



Newsletter

No. 71 December 2022

Message from General Secretary

Dear Member,

Christmas is almost here and as always, it brings with it a welcome opportunity to relax, celebrate the season and prepare for the coming year. When we reflect on the past year, we can all be immensely proud of the sterling work of schools. Nowhere is this more evident than in your work welcoming over 13,000 Ukrainian pupils into our primary schools. In the exceptionally caring response to all newly arrived children, including those who have arrived as refugees or asylum seekers, we see the message of Christmas lived out in our schools.

Like every other year, this year brought its own mix of other successes and challenges. The full return to pre-covid routines gave a sense of security, but the shortage of teachers and a substitution crisis, has caused unprecedented staffing challenges in many schools. CPSMA appreciated the very strong response rate to our survey in this area. We brought the facts as you reported them to us to the Department and are continuing to engage with the DE on this priority area .

Every day, CPSMA has the privilege of engaging with principals and chairpersons, who seek support from our education advisors. This year ,we have had over 13,000 calls on a very wide range of issues. We are particularly glad to have newly appointed persons make contact with us and we appreciate that there are times when there is a real benefit in simply discussing an issue with another. We are here to support you.

I would like to thank our Chair, Anne Fay, the board and subcommittees of CPSMA and the Diocesan Education officers nationally, for their hard work and support for our schools during the year and on their behalf, I thank you, for the extraordinary work you do for the children in your care.

I wish you all a happy and a restful Christmas and New Year.

Seamus Mulconry



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Admission Statements

[Circular 0075/2022](#) and the [FAQ's](#) in relation thereto require schools to amend their Admission Statements in line with the Education (Provision in respect of Children with Special Educational Needs) Act 2022. This allows the Minister for Education to direct that a school make certain provisions for children with special educational needs. The amendment should be made by 20 December 2022 and should be posted on the school website and be available in the school from 31 January 2023 onwards. In summary:

Amend your Admission Statement as soon as possible by inserting the text set out in the **NOTE** below into Section 3 of your Admission Policy . (The amendments can be ratified at your *next* Board meeting and so there is no need to call a board meeting before Christmas for this) .

1. **Confirm** to your Patron that you have made the appropriate amendments. There is a template letter/email from the Department for this purpose, contained in Appendix A to [Changes to Admission Policy Nov 2022](#). However, your Patron may have requested that you use a different letter and you should follow your Patron's instructions in this regard.
2. **Ratify** the amendments at your *next* Board Meeting and minute this ratification.
3. **Website:** Make sure that the amended document is on your school website by **31 January 2023** and advise parents and staff accordingly.

NOTE: The text to be added to Section 3 in your policy is as follows:

"**School Name**, will cooperate with the NCSE in the performance by the Council of functions under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 in relation to the provision of education to children with special educational needs, including in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when required to do so by the Council."

"**School Name**, will comply with any direction served on the board or the patron under Section 37A and 67(4)(b) of the Education Act 1998."



Anti-bullying Update

The Department of Education has launched [Cinéaltas: Action Plan on Bullying](#). This is an overarching framework document which will require further development before schools will be required to take any actions in this regard. The following is a summary of the actions proposed, under the four pillars of the Wellbeing Framework.

1. Culture and Environment

- Creation of a Cinéaltas charter. The DE will provide support for schools re same
- The designation of a staff member to promote wellbeing in schools
- CPD for schools provided by PDST
- WSEs to include wellbeing focus, including how schools deal with bullying allegations
- Annual report from the Inspectorate on the views of children, young people and parents on how schools are preventing and addressing bullying

2. Curriculum (Teaching and Learning)

- Initial Teacher Education and leadership graduate programmes to be updated to include measures to prevent and address bullying
- Training for boards of management regarding oversight of anti-bullying in their schools
- CPD for school staff provided by PDST
- Accessible training for parents on prevention and dealing with bullying incidents
- Upcoming report on Traveller culture to be published by NCCA
- DCU Anti-bullying programme FUSE to be made accessible to all schools and further modules to be created via Department of Education funding

