

Action Plan Reporting Template
Education Sector
October 2023

Action	Outcome	Timeframe	Measure	Owner (Dept./Body/Section)	Progress report update and achievements end october 2023
<p>1.1. Co-operation on measures to improve the effectiveness of leadership in schools</p>	<p>Improved school leadership and more efficient operations</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Engagement with any proposals</p>	<p>Education</p>	<p>The School Leadership Working Group established under the oversight of the Department's Management Board School Leadership Group has progressed guidance materials to support boards of management in leading teaching and learning, and supporting inclusive school leadership. Members of the group have also assisted with the amalgamation of the leadership section of the support services.</p> <p>The group has also provided input on the proposed primary principal preparation programme for newly appointed principals. Input to support newly appointed principals with developing a professional collaboration approach to school self-evaluation and inspection was provided through the Misneach programme for post-primary and primary principals.</p> <p>The Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) are continuing to implement Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for school leaders to improve the effectiveness of leadership in schools.</p> <p>PDST prepared a Misneach Newly Appointed Principals Data Report which outlines the necessary targeted supports to be considered to enable principals and school leaders to carry out their roles effectively. The report seeks to ensure that their self-care and self-reflection is enhanced, particularly in the challenging environment that leaders find themselves in.</p>

					<p>Also contained in the report is a recommendation for a leadership framework. The benefits of this were raised; benefits to mapping this for our aspirant leaders, benefits to the issue of duplication, benefits to supporting the very patchy route to senior leadership roles at primary level and the potential benefits in supporting and targeting professional development.</p> <p>No decisions have been taken to implementing the report actions to date. The Department will engage with the relevant stakeholders, including the teacher unions, in relation to the implementation of actions arising from the report, where appropriate.</p>
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1.2 Explore the concept of school principals completing a leadership course	Improved leadership skills for the role	Q3 2023	Engagement by Unions on exploring the concept	Education	<p>PDST in collaboration with CSL are at an advanced stage of developing a pre-commencement programme which will focus on the learning needs of the aspiring and newly appointed primary principal in relation to the operational and managerial aspects of the principal's role and will be framed in the wider arena of school leadership and governance. It will consider their prior learning and the importance of school context. The programme is based on research and statistical evidence which suggests that a high percentage of newly appointed primary principals undertake the role with</p>

					<p>minimum experience of leadership and leadership professional learning.</p> <p>The majority of the module design element has been completed by the Leadership Team in the PDST in conjunction with CSL.</p> <p>PDST is currently in the process of tendering for the e learning design element of this work.</p> <p>Due to changes in the e-tendering processes the tender has taken longer than originally anticipated, however it is expected that the majority of this work will be complete during Q4.</p>
<p>1.3</p> <p>Examine potential for post holders to provide professional support as part of POR duties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ to Newly Qualified Teachers during the Droichead induction process and ○ to student teachers on school placement. 	<p>Improved consistency and quality of support to NQT/student teachers</p>	<p>Q3 2023</p>	<p>Engagement between Unions and Department in exploring the potential of these actions</p>	<p>Education</p>	<p>The National Induction Programme for Teachers provides training for Professional Support Teams (PST) in schools. The PST is a team of fully registered teachers in a school, ideally with five years' experience, including the principal, who work collaboratively to support and mentor the NQT during school-based induction, in the first stages of their professional journey.</p> <p>The Treoraithe Professional Learning Group (TPLG), bringing together a range of stakeholders (including unions) to develop professional learning supports for Treoraí, has held 4 meetings to date, the most recent in Q1 2023. The group has looked at the support needs of student teachers and how these are currently provided by school leaders, Treoraí and other teachers (including post-holders and/or the Droichead</p>

					PST) as part of school placement. The Department and Teaching Council will hold focus groups with student teachers and Treoraí in autumn 2023, to further scope out these roles and potential options for support. These focus groups inform the next meeting of the TPLG.
2.1 Co-operation with Covid-19 related emergency measures	Ongoing operations during pandemic	During Pandemic	Measures in place and co-operated with as required	Education	Information Notes TC/IN 0004/2023 published 16 May 2023 and ESR ETB 0001/2023 published 18 May 2023, to reflect updated guidance on changes to Covid-19 Special Leave with Pay (SLWP) for the public service, as directed by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.
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2.2 Co-operation with primary and post primary curriculum reform	Implementation of reforms	Throughout agreement	Engagement Reforms implemented on time	Education	The Department continues to engage with The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) in the review and redevelopment of the primary curriculum. The Primary Curriculum Framework was published in March 2023. The new Primary Maths Curriculum will be published in September 2023. Work continues on the development of all other curriculum specifications with consultations on each expected in 2024.”

