



Newsletter to Schools

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Please photocopy and distribute to members of the Board of Management (BoM). A copy has been sent to the Principal. This Newsletter is also available on the CPSMA website at www.cpsma.ie.

CHECKLIST FOR BoM IN REGARD TO APPOINTMENT OF STAFF

A checklist of the procedures that schools should follow in the recruitment of all categories of staff is set out below. Boards should ensure that they use Appendix D and Appendix E of the DES *Constitution of Boards and Rules of Procedure* document in the recruitment of teachers and SNAs respectively.

ADMINISTRATION IN PREPARATION FOR INTERVIEWS	✓
Outline job specification and 'ideal candidate' to fill the post are specified by Board of Management.	
A selection board/panel should be properly constituted. The makeup of the selection panel depends on the category of post to be filled e.g. for the appointment of a Principal the selection panel should comprise the Chairperson and two independent assessors nominated by the patron, whereas for a teacher the selection panel is made up of the Principal, Chairperson and one independent assessor nominated by the Patron. In the case of an SNA it should be the Principal, Chairperson and an independent assessor nominated by the Patron. In the case of a secretary/caretaker it should be the Principal, Chairperson and an independent assessor nominated by the Board of Management.	
A copy of the advertisement should be available to each member of selection panel.	
Applications Forms/Curriculum Vitae etc. of all candidates should be date stamped with the date of receipt of same and should be available for each member of the selection panel.	
The selection panel must have gender balance - at least one man and one woman.	
The selection panel must establish the criteria and scoring method to be used for assessment of the applications and shortlisting, having regard to the requirements of the particular post.	
The selection panel must ensure that no member of it stands in any relationship to any candidate. 'Relationship' is any relationship, which could be deemed to be prejudicial.	
The selection panel must determine those applicants (who are duly qualified) to be called for interview. (If three or less have applied, all must be called).	
Questions and 'ideal' responses should be prepared by the selection panel in advance of the interview.	
Agreed date/venue for the interview/s are arranged.	
ADMINISTRATION AFTER SHORTLISTING	✓
Short listed candidates should be invited for interview, in writing, giving seven days notice for times outside of school hours as appropriate. (Date of interview is normally within 3 weeks of the latest date for receipt of applications).	
Details of established criteria and a copy of the schedule for a Catholic school (as appropriate) should be sent to candidates called for interview.	
Additional materials/certification from candidates is requested, if required.	
Panel members are supplied with timetable for interviews allowing sufficient time between candidates.	
Individual marking sheets for each member of the selection panel and summary sheet for total marks are prepared.	

INTERVIEWS	
Has the Selection Panel/Chairperson...	v
Organised the interview room appropriately for adults (good seating, heating, lighting and ventilation)?	
Organised a comfortable waiting area – i.e. rest room/s, newspaper, water etc.?	
Clarified receptionist's role (the receptionist/secretary has no role in the interview process and must not comment, on any aspect of the process, to candidates)?	
Agreed on a questioning and marking system?	
Distributed questions to each panel member and discussed desired responses?	
Briefed the panel members on recording of notes during the interview of each candidate?	
Formally agreed candidate/s to be recommended to the Board of Management for appointment?	
Ensured that a form stating that the interview process has been completed is signed and collected?	
Collected the individual marking sheets, which may subsequently be made available to the candidate on request?	
POST INTERVIEW ADMINISTRATION	
Has the Selection Panel/Chairperson/Board of Management as appropriate...	v
Checked the references of those to whom it proposes to offer a post/s?	
Submitted a written report to the Board of Management, nominating the applicant that the selection panel considers most suitable for appointment in the case of teacher/s and in addition submitted a list of suitable candidates in order of merit in the case of SNA appointment/s?	
Retained a list in order of merit, should the post not be filled by the selection panel's first nominee?	
Agreed to appoint the candidate so nominated, unless there is a good and sufficient reason not to do so? In such a case the matter is referred to the Patron, whose decision shall be accepted by the BoM as final.	
In the case of two or more appointments, decided an order of merit to enable a seniority order be established by the BoM?	
Sought the prior written approval of the Patron for the appointment of the successful candidate before he/she is notified?	
Having received written approval of the Patron, notified the successful candidate of his/her appointment and advised him/her that the appointment is subject to sanction of DES and/or registration with Teaching Council, vetting clearance/medical fitness (as appropriate)?	
Notified the DES that the BoM has submitted the successful candidate's name to the Patron and that the Patron has given written approval for the appointment?	
Informed all unsuccessful candidates after the successful candidate has accepted the post in writing?	
Ensured that the successful candidate and chairperson have completed the relevant form and forwarded same to the DES?	
Entered into the appropriate agreement with the teacher/SNA/Other staff member?	
Retained a list of suitable candidates to fill posts becoming vacant in the period of 4 months after interview in case of teachers or for one year in case of SNAs (if so stated in relevant advertisements)?	
Arranged for the retention of a record of criteria for short listing and notes/marks from interviews for a minimum period of one year?	

