

Submission to Joint Committee on Education and Skills

16 December 2010

This Submission

This submission is in response to a request to appear before the Committee to make a presentation on special needs education and to give the views and experiences of the Council on the matter. The request was received on the 3rd December 2010 so there has been limited time to prepare a submission on such a wide ranging topic as special education. However, the Council has focused on a submission which clarifies the role and operation of the Council, outlines the key features of our special education policy and the immediate challenges from the Council's perspective. Representatives of the Council will be happy to address any particular issues of interest or concern to Members at the meeting. However, it should be noted that in accordance with Section 31 of the EPSEN Act 2004 the Council representatives appearing before an Oireachtas Committee shall not question or express an opinion on the merits of any policy of the Government or the objectives of such policy.

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 24th December 2003.

The Council was established under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 (EPSEN Act 2004) with effect from the 1st October 2005.

The Council comprises a Chairperson and 12 ordinary members appointed by the Minister for Education and Skills for a fixed period. Members are appointed from among persons who have a special interest in or knowledge relating to the education of children with special educational needs. The Council has 109 staff of whom 87 of are deployed nationwide to provide the Council's local service to schools and parents. The remainder is located at Headquarters. All staff are employed by the Council and are civil servants. The Council's Headquarters is in Trim Co. Meath.

The Council has three key functions viz.

- To provide a local service to schools and parents to support children with special educational needs particularly the sanctioning of teaching and SNA resources
- To conduct, commission and publish research on special education matters
- To provide policy advice to the Minister for Education and Skills in relation to any matter relating to the education of children and others with disabilities;

Section 20 of the Act sets out the general functions of the Council under the Act. These functions are set out at Appendix 1

In addition the Council will acquire a range of specific functions under the Act when the provisions of the Act are fully commenced. These functions will broadly relate to the rights of children with special educational needs to assessment, an education plan and appeals processes.

The Council had a budget of €8.9m 2010. However the Council sanctions teaching and special needs assistant resources to assist schools support children with special educational needs to a total value of about €600m per annum.

The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 (EPSEN Act)

The EPSEN Act 2004 provides a range of statutory rights for children with special educational needs as defined in the Act. The Act confers new statutory rights on those coming within the ambit of the Act and it creates a vision for the future educational regime for meeting the needs of those with special educational needs. In effect, it seeks to put that regime in place on the basis of those persons with special educational needs having rights to participate in, and benefit from, education on an equal footing with their peers who do not have such needs.

In passing the EPSEN Act, 2004 the legislature was conscious of the fundamental change involved, and of the radical nature of the response which would be required from the State, and from the multiplicity of stakeholders concerned with special education, if the vision inherent in the new Act is to be converted into reality for those intended to be the beneficiaries. In recognition of the considerable change agenda, and of its inherent challenges, the legislature recognised that it would take time to convert a special educational needs regime which pre-dates the Act and which, therefore, was not designed to meet its core requirements, into one which is fully compliant with the provisions of the Act. For this reason, the EPSEN Act, 2004 specifically provided for the phased implementation of the Act over a five year period. It provided for an Implementation Report to be prepared by the NCSE which would set out for Government the sequence in which the various provisions of the Act should be commenced, the timeframes involved and the resources, actions and other supports which would be needed as integral elements of a phased implementation plan for the Act. The implementation process began with the establishment of the NCSE by the Minister for Education and Skills under the EPSEN Act, 2004 on 1 October 2005 which required the completion of this Implementation Report by 1 October 2006

and set out a timetable for the commencement of all sections of the Act by 1 October 2010.

The Council submitted an Implementation Report to the Minister for Education and Skills at the end of 2006 which provided an action plan for implementation by 2010 together with indicative costs at that time.

In 2008 the Department of Education and Skills indicated that in the context of the current economic climate a decision was taken in the budget to defer the full implementation of the EPSEN Act. This decision is being kept under review and it is still the intention to fully implement the Act at the earliest possible opportunity. The timeframe, however, is dependent on economic circumstances.

The renewed programme for Government re-stated the Government's commitment to the full implementation of EPSEN and committed to developing, in consultation with stakeholders, a costed multi-annual plan, to plan for the implementation of EPSEN focussing on measurable, practical progress in education and health services for children with special needs.