3. Policy

- Data on recording bullying allegations to be retained by schools and annually anonymised & forwarded to DE, including nature of allegations, approaches to addressing and outcomes
- Annual report to be published on same by DE
- 2013 anti-bullying procedures to be updated
- Review of current Code of Behaviour NEWB guidelines to be undertaken
- Role of Online Safety Commissioner to be created

4. Relationships and Partnerships

- Schools to engage with pupils to promote pupil led anti-bullying initiatives
- Student councils to be established which are representative of pupil populations
- DE unit to be established to represent the voice of the child in policy development
- School clusters to be encouraged to share good wellbeing practice and innovations relating to anti-bullying measures
- Pilot programme of counselling supports for primary schools to be established
- Increase in the number of NEPS psychologists to be appointed
- Additional resources to be designed and published to support schools in this area
- DE aims to increase the number of students from underrepresented groups entering Initial Teacher Education.



Christmas Plays and Concerts

As parents are invited by the school to attend various school events, such as the school Christmas nativity play, the issue of photographs and video recording arises. Firstly, when inviting parents as guests, the school must decide whether they are to be given permission to make video recordings or take photographs at the event in question. Generally schools do permit this, but where parents are permitted to take photographs or videos, the school should make it clear from the start that any images taken must be for private use only and ask for them not to be shared on social media. The school may wish to provide written guidance on this to parents beforehand and/or make an announcement at the start of the event.



If a school intends to record a video of a school concert or nativity play, then it will need specific written consent to do so. If children do not have consent for inclusion in such a video, then the child's face must be technologically blurred from any images or video recorded.

At the end of the day, common sense should prevail and the Data Protection Commission has a very useful article on [taking photos at school events](#) which makes this point clearly.

Family Law Matters

Issues of family law arise frequently in schools today and schools can be unwittingly brought into these matters. A typical example of this might be where a school is requested by a parent to write a letter indicating how a child is getting on at school, under the current custody/access arrangements. CPSMA advises schools not to become involved in these proceedings, if at all possible.

It can be difficult to refuse to write such letters, especially when parents are going through such difficult times. We recommend that you explain to the parent in question that the school has to be there for the child and you have been advised not to become involved in the any dispute between the child's parents.

The latest school report can of course be shared with both guardians which helps ensure that the school commentary is related to educational matters.

Sometimes a party to a dispute will request the attendance of the school principal in court. If you are asked to attend, you should insist on a witness summons to attend, which states that you have been requested *by the court* to attend and give evidence. If you are issued with a summons to attend court or you have been requested to write a letter by a parent, please phone us at the office for support in this regard.



Child Safeguarding Statement

Boards of Management are required to annually review their Child Safeguarding Statement, in line with the Children First Act 2015. CPSMA recently asked the Inspectorate for their perspective on best practice when reviewing the Child Safeguarding Statement, including the risk assessment and their expectations around this during child protection inspections.

Podcast (15 mins)

On foot of this, CPSMA has created a [15 minute podcast](#) which, we hope, will be of assistance to schools completing the annual Child Safeguarding Statement review.

Additional Resources

[Resources](#) referenced in the podcast include a staff child protection quiz, prompts for seeking feedback from parents and pupils, Department of Education mandatory and optional child protection template documents, as well as links to relevant training for board members, DLPs, Deputy DLPs and school staff.

Supplementary Panel

The purpose of [Circular 0074/2022](#) is to set out the arrangements for access to the supplementary redeployment panels for the 2023/2024 school year, for eligible registered primary teachers in fixed-term/temporary positions (this includes substitute positions and part-time positions) in recognised primary schools. The Supplementary Panel is **not** used to fill fixed term positions in schools.

Completed forms must be received in the Department on or before 5 pm on **Friday, 16 December 2022** at the following address:

Supplementary Panel Application, Primary Teacher Allocations Section,
Department of Education, Cornamaddy, Athlone, Co. Westmeath. N37 X659.

Please note that application forms will only be accepted by post. Proof of postage should be retained by the teacher. Late applications will **not** be accepted.

Queries may be emailed to: supplementarypanel@education.gov.ie

Please bring the contents of this circular to the attention of any relevant staff in your school.

Ukrainian Students

Many schools have received additional EAL and SEN hours in respect of Ukrainian students. These extra teaching hours are allocated on the On-Line Claims System (OLCS) after the letter granting them has been received by the school. Teachers should be appointed on a specified purpose contract for the provision of additional SET/EAL teaching hours to Ukrainian students .

