



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Óige
Department of Education
and Youth

Review of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs

(EPSEN) Act 2004

Implementation Plan



July 2026



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Foreword from Minister Hildegarde Naughton

I am very pleased to publish the Implementation Plan for the Review of The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act 2004. This plan sets out a clear roadmap for how my department will deliver on the Review's recommendations and strengthen inclusive education for every child.

My interest in this is long-standing. I had the privilege of serving as Minister of State for Special Education and Inclusion during the majority of the review process, where I engaged closely with stakeholders who shared their lived experience and desire for a more inclusive system. I subsequently served as Minister of State at the Department of Children, Disability and Equality with responsibility for Disability, a role that further deepened my commitment to ensuring that the education system values the rights and potential of every child. Now, as Minister for Education and Youth, I am determined to see these recommendations implemented. This is an area that is deeply important to me, and I am committed to driving the changes needed to create a more inclusive and just education system.

Providing for all children, regardless of their abilities, to access a high-quality, inclusive education is a priority for this Government. The publication of this plan marks a key milestone in our commitment to building an education system that is fair, inclusive, and responsive to student's needs.

This plan follows extensive consultation with stakeholders, including young people and their families, and commits to implementing each of the 51 recommendations, across 16 themes of the EPSEN Review, within the current Government term.

These actions range from supporting the rights of children and parents to improving language use, support services, transitions, curriculum content, and professional learning. These measures will strive towards having inclusion embedded across every level of the education system.

Delivery of this plan will require collaboration across Government, schools, educators, and stakeholders. An oversight group will oversee progress, with regular reporting to ensure transparency, accountability, and timely delivery. The Forum on Inclusive Education for children and young people with special educational needs, which was recently announced, will take into consideration the contents of this implementation plan and how to build upon the engagement and collaboration already in place.

I am confident that, through this plan, we will take meaningful steps towards providing for every child to be given the opportunity to learn, develop, and thrive in an inclusive educational environment.

Hildegarde Naughton TD
Minister for Education and Youth



Foreword from Minister Michael Moynihan TD

An inclusive education system is an ambition shared across the education system, but it is a journey that requires dedication, collaboration, and a shared vision. This implementation plan, developed following the Review of the EPSEN Act, sets out practical steps to make education more inclusive and supportive for students with special educational needs.

Supporting these students requires a clear strategy. This plan strengthens the supports available to students, parents, and educators, while making sure that resources are used effectively. Having listened to the lived experience of those at the heart of our education system, this plan is shaped by educators, parents, students, and stakeholders across the system.

This is a whole-of-education approach, including curriculum, transitions, student support plans, and professional learning. We are pursuing a range of actions covering legislation and policy, and the outcome of the plan will result in a clear direction for educators, and practical measures to improve learning for every child.

Central to this plan is the establishment of an oversight group, chaired at senior independent level, which will monitor progress on the actions to be delivered. Regular reporting will help us to adapt and respond to the changing needs of students and schools.

I look forward to working closely with colleagues across Government, with school communities, and with families to make sure that the recommendations in this plan are delivered in full. With continued collaboration and commitment, we can build an education system that truly reflects the principles of inclusion and that every child can reach their full potential.

Michael Moynihan TD
Minister of State for Special Education and Inclusion



Foreword from Secretary General Bernie McNally

The Department of Education and Youth is committed to ensuring that every student, regardless of their needs or abilities, can access and benefit from an inclusive education system. The publication of this plan is an important step in realising that commitment.

This plan transforms the findings of the review into a clear action plan. It sets out how the department, in partnership with educators, agencies, parents, and wider stakeholders, will work over the coming years to strengthen supports, improve consistency, and embed inclusive practice across the education system.

Delivering on the recommendations of the EPSEN Review will require collaboration and accountability. The establishment of an oversight group, with regular progress reporting, will ensure that implementation is carefully monitored and that the plan remains responsive to the evolving needs of students and schools.

I would like to acknowledge the valuable input from students, parents, educators, and stakeholders who engaged in the review process and established the priorities set out in this plan. Their perspectives will continue to guide our work throughout this implementation.

This plan is a commitment to action, collaboration, and to improving the education experience of the students. The department has already commenced implementing these recommendations and shall continue to ensure that these are fully delivered.

