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An Roinn Oideachais & Eolaíochta,
Rannóg Múinteoirí Iarbhunoideachais,
Cor na Madadh,
Baile Átha Luain,
Co. na Íarmhí

Circular PPT 17/02

Programme Co-Ordinator Posts in Voluntary Secondary Schools

The Minister for Education and Science wishes to advise the authorities of Secondary Schools that, following consultation with the interested parties, agreement has been reached on the following arrangements for posts of Programme Co-ordinator in secondary schools.

1.	Programme Co-ordinator Posts	
1.1	A post of Co-ordinator will be established in each school offering any of the following programmes:	
	Leaving Certificate Applied Programme	
	Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme	
	Transition Year	
	Junior Certificate Schools Programme	
1.2	The post will not form part of the normal cohort of school posts of responsibilities and will lapse when none of the programmes listed in 1.1 above is being provided by the school.	
1.3	Selection for the post will be by way of special competition among the eligible teaching staff of the school.	
1.4	Remuneration will be at the level of the allowance for a Special Duties Teacher Post of Responsibility in the case of schools with up to 100 pupils on these programmes and at the level of allowance for an Assistant Principal Post of Responsibility where the number of pupils is 100 or more.	
1.5	Schools will arrange to provide a reduction in teaching hours to these post holders for co-ordination purposes from within the overall hours available to the school. The reduction in hours will be on the following basis	
	No of Pupils Hours Reduction per week	
	1-59	2
	60-99	3
	100-139	4
	>140	6
	The loss of teaching hours will be compensated by way of a concession in the allocation of the annual number of teaching hours to the school.	
1.6	In the event that the number of pupils falls below 100 pupils where the Programme Co-ordinator had previously been in receipt of an allowance at AP level, the co-ordinator will continue to hold the AP level allowance but will have the reduction in hours provided in accordance with the table in paragraph 1.5.	
1.7	The above arrangements will be implemented with effect from 1 September, 2001.	
1.8	Appointment to such a post in a voluntary secondary school shall have no implication for subsequent appointment to an SDT post of responsibility or an AP post of responsibility.	
1.9	Any existing post of responsibility holder may apply for a post of Programme Co-ordinator and, if appointed, will receive the higher of the relevant allowances and the reduction in teaching hours. The post of responsibility thus vacated will be filled on a temporary basis at the level of the Programme Co-ordinator post or at the level of the vacated post of responsibility, if lower, and this temporary post will be retained by the school for as long as the Programme Co-ordinator post is warranted and the post-holder, thus appointed, does not revert to his/her original post. A post holder thus appointed may opt to revert to his/her original post status from the beginning of a	

