



Summer 2021 – Primary School Summer Programmes for Pupils with Complex Educational Needs and Pupils at risk of Educational Disadvantage

20 May 2021

Dear Principal,

Ministers Foley and Madigan recently announced a package of supports to allow schools across the primary and post primary sector to offer a summer programme for children with complex special educational needs and those at greatest risk of educational disadvantage. The purpose of this letter is to set out in greater detail how the primary programmes will operate including further information on the range of supports on offer.

The programmes on offer this summer include a new 2-3 week summer programme available to all primary schools and an expansion of the existing programmes in special schools and classes and in DEIS schools.

Primary schools with special classes and special schools can offer an extended programme in 2021.

This range of programmes on offer builds on the success of the expanded programmes that ran last year and incorporates feedback from education stakeholders as to how to better support the programme for all involved in summer 2021.

The Department is conscious that the last year has presented significant and unprecedented challenges for school staff but hopes that the guidance and support structures proposed will encourage schools to run the programme this year.

It is accepted that school-based programmes provide a more holistic experience for the pupils and help retain the important connection with school and peers.

Measures to support schools to run the programme for summer 2021 include:

- **Overseer** – All schools can appoint an Overseer, which is a non-teaching role to oversee the schools summer programmes. This does not need to be the school principal, it can be any permanent teacher in the school
- **Preparation Time** –There is an additional 10 hours of paid time for each week of each programme for the overseer or another teacher to prepare the individual programmes
- **Additional Pay** –Teachers and SNAs working on the programme will receive an additional weeks pay for each week of the programme based on their personal rate of pay.
- **Earlier Payment of Staff** – Payments will be processed when completed claim forms are received over the summer thereby reducing payment timeframes



- **Flexibility** – Schools can run the programme at any time during the school summer holidays.
- **External Staff** – Schools can engage substitute teachers and SNAs and teachers graduating from college this summer. The Teaching Council and the Irish Primary Principals Network (IPPN) will promote the summer programmes with this year’s graduate teachers and PME pupils to increase the supply of available teachers via <https://www.educationposts.ie/>. This portal supports recruitment of staff for posts in the primary and post-primary sector.
- **Less Administration** – Applications and payment processes has been streamlined
- **Support and Guidance** – Helpline and Guidance material will be provided
- **Running Costs** – A grant of €30 per pupil per week will be paid to all participating schools.

The programme aims are to support pupils to re-engage with education, to build their confidence and increase their motivation, promote wellbeing and for those who are at key transition stages, helping to ensure they can progress onto the next learning pathway through school or to successfully re-engage with school next September as appropriate.

Further details on the schemes including available supports and how schools can apply are available at gov.ie/summerprovision

A home-based summer programme will be available for pupils with **complex special educational needs** where schools are not providing a school-based programme. An application and information pack on the home-based scheme which can be provided to parents will follow on the week commencing 31 May, 2021.

Your co-operation and support for this summer programme would be appreciated and if you have any queries please email schoolsummerprogramme@education.gov.ie or call 090 648 4292.

Yours faithfully

Martina Mannion
Assistant Secretary