



Newsletter

No. 72 March 2023

Message from General Secretary

Dear Members

The launch of the new [Primary Curriculum Framework](#) is a historic moment for our country. CPSMA is pleased to acknowledge and celebrate this significant event of national importance. We recognise the work undertaken by NCCA and thank them for their ongoing engagement with stakeholders. We now call on the Department of Education to ensure that our schools and teachers are given adequate funding, time, buildings, resources and supports to enable them to engage with the new curriculum framework in a meaningful way.

CPSMA takes this opportunity to wish all chairpersons, principals, school staff, board members and of course, pupils, a very happy Easter and we hope that Easter 2023 provides you with an opportunity for some much needed rest and renewal.



Free Primary School Books Scheme

[The Free Primary Schoolbooks Scheme](#) will remove the cost of funding schoolbooks from parents of children in primary schools and special schools. They will no longer be required to make any contribution towards the cost of schoolbooks, including the cost of any workbooks and copybooks. Where the funding allows, some related classroom resources may also be provided by schools under the new scheme.

[The Guidelines for Free Primary Schoolbooks Scheme](#) in schools and the [Quick Reference Guide for schools](#) will assist primary schools and special schools to implement the scheme in advance of the 2023/24 school year. Member schools will note that payment has been provided for an administrator of the School Books Scheme for a number of days, depending on the size of school.

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Please note that CPSMA will be closed on Good Friday and will re-open on Monday 17th April 2023.

"Beannachtaí na Cásca oraibh uile"

Panel Matters

[Circular 0006/2023](#) and [FAQ to Circular 0006/2023](#) inform all primary and special school management and staff of the staffing arrangements for all schools for the 2023-2024 school year. CPSMA prepared a [Podcast](#) on this Circular (known as the Staffing Schedule). The following Staffing Schedule Checklist may assist those who are new to the process, but if you just wish to remind yourself about the Main and Supplementary Panels, you can skip straight to point 10.

Staffing Schedule Checklist

1. **Appendix A** contains the number of mainstream posts, or mainstream class teachers (MCT) that a school is entitled to for the 2023/2024 school year.
2. **Appendix C** contains the NCSE Special Education Teaching (SET) Allocation for fulltime/shared and part time posts. These will for the most part be the same as current allocation and existing clusters should remain in place. If a school cannot arrange to cluster to a total of 25 hours, contact primaryallocations@education.gov.ie for further guidance.
3. **Appendix F** contains an appeals mechanism for schools, to an independent Appeals Board. Details of the appeal process, criteria and application form are available in Appendix F. If a school wishes to appeal it's allocation, all necessary paperwork should be verified and submitted in full to the Primary Staffing Appeals Board, Department of Education, Cornamaddy, Athlone, Co. Westmeath as soon as possible.
4. **Principal Release Days** entitle schools with a teaching principal to combine their release days to form a full-time fixed term position. Schools with one special class will have 4 additional release days in the 2023/24 school year. One school is designated as the base school and is responsible for the recruitment of the teacher. This is a fixed-term position for the year and should be notified to the Diocesan office. Clusters in place for the 2022/2023 school year should remain in place, unless one school has attained administrative status. Such schools should contact Primary Allocations (primaryallocations@education.gov.ie)
5. **A Special Class** may require an additional teacher, but this is required to be authorised by the NCSE and does not relate to the Staffing Circular. A second special class will result in a teaching principal being granted administrative status.
6. **A Projected Enrolment Post** may be applied for where a school's enrolment on 30th September 2023 is projected to exceed the enrolment on 30th September 2022: a) by a minimum numerical increase (depending on the school size) and b) by having a stipulated excess of 5 pupils above the required appointment figure. Schools should submit a completed application form for an additional teaching post(s) on the basis of projected enrolment to the Department's Primary Teacher Allocations Section, primaryallocations@education.gov.ie. It is important to note that the school's staffing will be adjusted downwards in light of the projected enrolment not being achieved on 30th September 2023. Precise details of this application are set out in Section 1.3 of [Circular 0006/2023](#).
7. **Appendix E** contains the Panel Application Form for Permanent / CID Holding Teachers access to the Main Redeployment Panel, in the event that a school is losing a post for any reason. This ensures that the teacher, who is normally the most junior teacher in the school, is placed on the appropriate Main Panel. If this has not yet been completed, please complete now and send it to the Primary Teacher Allocations Section, Department of Education, Cornamaddy, Athlone, Co. Westmeath as soon as possible.