	school year having given notice of his/her intent at the latest by 1st May of the previous school year.	
1.10	Arising from these arrangements a new competition will be held for the temporary post of responsibility retained by the school where an increase in the level of that temporary post is warranted by an increase in the level of the Programme Co-ordinator post.	
1.11	The holder of a Programme Co-ordinator post may apply for and be appointed to an SDT or AP post of responsibility under the terms of Circular 5/98. If appointed the teacher may retain the duties of Programme Co-ordinator and the higher of the relevant allowances. The post of responsibility may be filled on a temporary basis at the appropriate level, for as long as the teacher appointed to the post of responsibility is carrying out the duties of Programme Co-ordinator.	
2.	Appointment Procedure	
2.1	Advertising the vacancy.	
2.1.1	Notice of the vacant post, cf. Appendix One, shall be posted in the school for a period of not less than five school days, i.e. days on which the school is in operation for pupils.	
2.1.2	Every reasonable effort shall be made to bring the vacancy to the attention of all eligible teachers. Members of staff on approved leave are eligible to apply and therefore, a copy of the notice of the vacant post should be sent directly to the designated contact addresses of such teachers.	
2.1.3	All teachers on the staff with a minimum of two years' full-time teaching experience or its equivalent in the school and who are contracted by the school for the full school year are eligible to apply for these posts. The calculation of equivalent service for the purposes of eligibility for the posts shall be in accordance with the arrangements outlined in Circular Letter PPT05/02.	
2.1.4	The notice shall specify the closing date for receipt of written applications on the standard application form, cf. Appendix Two. The date of the notice should not be earlier than ten school days (four school days in the case of an acting-up position) after the initial date of posting of the notice in the school.	
2.1.5	The notice shall specify that the post is a post of Programme Co-ordinator with remuneration at SDT level or Programme Co-ordinator with remuneration at AP level. The notice should also specify the number of pupils involved in the programmes on the previous 30th September and the reduction in teaching hours available. On first introduction of a programme or programmes, the level of the post and the reduction in hours will be based on an estimate of the number of pupils taking the programmes in the first year.	
2.1.6	The notice shall invite applications from all eligible members of staff to be submitted by the specified date to the Secretary of the Board of Management/Manager.	
	Selection	
2.2.1	Applicants for the post shall be interviewed by an Interview Board consisting of the Principal of the school, a nominee of the Board of Management/Manager and an independent Chairperson, appointed by the Board of Management/Manager from a panel agreed nationally between the ASTI, JMB and the Department of Education and Science. The panel will be selected on the basis of agreed national criteria.	
2.2.2	The Interview Board will select the candidate for appointment based on the following criteria:	
(i)	Teaching experience in the school and/or in a school under the jurisdiction of the Department of Education and Science	40%
(ii)	Capacity to undertake the role as illustrated by previous relevant experience	20%.
(iii)	Capacity to undertake the role as demonstrated at interview	40%.
2.2.3	The Interview Board will nominate for appointment by the Board of Management/Manager the candidate it ranks highest based on the application of these criteria.	
2.2.4	The Board of Management/Manager will appoint the candidate so nominated to the post.	
2.2.5	The independent appeal system set out in Section 3 may be utilised by applicants who believe that the criteria set out in paragraph 2.2.2 above were not applied and/or the process through which the appointment was made was not in accordance with the procedures outlined in this circular. The allocation of marks to the appellant by the Interview Board will be made available to the appellant on request.	

2.2.6	No appointment shall be made pending the outcome of the appeal
3.	Appeal Procedure
3.1	An Arbitrator shall be appointed by the ASTI and the JMB for a fixed two-year renewable term of office to deal with such appeals.
3.2	The Arbitrator will be advised by a nominated advisor from each of the JMB and ASTI in all cases.
3.3	A person may submit an appeal in writing to the Arbitrator setting out the grounds for the appeal. Such an appeal must be lodged within ten school days of the announcement of the Board of Management/Manager's decision. The Arbitrator shall base any findings on the grounds for the appeal as submitted.
3.4	The Arbitrator shall obtain a written response from the Board of Management/Manager within ten school days of an appeal under paragraph 3.3 of this Circular.
3.5	The Arbitrator shall consult the advisors, based on the written statements which he/she will make available to both parties (Management/Appellant).
3.6	The Arbitrator may decide to hold a hearing at which to interview the parties. No additional grounds for the appeal will be admissible at the hearing. The Arbitrator shall have power to call witnesses and to make arrangements to have evidence heard in camera if necessary. Any expenses arising shall be shared by the ASTI and the JMB.
3.7	The Arbitrator shall give reasonable notice to the parties of the hearings. When notifying parties to an appeal of the date of the hearings, it should be indicated to the parties concerned that in the event of failure to appear the Arbitrator may proceed to decide the case if he/she considers it appropriate to do so.
3.8	The parties may be represented or accompanied at such hearings by a teacher or management colleague, other than a member of Standing Committee of the ASTI or official of the ASTI or a member or official of the JMB.
3.9	The Arbitrator shall act as correspondent and shall issue his/her findings to the ASTI, the JMB and to other parties involved within thirty school days of the submission of the appeal to him/her.
3.10	In the event of the unavoidable absence of the Arbitrator, the ASTI and the JMB may nominate an agreed Deputy Arbitrator for the whole of the hearing/consideration of any particular case.
3.11	Without prejudice to the rights of any of the parties involved to have recourse to litigation, the decision of the Arbitrator shall be final and binding on all of the parties.
3.12	Any disagreement between the Advisors to the Arbitrator about the interpretation of any aspect of the Appeals Procedure shall be referred by the Arbitrator for clarification in the first instance to the JMB and the ASTI. Should the ASTI and the JMB fail to agree on an interpretation it shall be interpreted by the Arbitrator.
3.13	If the appeal is rejected the Board of Management/Manager will appoint the candidate nominated to the post and notify the Department of Education and Science accordingly.
3.14	If the appeal is upheld, the post shall be re-advertised and a new competition for the post shall be held.
4.	Duties of Co-ordinator
	The duties attached to the post of Co-ordinator should reflect the grade and level of responsibility entailed by the post taking into account the size and needs of the school. Therefore the role and duties of the Programme Co-ordinator will vary according to the number of programmes being offered by a school, the number of pupils taking the different programmes and the reduction of teaching hours available with the post. In the distribution of responsibilities, where there is more than one programme involved, the Programme Co-ordinator may be assigned responsibility mainly for one programme.
	The duties of Co-ordinator may include:
(a)	Communication e.g. liaising with parents, staff and outside agencies.
(b)	Planning e.g. co-ordinating programme planning, time-tabling.
(c)	Administration e.g. record keeping, arranging out-of-school activities, monitoring of practical achievement tasks.
(d)	

