wonderful weekend at the Notre Dame Global Centre at Kylemore Abbey, studying school culture. Application materials for our fourth cohort will be available in October 2023. For more Information contact the Director of ACE Ireland, Angela Mitchell at [aceireland@nd.edu](mailto:aceireland@nd.edu).



Members of the third cohort of the Emerging Leaders Fellowship at Kylemore Abbey in March 2023 pictured with Anne Fay, Chairperson CPSMA.



## Recent Circulars

- [0016/2023](#) Policy on Gaeltacht Education - Invitation to Primary schools in Gaeltacht language planning areas to consider joining the Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme
- [0018/2023](#) Special Needs Assistant Allocation 2023/24
- [0021/2023](#) Say Yes to Languages – primary languages sampler module
- [0022/2023](#) Standardised Testing 2023
- [0025/2023](#) Voluntary Search and Rescue Leave for Registered Teachers employed in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools
- [0026/2023](#) Recruitment of Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) - Supplementary Assignment Arrangements for the 2023/2024 school year

## Oifig CPSMA oscailte le linn an tsamhraidh

Coiméadtar oifig CPSMA ar oscailt ó 9.00 go dtí 5.00 i.n. Luan go hAoine, le linn mí Iúil agus mí Lúnasa. Táimid ag súil le tacú libh le pé ceseanna a bheidh agat le linn an tsamhraidh. Cuir glaoch orainn ar 01-6292462 nó seol ríomhphost chugainn chuig [info@cpsma.ie](mailto:info@cpsma.ie)

Idir an dá linn, tá súil againn go mbainfidh sibh taitneamh as sos an tsamhraidh agus taimid ag tnúth le oibriú libh uile arís don scoilbhliain nua.

