

National Programme of Training for Boards of Management of Primary Schools

Handouts

Appointment Procedures



June 2012
(Amended Version)

National Programme of Training for Boards of Management

Appointment Procedures

2012

Slide 1

Overview

- Procedures governing the appointment of
 - Principal
 - Permanent Teacher
 - Fixed term Teacher
 - Special Needs Assistant
- Post of Responsibility

Slide 2

Selection & Appointment of Principal & Teachers

- Valid post (other than principal) check:
 - CID entitlement
 - Panel arrangements/status
 - Staffing schedule of relevant year
 - School's internal panel
 - Notification of all staff
- Appendix D must be followed

Slide 3

Selection & Appointment of Principal & Teachers

- Prior approval of the Patron must be sought
- Appointments by the BoM shall be subject to & conditional on
 - Current registration with Teaching Council
 - Confirmation of qualifications
 - Sanction of Minister
 - Approval from Medmark
 - Garda vetting

Slide 4

Selection & Appointment of Principal & Teachers

Compliance with:

- Rules for National Schools
- Law generally
- Policies of the employer
- Rules & Regulations of DES
- Other as appropriate
- Selection Board appointed

Slide 5

Advertising - Post as Principal

- Notify all of the teaching staff of the school including those on leave
- Vacancies for Principal should not be advertised in July or August save in exceptional cases
- Applications by cv. or on application form

Slide 6

Permanent & Fixed Term Teachers

- Vacancies shall be:
 - notified to all teaching staff of the school
 - advertised with a full advertisement in at least one national daily newspaper *or*
 - the post may be advertised on recognised sites

Slide 7

Advertisement

Shall state re school:

1. Name, address, roll number & patronage
2. Number of teaching posts including principal
3. Nature of vacancy (principal/teaching post)
4. Status of post (*permanent, fixed term, whole or part time*)

Slide 8

Advertisement *contd. ...*

5. Expected date of commencement
6. Address to which applications should be sent (postal or email)
7. Latest date for receipt of applications
8. Whether a CV or Application Form is required

Slide 9

Advertisement *contd.*

9. Initial duties - may be subject to change
10. List of documents required
11. Any other documentation

Slide10

Advertisement *contd.*

May state

1. Whether a list of suitable applicants may be set up (exception: for post of principal)
2. Whether an SAE is required
3. That applicants should mark the envelope "Application"
4. Whether a minimum number of applications are required

Slide 11

Electronic applications...

Choice for BoM

- Separate email account set up
- Access restricted to selection board only
- Closing date & time adhered to as per email
- Once minimum number received (if so specified) selection board downloads at short listing meeting
- Assessed in accordance with normal procedures

Slide 12

Electronic applications contd...

- Calls to interview and documentation re same sent by email and request a receipt
- bcc option/individual emails to candidates – confidentiality
- Printed copies of email communications should be retained on personnel file/s
- Subsequent vacancies – change password if using the same email address for electronic applications

Slide 13

Electronic applications contd...

- All email applications deleted at completion of process
- All relevant data held securely only for as long as necessary in compliance with data protection requirements

Slide14

Selection Board – Composition

- **Principal teacher post**
 - Chairperson of the BoM + at least 2 independent assessors appointed by the Patron after consultation with Chairperson
 - Gender balance
- **Teaching post**
 - Chairperson, Principal + 1 independent assessor appointed by the Patron after consultation with Chairperson
 - Gender balance
 - Principal designate on selection board when selecting a teacher before new principal has taken up duty

Slide 15

Selection Board – contd...

Special Needs Assistant

- Chairperson of the BoM, Principal + 1 external assessor nominated by the Patron
- Gender Balance

Caretaker, Secretary posts

- Chairperson of the BoM, Principal + 1 external assessor nominated by the BoM
- Gender Balance

Slide 16

Disclosure of interest ...