SNA's appointed in respect of Ukrainian children should be appointed using the SNA appointment form and submitted to SNA payroll. SNAs should be appointed on a specified purpose contract to cover the additional SNA allocation for Ukrainian children.

Specified purpose contracts for both teachers and SNAs are available at www.cpsma.ie – Members Documents/Appointments.



Cost of Living Grant

[Circular 0077/2022](#) provides for a one-off grant to schools to cover the increased cost of living. This grant will be calculated based on recognised pupil enrolment at 30th September 2021. The standard mainstream and the enhanced per capita rates payable in respect of this once-off cost of living grant are set out in Appendix A to Circular 0077/2022. This payment will issue shortly to schools. The FSSU have recently issued [guidance](#) to schools in respect of this grant.

School Year Standardisation

[Circular 0072/2022](#) provides for the Standardisation of the School Year in respect of Primary & Post-Primary Schools for the years 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26. In addition, guidance for schools in relation to making up for time lost due to unforeseen school closures is included at Appendix B of this circular.

Protected Disclosures

The Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform has signed an order setting **1 January 2023** as the commencement date for the Protected Disclosures (Amendment) Act 2022.

This Act amends the Protected Disclosures Act 2014 to give effect to EU Directive 2019/1937 (“the Whistleblowing Directive”) and to reform the statutory protections in place for whistle-blowers.

CPSMA will advise schools on the implications of this legislation early in the New Year.

HSE letter to schools regarding infections

The HSE has issued a [Letter](#) to schools regarding Group A Strep Infection and the significant increase in viral infections. They have requested that it be sent to parents, guardians and staff. They have also issued schools with posters advising parents to keep their child at home when unwell.



Polasaí oideachas lán-Ghaeilge

Tá an Roinn Oideachais tar éis tús a chur le próiseas comhairliúcháin phoiblí, ag lorg tuairimí ó pháirtithe leasmhara, chun eolas a sholáthar d'fhonn polasaí nua a fhorbairt don oideachas lán-Ghaeilge lasmuigh den Ghaeltacht.

Fáiltíonn CPSMA roimh an bpróiseas seo agus molaimid go láidir do bhoird bainistíochtaí na ngaelscoileanna tabhairt faoin gceistneoir a chomhlíonadh tar éis machnamh a dhéanamh ar a bpolasaí féin don oideachas lán-Ghaeilge. Ba chóir pobal na scoile ina h-iomláine a bheith ar an eolas faoin tábhacht a bhaineann leis an gcomhairliúchán seo don earnáil agus iarrtar ar bhaill bhoird, mhúinteoirí, chúntóirí agus thuismitheoirí an ceistneoir a chomhlíonadh chomh luath agus is féidir. Is é **an séú lá déag d'Eanáir** an spriocdáta le haghaidh na ceistneoirí a chomhlíonadh. Is féidir le scoileanna nó le daoine aonaracha aighneachtaí a sheoladh isteach freisin. Brúigh [anseo](#) chun teacht ar Cheistneoir na Roinne.

Seolfar ceistneoir gairid chuig scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge lasmuigh den ghaeltacht go luath an tseachtain seo chugainn le cabhrú linn aighneacht a ullmhú le seoladh chuig an Roinn roimh an spriocdáta san Athbhliain.

Tuigeann CPSMA gur am fíor-ghnóthach é seo ins na scoileanna agus iad ag ullmhú don Nollaig a cheiliúradh. Bheimís ana- bhuíoch de scoileanna dá bhféadfaidís a gcuid smaointí a roinnt linn sa cheistneoir gairid de chuid CPSMA.

Report on the Consultation on the Draft Primary Curriculum

The [Report on the Consultation on the Draft Primary Curriculum Framework](#) is now published.

Two documents are published alongside this report:

- [Technical report](#) detailing the original verbatim questionnaire responses
- [Report on the Consultation with Children on the Draft Primary Curriculum Framework](#).

In addition, the written submissions, for which permission to publish was given, are published on the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) website along with the above documents.

You can find all materials related to the consultation reports [here](#).

