

**The National Council for Special Education**

**Annual Report  
2005**

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## **Introduction**

This is the second Annual Report of the National Council for Special Education. The Council was originally established by Order (SI No. 270 of 2004) made by the Minister for Education and Science under Section 54 of the Education Act 1998 on 24<sup>th</sup> December 2003.

The Council as established by the above order was formally dissolved on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2005 and re-established under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 (EPSEN Act 2004) with effect from that date.

This report outlines the continued organisational development of the Council, the expansion and extension of its functions and its key activities during the period 1 January 2005 to 31 December 2005.

## **Foreword**

This, the second Annual Report of the National Council for Special Education, records the development of the organisation and the commencement of our core functions. It also marks the formal establishment of the Council under the EPSEN Act 2004 which extends the functions of the Council and triggers the preparation of the Council's Implementation Report which will propose a detailed programme for the phased implementation of the EPSEN Act 2004.

The local service of the Council is now in place and providing a direct service to schools and parents in relation to resource allocation to schools. This report outlines the impact made by the Council's Special Educational Needs Organisers (SENOs ) in their first full year of operation on improving the delivery of services by schools to support children with special educational needs.

The activities of the Council in 2005 provide a platform for a programme of progressive improvement in the delivery of special education services and for the expansion of the Council's activities to meet its full range of functions as set out in the EPSEN Act 2004.

I believe that the engagement of the Council with schools and parents through its local service is already making a real difference in relation to resource provision for children with special educational needs. I look forward to the future expansion of the Council's functions and services over the coming years.

Finally I wish to take this opportunity to thank the Council members for their expert guidance and advice on the range of issues that arose over the past year and to thank all the staff for their dedication to the work of this new organisation and for the flexibility they have shown in ensuring that a nationwide service has been maintained in a scenario in which there were significant vacancies.

Pat Curtin  
Chief Executive Officer

## **Functions of the Council**

### **Establishment Order**

The National Council for Special Education was established by Order (SI No 270 of 2004) made by the Minister for Education and Science under Section 54 of the Education Act 1998 on the 24th December 2003.

### **General Council Functions as prescribed by Order**

The Order provides that the general functions of the Council shall be to –

- (A) carry out research and provide expert advice to the Minister on the educational needs of children with disabilities and the provision of related services,
- (B) provide for a range of services at local and national level in order that the educational needs of children with disabilities are identified and provided for, and
- (C) co-ordinate, with health boards, schools and other relevant bodies, the provision of education and related support services to children with disabilities.

Arrangements were developed in close co-operation with the Department of Education and Science for the National Council for Special Education to take operational responsibility including decision making in a number of areas with effect from 1 January 2005. These were:

- processing applications for resource teacher support in respect of children with low incidence disabilities and deciding on the level of support appropriate to the school;
- processing applications for special needs assistant support for children with disabilities and deciding on the level of support appropriate to the school;
- examining applications for special equipment/assistive technology;
- examining applications for transport arrangements for children with disabilities and making recommendations to the Department of Education and Science;

## **Establishment under The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004.**

The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act, 2004 was enacted by the Oireachtas and signed into law by the President in July 2004.

The Act provided for the dissolution of the National Council for Special Education as established by Order and for its re-establishment under the Act with further defined functions and responsibilities.

The Minister for Education and Science formally established the Council under the Act with effect from 1 October 2005 and commenced Section 20 of the Act which sets the general functions of the Council under the Act. These functions are

- (a) to disseminate to schools, parents and such other persons as the Council considers appropriate information relating to best practice, nationally and internationally, concerning the education of children with special educational needs;
- (b) in consultation with schools, health boards and such other persons as the Council considers appropriate to plan and co-ordinate the provision of education and support services to children with special educational needs;
- (c) in consultation with schools and with such persons as the Council considers appropriate to plan for the integration of education for students with special educational needs with education for students generally;
- (d) to make available to the parents of children with special educational needs information in relation to their entitlements and the entitlements of their children;
- (e) to ensure that the progress of students with special educational needs is monitored and that it is reviewed at regular intervals;
- (f) to assess and review the resources required in relation to educational provision for children with special educational needs;
- (g) to ensure that a continuum of special educational provision is available as required in relation to each type of disability;
- (h) to review generally the provision made for adults with disabilities to avail of higher education and adult and continuing education, rehabilitation and training and to publish

reports on the results of such reviews (which reviews may include recommendations as to the manner in which such provision could be improved);

(i) to advise all educational institutions concerning best practice in respect of the education of adults who have disabilities;

(j) to advise the Minister in relation to any matter relating to the education of children and others with disabilities;

(k) to consult with such voluntary bodies as the Council considers appropriate, (being bodies whose objects relate to the promotion of the interests of, or the provision of support services to, persons with disabilities) for the purposes of ensuring that their knowledge and expertise can inform the development of policy by the Council and the planning and provision of support services, and

(l) to conduct and commission research on matters relevant to the functions of the Council and, as it considers appropriate, to publish in such form and manner, as the Council thinks fit, arising out of such research.

These functions together with the functions relating to the allocation of resources already transferred from the Department formed the remit of the Council with effect from 1 October 2005

# Governance

## Membership of the Council

The chairperson and 12 other members of the Council were appointed by the Minister for Education and Science from among persons who have a special interest in or knowledge relating to the education of children with disabilities, and include two persons nominated to the Minister by the National Disability Authority and a nominee of the Minister for Health and Children.

On the re-establishment of the NCSE under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act, 2004 (EPSSEN Act 2004) on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2005, the serving members of the original Council were reappointed by the Minister with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2005 under section 21 of the EPSSEN Act for a term to expire on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2006.

