

Guidelines for Setting Up and Organising Special Classes

for

Boards of Management and
Principals of Primary and Post-Primary Schools



The term 'parent' in this guideline should be taken to include parents and guardians of students.

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Introduction

Students with special educational needs should, where possible, be educated in mainstream classes along with their peers, with additional supports provided as necessary.

Special classes¹ are part of a continuum of educational provision that enables students with more complex special educational needs to be educated, in smaller class groups, within their local mainstream schools. They offer a supportive learning environment to students who are unable to access the curriculum in a mainstream class, even with support, for most or all of their school day. Students enrolled in special classes should be included in mainstream classes to the greatest extent possible, in line with their abilities.

These guidelines give information and guidance to schools on the setting up and organisation of NCSE-sanctioned special classes in mainstream primary and post-primary schools. They are based on principles of good practice and Boards of Management are requested to take due cognisance of them when setting up, staffing and organising special classes in their schools. These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the NCSE Transitional Guidelines for schools available on the NCSE website at: <http://ncse.ie/information-booklets-and-pamphlets-for-schools>.

Which students are enrolled in special classes?

Special classes are sanctioned in mainstream schools for students with special educational needs arising from certain disabilities. A list of the types of special classes is provided in Appendix 2. Enrolment in a special class should only be considered where it has been demonstrated that a student requires the support of a special class because he/she is unable to learn effectively in a mainstream class for most or all of the school day even with appropriate supports.

Some students, although academically able to access the curriculum in mainstream, may find it too difficult to manage full-time placement there. This can be due to significant difficulties in areas such as behaviour or sensory needs which have not been ameliorated, even with appropriate intervention, in mainstream.

The decision to enrol a student in a special class should take account of:

- The student's strengths, abilities and needs
- The student's experiences and outcomes to date (in preschool or primary as appropriate)

1 Schools are requested to use the term 'special class' in preference to the term 'unit' which has medical rather than educational connotations.

- The interventions that were or could be put in place, within available resources, to support the student's inclusion in mainstream education
- The views and opinions of parents, students, teachers and other relevant professionals, as appropriate.

In order to access a special class a student must have a report from a relevant professional or team of professionals (for example, psychologist, speech and language therapist, psychiatrist) stating that:

- 1 S/he has a disability (in line with the designation of the special class in question) and**
- 2 S/he has complex or severe learning needs that require the support of a special class setting and the reasons why this is the case.**

The professional report must meet DES requirements for the particular disability in question.

Under no circumstances should a school place a student in a special class without such a professional report.

Early Intervention Classes

Early intervention classes are available for children aged 3-5 with autism spectrum disorder. A small number of early intervention classes are available for children who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing and children with physical disabilities.

Early intervention classes follow the Junior/Senior Infant Day i.e. 4 hours 40 minutes each day.

Schools, in consultation with parents, may reduce the length of the school day for 3 year olds who are unable to manage a full day in the early intervention setting.

Early intervention classes are intended to provide early support for children with ASD before they start school. Following early intervention children will attend a mainstream class unless there is professional guidance that they require a special class.

Please note: A child's attendance in an early intervention class is not, and should not be taken as, an indication that the child will require access to a special class when he/she enrolls in primary school.

In the case of an early intervention class for ASD, the professional report must state that the child has been diagnosed with ASD – the requirement for the report to state that the child has complex or severe learning needs requiring the support of a special class setting, is not necessary in this case.

Who decides whether a student is enrolled in a special class?

Parents make the final decision – in conjunction with the student, school and other relevant professionals. Parents require objective and comprehensive information about the options available and should actively consult with relevant professionals (e.g. school, psychologist, special educational needs organiser (SENO), health professionals) to arrive at an informed decision.

Schools must obtain parents' written consent before enrolling a student in a special class. This can be a difficult decision for some parents who can feel under pressure to keep their child in mainstream education.

In some cases the decision may be relatively straightforward as the student's needs are very complex. In other cases, the decision is made following a period of assessment, intervention and review, conducted by teachers, in conjunction, as appropriate, with psychologists from the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPs) and other external professionals. Parents and students should be actively involved in this process.

How long do students remain in a special class?

As learning needs may change over time, a student's enrolment in a special class should be kept under continual review by the school. At a minimum, a review should take place once a year and include a careful examination of the student's progress in achieving his/her learning targets.

The review should consider:

- Student's views and those of parents, teachers and other relevant professionals
- The suitability of the special class placement
- Whether the student's needs might be best addressed in a mainstream setting or whether a more supported setting is required (e.g. special school setting).

