

10 May 2022

2022 Home-Based Summer Programme to Support the Education or Care Needs of Students with Complex Needs

Dear Principal

The purpose of this letter is to set out the arrangements for the 2022 Home-Based Summer Programme for students with complex special educational needs.

It is accepted that school-based programmes provide a more holistic experience for the students and help retain the important connection with school and peers and the Department is conscious that many principals and boards of management are currently liaising with teachers, SNAs and parents in considering if they can run a school based programme this year.

However, the Department recognises that not all schools will be in a position to provide a school-based programme. For this reason, the Department will continue to provide a home-based summer programme to support the education or care needs of students with complex needs during the summer break period where their school is not providing a school-based programme.

Please bring the programme to the attention of parents of eligible students and school staff.

Eligibility Criteria

Students with complex needs for whom there is no school-based programme available are eligible for the 2022 Home-Based Programme. For the purposes of the Home-Based Programme students with complex needs are defined as:

1. Any student enrolled in a special school or a special class - primary and post primary
2. Students presenting with the most significant needs in mainstream classes in primary or post-primary schools who are accessing the highest level of the Continuum of Support (School Support Plus). This will include a small number of students with enduring needs which significantly affect their capacity to learn, to function independently and to participate in education. These students require highly individualised and differentiated learning programmes that are significantly different to their peers. These students may present with the following:
 - Significant needs with physical and/or sensory functioning (including students who are Deaf or have severe to profound hearing loss and students who are blind or have a severe to profound visual impairment)
 - Significant needs in cognitive functioning and independence/daily living skills (including students who have moderate to severe/profound learning disability)
 - Significant needs in social communication, social interaction combined with rigid repetitive patterns of behaviour (including students with Autism)
 - Students with Down syndrome

- Students with severe emotional behavioural needs, to the extent that these behaviours of concern are impacting on a student's ability to learn, to function independently and to participate fully in school life

Children in the above categories entering primary school in September 2022 are also eligible for the programme.

This home-based summer programme provides 10 hours per week for 4 weeks of home based tuition or care support for an individual eligible pupil. Shared allocations may apply where siblings are participating in the programme.

Online Sanctioning Portal

For the 2022 Home-Based Summer Programme, we have introduced an Online Sanctioning Portal. Where parents wish to participate in the scheme, schools are asked to submit the details of applicant students onto this portal. This will allow the Department to confirm eligibility automatically and issue a sanction email to the parent along with a link to the Grant Claim Form for the programme. By using this Sanctioning Portal for the 2022 programme it is hoped that this will provide clarity to the parents regarding the number of hours their child has been allocated.

The following documents have been attached with this letter:

1. Overview/Terms and Conditions for Parents, Teachers and SNAs

We request that schools provide a copy of this document to parents of eligible student(s). We would also ask that you draw it to the attention of teachers and SNAs in your school.

2. Application form for Sanctioning

This document should also be provided to the parent of eligible student(s), along with the Overview document. The parent can complete with their child's details and their own contact details and return to the school for input on the Sanctioning Portal. This form is provided solely to facilitate the inputting of details and does **not** need to be returned to the Department.

3. Sanctioning Portal Instructions for Schools

This document gives instructions on the application process and how the Portal should be completed by the school when the parent provides the information required on the Application Form for Sanctioning.

The link for the Online Sanctioning Portal will be circulated to schools by email on Thursday 12 May 2022 and the Portal will remain open until Thursday 09 June 2022.

Assisting Parents in sourcing a teacher/SNA

The school should make every effort to support parents in securing the services of a Teacher or an SNA known to the school.

Potential Staff to provide in-home support	
Teachers	SNAs
The child's classroom teacher	An SNA that works in the child's class
The school SET	An SNA that has worked with the child
Any other teacher in the school	Any other SNA in the school
Teachers on the schools substitute list	Any other SNA on the schools substitute list
Recently retired teachers	Recently retired SNAs

Where the number of available school staff is not sufficient to cover the number of applications for support under the programme, it is requested that schools provide information on other teachers and SNAs who are known to them who might be in a position to assist the family.

To help parents source a teacher/SNA for the summer programme in their local area, the IPPN has created a Summer Programme Noticeboard for teachers and SNAs to advertise their availability for the programme. Parents can also post notices on the board to source suitable candidates. The Summer Programme Noticeboard is available on www.educationposts.ie

The NCSE have compiled a non-exhaustive list of private home tutor services and online platforms who may advertise for tutors for the 2022 Summer Programme. This document may support parents to source a tutor when they cannot source one through their schools. It can be accessed here: <https://ncse.ie/information-for-parents-on-private-home-tutor-services-for-the-summer-programme>

Your co-operation and support for the 2022 summer programmes would be appreciated and if you or parents have any queries please email homebasedsummerprogram@education.gov.ie or phone the helpline on 090648 4292.

Yours faithfully
Frank Hanlon
Principal Officer
Inclusion and Special Education