

Guidelines for Principals of Special Schools in relation to the allocation of Teaching and SNA Resources for the 2010/11 Academic Year

1. Introduction

The purpose of this circular is to outline the process by which the NCSE will allocate class teaching and SNA resources to special schools in relation to the 2010/11 academic year. It should be read in conjunction with Dept of Education & Skills Circular 0038/2010, which advises special schools of the policy parameters and the transitional arrangements, which will apply in relation to the 2010/11 academic year.

2. Application of Dept of Education & Skills Policy Parameters

Since January 2005, the NCSE has been responsible for the allocation of resource teaching and SNA posts to schools and has fulfilled this function in line with Departmental policy.

Accordingly each year, generally during the period April to June, schools have submitted applications for such resources in respect of the new cohort of children with special educational needs who will be enrolling in the school the following September. The local SENO, acting on behalf of the NCSE determines the level of resources to be allocated to the school for September 2010 by taking into account the following factors

- the level of resources required to meet the needs of the children who will continue to be enrolled in the school in 2010/11
- the level of resources required to meet the needs of children with SEN who will be enrolled next September
- the level of resources freed up as a result of children leaving the school in June 2010
- in the case of SNA support, where the diminishing care needs of a number of children with SEN may also free up a level of SNA resources.

As stated above, the NCSE is required to fulfil its statutory duty to resource schools, in line with Dept of Education & Skills policy. The NCSE is also required to take account of section 2 of the EPSEN Act, which states that a child with special educational needs shall be educated in an inclusive environment unless the nature and degree of needs of the child are such that to do so would be inconsistent with the best interests of the child or the effective provision of education for children with whom the child is to be educated.

3. Determining the Level of Teaching and SNA Supports for 2010/11

In relation to special schools, the following will apply.

Teaching Posts

Section 6 of Dept of Education & Skills Circular 0038/2010 refers to the current staffing arrangements in special schools. In effect the NCSE has been authorised to maintain the current level of class teaching posts in the school for the 2010/11 school year with a small number of exceptions, primarily relating to the retirement of teachers.

This concession is conditional on schools being prepared to enrol further pupils with a diagnosed disability and special educational needs similar to their existing pupil cohorts during the course of the school year, on referral from the SENO.

In order to clarify matters, the NCSE will confirm in writing, the number of class teachers to be allocated, according to the profile of children with SEN enrolled in the school, for the 2010/11 academic year, together with the number of surplus class teachers. The position in relation to the excess class teachers will be determined before the end of the 2010/11 academic year, in the light of the discussions referred to in section 4 of the Department's circular.

SNA Posts

The recent review of SNA posts has resulted in a sanctioned level of SNA allocation for each school reviewed for the 2009/10 school year. The allocation for the 2010/11 school year will be determined, taking into account the factors set out in section 2 above. In order that the SENO can sanction the appropriate level of SNA resources, the special school will be required to submit to the SENO

- A list of those children who will leave the school in June, as provided for in Appendix 5 of the guidelines for schools (NCSE 01/10), which issued in February last. These guidelines may be accessed on www.ncse.ie
- Details in relation to those children who are new entrants in September 2010 as set out in section 4 below.

4. Notification of New Enrolments to SENO

Circular 0038/2010 states that special schools should provide their SENO with the professional reports in respect of all children enrolling for the 2010/11 school year immediately. Appendix 1 of the DES circular sets out the Pupil-teacher and SNA- class group ratios for special schools and special classes. Given that the position in relation to transitional arrangements for teaching supports for special schools has already been outlined, such schools will only be required to apply for SNA supports for 2010/11 in respect of those children enrolling in the school.

Special schools should therefore forward an application for SNA support to the SENO, with the consent of the parents/guardian, as set out in *Appendix A*. The application should be accompanied by the relevant professional reports, which will outline the diagnosis of disability and should also clarify why the child is not enrolling in a mainstream setting. The SENO decision will issue as in the format at *Appendix B*. If the child requires special transport arrangements, the school should complete the relevant application, as set out in *Appendix C*. Schools should note that the Dept of Education & Skills policy provides that transport will be considered where the pupil is attending the nearest school, which can meet their special educational needs. Additional copies of these application forms are available on the NCSE website www.ncse.ie

Important: Applications should only be submitted once the school has determined that the child will be enrolled in the school next September. This is particularly relevant where the number of applications for places exceed the number of places available. In such cases, school authorities must determine which children will be enrolled before forwarding applications for supports to the SENO.

In some schools, the number of pupils enrolling in the school may result in some places in the school remaining unfilled (e.g. where the PTR indicates that a place is available). In such circumstances, the SENO may wish to discuss with the school, the position regarding further enrolments in order to satisfy the staffing ratios as set out in Appendix 1 of Circular 0038/2010.

Schools should contact their SENO immediately in order to forward the above information in relation to new enrolments for 2010/11.

Engagement with the NCSE in relation to the 2010/11 school cohort

Section 4 of Circular 0038/2010 requests that all special schools engage with the NCSE by 1 September next, in order that the position regarding the future enrolment of pupils with SEN, who fall outside the official designation of the school, will be formalised. You should therefore contact your SENO and inform them of the current position of the school in order that there is clear understanding in relation to the cohort of pupils that the school proposes to enrol in the future.

