

7 March 2023

BY E-MAIL

To: **The Principal of each: - controlled, special, voluntary grammar, grant maintained integrated and other maintained schools**

Dear Principal

RE: VOLUNTARY TEACHING REDUNDANCIES – 2023/24 (Financial Year)

Since 2020-21, as distinct from preceding years, the Department of Education (DE) was not successful in a bid for a full voluntary redundancy scheme. Consequently, only Priority 1 unavoidable teaching redundancies have been able to proceed i.e. redundancies arising from school closures/amalgamations or coming out of a collective agreement and redundancies from SEN funded posts due to changes in SEN provision within a school.

There is currently no funding in place for 2023-24 voluntary redundancies. The Department of Education has bid for voluntary redundancies funding for 2023-24 as part of the budget planning exercise which will be subject to approval. While the necessary funding approval is not yet in place, it is recognised that there will inevitably be some ‘unavoidable’ redundancies that will need to be addressed and that schools must begin the process to proceed with Priority 1 unavoidable teaching redundancies only at this time i.e. redundancies arising from schools that are in a closure/amalgamation situation with a Development Proposal which has been approved by the Minister of Education / Permanent Secretary (closing or amalgamating in August 2023), or coming out of a collective agreement in August 2023.

In order to manage expectations please be advised **no assurances should be given to teachers at school level that a redundancy will be progressed until the applications are appraised and the Education Authority provides formal approval. All applications are subject to DE funding approval.**

A separate communication will issue in relation to non-teaching / support staff.

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Compensation Terms

The Education Authority will be in a position to pay teachers made redundant total compensation which is **“up to 52 weeks’ salary”**, that is up to a maximum of 52 weeks’ actual salary. For example, where a teacher is eligible for redundancy compensation of 30 weeks (statutory maximum) he/she will receive an additional 22 weeks’ salary as an enhanced severance payment giving total compensation of 52 weeks’ salary.

Total compensation payable to any teacher will not exceed 52 weeks’ salary. Teachers receiving an enhanced severance payment will have to wait until normal pension age (60) to draw their pensions (or may opt to draw an actuarially reduced pension if aged 55 to 59).

Please note the Department of Education has advised, this enhancement will apply to teacher redundancies up to **31 August 2023**.

Criteria

The Education Authority must carry out a robust and meaningful due diligence review prior to applications being formally considered for approval.

Applications will only be considered and funding will only be given where **all of the following criteria are met**:-

- **It is a bona fide redundancy; the post is being suppressed and WILL NOT be refilled at a later stage;**
- **Genuine reduction in FTE¹, not to be increased at a later stage on a permanent or temporary basis, even through NISTR; and**
- **The payback period is clearly demonstrable and can be achieved (up to 2 years for school based teaching staff).**

Furthermore, in addition to the above, participative schools will be required to provide assurance:

- that their **voluntary exits are based on strategic workforce planning** which: links exits to target operating models; assesses the priority skills the organisation needs to retain; forms a wider set of workforce planning measures to control staff costs; and factors in potential impact of natural wastage;
- covering how they intend to monitor and mitigate the impact of redundancy on staff morale and on service delivery; and

¹ **Genuine reduction in FTE:** that the overall FTE of the school decreases in line with the number(s) of posts declared redundant (e.g. 2 redundancy applications, FTE staffing level to reduce accordingly by 2) **and** that the FTE will not be increased at a later date without Employing Authority and Departmental approval. (The teaching FTE must not increase on a temporary/substitute basis, even through NISTR, prior to obtaining said approval).

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- covering how they intend to monitor and mitigate the impact of redundancy on workload and class size.

If it has been identified that you must make a redundancy, you must proceed strictly in accordance with the TNC Procedure and EA Guidance which is available from Human Resources (please refer to contacts below).

Transferred Redundancy Process (Teaching Staff)

Schools identifying Priority 1 unavoidable redundancies are encouraged to explore all possible options to avoid compulsory redundancies including seeking volunteers from other schools for a transferred redundancy. The transferred redundancy process operates in order to protect the jobs of teachers who would otherwise be made redundant by allowing them to transfer to posts in other schools where teachers have volunteered for redundancy but no redundancy actually exists.

A separate communication will issue in relation to the transferred redundancy process for teaching staff.

Please bring this letter to the attention of the Board of Governors of your school.

You will be kept informed of any developments to the teaching voluntary redundancy process.

For further advice and support in relation to the 2023-24 Voluntary Teaching Redundancies (Priority 1 Unavoidable) process please contact a member of the Schools HR Business Partnering Team – contact details below.

Yours faithfully



Jill Aicken

HR Manager: HR Business Partnering

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Education Authority


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CONTACTS – Schools HR Business Partnering Team

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