Member of the selection board/BoM who stands in a material relationship to a person who is a candidate for appointment as a teacher or other member of staff of the school including the principal shall

- disclose to the BoM the fact of the relationship
- the nature thereof
- take no part in any deliberation or decision of the BoM concerning the appointment from very start of process to ratification of successful candidate by BoM

Slide 17

Disclosure of interest *contd.*

Board members are required to make disclosure not only in the case of a family relationship but in respect of any relationship which could be regarded as prejudicial to ensuring absolute impartiality in the selection process.

Professional relationship of itself not necessarily a material relationship

Disclosure and decision shall be recorded in the minutes

Slide 18

Shortlisting ...

[Date stamp each application as it is received]

- Chairperson shall submit all applications to the selection board
- Where the minimum number specified by BoM not received post re-advertised
- Notes/documents created by Selection Board retained for 18 months

Slide 19

Shortlisting

- Selection Board shall meet as soon as practicable - *Appendix D p 43*
- Familiarise itself with
 - job description – tasks and responsibilities
 - person specification – competencies required

Slide 20

Shortlisting

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 - job description – tasks and responsibilities
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Slide 21

Selection Board

- Selection Board shall establish criteria for assessment of the applicants which takes into account ...
 - *Rules for National Schools currently applicable*
 - *Requirements of the post*
 - *Provisions of Employment Equality Acts, 1998 – 2007*
 - *Code of practice (Equality Authority)*
 - *Professional qualifications*

Slide 22

Selection Board

- *Registration with TC*
- *Teaching experience*
- *Other relevant experience*
- Copy of criteria sent to each candidate called for interview
- Records of criteria for assessment retained

Slide 23

Group work ...

A vacancy for a teacher has arisen in a rural school where staff turnover is high. The school needs a teacher for a mixed 2nd and 3rd class. The school has lost its last remaining male staff member with musical ability and no teacher has experience of teaching games or sport.

- What criteria would you use?
 - Essential?
 - Desirable?

Slide 24

Interviews

How many to call

- If there are three eligible applicants or fewer - all called for interview by Selection Board
- More than three eligible applicants - at least three called for interview

Slide 25

Invitation to Interview

- Applicants called to interview shall be given
 - at least **7 days clear** notice in writing
 - a specific interview time outside school hours
 - a copy of the criteria for the post
 - information on school
 - directions to interview location

Slide 26

Interview

Copies for each selection board member of

- Advertisement
- Criteria for post
- Applicants' letters, cvs or application forms, inspectors' reports etc. as appropriate
- Agreed questions
- Marking schedule
- Timetable

Slide 27

Environment

- Venue – appropriate room with good heating, lighting and ventilation
- Timetable for interviews
- Place names of those on interview panel
- Water for panel and candidate/s
- Comfortable chair, same height as interviewers, at comfortable distance
- No interruptions – phone/doorbell/other
- Suitably comfortable and private waiting area so that candidates do not meet each other
- Receptionist role

Slide 28

Interview Structure

- Interview must be structured
- Questions linked directly to the requirements of post & Rules for NS
- Scheduling the interviews
 - Time
 - sufficient time - interview, discussion
 - do not schedule too many in one day

Slide 29

Role of Chairperson ...

- Welcome candidate
- Introduce the panel to the candidate and explain who is on panel
- Steer the interview
- Ensure that all members avoid any bias or discrimination
- Follow up with supplementary questions - points which need clarification after other selection board members have finished

Slide 30

Role of Chairperson ... *contd.*

- Ask the candidate at end of interview
 - Any points s/he would like to add in support of application
 - Anything s/he would like to add to his/her replies
 - Any questions for the selection board
- Ensure that individual marking sheets/notes are kept
 - Written record of questions asked
 - Selection board's evaluation in respect of each individual candidate
 - Collect each assessor's individual marking sheet p 45
- Ensure compliance with legislation
- Wrap up interview in a pleasant manner

Slide 31

Conducting Interview

- Establish rapport
- Obtain information
 - Questioning and observing candidate
 - open questions
 - probing questions
 - closed questions
- Lead to close
 - opportunity for candidate to ask questions and fill in any remaining gaps
- Evaluation after each interview – allow time

