

ACCS

Newsletter Nuachtiris

Cumann na Scoileanna Pobail is Cuimsitheacha Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools

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This newsletter is a private and confidential document for circulation only to Boards of Management and Principals.
Please circulate to Board Members.



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Welcome to 2013/2014 School Year

I'm sure if you look back over newsletters from recent years the message will have been the same in our first one of the year. Each year we wish our schools, our staffs and our pupils well for the year about to begin and each year we say it will be a challenging one. I don't think anyone could have envisaged when we complained so bitterly and so vocally about the provisions of Budget 2009 that we would still be accepting further cuts and getting on with the job in our schools despite successive cuts in resources over each of those years. We have accepted challenge after challenge and still manage somehow to deliver a quality service to our students, many of whom are suffering personally within difficult family situations. There is one thing we can be certain of, our schools provide a beacon of hope for all these students, for some it may well be the sole beacon guiding them. Budget 2013 will provide further challenges. At least we will know about them three months earlier than usual with the budget in October 2013.

There is a lot of uncertainty in our schools at present. Our teachers will be making stark and difficult choices in September in their consideration of the Haddington Road agreement proposals. In the interim School Managements will try to cope with ensuring a safe and productive environment for our students supported by those same teachers. I have no doubt that the co-operation that exists among our staffs will once again overcome the uncertainty and support our students.

We will be facing the ongoing challenges of Junior Cycle Reform, the operation at local level of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategy and School Self Evaluation. Trying to cope with all these initiatives simultaneously while responding to newer ones such as the development of an Anti-Bullying Policy will be very challenging over the coming year. The fact that we are suffering a chronic lack of teaching resources and middle management support makes it all the more difficult. In seeking an inspirational phrase to set us up for these challenges I came across the following: "The difference between stumbling blocks and stepping stones is how you use them." Never will the requirement for positivity be greater. It has been a summer of mainly wonderful weather and hopefully we will all have benefitted from the rest and relaxation.

ACCS will be there to support your work over the coming year. We publish in this newsletter our Continuous Professional Development programme and we will begin this process with our Area Information Meetings in September.



Ciarán Flynn

We look forward to seeing you there and exploring ways in which we can give further support to schools. You will have heard that ACCS has agreed a contract with Carecall to provide a counselling service to all our staff members not covered by the DES contract. This is a major positive initiative which we hope to embed in all our schools in the coming years. We will review progress on this at our Annual Convention in Killarney in March 2014. We are involved with the JMB on a piece of quality research on middle management which we will share with you when it is complete. Another piece of research on the use of 1:1 devices in our schools is almost ready for sharing with you.

The ACCS Strategic Plan is near completion and will soon be ready for publication. It will provide a template for our work based on your perceptions for the next number of years. It has been a very useful and important exercise for us emphasising the areas of our work which are important to you but also highlighting areas where we can look for improvement.

At our In-School Management Conference in November we will be aiming to provide practical on-the-ground examples of best practice in a number of important areas. We look forward to working closely with the ISM sub-committee in the development of this Conference and to the opportunity to say a heartfelt thank-you to our members recently retired.

As you approach the year ahead please remember that ACCS is always available to support you. Don't hesitate to pick up the phone and call us or send an email if you need some advice.

ACCS Area Meetings

A series of Area Meetings are scheduled for early September. These meetings will provide the opportunity for Boards of Management members and Principals to discuss the particular difficulties which arise from the current changes in resources and procedures. Participants can advise ACCS of issues which require attention during the course of the year.

The Role and Function of a Board of Management

Objectives

This in-service gives both new and existing Board Members an opportunity to learn about their role and function in the school. The DES supports Boards of Management being informed and engaged with what is going on in their schools and, through the Inspectorate at Whole School Evaluation, is asking how Boards are fulfilling their function.

Board Members will have the opportunity to gain an insight into their responsibilities as Members of a Board of Management of a Community or Comprehensive School. The emphasis is on the heightening of awareness necessary to facilitate transparency, accountability, understanding and wisdom on how schools function and operate. Participants will be encouraged to raise practical issues for discussion and clarification.