Following a decision that the special class is no longer the most appropriate placement, a student may move to:

- a mainstream class in the same school or
- a mainstream class in a school more local to the student's home or
- a different category of special class or
- a special school.

Where the change involves a move to a different school, parents should apply to enrol their child in the new school and the student should remain in the existing special class until the new placement is organised.

The school should also notify the SENO when a student has left a special class, either to return to mainstream or enrol in another school, as this creates a vacancy in a special class that can be utilised for another student who may need it.

A student's enrolment in a special class should be kept under continual review by the school.

The rules for the maximum period that a student can be educated in a special class are generally the same as those for mainstream primary and post-primary classes. Primary education consists of an eight year cycle: junior infants, senior infants, and first to sixth classes. Students move to the next class at the end of each school year and normally transfer to post-primary education at the age of twelve. Post-primary education generally consists of a six year cycle, with three years spent in Junior Cycle and three years in Senior Cycle. This includes Transition Year which is not offered by all schools.

There are two exceptions to this general rule, i.e. special classes for students with specific learning disability and students with specific speech and language disorders. In these cases, students return to their local school after a period of two years spent in these classes.

How does a special class get established?

Schools may apply to the NCSE to open a special class where a need has been identified in their area i.e. a number of students have professional reports indicating they require the support of a special class.

SENOs may also approach a school directly where they are aware that a special class is or will be required in the near future. SENOs consult with other education partners (e.g. NEPS and Inspectorate) when planning to set up a special class. SENOs consult with DES School Planning and Building Section where special classes are being incorporated into a new building.

Before approaching a particular school to request the establishment of a special class, SENOs take into account both present and future potential need within the area and must be satisfied that the class is sustainable and appropriately located. The DES has issued retention rates which guide SENOs in determining sustainability – see Appendix 2 for DES Retention Ratios for Special Classes.

In addition, the SENO will consider:

- the school's accommodation and accessibility
- the number of special classes, if any, already in the school.

In certain circumstances, the SENO may sanction a class before there are sufficient students to create a full class. This is done on the basis that the extra places will be filled as soon as students in need of such placements have been identified by the NCSE.

The final decision to open a special class rests with the school's Board of Management. However, the overriding consideration must be to respond to the needs of students with special educational needs who, had they not additional needs, would ordinarily attend a school in their local community.

What are the steps involved in setting up the class?

Step 1: School/SENO considers establishment

Step 2: School makes an application

Step 3: Class is sanctioned with particular designation

Step 4: Parents/School enrol students

Step 5: School plans for the opening of the class

Step 1: School/SENO considers establishment

In reaching a decision to set up a special class, the school, in consultation with SENOs and other professionals, considers:

- How many students, with relevant professional reports, are likely to enrol?
- What are the particular learning/care needs of these students and what supports might they require?
- Will it be necessary to employ additional staff?
- What planning needs to be in place for additional teacher training?

- What supports are required from external professionals?
- Is there sufficient accommodation or will it be necessary to procure a temporary or permanent building or to have existing rooms re-furnished? Will planning permission be required?

The school should discuss any matters of concern with the SENO and other relevant professionals.

Discussions in relation to the establishment of a special class need to take place well in advance of the start of the following school year (ideally concluded by January).

Step 2: School makes an application

The SENO and Board of Management identify the students, with relevant professional reports, who are likely to require access to a special class.

The Board of Management applies in writing to the SENO for sanction to open a special class for a particular disability category. This application must be signed by the Chairperson of the Board.

Step 3: Class is sanctioned with particular designation

The SENO writes to the school confirming sanction for a special class with a particular designation.

This letter of sanction enables schools to apply to the DES for relevant teacher training, accommodation and IT grants.

Teacher and SNA allocations are sanctioned as part of the overall school's allocation for special educational needs, issued in June of each year.

SENOs inform the **Health Service Executive (HSE)** that a special class is sanctioned so that the class can be included in HSE planning. The provision of therapeutic services is the responsibility of the HSE. SENOs can provide schools with local HSE contact details.

(Note: The NCSE is aware that provision of health supports for students with special educational needs can be inconsistent and limited² in certain areas. The HSE is endeavouring to improve service delivery through a new policy 'Progressing Disability Services'³ but it will take some time for change to be embedded in the system. In the meantime, therapeutic supports (speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and so on) are provided by the HSE in line with their assessment of student's needs and their current policy parameters.