Members of the Council of the NCSE		Served from	
		1 <sup>st</sup> January to 30th September 2005 on Council established under Order	From 1 <sup>st</sup> October 2005 on Council established under EPSSEN
<b>Mr Tom Murray (Chairperson)</b>	Management Consultant	✓	✓
<b>Mr Christy Lynch</b>	CEO KARE, Nominated by NDA	✓	✓
<b>Ms Maisie Dooley</b>	Former Secondary School Teacher, Nominated by NDA	✓	✓
<b>Ms Mary Grogan</b>	Second Level Teacher	✓	✓
<b>Ms Mary Keane</b>	Principal, St. Dominics College, Cabra, Dublin 7	✓	✓
<b>Mr PJ Gannon</b>	Principal, Scoil Dara, Kilcock,, Co Kildare	✓	✓
<b>Ms Antoinette Buggle</b>	Administrator of the National Association of Boards of Management in Special Education	✓	✓
<b>Ms Frankie Berry</b>	Chaplaincy for the Deaf	✓	See note under <sup>1</sup>
<b>Dr Michael Shevlin</b>	.Senior Lecturer, Dublin University	✓	✓
<b>Mr Brendan Ingoldsby</b>	Principal, Department of Health and Children	✓	✓
<b>Mr Gearóid Ó Conluain</b>	Deputy Chief Inspector, Department of Education and Science	✓	✓
<b>Ms Sinéad McLaughlin</b>	Principal, Scoil Iosagáin, Buncrana, Co. Donegal	✓	✓
<b>Vacancy<sup>2</sup></b>			

<sup>1</sup> Ms Frankie Berry, was not in a position to continue to act as a member after 1<sup>st</sup> October 2005

<sup>2</sup> The vacancy arising from the resignation of Ms Daraine Mulvihill was not filled in 2005

## **Council Meetings**

During 2005, the Council met formally on 10 occasions. The Council established under the Order met on 7 occasions. The re-established Council under the EPSEN Act 2004 met on 3 occasions.

## **Deputy Chairperson**

The Council appointed Mr Christy Lynch as Deputy Chairperson and he was reappointed by the Council in accordance with Section 19 of the EPSEN Act 2004.

## **Council Committees**

The Council established four committees during 2005

- ❖ External Relations and Communications (4 meetings in 2005)
- ❖ Finance (3 meetings in 2005)
- ❖ Strategy and Policy (2 meetings in 2005)
- ❖ Audit (First meeting held in 2006)

## **Main Achievements in 2005**

The main achievements in 2005 may be summarised as follows:

1. The provision of a nationwide local service to schools and parents in relation to the support of children with special educational needs
2. The waiting time for decisions on requests for additional educational supports for children with special educational needs was reduced from 12 months to 4-6 weeks
3. A Head of Research was appointed and work on the roll out of a Research Programme began
4. The work of establishing a comprehensive data base of children with special education needs began.
5. Work was commenced on the preparation of the Implementation Report on the EPSEN Act 2004 for submission to the Minister for Education and Science by October 2006.
6. Work continued on the embedding of first class corporate structures relating to Corporate Governance, Financial and Procurement Procedures and Human Resource Systems.
7. The development of our ICT systems also continued

# Services to students, parents and schools

## Local Service Provision

In 2005, the establishment of a national network of Special Educational Needs Organisers (SENOs) by the Council began to impact positively in relation to the education of children with special educational needs, arising from a disability. A nationwide service was provided through a national network of 80 SENOs, with at least one situated in each county. The SENO assigned to each district had responsibility for the allocation of resources to each primary, post-primary and special school in their district. On average, a SENO would be responsible for a cohort of approximately 10,000 school going children of whom it is estimated that approximately 500 will have special educational needs arising from a disability.

A list of the Council Offices is set out in **Appendix I**

## Transfer of Functions from the DES to the Council

On 1 January 2005, the NCSE assumed its full range of functions as set out in the Ministerial order establishing the Council in December 2003. In transferring the relevant functions, the Minister for Education & Science clearly laid down the policy parameters under which the Council would operate. As a result, schools could now submit applications for resources required to support the education of children with special educational needs to their local SENO. Such resources could include as appropriate:

- Applications for resource teaching hours
- Applications for special needs assistant (SNA) hours
- Applications for school transport for children with disabilities with special educational needs
- Applications for other resources e.g. assistive technology/special equipment

### *New Allocations Process – Local Decision Making Results in an Improved Service to Schools*

In meeting its obligations under the transfer of functions arrangements, the Council was empowered to make decisions in relation to the resource teaching\* and level of SNA support required by the school to meet the special educational needs of children arising from a disability. As previously stated, the network of local SENOs was responsible for

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\* The role of the Council in allocating resource teaching to primary schools only applied to children with a low incidence disability (the high incidence disabilities being Mild General Learning Disability, Borderline-Mild GLD and Specific Learning Disability). The allocation of resource teaching to schools for children with a high incidence disability is provided for under the General Allocation Model and is set out in Department of Education & Science circular Spec Ed 02/05.

the allocation of these resources. SENOs also provided reports in order to inform the decision making process of the Department of Education & Science in relation to requests from schools for transport or special equipment for children with special educational needs.

From February 2005, schools began to submit applications to SENOs in relation to children who were due to enroll the following September. At the same time, the Dept of Education & Science transferred to the Council approximately 1,800 applications for resources from schools, which still required attention.

In determining the overall level of resources to be allocated to the school for September 2005, the SENO took into account the level of resources, which were freed up as a result of children with special educational needs leaving the school at the end of the school year (i.e. at the end of June 2005) as well as identifying the level of resources required by schools to meet the needs of the new intake (in September 2005) of children with special educational needs.

The benefit of the Council's approach was immediately felt by schools as

- The turnaround time for decisions was reduced from over 12 months to 4 – 6 weeks and also
- On foot of the decision, schools could *immediately* put in place the relevant teaching and SNA resources as determined by the SENO.

