

Press Release 28th January, 2016
National Council for Special Education (NCSE) Launches First Transition Guidelines for Children with Special Needs

The National Council for Special Education (NCSE) today Thursday, January 28th, publishes for the first time national guidelines to assist parents and children with special educational needs to make successful transitions in their lives.

The wide-ranging, comprehensive guidelines provide advice and tips for parents and children with special educational needs. They cover transitions between all stages and levels including starting school; the move from primary to post-primary school; moving between mainstream and special school settings and preparation for life after school.

They are designed to make these major changes as successful as possible for all children and their parents.

According to Minister for Education and Skills, “Transition between schools can be a difficult time for all parents and students, including those with a special educational need. These excellent guidelines provide a wealth of information to parents, students and everyone who works in the sector. It is a great resource and I would like to compliment the NCSE on acknowledging the need for independent, expert information and for issuing these guidelines early in the year to assist pupils make successful transitions.”

Speaking at the launch in Dublin today, Teresa Griffin, CEO, NCSE, said: “We are responding to requests from parents who really need information and advice about how to help their children make transitions - this can be an anxious time for both children with special educational needs and their families.

“We are publishing these guidelines early in the year because this is the time when parents of children with special educational needs most need this support as they plan for the school year ahead,” Ms Griffin added.

Ms Griffin said that most students with special educational needs already make successful transitions between education levels, but pointed out that some schools may need to adapt buildings; apply for additional supports or seek additional training for teachers.

Such changes take time, so preparation and planning is essential for successful transitions and will need to happen well in advance. These guidelines emphasise the importance of early planning and timely sharing of information between parents and schools or settings and between schools and other settings.

The NCSE is also publishing a similar guide for schools to support the transitions process.

Every school will receive a copy of the guidelines which will also be available from SENOs and on the NCSE website- www.ncse.ie. Contact details for SENOs are available on the NCSE website.

ENDS