



CIRCULAR TO BOARDS OF MANAGEMENT AND PRINCIPAL TEACHERS OF NATIONAL SCHOOLS

Applications for full-time or part-time Special Needs Assistant support to address the special care needs of children with disabilities.

1. Introduction

Special Needs Assistants (SNA) are recruited specifically to assist in the **care** of pupils with disabilities in an educational context. They may be appointed to a special school or a mainstream national school to assist school authorities in making suitable provision for a pupil or pupils with special **care** needs arising from a disability. The allocation of special needs assistant support may be made on a full- or part-time basis (e.g. an hour or more per day), and may be shared by named pupils for whom such support has been allocated.

2. Duties of Special Needs Assistants

The duties of Special Needs Assistants are listed in Appendix I. Schools should note that the duties of Special Needs Assistants sanctioned by this Department are of a **non-teaching nature**. Individual pupils with a general learning disability would not typically require the services of a Special Needs Assistant. Schools with pupils who have special care needs arising from a disability and who also require additional academic input should consider applying for additional resource teaching provision.

3. Applications for a Special Needs Assistant should be considered where, for example, a pupil has a **significant** medical need for such assistance, a **significant** impairment of physical or sensory function or where their behaviour is such that they are a danger to themselves or to other pupils. Pupils' needs could range from needing an assistant for a short period each week, for example to help feed or change the pupil(s) or bring them to the toilet, to requiring a full-time assistant.

4. **How do schools apply for a Special Needs Assistant post?**

School authorities may apply for the services of a special needs assistant to assist in catering for a pupil or pupils with special **care** needs arising from a disability. Such an application must be based on:

- (a) a recommendation from the professional who assessed the child and who diagnosed the child's special **care** needs;
- (b) evidence that describes the child's special **care** need, the reasons why the support of a special needs assistant is necessary and the benefits (s)he would derive from such **care** support in a school setting;
- (c) the signed certification of the professional who diagnosed the child's special **care** need.

The existence of a disability or syndrome does not necessarily mean that the pupil has a special **care** need.

It must be remembered when considering making an application for the support of a special needs assistant that a balance must be struck between allocating necessary care support and the right of the child to acquire personal independence skills. For this reason, the professional who assessed the child is in the best position to advise on the amount of support (full-time or a specific number of part-time hours).

5. In some cases, schools now seeking Special Needs Assistant Support may already be in receipt of some part-time allocations of such support. In these situations, the Department will sanction a full-time post to replace the part-time hour allocations, where the total hours involved including those now being sought, warrant a full-time post.

6. Completed application forms SER 1 and SER 2 (copies enclosed) should be forwarded directly to:

**Special Education Section 1,
Department of Education and Science,
Cornamaddy,
Athlone.**

7. Enquiries relating to this Circular should be made to:

**Special Education Section 1,
Telephone: 0902 - 74621 or (01) 8734700
Fax: 0902 - 76939**

**L. Kilroy,
Principal Officer**

February, 2002.

APPENDIX 1

Role of the Special Needs Assistant

Their duties are assigned by the Principal Teacher in accordance with Circular 10/76: "Duties and responsibilities of Principal Teachers" and sanctioned by the Board of Management. Their work should be supervised either by the Principal or by a class teacher. Those duties involve tasks of a ***non-teaching nature*** such as:

1. Preparation and tidying up of classroom(s) in which the pupil(s) with special needs is/are being taught.
2. Assisting children to board and alight from school buses. Where necessary travel as escort on school buses may be required.
3. Special assistance as necessary for pupils with particular difficulties e.g. helping physically disabled pupils with typing or writing.
4. Assistance with clothing, feeding, toileting and general hygiene.
5. Assisting on out-of-school visits, walks and similar activities.
6. Assisting the teachers in the supervision of pupils with special needs during assembly, recreational and dispersal periods.
7. Accompanying individuals or small groups who may have to be withdrawn temporarily from the classroom.
8. General assistance to the class teachers, under the direction of the Principal, with ***duties of a non-teaching nature. (Special Needs Assistants may not act either as substitute or temporary teachers. In no circumstances may they be left in sole charge of a class).***
9. Where a Special Needs Assistant has been appointed to assist a school in catering for a specific pupil, duties should be modified to support the particular needs of the pupil concerned.