The Council placed a strong emphasis on the need to ensure a consistency of approach by SENO in making decisions and consequently ensured that adequate training was made available to SENOs.

In this regard, the Council would like to place on record its appreciation of the training supports provided by the Department of Education & Science, in particular the National Education Psychological Services and those schools, voluntary bodies and parents of children with disabilities who participated in the training programmes.

Similarly the Council recognized the importance of the provision of information to parents. Consequently schools were informed that SENOs would assist in informing parents of the decision in relation to their child, should the principal so wish. This was viewed as a first step in the development of an information dissemination policy to parents.

### **Outcome of Transfer of Functions**

In 2004, the NCSE was required to place an emphasis on building the organisation, namely the recruitment of personnel, procurement of premises and development of systems. During the latter end of 2004, the newly appointed SENOs arranged to meet with each of the Principals of those schools in their district in order to inform them of

their role and also to gain an understanding as to how these schools were meeting the special educational needs of pupils.

Following the transfer of functions from the Dept of Education & Science to the Council as set out above, the Council strengthened its links with schools through the allocation of resources by SENOs to schools to support the education of children with special educational needs arising from a disability.

By the end of September 2005 over 6,500 applications from primary schools and 6,700 from second level schools had been processed by SENOs, acting as the local representative of the Council\* in relation to the 2005/06 academic year. A number of the 80 SENO posts were vacant for periods in 2005, however all applications from schools in these districts were processed by the Council with the assistance of the existing SENO cohort.

During 2005, work commenced on the collation of decisions made in relation to the 2005/06 school year. By December 2005, approximately 70% of decisions made had been recorded by NCSE and an analysis of these is set out as *Appendix II*. In analysing these figures, it must be recognised that they also include the backlog of applications transferred from the Dept of Education & Science therefore they would not necessarily reflect the typical enrolment patterns of schools. It is anticipated that more precise figures will be available in the 2006 report.

### **Transfer of Functions – Issues Arising**

In general, the role of the Council in the allocation of resources to schools to support the education of children with special educational needs met with broad approval from National Parents bodies, disability groups, teacher management bodies and teacher representative groups.

Issues highlighted in meetings with these bodies included

- The application of the General Allocation Model to children with Down Syndrome
- The need for greater clarity in relation to the role of an SNA
- Access to health related supports (e.g. occupational therapy, speech and language therapy)

The Council also utilised the capacity for on the ground feedback from SENOs to identify issues including

- The policy parameters which apply in relation to the eligibility criteria for children with an Emotional Behavioural Disturbance (EBD)

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\* these figures are based on returns entered in relation to 75% of SENO districts as there were 9 SENO districts vacant in 2005.

- The policy parameters which apply in relation to the eligibility criteria for children with a Specific Speech and Language Disorder (SSLD)

In response to these issues, the Council

- Conveyed its concerns in writing in relation to the General Allocation Model, to the Department of Education & Science
- Proposed that research in relation to the role of the SNA in schools be included in the programme for research, which might be considered in 2006
- Commenced discussions with the Health Services Executive (HSE) with a view to identifying how children in a school setting might access health supports
- Established a joint working group with NEPS in order to identify issues relating to children with EBD
- Established a joint working group with NEPS in order to identify issues in relation to children with speech and language disorders

### **The Issue of Inclusion in Schools**

The transfer of functions from the DES to the NCSE in 2005 resulted in the Council being in a position to identify trends and patterns in the area of special education, as a result of the allocation of resources by the local SENO to both primary and second level schools. The capacity to collect and interrogate the relevant data is still at an early stage of development but it would appear from the patterns of resource allocation that some schools have adopted a more inclusive approach than other schools in their area, in particular at second level.

Some of the factors which may lead to difficulties in enrolling a child with special needs in a school include

- The need for specialist training/up-skilling for teachers
- The dissemination of information to schools regarding examples of best practice already in use in other schools as well building issues such as the establishment of a special class.

Issues which were raised by a number of schools in the second level sector, included

- Better information for schools on how best to meet the special educational needs of children with a low incidence intellectual disability e.g. through the delivery of a modified version of the post-primary curriculum
- The issue of the offset of the over-quota teaching resources in schools to meet the additional teaching support required by children with special educational needs

The Council, through the local network of SENOs, is providing information to schools on how to access training for teachers (through the Special Education Support Service) and is beginning to identify examples of best practice. It is anticipated that the role of the Council in providing such information will develop further in the near future but it is

clear from the experience of the resource allocation process that this issue will require further attention.

*Inclusion – Progression of Children with Special Educational Needs from Primary to Post-Primary Schools*

To illustrate this point, two adjoining SENO areas, which provide for the educational needs of children in this particular geographical area, were examined in order to profile the enrolment of children with special educational needs.

In the first SENO area, the SENO concerned received applications for resources from 30 of the 39 primary schools in the area in respect of 87 children with special educational needs. The spread of such children implied that each school had requested resources in relation to between 1 and 6 children (with only 1 school submitting 6 applications).

The position at second level differs in that 75 applications were received from the 8 post-primary schools in the area however 55 (73%) of these were concentrated in 4 schools with one school alone submitting approx 22 (30%) of these applications.

In the adjoining SENO area, 29 of the 32 primary schools submitted 107 applications for resources in respect of children with special educational needs with one school submitting 15 (14%) of these applications with the remainder submitting between 1 and 7 applications for resources.

At second level, 94 applications were submitted from the 8 schools in the SENO district with 60 (67%) submitted by 3 of these schools. Of these one school had submitted 32 (34%) applications.