Discussions have commenced between the Department of Education and Skills (DES), the Health Service Executive (HSE) and the Department of Health and Children (DHC) and the Council to further the implementation of EPSEN Act. Each non-commenced part of the EPSEN legislation is being considered. Commencements of individual aspects of the EPSEN legislation in isolation is very difficult however, as one aspect triggers the need for another. In the meantime, children with special education needs will continue to receive an education appropriate to their needs.

The National Council for Special Education (NCSE) will continue to support schools, parents and children and teachers and special needs assistants will continue to be deployed to schools in line with the Departments policies. Also, the National Educational Psychological Service is being expanded and additional funding has been provided to the HSE for an increase in the number of therapists.

Assistive Technology support continues to be funded where necessary along with specialist equipment. In addition, special school transport arrangements are put in place for children with special educational needs.

The Sections of the Act commenced to date refer in the main to the establishment of the Council and the right of children with special educational needs to an inclusive education and the obligation of schools to provide inclusive education. A list of the sections commenced is at Appendix 2.

NCSE's Research Programme

The NCSE has a statutory function to undertake research to provide an evidence base to support its work. This research assists in the development of policy advice on special education matters to the Minister for Education and Skills. It will also contribute to identifying and disseminating to schools, parents and other appropriate

persons, information relating to best practice concerning the education of children with special educational needs (SEN).

The current research programme is governed by a framework that incorporates four key themes:

- The Experiences of Children with SEN and their Parents
- Best Practice/Policies in the Provision for Children with SEN
- Staff and Support Issues
- Improved Data Collection in Special Education

Since 2008, the NCSE has commissioned 19 studies:

- 10 are complete (6 published on our website and 4 in design phase)
- 6 still underway
- 3 in tendering phase

The Council also completed the grants initiative that commenced in 2006. Sixteen grants were awarded to institutes to develop and promote the Council's work and to support the development of the research infrastructure in special education.

Research Areas

The Council has an extensive research programme that covers a broad array of topics. The NCSE is particularly interested in exploring best practice models and outcomes in the education of children with special educational needs. This requires reviewing information on evidence based effective interventions and programmes and looking at international practices and approaches. One strand of our research looks specifically at such reviews. These reviews usually have the following focus:

- SEN themes (e.g. diagnosis/assessment of SEN, outcomes for pupils with SEN)
- Categories of SEN (e.g. emotional disturbance/behavioural difficulties, deaf/hard of hearing)

A second strand of research is empirical in nature. There is a dearth of research in the area of special education in Ireland, so it is critical for the Council to fill this gap and explore areas where anecdotal evidence suggests there are systems or thematic areas of concern. Depending on the topic area, our empirical research will use a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods and regularly incorporate case studies of schools and pupils. Some of the areas explored or currently under review are:

- Transition and access (e.g. primary to post primary and post primary to further/higher education)
- Curriculum (e.g. access to curriculum for pupils with SEN in mainstream primary schools)
- Alternative types of provision (e.g. special schools and special classes)
- Experiences and views of pupils, parents and educational personnel (e.g. a national survey of parents views)
- Outcomes for pupils with SEN (e.g. a longitudinal study of pupils)
- Resources/Resourcing Models (e.g. review of resource allocation and deployment in schools)

Utilisation and Impact of Research

Approaches to educating children with SEN is often built upon a limited evidence base and founded upon unsystematic trial and error. Innovation in schools often remains at a parochial level through lack of evaluation or effective dissemination. One of the major functions of research is to challenge our ideas and understanding with regards to learning and teaching for pupils with SEN. It seeks to verify the efficacy of the approaches deployed and assist in modification as necessary. Research imparts new evidence, ideas and views to enhance the evidence and knowledge base of educational professionals and in doing so creates new thinking, provokes and challenges current thinking, and instigates change in teaching practices and pupil outcomes.

Another key function of research is to provide a suite of evidence-based information that can contribute to the development of policy advice to the Minister for Education and Skills.

The NCSE is beginning to build a store of research on special education and is actively engaged in disseminating its research findings to a wide audience. In addition to publishing our reports on our website, we have held two major research conferences this year and last year that were attended by nearly three hundred people from the education sector including parents and disability/advocacy groups.

The NCSE is of the view that our research programme has had a tangible impact on the system and some examples of this are described below.

