

Department of Education and Science Primary Branch

To Boards Of Management And Principals Of Primary Schools

Secondments

1. Purpose of the secondment scheme.

- 1.1 The scheme is designed to facilitate the temporary release of a permanent teacher from his/her teaching post. The seconded teacher will be paid his/her salary from the Department of Education and Science for the duration of the secondment arrangement.
- 1.2 The work being carried out by the teacher in the seconding body must be of clear benefit to the educational system and in particular to primary or second level education.

2. Length of a secondment arrangement.

- 2.1 The minimum period for which a secondment may be granted is one school year.
- 2.2 In a case of a secondment to a Department of Education and Science approved programme for a period specified at the commencement of the programme, a secondment arrangement in excess of one school year may be agreed between the Board of Management and the teacher at the start of the secondment arrangement.
- 2.3 In cases other than those referred to in paragraph 2.2 above, where the seconding body/organisation requires the services of the teacher for a period longer than one school year, the period may be extended, on the seconding body/organisation making a written application to the Board of Management subject to the following maximum period of secondment being adhered to.
 - (a) A maximum period of five school years for secondments to outside organisations.
 - (b) A maximum period of nine school years for secondments to European Schools.
 - (c) A maximum period of ten school years for secondments to Department of Education and Science national approved programmes. In the case of existing secondments to Department programmes where exigencies require an extension in excess of ten school years, an application for a further extension may be considered but is subject to Board of Management and Department approval.
- 2.4 Where a teacher wishes to continue beyond the limits outlined in paragraph 2.3 in the employment of the body/organisation to which s/he has been seconded, s/he must resign his/her teaching post.
- 2.5 The Board of Management of the school has the authority to terminate a secondment at any time to ensure that the educational needs of the school are given priority.

3. General guidelines for operating the scheme.

- 3.1 Education related posts, outside of teaching, are normally advertised in the national press and usually state that a secondment arrangement may be possible. It is a matter for teachers to apply for such posts if desired.
- 3.2 The selected teacher must first seek the approval of the Board of Management of his/her school. A decision by a Board of Management to refuse a secondment request shall be final.
- 3.3 In framing a policy position on secondments, a Board of Management is required to ensure that the welfare and educational needs of pupils take precedence over all other considerations.
- 3.4 The Department of Education and Science, on being satisfied as to the educational benefit to be derived from the arrangement, will sanction the filling of the vacant teaching post by a fully qualified temporary teacher for the school year.
- 3.5 The Board of Management must ensure that a qualified replacement teacher can be obtained (except where a teacher has deferred panel rights to take a secondment arrangement, where there is no replacement teacher appointed). In the case of the secondment of a Principal or Deputy Principal the Board must also ensure that this post can be filled from within the staff of the school. The Board shall retain the right to terminate the secondment should it encounter difficulties in filling the vacant teaching post at a later date.
- 3.6 A teacher's seniority in his/her school shall not be affected by participating in a secondment arrangement.
- 3.7 A teacher who is due to go on the re-deployment panel can defer his/her panel rights in order to take a secondment arrangement. The maximum period for which a teacher on secondment can defer his/her panel rights is five school years.

4. Posts of Responsibility while on secondment.

- 4.1 Posts of responsibility vacated by teachers participating in a secondment arrangement should be filled on a temporary basis for the duration of the secondment provided that the school is within its quota of post holders as per Department circulars.
- 4.2 A teacher on secondment must be notified by the Board of Management of any post of responsibility that may become vacant in the school. If the teacher on secondment is appointed to the vacant post, the equivalent post of responsibility allowance will only be paid to this teacher when he/she returns to his/her teaching post in the school. The vacant post may be filled on a temporary basis for the duration of the secondment arrangement.

5. Job-Sharing while on secondment.

- 5.1 A teacher on secondment must not enter into a job-sharing arrangement for the duration of the secondment.

6. Leave of Absence while on secondment. (other than sick leave)

- 6.1 Teachers on secondment will retain their entitlements to statutory leave of absence (e.g. maternity, adoptive, parental etc.)

- 6.2 The actual arrangement (number of days etc.) for the granting of any leave are matters to be agreed between the teacher and the body to which the teacher is seconded.
- 6.3 The annual leave terms for the period of secondment is a matter for the seconding body/organisation. However, the limits applying to annual leave as a teacher shall not be exceeded.

7. Sick leave while on secondment.

- 7.1 A record of sick leave taken by the seconded teacher must be maintained by the body to which the teacher is seconded and forwarded to the school Principal so that the details can be included on the salary return forms being sent to the Department of Education and Science. The sick leave terms for the period of the secondment is a matter for the seconding body/organisation. However, the limits applying to paid sick leave in the context of a teacher's incremental salary shall not be exceeded.

8. Teachers on secondment paying class A PRSI.

- 8.1 Where the seconded teacher pays Class A PRSI the onus is on the seconding body/organisation to recoup any monies due from the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs should the seconded teacher be absent on maternity leave, or continuous sick leave for four or more days.

9. Application procedures for the seconding body/organisation.

- 9.1 The seconding body/organisation to which a teacher is being seconded must apply in writing to the relevant section of the Department of Education and Science by the 1st May each year.
- 9.2 The application must include:
- (a) a detailed description of the work to be carried out by the teacher, sufficient to allow this Department to assess the educational aspect of such work and how they relate to teaching.
 - (b) the written approval of the Board of Management.
 - (c) a letter of authorisation from the teacher allowing the Department to release details of his/her salary to the seconding body/organisation.
 - (d) a written agreement to reimburse the Department of Education and Science with the full cost of the seconded teacher's salary, including all allowances and employer's PRSI and superannuation costs.
- 9.3 Applications for an extension of a secondment arrangement will not be accepted by the Department after the 1st May. Where an extension of a secondment is being sought, with no change in the work being carried out, the Department still require a written request along with the letter of approval of the Board of Management by the 1st May. In this case there is no need for a detailed description of the work or a letter of authorisation from the teacher.
- 9.4 The Department of Education and Science sanction will be dependent on the Department being satisfied as to the educational content of the work involved and its relevance to the educational system and must be on the basis that no additional costs will accrue to the Department as a result. The seconding body/organisation and the Chairperson of the Board of Management will be notified in writing of the decision.

10. Recoupment of monies to the Department.

- 10.1 The Department of Education and Science will seek recoupment on a quarterly basis in respect of the seconded teachers' salary and allowances together with the employer's share of PRSI contributions and superannuation contributions.
- 10.2 The Department of Education and Science reserve the right to terminate the secondment should the terms of the recoupment arrangement not be complied with or should there be any delay in the recoupment of monies to the Department.

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