It would appear therefore that the progression of children with special educational needs, from primary to post-primary level may require further examination in the context of an inclusive approach at second level education. It is not clear precisely why this trend is occurring. It may be that particular schools have built up a reputation for their expertise in meeting the needs of children with special educational needs and are thus the first choice for parents of children with special educational needs. On the other hand there is concern that some schools may be actively discouraging parents of children with special educational needs from enrolling in their school and directing them towards other schools which have a record of supporting children with special educational needs.

The Council's policy is to encourage parents to enroll children with special educational needs in their local school and to encourage and resource all schools to support children with special educational needs. As our SENOs become more familiar with their local schools and our data on the placement of children with special educational needs improves we will be better placed to devise strategies to counteract any reluctance by schools to adopt a fully inclusive policy.

## **Role of the Council in Processing Appeals under Section 29 of the Education Act**

Section 29 of the Education Act provides that parents may appeal decisions made by a school namely

- Permanent exclusion from a school
- Suspension from a school
- Refusal to enroll a child

In 2005, the Council provided information to the Appeals Board in relation to over 50 cases involving children with diagnosed special educational needs where the section 29 process had been triggered. The trends identified in relation to such appeals are:

- Approximately 60% referred to children of primary school going age while 40% related to children of second level school going age.
- 25% of cases related to children permanently excluded from the school
- 60% of cases related to children where there was a refusal to enroll the child
- 30% of cases where the disability was specified related to children with EBD or severe EBD
- 22% of cases where the disability was specified related to children with ASD

A number of processes applied in these cases resulting in varied outcomes ranging from facilitated resolutions, local resolutions, withdrawal of appeal, upholding of the appeal, and dismissal of the appeal. In 35% of the above cases, the appeal was not upheld while in 30% the appeal was upheld.

When Section 12 of the EPSN Act, which confers authority on the Council to designate a school to take a particular child with special educational needs, is commenced it is anticipated that Section 12 designation will be the primary mechanism through which this issue will be addressed. In the meanwhile the Council will continue to input into the Section 29 appeals process as appropriate.

### **Establishment of IEP Expert Group**

In 2004, the Council had recognised the importance of the Individual Education Planning process in meeting the special educational needs of children with disabilities and had established an expert working group to develop a template for consideration by the Council, for the preparation and review of an IEP and the guidelines, which should issue to schools. The terms of reference and the membership of the expert group are contained in **Appendix III**

In 2005, this group met on 12 occasions and in November the group submitted its report on the guidelines to the Council. Accordingly, at the December meeting of the Council, it was agreed that they should be published and should issue to schools in 2006, as a guide to best practice and also in response to requests from schools for guidance on this issue.

In this regard, the Council would again wish to express its appreciation to the members of the working group, who were central to this process.

### **Developing Links in the Disability Sector**

As part of the process of establishing the role of the Council, meetings were held with the following groups

#### ***Education***

Dept of Education & Science  
National Educational Psychological Service  
Irish Primary Principals Network  
National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals  
INTO  
TUI  
ASTI  
Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools  
Joint Managerial Board  
IVEA

#### ***Health***

Dept of Health and Children  
Health Services Executive  
National Disability Authority

#### ***Parents Groups***

National Parents Council - Primary

***Voluntary Sector***

Brothers of Charity  
Sisters of Charity  
NAMHI

***Disability Groups***

Down Syndrome Ireland  
Irish Autism Alliance  
Laois Offaly Families for Autism  
National Parents and Siblings Alliance

# Research

## **Appointment of a Head of Research**

A key function of the Council as set out in the EPSSEN Act 2004 is to conduct and commission research on matters relevant to the functions of the Council and to publish the findings arising out of such research. In preparation for the exercise of this function the Council recruited and appointed a Head of Research in 2005.

## **Research Programme**

The Council has commenced work on the preparation of a Research Programme to be undertaken in the medium term. As an immediate step it has identified the need for research on the prevalence of special educational needs as defined in the EPSSEN Act 2004 and on the review of other legislation impacting on special educational needs provision. This research will be used to inform the Implementation Report on the EPSSEN Act which the Council is required to submit to the Minister for Education and Science by 1<sup>st</sup> October 2006. In accordance with the EPSSEN Act 2004 the Implementation Report will set out the steps that must be taken in order that the provisions of the Act will be fully implemented within a five year period from 1 October 2005. The Council has already commenced this task. As part of its consultation process on the preparation of the Implementation Report the Council sought submissions from interested parties through advertisements in the national press and on radio. Submissions were requested to be submitted by 13<sup>th</sup> January 2006.

## **Deaf Education**

An Advisory Committee on the Education of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing was established by the Minister for Education and Science in December 2001 to review the education provision for the deaf and hard of hearing. However as the Committee had not produced a report by March 2005 the Minister for Education and Science disbanded the Committee and asked the Council to build on the work undertaken by the Committee and prepare a report to advise on future education provision in this area. The Council began work on this task in 2005 and had initial contacts with the major stakeholders with a view to developing the very considerable work undertaken by the Advisory Committee and preparing a comprehensive report addressing all of the issues outlined in the Committee's Terms of Reference.

## **Review of Special Schools and Classes**

The Council was requested by the Minister for Education and Science to undertake a review of Special Schools and Classes following the completion by the Department of Education and Science of a preliminary information gathering exercise. The Council has agreed. It is expected that the information gathering exercise by the Department of Education will be completed in early 2006. The terms of reference for the review will then be agreed with the Department and the review undertaken by the NCSE.

# Corporate Services

## Corporate Governance

The Council proceeded during 2005 to identify and put in place appropriate Corporate Governance structures and procedures in line with best practice and the Government approved guidelines. The Institute of Public Administration was engaged to provide briefing and guidance and a specially commissioned manual on Corporate Governance was developed and distributed to members during the year.

