



Circular 0049/2023

To Boards of Management and Principal Teachers of Primary Schools  
and the Chief Executives of Education and Training Boards

## Election of new Boards of Management of Primary Schools

### 1. General

In anticipation of the appointment of new Boards of Management from 1 December 2023, the Department, following consultation with organisations representing school management, parents and teachers, has updated the **Governance Manual for Primary Schools 2019 - 2023**.

The updated provisions governing the composition, appointment and functioning of Boards of Management assuming office from 1 December 2023 are now set out in the **Governance Manual for Primary Schools 2023 - 2027**

The **Governance Manual for Primary Schools 2023 - 2027** is published on the Department's website at [www.gov.ie/education](http://www.gov.ie/education)

Ten copies of the manual will be distributed to each primary school in the coming weeks. A hardcopy must be provided to each person appointed to the new Board of Management and the remaining two copies must be provided to the Parents' Association.

The Governance Manual for Primary Schools published in 2019 continues to apply to existing Boards up to the end of their term of office on 30 November 2023.

### 2. Election of new Boards

The procedures set out in the **Governance Manual for Primary Schools 2023 - 2027** for the election of new Boards must now be activated.



This process can take up to 9 weeks maximum but can be completed earlier depending on the particular option chosen for the election of the parents' nominees or where the selection proceeds without recourse to an election (i.e. where the maximum number of nominees does not exceed the number of places).

The maximum timeframe for elections is set out in the Appendix to this circular. Under this timeframe each new Board shall assume office from 1 December 2023. The term of all outgoing Boards shall expire on 30 November 2023.

### 3. Queries

If, after reading this circular or the **Governance Manual for Primary Schools 2023 - 2027** you have any queries relating to either the circular or to the manual, these should be emailed to the Department at: [schoolgovernance@education.gov.ie](mailto:schoolgovernance@education.gov.ie)

Queries in relation to recruitment and appointment procedures for principals, teachers and special needs assistants (SNA's) should be emailed to: [teachersna@education.gov.ie](mailto:teachersna@education.gov.ie)

### 4. Dissemination of circular

A copy of this circular should be provided to all members of the Board of Management and all school personnel. A copy should also be provided to the Parents' Association. This circular and manual may be accessed on the Department of Education website at [www.gov.ie/education](http://www.gov.ie/education)

Paraic Joyce  
Principal Officer  
School Governance Section.

September 2023



## APPENDIX

### **The following is the timeframe for the election of the Board members.**

(Any reference to days should be taken to mean calendar days, including weekends)

- A 14 day period for the Patron's representative to consult the Parents' Association regarding the method of election of parent nominee(s), prepare lists (if not by meeting), invite and obtain nominations.
- A 7 day period to arrange elections of parent nominee(s) (i.e. information on candidates for inclusion on ballot papers, preparation of ballot paper and issue of same).
- A 7 day period (maximum) for latest return of parents' votes and public count of same.
- A 7 day period to convene a meeting of the 6 nominees to the Board (i.e. the two nominees of the Patron, the two elected parent nominees, the elected teacher nominee and the principal) to select two extra members from the Community. In a shared governance arrangement a meeting of the 9 nominees to the Board is convened (i.e. the three nominees of the Patron, the three elected parent nominees, the elected teacher nominee and the principals of the two schools) to select three extra members from the Community.
- 10 days to reach agreement and to nominate substitutes (in the event that any of the community nominees decline to act).

A further 7 days, but only where the persons initially selected as community nominees decline or where there is not unanimous agreement – See Appendix C of the **Governance Manual for Primary Schools 2023 - 2027**

A 10 day period to provide for immediate notification to the Patron of the nominees to the Board and for the Patron to, in turn, submit the Patron's declaration (contained at Form 1 of the **Governance Manual for Primary Schools 2023 - 2027**) to the Department of Education.