I welcome this plan as an important roadmap for embedding inclusive practices and improving outcomes across the education system.

Bernie McNally
Secretary General



Introduction and Background

The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act 2004 was enacted with the intention of providing a legislative framework to support students with special educational needs. However, several key provisions of the Act have not been commenced, leading to calls for a comprehensive review to assess its adequacy and effectiveness in the current educational landscape.

In response, the Department of Education and Youth initiated a review of the EPSEN Act in December 2021 to modernise and reflect the experiences of students, staff, and families. Public consultations were launched to gather insights from a wide range of stakeholders, including students, educators, parents, advocacy groups, and professional bodies. The feedback received highlighted the need for a more inclusive and responsive education system that fully supports students with special educational needs.

This review represents the most comprehensive national reflection to date on how we support children and young people with additional needs in our education system. One of the defining features of this review was the meaningful participation of children and young people. Focus groups and tailored surveys were specifically designed to allow students to share their experiences in a comfortable, accessible way. This approach ensured that the voices of students, particularly those with complex needs, shaped the direction of the review from the very beginning.

The review report contains 51 recommendations across 16 themes, broken down into legislative and policy-based recommendations. These recommendations focus on strengthening inclusive education, improving transitions between educational stages, clarifying language and terminology, enhancing professional learning for educators, and ensuring better collaboration across government and education stakeholders.

Building upon the findings of the EPSEN Review Report, which was published on the 25th June 2025, this implementation plan outlines a strategic approach to address identified gaps and enhance the provision of education for students with special educational needs. It encompasses a range of recommendations aimed at improving legislative frameworks, resource allocation, staff training, and student support services.

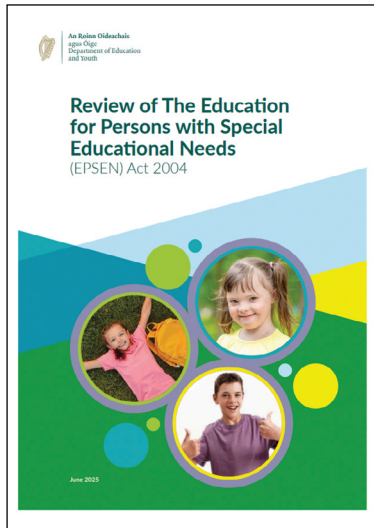
The plan aims to ensure that educational provision is inclusive, equitable, and tailored to the diverse needs of learners across all school settings. By establishing key processes, the plan seeks to strengthen resources and supports in schools, while developing collaboration between parents, educators, and relevant agencies.

The recommendations on which this plan is based address a broad range of areas including curriculum design, staff training, resource allocation, access routes to supports for pupils in Irish-medium education, and the wellbeing and inclusion of students. This plan serves as a practical roadmap to implement these recommendations, ensuring that schools and stakeholders can deliver timely and effective supports for students with additional educational needs.

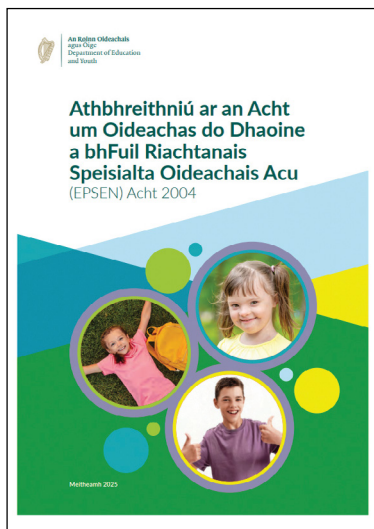
The fundamental goal is to create an education system where every student, regardless of their abilities, has access to the support and opportunities they need to succeed.

