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Redundancy Consultation

Schools are now working on their budgets which may, in some cases, mean decisions being taken to reduce teaching staff, using the agreed Redundancy Procedure (TNC 2010/ 1). It is essential in any redundancy process that consultation with staff and INTO is ongoing and meaningful. When a school is unable to manage staffing reductions on a voluntary basis, compulsory teacher redundancies may be necessary. In declaring such compulsory redundancies the Board of Governors must rely only on the three Areas stated in the Procedure

- Statutory requirement for curriculum delivery and teachers contribution to the curriculum.
- Specialist roles undertaken in school which cannot be easily replaced.
- Total teaching experience in current school.

It is important to stress that redundancy means the loss of a teaching position and reliance on criteria in compulsory redundancy situations such as

- Having prepared pupils for specific curricular activities e.g. religious, sacramental, sport, drama, feis etc
- Having been a coordinator, (paid or unpaid), or held management responsibility for delivery or coordinating a curricular theme / subject

may be open to challenge. Governors should be able to objectively justify the decision to retain a particular teaching position while making some other teacher redundant. Teachers should not have to respond to blank requests for information about their qualifications, training, or experience, unless that request details:

- The nature and purpose of the request
- The criteria to be used in the redundancy situation; and
- The information that the school already holds on the teacher

Redundancy means dismissal and the loss of a teacher's livelihood. It is imperative that all INTO representatives co-ordinate their activities in any redundancy situation. Every member should be assured that (s)he has the full support of the INTO at such a time. Help is available at every level to members in a redundancy situation.

INTO policy is to oppose teacher redundancies and to retain the maximum number of teacher post in any given situation. When redundancy situations are unavoidable, INTO will seek to achieve redeployment of the staff concerned to suitable alternative teaching posts and, where appropriate, to ensure that those members who wish to avail of the scheme for premature retirement on grounds of redundancy are provided with the benefits of the scheme.

Frank Bunting
Northern Secretary

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