

Appointment of Principals, Permanent & Temporary Teachers

(Updated Version – April 2002)



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ABOUT THIS BOOKLET

The aim of this booklet is to provide information in relation to the appointment of Principals, Permanent & Temporary Teachers in primary schools. Questions which frequently arise are answered. While care has been taken in the preparation of the material, by nature it cannot cover every single aspect of appointment procedures.

Chairpersons of Boards of Management and Principals should bring this booklet to the attention of members of the Board and teachers and should retain a copy for future reference.

The booklet may also be viewed and downloaded on the Department of Education & Science website – www.irlgov.ie/educ

April 2002

Appointment of Principals & Permanent Teachers

General Information

The procedures to be followed when appointing Principals and Permanent teachers are set out in Paragraph 20 and Appendix D of the revised “Boards of Management of National Schools – Constitution of Boards and Rules of Procedure” (2000 edition) as amended by Circular 2/02

SECTION 1 ~ Appointment of Principals, Permanent & Temporary Teachers

1. What is the first step that a Board of Management should take when filling a post?

- In the case of the appointment of a **Principal** teacher, the appointment is by open competition.
- In the case of the appointment of a **Permanent** teacher (other than Principals) the Board must determine whether the appointment should be made from the panel or by open competition. (Please read Section 2 in relation to Panel Appointments).

A permanent post is **only** filled by open competition when either of the two conditions listed below is satisfied:

1. The panel(s) is/are clear.
 2. All of the teachers on the panel(s) have been made a written offer of a post, which they have refused on grounds of distance (sanction to advertise will not be granted until evidence of refusal has been submitted to the Department).
- Where a vacancy occurs after the 1st June of a school year it must be filled in a temporary capacity until the end of that school year. The permanent post must then be offered to teachers on the relevant panel to commence in the school on the 1st September.
 - A **temporary** post for a period of 8 months or longer must be filled by open competition and the procedures as set out in Appendix D of Circular 2/02 must be adhered to. The filling of a temporary post for a period of less than 8 months is a matter for the Board of Management.

2. What happens if the Board of Management advertises a post before the panel(s) is/are clear?

The advertisement is invalid. The Board is obliged, in the first instance, to offer the post to teachers on the panel.

Where a vacancy occurs after the 1st June of a school year and panels are clear it must be filled in a temporary capacity until the end of that school year. The permanent post must then be offered to teachers on the relevant panel to commence in the school on the 1st September.

The Department will not allow a Board of Management to fill a permanent vacancy with a temporary teacher from the 1st September of a school year where there are teachers remaining on the relevant panel for redeployment.

3. When can the post be advertised?

The post of **Principal** teacher can be advertised at any time, except July and August. Advertisements in July and August are only allowed in exceptional circumstances and with the prior approval of the Patron.

The post of **Permanent** teacher can be advertised at any time provided the conditions as set out in question 2 above are adhered to.

The post of **Temporary** teacher can be advertised at any time. However, the Department will not allow a Board of Management to fill a permanent vacancy with a temporary teacher from the 1st September of a school year where there are teachers remaining on the relevant panel for redeployment.

4. Where should the post be advertised?

It must be advertised in at least one national daily newspaper. The advertisement must run for a minimum period of one day. The Chairperson should notify all teaching staff of the school regarding the vacancy. The Irish Primary Principal's Network now operate a website (www.educationposts.com) where vacancies for posts can be advertised. However, advertising on this website does not replace the requirement to advertise in a national newspaper.

5. What details should be included in the advertisement?

1. The name and address of the school (in the case of Catholic schools add "under the Patronage of the Catholic Bishop of _____ (Diocese).
2. The number of teaching posts, including the Principal.
3. The nature of the post e.g. Principal, fifth teacher.
4. The status of the teaching post (i.e. whether Principal, Permanent or Temporary).
5. The date of commencement of the teaching post.
6. Nature of duties which, initially may be allocated to the post (e.g. learning support, resource etc)

7. The latest date for receipt of application forms. **This date should not be earlier than two weeks after the last date of publication of the advertisement.**
8. That a curriculum vitae must be submitted with the application.
9. Whether references, reports or other documentary information are required.
10. Applicants should be advised to enclose a stamped addressed envelope for the return of documents.
11. In the case of permanent and temporary teachers (excluding Principals), the advertisement should state whether or not a list of suitable applicants may be set up from which future vacancies shall be filled. Such a list would only be valid for the four month period from the date of the advertisement.
12. Special care shall be taken in drafting the advertisement, especially indicating the sex category of the school, so as to ensure that it will be understood by all that both male and female applicants will be given equal consideration.