The in-service can take place in an individual school with an individual Board or a small group of local schools can have this in-service together. Alternatively, if there are only a few new Members of your Board of Management who require in-servicing, they can attend an in-service organised for October 23, 2013.

Content Includes:

- Deed of Trust/Deed of Indenture
- Characteristics of a Community/Comprehensive School
- Roles of Chairperson, Secretary and Member
- The Board of Management as an Employer
- School's Policies and Practices
- Pastoral Care and Behaviour
- Accounting Procedures
- Curriculum Planning
- Current Issues

Who should attend?

New and recently appointed members of a Board of Management; School Principals; Experienced Board Members who want to be updated on their role.

- In-service may be organised with individual Boards by request to ACCS.
- In-service in ACCS Head Office, Dublin 12 on October 23, 2013.

[€70 per participant]

Costs of this CPD are recouped by ACCS for schools from the Department of Education and Skills.

Post of Responsibility Process

Objectives

This in-service gives Principals and other Selection Committee Members an opportunity to learn about best practice regarding the appointment of staff to Posts of Responsibility in their schools.

Content Includes:

- The Schedule of Posts
- Criteria and allocation of marks as outlined in Circular 42/10
- Advertising the position(s)
- The Interview Process (questioning and note-taking)
- Marking Schemes
- Post of Responsibility Appeal System

Who should attend?

Principals and Selection Committee Members

- In-service in ACCS Head Office, Dublin 12 on September 18, 2013.
- [€70 per participant]

Accountability and Management of the DES Administrative & Financial Guidelines

Objectives

Principals carry onerous responsibilities in finance and administration in their schools. They are ably assisted by their Clerical Officers. This in-service supports both Principal and Clerical Officer in understanding the importance of the processes underpinning financial accountability in their school. They will become aware of the pitfalls which should be avoided and how to avoid them.

We will clarify aspects of the Guidelines as they impact on school administrators.

We are currently engaged in a review of the guidelines with the DES.

Content Includes:

- Board of Management Responsibilities
- Financial Returns/Audits
- Allocations: Funding & Staffing
- School Internal Controls
- Purchasing, Tendering, Quotations etc.
- Asset Management
- Receipts, Payments & Banking Arrangements
- Adult Education
- Record Keeping
- Use of School Facilities by Outside School Agencies
- Compiling a Risk Register
- Procurement

Who should attend?

Principals and/or Clerical Officers who are charged with the responsibility for the preparation of school accounts.

- In-service in ACCS Head Office on September 25, 2013.
- [€120 per school or €80 per participant]

Staff Management Issues – Best Practice in Schools

Objectives

Principals and Board Members need to have the necessary knowledge and support to enable them to play an effective role in managing staff and securing their commitment to the school.

Participants on the course will get an introduction to the legislative obligations on employers, become familiar with the agreed policies and procedures in the Community & Comprehensive Sector, gain an understanding of handling the non-routine HR issues that arise in schools and get advice on staying 'complaint compliant'.

Content Includes:

- Contracts of Employment (teaching & non-teaching staff), Contracts of Indefinite Duration, Fixed Term Contracts, Adjudication Process and case studies.
- Occupational Health Service, Managing Absenteeism.
- Grievance & Disciplinary Procedures:
 - Disciplinary procedures under Section 24.3.
 - ACCS, IMPACT & SIPTU New Grievance, Discipline and Dismissal Procedure.
- Dignity at Work (Bullying & Harassment)
- Complaints from a Parent
- Health & Safety at Work
- Updated Leave Entitlements
- Relevant DES Circulars and ACCS website

Who should attend?

- Principals, Chairs of Boards, Members of Boards of Management.
- Dunraven Arms Hotel, Adare, Co. Limerick on October 10, 2013. [€80 per participant]
 - ACCS Head Office, Dublin 12 on October 15, 2013. [€70 per participant]

Codes, Policies and Appeals

Objectives

It is important for all school managements to understand and be empowered in the development and periodic review of school codes/policies and their relevance to the appeal process. The Code of Behaviour and Admission/Enrolment Policies are of particular relevance here.