Slide 32

Assessing and Scoring

- Each criteria distinct and separate – should not overlap
- Assign a weighting to each criterion to reflect its importance *i.e. one criterion may be twice as important as another*

Slide 33

Method of Assessment

- Marking Sheet supported by notes
- Notes normally include
 - References to responses to questions
 - Evidence given in terms of criteria
 - Overall assessment of candidate's suitability for appointment

Slide 34

Record Keeping & Note Taking

- Research indicates that interviewers are not good at recalling information heard during interview
- Memory alone will not work
- Necessary to have
 - frequent summaries
 - good structure
 - accurate notes, while not a transcript
- Take notes
 - key words in quotation marks
 - after interview write a well constructed summary

Slide 35

Avoid Discrimination

- Ensure Selection Board is familiar with Equality Legislation – 9 grounds
- Ask similar core questions of all candidates
- Assess candidates objectively against the criteria
- Award marks, then discuss
- Keep records for 18 months

Slide 36

Checking References

An obligatory criterion

- Checking references of successful candidate is obligatory
- Follow up on a written reference with a phone call
 - Construct a set of questions around the job specification and the competencies you are looking for and ask the referee to respond
 - Seek clarification of level, depth, and range of experience and skills demonstrated

Slide 37

Ranking

- List candidates who are deemed suitable for employment in order of merit
- Individual marks shall be added and these totals used to produce a ranking order **of candidates deemed suitable for appointment**
- Chairperson in written report shall furnish this ranked order and the marks to BoM nominating the candidate for appointment

Slide 38

Ranking contd...

- Confirmation of receipt of suitable references (either verbal or written) for the highest ranked candidate must be included in the written report
- Vacancies [except for the post of principal] arising within 4 months of the date on which the BoM approves the successful candidate may be filled from the list supplied to the BoM only if such a list/panel was referred to in the advertisement

Slide 39

Appointment: Principal, Teacher, SNA

- Written report to the BoM as already outlined
- BoM meeting
- BoM appoints
- Chairperson seeks the approval of the Patron in writing for the appointment

Slide 40

Principal/Teacher in Convent/Monastery schools....

- If a member of a religious order is to be appointed, BoM shall so appoint once all necessary issues in regard to registration, qualifications, vetting, references etc. are complied with
- Where a number of posts are guaranteed in reorganised school (not a convent/monastery setting) BoM appoint subject to above requirements

Slide 41

Notification to applicants

- Approval received from Patron – notify the successful candidate in writing
- Letter states offer is subject to *inter alia*:
 - Sanction of Minister
 - Confirmation of qualifications
 - Continued registration with Teaching Council
 - Compliance with vetting
 - Medical screening

Slide 42

Notification to applicants contd...

- Unsuccessful candidates notified once BoM has received written notification of acceptance from successful candidate
- Chairperson and successful candidate complete the relevant appointment form and forward same to the DES
- Sanction of DES once procedures are complied with
- BoM enter into the appropriate agreement - contract

Slide 43

Notification to applicants *contd.*

Special Needs Assistant (SNA)

Successful candidate gets a letter offering post **subject to:**

- Receipt of certificate of medical fitness - OHS
- Successful outcome of vetting
- Confirmation of Qualifications
- Other...

Notification of Appointment Form sent to Non Teaching Staff (NTS) Payroll section, DES

Slide 44

Documents retained

- Advertisement
- Established criteria for post
- Short listing criteria
- Assessment questions
- Individual & aggregate marking sheets for each candidate
- Reports and notes of the selection board
- Decision of the selection board
- Written report to the BoM
- Copy of letter to Patron seeking written approval for the appointment

Slide 45

Documents retained *contd.*

- Letter of approval from Patron
- Letter offering the post to the candidate approved by the Patron
- Letter of acceptance from the candidate
- Appointment Form – DES (copy of original)

Slide 46

Contract of Employment

Fixed Term Contract

- Insert objective grounds
- Insert commencement date and end date
- Sign, file & give a copy to the teacher

Permanent Teacher

- Letter of offer
- Sign, file & give a copy to the teacher
- Circular 60/2009 given to teacher

Slide 47

New appointments – Terms & Conditions

- Full name and address of the employer
- Place of work
- Job title
- Details of the contract
- Date employment began
- Details of rest periods and breaks as required by law

Disputes:

- Complaints
 - Grievance & disciplinary procedure
 - Mediation
 - Dismissal
 - Pensions
- [Employer should clarify health & safety issues also]

Slide 48

The Law ...