8. **Permanent or fixed term/ specified purpose vacancies** of at least one year's duration should be notified to the school's Diocesan Secretary within 5 working days of the vacancy becoming known to the school. However, it is important to note that all principal and deputy principal vacancies must now be filled through open competition and not through the Panel. Information on this process can be found in Chapter 4 of [Circular 0044/2019](#).
9. **Contracts of Indefinite Duration (CIDs)** should be considered before filling a teaching vacancy and in this regard, schools have to be sure as to whether or not there is a teacher in the school with a CID or an entitlement to a CID. A CID affords an employee the same rights as a permanent member of staff.

A teacher may have an entitlement to a CID, if they have completed two years of continuous service in the same school and there is what is termed a "viable post" available in the school, for the next school year. CPSMA has created a short [podcast](#) to help make sense of CIDs.

There are two tasks relating to CIDs as part of [Circular 0006/2023](#):

- **Appendix H** should be completed and returned to the Allocations section of the Department of Education, as soon as possible, if a teacher may have an entitlement to a CID.
- **Appendix G** should be completed in respect of each teacher in the school with a prior CID. This does not apply to any CID- holding teachers, who have since taken up permanent positions in the school.

10. **The Main Panel** has now issued in each Diocese and the Panel Operator can see how many teachers are listed on the Main Panel and how many vacancies there are in the Diocese. It's important therefore, that even a late notification of a retirement or resignation, should be notified to the Diocese within 5 days, to keep the system fully informed.

Schools which have notified their Diocese of permanent vacancies will have been forwarded a list of the teachers on the Main Panel, who are available for redeployment.

Schools have three options for filling a permanent vacancy:

1. A teacher can be selected directly from the Main Panel, without an interview process.
2. Where there is more than one teacher on the Main Panel, the board of management can send a request by email, inviting some or all of the teachers on the Main 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.
3. Finally, schools have the option of using a website (www.educationposts.ie or www.staffroom.ie) as a way of engaging with the Main Redeployment Panel .

If using option 3, it is restricted to a school's own Panel/Diocese, so teachers can only respond to expressions of interest from within their own relevant panel area. Teachers are given 5 days to express an interest.

In addition to any teacher that expresses an interest in the post, the school may consider other teachers that are remaining on the Main Panel (who had not responded with an expression of interest).

The filling of the post in this manner may be done with or without an interview process, but boards have the prerogative to interview if they so wish.



If no teachers on the relevant Main 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, then the school should inform the Panel Operator.

[Redeployment Arrangements at Primary Level for Surplus Permanent and CID Holding Teachers](#) sets out the details for engaging with the Main Panel (including the required wording for any advertisements). If this is your first time engaging with the Main Panel, please contact us at 01-6292462 to discuss any questions you have.

All teachers on the Main Panel must be redeployed before permission is given by the Department of Education to fill remaining permanent vacancies or fixed-term teaching vacancies. When the Panel Operator is satisfied that there are enough positions available to redeploy all teachers on the Main Panel, schools will be permitted to proceed to advertise any fixed term positions which had been notified to the Diocese.

The Supplementary Panel in each Diocese will only come into operation, when the Main Panel is cleared. Teachers on the Supplementary Panel will get preference for any remaining permanent positions in the Diocese, through a similar process as the Main Panel. **It is important to note that the Supplementary Panel may not be used for fixed term vacancies.** Supplementary Panel rights expire after the first working day in November (01/11/2023).