EPSEN Act 2004 Review

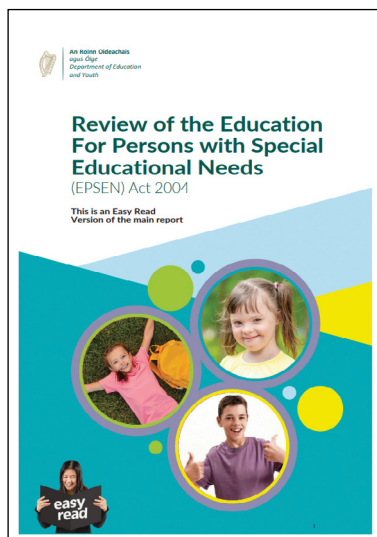
Report on the Review of The Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act 2004



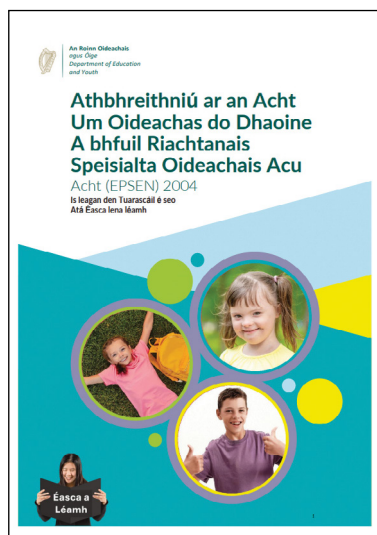
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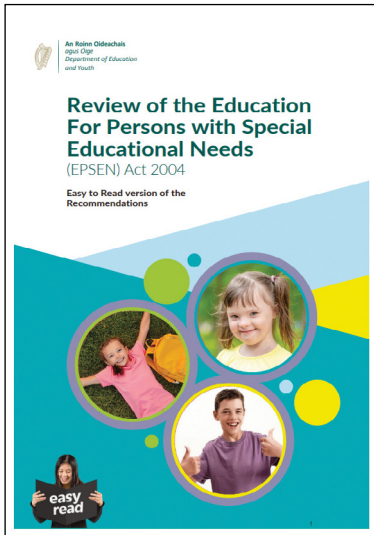
Easy Read Version of the Report on the Review of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act 2004



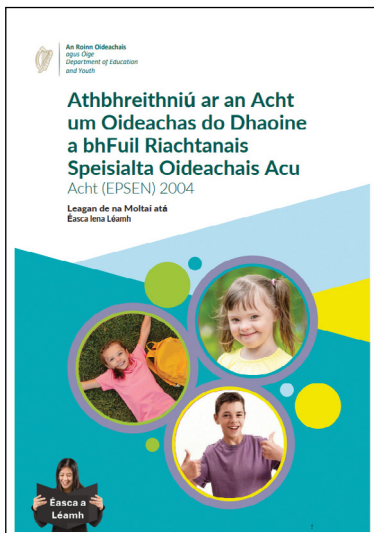
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Easy to Read version of the Recommendations of the Review of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act 2004



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[Link to all reports: EPSEN Review Consultation](#)

Key elements of the EPSEN Act 2004 Review

- 28,000 responses to online survey, of which 12,667 complete surveys were included in the survey analysis.
- 900 responses to an easy-read accessible online survey.
- We held focus groups with 80 students
 - o 35 English speaking face to face students
 - o 45 Irish speaking students, who were under the age of 18.
- Focus groups were also held with adult participants that included parents, teachers, special needs assistants and other professionals.
 - o 91 participants took part in five adult focus group meetings, four actual meetings in various locations throughout the country and one virtual meeting.
- We also engaged in focus groups with 14 young adults, aged from 18 to 25.
- The report includes a total of 51 recommendations, which are contained within 16 sub themes.
- These are divided into 2 sections – legislative and policy based.
- There are 149 individual actions as part of the overall implementation plan.



Understanding the EPSEN Act 2004 Review Implementation Plan

What is the EPSEN Act 2004 Review Implementation Plan?

- This Implementation Plan sets out how the recommendations of the EPSEN Act 2004 Review will be put into action.
- It explains the steps that need to be taken, who will be involved, and the timeframe for when these will happen.

What does the Implementation Plan do?

- Breaks the EPSEN Act 2004 Review's recommendations into clear actions.
- Says who is responsible for each action.
- Sets timelines for when the work will be completed.
- Explains how progress will be monitored.

Who is involved?

A wide range of people and organisations will take part, including:

- The Department of Education and Youth (DEY)
- The Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE)
- National Council for Special Education (NCSE)
- Advocacy groups
- Schools and school staff
- Other Government departments where needed

What is involved in delivering the plan?

