



Circular Letter PPT 18/02

**To: The Board of Management of each
Community and Comprehensive School**

**Programme Co-ordinator Posts in Community and
Comprehensive Schools**

The Minister for Education and Science wishes to advise Boards of Management of Community and Comprehensive Schools that, following consultation with the interested parties, agreement has been reached on the following arrangements for posts of Programme Co-ordinator in Community and Comprehensive Schools.

Programme Co-ordinator Posts

- 1.1 A post of Co-ordinator will be established in each school offering any of the following programmes:

Leaving Certificate Applied Programme
Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme
Transition Year
Junior Certificate Schools Programme

- 1.2 The post will not form part of the normal cohort of school posts of responsibilities and will lapse when none of the programmes listed in 1.1 above is being provided by the school.
- 1.3 Selection for the post will be by way of special competition among the eligible teaching staff of the school.
- 1.4 Remuneration will be at the level of the allowance for a Special Duties Teacher Post of Responsibility in the case of schools with up to 100 pupils on these programmes and at the level of allowance for an Assistant Principal Post of Responsibility where the number of pupils is 100 or more.
- 1.5 Schools will arrange to provide a reduction in teaching hours to these post holders for co-ordination purposes from within the overall hours available to the school. The reduction in hours will be on the following basis

No of Pupils	Hours Reduction per week
1-59	2
60-99	3
100-139	4
>140	6

The loss of teaching hours will be compensated by way of a concession in the allocation of the annual number of teaching hours to the school.

- 1.6 In the event that the number of pupils falls below 100 pupils where the Programme Co-ordinator had previously been in receipt of an allowance at AP level, the co-ordinator will continue to hold the AP level allowance but will have the reduction in hours provided in accordance with the table in paragraph 1.5.
- 1.7 The above arrangements will be implemented with effect from 1 September 2001.
- 1.8 Appointment to such a post in a Community or Comprehensive School shall have no implication for subsequent appointment to an SDT post of responsibility or an AP post of responsibility.
- 1.9 Any existing post of responsibility holder may apply for a post of Programme Co-ordinator and, if appointed, will receive the higher of the relevant allowances and the reduction in teaching hours. The post of responsibility thus vacated will be filled on a temporary basis at the level of the Programme Co-ordinator post or at the level of the vacated post of responsibility, if lower, and this temporary post will be retained by the school for as long as the Programme Co-ordinator post is warranted and the post-holder, thus appointed, does not revert to his/her original post. The reduction in teaching hours deriving from the level of the Programme Co-ordinator post will be compensated to the school for the purposes of co-ordination and fulfilment of duties having regard to the needs of the school. A post holder thus appointed may opt to revert to his/her original post status from the beginning of a school year having given notice of his/her intent at the latest by 1st May of the previous school year. Any revision of duties necessitated by this arrangement will be carried out in accordance with normal practice.
- 1.10 The holder of a Programme Co-ordinator post may apply for and be appointed to an SDT or AP post of responsibility under the terms of Circular Letters 15/97, 32/00, 32A/00, PPT07/02 and PPT21/02. If appointed the teacher may retain the duties of Programme Co-ordinator and the higher of the relevant allowances. The post of responsibility may be filled on a temporary basis at the appropriate level, for as long as the teacher appointed to the post of responsibility is carrying out the duties of Programme Co-ordinator.
- 1.11 Arising from these arrangements a new competition will be held for the temporary post of responsibility retained by the school where an increase in the level of that temporary post is warranted by an increase in the level of the Programme Co-ordinator post.

2. Appointment Procedure

- 2.1 Notice of the vacant post shall be posted in the school for a period of not less than 7 school days, i.e. days on which the school is in operation for pupils.
- 2.2 Every reasonable effort shall be made to bring the vacancy to the attention of all eligible teachers. Members of staff on approved leave are eligible to apply

and therefore, a copy of the notice of the vacant post should be sent directly to the designated last known contact addresses of such teachers.