Protected Disclosures Policy

The Protected Disclosures Act 2022 significantly expands the scope of the protections contained in the previous Protected Disclosures Act 2014 for those who make protected disclosures and places new and enhanced obligations on schools, as public bodies, to have processes in place to facilitate workers in making protected disclosures.

Schools are required to update their Protected Disclosure Policy and CPSMA now has a [template Protected Disclosure Policy](#) which may be useful to members. This template document is self-explanatory and sets out the obligations of all parties in simple terms.

If you have any questions in relation to this template policy or in relation to Protected Disclosures, please contact us for further advice on 01 629 2462 or info@cpsma.ie.



Easter Prayer

May the glory and the promise
of this joyous time of year
bring peace and happiness to you
and those you hold most dear.

And may Christ, Our Risen Saviour,
always be there by your side
to bless you most abundantly
and be your loving guide.

— Author Unknown



Frequently Asked Questions

Q When is the best time to allocate classes to teachers?

A There is no set time, but the earlier the better. Best practice indicates that allocating classes soon after Easter enables teachers to get better attuned to the class or role they have next year. This may also have the benefit of having more time to have professional conversations around class choices, pupils etc. When class allocation is left to the end of the year, it can coincide with challenges such as preparing school reports, assessments and other duties.

Q Can the Supplementary Panel be used to fill Fixed Term Positions?

A No. After the Main Panel has cleared, teachers from the Supplementary Panel may only be used to fill **permanent** positions.

Q Do you automatically become an Administrative Principal if you open a special class in your school?

A No, the Department have confirmed that administrative status is conferred on a principal on the day that a second special class opens in your school. This happens regardless of whether this is at the start of the school year or mid-year.

Q Are the shortened timelines for teacher recruitment still in operation?

A No. From 1st January 2023, normal timelines apply.

Report of Education Needs for the purpose of Assessment of Need (Disability Act 2005)

[Information Note SE 0002/2022](#) and [Information Note 0001/2023](#) explain that, following a court case in October 2021, the HSE is now required to complete an assessment of need in respect of children born after 1st June 2002, whose parents have requested such an assessment. As part of this assessment for a child, the HSE may request an assessment of educational needs to be completed by the child's school. It appears that the information required in such an assessment, mirrors that contained in a student's current support plan. The HSE have stated that they will only contact schools for this information where parents have requested this assessment and have already consented to the sharing of information between HSE, NCSE and the schools. Accordingly they have advised that schools do not have to seek the consent of parents in order to provide this information to them.

The following supports are available to those schools requested by the HSE to complete a Report of Educational Needs in respect of a pupil.

- CPSMA Podcast on [Completing a Report of Educational Needs](#).
- [NCSE Guidance Note for schools on the Report of Education Needs](#)
- [NCSE Report of Educational Needs Form](#)
- [NCSE Video on completing a Report of Education Needs](#)
- [NCSE FAQ on Assessment of Need Process and the Role of the Education Sector](#)

Schools can email for support at aon@ncse.ie or phone the NCSE dedicated phone line on 01-6033450 for assistance. Member schools may also phone CPSMA on 01-6292462 or email us at info@cpsma.ie if required.



Health and Safety Inspections in Primary Schools

CPSMA has engaged with the Education Officer of the Health and Safety Authority in relation to Health and Safety inspections of Primary Schools. These inspections are not a new phenomenon, but are happening more frequently. We have recently prepared a [webinar](#) in relation to these inspections which may be helpful for members. This is our 4th webinar in relation to Health and Safety.

Maintaining the School's Safety Statement and Risk Assessment as a live, relevant, school-specific document, updated when required and reviewed at least annually, appears to be of central importance in these inspections. In addition, school staff need to be aware of the contents and whereabouts of the Safety Statement and policy. The HSA recommends keeping Health and Safety on the agenda at staff and board meetings to ensure that safety issues are discussed as required.