## Development of the Organisation

During 2005 the Council continued to build and develop the strategic organisational infrastructure necessary to support the establishment and development of the range of functions within the statutory remit of the NCSE. This ongoing infrastructure development included staffing, accommodation, central services, information technology and finance.

## Staffing

Details of NCSE approved staffing during 2005 are set out in **Appendix IV**

The Council made 9 additional SENO appointments following an open competition. 5 further SENOs resigned during 2005. A number of SENO posts remained vacant during 2005.

An open competition was held for the filling of the post of Head of Research and Development. This post was filled in Autumn 2005. This post will head up and develop the NCSE research Programme.

The Council came to the view that a local Senior SENO grading structure was required to manage and control the Council's operations at local level and authorised the executive to develop proposals in consultation with staff and the Department of Education and Science.

## Local Office Network

A network of 41 local offices for the delivery of local services by SENOs was put in place during 2004. Further work continued during 2005 in developing and maintaining and establishing this office network on a secure and more permanent basis. Progress was made on enhancing the speed of IT connectivity of the office network on broadband and the Government VPN. Provision was made for the inclusion of NCSE local office on the OPW State office development programme. Details of NCSE offices are outlined in **Appendix I**.

## **Special Education Administrative System**

The Council agreed to establish a computer based Special Education Administrative System to support the work of the NCSE in the development and implementation of educational services for children with special educational needs and for the development and review of Special Education policy. A request for tenders for the development of this system was published. When fully developed over the coming years the system will facilitate an efficient resource allocation /decision making system and provide a comprehensive data on special education needs, prevalence, demands and provision.

## **Finance**

Financial Systems and procedures continued to be developed during 2005. The Council has taken steps to ensure an appropriate control environment by:

- ensuring it complies with its financial obligations under the Act
- ensuring that assets and liabilities of the Council are properly indemnified
- Clearly defining management responsibilities in a defined organisational structure with clear segregation of duties; and
- The establishment of appropriate committees of the Council to give greater focus on specific areas.

The system of internal financial control is based on a framework, which aims to provide regular management information, administrative procedures (including segregation of duties, authorisation limits and a documented procedures manual), and a system of delegation and accountability. In particular it includes:

- ❖ a comprehensive budgeting system with an annual budget, which is reviewed and agreed by the Council prior to presentation to the Department of Education and Science
- ❖ detailed review by the Executive and the Council of monthly and period to date financial reports which indicate financial performance against both budget and prior period;
- ❖ Regular review by the Executive and the Council of financial reports and key operational indicators and
- ❖ Clearly defined procurement, tendering and capital investment guidelines.

An extract of the financial accounts submitted by the Council to the Minister is set out in **Appendix V**

## Appendix I

### NCSE Offices

(full current details are available on [www.ncse.ie](http://www.ncse.ie))

Trim, Co. Meath (NCSE HQ)

Carlow Town, Co. Carlow  
Cavan Town, Co. Cavan  
Ennis, Co. Clare  
Cork City  
Fermoy, Co. Cork  
Mallow, Co. Cork  
Dunmanway, Co. Cork  
Letterkenny, Co. Donegal  
Glenties, Co. Donegal  
Tallaght, Co. Dublin  
Blanchardstown, Co. Dublin  
Dublin City  
Ringsend, Co. Dublin  
Baldoyle, Co. Dublin  
Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin  
Galway City  
Athenry, Co. Galway  
Tralee, Co. Kerry  
Naas, Co. Kildare  
Kilkenny City  
Portlaoise, Co. Laois

Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim  
Limerick City  
Newcastlewest, Co. Limerick  
Hospital, Co. Limerick  
Longford Town, Co. Longford  
Drogheda, Co. Louth  
Castlebar, Co. Mayo  
Navan, Co. Meath  
Monaghan Town, Co. Monaghan  
Tullamore, Co. Offaly  
Roscommon town  
Sligo Town, Co. Sligo  
Nenagh, Co. Tipperary  
Clonmel, Co. Tipperary  
Waterford City  
Mullingar, Co. Westmeath  
Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford  
Kilcoole, Co. Wicklow  
Arklow, Co. Wicklow  
Blessington, Co. Wicklow

## Resource Allocation- Decision Analysis

### Primary Schools

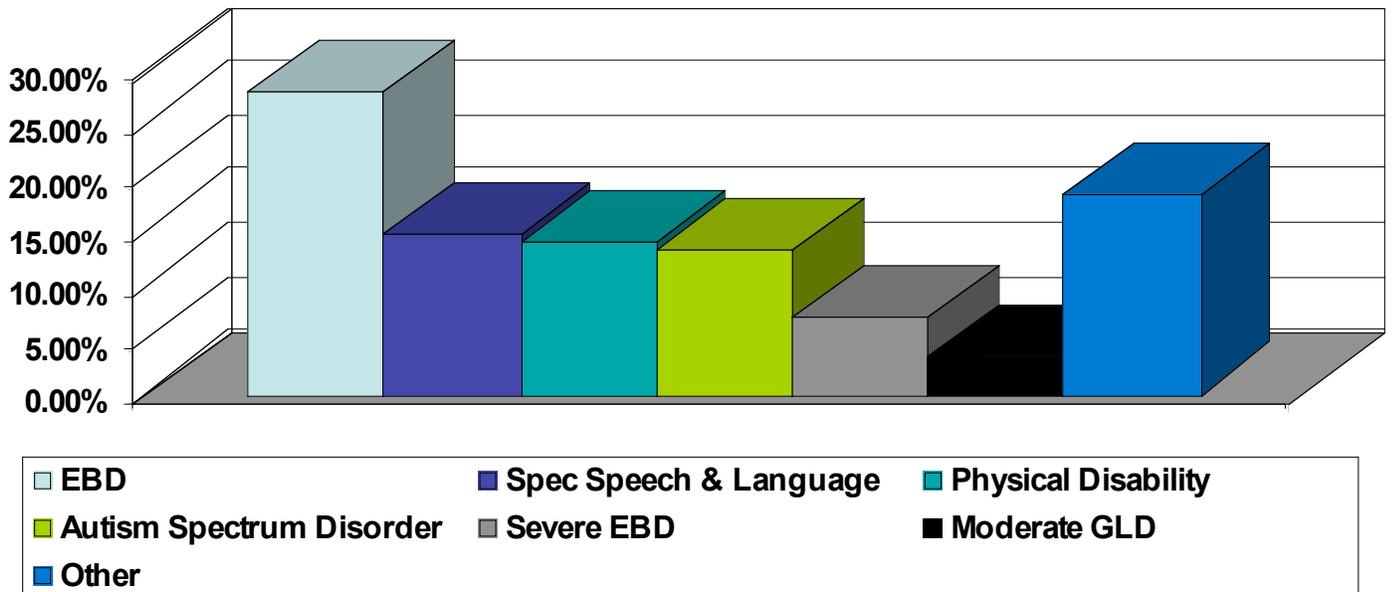
#### *Applications in respect of Children in Primary Schools (includes Special Schools)*