- 2.3 The notice shall specify that the post is a post of Programme Co-ordinator with remuneration at SDT level or Programme Co-ordinator with remuneration at AP level. The notice should also specify the number of pupils involved in the programmes on the previous 30th September and the reduction in teaching hours available. On first introduction of a programme or programmes, the level of the post and the reduction in hours will be based on an estimate of the number of pupils taking the programmes in the first year.
- 2.4. All teachers on the staff of the school with a minimum of three years' wholetime teaching service or its equivalent are eligible to apply for the post where the remuneration is at AP level. All teachers on the staff of the school with a minimum of one years' wholetime teaching experience or equivalent are eligible to apply where the remuneration is at STD level. The revised arrangements for the calculation of service for eligibility for posts of responsibility are set out in Circular Letter PPT07/02.
- 2.5. The notice shall specify the closing date for receipt of written applications which should not be earlier than ten school days after the initial date of posting of the notice in the school.

3. Selection

- 3.1 The Selection Committee for appointments in Community Schools shall be as set out in the Deed of Trust. The Trustees must have regard to the need for gender representation when establishing a Selection Committee. In the case of Comprehensive Schools the Selection Committee will be the Board of Management in line with existing practice except where otherwise agreed by the relevant interests.
- 3.2 The Selection Committee shall concern itself with the skills and aptitudes of the candidates and their suitability for promotion. In the interests of fairness and transparency the Selection Committee should adopt the following criteria when determining their order of merit for submission to the Board of Management
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|---|--------------|
| * Capacity of the applicant to meet the needs of the school and the case made at interview | 50% of marks |
| * Service to the school | 30% of marks |
| * Experience of a professional nature in the field of education and involvement in the school | 20% of marks |
| * See attached Annex | |
- 3.3 The Board of Management shall adopt the agreed selection criteria.
- 3.4 The Selection Committee shall make its decision based on the application of the agreed criteria

- 3.5 The Selection Committee should forward its recommendations to the Board of Management which shall have regard to the order of merit settled by the Selection Committee and shall make its appointment in accordance therewith.
- 3.6 The Board shall notify candidates of its decision. The candidates will be informed that the decision is subject to sanction by the Department and may be appealed to the Board of Management.
- 3.7 A candidate may submit an appeal in writing to the Secretary of the Board of Management within a period of five school days on the grounds that the criteria were not applied.
- 3.7 The appeal shall be referred to an agreed Arbitrator by the Board of Management.
- 3.8 No appointment shall be made pending the outcome of the appeal.
- 3.9 The Arbitrator shall obtain a written response from the Board of Management within 10 school days of the referral.
- 3.10 The Arbitrator may hold an oral hearing if he/she deems it necessary and shall make a recommendation to the Board of Management within 15 school days.
- 3.11 If the appeal has been rejected the Board of Management will request the Department of Education and Science to sanction the post.
- 3.12 If the appeal is upheld the Board of Management shall hold a new competition confined to original applicants. The original applicants will be invited to attend for re-interview.

4. Appeal Procedure

- 4.1 The person making the appeal shall submit a full written statement to the Board of Management on the grounds of the appeal, namely that the agreed criteria were not applied, within 5 school days of the announcement of the Board of Management's decision.
- 4.2 Upon receipt of the appeal the Board of Management shall submit the appeal and the Board of Management's written response to the Arbitrator within 10 school days of the receipt of the appeal.
- 4.3 The Arbitrator will be advised by a nominated advisor from each of the Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools, the Association of Secondary Teachers Ireland and the Teachers' Union of Ireland. A meeting of the Arbitrator and the advisors will be held when all relevant documentation has been received.
- 4.4 The Arbitrator will normally make a decision, having consulted the advisors, based on the written statements which he/she will make available to both parties (Board/Appellant). He or she may decide to interview the parties. The Arbitrator will notify the Board of Management of his/her decision within 15 school days of the submission of the appeal to him/her.

- 4.5 The Board of Management shall, on receipt of the Arbitrator's decision, hold a Board Meeting to formally adopt the Arbitrator's decision. If the Arbitrator's decision is to uphold the appeal, the Board of Management shall notify the parties and shall hold a new competition for the post of Programme Co-ordinator. If the appeal is rejected, the Board of Management will so inform the Appellant and request the Department to sanction the appointment.