CHECKLIST OF DOCUMENTS TO BE KEPT ON FILE	√
Advertisement	
Established criteria for post	
Short listing criteria	
Interview questions	
Marking sheets for each candidate and aggregate marking sheet (<i>Data Protection Acts 1998 and 2003</i>)	
Reports and notes of selection panel	
Decision of the selection panel	
Written report to the Board of Management	
Copy of letter to Patron seeking written approval for the appointment	
Letter of approval from the Patron for the appointment	
Copy of letter notifying the DES that the BoM has submitted the name of the successful candidate to the Patron for approval and letter from the Patron giving written approval	
Copy of letter notifying the DES that the process is completed	
Letter of acceptance from the successful candidate	
Appointment form - PTAF1 (copy of original) /other agreement form as appropriate.	
Sanction from Department of Education & Skills where appropriate	
List of suitable candidates in order of merit as appropriate should further vacancies occur, if so stated in relevant advertisement	
Appropriate contract of employment /form of agreement	

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE SERVICE (EAS)

The EAS provides confidential counselling to teachers/special needs assistants and their immediate family members.

The EAS is a **FREE** confidential counselling and support service that was established in 2006 exclusively for teachers and their family members to provide them with assistance in coping with a variety of issues. The EAS is funded by the Department of Education & Skills.

Given that we are living through a period of change and uncertainty, the EAS is now, more than ever, a beneficial resource offering guidance and support in coping with these changes. This service has promoted the wellbeing of teachers over the past number of years. In a survey of those who have accessed the service, 100% of respondents stated that they would recommend the service to others, while 94% indicated that it definitely improved their ability to manage the pressure of their situation.

Some examples of the feedback received detailed for instance, how the EAS helped considerably in working with an individual who was trying to balance his professional and personal life and how the EAS helped another person to cope with the loss of a loved one.

The EAS is available to teachers and special needs assistants, whose positions are funded by the Department of Education and Skills, their spouses or partners, their dependents above the age of 16 and mother/father where appropriate and can be accessed by a dedicated free phone number or email address.

Vhi Corporate Solutions, an external provider, deliver the EAS and its staff follows strict ethical guidelines and codes of practice, which means that any contact remains confidential and that no information is available to anyone without written consent. Any feedback provided to the Department is purely in general terms and is anonymous in nature.

What services are available?

- Telephone Counselling – single sessions or short term structured counselling
- Face to Face counselling – up to six counselling sessions

Counselling is provided on issues such as health, relationships, addictions, bereavement, stress, conflict, critical incident and trauma.

Accessing the service

The **EAS** is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year: Free phone 1800 411 057 or Email: eas@vhics.ie

OLCS

1. At end of each school year (or more regularly if desired), it is recommended that a report of absences from the OLCS be generated for each staff member, so as to allow each person to check for the accuracy of records and the correction of errors at an early stage. A copy of this report should be retained in the records of the BoM.
2. It is recommended that the data approver for the OLCS in the school should furnish a report of the recorded absences of all staff to the BoM at each meeting.

FIXED TERM TEACHERS

Scenario: A school currently has 5 fixed term teachers on its staff. From September 2010 it has 3 positions for fixed term teachers. What should the BoM do in regard to filling those 3 posts?

Answer:

As a fixed term contract ends once the term of the contract ends (provided the fixed term teachers have correct fixed term contracts), the BoM may make its decision in regard to which teacher/s to retain, in the best interests of the school i.e. the BoM does not have to give any reasons for its decision as to who it decides to give a further contract to.

This could involve

1. Offering the 3 further contracts to any 3 of the 5 fixed term teachers

Or

2. The BoM may decide to end the contracts of all existing 5 fixed term teachers and advertise on the **OPEN MARKET**. In such circumstances the existing 5 fixed term teachers may apply for the posts if interested. (Legal advice is that a BoM should not interview the existing 5 staff members **only** in order to decide who to retain.)

Or

3. The BoM could adopt a combination of numbers 1 and 2 i.e. offer **some but not all** of the available temporary positions to some of the fixed term teachers and advertise the remaining fixed term positions on the open market e.g. two of the positions could be offered and one could be advertised on the open market.

It has been suggested that a BoM should use notional seniority to determine which temporary teachers to offer a further contract to. It should be noted that while a BoM may use notional seniority it is not obliged to do so. Furthermore Boards of Management should be aware that the use of notional seniority could be setting a precedent. Boards are directed to read the complete legal advice set out in the March 2010 Newsletter which is available on www.cpsma.ie