Main sources of dispute

- Gender balance of interview panels
- Acceptance of material after closing date
- Advertising – teachers on leave
- Discriminatory questioning
 - to date mainly on grounds of gender, age and disability
- Breach of procedure

Slide 49

Summary

- Job and person specification
- Identify selection criteria based on person spec.
 - competencies
 - relative weighting
- Adopt a structured approach
 - prepared questions to elicit relevant information/evidence
- Assess evidence provided against selection criteria
- Complete marking scheme in accordance with selection criteria
- Collect and retain notes

Slide 50

Posts of Responsibility

- **Deputy Principal**
- **Assistant Principal**
- **Special Duties Posts**

Slide 51

Consultation re duties

Principal consults with staff to

- Agree schedule of duties
- Proposed schedule of duties submitted to Board
- Board approves duties & informs staff
- Post advertised following BoM meeting

Slide 52

Advertisement

- Vacancy posted in the staff room – all staff access to it
- Notice of advertisement sent by registered post to all teachers on leave
- Notice must contain agreed schedule of duties
- Advertised for 5 consecutive school days
- Specify the closing date for receipt of applications – (10 school days from last day of posting the notice)
- Teachers must apply in writing

Slide 53

Appointment Procedures

Eligibility of teachers to apply

- Qualified permanent and fixed term teachers – (incl. provisional and restricted recognition)
- Teachers on approved leave – career break, secondment, parental leave, carer's leave, sick leave, maternity leave, adoptive leave, etc.
- Job Sharing
- Shared post – eligible in base school only

Slide 54

Criteria – Circular 28/11

Criteria	Marks
■ Length of service	■ 30
■ Knowledge, understanding & capacity to meet needs of job	■ 15
■ Capacity to contribute to overall development of the school	■ 15
■ Interpersonal & communication skills	■ 15
■ Capacity to contribute to overall organisation & management	■ 15

Slide 55

Length of Service

- Leave of absence of 1 school year or longer taken after 1.09.1999 not reckonable
- Leave of absence for periods of less than a school year is reckonable and does not affect the year in question being fully counted
- Maternity leave, unpaid maternity leave, adoptive leave, unpaid adoptive leave, leave in lieu of adoptive leave, parental leave and certified sick leave do not constitute leave of absence for this circular

Slide 56

Length of Service *contd.*

- Substitute/Temporary service given in the school for a minimum of 60 days reckonable as a full year
 - subject to verification
- Job sharing counts as 1 year
- Service given in a school prior to its amalgamation into existing school is reckonable

Slide 57

Selection Board

- 3 person board (in context of Appeal is 4)
 - Chairperson, Principal, Independent Assessor from agreed list
- All applicants to be interviewed even if only one applicant

Slide 58

Interview

- Marking sheet supported by notes
- Notes normally include
 - References to responses to questions
 - Evidence given in terms of criteria

Slide 59

Marking

- Most transparent method is to ascertain the highest number of years served by any applicant and allocate that person 30 marks for service e. g.
 - **Teacher 1: 18 years**
 - **Teacher 2: 20 years**
 - **Teacher 3: 5 years**
- 30 marks for service to teacher 2
- Therefore teacher 1 gets 27 marks
- Teacher 3 gets 7.5 marks

Slide 60

Appointment

- BoM Meeting - written report from selection board to the BoM recommending the appointment of successful candidate
- BoM
 - intention to offer the post to named candidate/s posted on notice board
 - 10 school days to initiate appeal
 - If no appeal
 - appointment confirmed
 - contract
 - notify the DES – PoR amend form
 - If appeal – implement appeals procedure

Slide 61

Group work

- A vacancy has arisen for a Deputy principal in a 16 teacher school
- 3 applicants each with 12, 16 & 5 years experience and currently Special Duties post holders
- Duties: Deputise for Principal
 - Pastoral: responsibility for behaviour management
 - Organisational: responsibility for special needs
 - Curricular: English & ICT
- Design a marking scheme

Slide 62

Group work

Anraoi Naofa NS, a large mixed school in the West of Ireland has a vacancy for a principal teacher.