					<p><u>Primary Curricular Reform</u></p> <p>STAGES 1 AND 2 (JUNIOR INFANTS – 2ND CLASS)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Language (Irish & English) 2. Mathematics, Science & Technology Education 3. Wellbeing 4. Arts Education 5. Social & Environmental Education <p>STAGES 3 AND 4 (3RD – 6TH CLASS)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Languages – English, Irish and Modern Foreign Languages 2. Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics 3. Physical Education 4. Social, Personal and Health Education 5. Arts Education – Drama, Art and Music 6. Social & Environmental Education – History and Geography 7. Religious/Ethical/Multi-belief Education
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2.3 Co-operation with reforms in the further education sector	Implementation of reforms	Throughout agreement	Engagement Reforms implemented on time	Education/FET (DFHERIS)	There is continuing engagement and consultation on reforms in the further education and training sector under the strategic pillars of the national FET strategy

2.4	Co-operate with review of arrangements for recruitment in ETBs (Circular 08/2017 refers)	More efficient operations	Q3 2023	Engagement with review process	Education	A revised recruitment policy, reflecting review of arrangements mandated under Circular 08/2017, has been developed under the auspices of the ETB IR Forum and is in its final stages of consultation
2.5	Explore the potential of providing some elements of CPD outside teaching hours and online.	Increased continuity	Throughout agreement	Engagement by Unions in exploring the potential of this concept	Education	JCT continues to provide a broad range of CPD online and outside of teaching hours where possible to lessen impact on class time. PDST and NIPT are continuing to deliver elements of CPD outside teaching hours and online where practicable.
2.6	Explore the concept of Primary teachers to be allowed to be employed in post-primary schools at the qualified rate in special education settings as part of sequencing process	Additional supply source	Q3 2023	Engagement by Unions on exploring the concept proposed	Education	Department developing proposals
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2.7	Explore measures which consider efficient operations	Efficiency in operation of state exams	Q2 2023	Engagement by Unions in exploring the	Education/SEC	Agreement was reached with teacher unions that 2022 Leaving Certificate oral languages

<p>of State Examinations such as Orals and Practical elements taking place outside school time and an increase in the number of teachers acting as correctors, superintendents and examiners.</p>			<p>potential of these measures</p>	<p>examinations and music practical's would take place outside of school time over the first week of the Easter holidays. This was agreed for 2022 based on the lack of availability of teachers for substitution and the aim to minimise disruption for schools and students.</p> <p>Following the 2022 examinations at Easter, the SEC carried out a preliminary review of the process to assess the impact of the timing of the examinations on candidates and on the second-level system noting that Covid created particular challenges in the delivery of these tests at Easter in 2022. The arrangements that applied in 2022 for the Oral examinations in Irish and the Modern Foreign Languages have been extended for a further year and these examinations were held over the Easter holidays from Saturday 1 April to Thursday 6 April 2023 last.</p> <p>This interim position was reached as it was considered that a more extensive evaluation involving engagement with all stakeholders is required to fully assess the impact of holding the oral examinations at Easter in the longer term. This evaluation is being undertaken by the SEC as part of the comprehensive review of the overall issue of examiner supply. The outcomes of the review process will form the basis of advice to the Minister for Education on the future timing of the oral examinations at Leaving Certificate.</p>
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				<p>Recruitment and retention of teachers as examiners is whole of system issue at second level.</p> <p>Significantly improved examiner rates have continued for 2023. In an effort to identify and address the factors which impact on contract staff supply the SEC has been undertaking a major review of this critical strategic issue which includes extensive engagement with stakeholders</p> <p>The review process, which has a number of ongoing strands of work, has as its core objective to substantially increase the numbers of teachers involved in examinations work so that the experience is a positive one which greatly enhances teacher professional competence as well as earning power.</p> <p>A working group, comprising representatives of the management bodies and teacher unions, has been established to look at measures designed to ensure the availability of teachers in the required numbers to engage in this critical work in a sustainable way into the future. The objective is to better understand the factors which motivate teachers to get involved and those which prevent them from doing so.</p> <p>A relaunched Recruitment Campaign for the 2023 written examinations had as its theme - Learn Earn Return - and a new website https://secexaminer.ie highlighted the many personal and professional benefits of becoming</p>
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					<p>an examiner with the SEC. The SEC received additional funding for significant increases in the rates paid to examiners again in 2023. This strategic approach has seen a substantial increase in the number of written examiners compared to 2022.</p> <p>To improve the examiner experience, and for reasons of organisational efficiency, online marking has been further rolled out at Junior Cycle in 2023. The SEC also continues to expand the digital services available to schools and candidates through the Candidate Self-Service portal and the Schools Examinations portal.</p>
<p>2.8</p> <p>Co-operation with continued implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle, including engaging in supporting professional and collaborative activities. This will incorporate Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meetings taking place at a time which does not impinge on a teacher's contact time with students nor necessitate additional expenditure to the allocation already</p>	<p>Maintaining teaching time</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Implementation in all schools</p>	<p>Education</p>	<p>The Department continues to engage with the teacher unions via the Junior Cycle Implementation Committee to seek to resolve this matter. This group is currently scheduled to meet on a quarterly basis to progress matters in relation to the implementation of Junior Cycle reforms.</p>