CPSMA recommends HSA's [Managing Safety, Health and Welfare in Schools](#) for board members, either individually or at a board meeting collectively. We also recommend making contact with your local Allianz representative to discuss any concerns schools may have. CPSMA have prepared a list of resources for schools in relation to Health and Safety which may be of assistance:

- [Safe and Healthy Workplaces: The HSA Inspection process in primary schools](#)
- [Introduction to Health & Safety for Boards of Management](#)
- [School Health & Safety Risk Assessment & Review](#)
- [Useful Links to resources on Safety, Health and Welfare in a school setting](#)
- [Additional Health & Safety Resources](#)

2023 Summer Programmes

Information is available in relation to the 2023 School Summer Programmes, including the new school-based programme in special schools. For the first time, it is envisaged that parents of children in a special school, may register their child in another school, if their child's school is not in a position to provide a summer programme. There are increased supports available for these summer programmes to help and encourage schools to provide as many places as possible. This year, there is an overall co-ordinator for summer programmes in special schools. Schools can employ staff from outside their school, if required, and there is a portal whereby teachers, SNAs and others may register their interest in working in a special school, outside of their own school. Already 700 have registered their interest on the portal. Further information is available [here](#).

1. [Information for Special Schools](#)
2. [2023 Summer Programme: letter to special schools](#)
3. [Guidance on the 2023 Summer Programme for Primary and Special Schools](#)
4. [Information Session Videos](#)
5. [Online registration portal for schools](#)
6. [Online registration for external staff recruitment](#)
7. [Summer programme school stories](#)
8. [Information for parents](#)
9. [Payment information for schools](#)
10. [Queries and support](#)



Amendment to the Job Sharing Scheme for SNAs

[Information Note TC/IN 0002/2023](#) advises employers of amendments to [Circular 0041/2014](#) titled 'Job-Sharing Scheme for Special Needs Assistants in recognised Primary and Post-Primary Schools'. It is applicable to job-sharing applications for the 2023/24 school Year and onwards.

In summary, an infant day is now regarded as a wholetime post, for the purposes of this circular. There are two options for job-sharing. One is where two wholetime SNAs with the same hours of work in the same school, apply to job-share. The second is where a wholetime SNA applies to reduce their hours by 50% and the board agrees to recruit an SNA to cover the available hours.

Any queries on this may be directed to teachersna@education.gov.ie

Scéim Aitheantais Scoileanna Gaeltachta

Cuireadh do Bhunscoileanna i Limistéir Pleanála Teanga Ghaeltachta Machnamh a Dhéanamh Maidir le Páirt a Ghlacadh san scéim seo

Foilsíodh [Imlitir 0016/2023](#) le déanaí. 'S é cuspóir na hImlitreach seo ná a chur in iúl d'údaráis scoileanna atá suite i limistéir pleanála teanga Gaeltachta go bhfuil deis á sholáthar páirt a ghlacadh i 2023 sa Scéim Aitheantais Scoileanna Gaeltachta de chuid na Roinne Oideachais.

Aithníonn an Polasaí don Oideachas Gaeltachta uathúlacht na Gaeltachta mar cheantar a bhfuil tábhacht shuntasach theangeolaíoch, chultúrtha agus eacnamaíoch ag baint leis. Athdhearbhaíonn sé tiomantas an Rialtais d'athghiniúint agus do mharthanacht na Gaeltachta mar eintiteas inmharthana le Gaeilge, agus aithníonn sé an ról atá ag scoileanna agus suíomhanna foghlama agus cúraim na luath-óige chun oideachas ardchaighdeáin trí mheán na Gaeilge a sholáthar agus chun inniúlacht agus úsáid na Gaeilge a chothú sa phobal Gaeltachta i gcoitinne.

Faoi láthair tá thart ar 80% de scoileanna páirteach sa scéim agus anois, táthar ag súil go méadóidh an rannpháirtíocht seo i measc scoileanna gaeltachta eile. Tá dhá chuid den imlitir reatha. Déantar cur síos i gCuid A den Imlitir ar na céimeanna atá i gceist chun clárú don Scéim i 2023. Déantar cur síos i gCuid B ar na tacaíochtaí breise a chuirfear ar fáil ag na céimeanna pleanála agus feidhme do scoileanna a mbeidh iarratas á dhéanamh acu in 2023/24.

