

Rannóg Oideachais Speisialta  
An Roinn Oideachais & Eolaíochta  
Cor na Madadh  
Átha Luain  
Co. Na hIarmhí



Special Education Section  
Department of Education & Science  
Cornamaddy  
Athlone,  
Co. Westmeath

**Circular 22/92**

## **Circular to Managerial Authorities and Principal Teachers of Special National Schools Special National Panel**

1. The Minister for Education wishes to advise Boards of Management and teachers of the establishment of a Special National Panel for teachers recognised as qualified to teach in Special National Schools but not in mainstream National Schools whose posts are discontinued due to a decline in pupil enrolments.
2. All relevant conditions of the Diocesan panel arrangements will apply (rule 97 of the Rules for National Schools, as amended, refers), except as provided hereunder. Subparagraph (9) of rule 97 is hereby revoked and, for the purposes of that rule, the Special National Panel is deemed to be an approved panel.
3. The Special National Panel will apply to teachers with restricted qualifications in special schools and special classes. Such teachers, whose posts are discontinued, will have the option of having their name placed on the Special Panel for redeployment in another special school. A teacher whose name is placed on the Special Panel will continue to serve in his/her current post pending redeployment.
4. The Department will notify the Board of Management of each school in which posts are to be discontinued, and will also notify the teachers concerned.
5. The maximum period a teacher can remain on the Panel will be three years, after which the exemption referred to at 6 (a) hereunder will be waived.
6. A teacher on the Special Panel is advised that s/he is required to accept the first post offered unless s/he can claim exemption for any of the following reasons:

a) Distance

The distance between the school offering the post and the school in which the teacher is serving is greater than 45 kilometres.

b) Maternity

A teacher may be exempted from the panel for a period of six months before and nine months after the birth of her child. Claims for exemption should be made in writing to the Department. Where an exemption is granted, the teacher's name will remain on the panel but school authorities will not be obliged to offer a post to the teacher during the period in question. In the absence of a written application for exemption, the teacher will be regarded as being subject to the Panel Rule.

7. Teachers who have been placed on the Special Panel and who are subsequently granted a career break will have their panel rights deferred for the duration of the career break.
8. Vacancies occurring in Special Schools should in the first instance be offered to teachers on the Special Panel. In the event of the Special Panel being cleared, or a teacher remaining on it refusing the job offer

due to distance or maternity, the vacancy should be filled from the appropriate Diocesan or other approved panel. Temporary appointments cannot be sanctioned pending the making of a Special Panel appointment.

9. In the event of the Diocesan or other approved panel being cleared, vacancies will be filled in the normal way. In this connection, it is intended that, from 1 September 1992, onwards, only teachers who are eligible to teach in mainstream national school, or Montessori teachers whose qualifications are recognised by the Department, may be appointed to posts in special schools.
10. Teachers should ensure that, during the summer vacation period, they can be contacted at the address given on the panel form. Teachers are reminded that, in opting to avail of their panel rights by signing the panel form, they are also giving an undertaking to comply with their responsibilities under the Panel Rule. Rule 97 subparagraph (8) provides for salary to be withdrawn from any teacher who fails to comply with the requirements of the rule.
11. A Board of Management must notify the Department as soon as a teacher on the Special Panel has accepted a post in its school. All enquiries regarding teachers available for redeployment should be directed to:

Special Education 1 Section,  
Department of Education and Science,  
Cornamaddy,  
Athlone,  
Co. Westmeath

C.N. Ó Loingseacháin  
Rúnaí

1 September, 1992.