The presenters have extensive experience of Section 29 facilitations and hearings and will be in a position to discuss some of the issues which schools have experienced in these processes. Important lessons for school policies and practices arising from Section 29 processes will be shared with the participants.

Content Includes:

- Legislation
- Admission/Enrolment Policy
- Code of Behaviour
- Section 29 Appeal Process
- Guidance and Best Practice garnered from practical experience

Who should attend?

- Principals, Chairs of Boards, Members of Boards of Management.
- Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone, January 23, 2014. [€80 per participant]

Teacher Allocation [Redeployment in afternoon]

Objectives

This in-service is being held prior to allocations being distributed to schools by the DES. The intention is that schools will be alerted to any changes emanating from the Budget and will be updated on any DES changes to allocations. We will discuss how schools can use their allocation to best effect and how curricular concessions should be sought. Some of our school principals are very experienced in seeking curricular concessions and best practice in this regard will be shared. In the afternoon we will work with any of our schools who are likely to find themselves in a redeployment situation.

Content Includes:

- Current issues affecting allocation
- Initial Allocation/Final Allocation
- Curriculum Check List/Audit
- Curricular Concessions Best Practice
- Appeals Board
- Redeployment

Who should attend?

- Principals, Chairs of Boards.
- Mullingar Park Hotel, Co. Westmeath, on December 11, 2013.
[€110 per participant]

Clerical Officer/School Secretary In-Service

Objectives

The work of the Clerical Officer/School Secretary continues to be very responsible. Following on from our Clerical Officer in-services last year, we will provide an in-service that is practically based and will give both new and experienced Clerical Officers an opportunity to discuss their concerns and to share best practice.

Following consultation we will provide in-service based on needs as outlined by Clerical Officers.

Who should attend?

- Clerical Officers and School Secretaries.
- Sheraton Hotel, Athlone, Co. Westmeath, on February 11, 2014.
 - Dunraven Arms Hotel, Adare, Co. Limerick on February 13, 2014.
[€80 per participant]



Clerical Officer In-Service, Adare, Co. Limerick.

Booking Arrangements

Notice of arrangements will be sent to schools with appropriate enrolment forms prior to each course. Electronic booking forms are available on the ACCS website at www.accs.ie. Each completed booking form should be accompanied with the appropriate participant fee when bookings are made.