The principals post is advertised, and seven applications are received, including applications from two members of the school staff – Ms. White and Mrs. Brown. Neither of the staff members is called for interview.

Following the interviews, and the announcement of the successful candidate, the BoM refuses to sanction the appointment.

What issues arise?

Slide 63

Group Activity

Quick Quiz

Slide 64

Appeal Process

- Letter of appeal must be lodged with the chairperson within 10 school days
- Letter of appeal must state grounds of appeal e.g.
 - alleged breach of procedure
 - lack of fairness in applying criteria
 - lack of consultation and agreement
 - other ...

Slide 65

Appeal Process *contd.*

- Chairperson responds initially, by registered post to the appellant within **10 school days**
- Should the appellant wish to proceed he/she must inform the chairperson within **5 school days**

Slide 66

Appeal Process *contd.*

- **Where the appeal is to proceed**
 - Chairperson contacts Patron & INTO CEC rep. to establish Arbitration Board
- **Arbitration Board appointed**
 - Nominee of Patron Body
 - Nominee of INTO
 - An agreed Chairperson

Slide 67

Appeal Process *contd.*

Chairperson BOM provides (on a confidential basis) the Chairperson of Arbitration Board, within 5 school days, with 3 copies of all relevant documentation including

- letter of appeal
- response of the chairperson
- marking sheets

Slide 68

Appeal Process *contd.*

Arbitration Board shall arrange hearing without delay and invite ...

- the appellant
- the respondents i.e. BoM
- witnesses, if any

Slide 69

Appeal Process *contd.*

Arbitration Board

- shall ensure that all normal rules of due process and fair procedures apply
- all documentations to be copied to all parties in advance of the hearing
- chairperson of Arbitration Board clarify the procedures s/he intends to adopt
- all parties invited to the hearing and given reasonable notice of it by Arbitration Board

Slide 70

Appeal Process *contd.*

- Appellant shall be entitled to be accompanied and assisted by a person of his/her choice
- Each party shall be afforded an opportunity to present its case to Arbitration Board
- Arbitration Board shall be entitled to question each party or seek further information

Slide 71

Appeal Process *contd.*

- Where appropriate, the Arbitration Board shall afford each party an opportunity to provide further information on the clear understanding that the other party will have an opportunity to respond to same
- Adjournments are allowed if necessary

Slide 72

Appeal Process *contd.*

Arbitration Board withdraws to deliberate

- If appeal rejected – this decision only is recorded
- If appeal upheld – BoM is advised where to recommence process...
 - initial consultation/allocation of duties
 - advertising stage
 - interview stage

Slide 73

Arbitration Board Findings *contd.*

- Outcome notified by the Arbitration Board Chairperson to
 - Chairperson BoM
 - Appellant
 - Patron
- Outcome of Arbitration Board final and binding

Slide 74

Common reasons for appeal

- Breach of procedure
- Nature of the consultation process
- Duties not inclusive in nature
- Duties too onerous
- Advertising of posts – not adhering to deadlines
- Independent assessor not from agreed list

Slide 75

Common reasons for appeal *contd.*

- Lack of clarity as to what post is under consideration where simultaneous interviews are being held
- Marking scheme *e.g. calculating the length of service*
- Bias in framing the duties or applying the criteria

Slide 76

References

- Constitution of Boards & Rules of Procedure, DES, 2011
- DES Circulars & Booklets www.education.gov.ie
- Guide to Employment Law www.djei.ie (previously www.entemp.ie)