IMLITIR DO BHOIRD BHAINISTÍOCHTA AGUS DO PHRÍOMHOIDÍ SCOILEANNA NÁISIÚNTA

Iarratais ar Chuntóirí Riachtanas Speisialta chun tacaíocht a thabhairt ar bhonn páirtaimseartha nó lánaimseartha agus chun cuidiú leis na riachtanais speisialta cúraim a bhaineann le leanaí ar mhíchumas

1. Réamhrá

Is chuige go speisialta a earcaítear Cúntóirí Riachtanas Speisialta (CRS) chun cúnaimh a thabhairt do dhaltáí ar mhíchumais i gcomhthéacs oideachais. Féadtar iad a cheapadh chuig scoil speisialta nó chuig gnáthscoil náisiúnta mar chúnaimh d'údaráis scoileanna chun soláthar oiriúnach a dhéanamh do dhaltá nó do dhaltáí a bhfuil riachtanais **chúraim** faoi leith orthu de dheasca míchumais. Féadtar an an liúntas de chúntóirí riachtanas speisialta tacaíochta a chur ar fáil ar bhonn lánaimseartha nó páirtaimseartha (sé sin, uair a'chloig nó níos mó sa lá) agus féadtar é a roinnt ar dhaltáí ainmnithe ar a bhfuil a leithéid de thacaíocht dáilte orthu.

2. Dualgais Chúntóirí Riachtanas Speisialta

Gheofar dualgais Chúntóirí Riachtanas Speisialta liostaithe in Aguisín I. Iarrtar ar scoileanna a thabhairt faoi deara gur dualgais **neamh-mhúinteoireachta** atá ar Chúntóirí Riachtanas Speisialta a cheadaíonn an Roinn. Ní bheadh gá ag daltaí ar leith, a bhfuil éagumais ghinearálta foghlama orthu, le seirbhísí Chúntóirí Riachtanas Speisialta de ghnáth. Scoileanna ina bhfuil daltaí a bhfuil riachtanais shainchúraim acu ag éirí as éagumas agus a bhfuil ionchur acadúil sa bhreis uathu, ba cheart dóibh smaoineamh ar iarratas a dhéanamh le haghaidh breis tacaíochta teagaisc.

3. Ba chóir iarratais ar Chúntóir Riachtanas Speisialta a mheá áit a bhfuil, mar shampla, dalta a bhfuil cabhair uaithi/uaidh de thoradh riachtanas **suntasach** leighis, lagú **suntasach** ar fheidhmiú coirp nó céadfach nó mar a bhfuil iompar na leanaí de shaghas gur baol dóibh féin agus do dhaltaí eile iad. Daltaí áirithe, ní bheadh uathu ach cabhair chúntóra ar feadh gearrthréimhse gach seachtain, mar shampla chun na daltaí a chothú nó a gcuid éadaigh a mhalartú nó iad a thabhairt chuig an leithreas; daltaí eile, bheadh cúntóir lánaimseartha uathu.

4. **Conas a chuirfidh scoileanna iarratas isteach ar phost mar Chúntóir Riachtanas Speisialta?**

Féadtar le húdaráis scoileanna iarratas a dhéanamh ar sheirbhísí Chúntóir Riachtanas Speisialta chun cabhrú le dalta nó le daltaí a bhfuil riachtanais **chúraim** ar leith uatha ag éirí as míchumas. Ba chóir a leithéid d'iarratas a bheith bunaithe ar:

- (a) moladh ón duine proifisiúnta a rinne an leanbh a mheas agus a rinne riachtanais speisialta **cúraim** an linbh a fháthmheas
- (b) fianaise a thugann sonraí ar riachtanas speisialta **cúraim** an linbh, na fáthanna gur gá an tacaíocht a ghabhann le cúntóir speisialta **cúraim** agus na buntáistí a gheobhaidh an dalta de bharr na tacaíochta **cúraim** sa rang scoile
- (c) teastas an duine proifisiúnta a rinne an fáthmheas maidir le riachtanas speisialta **cúraim** an linbh agus é sínithe aige.

Ní ionann, amach is amach, míchumas nó siondróm a bheith ann agus an gá le riachtanas speisialta **cúraim** ón leanbh.