2 NCSE (2013) Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Schools available at: http://ncse.ie/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Supporting_14_05_13_web.pdf

3 For further information on the HSE Progressing Disability Services is available at: <http://www.hse.ie/progressingdisabilityservices/>

Step 4: Parents/School enrol students

Relevant parents are informed by the SENO and school of the location of special classes that have places available. Parents should also be informed that enrolment of their child will be subject to the particular school's enrolment policies.

Parents then contact and apply to the school with a view to enrolling their child in the special class, should they wish to do so.

The SENO can advise principals of any professional reports that may be required to ensure the students can be enrolled in the special class.

The school gathers the necessary professional reports from parents as soon as possible.

The school returns a **Notification of Enrolment Form** to the NCSE, along with relevant professional reports. An electronic copy of this form (Form 7) is available at: <http://ncse.ie/for-schools>.

Step 5: School plans for the opening of the class

1. Time frame

Indicative time-frame for opening of the class is agreed with SENO. Classes generally open at the start of a school year but may open during the year, if necessary.

2. Notifications and applications

Special Transport Scheme:

Schools should ensure that an application form for school transport for each eligible student is completed and signed by the parents, school principal and SENO prior to, or at the time of, first enrolment.

The SENO forwards completed application forms to School Transport Section, DES. An electronic version of the NCSE form (Form 2) is available on the NCSE website at: <http://ncse.ie/for-schools>.

DES School Transport Section can be contacted by telephone at: 057 935466/7. Further information is available on the DES website – see Appendix 1: Useful Links for Schools.

For students to be eligible for school transport they must be attending the nearest recognised mainstream or special school/class that is or can be resourced to meet the student's special educational needs.

Eligible students who are enrolled in an autism class in a mainstream school and who subsequently mainstream in that school will retain their transport eligibility for the duration of their primary education in this school. Should these students transfer to a different school, a new transport application will be required.

Assistive Technology

Schools should apply for a grant to purchase specialist equipment, where this is essential, for students with a diagnosis of:

- a serious physical disability and/or
- a sensory or communicative disability.

For students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing or students with a visual impairment, schools should apply to the Visiting Teacher Service. The Visiting Teacher Service assesses the application and advises the NCSE in relation to appropriate equipment e.g. technology, large print, tapes, brailers, audiology equipment etc. The SENO takes account of the Visiting Teacher's recommendations when considering applications for equipment and makes a recommendation to the DES, as appropriate.

All other applications for assistive technology should be made to the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) with responsibility for the school.

Contact details are available in Appendix 1: Useful Links for Schools.

Specialised furniture/equipment grant

Schools should make an application for specialised furniture/equipment where this is required for a particular student. An application, along with a report from an occupational therapist, should be submitted to the School Building Unit, DES, Tullamore.

Contact details are available in Appendix 1: Useful Links for Schools.

3. Employment of Staff:

Boards of Management are responsible for the appointment and employment of staff for the special class. This includes teachers, SNAs and bus escorts, where sanctioned.

On appointment, schools are responsible for organising payment of teachers and SNAs through the DES centralised payroll systems. The school should also inform this section when a special class is closed.

Teaching posts in special classes can be filled internally by the deployment of an existing permanent/CID post holder in the school. Otherwise they should be filled from the appropriate panel (primary) and as per recruitment procedures (post-primary), in accordance with DES circulars. DES circulars on school staffing are available on the website at: www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars.

4. Staff Development and ongoing supports:

Students in special classes require experienced teachers with appropriate qualifications and, wherever possible, a background in working with students with special educational needs. Schools should also endeavour to assign experienced SNAs to the special class.

Schools planning to open special class provision should be proactive in meeting the continuing professional development needs of their special class teachers, in addition to developing and reviewing their whole school policies in relation to the education and inclusion of students with special educational needs.

The Special Education Support Service (SESS) delivers a range of professional development initiatives and support for teachers working with students with special educational needs in special classes. Schools should contact the SESS as soon as they receive their letter of sanction in order to facilitate planning for training of teachers. The SESS can be contacted at: www.sess.ie.

The Middletown Centre for Autism also offers training for parents and professionals in the area of autism spectrum disorders.

A detailed list of available training and supports is available on the SESS website and that of the Middletown Centre for Autism. See Appendix 1: Useful Links for Schools.

5. Environment

Where modifications are necessary to the school environment, schools should contact the School Capital Appraisal Section of the DES Planning and Building Unit, as soon as possible, to discuss the school's requirements (which can sometimes involve the temporary use of pre-fabs). Building and/or planning permission can take considerable time to put in place.