ACCS Continuous Professional Development Programme 2013/2014

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Date and Location	Programme Title	Participants
15/08/13 - 2.30 p.m. – 6.30 p.m. 16/08/13 - 9.30 a.m. – 1.00 p.m. Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone, Co. Westmeath.	Induction of New Principals in Community & Comprehensive Schools.	All recently appointed Principals for an introduction to the sector.
20/08/13 Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone, Co. Westmeath.	Induction of New Deputy Principals in Community & Comprehensive Schools. 9.30 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.	All recently appointed Deputy Principals for an introduction to the sector.
03/09/13 Gallagher's Hotel, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal. 03/09/13 Dunraven Arms, Adare, Co. Limerick. 05/09/13 ACCS Head Office, Dublin 12. (Dublin Meeting) 11/09/13 Lough Rea Hotel & Spa, Loughrea, Co. Galway. 12/09/13 ACCS Head Office, Dublin 12. (Leinster Meeting)	ACCS Area Information Meeting. 6.30 p.m. - 8.30 p.m.	Principal/Secretary Board of Management plus 2 Members of the Board of Management.
18/09/13 ACCS Head Office, Dublin 12.	Post of Responsibility Process. 10.00 a.m. – 1.00 p.m.	Principals & Selection Committee Members.
25/09/13 ACCS Head Office, Dublin 12.	Accountability & Management of the DES Administrative & Financial Guidelines. 9.30 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.	Newly appointed Principals with their Clerical Officers.
10/10/13 Dunraven Arms, Adare, Co. Limerick. 15/10/13 ACCS Head Office, Dublin 12.	Staff Management Issues - Best Practice in Schools. 9.30 a.m. – 1.30 p.m.	Principals, Chairs and Members of Boards of Management.
23/10/13 ACCS Head Office, Dublin 12.	The Role & Function of a Board of Management. 6.30 p.m. - 9.30 p.m. In-Service may be organised with individual Boards by request.	New and recently appointed Members of a Board of Management/School Principals.
14/11/13 & 15/11/13 Radisson Blu Hotel & Spa, Ballincar, Rosses Point Road, Sligo.	In-School Management Conference. Buffet Lunch from 12.30 p.m. 2.00 p.m. - 7.00 p.m. 9.15 a.m. - 1.30 p.m.	Principals & Deputy Principals of Community & Comprehensive Schools (Documentation to follow).
11/12/13 Mullingar Park Hotel, Co. Westmeath.	Allocations 9.30 a.m. – 1.00 p.m. Redeployment 2.30 p.m. – 4.00 p.m.	Principals, Chairs of Boards of Management.
23/01/14 Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone, Co. Westmeath.	Codes, Policies and Appeals. A best practice guide to reviewing and operating a Code of Behaviour and an enrolment policy with lessons learned from Section 29 appeals. 1.30 p.m. – 4.30 p.m.	Principals, Chairs of Boards and Members of Boards of Management.
05/02/14 Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone, Co. Westmeath.	Education Conference. 9.45 a.m. - 4.00 p.m.	Principals, Deputy Principals, School Personnel & Members of Boards of Management.
11/02/14 Sheraton Hotel, Athlone, Co. Westmeath. 13/02/14 Dunraven Arms Hotel, Adare, Co. Limerick.	Clerical Officer In-Service. 9.30 a.m. – 1.30 p.m.	Clerical Officers/School Secretaries.
27/03/14 - 29/03/14 The Malton Hotel, Killarney, Co. Kerry.	ACCS 2014 Convention.	School Principal plus 2 Members of the Board of Management.
14/05/14 Mullingar Park Hotel, Co. Westmeath.	ACCS National Trustee Forum 5th Conference. 9.00 a.m. – 3.15 p.m.	Patrons, Trustees (& their Nominees) of Community & Comprehensive Schools.

Retirements and New Appointments

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ACCS offers its congratulations to recently appointed Principals and Deputy Principals and its thanks and best wishes to those retiring. Congratulations also to our departing colleagues who are taking up leadership positions in schools outside the sector as shown below.

Mr. Mark O'Brien appointed Principal of **Good Counsel College**, New Ross, Co. Wexford.

Ms. Maria McAlinden appointed Deputy Principal of **Luttrellstown Community College**, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15.

Ms. Patricia Atkins appointed Principal of **Lusk Community College**, Co. Dublin.

Ms. Pauline Meany appointed Principal of **Our Lady's School**, Templeogue Road, Dublin 6 W.

Mr. Alan Cox, currently Principal of East Glendalough School is the Principal Designate of the new Secondary School, **Temple Carrig** in Greystones.

Retired/Departing Principals and Deputy Principals

Bailieborough C.S.
Principal: Ms. Patricia Atkins

Ballinrobe C.S.
Principal: Mr. Michael Brett

Ballinteer C.S.
Deputy Principal: Ms. Maria McAlinden

Ballyhaunis C.S.
Principal: Mr. Pat McHugh

Clifden C.S.
Principal: Dr. Liam Bolger

Killinarden C.S.
Deputy Principal: Ms. Noreen Walsh

Kinsale C.S.
Principal: Mr. Seán Ó Broin

Ramsgrange C.S.
Principal: Mr. Mark O'Brien

Royal and Prior Comprehensive School
Deputy Principal: Ms. Jean Curran

St. Colmcille's C.S.
Deputy Principal: Ms. Pauline Meany

St. Mark's C.S.
Deputy Principal: Ms. Rose-Marie Horan

Tarbert Comprehensive School
Principal: Ms. Mary McGillicuddy

New Principals and Deputy Principals

Bailieborough C.S.
Principal: Ms. Martha Lievens
Deputy Principal: Mr. Fergal Kenny

Ballinamore C.S.
Principal: Mr. Padraig Leyden
Deputy Principal: Mr. Diarmuid McCaffrey

