Supporting Inclusion in Schools

ACCS Conference

24th March 2017

AN ROINN | DEPARTMENT OF
OIDEACHAIS | EDUCATION
AGUS SCILEANNA | AND SKILLS

Inclusion of Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) – Legislative Basis - S2 EPSEN 2004

- A child with special educational needs shall be educated in an inclusive environment with children who do not have such needs unless the nature or degree of those needs of the child is such that to do so would be inconsistent with —

    - (*a*) the best interests of the child as determined in accordance with any assessment carried out under this Act, or
    - (*b*) the effective provision of education for children with whom the child is to be educated.

SEN Provision 2017/2018

- **€1.7b annual Budget**
- 13,400 additional teaching posts to schools
- 13,115 Special Needs Assistants
- School Building Programme; technology and equipment
- Special School Transport Scheme
- NCSE
- NEPS
- Capitation
- Special Schools and Classes

Teaching Posts - Breakdown

- **13,400 additional teaching posts to schools Includes**
    - **8,900 Teachers to Primary schools**
    - **4,500 Teachers to Primary schools**

- **1,100 teachers in 125 special schools**

- **1,153 special classes (1,304 teacher posts)**
    - **854 posts at Primary level**
    - **464 posts at Post Primary level. (311 classes)**

New Allocation Model

- Concerns date to 2012
- Little evidence supporting growth in disability levels except Autism
- Demographic Growth not exceeding 2% per annum
- Evidence that more children assessed just to access RT support
- Evidence of increasing use of private assessments
- Parent concerns re labelling and delays in access to assessments and supports

Need for change NCSE 2013 Policy Advice

- **Inequitable**

- **Wasteful more than 1,500 teachers allocated Post Primary schools without any reference to need in school**

- **Reinforces disadvantage; Confirms advantage**

- **Results in unnecessary "labelling" of children**

- **Out-of-date**

- **Not linked to improved educational outcomes**

General Allocation Model: Wasteful and Inequitable

Example

- ## School A
  - 250 students
  - **10** students need Learning Support

- ## School B
  - 250 students
  - **75** students need Learning Support

Both schools get the same level of Learning Support under current system

NCSE finds that the Resource Teacher scheme is inequitable

- Requires formal diagnosis of a disability – not always available - Private assessments only available to well-off parents

- Allocations are based on disability category rather than actual need – each child is different

- Research finding is clear that allocations should be based on <u>assessed need </u>rather than category of disability

Current resource teaching scheme disadvantages those students from less well-off families

NCSE Proposal

1 simple scheme to allocate 12,500+ teachers in line with ed. need

- Every school will have additional teaching support

- Every student currently supported will continue to be supported

- Every student significantly below average academically - can get additional help

- Allocation to be on the basis of school educational profile

- Advice re deployment and utilisation in schools

NCSE recommendations

- A new model for allocating resource teachers based on two components:

  A school educational profile:
  - **complex needs.**
  - **standardised test results.**
  - **social context of schools, including gender and educational disadvantage.**

  A **baseline allocation,** based on school enrolment to support inclusion

A Pilot of the model was conducted in 47 schools in 2015/16

- **A Report on the review of the Pilot has been published. The review found:**
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- • The new model has been positively received by schools and parents
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- • Schools welcome the move away from labelling
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- • Schools also welcomed that they no longer need to wait for diagnosis
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- • Most schools acknowledged that over the course of the pilot their whole school approaches had improved and that they were targeting students more effectively

- • Improvements in planning for students, better collaboration between classroom and support teachers and better tracking of student progress

What Happens Now

- New model in place from September 2017.

- Additional 900 teaching posts

- Up to 340 post primary schools have received additional allocations

- No school has received an allocation of resources less than the allocation they received in the 2016/17 school year.

What Happens Now

- New circular has been issued

- New guidelines for schools to issue in coming weeks

- Schools advised of details of Appeal Process with further detail imminent

- Regional Training Days for Schools (March/ April 2017)

- Publication of additional support materials for parents and schools

Some benefits for Pupils and Families

- Over 13,400 teachers are allocated on the basis of need instead of diagnosis or enrolment

- No waiting for diagnosis

- No unnecessary labelling

- Parents will no longer have to pay for assessments to access resources

- Resources will be in school on enrolment.

- Resources will be deployed according to identified need.

- More professional time available to support schools/children instead of conducting assessments

- Guidance For Schools

- New Circular accompanied by "Guidance for Schools" document.

  - A whole-school approach
  - **<u>Identify</u>** the needs
  - **<u>Meet</u>** the needs
  - **<u>Monitor and Record</u>** the progress

- Summary single page document for every teacher.

The Role of NEPS

One Process

What is the Problem?

Why is it happening?

How can we help?

Did it work?

Three Levels

School Support Plus for Few

School Support for Some

Whole School and Classroom Support for All
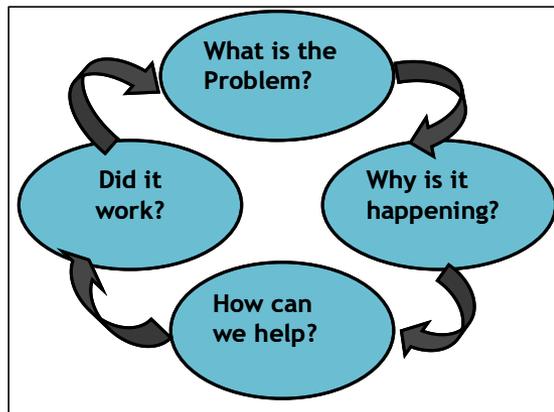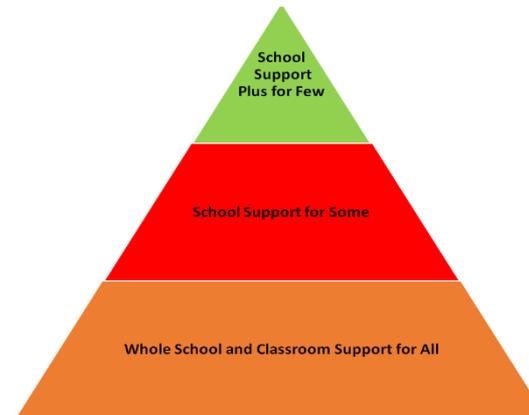
Additional developments within NCSE

- The NCSE is significantly expanding its regional presence to assist schools to support children with special needs.

  - The Special Education Support Service (SESS),
  - The National Behaviour Support Service (NBSS),
  - The Visiting Teacher Service for children who are deaf or hard of hearing and for children who are blind or visually impaired.

Special Needs Assistants

- 13,115 SNAs in place

- Application process remains in place.

- NCSE reviewing the scheme (report due in May)
  - Examine whether the SNA scheme continues to meet its purpose.
  - If the scheme is being used to meet needs, other than care needs,
  - Identify the most appropriate form of support options to provide better outcomes for students with Special Educational Needs who have additional care needs,