

ILSA Annual Conference

DELIVERY FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

A better and more equitable way

18th September 2015

Overview of presentation

- 1 Reasons for change
- 2 Proposed new model
- 3 Benefits of proposed new model

Level of support in schools: 2014-2015

- Approximately 58,000 Teacher posts
- 11,000+ learning support and resources teacher posts in schools
 - 5,000 in-school already
 - 6,225 available to NCSE
 - (2015-2016: 6,705 posts available)
- Approx. 850 Special Classes
 - (2015 – 2016: 1,000 special classes)
- Over 1,100 Special School Teachers
- 11,000+ SNAs available to NCSE
 - (2015-2016: c. 12,000 SNAs available to NCSE)

Reasons for change

- Current system:
 - Learning support teachers on basis of enrolment**
 - Resource teachers on basis of diagnosis**
- unfair
- rewards advantage
- rewards unnecessary “labelling” of children
- not linked to improved educational outcomes

Learning Support

- School A
 - 250 students
 - **10** students qualify for Learning Support
- School B
 - 250 students
 - **75** students qualify for Learning Support

Both schools get the same level of learning support

High Incidence RT model @ pp

- c.700 teacher posts
- Out-of-date basis for current allocation

Current Resource Teacher scheme can be unfair

- Requires formal diagnosis
- Private assessments used by parents at great cost
- Each category of disability has spectrum of ability
- Basis for allocation under the old model may no longer be available when the HSE moves away from a diagnostic based model.

Members of working group

Eamon Stack	(Chair) <i>NCSE</i>
Mary Byrne	(Sec) <i>NCSE</i>
Don Mahon	<i>Inspectorate, DES</i>
Maureen Costello	<i>NEPS</i>
Peter Archer	<i>ERC</i>
James O'Grady	<i>NCSE Council</i>
Brian MacGiollaPhadraig	<i>Inspectorate, DES</i>
Áine Lynch	<i>NPC</i>
Anne English	<i>Primary principal</i>
Katherine O'Leary	<i>Parent and Board Director, Inclusion Ireland</i>
Antoinette Nic Gearailt	<i>PP principal, ACCS</i>
Albert O'Donoghue	<i>DCYA</i>
Pat Kinsella	<i>NCSE Council</i>
Eithne Fitzgerald	<i>NCSE Council and NDA</i>

Guiding Principles

- All students, irrespective of special educational need, are welcomed and enabled to enrol in their local schools.
- Allocation of additional teaching supports - in line with the school's educational profile.
- Deployment of supports by schools - in line with students' identified learning needs.
- A whole-school approach to be adopted.
- Evaluation and monitoring of use of resources- at school and system level.

Some research findings

- There is no single, 'best' funding model but good principles:
 - Targeted to areas of most need e.g. early intervention
 - Coherent with policy e.g. greater inclusion
 - Inclusive of complex needs
 - Need for accountability
 - Transparency and equity

22 Consultation meetings

- Right direction is being taken
- Mix of achievement and educational disadvantage measures required
- Capacity to provide for early intervention and prevention within schools is important
- Need to reduce administration burden on schools
- Concerns: Communicating new model
Back door to cuts.

Proposed New Model

One Scheme: 11,000 Support Teachers

Step 1: Allocation provided to schools:

School educational profile component:

**Complex special educational needs
Standardised test results
Social context of school**

Baseline component provided to every mainstream school

Step 2:* **Deployment/Utilisation by schools*

Complex special educational needs

- Very significant difficulties in functioning (physical, sensory, cognitive, adaptive, social and communication)
- Need highly individualised and differentiated learning programmes
- Most children identified at birth or by entry to primary school
- NEPS continuum of support *
- Descriptors and protocols for collection of information to be developed

* **The National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) has developed a system to help all schools to identify and support children with special educational needs, known as the NEPS Continuum of Support**

Educational Achievement

- Standardised test results provide a robust basis to distinguish between schools
- Provides information on the percentage of students in each school with learning difficulties
- All students below average (at or below STen 3)
- Differential weighting – e.g. STen 1 higher than STen 3

Social context of a school

- Risk factors that signal a potential for educational disadvantage include gender and social context
 - Boys generally more likely to have SEN (overall ratio is between 2:1 and 3:1)
- Data on social context to be collected from every school
 - Lone parenting
 - Reliance on social welfare
 - Local authority housing
 - English as an Additional Language
 - Membership of the Travelling Community

Baseline component:

- Facilitate enrolment & inclusion of students
- Allow for prevention and early intervention
- Be graduated in line with school enrolment
- Represent a small proportion of total available resources

Weighting of elements

- Statistical modelling exercise will be applied to data to determine appropriate weightings
- Weighting should be assigned in the following order:
 - Complex Needs
 - Standardised Test Results
 - Social Context

How might students be identified under the proposed new model?

If a decision is taken to implement the proposed model, students could be identified as follows:

- Low achievement
 - all students scoring below average on standardised tests
- Social/Communication
 - complex needs before school or NEPS continuum of support in school
- Physical, Sensory
 - complex needs before school or NEPS continuum of support in school
- Emotional/Behavioural
 - Social Context of school

Supports for schools

- **Independent Appeals process**
- **Resources in place for an allocation cycle**
- **Guidance to assist schools:**
 - Use and deployment of resources
 - Recording and reporting outcomes for students that are linked to individualised learning plans
- **Inclusion Support Service**
 - Exceptional Circumstances

Reporting

School would be asked to report about:

- How their additional resources are used to benefit students with special educational needs
- Outcomes for students linked to individualised learning plans

- Outcomes
 - Academic-achievement
 - Attendance
 - Quality of life
 - End of school outcomes

Benefits for students and families

- Over 11,000 teachers will be allocated in line with need
- No waiting for diagnosis; No unnecessary labelling
- Parents will no longer have to pay for private consultants
- Resources will be in school on enrolment

Over time

- More professional time available for assessments

Benefits for schools

- Schools will have greater stability in terms of staffing
- Schools will be better able to:
 - plan for students
 - put training in place for teachers
 - deploy resources in line with students' needs
- Role of teacher assessment of students learning needs more valued

Over time:

- Less administration for schools in processing applications for resources

30 linked recommendations in all

Some other recommendations.....

- Future-proof use of Standardised Tests
- Development of on-line system for data collection
- Trained support teachers
- Objective external source for social context data
- Validation of school-based data
- DES to consider that allocation of resources dependent on
 - Fully inclusive enrolment policy
 - Students being supported to participate in school activities

Management of change required to ensure:

- Any changes to the level of teaching supports in individual schools is properly managed
- Sufficient time is allowed for further consultation with the education stakeholders - approach, indicators, weightings
- Schools have adequate advice on how to allocate and use available resources
- Interplay between new model and the systems used for other educational purposes is examined

Next steps

- 10th Feb 2015 Minister Announces: Establishment of a new Inclusion Support Service within NCSE to include the Visiting Teacher Service, SESS and NBSS.
- Current model for allocating resource and learning support teachers to be retained for the coming year, to allow for further consultation with the education stakeholders and for the new model to be piloted.
- September 2015: New model being piloted in a selection of primary and post-primary schools



Thank you