

# PROMOTIONS PROCEDURES

A promotion procedure has been in operation within the Down & Connor Diocese for the Catholic Maintained Sector for a number of years. Its main characteristic is that it requires Boards of Governors to post a notice of intent, detailing the promotion offered in any relevant job description; which must be left for 5 working days to allow objections by teaching staff members to be raised - either by an individual teacher or by a union, where there is a collective complaint which has not been resolved. If there are no objections, the Board of Governors can then proceed to advertise the post.

Where an objection has been lodged, a complaints procedure is followed. The individual teacher or the teaching union official, as appropriate, is invited to meet a sub-committee of the Board of Governors to present a complaint. If the matter is not resolved at this stage, it can be referred to the Diocesan Administrator, who will attempt to affect a resolution in co-operation with the teaching union official. If the complaint is still not resolved it can be referred to an independent appeal panel consisting of an independent chairperson appointed by the Labour Relations Agency and two side persons. The decision of the appeal panel is final. Time limits apply to the various stages to ensure that the matter is dealt with as expeditiously as possible.

A new and improved procedure applicable to all schools is currently under negotiation within the Teachers' Salaries and Conditions of Service Negotiating Committee. INTO and other teaching unions in the Northern Ireland Teaching Council remain convinced that the only effective way forward is for a centrally agreed promotions procedure which will apply to schools in all sectors. In the interim period the following management guidelines for awarding Responsibility Points have been circulated by the Employing Authorities to all Boards of Governors:

## **Management Guidelines for the Award of Responsibility Points in Schools**

1. The Guidelines set out the key principles which should be followed by Boards of Governors in awarding responsibility points to teachers. All decisions regarding the award of responsibility points should be consistent with a management structure which has been agreed by the Boards of Governors and attached as an annex to its School Salary Policy Statement following consultation with all teaching staff.
2. Employing authorities are committed to ensuring fair equitable consideration of applications by persons employed or seeking to be employed. There must be no unfair discrimination, direct or indirect, against any person in recruitment, training, promotion or in any other way. The award of responsibility points must be based on merit and suitability for the post. Such points will normally be awarded following completion of a selection process.
3. With regard to selection practice, the principles, which apply to appointments, apply equally to the award of responsibility points. Boards of Governors are accountable for the implementation of good practice, and the operation of the relevant Equal Opportunities legislation applies as much in respect of the award of responsibility points as in respect of appointments.

4. Where a Board of Governors identifies a need to award responsibility points within a school, it shall determine the method of allocating the point(s) which may be by:
  - (a) Internal trawl;
  - (b) Regrading of an existing post; or
  - (c) Public advertisement
5. With regard to 4(a) and 4(c) above, the post of responsibility for which responsibility points are to be awarded should be notified to all staff within the school, along with a job description, and written applications should be invited on appropriate forms, by a specified date.
6. In all cases of selection for the award of responsibility points arising from 4(a) and 4(c) above, applicants should be interviewed by a properly constituted panel, after short listing if necessary. A properly constituted committee/panel is one which is set up in accordance with the terms of the Scheme of Management for the school and any appointments procedure established by an employing authority.
7. The practice whereby members of recruitment and selections panels receive training in interview techniques and other selection procedures should continue to be promoted.
8. The panel will agree and record the short listing criteria to be applied before considering the application forms. The short-listing criteria should be derived from the terms of the Job Description. Only after this has been completed should the applications be considered. Only those applicants who fulfil the short-listing criteria should be invited for interview. Decisions on implementing short listing criteria should be taken only on the basis of information contained in the application form.
9. The panel should then establish selection criteria which will be used to assess candidates at interview. The criteria used should be related to the main competencies required to carry out the duties, responsibilities and requirements of the post.
10. Panel members involved in all appointments should make a written record in an appropriate format of these matters relating to each candidate which could affect their final assessment. Such a record must be retained for a period of not less than two years.
11. Applicants for posts should be advised of the outcome at the earliest possible moment.
12. Where an applicant considers that there may have been procedural defects in the action of the panel, the applicant may appeal to the employing authority, provided that the appeal is presented within seven working days of the decision having been notified to the teacher, and that the grounds of appeal are made in writing.
13. All teaching staff should be advised of all awards of responsibility points, including regradings of existing posts.