	Motivation e.g. team building, establishing the profile of the programmes, maintaining morale.
(e)	Organisation e.g. organising work experience, insurance, meeting employers.
(f)	Reporting to the school authorities.
	This list is no exhaustive.
	In implementing the various programmes and following consultation with those involved, school authorities will distribute duties in relation to the programme to the available personnel according to the individual circumstances of the school and according to the aptitudes and interests of the staff. In a school that offers more than one programme and/ or where there are significant numbers of pupils taking a programme, duties in relation to the programmes may be assigned to other teachers, who may be post of responsibility holders, in addition to the Programme Co-ordinator.
5.	Review
	The operation of the arrangements will be reviewed after a period of two years by a group which will include representatives of the ASTI and JMB and of the Department of Education and Science.
6.	Copies of circular
6.1	You are requested to ensure that copies of this circular are provided to the appropriate representatives of parents and teachers for transmission to individual parents and teachers.

Johnny Bracken,
Principal Officer.

June, 2002.

Appendix One:

Sample Advertisement

School Name School Name School Name

Programme Co-Ordinator

Applications are invited from eligible teachers for the post of Programme Co-ordinator in this school.

This position is a post of overall Programme Co-ordinator for the following programmes:

- * Transition Year (pupils)
- * Leaving Certificate Applied (pupils)
- * Leaving Certificate Vocational (pupils)
- * Junior Certificate Schools Programme (pupils)

The duties are as set out in section 4 of Circular Letter PPT 17/02.

The post is remunerated at the level of Special Duties Teacher/Assistant Principal post of responsibility grade.

This post carries a reduction of _____teaching hours as per the terms of Circular Letter PPT 17/02.

Please submit a written application on the standard application form to
The Secretary, Board of Management/Manager.

The application form is available from the Secretary, Board of Management/Manager.

Closing date for applications is _____

Appendix Two:

APPLICATION FORM FOR THE POST OF
PROGRAMME CO-ORDINATOR AS SET OUT IN PARAGRAPH 2.1.5 OF CIRCULAR LETTER PPT 17/02

in _____ (School Name)

1. Name: _____

2. Address: _____

3. Telephone No. _____

4. Please indicate the position you hold in the school: (e.g. Assistant Principal, Special Duties Teacher, Teacher)

5. For how many years have you worked as a teacher? _____

6. Outline your teaching experience in the school and/or in a school or schools under the jurisdiction of the Department of Education and Science.

Dates from Dates to Position School

7. Outline briefly relevant previous experience that you consider demonstrates your capacity to undertake the post as advertised.

8. What are the main contributions you could make to this Post:

9. I have read and am familiar with the terms of Circular Letter PPT 17/02 on Programme Co-ordinator Posts in Voluntary Secondary Schools.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Please return to: The Secretary
Board of Management

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on or before.....