Total Number of Applications Recorded: 6,508  
 Applications for resource teaching in primary schools relate only to children with low incidence disabilities as children with high incidence disabilities are supported through the General Allocation Model which operates in primary schools/

Of these applications 4,818 applied for additional resource teaching and 3,104 applied for access to a Special Needs Assistant

*The process of entering all the data in relation to these applications on our Special Education Administrative System is on-going. However, an analysis of over 3,500 applications which have been entered on our system indicates a breakdown by disability as shown below.*

### Resource Hours Applications by Disability - Primary

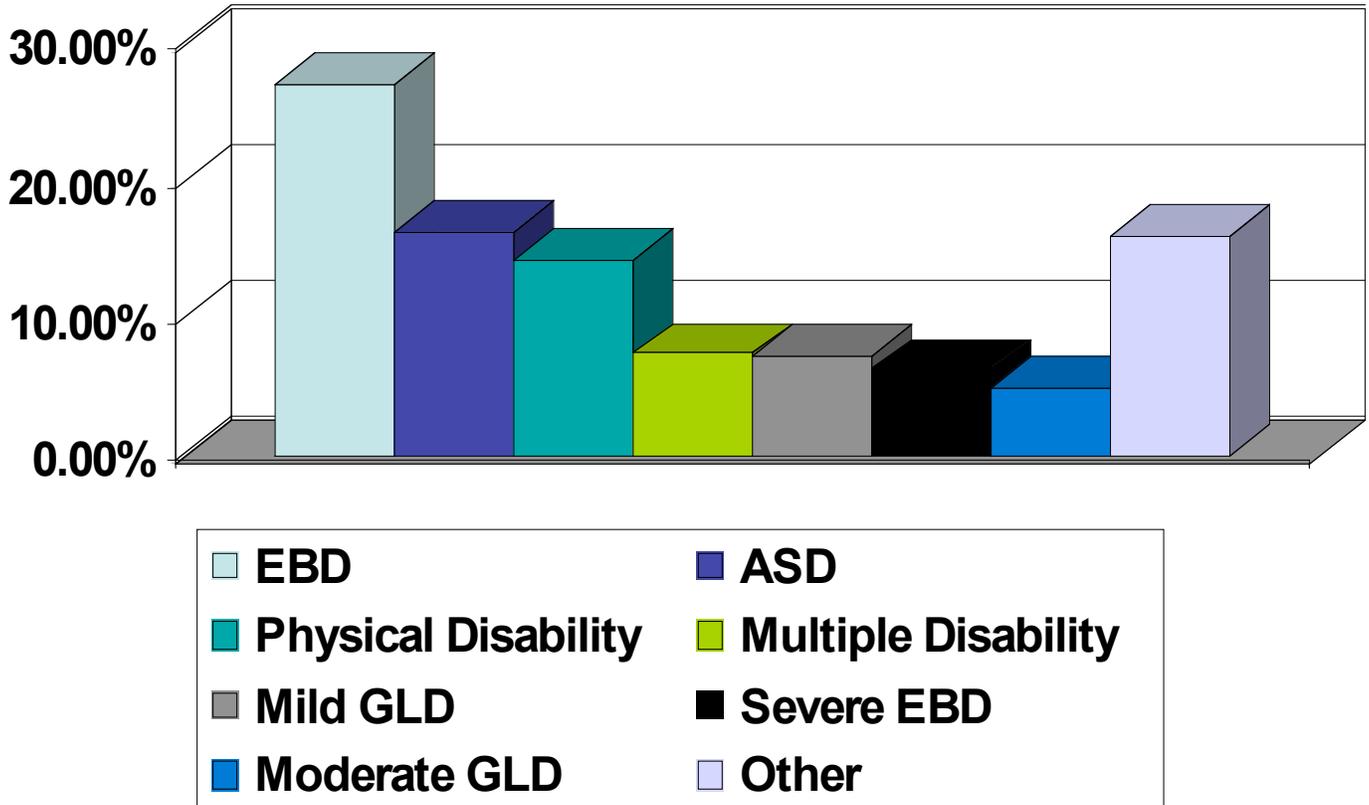


Access to SNA

A significant portion of the backlog of applications received from the Dept of Education & Science related to children who were now also seeking access to an SNA

*An analysis of over 2,700 applications for access to SNA support indicates that over 90% met the criteria for SNA support and shows a breakdown by disability as shown below.*

**SNA Applications by Disability  
-Primary-**



## ***Conclusions***

The above figures do not constitute a definitive position as not all claims for the 2005/06 academic year are included and also because a backlog of resource specific claims transferred from the Dept of Education & Science to the Council as a result of the transfer of functions. Nevertheless the following trends can be identified from the above figures:

- 36% of applications for resource teaching and 34% of applications for access to an SNA related to children with an emotional behavioural disturbance or a severe emotional behavioural disturbance.
- 14% of applications for resource teaching and also of applications for access to an SNA related to children with a physical disability
- 13% of applications for resource teaching and 16% of applications for access to an SNA referred to children with ASD.