1. The literature review on the principles and practices of inclusive education is a very useful reference tool for schools and the wider community as it describes what inclusion looks like in practice. The work around this project led a significant best practice initiative, which is the development of an Inclusive Framework for Special Education and self-evaluation tool for schools, which they can use on a voluntary basis, to assess and develop their inclusive practices.
2. The international review on the evidence available on the education of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD) contains a specific chapter for teachers on evidence based effective educational interventions that are of practical use for schools and teachers. The report is also being used by a specific expert group on the education of children with EBD.
3. We commissioned an inventory of research and policy in special education in Ireland, both north and south, since 2000. This information will be made available in a publicly accessible database on our website. This will be an invaluable tool for researchers, policy makers, practitioners and the wider community.
4. The international review on the evidence available on the education of pupils who are deaf or hard of hearing and the empirical research that reviewed the role of special schools and classes have formed a major source of evidence in the development of policy advice in these areas for the Minister for Education and Skills.
5. When the study on transitions from primary to post primary school is complete, we plan to develop our next set of best practice guidelines on

transitions that can be used by schools, parents and the wider education community on the transition process.

Developing Policy Advice

Under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 (EPSEN), the Council is required to provide policy advice to the Minister for Education and Skills in matters relating the education of children and others with disabilities (Section 20 (j)). In developing such policy advice, Council is obliged to consult with voluntary bodies; to provide an assessment of the implications of the advice for the resources, including financial resources, available to the State; and have regard to the practical implementation of the advice. The statutory role of Council regarding the development of policy advice is therefore an advisory one while the determination of appropriate policy is a matter for the Minister and for Government.

The EPSEN Act 2004 set out a future statutory framework for the preparation and implementation of Individual Education Plans in Ireland. Subsequent to the passing of the Act, the Council had many requests from parents, teachers and schools to prepare and issue national guidelines on IEPS which would underpin a uniform national approach. The Council considered that it should address this expressed need for guidance while recognising that the statutory IEP system had not yet commenced. Following an extensive consultative process, the Council published the Guidelines on the Individual Education Plan Process in May 2006 (NCSE, 2006).

Following a request from the Department of Education and Skills, the NCSE is now finalising policy advice for the Minister in relation to the future role of Special Schools and Classes for children with special educational needs arising from a disability. It is expected that this policy advice paper will be ready for submission to the Minister early in 2011. In preparation of this advice, the Council has consulted with its Consultative Forum, as required under the Act. The Council has also prioritized the development of policy advice in relation to the education of children who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing and would expect to be in a position to submit such advice by mid 2011.

The Policy and Research Expert Group on the Education of Children with Emotional and Behavioural Disorders was established by the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) in Oct 2009. The purpose of this group was to provide assistance to the NCSE Strategy and Policy Committee in the formulation of policy advice and research proposals for consideration by Council in relation to the education of children with emotional and behavioural disorders. The final meeting of this group took place on December 7th 2010 and a report will shortly be submitted to the Strategy and Policy Committee outlining the recommendations of this Expert Committee.

Under the EPSEN Act, 2004, Council is required to make information available to the parents of children with special educational needs in relation to their entitlements and the entitlements of their children. Parents have also requested that such information be made publicly available to them. In response to these requests, Council is in the

process of finalising an Information Booklet for parents which will be made available on the website of the Council early in 2011.

Special Education Policy

Current policy on special education recognises the need for a continuum of support and provision for children with special educational needs. This continuum spans full-time enrolment in mainstream classes to full-time enrolment in special schools and a range of options in between.

Continuum of Provision

In accordance with current policy pupils with special educational needs may therefore be educated in a:

- Mainstream class with additional support from:
- Special class in a mainstream school
- Special class in a special school
- Special school which has been designated for a particular category or categories of disability.

General Allocation Model (GAM)

All mainstream primary schools are provided with a general allocation of teaching hours to support inclusive education. This General Allocation Model provides additional permanent teachers to assist schools to make appropriate provision for the needs of pupils with special educational needs arising from high-incidence disabilities and for children who are eligible for learning support teaching (DES Circular 02/05). High incidence disabilities refer to those disabilities which occur with a greater frequency in the general population and include borderline mild general learning disability, mild general learning disability and specific learning disability. Pupils whose achievement is at or below the 10th percentile on standardised tests of reading or mathematics are given priority when schools are determining eligibility for learning support teaching (DES Circular 02/05).

Under the GAM the amount of additional teaching resources provided to schools is related to the overall school enrolment numbers, gender breakdown of pupils and DEIS status. This ensures that schools have a means of providing additional teaching support to pupils with special educational needs without recourse to making applications on behalf of individual pupils. The model is therefore not reliant on an individual diagnosis of a special need. The GAM is intended to facilitate the development of more inclusive schools and the flexible deployment of resources.