The Planning and Building Unit, DES, Tullamore can be contacted by telephone at: (057) 9325442. Email contact details are available in Appendix 1: Useful Links for Schools.

SENOs can assist schools by providing relevant DES contact details or by liaising with the Planning and Building Unit.

How are special classes resourced?

Special classes are resourced to cater for students with special educational needs, who because of greater levels and complexity of need, require to spend most or all of their week in a special setting.

1. Teachers

Special classes are generally resourced on the basis of student-teacher ratios specified for their designated disability category. Student-teacher ratios for each disability category are outlined in Appendix 2.

Students in special classes are counted twice for teacher allocation purposes: they are counted in determining teacher allocation to the special class and separately in determining the overall mainstream teacher allocation for a school. This is intended to support their inclusion in mainstream classes, as appropriate.

2. Care supports

There is a prescribed special class : SNA ratio, as set out in Appendix 2. Circumstances may arise where this level of support is not sufficient to meet the care needs of the cohort of students enrolled. In such circumstances, the school may apply to the SENO for access to additional care supports, clearly outlining the reason why the additional support is necessary.

If care needs within the special class are above what the school can reasonably be expected to provide within the prescribed baseline ratio, the SENO will allocate additional care supports to the school.

3. Grants

Enhanced capitation grant

Primary schools receive the mainstream capitation rate (currently €170) and an enhanced capitation grant for each student enrolled in special classes, in accordance with specific disability categories – see Appendix 2 for current rates. For example the enhanced rate of capitation for a student in a special class for ASD is €670 per student in addition to the mainstream rate of €170 giving a total per student of €840.

Post-primary schools receive the mainstream capitation rate (currently €301) and an enhanced capitation of €191 for students enrolled in classes for mild/moderate general learning disabilities, i.e. a combined allocation of €492 for each student.

Further information is available on the DES website – see Appendix 2: Useful Links for Schools.

Special class start-up grant

A grant of €6,500 is available to cover the cost of furniture and general equipment. Further information is provided on the DES website – see Appendix 2: Useful Links for Schools.

Other Grants:

Specialised furniture/equipment grant:

Available for individual students who require specialised furniture/equipment.

Loose furniture and equipment: €2,500 is available.

Once off grant: €7,000 is available for equipment for a multi-sensory room where this is included in the overall schedule of accommodation.

ICT – a grant of €5,000 is available per new primary classroom.

Minor works grant: Funding is made available to all primary schools on the basis of a grant of €5,500 plus €18.50 per mainstream student and €74 per student attending a special class in a mainstream school.

Further information on the above grants is available on the DES website – see Appendix 1: Useful Links for Schools.

Your local SENO can provide advice and information on setting up a special class. Contact details are available on the NCSE website at: www.ncse.ie

In what circumstances are special classes closed?

Both Boards of Management and SENOs should review the ongoing sustainability of special classes on a regular basis. Either may determine that a special class should be closed where:

- The numbers of students in the special class fall below the DES retention rates and
- No further local students have been identified as needing access to the class.

In making a decision to close a special class SENOs will take into account:

- How the educational needs of any remaining students will continue to be met, for example in mainstream, special school or another special class.
- Whether, instead of closing, the class should be re-designated to a different disability category in line with changing needs within the local area.

Discussions in relation to the viability of a special class need to take place well in advance of the start of the following school year (ideally concluded by January). As students with special educational needs can find transitions difficult, they and their parents/schools need time to prepare for the change and put plans in place to ensure a successful transition.

Good Practice Points

Special classes have been a feature of Irish schools for many years and good practice has developed over this time. The following good practice points for schools are based on such school practices and the findings of several national and international studies.

The School Plan

The school's policies and approach to special classes are fully integrated into the overall school plan and address:

- The roles and responsibilities of all staff members in promoting inclusion
- The admission of students into special classes
- How students in special classes are meaningfully included in mainstream classes and school activities to the greatest possible extent
- How mainstream students and teachers engage with the special class (reverse inclusion)
- How an individualised approach to assessment, planning, teaching and record-keeping is implemented in line with NEPS Continuum of Support
- How parental involvement in their child's education is promoted
- How transitions are supported and managed
- How staff training needs are identified and addressed
- How school polices (e.g. promoting positive behaviour and managing challenging behaviours) apply to special class provision, including how such plans are differentiated to meet the needs of students in these classes.