As our systems are developed and refined the Council will provide more detailed information on the prevalence of particular disabilities and supports provided,

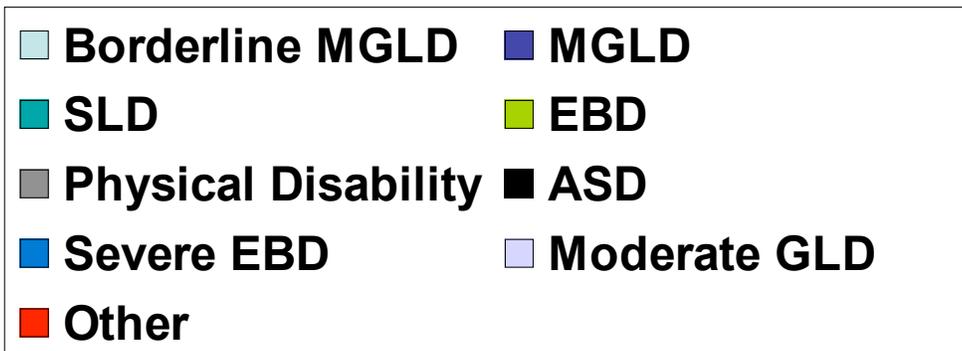
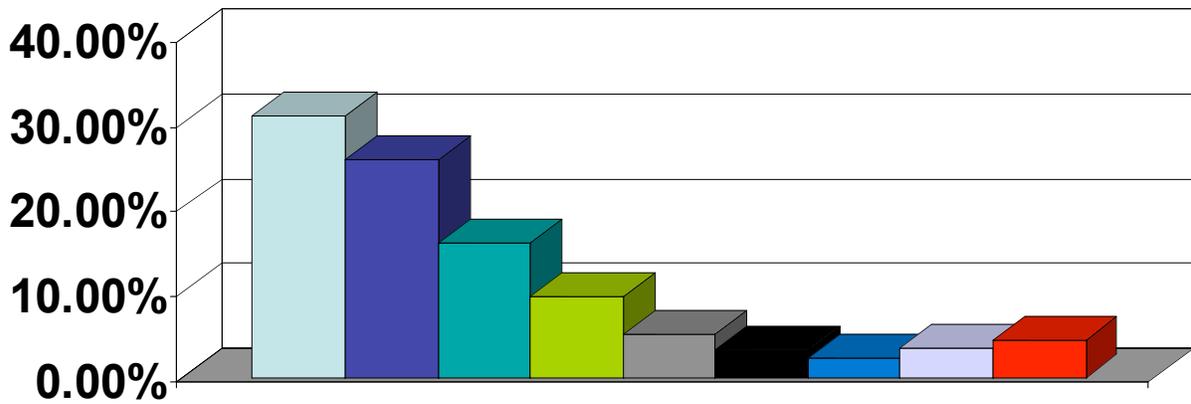
## **Post-Primary Schools**

Total Number of Applications Recorded: 6,133

Pupils with a high incidence disability are included in these figures as the General Allocation Model only applies at primary level. However a very high proportion of the applications received (43% ) did not meet the criteria for support. This implies that schools were not fully aware of these criteria, which apply in relation to children with special educational needs. The Council will take account of this in the provision of information to schools.

*The process of entering all the data in relation to valid applications on our Special Education Administrative System is on-going. However, an analysis of almost 3,000 applications which have been entered on our system indicates a breakdown by disability as shown below.*