Ní mór a chur san áireamh agus iarratas dá chur isteach ar chúntóir riachtanas speisialta mar thaca gur gá cothromaíocht a bhunú idir tacaíocht chúraim riachtanach a dháileadh agus cearta an linbh scileanna neamhspleácha pearsanta a ghnóthú dó/di féinigh. Sin é an fáth gurb é an duine proifisiúnta a rinne an leanbh a mheas an duine is fearr chun an méid tacaíochta (lánaimseartha nó an líon d'uaireanta a'chloig páirtaimseartha) a chomhairliú.

5. I gcásanna ar leith, is féidir go mbeadh liúntas tacaíochta páirtaimseartha ar fáil cheana féin ag scoileanna ar leith a bheadh ag iarraidh a leithéid de Chúntóir Riachtanas Speisialta mar thaca. In a leithéid de chás, ceadóidh an Roinn post lánaimseartha in ionad na liúntas uaire páirtaimseartha, áit a rinneann na huaireanta a'chloig a bheidh i gceist, na cinn atá á iarraidh faoi láthair san áireamh, post lánaimseartha a bharántú.
6. Ba chóir foirmeacha iarratais comhlánaithe SER 1 agus SER 2 (cóipeanna faoi iamh) a sheoladh go díreach chuig

An Ránnóg Oideachais Speisialta 1
An Roinn Oideachais agus Eolaíochta
Cor na Madadh
Baile Átha Luain.

7. Ba chóir fiosrúcháin faoin Imlitir seo a dhéanamh le:

An Ránnóg Oideachais Speisialta 1
Teileafón: 0902 - 74621 nó (01) 8734700
Faics: 0902 - 76939

L. Kilroy
Príomhoifigeach

Feabhra 2002

AGUISÍN 1

Ról an Chúntóra Riachtanas Speisialta

Is é an Príomhoide a leagann a ndualgais orthu faoi fhorálacha Imlitir 10/76:

"Dualgais agus Freagrachtaí Príomhoidí" agus faomhann an Bord Bainistíochta iad. Ba cheart go ndéanfadh an Príomhoide nó oide ranga maoirseacht ar a gcuid oibre. I measc na ndualgas tá gníomhaíochtaí **neamh-mhúinteoireachta** mar:

- 1 An seomra (na seomraí) ina bhfuil dalta(í), ar a bhfuil riachtanais speisialta de dhíth orthu, ag fáil teagaisc a ullmhú agus a ghlanadh.
- 2 Cabhrú le leanaí ag bordáil bus scoile agus ag tuirlingt de. Féadtar feidhmiú mar thionlaic ar bhusanna scoile nuair is gá a leithéid.
- 3 Cúnamh speisialta do dhaltaí le riachtanais ar leith e.g. cabhair a thabhairt do dhaltaí a bhfuil éagumas coirp orthu scríobh nó clóscríobh a dhéanamh.
- 4 Cúnamh agus an leanbh á gléasadh féin, ag ithe, ag dul go dtí an leithreas agus cúrsaí sláinteachais i gcoitinne.
- 5 Cúnamh a thabhairt nuair a bhíonn cuairteanna as an scoil i gceist, siúlóidí agus gníomhaíochtaí dá leithéid, ar siúl.
- 6 Cúnamh a thabhairt do na hoidí i maoirseacht daltaí a bhfuil riachtanais speisialta de dhíth uatha i rith tionóil, agus tréimhsí súgartha agus scaipthe.
- 7 Ag tionlacan daltaí ar leith nó gasraí beaga a mb'fhéidir go gcaithfí iad a tharraingt siar go sealadach ón rangsheomra
- 8 Cúnamh ginearálta a thabhairt do na hoidí ranga, faoi stiúir an Phríomhoide, i mbun **dualgas neamh-mhúinteoireachta. (Ní ceadmhach Cúntóirí Riachtanas Speisialta bheith ag feidhmiú mar ionadaithe nó mar oidí sealadacha. Ní ceadmhach iad a fhágáil i mbun ranga ina n-aonar ar chúinse ar bith).**
- 9 Má cheaptar Cúntóir Riachtanas Speisialta chun cúnamh a thabhairt i scoil atá ag freastal ar dhalta faoi leith, ba chóir go ndéanfar na dualgais a mhaolú chun tacú le riachtanais ar leith an dalta úd.