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Education

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AN ROINN

Oideachais

MÁNNYSTRIE O

Lear

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Subject:

PRIMARY TEACHING PRINCIPAL RELEASE TIME

**Circular Number:
2008/17**

**Date of Issue:
24 June 2008**

Audience:

- Principals and Boards of Governors of all grant-aided primary schools;
- Education and Library Boards;
- Council for Catholic Maintained Schools;
- Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta;
- Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education;
- Teachers' Unions; and
- General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland.

Summary of Contents:

This circular sets out the arrangements from September 2008 for one additional day per week Principal release time for teaching Principals in small primary schools. Together with the one day already provided through the Small Schools' Factor this will ensure that at least two days' per week release from teaching duties is available for teaching Principals to concentrate on their leadership, management and administrative duties.

It also sets out the funding arrangements for the current financial year. Funding arrangements from April 2009 will be confirmed at a later date.

Enquiries:

Any enquiries about the contents of this Circular should be addressed to the relevant employing authority.

**Governors' Awareness:
Essential**

**Status of Contents:
Advice
Information for Schools**

**Related Documents:
None**

**Expiry Date:
Not applicable**

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PRIMARY TEACHING PRINCIPAL RELEASE TIME

1. In recognition of the particular pressures facing teaching Principals the Education Minister announced in February 2008 the Department's commitment of almost £12 million over the next three years to help primary school teaching Principals. The resource is to help ensure that at least two days' per week release from teaching duties is available for teaching Principals of primary schools from September 2008. This release from classroom duties will allow teaching Principals to concentrate on their leadership, management and administrative duties.
2. Each Education and Library Board has been notified of its allocation, with a detailed breakdown of each individual school's amount for the period September 2008 to March 2009. One day per week is currently provided for through the Small Schools' Support Factor and this is already within the 2008/09 budget allocations for eligible schools. The allocation being provided in the current year for the additional one day per week release from September 2008 broadly reflects the methodology used in the Small Schools' Support Factor. Small primary schools with an enrolment of 300 pupils or less will be eligible. Funding will be distributed on a sliding scale, with primary schools with less than 100 pupils receiving the maximum amount available.
3. Funding arrangements from April 2009 will be confirmed at a later date. Consideration is being given to the potential mainstreaming of this funding within current Common Funding Formula arrangements. Any change to incorporate this funding into the delegated budget calculations for schools within the Common Funding Formula would be subject to formal consultation and Ministerial approval.
4. As this funding has been secured specifically to help ease the burden placed on primary school teaching Principals, eligible Principals should ensure they have at least two days per week free from class contact. Boards of Governors of eligible schools are expected to ensure that the necessary conditions exist in which the Principal may avail of this time to concentrate on leadership, management and administrative duties. The Principal should be prepared to report regularly to the Governors on how effectively the finances are being used and whether the resource is delivering the expected outcomes. Any eligible teaching Principal who is unable to avail of this time or is prevented from doing so should contact his or her employing authority.
5. It is anticipated that the additional finances will be delegated to the eligible schools during the summer break. The funding must be used solely in order to ensure that the Principal is not required to spend more than three days per week on teaching duties. School Development Plans should include specific reference to non-teaching time for leadership and management responsibilities as appropriate from September 2008.
6. Teaching Principals should in the meantime begin to put plans in place, including any necessary appointments.