The GAM does not apply to post-primary schools. However learning support is available in post-primary schools for those students who have not been diagnosed as eligible for support under any of the disability categories but who have low achievement in reading or mathematics. To support these students, 0.7 of a teacher post for learning support is allocated to schools with less than 600 students and 1.2 posts are allocated to schools with more than 600 students.

Individual Allocation of Additional Support

Additional teaching resources are also allocated to primary and post-primary schools for the support of individual pupils who have complex and enduring needs and have been assessed as having a low incidence disability. The number of hours allocated varies by category of low incidence disability.

Post primary schools are also given a specific individual allocation of resource teaching hours for children with high incidence disabilities as the GAM does not apply to post-primary schools. Specifically post-primary schools are provided with an additional 1.5 teaching hours per week for each student diagnosed with mild general learning disability, borderline mild general learning disability and specific learning disability in accordance with DES specified criteria. This additional teaching resource is designed to facilitate schools providing a minimum of 2.5 hours group teaching per week to these pupils.

NEPS Continuum of Support Model

In accordance with current DES policy on assessment and identification of need, the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) recommends a continuum of support for pupils with special educational needs. This approach involves the use of a problem solving model of assessment and intervention in schools which is implemented at three different levels. It starts with extra support being provided by the class teacher in the regular classroom, followed by learning support and/or resource teaching interventions if necessary, and finally, the involvement of external services such as psychologists. This continuum approach is based on the recognition that special educational needs occur along a continuum from mild to severe, and from transient to long term

Students are offered support along this continuum of provision depending on the nature and extent of their learning needs. Where students require support in excess of that offered under the General Allocation Model, an assessment of their educational needs and attainments must be carried out by specified professionals and a statement of a formal diagnosis of disability provided. There are currently fourteen recognised categories of disability for the purposes of resource allocation. The allocation of teaching hours and SNA support is determined by the child's disability category and the nature and extent of their care needs.

Education Supports for Children with Special Educational Needs

In the school year 2009-2010 there were over 850,000 pupils in primary and post-primary schools aided by the DES. Of this number, approx. 6,000 were in special schools. In the same year approximately 16,600 children with low incidence disabilities in primary schools were sanctioned resources by the NCSE. Approximately 17,500 pupils with both low and high incidence special educational needs were sanctioned resources by NCSE in post-primary schools.

It is currently not possible to state the numbers of children with high incidence special needs being supported under the General Allocation Model in primary schools, as the model supports both children with high incidence special needs and children with 'learning support needs'

Current policy in Ireland is based on providing a continuum of support to meet the diversity of needs that children with special educational needs bring with them into the school situation. Different models of support exist across the education system and resources (teaching hours, teaching posts, SNAs, transport, assistive technology, reasonable accommodation in examinations, etc) are made available to schools to support these models. Overall there are over 20,000 adults - teachers and SNAs - working directly with pupils with special educational needs in schools.

NCSE's Local Services

Under its current remit a major function of the Council is the sanctioning of teaching and special needs assistant resources for schools to support individual children with special educational needs. In sanctioning such resources the Council is required to implement Departmental policy while taking into account the special educational needs of children as identified in assessment reports.

The objectives of the NCSE in delivering and developing its local services function are:

- To allocate additional teaching and SNA support to schools in line with the Department of Education & Skills (DES) policy in order that they can meet the special educational needs of children, arising from a disability
- To provide reports to the DES in relation to applications for transport for special equipment (assistive technology)
- To act as a point of contact for parents in outlining how the school is resourced to meet the needs of their child
- To develop links with other State Agencies such as the HSE and the National Education Welfare Board and also with the psychological (NEPS) and Inspectorate areas of the DES in the development of a coherent approach between the education and health sectors in relation to children with special educational needs

Local Services Staffing

In order to carry out the above functions, the NCSE has deployed a network of 12 senior SENOs and 75 SENOs throughout the country. Each SENO operates within a geographical district, which encompasses approx 10,000 children of whom approx 500 will have a special educational need arising from a disability. The SENO will therefore be responsible for the allocation of teaching and SNA supports to the primary, second level and special schools in the district of operations.

It is the view of the NCSE that this localised network of SENOs ensures that the resources available for deployment to schools are allocated in an efficient manner and maximises the opportunity for the SENO as decision maker to become familiar with

the needs of the child and the school circumstances including existing supports. It also provides opportunities for the SENO to have joint discussions with the school and parents as the need arises so that a fuller understanding of all the issues can be developed.