5. Duties of Co-ordinator

- 5.1 The duties attached to the post of Co-ordinator should reflect the grade and level of responsibility entailed by the post taking into account the size and needs of the school. Therefore the role and duties of the Programme Co-ordinator will vary according to the number of programmes being offered by a school, the number of pupils taking the different programmes and the reduction of teaching hours available with the post. In the distribution of responsibilities, where there is more than one programme involved, the Programme Co-ordinator may be assigned responsibility mainly for one programme.

- 5.2 The duties of Co-ordinator may include:

- Communication e.g. liaising with parents, staff and outside agencies.
- Planning e.g. co-ordinating programme planning, timetabling
- Administration e.g. record keeping, arranging out-of-school activities, monitoring of practical achievement tasks
- Motivation e.g. team building, establishing the profile of the programmes, maintaining morale.
- Organisation e.g. organising work experience, insurance, meeting employers.
- Reporting to the school authorities.

This list is not exhaustive.

- 5.3 In implementing the various programmes and following consultation with those involved, school authorities will distribute duties in relation to the programme to the available personnel according to the individual circumstances of the school and according to the aptitudes and interests of the staff. In a school that offers more than one programme and/ or where there are significant numbers of pupils taking a programme, duties in relation to the programmes may be assigned to other teachers, who may be post of responsibility holders, in addition to the Programme Co-ordinator.

6. Review

- 6.1 The operation of the arrangements will be reviewed after a period of two years by a group which will include representatives of the ACS, ASTI, TUI and the Department of Education and Science.

7. Copies of circular

- 7.1** You are requested to provide a copy of this Circular to the parents' and teachers' representatives on Boards of Management.

**Johnny Bracken,
Principal Officer.**

June, 2002.

ANNEX

1. Capacity of the applicant to meet the needs of the school plus case made at interview:

- (a) The Selection Committee will assess the ability of the candidate to perform a range of duties.
- (b) In evaluating the capacity of the applicant to meet the needs of the school, the performance of the candidate to date may be assessed; the candidate may present evidence or record of such performance.
- (c) In demonstrating his/her ability to meet the needs of the school, the applicant may propose what he/she perceives to be the needs of the school in the context of the post.
- (d) The Selection Committee may seek to assess the reaction of an applicant to certain situations, which might reasonably be expected to be encountered in the performance of the duties associated with the post.
- (e) Cases made at interview would include the general professionalism of the candidate as presented at interview. It would include the presentation of the candidate himself/herself, the presentation of the application form/CV etc.

2. Service to the School.

- (a) The most senior applicant shall receive maximum marks – 30. Other candidates shall receive marks pro-rata e.g.

Candidate A = 20 years previous experience = 30 marks
Candidate B = 10 years previous experience = 15 marks
Candidate C = 5 years previous experience = 7.5 marks
- (b) The seniority of applicants shall be determined at the beginning of each school year by reference to qualified service in a permanent, temporary, substitute, eligible part-time or part-time capacity in the school as a post-primary teacher.
- (c) A maximum of one year's credit may be granted in respect of any one year. Seniority will be credited in full years only and will be computed as follows;
 - (i) each full year of permanent service will reckon as one year for seniority purposes
 - (ii) Permanent, temporary, substitute, eligible part-time or part-time service for a minimum of 22 school weeks in any one school year will reckon as a full year for seniority purposes
 - (iii) Permanent, temporary, substitute, eligible part-time or part-time service which, collectively or separately, amount to 200 or more hours in any school year will reckon as one year for seniority purposes.

- (iv) Subject to (iii) above, service in any one school year which is less than 22 school weeks will not be reckonable
- (v) Subject to (ii) above, service in any one school year which is less than 200 hours will not be reckonable.

3. Experience of a professional nature in the field of education and involvement in the school:

In-school experience e.g.

- (a) Contribution of applicant to the school
- (b) Experience as a post-holder in a temporary or permanent capacity
- (c) Experience as co-ordinator of a school project.

Out of school experience e.g.

- (a) Professional Development (In-Service, etc)
- (b) Subject Associations
- (c) Professional Associations
- (d) Work Experience
- (e) Course Committee Membership.