- Updating policies, guidance and processes.
- Developing resources and supports for schools.
- Providing training and professional development.
- Strengthening collaboration across government.
- Improving planning and communication.
- Testing new approaches and learning from them.

How long will it take?

The EPSEN Act 2004 Review Implementation Plan will be delivered over the lifetime of this Government. Some actions are already underway, while others will be phased in over time to allow time for planning and engagement. Progress will be reviewed regularly, and updates will be shared to show what has been achieved and what is coming next.

Why does it matter?

This Implementation Plan is designed to ensure that implementation of the EPSEN Act 2004 Review's recommendations result in real improvements, helping children and young people with additional needs to receive the support they need, when they need it, in every school.

Key Messages

This plan represents an ambitious, system-wide reform designed to strengthen inclusive education and support children and young people with special educational needs. The 51 actions span both legislative and policy-based recommendations and will be delivered in a logical, coherent, and evidence-based manner.

A central focus of the plan is identifying areas of strong existing practice, analysing what is working well, and implementing them across the education system. Along with this, identifying gaps or barriers will be important. Targeted training and support will be provided where required. These insights will form the basis for enabling provisions within legislation, ensuring that future legislative changes reflect practice that has already demonstrated positive results.

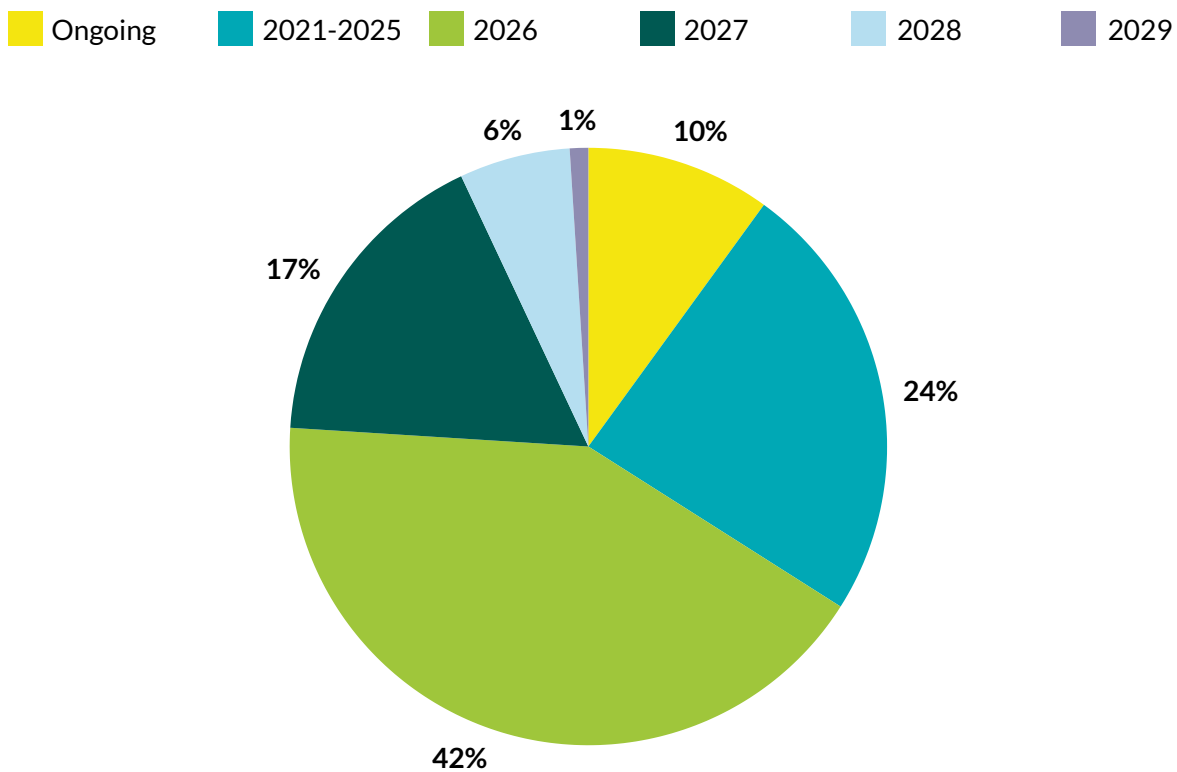
The plan follows a whole-of-education approach. While it is primarily led by the Department of Education and Youth, delivery will also require action from across government. This reflects commitments in the Programme for Government. This will enable continuity of support, particularly in areas such as transitions, Assessment of Needs, and further education and training pathways. Continuous monitoring and review are built into the plan.