provided for Professional Time for teachers.					
2.9 Co-operation with upskilling as a result of technology and/or changes in business/operational practices	Improved efficiencies	Throughout agreement	Engagement with any upskilling proposals	Education/FET (DFHERIS)	No issues to date.
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2.10 Work with Department to support the use of technology to the greatest extent possible to maintain teaching and supports to children in unexpected closures (weather etc.) on a remote basis	Continuity of learning	Throughout agreement	Positive engagement by staff in supporting the concept	Education	<p>Effective focus was maintained on school operations, with an emphasis on equity in and quality of educational provision, in pandemic period.</p> <p>During that time, schools staff adapted to new methodologies to deliver education services in response to the pandemic challenges, and this continues to inform the development of potential complementary mechanisms to facilitate the delivery of education services.</p> <p>PDST are continuing to provide supports in the use of technology to schools which allows for online provision due to unexpected closures.</p>
2.11	More efficient operations	Throughout agreement	Rate of adoption of new solutions	Education	

Commitment to maximise the use of IT solutions for various school operations (e.g. recruitment portal, school placement portal etc.)					<p>The second meeting of the School Placement Implementation Group (SPIG) took place in Q1 2023.</p> <p>The SPIG will continue to progress the recommendations made by the Placement System Working Group (PSWG) in its report, as appropriate. The PSWG has not recommended the establishment of a national placement online portal at this time.</p> <p>The Teacher unions are represented on the SPIG, as they were on the PSWG.</p>
2.12 Re-assignment of staff to new roles as a result of new technology and/or changes in business/operational practices	Change and reform implementation	Throughout agreement	Engagement with any proposals	Education/FET (DFHERIS)	This is being actively managed and no issues have been notified as a result of staffing re-assignments associated with the delivery of shared services.
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3.1 Co-operate with review of SNA redundancy scheme	Implementation of reforms	In line with Contract Review	Co-operation and engagement in the review process	Education	Contract review ongoing, incorporating engagement with SNA's, FORSA and other stakeholders; Supplementary panel arrangements continuing, with publication of Circular 0026/2023 on 29 May 2023
3.2	Implementation of reforms	Ongoing	Level of engagement	Education	The Department will engage with all stakeholders again in advance of rollout.

Engagement on new SNA allocation model			with the Department on the new model		
3.3 Co-operate with the introduction of new technology and/or changes in business/operational practices associated with the development and implementation of shared services	Implementation of reforms	Throughout agreement	Co-operation over period	Education/FET (DFHERIS)	As of May 2023, 14 ETBs have migrated their Payrolls and approximately 28,000 ETB employees are now being paid by the ESBS. 5 ETBs have also migrated their Expenses functions to ESBS Calls are now being held monthly with ETB nominees in respect of Pensions issues arising and clarifications sought
3.4 Co-operation with moves to standardise pay frequencies when an organisation is moving and/or has moved to a Shared Service platform.	Implementation of reforms	Throughout agreement	Co-operation over period	Education/FET (DFHERIS)	No further issues.
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4.1 Engagement in the (SNA Contract) process	Improved operation of role	Process to be concluded as soon as possible but for 2023/2024 school year at latest	Level of Engagement Review undertaken	Education	Statement to issue in September 2023 on progression of contract review/work streams established etc.

