

Appointment and Retention of Teachers

A child with a low incidence disability, for whom I have been allocated resource hours, will be leaving my school in October. What should I do?

In the first instance, you should let your local Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO) know. If the child's resource hours make up a part of a full time post, the post will not be affected for this year, as appointments are made for the school year 2005/6. However, in the event that additional hours are required for low incidence children in your school or cluster, the SENO may fill those hours from the surplus in your post. Where a pupil who is in receipt of low incidence hours leaves the school during the school year and these hours are being delivered by a part-time teacher, the part-time teacher's hours should be adjusted accordingly as soon as the pupil leaves the school. Boards should be cognisant of this possibility when they offer contracts to part-time staff.

My enrolment figures has risen since 2003 when my general allocation was calculated. Will DES amend my general allocation?

Schools which met the DES 'developing schools' criteria under Circular 15/05 have had their allocations amended based on the 2005/6 projected enrolment. However, DES will not amend the general allocation for smaller changes in a school's enrolment

My school retained our most junior permanent teacher for a full-time post sanctioned for a combination of low incidence and general allocation hours. However, a permanent teacher has indicated that she will be resigning on 30th September. Should I advertise a permanent or temporary post?

The post in question is in essence a temporary post, but you retained your most junior permanent teacher in it. When the other teacher resigns, the permanent teacher retained is now secure (i.e, not dependent on the temporary post), but the replacement teacher will be temporary. You should advertise a temporary post until the end of this school year.

Can I appoint an unprobated teacher to a post which includes general allocation hours?

DES has said that teachers appointed to any posts involving general allocation must be fully recognised and probated. If a teacher with restricted recognition is permanent in the school, they may carry out these duties for this school year. If you are appointing a teacher, the following applies:

"Boards of Management are obliged to recruit and employ fully qualified primary teachers for any vacancy in the school, regardless of the duration of the vacancy. Information regarding recognised qualifications can be obtained from the Primary Administration Section of the Department (Tel: 090 6483735/6483736). Also In the event that no suitable qualified teacher applies for a post and an untrained person is appointed pending the availability of a qualified teacher, the Board must outline to the Department the efforts made to secure a qualified teacher and the circumstances that necessitated the appointment of an untrained person." DES Circular 15/05

An unprobated teacher will not be able to fulfil probation requirements while in such a post.

Can I appoint an unprobated teacher to a post for children with low incidence disabilities?

Every effort should be made by schools to fill posts with qualified teachers. Teachers with restricted recognition are qualified for such posts. Newly qualified teachers may also be appointed to these posts, but they will be unable to fulfil the probation requirements as they are currently set out. However, DES are expected to issue a circular on probation in this school year which may alter this situation.

I have a full-time temporary post in my school for some general allocation and some low incidence hours. Will I have to seek sanction for this temporary post again for the next school year?

Yes. Your general allocation hours will be the same for next year and your SENO will confirm your entitlement to low incidence hours. If you are entitled to 22 hours, you will be able to retain the post. DES will contact schools early in 2006 to ask them to apply for appointment/ retention of temporary special education posts for 2006/7.

Deployment of Teachers

A child in my school has an assessment stating that he has a mild general learning disability and he was previously getting 2.5 hours individual tuition. Must I continue to provide 2.5 hours individual tuition from the general allocation?

You may continue to provide one to one support if you choose to do so, if it best meets the child's needs. However, DES Circular SPED 02/05 gives guidance to schools in prioritizing children's needs using the staged approach. A child with a mild general learning disability is considered to be at stage 3, and will require an individual planned programme, and should be allocated more time than a child at stage 2. However, the underlying principle in the circular is flexibility for the school to deploy their resources to best meet the needs of children with learning support/ special educational needs.

I have employed a teacher for six hours part-time, on the basis of hours allocated to 2 individual children with low incidence disabilities. Must that teacher teach those two children?

No. As part of the flexibility of deployment given under Circular SPED 02/05 schools are asked to consider the experience and permanence of teachers in allocating support, particularly to children with more acute needs. Priority should be given to meeting the needs of children with the most acute needs.

"Whenever possible, pupils with the greatest need should be taught by teachers who have the relevant expertise and commitment and who have a degree of permanence in the school"
(Circular SPED02/05)

My school has a shared general allocation post and a shared low incidence post with another school. One post is based in each school. Can the schools agree local arrangements to minimise travel time and make timetabling easier?

Yes. Schools may make local arrangements for the deployment of teachers provided:

- (a) that the overall number of authorised hours in a cluster is not exceeded;
- (b) that the needs of the children who are allocated teaching time are still met; and
- (c) that there is local agreement between the schools.

The post I hold was sanctioned based on 22 hours. Am I entitled to use the rest of the time for planning?

The 22 hours required for appointment is an agreed minimum figure at which a full-time appointment may be made. However, it is expected that all teachers, including resource/ learning support teachers teach for the full school day. Many schools have made local arrangements which accommodate teachers' need for planning and/or travel time. This matter will continue to be at the discretion of individual schools or clusters of schools, providing that all children's needs are being met. Also, teachers in posts sanctioned at 22 hours will be expected to cover any additional low incidence hours granted to the school, up to a maximum of 25 hours.

A child in my school has recently been diagnosed with dyslexia. How should we organize teaching support for that child?

Using the staged approach outlined in Circular 02/05, a child with dyslexia would be considered to be at Stage III, i.e. having significant special educational needs. The Circular recommends that pupils at stage III receive more additional teaching time from the school's general allocation than pupils at Stage II. The level of support allocated to a pupil, and the form that support will take should be based on the child's needs.

General

A new special education post has been created in our school. Am I entitled to a grant?

Yes. Where a learning support/resource teacher has been appointed to a school, an annual grant is paid for the purchase of learning support/resource equipment and materials. The grant is payable at a rate of €635 in the first year of the post being established and €317 annually thereafter. The grant is payable in respect of each recognised learning support/resource teacher in a school. However, a teacher serving a cluster of schools receives the same grant for the purchase of equipment or materials as does a teacher serving a single school.

I am a learning support/ resource teacher shared between two schools. Am I entitled to travelling expenses.

Yes. The form for claiming expenses and information on the rate etc is available. The rate of expenses and an application form are contained in Circular 01/02, which can be found on the DES website, under Education Personnel> Primary> Circulars> Salary

My school has two additional temporary posts as a result of appointments for low incidence children. Do these posts count for the calculation of the number of posts of responsibility and principal's allowance?

Yes. You should check the schedule of posts set out in Appendix B of Circular 07/03 or on page 9 of the September 2005 Intouch to ensure that the correct number of posts are being filled in your school.