



The state of the business office — 486 applications, 214 reminders, 3,200 purchase lines

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One financial year read, three costed workstreams · fictional document

Fictional document — demonstration example

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Fictional document, produced for the demonstration. **The measurement covers what the office processes and what it collects, never what a member of staff does nor what a family is worth. The 3 letter templates, the 31 recalculated credit notes and the hardship fund note are written: the office reads them, corrects a word and settles the version.**

What the business office handles every year

Item	Annual volume	Unit time today	Observation
Grant and aid applications	486	50 minutes end to end, of which 30 minutes of pre-assessment	168 come back incomplete — 35 %, of which 149 for 3 documents

Item	Annual volume	Unit time today	Observation
Letters to families	2,840	20 minutes end to end, of which 8 minutes of drafting	1,524 charge invoices, 640 reminders, 676 individual written answers
School-charge billing campaigns	3	24 hours per campaign	508 accounts: 412 on school meals and 96 boarders
Enquiries from families received	4,260	Average response time: 6 days	2,980 are about 11 recurring questions
Expenditure lines	3,200	—	214 suppliers, never grouped by homogeneous family

The 168 incomplete applications — three documents account for 149

Document at fault	Applications	What is missing exactly	What is written
Tax assessment	67	First page only, or a year earlier than the campaign requires	Template letter naming the pages and the year expected
Bank details	48	Account holder different from the legal guardian declared on the file	Template letter asking for details in the legal guardian's name
Proof of circumstances after the assessment	34	Separation or job loss reported, without the document that dates it	Template letter listing the documents the start-of-year notice admits

Document at fault	Applications	What is missing exactly	What is written
Other causes, one per file	19	Proof of address, enrolment certificate, unsigned form	Handled case by case
Total	168	—	149 covered by 3 letter templates

An incomplete application costs three times over: a letter to write, a family who waits, and a phone call that interrupts the campaign. **On the previous campaign, letters written in this form brought 149 of the 168 files back within the deadline.**

The 31 unapplied credit notes — €2,180 left with the families

Ground for the authorised absence	Credit notes due	Applied	Amount not given back
Work placement	29	17	€842
School trip or journey	21	14	€486
Health-related absence of more than a week	16	8	€604
Change of regime mid-term	8	4	€248
Total	74	43	€2,180

Every credit note carries the line of the governing board's resolution of 14 October that opens it, the exact period and the ground accepted. The 31 missing ones are recalculated and waiting for you — read and signed, they are deducted from this term's invoice.

The 214 families chased — and the 118 with an entitlement open to them

Situation	Families	What their own file says	What is offered
Chased, declared ratio below the threshold voted on 14 October, no hardship fund application	118	The ratio is in their grant application, declared by them	Information note and form attached to the reminder; the hardship fund committee decides
Chased, ratio above the threshold	74	—	Instalment plan costed on the real debt
Chased, hardship fund application already filed	22	File under examination	Reminder suspended until the committee decides
Total	214	—	118 signposted, 71 applications filed, 58 supported

These are not families refusing to pay: they are families the school never offered the entitlement it created itself. A debt recovered without the entitlement having been offered is a recovery that will not be defended before a governing board.

The three measured items, and what the agent does with them

Item	Share of the task's time, before	After	In duration	Volume retained	Time given back
Pre-assessing a grant application	60 %	10 %	30 min → 5 min	486	202 hours

Item	Share of the task's time, before	After	In duration	Volume retained	Time given back
Letter or reminder to a family	40 %	10 %	8 min → 2 min	2,840	284 hours
Termly billing of school meals	100 %	20 %	24 h → 4 h 48	3 campaigns	57 hours
Total	—	—	—	—	543 hours a year

543 hours is more than fifteen weeks of work on the statutory basis of 35 hours, that is a little over three months on the basis of 151.67 hours — always rounded down. Spread over the 2 people of the business office: 271 hours each, more than seven weeks each. No post is cut, none is created.

The proposed opening order — three workstreams out of seven

Workstream	Volume	Opening	Time given back	What has to be settled first
Grants and document checking	486 applications	October	202 hours	The 3 missing-document letter templates
Letters and reminders to families	2,840 letters	October	284 hours	The tone, the standard instalment plan, the hardship fund note
Billing of school charges	3 campaigns	October	57 hours	The tariff resolution and the absence register
<i>Procurement and order support</i>	3,200 lines	Second term	Outside the measured items	The homogeneous families

Workstream	Volume	Opening	Time given back	What has to be settled first
<i>Budget monitoring</i>	€1.84m	Second term	Outside the measured items	The chart of accounts and the alert thresholds
<i>Answering families on their channels</i>	4,260 enquiries	Second term	Outside the measured items	The 11 questions and the mandate
<i>Checking purchase documents</i>	3,200 lines	Second term	Outside the measured items	The documents the accounting agency requires

Opening all seven at once would take six meetings, two of them with the accounting agency 18 km away: five weeks' delay to going live, for hours that do not move by a single figure. Three workstreams in October, four in the second term: the January grant campaign is already served.

The grant campaign calendar — where the load concentrates

Campaign week	Applications filed	Share of the total	What it means for the business office
Week 1	48	10 %	24 hours of pre-assessment by hand
Week 2	96	20 %	48 hours
Week 3	132	27 %	66 hours by hand — for 2 people, that is the impossible week
Week 4	87	18 %	43 hours
Weeks 5 to 9	123	25 %	61 hours
Total	486	100 %	243 hours by hand, 40 hours with pre-assessment

For the school to settle

Opening order of the seven workstreams settled by the head teacher on: _____

Authorised reading perimeter (grant applications, school charges, accounting entries, absence register): _____

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