

## Staffing Schedule and SET Allocations (Feb 2024)

The unfortunate inadvertent and premature release of the SET allocations appendices on Friday night has led to confusion and upset among school leaders, which is very regrettable. IPPN issued a communication to members via SMS on Saturday afternoon relating to the [DE clarification](#) that it had been issued in error.

IPPN has lobbied intensely for an early release of the staffing schedule, given the impact on schools of the much later issuing of the circular in previous years, and therefore welcomes the early publication of the staffing schedule and SET allocations for the 2024/25 school year. The publication of the circular in early February is commendable given that a process of reprofiling of schools for SET allocations had to be completed. The publication of the circular at this juncture of the school year will better facilitate the timely completion of redeployment and recruitment processes.

As you are aware, IPPN published a position paper on [SEN Resources, Allocations & Appeals](#) last June. The position paper was developed by the Advocacy & Communications committee of the National Council and highlighted challenges relating to the allocation of resources to schools to meet additional needs, including:

- planning for, supporting and resourcing schools to meet special needs
- how allocations are compromised by inaccurate or out of date data
- the inadequacy of the exceptional review process
- the impact of the shorter timeframe for the admissions process
- the lack of transparency with regard to how allocations are calculated
- the additional complexity of resourcing Special Schools.

The paper also outlined recommendations to resolve these challenges and was a focus for IPPN's engagement with the DE and NCSE in advance of the reprofiling process.

It is in this context that IPPN welcomes the measures that have been taken to better ensure accurate and adequate allocations to schools. There is an obvious commitment to better ensuring the efficacy and accuracy of the model.

We also welcome the clear explanations of why gender and complex needs are being discontinued as elements of the model, and the clear commitment to a greater level of transparency around how the allocations are calculated, particularly in relation to the enrolment portion of the allocation.

The distinction that the school's allocation under the Educational Disadvantage pillar is calculated with reference to individual pupils, and not the school's designation, is important. Also important is the clarification that schools receive an allocation in respect of children who are exempt from the standardized testing process.

The move to an annual reprofiling of schools should help to guard against allocations to new and developing schools not keeping pace with their rapidly increasing enrolments. Furthermore, the replacement of the exceptional review process with a more responsive, timebound process of review is a very positive development.

Of particular interest to IPPN is the section which details progression to a stage where “schools have more input into identifying the need in their school”. IPPN believes that a move to such a high-trust model of self-declaration would be the most effective and efficient way to ensure that schools were resourced adequately to meet the additional needs of children. Accordingly, IPPN welcomes the ongoing commitment to further development and enhancement of the model.

IPPN understands that, within 24 hours of the circular issuing, schools will receive letters by email from the NCSE detailing how their allocations were calculated. More detail with regard to the revised, streamlined review process will be published within the coming weeks and guidelines will also issue to schools on the deployment of Special Education Teaching supports.

**Some key points to note:**

- The Special Education allocation has been reviewed for 2024/25. All existing Special Education cluster posts will cease at the end of the 2023/24 school year. Schools should recluster their SET hours into fulltime posts. See IPPN response in this week’s E-scéal.
- Combining SET hours and Principal release days - Having lobbied for this, IPPN is delighted that part-time hours for SET and principals' leadership and management days can be combined to form a full-time post. Note the requirements as set out in section 1.5 of Circular 11 in relation to clustering of posts.
- Teacher Supply Panels will continue for the 2024/25 school year. The current level of posts will be reviewed at the end of the school year based on the current level of utilisation. Schools will be notified in this regard later in the year.

**Relevant Circulars**

**[Circular 0002/2024](#) - Special Education Teacher (SET) allocation model and the calculation of the SET allocation for each school from the 2024/25 school year**

**[Circular 0011/2024](#) - Staffing arrangements in Primary Schools for the 2024/25 school year**