Slide 77

Reminders

- Register signed
- Evaluations completed and returned
- Handouts
- Arrangements for next training session (*if applicable*)
- Other modules available include:
 - The Board as Corporate Entity. Function, Roles and The Board in Action
 - Board Finances and the Role of Treasurer
 - Legal Issues. Policies and procedures arising from legislation, guidelines and circulars
 - Child Protection

Slide 78

Organisations and Acronyms

Organisations

Board of Education	Church of Ireland Board of Education, Church of Ireland House, Church Avenue, Rathmines, Dublin 6 Tel: 01 497 8422
CPSMA	Catholic Primary School Management Association, New House, St Patrick's College, Maynooth Co. Kildare Tel: 01 6292462, 1850 – 407200 email: info@cpsma.ie website: www.cpsma.ie
DES	Department of Education and Skills, Marlborough St., Dublin 1 Tel: 01 889 6400 email: info@education.gov.ie website: www.education.ie
Educate Together	email: info@educatetogether.ie website: www.educatetogether.ie
Foras Pátrúnachta	Foras Pátrúnachta na Scoileanna Lán-Ghaeilge Teo, An Foras Pátrúnachta Bloc K3 Campas Gnó Mhaigh Nuad Maigh Nuad Co. Chill Dara Tel :01 629 4410 email: foraspatrunachta@hotmail.com website: foras.ie
IMPACT	Trade Union: www.impact.ie
INTO	Irish National Teachers Organisation: www.into.ie
IPPN	Irish Primary Principals' Network: www.ippn.ie
NABMSE	National Association of Boards of Management in Special Education, Kildare Education Centre, Friary Rd, Kildare, Co Kildare. Tel: 045 533 753 email: info@nabmse.org website: www.nabmse.org/

NCCA	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, 24 Merrion Square, Dublin 2 Tel: 01 661 7177 email: info@ncca.ie website: www.ncca.ie
NCSE	National Council for Special Education, 1-2 Mill Street, Trim, Co. Meath. Tel: 046 948 6400 email: info@ncse.ie website: www.ncse.ie
NCTE	National Centre for Technology in Education, Dublin City University, Dublin 9. Tel: 01 700 8200 email: info@ncte.ie website: www.ncte.ie
NEPS	National Educational Psychological Service, Frederick Court, 24/27 North Frederick St., Dublin 1 Tel: 01 889 2700 website: www.education.ie
NEWB	National Education Welfare Board, 16-22 Green Street Dublin 7 Tel: 01 8738700 email: info@newb.ie website: www.newb.ie
SESS	Special Education Support Service, Cork Education Support Centre, The Rectory, Western Rd, Cork. Tel: 1850 200 884 email: info@sess.ie website: www.sess.ie
Teaching Council	The Teaching Council, Block A, Maynooth Business campus, Maynooth, Co. Kildare Tel: LoCall 1890 224 224, 01 651 7900 email: info@teachingcouncil.ie website: www.teachingcouncil.ie
Teacher Education Section (TES)	Teacher Education Section, Department of Education & Skills, Marlborough St., Dublin 1 <i>This unit has a role in all national initiatives</i>

Acronyms

AP	Assistant Principal
BOM	Board of Management
DP	Deputy Principal
DEIS	Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools – an action plan for educational inclusion
Early Start	The Early Start Programme is a one-year programme offered to children aged 3-4 years in selected schools in areas of designated disadvantage
EWO	Education Welfare Officer
HSCL	Home School Community Liaison now part of NEWB
IEP	Individual Educational Plan
Inspector	Department of Education and Skills inspector
IPLP	Individual Profile and Learning Programme
Mainstream Teacher	Class teacher
NPC	National Parents Council
NQT	Newly qualified teacher
PA	Parent Association
Partners	Parents, Board of Management etc. involved in a school's activities
Patron	Schools operate under a patron body e.g. Catholic Church, Educate Together, Church of Ireland Board of Education, An Foras Pátrúnachta, Islamic Board of Education ...
PoR	Post of Responsibility e.g. deputy principal, assistant principal, special duties teacher
SENO	Special Education Needs Organiser
Shared teachers	Teachers working in a number of schools to support children with special needs
SIPTU	Trade Union
SNA	Special Needs Assistant
Special duties teacher	Teachers with a special responsibility for organisational or curriculum issues in addition to their teaching duties
Trustees	The persons nominated by the Patron as trustees of the school. They are parties to the lease of the school premises. The Trustees undertake that the buildings shall continue to be used as a national school for the term of the lease & guarantee that the premises and contents are insured
Visiting teachers	Teachers working with pupils who are sensory impaired

