Frequently Asked Questions on Circular 0007/2014

Staffing arrangements in Primary Schools for the 2014/15 school year

January 2014

This document should be read in the context of Circular 0007/2014.

Allocations

1. **Will the Department be writing to my school in relation to its staffing for the 2014/15 school year?**

   Circular 0007/2014 is the Department notification to all schools regarding their staffing levels for the 2014/15 school year. Schools are required to comply with the arrangements in the Circular without an individual letter being sent to each school from the Department.

2. **How many mainstream classroom posts is my school entitled to?**

   Check the schedule appropriate to your school at Appendix A of Circular 0007/2014 using the school enrolment at 30 September, 2013 to find out how many mainstream classroom teachers your school will have for the 2014/15 school year.

3. **My school will have a significant increase in enrolments for the coming school year. Is there any provision for this?**

   Mainstream classroom posts are allocated to schools that project significant increased enrolments for September 2014 (developing school status). The arrangements for this are set out at Section 1.3 of Circular 0007/2014.

4. **What should I do if I have an existing full-time or part-time teacher in my school who is a CID holder?**

   Complete Form CID Primary 1 and forward it to the Department's Primary Teacher Allocations Section by Friday 14 February, 2014.

GAM/EAL Allocation (General Allocation Learning/Language Support)

1. What is the GAM/EAL allocation?

Under the teacher allocation reforms introduced for the 2012/13 school year, the combined resources available for GAM (General Allocation Model of Learning Support) and EAL (Language Support) were used to create a single simplified allocation process for all primary schools to cover both the GAM and language support.

The simplified process supersedes the **allocation process** set out in Part 2 Section 6 and Appendix 2 of Circular SP ED 02/05 for the General Allocation Model and in Circular 0015/2009 for language support, respectively.

Autonomy is given to schools to deploy GAM/EAL hours between learning and language support depending on the specific needs of the school. Schools are advised to use the language assessment kits as referred to in Circular 0015/2009.

Schools should also continue to refer to the guidance contained in Circular 02/05 (Sections 3-5) with regard to pupils covered for learning support by the general allocation model, deployment of teaching resources for special educational needs, and planning in individual schools.

2. How is the GAM/EAL calculated (including DEIS Band 1 schools)?

The single allocation process for GAM and language support involves the allocation of the equivalent of circa. 4,100 posts as follows:

A school's GAM/EAL allocation for the 2014/15 school year is based on the mainstream classroom posts for the 2013/14 school year as follows:

School type	Allocation per mainstream classroom teaching post
All-boys school	5 hours per week (0.2 of a post)
Mixed school*	5 hours per week (0.2 of a post)
All-girls school	4 hours per week (0.16 of a post)**

*mixed schools must have a minimum of 25% of both boys and girls as part of their enrolments.
** rounded, up/down, to the nearest 0.2 of a post to facilitate clustering into full-time (25 hour) posts

DEIS Band 1 schools

In addition to the above allocation of hours, a differential in the GAM/EAL allocation for DEIS Band 1 schools will continue to be applied. This will operate as follows:

DEIS Band 1 schools with an enrolment at 30 September of less than 200 pupils	An additional base allocation of 5 hours per week (0.2 of a post)
DEIS Band 1 schools with an enrolment at 30 September of 200 or more pupils	An additional base allocation of 10 hours per week (0.4 of a post)

3. **How will I know my GAM/EAL allocation?**

   The allocation for all schools is set out at [Appendix C](#) of Circular 0007/2014.

4. **What do I do if I think that the GAM allocation for my school set out at Appendix C of Circular 0007/2014 is incorrect?**

   While every effort has been made to ensure that the base data used to provide allocations is correct, the school authority should satisfy itself that the data is correct and reflects any returns made by the school in respect of its pupils and teachers. If you have a query on your allocation, please contact Primary Allocations at primaryallocations@education.gov.ie

5. **My school has been granted developing school status. Will my general allocation be increased for the 2014/15 school year?**

   Schools that are approved for 2 or more developing posts will have their GAM/EAL allocation adjusted and will receive sanction for an additional 5 GAM/EAL hours.

6. **My school is newly established for the 2014/15 school year. Will the school get a GAM/EAL allocation?**

   The school's GAM/EAL allocation will be based on the mainstream classroom posts for the 2014/15 school year.

7. **My GAM/EAL hours have changed for the 2014/15 school year. Does this affect my cluster arrangement?**

   Yes. The cluster your school had for the 2013/14 school year is regarded as ceased and the hours shown for your school at Appendix C (column D) are now available for re-clustering for the 2014/15 school year.

8. **My GAM/EAL hours have not changed for the 2014/15 school year. However the GAM/EAL hours have changed for the school(s) that I am clustered with. Does this affect my cluster arrangement?**

   Yes, the cluster your school had for the 2013/14 school year is regarded as ceased and the hours shown for your school at Appendix C (column D) are now available for re-clustering for the 2014/15 school year.

9. **What should I do when I enter a new cluster arrangement?**

   The base school for your cluster must complete FormGAcluster14 at [Appendix D](#) of Circular 007/2014, which is the notification to the Department giving details of your school and any others in the cluster. All schools in the cluster must sign the form before it is submitted, by the base school, to the Department. The form must be submitted by Friday 14 February, 2014.

10. **The schools in my cluster have all agreed to end the cluster arrangement for the 2014/15 school year. What should I do now?**

    The Department must have been notified by 31 December 2013 of any alternative cluster arrangement for the 2014/15 school year, or, if there is no proposed new cluster arrangement, of the individual hours available in each school for clustering.

