

## Reform of the Teacher Allocation Process

In addition to the budget savings measures the Department is also publishing the details of the reforms to the existing teacher allocations process that come into effect for the 2012/13 school year.

The reforms have a number of objectives. There is an overall objective of enabling the teacher allocation process to operate smoothly and efficiently within the new climate of fixed ceilings on teaching posts. The changes are designed to give a more equitable distribution of existing posts between schools, give earlier certainty to schools about their staffing allocations and, where possible, simplify existing processes and critically to give greater autonomy and control to schools in relation to how posts are utilised in individual schools or in the case of primary schools to enable two or more schools choose how to combine General Allocation Model (GAM) resources to establish shared posts.

These reforms are intended to be neutral in relation to the overall number of teaching posts allocated to schools. However, because many of the changes are designed to bring a more equitable distribution of existing posts between schools there will inevitably be some schools that will lose posts and other schools that will gain posts.

A summary of the main reforms of the teacher allocation process is outlined below:

### Primary

1. Aligning the General Allocation Model with current enrolment and thereby making it more equitable.
  - Existing posts will be used to **combine the General Allocation Model (learning support/high incidence special needs) and language support into a single and simplified allocation for all primary schools**. Schools will have autonomy on how to deploy the resource between language support and learning support.
  - The new arrangements will include provision for additional support for schools with high concentrations of pupils that require language support.
2. Special Needs -allocations determined by the NCSE
  - Existing posts will be used to put in place a **network of about 2,450 full-time resource posts in over 1,600 base schools** throughout the country that will be allocated on a permanent basis. The teachers in these full-time permanent posts will undertake NCSE approved resource hours in the base schools or in neighbouring schools. Through his/her role in allocating resources the local SENO will have an oversight role in relation to the sharing arrangements between schools so that they can operate as efficiently as possible and time loss due to travel between schools can be kept to a minimum. Schools that are unable to have their NCS E approved resource hours met from this network of full-time resource posts will be allocated mainly part-time temporary posts.
  - The list of base schools for the resource posts will be reviewed regularly to ensure needs of newly established and rapidly developing schools.

3. Change in clustering arrangements
  - Any re-clustering of GAM and language support hours into full-time posts will be operated at school level with schools having greater autonomy rather than the previous Department led approach. However, because of the later timeline for the allocation of resource hours by the NCSE, schools will not be permitted to combine GAM and NCSE approved resource hours together into full-time posts
4. Revised basis for the appointment of Administrative Principal posts
  - The criteria for the **appointment of Administrative Principals** will be **solely based on pupil numbers** rather than the current approach of mostly on pupil numbers but some also on teacher numbers. **Administrative Deputy Principals** posts will be determined on a similar basis where they arise.
5. **Specific autonomy measure in relation to Teaching Principals and the deployment of Resource/Learning support resources**
  - As an additional autonomy measure the **prohibition on teaching principals working as Resource/Learning Support teachers will be removed from September 2012**. Guidelines for the operation of these arrangements will be published early in 2012.

#### **Limited phasing arrangements**

Some limited phasing arrangements will be put in place by the Department for those primary and post-primary schools where the combination of budget and reform measures impact in a particularly adverse manner on the schools overall allocation. Further details will be notified to schools in early January

#### **Background Explanatory Note**

This background explanatory note gives more detail on the changes on the staffing arrangements in schools.

Schools will also be separately notified of the changes to the staffing arrangements when Department circulars are issued in early January.

#### **Primary:**

##### **1. Combining the GAM (learning support/high incidence resource) and language support:**

- The staffing allocation for many schools under the **General Allocation Model (GAM)** has not been updated since it was first introduced in 2005. It **will now be updated from September 2012 for all schools** through a redistribution of the existing resources. The combined resources available for GAM and language support (currently 4,700 posts) will be used to create a single simplified allocation process to cover both the GAM and language support.
- The new single allocation for GAM and language support will be based on the number of classroom teaching posts in each school in the previous school year (i.e. the allocation for 2012/13 school year will be based on the number of mainstream classroom teaching posts in the 2011/12 school year). This simplified approach will make it easier to automatically update it annually in line with the changes in the number

of classroom teachers in each school. Under these new arrangements schools will be treated equally irrespective of size, whether urban or rural or whether or not they are in DEIS.

- The single allocation process for GAM and language support will involve the allocation of the equivalent of circa. 4,100 posts as follows:
  - An allocation of 5 hours per week (0.2 of a post) to each mixed or all-boys school for every mainstream classroom teaching post.
  - An allocation of 4 hours per week (0.16 of a post) to each all-girls school for every mainstream classroom teaching post (rounded to the nearest 0.2 of a post to facilitate clustering into full-time posts).

The above allocations are designed to facilitate clustering into full-time posts (25 hours per week in each full-time post).

- DEIS Urban Band 1 schools under these revisions will be provided with an allocation on the same rules applying to schools generally. However, they will do better than schools generally given that the staffing schedule applicable provides a more favourable position for them in relation to the number of classroom teachers.
- Additional support will be provided to schools with high concentrations of pupils that require language support. This will operate as follows:
  - A **permanent allocation of over 350 posts** will be allocated to schools with high concentrations of pupils that require language support using the following criteria:
    - Schools that currently have 2 temporary language support posts will be allocated 1 permanent post
    - Schools that currently have 3 temporary language support posts will be allocated 2 permanent posts
    - Schools that currently have 4 temporary language support posts will be allocated 3 permanent posts.
    - Schools that currently have 5 or 6 temporary language support posts will be allocated 4 permanent posts.