Caithfear an Fhoirm um Léiriú Spéise comhlánaithe a sheoladh chuig an Roinn faoi **28 Aibreán 2023**.

Treoir do bhunscoileanna maidir le feidhmiú leanúnach na Scéime Márta 2023

Leagadh amach eolas ar fheidhmiú leanúnach na Scéime Aitheantais Scoileanna Gaeltachta i mbunscoileanna in [Imlitir 0010/2022](#) a eisíodh anuraidh. Baineann an imlitir sin le cur i bhfeidhm na Scéime sna scoilbhlianta 2022/23 agus 2023/24 araon. Tugann [an nóta treorach](#) seo uasdátú ar chur chun feidhme na Scéime don scoilbhliain 2023/24.

Mar a sonraíodh in [Imlitir 0010/2022](#), beidh na huairteanta tacaíochta Gaeilge don scoilbhliain 2023/24 bunaithe ar rollachán na scoile ar 30 Meán Fómhair 2022. Más mian le scoileanna sa Scéim a gcuid uairteanta tacaíochta Gaeilge a chnuasach chun poist a chruthú don scoilbhliain 2023/24 de réir na gcoinníollacha atá leagtha amach san imlitir, ní mór dóibh [an Fhoirm Iarratais do Chnuasach Scoileanna](#) a chomhlánú agus a sheoladh chuig aog@education.gov.ie faoi **9 Bealtaine 2023**.



“Looking at ...” Series of Draft Guides for Primary Schools

The “Looking at ...” Series of Draft Guides for Primary Schools, published in January 2023, are designed to help primary schools and/or individual teachers bring about improvement in the learning and teaching of each subject. They refer to :

- *Primary School Curriculum* (1999)
- *Individual subject Curriculum* (1999)
- The school self-evaluation process
- *Looking at Our School 2022: A Quality Framework for Primary Schools and Special Schools*
- Published inspection reports on the learning and teaching of each subject in primary schools.

Draft Guides for Primary Schools have been prepared in

[Drama](#)

[History](#)

[Geography](#)

[Physical Education](#)

[Maths](#)

[Music](#)

[Science](#)

[SPHE](#)

[Visual Arts](#)

Circulars and Information Notes

[0005/2023](#) Teacher Fee Refund Scheme 2022

[0006/2023](#) Staffing arrangements in Primary Schools for the 2023/24 school year

[0007/2023](#) Revision of Teacher Salaries under The Building Momentum Pay Agreement with effect from 01 March 2023

[0008/2023](#) Revision of Salaries for Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) under Building Momentum Pay Agreement with effect from 01 March 2023

[0011/2023](#) Revision of Salaries of Clerical Officers and Caretakers employed under the 1978/1979 Scheme under The Building Momentum Pay Agreement effective from 01 March 2023

[0012/2023](#) 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, 2023/2024

[0013/2023](#) Post-Graduate Diploma Programme of Continuing Professional Development For Special Education Teachers, 2023/2024

[0014/2023](#) Post-Graduate Certificate/Diploma Programme of Continuing Professional Development for Teachers working with Students with Special Educational Needs (Autism)

[0016/2023](#) Policy on Gaeltacht Education - Invitation to Primary schools in Gaeltacht language planning areas to consider joining the Gaeltacht School Recognition Scheme

[0017/2023](#) Primary Curriculum Framework

Information Note

[TC/1N 0002/2023](#) Amendment to the Job Sharing Scheme for Special Needs Assistants employed in Recognised Primary and Post Primary Schools.

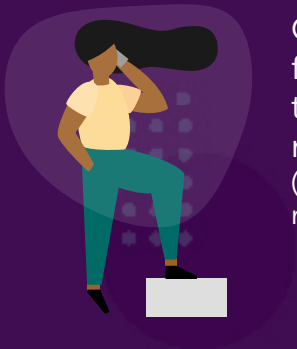


Your Employee Assistance Service In The Moment Support

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