Sé Goulding
Principal Officer
June 2010

Special School Pupil Application for SNA Support

<p>A.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>PUPIL DETAILS</u></p> <p>Name of Pupil: _____ SEX M/F _____</p> <p>Home Address of Pupil: _____</p> <p>PPSN: _____ Date of Birth: _____ Expected date of enrolment _____</p> <p>Category of Assessed Disability: _____</p> <p>Class/School designation: _____</p> <p>Professional Recommendation for non-mainstream setting yes <input type="checkbox"/> no <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If enrolment is for reason other than professional recommendation, please clarify e.g. parental choice</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>B.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>SCHOOL DETAILS</u></p> <p>Name of School: _____</p> <p>Address of School: _____</p> <p>Roll No: _____ Phone No: _____</p> <p>Name of Principal: _____</p>
<p>C.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>SNA SUPPORT</u></p> <p>It is only in the most exceptional circumstances that SNA support over and above the level set out in Dept of Education & Skills Circular 0038/2010 (Appendix 1) will be considered.</p> <p>If you wish to apply for consideration, please indicate below:</p> <p>Is SNA support required for this pupil over and above that set out for the school as per Dept of Education & Skills circular 0038/2010 and detailed in professional reports? Y/N <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>D.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>PARENTAL/GUARDIAN CONSENT</u></p> <p>I/We, the undersigned, being the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the above named pupil confirm that this application has been discussed with me/us and that I/we give consent for the school to apply for the support services identified above.</p> <p>That I am/we are aware that all information relating to this application will be kept on file, and made available to the SENO/National Council for Special Education.</p> <p>Signed: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>Name (In Block Letters): _____ Contact Phone No.: _____</p>
<p>E.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>DECLARATION BY PRINCIPAL</u></p> <p>I hereby confirm</p> <p>That parents have given informed consent for this application to be made on behalf of their child</p> <p>that this application is supported by the Chairperson of the school's Board of Management.</p> <p>that in making this application full consideration has been given to any support services already in the school and that all required documentation is attached, including professional reports.</p> <p>Signed: _____ Date: _____</p> <p>(Principal)</p>

NCSE Notification to School Decision on Pupil Application

Pupil Name:	Date of Birth:	PPSN:
Category of Assessed Disability:		
School:	Principal:	
Address:		
Roll Number:		
Special School Designation:		
<p>The professional reports provided by the school in relation to the above pupil meet the criteria for a diagnosis of _____</p> <p>The professional reports provided contains the following information as to why a mainstream school setting may not be appropriate for this pupil</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>		
Access to Special Needs Assistant support		
<input type="checkbox"/>	No	No diagnosed disability
<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	Access to support as set out in DES circular 03/2010 Appendix 1
<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes	Additional SNA support as follows _____
Date for Review:		

Signed: _____

Date: _____

SENO Area:

cc: Pupil file

Appendix C

**Application Form for School Transport.
 Primary/Post Primary/Special School.**

A. PUPIL DETAILS

Name of Pupil: _____ Sex (M/F): _____

Home address of Pupil: _____

PPSN: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Date Enrolled in School: _____ Present Class: _____

Category of Assessed Disability: _____

B. SCHOOL DETAILS

Name of School: _____

Address of School: _____

Roll No: _____ Phone No: _____

Name of Principal: _____

C. PARENTAL/GUARDIAN CONSENT
(to be completed in all cases)

I/We, the undersigned, being the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the above named pupil, confirm each of the following:

I/we have discussed this application with the Principal of the above-named school and I/we give consent to the school to apply for school transport.
 I am/we are aware that all information relating to this application will be kept on file and made available to the National Council for Special Education (NCSE).
 I am/we are aware that this application form will be forwarded by the NCSE to the School Transport Section, Department of Education and Science, which will make a decision regarding the provision of transport and will endeavour to ensure, through Bus Éireann, that a reasonable level of transport service is provided for my/our child*.
 I am/we are aware that, in the event of it being determined that a school nearer to my/our child's home is or can be resourced to meet my/our child's special educational needs, there is no obligation on the Department of Education and Science to either arrange for a transport service or to pay a grant towards the cost of private transport arrangements to any other school.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Name (In Block Letters): _____

Contact Phone No. for Parent(s)/Guardian(s): _____

* Please refer to the terms of the School Transport Scheme for Children with Special Needs.

Date received: SENO USE ONLY

D.

DECLARATION BY PRINCIPAL

I hereby confirm that:

the above named pupil is due to be enrolled or has already enrolled in this school.
I have discussed this application with the applicant's parents/guardians and
this application is supported by the Chairperson of the school's Board of Management.

Please provide any information you may have which may assist in determining the type of transport required.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

E.

REPORT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS ORGANISER (SENO)

The required professional report(s) submitted meet with Department of Education and Science criteria.

- Yes
 No

The school named at section B is the nearest to the child's home that is or can be resourced to meet the child's special educational needs under Department of Education and Science criteria.

- Yes
 No - if no, on what basis has this application been made (e.g. parental choice)

Professional reports and/or information supplied by the relevant school authorities indicate that this pupil will require

- Escort,
 Wheelchair access,
 Harness,
 Other (e.g. specialised vehicle). (Please give details):

Please include here further information (if any) which is relevant to this application.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

SENO Area: _____