No details should be given which might be construed as being discriminatory on grounds of gender or marital status of applicants, irrespective of the gender category of the school.

(See sample advertisements in Appendix A).

6. What happens next?

A Selection Board is set up.

7. Who should be on the Selection Board?

In the case of the appointment of a **Principal** teacher, the Chairperson of the Board of Management and at least two assessors independent of the Board of Management to be appointed by the Patron after consultation with the Chairperson should be on the Selection Board.

In the case of the appointment of a **Permanent** and **Temporary** teacher, the Chairperson of the Board of Management, the Principal teacher and an assessor, independent of the Board of Management to be appointed by the Patron after consultation with the Chairperson should be on the Selection Board. (In the case of the selection of a **Permanent** and **Temporary** teacher in a period after a Principal teacher has been appointed but before that Principal takes up duty, the Principal-designate shall fill the position of Principal on the Selection Board.

The Selection Board must include at least one male and one female.

8. Who decides whom the independent assessor(s) is/are to be?

The Patron, in consultation with the Chairperson.

9. What are the general functions of the Selection Board?

The Selection Board:

1. Prior to any consideration of the applications would establish and record in writing criteria for the assessment of applications, having regard to appropriate legislation, the Rules for National Schools (as amended), Circular 2/02 and the requirements of the post.
2. Draws up a shortlist of applicants who are to be invited to interview.
3. Conducts the interviews.

10. When must the Selection Board meet?

Within a reasonable period after the closing date for receipt of applications.

11. Can the Chairperson or any other member of the Selection Board disqualify him/herself from the Selection Board?

Yes, when a relationship exists between any member of the Selection Board and any applicant for the post. The Patron will then nominate a replacement in his/her place and is required to inform Primary Administration Section of the Department of Education & Science prior to the interview.

Failure to disclose any relationship may invalidate the selection process (Section 15b of the revised Boards of Management of National Schools, Constitution of Boards and Rules of Procedure (2000 edition) refers).

12. What action should be taken if the Chairperson of the Board of Management is unable to act on the Selection Board because of illness or other serious cause?

The Patron nominates a replacement for the Chairperson and is required to inform Primary Administration Section of the Department of Education & Science prior to the interview.

13. Can the Selection Board limit the number of applicants which it wishes to call for interview?

Yes. However, a minimum of three eligible applicants must be called for interview. If less than three applicants have applied for the post, all of the eligible applicants must be invited to interview. Applicants for a permanent or temporary position must be either fully qualified primary teachers or meet the criteria for a particular post as outlined in Circular 25/00. Applicants for the post of principal must satisfy the criteria as outlined in Circular 2/02.

14. Are there any specific issues, which the Selection Board must bear in mind during the appointment process?

Yes.

1. The Selection Board must keep to the agreed criteria for the assessment of applicants.
2. The Chairperson must keep a record of the agreed criteria and of the scoring used to assess applications and interviews.
3. When interviewing applicants, the Selection Board must adhere to the provisions of the Employment Equality Act, 1977, and the Code of Practice of the Employment Equality Agency, 1983 and the Code of Practice of the Equality Authority.
4. All questions at the interview must relate to the requirements of the teaching post and the Rules for National Schools.
5. Particular caution must be taken at the interview to ensure that no questions, comments or statements might be construed as discriminatory on grounds of gender or marital status.
6. The following factors should be taken into account, having regard to the requirements of the particular post and the Rules for National Schools and Department Primary Circular 2/02, though not exclusively and not necessarily in this order:
 - professional qualifications
 - teaching experience and inspector's report on competence
 - other relevant experience
 - references (in this regard applicants should be advised in good time whether or not additional documentary information is required).
7. In the selection of staff for boys only and girls only schools special care should be taken to ensure that both male and female applicants are given equal opportunities to present themselves as suitable and that questions put should not give the impression that the Board has a preconceived view of the suitability of either a male or female applicant for a particular post.