Circulars - Selection & Appointment Procedures

Principals and Teachers - Relevant Circulars

Staffing	Staff schedule of relevant year; Panels
May 2005 (Booklet)	Panel Rights for Teachers
Circular 10/04	New Entrants to Employment from 1 April, 2004. Raising the minimum pension age to 65. Abolition of the maximum age for retirement
Circular 0063/2010	New arrangements for the vetting of teaching and non-teaching staff
Appointments & Probation	
Teacher Registration and Qualifications – DES Circular 31/2011	
Eligibility Criteria for Appointment as a Principal Teacher - DES Circular 02/02	
Seniority of Primary Teachers- DES Circular 02/2004	
Release Time for Principal Teachers - DES Circular 25/2002	
Probationary Requirements for Registration Purposes - DES Circular 47/2011	
Notification Requirements on Retirement- DES Circular 45/2011	
Filling Posts of Responsibility in Primary Schools:	
Procedures for Filling Posts of Responsibility – DES Circular 07/2003	
Amendment to Assessment Criterion – DES Circular 28/2011	
Moratorium on Filling Posts of Responsibility – DES Circular 22/2009.	
Limited Alleviation Measures –Circular 53/2011.	
Sick Leave	
Sick Leave Scheme for Teachers – DES Circular 60/2010	
Occupational Health Scheme for Teachers – DES Circular 65/2008	

OHS Operating Procedures [Revised 2011]
OHS Medical Fitness to Teach Guide [Revised 2011]
Ill Health Retirement Information [Revised 2011]
Employee Assistance Service - Carecall
Family Leave
Teacher Absences - DES Circular 32/2007
Maternity Protection Entitlements For Teachers - DES Circular 11/2011
Adoptive Leave Entitlements- DES Information Booklet
Parental Leave: Main Provisions - DES Circular 01/1999 Parental Leave - Amendment 1 – DES Circular 23/2003 Parental Leave - Amendment 2 – DES Circular 01/2004
Career Break Scheme for Teachers – DES Circular 10/2011
Job Sharing Scheme for Teachers – DES Circular 11/2003
Carers Leave for Teachers – DES Circular 05/2003
Teacher Exchange Scheme- DES Circular 12/2003
Unpaid Leave for Teachers- DES Circular 35/2010
Extra Personal Vacation - DES Circulars 37/97, 32/2007 & 0035/2009
Croke Park Agreement – Additional Hours - DES Circular 08/2011

General Provisions for the Appointment of SNAs'

Redundancy for Special Needs Assistants DES Circular 58/2006, 59/2006
Standard Contract of Employment Circular 15/2005
Sick Leave for Special Needs Assistants - General Information Circular 33/2010,
Occupational Health Scheme for SNAs Circular 34/2010
OHS Operating Procedures [Revised 2011] Available at www.education.ie Employee Assistance Service
Brief Absences for Special Needs Assistants Circular 32/2010
Maternity, Adoptive and Paternity Leave for Special Needs Assistants Circular 13/2005
Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures for Special Needs Assistants Circular 72/2011
Public Service (Croke Park) Agreement -Special Needs Assistants Circular 71/2011

Productive Questioning at Interviews

Use **Open Questions** when you want to...

- start the interview
- discover the interviewee's knowledge and experience
- ascertain the depth of interviewee's knowledge
- assess how articulate the interviewee is e.g.
 - *Tell me about ...*
 - *How did it seem to you when ...*
 - *I'd like to hear about ...*
 - *Tell me about the problem from your point of view ...*

Probing Questions are useful when an incomplete answer is given to an initial question. Use probing questions ...

