**Amendment to process for allocating SET hours to schools resulting from the Projected Enrolment process 2023/24**

Arising from feedback from management bodies and schools, the department has reviewed the operation of SET hours allocation arising from the Projected Enrolment process.

The present operation of the SET allocation process results in schools receiving confirmation of their allocation when enrolments are finalised in November. This causes difficulties for schools in terms of resource planning all though the hours are backdated to start of the term.

**Revised Process for Primary schools**

We are proposing that the SET hours arising from the Projected Enrolment process will be advised to schools as part of the mainstream projected enrolment communications from the Allocations Unit.

On the basis that predefined SET hours result from mainstream projected enrolment posts, we are proposing to align our process with Allocations section so that the additional SET allocation would be given provisionally when a projected enrolment post is awarded, meaning schools would no longer have to wait until November to get their additional SET allocation.

For 2023/2024 school year the SET allocation will be included in both the provisional and confirmation letters issued by the allocations unit. The same process will be applied to SET hours as is presently applied to the mainstream posts. The hours will be given provisionally and then suppressed/ removed in line with the allocations process if the projected enrolments do not materialise.

The above change will result in projected enrolment letters which issue from March onwards outlining provisional projected enrolment posts will include the SET hours.

When the posts are confirmed at the end of September Allocations unit write to schools informing them of their permanent allocation at which time and the permanent SET hours will be confirmed. The SET hours will be removed from schools at the end of October where enrolments do not materialise in line with the mainstream enrolment posts.

We believe that this change is a positive development and will address the issues raised with the present process.

**It is important to note that the change to the process is being implemented on a trial basis for the 2023/24 school year. If the trial is successful we would intend to apply the process going forward, however should issues arise in relation to the removal or suppression of posts we reserve the right to revert to the existing process with immediate effect.**

**Revised Process - Post Primary:**

At post primary, schools submit projected enrolments figures by March to the Departments Allocations unit. Schools are then notified in April where an allocation is provisionally approved in respect of projected increased enrolment.  This notification will also include the provisional SET Hours that would be applicable if the projected enrolment materialises.

In September/October, when the Allocations unit complete their application process the approval of the allocation for projected enrolment posts is communicated to schools and this will now also include the confirmed SET hours applicable.

Finally just to confirm this proposed change to the process does not impact the hours allocated which remain unchanged.

Special Education

March 2023