Admissions Policy

Boards of Management give careful consideration to developing the admissions policy for special classes, particularly where the school is over-subscribed. Aspects addressed include:

- Catchment area as students in need of a special class may come from a wider catchment area than the school's general catchment area
- Category of disability for which the class is sanctioned
- Assignment of places where the special class is over-subscribed⁴

⁴ Note: Schools may not hold a place in a special class for a child in an early intervention class who is due to enrol the following September, if another child needs the place before that date.

- Assignment of places in mainstream classes. As students in special classes are counted both on the mainstream and special class roll, it is good practice for schools to assign a place in a mainstream class to a student in a special class. This enables the student to access the mainstream place (including optional subjects in post-primary schools) to the greatest extent possible, in accordance with their ability to participate.

Curriculum

Students in special classes are given the opportunity to access the full range of curricular areas, in line with their abilities, either through differentiated teaching in special or mainstream classes.

Appropriate certification options are in place for students in special classes.

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment has produced useful guidelines for teachers of students with general learning disabilities in post-primary schools –see Appendix 1: Useful Links for Schools.

Individualised Planning

Students in special classes have a detailed support plan setting out clear goals and strategies to meet their diverse needs, in line with the NEPS Continuum of Support Guidelines.

Support plans are based on a detailed assessment of individual needs. They include key independence and communication goals designed to facilitate students' inclusion in mainstream classes to the greatest possible extent, and/or a return to mainstream placement, where feasible.

Support plans address students' needs in some or all of the following areas, as appropriate to the student:

- Learning
- Social and communication
- Emotional
- Behaviour
- Life skills, including independence
- Care
- Adaptation of physical environment.

Students' progress is kept under regular review.

Appointment of Teaching Staff

The school recognises that students in special classes have complex learning needs and appoints teachers knowledgeable and experienced in working with students with special educational needs. Additional training opportunities are provided where required.

The number of teachers involved with special classes is kept to the minimum necessary to ensure students have access to a broad and relevant curriculum and a consistent level of support.

In post-primary schools, principals balance students' need for continuity in teaching staff and approaches with students' need to have access to specialist teachers.

Staff Development

Boards of Management encourage special class teachers to engage in appropriate learning opportunities to ensure they have the knowledge, skills and competencies necessary to be a special class teacher. Boards also build up the capacity of mainstream teachers in the area of special educational needs.

Boards of Management encourage teachers to visit other special classes to see, at first hand, how these classes operate. SENOs may be in a position to give the principal contact details for neighbouring schools with similar special classes, so that visits or liaison with these schools can be arranged.

Boards of Management ensure that special needs assistants have received the training necessary to carry out tasks allocated to them.

Transition

The school carefully plans and supports the transition of students into and/or out of special class provision including transitions during the school day. The school teaches specific skills to enable the student transfer successfully to his/her new setting, as necessary.

The NCSE has recently published Transitional Guidelines for Parents, Students and Schools to assist the process of transition for students with special educational needs. See Appendix 1: Useful Links for Schools.

Accommodation

Schools ensure that where possible, the special classroom is centrally positioned in the school with sufficient space to accommodate work stations, wheelchairs and other specialised furniture and equipment. The physical location of the classroom then facilitates inclusion, reduces segregation of students and isolation of teaching staff.

Appendix 1: Useful Links for Schools

Grants, Supports and Schemes

Assistive Technology:	DES circular on assistive technology is available on the DES website at: http://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0010_2013.pdf . Application forms are available on the NCSE website at: http://ncse.ie/for-schools . Contact details for the Visiting Teacher Service are available at: www.education.ie/en/Parents/Services/Visiting-Teacher-Service .
Capitation rates:	http://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/Grants-and-Additional-Support/Capitation-Grant .
Extended School Year Scheme (July Provision):	http://www.education.ie/en/Parents/Services/July-Provision/Home-Based.html .
Information Note on Staffing, Supports and Grants for ASD classes:	https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/Grants-and-Additional-Support/New-ASD-Classes-Staffing-Supports-and-Grants-Information.pdf .
Planning and Building Unit:	www.education.ie/en/School-Design .
Special Needs Assistant (SNA) scheme Circular 0030/2014:	http://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0030_2014.pdf .
Special Needs Furniture:	http://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/Special-Education-Furniture-Equipment .
Transport Scheme:	http://www.education.ie/en/Parents/Services/School-Transport .

