



Oifig an Stiúrthóir Cúnta Náisiúnta,
Foireann Míchumais Náisiúnta,
An Chéad Urlár - Oifigí 13, 14, 15,
Áras Phlásóg na Rós, Coimpléasc Gnó na hOllscoile,
Páirc Náisiúnta Teicneolaíochta,
Caladh an Treoigh,
Luimneach.

Office of the Assistant National Director,
National Disability Team,
First Floor- Offices 13, 14, 15,
Roselawn House, University Business Complex,
National Technology Park,
Castletroy,
Limerick.

4th October 2024

Deputy Sean Fleming,
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: sean.fleming@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Fleming,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the following parliamentary question, which was submitted to this department for response.

PQ: 36731/24

To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth the selection criteria in relation to a pilot scheme (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Details supplied: The Pilot Scheme for placing therapists in Special Schools, the number of applications received and the regions in the Country where the pilot scheme is to be based.

HSE Response

The Health Services Executive, and the Lead Agencies it funds, have been working continuously to develop supports for children with Disabilities.

In line with Government policy, the HSE has recruited approximately 80 of the 135 additional posts provided for by Government to restore supports to special schools to pre-reconfiguration levels.

The HSE and funded agencies continue to prioritise recruitment for children's services, including these posts. The range of measures have included:

- Dedicated and rolling recruitment campaigns
- The use of agency staffing where available
- Dedicated webinars with new graduates
- Engagement with Government to expand the number of graduate places
- Development of measures to enhance clinical placements in disability services

In August 2024, Government asked the HSE to initiate a pilot of dedicated supports, under the governance of the CDNTs, to six special schools initially, two in Dublin and four in Cork.



The HSE has worked with Lead Agencies and on-site therapy supports are in place from 30/9/24 in five of the six schools. The Lead Agency for the one school that has not yet progressed continues to engage with staff, supported by the HSE.

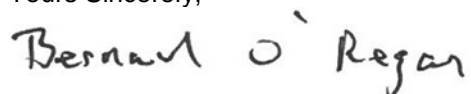
The HSE is working with representatives from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, the Department of Education and the NCSE at the National Oversight Group to lead the overall Pilot. In addition, local working groups are being established/have been established which will address any local issues.

A further ten schools are to be included in the Pilot and the National Oversight Group has commenced consideration of which schools are to be included. It is expected that this will be concluded and the schools announced later in October 2024.

With regard to assessment of the pilot, since the Government's announcement of the pilot in August 2024, the National Oversight Group, comprising of the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, the Department of Education, HSE and NCSE, has focused on planning and commencing the in school therapy supports for 6 special schools, and set-up of the Cork and Dublin Working Groups to implement the pilots.

In addition to considering phase 2 of the pilot, a further 10 special schools, the Oversight Group will now consider how the pilot will be assessed, informed by the Working Groups' analysis on what is working well and any difficulties/challenges facing schools to be addressed.

Yours Sincerely,



Bernard O'Regan
Assistant National Director
National Disability Team

