



# In-person Supplementary Programme to Support the Education or Care Needs of Pupils with Complex Needs during this period of school closure

## Guidance for Parents/Legal Guardians of Eligible Children

While schools are making significant efforts to provide effective remote teaching and learning, including one-to-one remote supports for pupils with the most complex needs, the Department acknowledges the significant impact of school closures on children with significant complex needs.

To address these difficulties and to support this group of children and their families, the Department is introducing an **In-person Supplementary Programme** – intended to enhance the remote learning experience for children with complex needs during the school closure period. The in-person supplementary programme may be provided by a teacher or SNA.

Schools will seek to actively support parents/guardians in sourcing a teacher or SNA.

## Eligibility

Parents/Guardians of eligible children will be contacted by their school.

The following children are eligible to participate in the scheme

- All pupils in special schools and special classes in primary schools.
- Pupils in mainstream classes in primary schools who are accessing the highest level of the continuum of support (Student Support Plus/for a few). This includes pupils with Autism, Down syndrome, sensory impairments, and other disabilities who were identified for the Summer Provision Programmes of 2020.
- Schools have flexibility to identify pupils that require the highest level of support at any given time. This will ensure that pupils presenting with

exceptional needs due to the current school closures can participate in the scheme.

## **What is available under the scheme?**

A maximum of 5 hours per week home-based tuition or care support will be available to eligible pupils for a four week period.

The four week programme (20 hours) can commence from 11 February and can be used by families at any time up until the end of April.

All banked hours must be used by Friday 30 April.

The closing date for receipt of completed grant claim forms is close of business on Friday 14 May. Grant Claim Forms will not be accepted after this date.

Supports must be delivered outside of the normal school day and/or at weekends.

Home based support must be provided on a 1:1 basis, except with siblings.

## **Banking of unused hours for delivery during the Easter Break**

To give parents every chance to participate in the scheme the Department will facilitate parents in arranging for the delivery of up to 20 unused hours of support during the Easter break.

## **Steps to be taken by parents/legal guardians who wish to avail of the scheme:**

### **STEP 1 – Eligibility**

Schools will contact parents of eligible children and provide them with the Grant Claim Form with PART 1 completed which will establish eligibility. This signed form is your sanction to participate in the scheme.

## STEP 2 – Supports provided by teachers OR SNAs and Child Protection Procedures

Parents/Legal guardians must complete PART 2 of the form in full with your own and your child details.

Parent/legal guardians will then be required, with assistance from the school, to identify and secure the services of a qualified and vetted teacher or SNA.

Similar to the summer programme, the NCSE and IPPN also provide information on how to source a teacher or SNA where parents cannot source one through their schools.

<https://ncse.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Supplementary-Programme-2021.pdf>

Support can also be accessed through the Irish Primary Principals Network (IPPN) at the link:

<https://www.educationposts.ie/notice/supprog>

Please note that funding will not be provided where parents support their own child under the scheme.

Your selected teacher or SNA must complete the TEACHER/SNA DETAILS section in PART 2 of the Grant Claim Form.

## Child Protection Procedures

### **IMPORTANT**

As home based provision takes place outside the usual school structure, parents should be mindful of additional risks or potential dangers involved in engaging teachers/SNAs in a private arrangement.

Parents should be particularly careful where teachers/SNAs are engaged who may not be familiar with some children's highly complex

medical or behavioural needs. Parents should satisfy themselves that teachers/SNAs are aware of your child's needs in this regard.

### **Prior to commencing home based support**

- You must ask the teacher/SNA to show you his/her vetting disclosure. Parents/legal guardians are advised to request a newly-issued vetting disclosure in circumstances where they are engaging the services of a teacher/SNA for the first time.
- You must ensure that all teachers/SNAs engaged have a current Statutory Declaration, signed by the relevant authority i.e. Appendix 1 of the Grant Claim Form. A Statutory Declaration signed at any time in 2020 is valid until the end of 2021.
- Both the parent and the teacher/SNA must complete the Form of Undertaking, i.e. Appendix 2 of the Grant Claim Form

Parents are also advised to consider whether a newly-issued vetting disclosure is necessary if they have previously engaged the teacher/SNA.

The factors that the parent/legal guardian may wish to take into account in determining whether a newly issued vetting disclosure is required may include the following:

- The period of time since previous vetting was obtained.
- Whether there are any gaps in the person's employment/career/educational history which have not been satisfactorily accounted for
- Whether comprehensive references have been made available in respect of previous employments

The above is not an exhaustive list of factors that parents/legal guardians may wish to take into consideration.

### **STEP 3 – Provision of tuition/care support and funding.**

The Timetable of Teaching/Care Support should be completed as provision occurs. When delivery of the programme of tuition or care is complete, parents/legal guardians and the teacher or SNA must

complete the Declaration in Section 3 of the form and return all parts of the form fully completed to the Department so that direct payment to the teacher or SNA can be processed.

Funding will be paid by the Department directly to teachers or SNAs on submission of the completed Grant Claim Form.

Exact dates and times of provision **must** be entered on the Timetable of Support page.

The completed forms including the completed Timetable should only be submitted when the programme has concluded.

Submit completed forms to *Special Education Section, In-Person Supplementary Programme, Department of Education & Skills, Cornamaddy, Athlone, Co. Westmeath. N37 X659*

Please see Guidance Information on the scheme which provides full information on the scheme, including terms and conditions. For queries regarding eligibility for the scheme, you should contact your child's school principal. If you are unable to source the information you require in the scheme's published information, you can email your query to [supplementaryprogramme@education.gov.ie](mailto:supplementaryprogramme@education.gov.ie)

***Special Education Section***