## Resource Hours Applications by Disability Post Primary

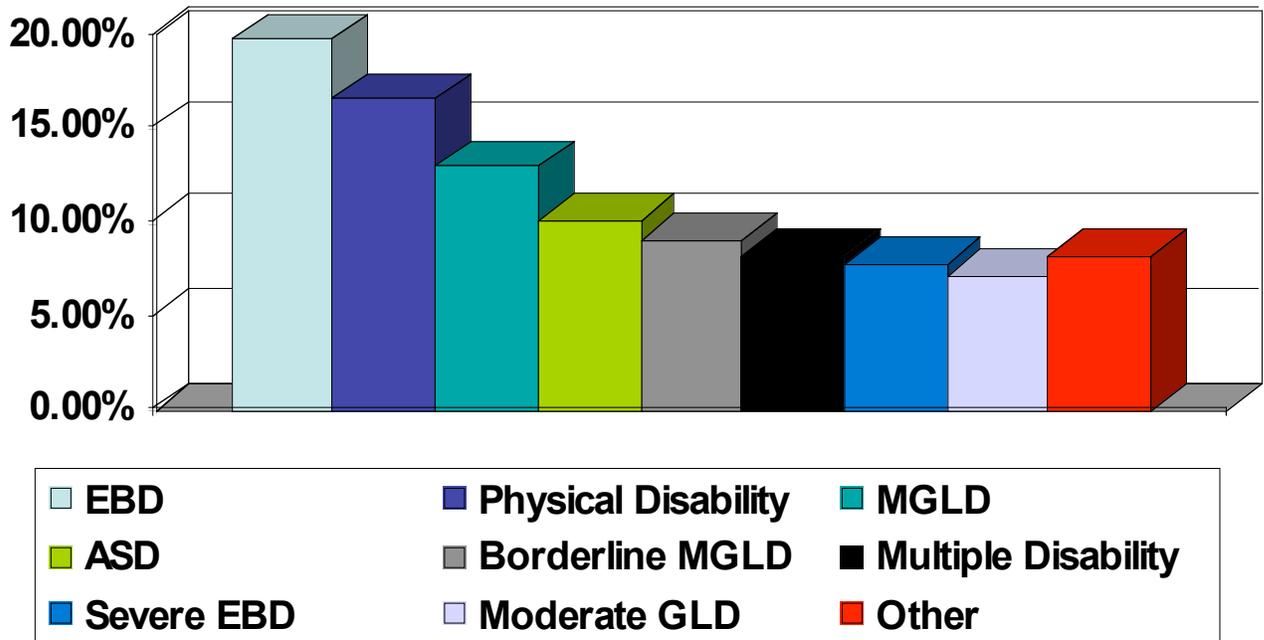


Access to SNA

Of the 3,000 valid applications entered on our system 474 included applications for access to an SNA

*An analysis of the applications for access to SNA support indicates a breakdown by disability as shown below*

**SNA Applications by Disability  
-Post Primary-**



**Conclusions**

The above figures do not constitute a definitive position as not all claims for the 2005/06 academic year are included. Nevertheless the following trends can be identified from the above figures:

- 43% of applications received from second level schools did not meet the criteria for the resourcing of such schools to meet the special educational needs of children arising from a disability.
- 67% of applications recorded for additional teaching support relate to children with a high incidence disability
- 12% of applications for additional teaching support and 27% of applications for access to an SNA related to children with an emotional behavioural disturbance or a severe emotional behavioural disturbance.

As our systems are developed and refined the Council will provide more detailed information on the prevalence of particular disabilities and supports provided,

**Appendix III**

# **IEP Expert Group**

## **Terms of reference**

The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Bill, 2003 provides for the preparation of an individual education plan (IEP) where a child has special educational needs, as defined in the Bill. The definition as set out in section 1 is as follows:

*“special educational needs” means, in relation to as person, a restriction in the capacity of a person to participate in and benefit from education on account of an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or learning disability, or any other condition which results in a person learning differently from a person without that condition and cognate words shall be construed accordingly;*

In this context, the Bill also outlines the matters to be specified in such a plan and also provides that the plan will be in such form as the Council may determine and specify. It also provides that the Council will prepare guidelines with respect to the matters to be provided in an education plan, prepared by the school.

The task of the Expert Group will be to develop a template for the preparation and review of an IEP and the guidelines, which should issue to schools. The Council will then consider this template as part of its decision making process.

In developing the template, the Expert Group will be guided by the references to the preparation and review of an IEP as specified in the following sections of the Bill:

- Section 3 – preparation of an IEP by the school
- Section 8 – preparation of an IEP at the direction of the Council
- Section 9 - content of an IEP
- Section 11 – review of an IEP
- Section 15 - planning for future education needs

The Expert Group will also take into account the following principles namely

- The child centred approach of the legislation and the importance of the participation of the parents and of the child where appropriate
- The need to ensure the confidentiality of sensitive medical information while ensuring that information is available to all who need it in planning the child’s ongoing education
- The need to provide for the transition from pre-school education to primary school education and from primary to post-primary school education
- The possible use of technology in the preparation and production of individual education plans
- The need to ensure that professional development and relevant supports will be available for teachers with regard to the implementation of the plan

## **Members**

<b>Jack O'Brien</b>	Chairman. Former Assistant Secretary, Department of Education and Science
<b>Ruby Morrow</b>	Church of Ireland College of Education
<b>Ray Powell</b>	Psychologist, Mid-Western Region, Health Service Executive (HSE)
<b>Michael Shevlin</b>	Education Department, Trinity College Dublin
<b>Brendan Spelman (RIP)</b>	Education Department, University College Dublin
<b>Orla Ní Bhroin</b>	St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra
<b>Ursula Doherty</b>	Mary Immaculate College, Limerick
<b>Eugene Toolan*</b>	Head of Education, St Angela's College, Sligo
<b>Áine O'Sullivan</b>	Principal, Ashbourne Community College, Co Meath
<b>Maresa Duignan</b>	Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education
<b>Marie Raftery</b>	Assistant National Co-ordinator, Special Education Support Service
<b>Mary Grogan</b>	Special Educational Needs Organiser, National Council for Special Education
<b>Liam Lawlor</b>	Principal, Catherine McAuley Special School, Limerick
<b>Mary Nugent</b>	Senior Psychologist, National Educational Psychological Service
<b>Margaret O'Donnell</b>	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

\*Bairbre Tiernan and Dolores McDonagh acted as alternates for Eugene Toolan.

## **Appendix IV**

## NCSE Staffing

	Approved Posts 2005
Chief Executive Officer	1
Principal Officer	3
Assistant Principal Officer	3
Higher Executive Officer	4
Executive Officer	4
Staff Officer	1
Clerical Officer	2
Special Educational Needs Organiser	80

**Total**

**98**

## Appendix V

### Summary of Financial Statement

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	2005	2004
	€	€
<b>Income</b>		
State Grant	6,211,447	4,029,893
Transfer to Capital Account	(160,315)	(834,179)
	<u>6,051,131</u>	<u>3,195,714</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>	<u>(6,576,087)</u>	<u>(2,763,523)</u>
Surplus/Deficit of income over expenditure	<u>(524,956)</u>	<u>432,191</u>

There were no other recognised gains or losses in the year, other than those dealt with in the Income and Expenditure Account.

A copy of the audited financial statements for year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2005 can be accessed on [www.ncse.ie](http://www.ncse.ie).