15. When should the interviews be held ?

Calls for interviews should normally be issued within 3 weeks of the latest date for receipt of applicants.

16. How much notice must each teacher, being called to interview, receive from the Selection Board?

Seven days written notice must be given. The interviews should be scheduled for times outside of school hours.

17. What happens after all the interviews have been completed?

The Selection Board shall submit a written report to the Board of Management, nominating the applicant whom it considers most suitable for appointment.

18. Should a list of suitable candidates (excluding the nominated candidate) be submitted to the Board of Management?

Yes. In the case of Principals, Permanent and Temporary teachers, a list in order of merit of other candidates who are also deemed suitable shall be retained by the Selection Board.

19. Should a list of suitable candidates in addition to the nominated candidate, be submitted to the Board of Management?

In the case of Permanent and Temporary teachers (but not Principals) a list of candidates, in order of merit, who are deemed suitable may be submitted to the Board for use in the event of future vacancies arising in the school. This particular list may only be compiled if it has been referred to in the advertisement.

This list is only valid for a 4 month period, from the date of the advertisement.

Learning Support or Resource posts may not be filled from the above list. Such posts must be advertised separately.

20. Must the Board of Management appoint the candidate nominated by the Selection Board?

The Board of Management shall meet and appoint the teacher nominated by the Selection Board, unless, for what it considers a good and sufficient reason, it does not wish to do so. In this instance it should refer the matter to the Patron, whose decision shall be accepted by the Board of Management.

The rejection of the recommendation of the Selection Board is a serious step, which should not be taken lightly by the Board of Management. The "good and sufficient reason" would have to be a very serious point and one not usually known to the Selection Board.

It is important to emphasise that members of the Board of Management are required to treat matters discussed at meetings as confidential, unless otherwise advised by the Board of Management.

21. Is approval for the appointment required from the Patron?

Yes.

22. When should the Board of Management notify the teacher selected for the post?

Having received the approval of the Patron, the Board shall notify the teacher of his/her appointment. The successful candidate should be advised that the offer is subject to the sanction of the Minister for Education and Science.

The Board and the teacher then complete the relevant form (available from the Primary Payments Section of the Department or from the Department website www.irlgov.ie/educ) which is submitted to Primary Payments Section of the Department. The Department then issues an "Agreement Form" for execution between the Board and the teacher together with the letter sanctioning the post.

23. When should the Board of Management notify all other candidates?

As soon as the Board has received approval from the Patron for the appointment of the person selected and notification of his/her acceptance of the post, all other candidates shall be notified that they are unsuccessful. (This includes candidates who have been placed on the list mentioned at Question 18). Notification should be in writing.

24. What is the procedure regarding appointing a Principal teacher or a permanent teacher to a convent and a monastery school?

If the authorities of the religious order concerned wish to appoint a member of the order the Board of Management shall, subject to the prior approval of the Patron and the sanction of the Minister, appoint the person proposed by these authorities provided that the person is qualified for the post as per Primary Circular 2/02.

If the authorities of the order consider that a layperson should be appointed then the appointment should be filled by open competition as set out in questions 1 - 23 above.

Where a religious order has been guaranteed a certain number of posts in a re-organised school which is not a convent or monastery school, the Board of Management shall, subject to the prior approval of the Patron and the sanction of the Minister, appoint to such posts members of the order nominated by the authorities of the religious order concerned provided that the persons nominated are qualified for the posts in question as per Primary Circular 2/02.

25. What is the procedure that a Board of Management must follow in making a temporary appointment?

If the duration of the temporary appointment is for a period of eight months or more the procedures outlined in Appendix D Boards of Management of National Schools Constitution of Boards and Rules of Procedure and as amended in Appendix D to Primary Circular 2/02 must be adhered to. If the temporary appointment is for a period of less than eight months the appointment procedures are a matter for the Board of Management.