Summary of Timelines

The Implementation Plan marks the first comprehensive structured progression of the EPSEN Act 2004 in over 20 years. It sets out 51 actions to be delivered over a four year period, beginning in 2026 and concluding in 2029. All actions will commence in 2026. Some actions will be concluded during 2026, with enabling steps undertaken to support further delivery in 2027, 2028 and 2029. Later actions will build upon the evidence, learning and system changes developed during the earlier phases.

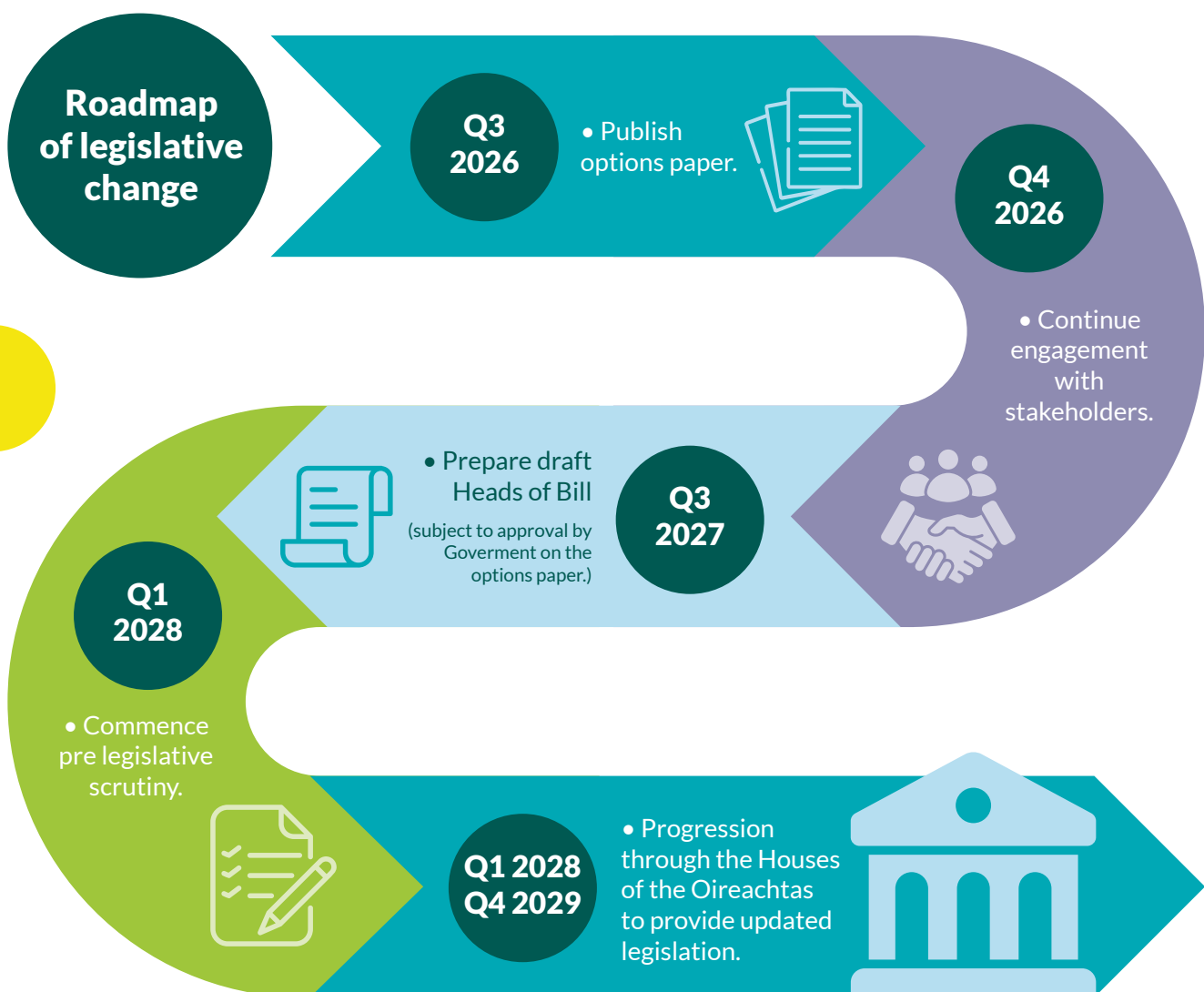
The sequencing of actions is important. Certain elements must occur in a specific order to progress later developments, such as legislative amendments and strengthened transition structures. These will be evidence based, identifying best practice, and creating clear guidance. Where actions are identified as 'ongoing', this reflects their nature as continuous processes, for example, stakeholder engagement, refinement of guidelines, and training.