Ballinrobe C.S.
Principal: Mr. William Culkeen
Deputy Principal: Ms. Kathleen Devaney

Ballyhaunis C.S.
Principal: Mr. David McDonagh

Clifden C.S.
Principal: Ms. Mary Kelly

Killinarden C.S.
Deputy Principal: Ms. Denise Lennon-Hennessy

Kinsale C.S.
Principal: Mr. Fergal McCarthy

Ramsgrange C.S.
Principal: Ms. Rachel O'Connor

Royal and Prior Comprehensive School
Deputy Principal: Ms. Margaret Nairn

St. Colmcille's C.S.
Deputy Principal: Ms. Aileen Ryan

St. Mark's C.S.
Deputy Principal: Mr. Paul Dempsey

Tarbert Comprehensive School
Principal: Mr. Richard Prendiville
Deputy Principal: Ms. Leila Moloney



Convention 2014

The 32nd ACCS Convention will take place on the 27th, 28th & 29th March, 2014 in The Malton Hotel, Town Centre, Killarney, Co. Kerry.

Dates to remember

27th December, 2013 Nominations for Presidency and motions for Convention to be submitted.

27th January, 2014 Draft agenda of business and nominations for Presidency and motions to be issued to Member Boards and Executive Members. Member Boards will be invited to submit amendments to the motions.

27th February, 2014 Latest date for receipt of amendments to the motions.

13th March, 2014 A final agenda will be issued to Member Boards.

Areas of Focus for 2013/2014

Continued preparation for Junior Cycle Framework

CPD for Junior Cycle will be commencing shortly:

- Dr. Pádraig Kirk has taken up his position as Director of CPD for Junior Cycle with the DES since July 1, 2013.
- A lot of discussions between Management Bodies, unions and the DES have been taking place around CPD that is necessary and possible for the Junior Cycle.
- To date plans for CPD in the 2013/2014 school year are as follows:
 1. Principal and one other (Deputy Principal/ Co-ordinator) will have a half-day's in-service in late September through October 2013. This first session will include information on where the Junior Cycle Framework is at, what the CPD plan is going forward, links between SSE, L&N and JCF, curriculum and timetable options, exploring next steps for your school.
 2. English teachers will have a one-day in-service taking place from November to February 2014 in Education Centres around the country. Teachers will be invited to this in-service on a staggered basis (similar to Project Maths).
 3. English teachers will be expected to work on the JC back in school. Time may be allocated for this.
 4. Principal and one other will have another half day in-service later in the year. The aim is to have this starting in March 2014. The content of this in-service will be informed by the previous session and the work of the Junior Cycle Team in the meantime.

New website for Junior Cycle:

The DES is developing a new website for the Junior Cycle. This should be live by the end of September 2013. This website will use materials from the NCCA website, redevelop some of these materials and add to them. The Junior Cycle Support Service will continually update materials on the website.

The ACCS Education Conference on 5th February 2014 will be dedicated to the Junior Cycle Framework

Our Education Sub-committee hasn't made final decisions on the detail of the Conference because of potential overlap with CPD content for Senior Management. However, we expect to build on the 2013 Conference and will be asking our Network Schools to take a leading role in next year's event also.

Anti-Bullying Procedures

New Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post Primary schools are currently being developed following consultation with the relevant education partners (including ACCS). These Procedures will replace the 1993 Guidelines on Countering Bullying Behaviour. The requirement for new procedures resulted from a review of the 1993 guidelines and the implementation of the Action Plan on Bullying – Report of the Anti-bullying Working Group to the Minister for Education and Skills which was published in January 2013 and summarized in our Newsletter No. 4 2012/2013.

The purpose of the new procedures is to give direction and guidance to school authorities and school personnel in preventing and tackling bullying behavior.

The aim of the DES is for the finalised procedures to be published in early September. School personnel will be required to adhere to the procedures in dealing with allegations and incidents of bullying. All Boards of Management will be required to formally adopt an Anti-Bullying Policy that fully complies with the requirements of these procedures.



"We have accepted challenge after challenge and still manage somehow to deliver a quality service to our students."