Schools who did not notify the Department by this date will have to wait until the 2015/16 school year in order to change the clustering arrangement.

11. My school has a high concentration of pupils that require language support. What are the arrangements for language support for those pupils?

A GAM/EAL allocation is made to all schools. Schools have autonomy on how to deploy the allocation between learning support and language support.

Since the 2012/13 school year permanent posts were also made available for schools with a high concentration of pupils requiring language support (EAL posts). There will be no additional permanent EAL posts sanctioned to schools for the 2014/15 school year. Schools in receipt of such posts are listed at Appendix C of Circular 0007/2014.

In addition schools with a high enrolment of EAL pupils that require EAL support (pupils with less than B1 (Level 3 Proficiency) may appeal to the independent Appeals Board for additional EAL support. Eligibility to submit an application to the Appeals Board is confined to those schools with at least 20% of their total enrolment made up of pupils that require EAL support. This will be primarily focussed on the number of pupils requiring EAL support that have had less than three years EAL support. Posts allocated by the Appeal Board will be on a temporary basis for the 2014/15 school year. See Section 4 of Circular 0007/2014.

12. If my school had a permanent language support post in the 2013/14 school year, will it remain in place for 2014/15?

Yes.

Resource Posts (NCSE low incidence)

1. **Is there a change to the location of base resource posts for the 2014/15 school year?**

   There are no changes to the location of these base posts for the 2014/15 school year.

2. **How do I know how many, if any, resource base posts have been allocated to my school?**

   The list of schools and the number of base resource posts for each school is set out at Appendix C of Circular 0007/2014 on the Department's website.

3. **When will I know my resource allocation for the 2014/15 school year?**

   The NCSE expects to notify schools in May of their approved allocation of resource hours for the 2014/15 school year.

4. **What do I do when I receive my NCSE allocation if I do not have a base resource post in my school?**

   You should contact your neighbouring schools that have base resource posts for any surplus capacity before contacting the Department for part-time hours. The Department will, at that stage, also consider joint applications from such schools for a full-time shared temporary resource post as an alternative to each school applying for separate part-time temporary resource posts. It should be noted that the Department will firstly be requiring any surplus capacity in the full-time base resource posts in neighbouring schools to be fully utilised before it approves any such applications.

Redeployment of Surplus Permanent/CID holding Teachers

1. **How do I know if there is a surplus permanent/CID holding teacher in my school?**

    Appendix A & C of Primary Circular 0007/2014 sets out the bulk of allocations for most schools. If you have more teachers in the school than permitted by your allocation, a teacher(s) is surplus to the requirements of the school.

2. **What do I do if I have a surplus permanent/CID holding teacher in my school?**

    You should arrange to have the completed Main Panel Form (MPF) at **Appendix E:** of Circular 0007/2014 returned to the Department's Primary Teacher Allocations Section by Friday 14 February, 2014.

    The most junior eligible teacher in the school is first in line to be placed on the panel for redeployment to another school. However, in exceptional circumstances s/he may seek the approval of the Board of Management to be replaced on the panel by an alternative eligible teacher.

    If the most junior eligible teacher seeks to be replaced on the panel then any other teacher interested in going on the panel must communicate his/her position to the Chairperson within five working days.

    The application from the staff member will be considered by the Board of Management. The final decision to admit a teacher to a panel rests with the Patron, who shall be given the reasons when it is intended to replace the most junior eligible teacher.

    The Main Panel Form (MPF) must be completed by the surplus teacher to be placed on the panel and the Chairperson. The Main Panel Form should be submitted to the Department by Friday 14 February, 2014.

Notification of Vacancies

1. Who do I need to inform that there is a vacancy in my school?

Each BOM is obliged to notify its relevant panel operator (diocesan secretary etc.) by **Friday 14 February 2014** of any impending permanent and fixed term vacancies for the 2014/15 school year.

Any subsequent permanent and fixed term vacancies must be notified within 5 working days of the vacancy becoming known to the Chairperson or Principal.

Schools with resource post and/or special class vacancies and special schools with vacancies that are fillable from the Special National Panel are required to notify these vacancies to the Department's Primary Teacher Allocations Section. This should be done by emailing primaryallocations@education.gov.ie within the above timeframes.

2. What is the position if my school does not have access to a redeployment panel?

Schools that do not have access to a redeployment panel must, within the same timeframes as outlined above, notify all their permanent and fixed term vacancies to the Department's Primary Teacher Allocations Section. This should be done by emailing primaryallocations@education.gov.ie

3. What if I have a temporary (fixed term) vacancy?

You must notify this vacancy to the panel operator. It can only be filled in the first instance if there is a permanent/CID holding teacher from your school on the main redeployment panel who wishes to defer his/her panel rights and take up the fixed term post for the 2014/15 school year. Otherwise it must be made available, if required, to be filled by any other surplus permanent/CID holding teacher on the main redeployment panel.

4. If my vacancy is a clustered GAM/EAL post how do I fill it?

You must notify this vacancy to the panel operator.

You should, in the first instance, offer the post among the base school staff. If a staff member opts to be the GAM/EAL teacher the consequential vacancy is filled through the relevant main redeployment panel.

If no teacher in the base school wishes to take up the GAM/EAL post it should be offered among the relevant teachers in the schools in the cluster. If a teacher from one of those schools opts to take it, s/he moves to the base school and the resultant vacancy is filled through the main redeployment panel. If no teacher in any of the schools in the cluster opts to fill the GAM/EAL post it is filled through the main redeployment panel.