The continued requirement for the above additional permanent posts will be reviewed on a regular basis by the Department having regard to enrolment trends and the number of pupils requiring language support.

- **Further additional temporary support** will also be provided, as necessary, to the above schools and any other schools that will have high concentrations of pupils that require language support in the 2012/13 school year. These allocations will be made on the basis of appeals by any of these schools to the Staffing Appeals Board. The DEIS status will be taken into account in any appeal application.
- The number of available posts for allocation through the appeals process will be adjusted down in future years in line with reductions announced in Budget 2010.

## 2. NCSE approved Resource hours

- Over 1,600 schools throughout the country will be identified by the Department as base schools for about 2,450 full-time resource only posts. The aim here is to have a good geographic spread of full-time resource posts in base schools throughout the country so that the teachers in these full-time permanent posts can undertake the NCSE approved resource hours for pupils with low incidence special needs in these base schools or in neighbouring schools.
- This approach builds on the interim arrangements that operated in 2011 but in a much more structured and transparent manner. The annual changes in resource hours at individual school level will only affect where the teacher working on any one day – not whether the school continues to host the full-time post. This approach will introduce a greater constancy in the context of annual allocations and redeployment process.
- When making allocations the local SENO will oversee the sharing arrangements between schools so that they are done as efficiently as possible and any time lost due to travel between schools is kept to a minimum.
- Schools that are unable to have their NCSE approved resource hours met from this network of 2,450 full-time resource only posts will be allocated mainly part-time temporary posts.
- The 1,600 base schools for the 2,450 full-time resource posts (the list of these schools will be published in early January as part of the Department circular on the new arrangements) will be selected on the basis of the number of NCSE resource hours approved for each school for the current 2011/12 school year using the following criteria:

NCSE approved allocation in 2011/12 school as at 31 December 2011	Proposed number of permanent resource posts to be hosted in base school (25 hours capacity in each post)
Less than 15 hours per week	0 posts
15 to 38 hours per week	1 post
Over 38 hours and up to 70 hours per week	2 posts
Over 70 hours and up to 95 hours per week	3 posts
Over 95 hours and up to 120 hours per week	4 posts
Over 120 hours and up to 145 hours per week	5 posts
1 additional post for each 25 hours thereafter	

- The list of base schools for the resource posts will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it reflects the needs of newly established and rapidly developing schools.

### **3. Clustering arrangements for full-time posts**

- Any re-clustering of GAM and language support hours into full-time posts will be operated at school level with schools having greater autonomy rather than the previous Department led approach. Because of the later timeline for the allocation of resource hours by the NCSE schools will not be permitted to combine GAM and NCSE approved resource hours together into full-time posts.

### **4. Administrative Principals and Deputy Principals in mainstream schools**

- The criteria for appointment as an Administrative Principal is mainly determined on the basis of reaching the relevant pupil enrolments listed in the staffing schedule. A relatively small number of schools also qualify for **Administrative Principal** status on the basis of the number of teachers in their school. This means that these schools do not have certainty in relation to Administrative Principal status until the teacher allocations process is fully completed. This will now be changed so that the qualification criteria for Administrative Principal for all schools will be based on reaching the relevant pupil thresholds. This will give much earlier certainty for schools once their enrolment numbers are known. A similar approach will also apply to the criteria for allocating the small number of Administrative Deputy Principals at primary level.
- As a means to ease the transition to the entirely enrolment driven arrangements for Administrative Principals and Administrative Deputy Principals schools that are adversely affected by the rule change can continue to keep their Administrative Principal or Administrative Deputy Principal status until there is a change of Principal or Deputy Principal in the school.

### **5. Teaching Principals working as Resource/Learning Support teachers**

- As an additional autonomy measure, it is proposed to remove the prohibition on Teaching Principals working as Resource or Learning Support teachers (currently they are only permitted to be classroom teachers). Some guidelines will be required to ensure pupils with special needs are not adversely affected. These guidelines will be published by the Department in early 2012 and will operate from September 2012.

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### 1. Will all schools benefit from the changes to the General Allocation Model?

No. In fact schools generally may see some reduction in the resources available under this measure. This is because the Department is dividing the existing resources across schools taking account of increased enrolments since the GAM was first introduced in 2005.

### 2. When will schools be notified of their staffing allocation for the 2012/13 school year?

The Department will issue a circular in early January on the staffing arrangements for primary schools for the 2012/13 school year. In addition to the staffing schedule it will also include the following:

- The individual allocation for each school for the combined GAM and language support. This will be based on the number of classroom teachers in each school in the 2011/12 school year. Each school will then be able to commence the re-clustering arrangements of these hours into full-time posts and inform the Department of the outcome.
- The additional permanent allocation for schools with high concentrations of pupils that require language support.
- The 1,600 base schools for the 2,450 resource posts.

### 3. Why is it no longer permitted to cluster GAM and NCSE approved resource hours into full-time posts?

- Because of the later timeline for the allocation of resource hours by the NCSE (mostly in the late Spring/early summer period but also throughout the school year) **schools will not be permitted to combine GAM and NCSE approved resource hours together.** The purpose of this is to enable the GAM allocation for each school to be updated annually and any re-clustering of GAM hours into full-time posts to be dealt with well in advance of the start of each school year (typically in the preceding October to December period).