- to zone in on areas of particular interest to the interviewer asking the question e.g.
 - *What happened to the plan?*
 - *How did she/he react to your suggestions?*
 - *How does that affect you?*
 - *Why do you think that will work?*
- If you feel an answer is inadequate use an elaboration probe e.g.
 - *Tell me more about that issue*
- If you need to clarify information given by the interviewee, use a clarification probe e.g.
 - *What do you mean by lack of leadership?*
- If an interviewee fails to respond fully, use a repetition probe. Simply paraphrase the question or repeat it verbatim.

Effective probing depends on the interviewer's ability to...

- listen well
- analyse the content of the information given.

Closed Questions are used to...

- establish facts
- obtain specific information from the interview
- maintain control over interview
- reduce the answering options e.g.
 - *At what time?*
 - *Which task did you do most frequently?*
 - *How much/many?*
 - *Were you asked to complete that task?*

Use **Precision Questions** to focus a candidate's answers e.g.

- *In one sentence, what did you achieve?*
- *How did you know you had succeeded?*
- *What feedback did you get?*
- *What was your expectation in this situation?*
- *What did you learn from the experience?*

Competency Based Questions can be used to

- Explore Experience
 - *Can you tell me about a time when ...*
- Probe for Proofs
 - *What did you do about it?*
- Focus on Outcomes
 - *Did it work?*
- Look for Learning
 - *What did you learn from that experience?*
- Ask about Applications
 - *If you were to face a similar situation in the job we are interviewing for, how would you deal with it?*

Avoid **Counter Productive** questions

- **Leading Questions** that prompt the interviewee to give the desired answer
 - *I take it you believe that...*
- **Multiple Questions** confuse the interviewee
 - *Do you prefer your current job to your last one, or would you be interested in*
- **Marathon Questions**
 - *When you were talking there it struck me to ask you what you thought ...*
- **Ambiguous questions**
 - *What about value for money?*
- **Rhetorical questions**
 - *Do you ... of course you do, sure that's obvious. I always say....*

Summarising Questions can be used bring a topic to a close or to clarify e.g.

- *What I heard you say was ...*
- *Are you saying ...?*

Lead the interview towards a conclusion by ...

- asking a challenging question at this stage – (with approx. 5 minutes remaining)
 - *as rapport is unlikely to be broken*
 - *and a tough question answered may enable the panel to differentiate between outstanding candidates*
- giving an opportunity for the candidate
 - *to ask questions*
 - *fill in any remaining gaps in the information they have provided about themselves*

Effective interviewing requires interviewers to ...

- **Listen**
- **Look interested**
- **Inquire through questioning**
- **Stay focused**
- **Test for understanding**
- **Evaluate the messages given by the interviewee**
- **Neutralise their feelings – remain detached**

Obvious barriers to **listening** include noise and other physical and mental distractions. More subtle barriers include

- **Anticipation** – feeling that you don't need to listen as you know what the candidate is going to say – you may even find yourself finishing the sentence for him/her
- **Telling and selling** – the interviewer takes over the interview and the candidate is not given an opportunity to talk
- **Stereotyping** – predicting what candidate is going to say as you have assigned him/her to a certain category
- **Lack of interest or experience**
- **Premature decision making** – the candidate did or said something at the beginning which has put you off.

Guard against allowing **first impressions** to last

- judging the candidate on how he or she looks; rating the candidate highly because he/she reminds the interviewer of themselves
- halo affect – allowing one good answer outweigh the rest of the evidence obtained
- negative effect – allowing one poor answer to outweigh the remainder of the evidence obtained

Most people have under developed listening skills. Only 25% of listening is effective. *i.e.* we listen to, and understand only ¼ of what is being communicated to us.

Being a good listener is neither easy nor automatic – it requires ability and discipline to hear and understand the message sent by another person while at the same time strengthening the relationship. Improvement can occur in relation to listening at an interview through careful preparation – if you know what you are looking for you are more alert to cues to help you find it. Try to maintain natural eye contact, nod and encourage, summarise at regular intervals.

Don't waste time asking a question which has already been answered in response to a previous question but indicate that the particular question has been answered.