



**TO BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT, PRINCIPAL TEACHERS AND
TEACHING STAFF IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

Release Time for Principal Teachers in Primary Schools

1. Introduction

The purpose of this circular is to set out the number of days that teaching principals may take as release time in a school year commencing from the 2020/21 school year.

This circular replaces Circular 0020/2019 in relation to the number of days that teaching principals may take as release time in a school year. However, the terms of Circular 14/01 "Release Time for Principal Teachers in Primary Schools" (other than Section 2.1) continue to apply.

2. Release Time for Teaching Principals in Primary Schools

Size of School *	Number of days release time
Principal + 5 / 6	31
Principal + 3 / 4	25
Principal + 0 / 1 / 2	19
Schools with Special Classes (regardless of size of school or number of special classes)	Additional 4 days

* Under the terms of this circular, size of school refers to teaching principals, mainstream class posts, including developing school posts and mainstream class appeal posts and excludes ex-quota posts e.g. Special Education Teaching Posts, Special Class Posts, HSCL, etc.

3. Posts to facilitate release time for Principals (Principal Release Time Posts)

Due to the increase of principal release days for the 2020/21 school year, all Principal Release Time Post clusters in place for the 2019/20 school year will cease with effect from the end of the 2019/20 school year.

Schools may combine their new allocation of principal release days into clusters so as to form a full-time fixed-term post to cover each school's principal release days for the 2020/21 school year.

Schools cannot be involved in more than one principal release cluster in any school year.

As part of the clustering process, schools should agree a timetable for the teacher.

Principal Release Time Posts are fixed-term posts and should be filled in accordance with the published redeployment arrangements and must not be filled until the Department advises that the post is not required for a teacher on the Main Redeployment Panel.

One school in the cluster must be nominated as the base school. This school will be the employing school for the teacher in the post. The post will not give rise to the payment of an increased allowance to the Principal or the creation of an Administrative Principal post or additional Posts of Responsibility.

Each cluster must contain a minimum of 175 days. Principal Release Time Posts with a combined entitlement of less than 183 days in the cluster must use casual substitution days to ensure the teacher employed in the cluster post achieves 183 working days in the school year.

Principal Release Time Posts with a combined entitlement of more than 183 days in the cluster may use normal casual substitution to cover the number of days in excess.

Participating Principals are required to record all release time absences on the On Line Claims System (OLCS) for days covered by the Principal Release Time teacher. Principals of the schools in each cluster are required to formally plan, coordinate and document the pattern of their release time absences.

As a shared post, teachers in Principal Release Time Posts may claim travel expenses.

The application form for Principal Release Time Posts is attached at Appendix A. The closing date for receipt of applications is Friday 24th April 2020.

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Teacher Allocations Section
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