

## **Results of Teacher Supply Survey**

November 2025

The INTO, IPPN and CPSMA carried out a joint survey of primary and special schools in relation to teacher supply in October 2025. The survey shows a reduction in the number of vacant long-term posts compared with last year, but a continuing disproportionate impact on special schools, schools in disadvantaged areas and in Irish medium education.

### **234 classes without teachers**

565 schools responded to the survey. Of these, 19% said that they had not been able to fill all vacant permanent, temporary and long-term substitute positions. There are 234 reported vacant posts in primary and special schools across the country, which means that children in these classes or settings did not have a teacher allocated to them in September. The number of vacant posts was highest in Dublin (39.8% of schools had vacancies - 51 permanent and 45 fixed-term), with Wicklow and Kildare the next most impacted.

These vacancies do not impact on all school types equally. Special schools had the highest percentage of reported vacancies at 56%. 43% of Gaelscoileanna, 35% of DEIS Band 2 and 32% of DEIS Band 1 schools reported long-term vacancies, compared to 10% of mainstream schools. DEIS schools report 30 long-term substitute vacancies.

### **Substitution crisis continues**

60% (336) of the responding schools reported that they had been unable to source a substitute for an absence. While for 128 schools this was for one or two days, 56 schools reported that there were ten or more days in September when they could not get a substitute. In addition, 283 people with no teaching qualification carried out substitute work in schools up to mid-October. The practice of splitting classes to cover for absent colleagues remains widespread. 215 schools reported splitting classes, which resulted in 735 days of disruption to children's learning in the first six weeks of the school year.

### **Special Education Needs**

The shortage of teachers continues to disproportionately impact children with special education needs. In addition to the unfilled posts in special schools outlined above, children in special schools are more likely to be taught by unqualified substitutes. Special schools have 24 unfilled long-term substitute vacancies.

65% of schools have had to redeploy a Special Education Teacher (SET) to cover for the absence of a class teacher, including three schools where multiple SETs were redeployed on more than 51 occasions up to mid-October, indicating that SET provision in these

schools was significantly reduced. There are also 150 unfilled part-time hours in 72 schools. The bulk of these unfilled hours relate to special education provision.

### **Supply Panels**

The survey indicated that there were 47 vacant posts on supply panels, which have 590 allocated positions. These panels continue to be the best option to provide substitute cover for short-term absences, even without clear operational guidance in the form of a DEY Circular. These panels need to be augmented to ensure that every child has access to a qualified teacher every day, particularly to serve special schools, DEIS schools and Gaelscoileanna, which show particularly high levels of unfilled substitute posts.