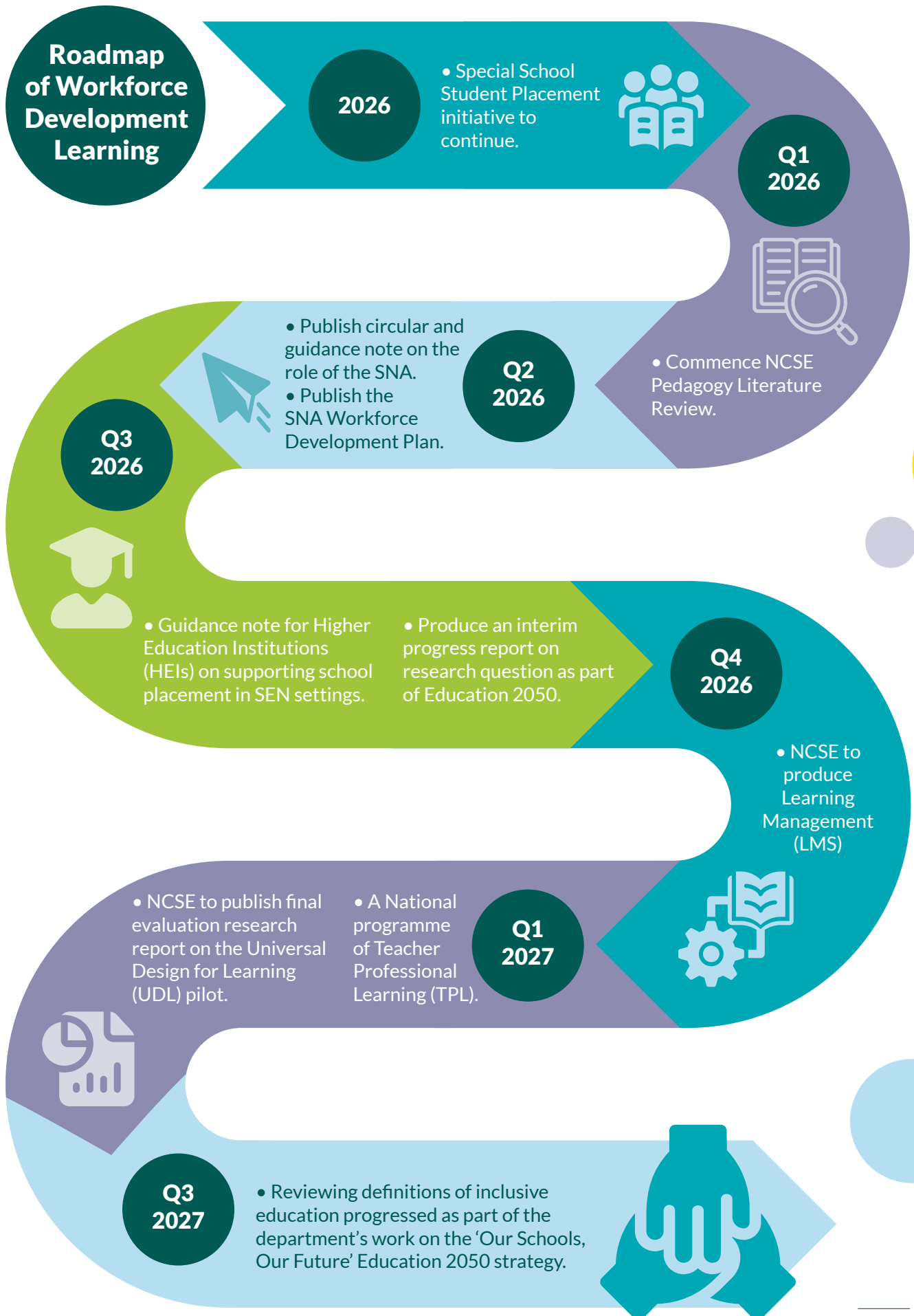


The percentage distribution of actions scheduled under the EPSEN Act 2004 Review by year.'