The SENO cohort was recruited through a competitive process from persons who worked in the health and education sectors with experience of working with children with special educational needs. All SENOs have graduate qualifications with many holding post-graduate qualifications at Masters Degree level in the area of special education.

2005 – 2010

In January 2005, the DES transferred to the NCSE, the functions of the allocation of teaching and SNA supports to schools. At the same time, a backlog of approx 2,000 applications for such supports from schools was also transferred. Since then, the NCSE has reduced the waiting time for such decisions from over a year in some cases to an average of 6 – 8 weeks. In this regard, SENO made approx 15,600 decisions in relation to the allocation of resources to schools in 2009.

Under the NCSE allocation process, schools can immediately begin the recruitment process where additional resources were allocated on foot of a decision from the SENO. However it is the responsibility of the Council to ensure that the DES policy parameters for the allocation of resources are applied in all schools. Arising from this, where the SENO determined that resources had been freed up and consequently adjusted the level of supports, the school was required to implement the decision immediately.

An associated element of the allocations process was the identification by SENOs of the need within an area for specialised education settings for children with SEN such as special class settings. Because of the lead-in time associated with the establishment of such classes, SENOs are required to initiate the identification of the school setting and the planning process attached to the establishment of the provision at least 1 year before the child commences in the school. Since 2005, the NCSE has established 500 special classes in schools.

In making decisions the 87 SENOs will interact with 4,000 school Principals and 40,000 parents and their decisions are likely to impact on employment status of a considerable number of the 4,500 resource teachers and 10,500 SNAs sanctioned by the NCSE. SENO decision making also involves interaction with a considerable number of professionals who provide assessments of children with SEN. In these circumstances it is not surprising that differences of opinion arise from time to time and that tensions arise in some cases. It has been the Council experience that SENOs have experienced considerable pressure to provide more and more SNA resources in particular. Difficulties are compounded when Health Professionals recommend particular levels of SNA support rather than clearly identifying the nature, level and pattern of care needs likely to arise in the school situation and allowing the SENO to deal with the issue of the quantum of additional support if any, that the school needs. In making a decision in relation to the SNA resources to be allocated to a school the SENO is required to consider the level of SNA resources already available to the

school and to gather as much direct evidence as possible in relation to the level of care needs in the school environment before making a decision. In order to address this issue to some extent, the NCSE introduced in 2010, an appeals process for schools and parents through which they could set out how they consider that policy was not correctly applied and to have the decision re-examined by a Senior SENO. In this regard, it is important to note that the appeals process does not provide for an appeal against the application of DES policy.

In 2007, the NCSE through the local SENO and the HSE, through the local Assessment Officer co-operated in the assessment of children aged under 5 under the provisions of the Disability Act 2005. Since then approx 1,600 requests for assistance have been received from the HSE in this regard. It is intended that this liaison process will assist schools and SENOs in planning for the educational needs of children with SEN, when they start school at age 5-6 years.

Finally, in 2009 and 2010, the NCSE was requested by the DES to conduct a national review of SNA allocation to schools. This review is now completed and a copy of the final report is attached for information at Appendix 3

The National Recovery Plan – SNA Provision

The National Recovery Plan 2011-14 states that there has been a significant increase in the number of SNAs in recent years and that it is intended to cap the number at 2011 levels and introduce a new system to facilitate the management of these finite SNA resources in a proactive manner.

Confirmation of cap on SNA Numbers

The Council has now been formally advised by letter from the Department of Education and Skills on the 7th December 2010 that it has been decided to cap the number of SNAs at 10,575. Wholetime Equivalent Posts. The Council has further been requested to advance the development of proposals to manage the SNA numbers within that ceiling with a view to further considering the matter in advance of the issue of the details of a new allocation process in the new year. The Department of Education and Skills has also indicated that it intends to issue a general notification to schools immediately in relation to the application of the cap on SNA numbers and the development of revised allocation and monitoring arrangements.

Implications for SNA Allocation.

As the numbers of children requiring SNA support is constantly changing as a result of children leaving schools and the reducing care needs of children in receipt of SNA support a pool of SNAs will be available from year to year to meet new demand. Operating within a cap will require a significantly different approach to allocation by the NCSE and to the management of this valuable resource by schools. The Council is currently developing proposals to manage this process to ensure that the available resources are assigned to support children with the greatest level of need.