SECTION 2 ~ Panel Appointments

1. What steps does a Board of Management need to take when filling a post from the panel?

1. Boards with permanent vacancies to be filled from 1st September, should arrange for the filling of these posts from the appropriate panels as soon as the panels are available from the Patron's Office. In any event, Boards should endeavour to have such vacancies filled from the panels by the 7th June. Where a vacancy occurs after the 1st June of a school year and panels are clear it must be filled in a temporary capacity until the end of that school year. The permanent post must then be offered to teachers on the relevant panel to commence in the school on the 1st September.
2. The Board should check the position of the panel(s) with the Patron's Office (copies of the appropriate panel list(s) can be obtained from the Patron's Offices).
3. The post must be offered in writing to a teacher(s) on the panel.

Even if there are teachers who are located in schools which are more than 45km (28 miles) a Board must still offer the post to these teachers. (Distance is calculated between the school offering the post and the school from which the teacher received panel rights. Distance between the teacher's residence and the school does not apply). A teacher is only obliged to accept offers made if the post is within the 45km (28 miles) limit. A teacher must reply in writing to each offer made even if it is outside the distance.

Teachers may be granted exemption from the requirements of the panel on grounds of maternity/adoption. Where an exemption is granted the teacher's name remains on the panel but Boards are not obliged to offer a post to the teacher during the period in question. However, in the case of a permanent teacher who has been granted an exemption and a vacant post **arises within her school, the Board must offer the post to her.** The teacher is obliged to accept the offer.

4. Allow the teacher seven days to reply in writing to the offer.
5. If a Board encounters any difficulties in the operation of the panels, including teachers refusing to reply to an offer, the matter should be reported to the Patron's Office or to the Primary Payments Section of the Department of Education & Science.

2. Has a Board of Management the right to interview a teacher when he/she is on the panel?

Yes, the Board of Management has the right to interview provided that there is more than one teacher on the panel.

3. **Can a Board of Management employ a temporary teacher while awaiting an indication from a panel teacher as to his/her intention in relation to an offer?**

No. There are no circumstances under which the Department will allow the appointment of a temporary teacher while there are teachers on the panel to whom offers are either pending or from whom replies are awaited.

4. **What must a Board of Management do when a panel teacher has accepted an offer?**

A Board of Management must notify the Patron's Office and the Department *immediately* when a panel teacher has accepted a post in its school, so that the teacher's name may be officially removed from the Panel.

The relevant form will be forwarded to a teacher at the same time as s/he is invited to have his/her name placed on the panel. When a teacher is offered a permanent post and has accepted same, s/he should immediately complete the relevant form and submit it to the Board. The Board must complete the details on the form and forward it to the Department *immediately* so that the teacher's salary details may be recorded.

SECTION 3

APPENDIX A

Sample Advertisement

Date of Advertisement

1st June 2002

PRINCIPAL

required from

1st September, 2002

for

ST. MARY'S NATIONAL SCHOOL

Main Street, Galway City

(under the Patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Galway)

Which is a seven teacher school

(including the Principal)

*Applications with curriculum vitae, copy of qualifications
and details of experience and references to reach the
Chairperson of the Board of Management no later than*

16th June 2002

Enclose SAE for return of documents.

Date of Advertisement

1st June 2002

PRIMARY TEACHER (PERMANENT)

required from

1st September, 2002

for

EARL NATIONAL SCHOOL
Main Street, Galway City

*Which is a seven teacher school
(including the Principal)*

*Applications with curriculum vitae, copy of qualifications
and details of experience and references to reach the
Chairperson of the Board of Management no later than*

16th June 2002

Enclose SAE for return of documents.

*A list of suitable applicants may be set
up from which future vacancies may be
filled within a four-month period from
the date of this advertisement.*

Date of Advertisement

1st June 2002

PRIMARY TEACHER (TEMPORARY)

required from

1st September, 2002

for the 2001/02 school year

for

ST. MARY'S NATIONAL SCHOOL

Main Street, Galway City

(under the Patronage of the Catholic Bishop of Galway)

*Which is a seven teacher school
(including the Principal)*

*Applications with curriculum vitae, copy of qualifications
and details of experience and references to reach the
Chairperson of the Board of Management no later than*

16th June 2002

Enclose SAE for return of documents.

*A list of suitable applicants may be set
up from which future vacancies may be
filled within a four-month period from
the date of this advertisement.*

**Primary Payments Section,
Department of Education & Science,
Cornamaddy, Athlone, Co. Westmeath.**

Tel: (0902) 74621 • (01) 8734700

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