

NCSE 05/2017

Dear Principal

Three year review of care needs and SNA support

The DES Circular 0030/2014 was issued to clarify and restate the purpose of the SNA scheme, which is to provide schools with additional adult support staff that can assist children with special educational needs who also have additional and significant care needs.

Section 14 of the circular states that: *"Whereas the NCSE will maintain the minimum SERC recommended ratios of SNA support in special schools and classes, all other allocations which are made, from September 2014, will be time bound, linked to the provision of a personal pupil plan, will be made initially for a maximum of three years, subject to annual review, and will be subject to a full reassessment of their care needs at the end of the three year period."*

As three years have now elapsed since the circular was issued, the DES has requested the NCSE to develop a review process, which will give effect to the provisions of the circular and which will review all SNA allocations in accordance with these provisions. The NCSE is requested to review such cases where students had access to SNA support in 2014 and whose access to support remains in place in 2017.

Section 15 of Circular 0030/2014, requires that Personal Pupil Plans (PPPs)¹ should be in place for each student who has access to SNA support. The review must also establish that, such PPPs are in place where an SNA allocation is to be renewed, following the forthcoming review.

This review is intended to provide current information on:

- the nature and intensity of the care needs of each student
- the nature of the specific duties performed by the SNA to support each child.
- future plans for level of SNA support including for example, encouragement of independence for each student.
- **New professional reports are not a requirement for this review**

The review will consist of:

1. Examination of all relevant documentation

- Professional reports for each student who is in receipt of SNA support. A copy of any relevant report completed since the original application should be made available.
- PPP/BCN
- Relevant Teacher/School reports in respect of students, for example, incident book, medical care plans where relevant etc.
- SNA timetable(s).

¹ A Personal Pupil Plan is a plan which outlines the care needs of the student and how these can be encompassed in an overall plan for the student in the school setting. This can be developed in conjunction with the student support file developed by NEPS.

2. School visit
 - Classroom visit, if appropriate
 - School yard visit, if appropriate
3. If required, subsequent discussions with
 - SNA, Teacher(s), Principal
 - Student, if appropriate, to ascertain his/her views, (informal)

It would be appreciated if a suitable work space could be provided for this purpose.

Your local SENO will be in touch with you soon to arrange an appointment for the review and will forward you the list of students to be included in this focused review.

On completion of all aspects of the review, the SENO will discuss the outcome of the review including transition planning if changes are signalled to students' access to support and/ or to the schools allocation.

Should you wish to discuss this or any related matter, please contact your local SENO.

Yours sincerely,

Noelle Connolly
Head of Local Services

28th November 2017