EPSEN Act Consultation

The Department of Education is undertaking a review of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act 2004. Online surveys for parents, students and school staff will open soon and will be publicised and available on gov.ie/epsenreview. Individuals or organisations that wish to make a submission to the review can do so [here](#). It is also possible to make a submission by emailing epsen@educaton.gov.ie.



FSSU Guidance on electronic banking

FSSU have issued guidance [Using Electronic Banking for Making Payments –FSSU](#) in relation to electronic banking which will be of interest to schools and boards of management.

Catholic Schools Week

The theme for Catholic Schools Week 2023 is 'Catholic Schools: Walking Together in Faith and Love'. This year Catholic Schools Week will be celebrated from 22nd to 29th January, 2023. Resources for Catholic Schools Week will be available to download in early January 2023 from [Catholic Education Partnership](#).

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. The following 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.

Frost and Freeze Protection during periods of severe or prolonged cold weather

- Maintain heat in the building
- Fit frost thermostats and ensure that they are correctly set, i.e. 35°F or 2°C if located indoors, or 32°F or 0°C if outdoors. These will automatically activate your heating system once the ambient temperature drops to 2 degrees Celsius or below
- Remember to protect your oil supply against freezing. This may happen if temperatures of 12°F or -9°C prevail. The oil supply pipe can be protected with weather-proof insulation and a tarpaulin cover will provide emergency protection to the tank
- Leave internal doors open to protect unheated or poorly heated compartments, but always subject to applicable fire safety rules and regulations. Make sure all radiators are on
- If air vents in the boiler room are closed off, leave sufficient opening to allow an adequate supply of air for combustion
- If heat is not to be maintained in a building no longer in use, then the water supply should be isolated and all sanitary and domestic water services drained
- Make sure all exposed pipes are properly lagged/insulated to at least 19mm along their entire length, including all joints and corners
- Make sure that all tanks in the attic space are fully lagged on all sides (excluding the underneath) to at least 80mm standard
- Inline pumps and automatic shut off valves can provide invaluable back-up protection if your heating system fails or has been inadvertently switched off.



Recent Circulars

- [0069/2022](#) Enhancement to Irish Sign Language (ISL) Scheme provision
- [0072/2022](#) Standardisation of the School Year in respect of Primary & Post-Primary Schools for the years 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26
- [0074/2022](#) Panel access for fixed-term/temporary (this includes substitute) and part-time teachers to the Supplementary Redeployment Panel for the 2023/24 school year
- [0075/2022](#) Commencement of the Education (Provision in respect of Children with Special Educational Needs) Act 2022 and Commencement of remaining sections of the Education (Admission to Schools) Act 2018
- [0075/2022](#) FAQs
- [0077/2022](#) Once-off cost of living measure to support increased school running costs
- [0079/2022](#) Bereavement Leave Scheme for Special Needs Assistants employed in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools

Please note that CPSMA office phone lines will be closed from Friday 23rd December and will re-open on Monday 9th January 2023.

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

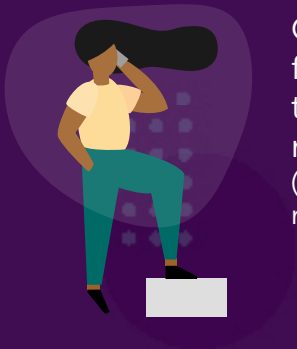


Your Employee Assistance Service In The Moment Support

Your EAS is available 24/7, 365 days a year and offers in the moment support to employees. Our team is always there to chat and provide immediate support for multiple concerns and difficulties - in the workplace or at home. EAS support is there for you to process how you are feeling and get advice in the moment, as you need it.



If you are experiencing a crisis or just want someone to talk to urgently, you can access your EAS at any time to speak freely with a Case Manager and they will provide support and guidance.



Calls are not limited in length or frequency. You are free to access this type of support for an unlimited number of times.
(scheduled sessions of counselling may be recommended if there is a recurring issue)



You can also call for advice on supporting another team member or colleague (all calls are confidential).



**You can reach your EAS Service to
speak to a Case Manager on:**

Freephone: 1800 411 057

SMS & WhatsApp:

Text 'Hi' to 087 369 0010