Services and Agencies

Middletown Centre for Autism:	https://www.middletownautism.com .
National Behaviour Support Service (NBSS):	http://www.nbss.ie .
National Council for Special Education (NCSE):	http://ncse.ie/for-schools .
National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS):	http://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/NEPS-Home-Page.html .
Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST):	http://www.pdst.ie .
Special Education Support Service (SESS):	www.sess.ie .
Special Educational Needs Organisers (SENOs):	http://ncse.ie/seno-contact-list .

Useful Documents for Schools with Special Classes

<p>NCCA:</p>	<p>Level 2 Learning Programmes for new Junior Cycle: http://curriculumonline.ie/Junior-cycle/Level-2-LPs.</p> <p>Guidelines for Teachers of Students with General learning Disabilities http://www.ncca.ie/en/Publications/Syllabuses_and_Guidelines/Guidelines_for_Teachers_of_Students_with_General_Learning_Disabilities.pdf.</p>
<p>NCSE Research Reports:</p>	<p>A Study of Transition from Primary to Post-primary School for Pupils with Special Educational Needs http://ncse.ie/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Transitions_23_03_13.pdf.</p> <p>Research Report on the Role of Special Schools and Classes in Ireland http://ncse.ie/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/4_NCSE_SpecSchlsClas.pdf.</p> <p>Understanding Special Class Provision in Ireland NCSE Research Report. No. 16. 2014. http://ncse.ie/research-reports.</p> <p>Special Classes in Irish Schools. Phase 2: A Qualitative Study. NCSE Research Report. No. 24. 2016. http://ncse.ie/research-reports.</p>
<p>NCSE Policy Advice:</p>	<p>Guidelines on the Individual Education Plan Process (2006) http://ncse.ie/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/final_report.pdf.</p> <p>Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Schools (2013) http://ncse.ie/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Supporting_14_05_13_web.pdf.</p> <p>The Education of Children with Challenging Behaviour arising from Severe Emotional Disturbance/Behavioural Disorders (2012) http://ncse.ie/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/EBDPolicyReport_1.pdf.</p> <p>Supporting Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder in Schools (2015) http://ncse.ie/policy-advice.</p>
<p>NCSE Information for Parents/Schools:</p>	<p>Inclusive Education Framework- A guide for schools on the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs (NCSE, 2011). http://www.ncse.ie/researches/InclusiveEducationFramework_InteractiveVersion.pdf.</p> <p>Information Pamphlet Series for Parents of Children with Special Educational Needs http://ncse.ie/information-booklets-pamphlets-2.</p> <p>Transitional Guidelines for Parents of Students with Special Educational Needs and for Schools: http://ncse.ie/information-booklets-pamphlets-2.</p>

NEPS:

A Continuum of Support – Primary

https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/neps_special_needs_guidelines.pdf.

A Continuum of Support – Post-Primary

https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/neps_post_primary_continuum_resource_pack.pdf.

A Continuum of Support – Behaviour, Emotional and social Difficulties

https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/neps_besd_continuum_teacher_guide.pdf.

Appendix 2: DES Policy: Staffing & Retention Ratios & Capitation Grant

Category	PTR Primary	PTR Post-Prim	Class: SNA Ratio	Enrolment Retention Level	Capitation Grants - primary ¹
Visual impairment	8:1	8:1.5	4:1	5	€819
Hearing	7:1	7:1.5	4:1	5	€819 €840 (Profound)
Mild General Learning Disability	11:1	11:1.5	4:1	9	€436 (<12 yrs) €650 (>12 yrs)
Moderate General Learning Disability	8:1	8:1.5	2:1	6	€819
Severe/Profound Learning Disability	6:1	6:1.5	2:1	SENO*	€840
Emotional/Behavioural Disturbance	8:1	8:1.5	4:1	6	€819
Severe Emotional/Behavioural Disturbance	6:1	6:1.5	1:1	3	€840
Autism/ASD	6:1	6:1.5	1:2	SENO*	€840
Physical Disability	10:1	N/A	1:1	8	€819
Multiple Disabilities	6:1	6:1.5	1:1	4	€840
Specific Learning Disability	9:1	N/A	N/A	5	€436 (<12 yrs) €650 (>12 yrs)
Specific Speech and Language Disorder	7:1	N/A	3:1	5	€819

¹ An enhanced capitation of €191 is payable to post-primary schools for students enrolled in classes for mild/moderate general learning disabilities. These students also receive the mainstream capitation rate (currently €301, i.e. a combined allocation of €492).

* Determined by SENO in line with DES policy

