



Oifig an Stiúirthóir 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.

29th January 2025

Deputy Sorca Clarke
Dail Eireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.
E-mail: sorca.clarke@oireachtas.ie

Dear Deputy Clarke,

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: 46522/24

To ask the Minister for Children; Equality; Disability; Integration and Youth if he will provide an update on the pilots for enhanced in-school therapy supports in the 16 special schools in Dublin and Cork; and if he will provide the number of extra speech and language therapists and occupational therapists, per school, who are working in those schools because of the pilot, in tabular form.

HSE Response

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

In August 2024, Government asked the HSE to initiate a *Special Schools Pilot* of dedicated supports under the governance of the CDNTs to six special schools initially, two in Dublin and four in Cork. (Phase 1). The assigned therapy supports in the 2 Dublin special schools commenced on September 30th and recruitment began for filling the assigned therapy WTE in the four CHO 4 special schools.

During this recruitment process, the Lead Agencies confirmed the ongoing provision of specific therapy hours per month to support children in the four CHO 4 Special Schools until recruitment has been successfully completed.

Phase 1 of the Special Schools Pilot included the following schools:

Cork:

- Carrigaline Special School
- Rochestown Special school
- Our Lady of Good Counsel Special School



- St Paul's Special school

Dublin:

- Ballymun Special school
- An Cosain Special School

Following consideration by the National Oversight Group, which comprises of the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, the Department of Education, HSE and NCSE, a further ten schools have been included in the Pilot project.

The Phase 2 schools are as follows:

In the Dublin area, the special schools identified for inclusion in Phase 2 are:

- Cheeverstown House, Kilvare, Templeogue, Dublin 6
- Saplings Special School, St Mary's Convent, Ballyroan Crescent, Rathfarnham, Dublin 16
- ABACAS Kilnamanagh, C/O St Kevin's Special School, Treepark Road, Kilnamanagh, Dublin 24
- Holy Family School for the Deaf, Navan Rd., Cabra, Dublin 7
- St. Vincent's, Navan Road, Dublin 7.
- St. Michael's House Special School, College St, Baldoyle, Dublin 13

In the Cork area, the special schools identified for inclusion in Phase 2 are:

- East Cork Community Special School, Carrigtwohill, Co. Cork
- St. Killian's School, Mayfield, Co. Cork

In Galway, the special schools identified for inclusion in the second phase of the pilot are:

- Rosedale School, Woodlands Centre, Renmore, Galway
- St. Teresa's Special School, 25, Moher, Ballinalsoe, Galway

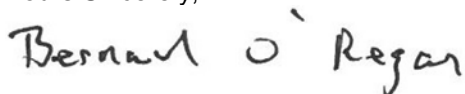
The Oversight Group will now consider how the pilot will be assessed, informed by the Working Groups analysis on what is working well and any difficulties/challenges facing schools to be addressed.

Recruitment

The HSE and funded agencies are focused on identifying barriers to workforce growth and putting in place corrective retention and recruitment initiatives. These initiatives have led to a growth in CDNT staffing levels, particularly in Health and Social Care Professionals roles. We know from an initial analysis of the Draft 2024 National CDNT Staff Census, which was run in October 2024 and will be published at the end of January or early February 2025, that there has been a 271.77 wte net gain of staff into CDNTs in the past 12 months to 16/10/2024. Early indicators also suggest that the whole time equivalent vacancy rate has reduced from 29% in the 2023 Workforce Review to 22% in the draft 2024 Review.

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Yours Sincerely,



Bernard O'Regan
Assistant National Director, National Disability Team

