

A guide to teachers in Irish primary schools

Mainstream Class Teacher

Mainstream class teachers make up the majority of primary school teachers, and are sometimes referred to as teaching teachers. They teach a single class for the entire academic year, and are responsible for teaching a broad range of subjects in accordance with the Primary Curriculum.

Figures given for the number of mainstream classroom teachers includes the number of **teaching principals** (see below.)

Administrative Principal

Sometimes referred to as a 'walking principal'. These are principals whose duties are primarily administrative and managerial, although in some schools they may engage in teaching on a limited basis. Very large schools may also have an administrative deputy principal in order to be able to effectively manage the school.

Teaching Principal

In smaller schools the role of principal is combined with that of a mainstream classroom teacher, who takes on the administrative and managerial role of a principal in addition to their teaching duties.

Special Class Teacher

Special class teachers teach small classes comprised of pupils with specific special educational needs and disabilities. Special classes can be found in special schools and in some mainstream schools.

GAM/EAL Teacher

These are teachers allocated under the General Allocation Model to provide additional teaching support to pupils with learning difficulties, pupils with special educational needs arising from high incidence disabilities and pupils requiring language support.

GAM/EAL teachers are allocated to schools on the basis of the number of mainstream classroom posts in that school, with additional resources made available to DEIS Band 1 schools and schools with a high proportion of pupils requiring support with English as an Additional Language (EAL)

Resource Teacher

Resource teachers are additional learning support teachers allocated to schools to provide additional support to specific pupils with significant learning difficulties and low incidence disabilities. The allocation of resource teachers is decided by the National Council for Special Education (NCSE).

As GAM/EAL and Resource Teacher allocation is based on teaching hours, these teachers often teach in more than one school. Each teacher has a base school and, for the purposes of the Primary School Census, are recorded as working in that school.

Home School Community Liaison Teacher

Home School Community Liaison teachers help to co-ordinate the Home School Community Liaison (HCSL) Scheme. HCSL is a preventative strategy targeted at pupils at risk of not reaching their potential in the educational system because of background characteristics which tend to have an adverse impact on pupil attainment and school retention. Home School Community Liaison Coordinator posts are provided on a full time or shared basis between schools and serving teachers are deployed to undertake full-time home school community liaison duties. These duties include implementing numeracy/literacy initiatives, monitoring attendance and home visitation.

Special Needs Assistant (SNA)

SNAs are additional adult support staff who can provide assistance to pupils with special educational needs who have additional and significant care needs. The support provided by SNAs helps to facilitate the attendance of those pupils at school and also to minimise disruption to class or teaching time for the pupils concerned, or for their peers.

SNAs are **not** teaching staff, and therefore are not included in statistics for pupil-teacher ratio.