Conclusion

The Council considers that our continued research and direct experience in applying current policy need to form the bedrock of our future policy advice. The Council also

considers that timely identification of the learning needs and abilities of each child with special education needs is essential. On identification of these needs children's educational needs are best supported by well trained teachers applying good teaching practices. While the teaching support and the quality of teaching is critical a number of children will require on- going supports from the health services and in school care support to allow them to participate in and benefit from education. Best outcomes for all children with special educational needs are facilitated through focused individual learning plans which are reviewed and re-assessed on a regular basis.

In the current difficult economic climate it is important that the advances made in relation to special education provision over the past decade are maintained to the greatest extent possible. In order to ensure the needs of these children's educational needs are met there must be an increased focus on the most effective and efficient use of resources.

END

Appendix 1

General Functions of the NCSE

Section 20 of the EPSEN Act 2004

(j) 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;

I 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;

Appendix 1(cont.)

(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

Appendix 2

SECTION OF THE ACT NOW COMMENCED

Section 1

Section 2

Section 14(1)(a)

14(1)(c)

14(2)

14(3)

14(4)

Sections 19 to 37 inclusive

Sections 40 to 53 inclusive

Schedules 1 and 2

Appendix 3

Table 1

Overall Change in Number of SNAs in all Schools Reviewed
(n= 3,056 schools)

| | Number of SNAs |
|------------------|----------------|
| Prior to Review | 9,829 |
| Following Review | 9,395 |
| Overall Change | - 434 |

Table 2

Number of Schools with a Change in Level of SNAs in Schools Reviewed
(n=3,056 schools)

| | Number of Schools |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| No change in Level of SNA | 1,622 |
| Decrease in Level of SNA | 891 |
| Increase in Level of SNA | 545 |

Outcome for Primary Schools

Table 3

Overall Change in Number of SNAs in Primary Schools Reviewed
(n= 2,363 primary schools)

| | Number of SNAs |
|------------------|----------------|
| Prior to Review | 6,310. |
| Following Review | 5,971. |
| Overall Change | - 339 |

Table 4

**Reasons for Change in Number of SNAs in Primary Schools Reviewed
(n= 2,363 primary schools)**

| | Number of SNAs |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| SNAs Freed up Because of Students Leaving | 751 |
| SNAs Freed up Because of Diminishing Care Needs | 556 |
| SNAs Allocated to New Students | 968 |

Table 5

Number of Primary Schools with a Change in Level of SNAs in Schools Reviewed (n= 2,363 primary schools)

| | Number of Primary Schools |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| No Change in Level of SNA | 1,261 |
| Decrease in Level of SNA | 704 |
| Increase in Level of SNA | 398 |

Outcome for Post-Primary Schools

Table 6

**Overall Change in Number of SNAs in Post-Primary Schools Reviewed
(n= 588 post-primary schools)**

| | Number of SNAs |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Prior to Review | 1737 |
| Following Review | 1676 |
| Overall Change | - 61 |

Table 7

**Reasons for Change in Number of SNAs in Post-Primary Schools Reviewed
(n= 588 post-primary schools)**

| | Number of SNAs |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| SNAs Freed up Because of Students Leaving | 204. |
| SNAs Freed up Because of Diminishing Care Needs | 208 |
| SNAs Allocated to New Students | 351 |

Table 8

**Number of Post-Primary Schools with a Change in Level of SNAs in
Schools
Reviewed (n= 588 post-primary schools)**

| | Number of Post-Primary Schools |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| No Change in Level of SNA | 304 |
| Decrease in Level of SNA | 158 |
| Increase in Level of SNA | 126 |

Outcome for Special Schools

A key factor in the review of Special Schools was that in most instances, the NCSE was not involved in the original allocation of SNA resources, unlike mainstream schools. Consequently this was the first detailed profile of SNA resources in these schools, obtained by the NCSE.

Table 9

**Overall Change in Number of SNAs in Special Schools Reviewed
(n= 105 special schools)**

| | Number of SNAs |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Prior to Review | 1,782 |
| Following Review | 1,748 |
| Overall Change | - 34 |

Table 10

**Number of Special Schools with a Change in Level of SNAs in Schools
Reviewed (n= 105 special schools)**

| | Number of Special Schools |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| No Change in Level of SNA | 54 |
| Decrease in Level of SNA | 29 |
| Increase in Level of SNA | 22 |