The chart above illustrates the percentage of actions scheduled under the EPSEN Act 2004 Review per year. Actions recorded for 2021-2025 reflect measures delivered since the review commenced. Actions scheduled for 2026 represent short-term priorities, 2027 reflects medium-term actions, 2028 captures medium-term to long-term actions, and 2029 represents longer-term actions.

Examples of Roadmap of Implementation:





Roadmap of Student Support Services

Ongoing

- Engage with relevant stakeholders to ensure adequate college places for Health and Social Care Professionals (HSCP) graduates to deliver a Education Therapy Service (ETS).



**Q2
2026**



- Rollout of ETS in 45 special schools.
- Publish circular and guidance note on the role of the SNA.

**Q3
2026**

- Deliver Strand 1 and Strand 2 of Counselling and Mental Health supports.

**Q4
2026**

- Keep wellbeing portal resources reviewed and up to date.
- Deliver Neart support services.

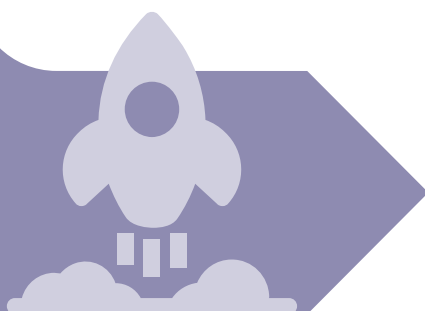
**Q1
2028**

- Commence rollout of ETS to special classes and mainstream schools.



- Therapy supports in all special schools.

**Q4
2027**



Roadmap of Transitions

**Q2
2026**

- Published revised circular on the role of the SNA and guidance note.
- Overall evaluation of CES Pilot will be available.



**Q4
2026**



- NCSE to produce Learning Management System (LMS)

- Report on National Transitions Policy expected.

**Q2
2027**

- Develop policy on transition support.



Methodology

The development of this implementation plan was a collaborative process, involving extensive consultation, review and analysis.

Engagement took place with a wide range of stakeholders including advocacy groups, government departments, and relevant national agencies to generate a plan that is informed, realistic, and actionable.

Key steps in the methodology included:

- Reviewing the findings of the consultations and policy recommendations of the EPSEN Act 2004 Review.
- Conducting targeted stakeholder consultations to gather input on priorities, challenges, and practical implementation considerations.
- Reviewing progress to date across the department and with external partners to identify existing initiatives that can be built upon, adapted, or re-directed to achieve the plan's objectives.
- Establishing smaller stakeholder working groups to facilitate focused discussion, collaboration, and shared problem-solving on specific recommendations.
- Seeking input from the EPSEN Act 2004 Review advisory group on their expectations, proposals, and priorities, followed by structured engagement meetings to facilitate the integration of their perspectives into the plan.
- Drafting clearly defined next steps and desired outcomes of each recommendation, in alignment with objectives.

The methodology emphasises inclusivity, collaboration, and evidence-based decision-making to ensure that the plan reflects the needs and perspectives of all stakeholders.

This structured methodology aims to facilitate effective execution and measurable outcomes.



Monitoring and Review

The successful implementation of this plan will require ongoing monitoring and review. A structured approach will be adopted to track progress against the recommendations, assess outcomes, and identify any emerging issues.

An oversight group, comprising of representatives from key stakeholders, will be tasked with overseeing the implementation of the recommendations. Progress will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis, with reports prepared by relevant stakeholders.

Each area assigned to implementing recommendations will be required to submit quarterly reports detailing progress, challenges encountered, and adjustments made. These reports will be reviewed by the oversight group to assess the effectiveness of actions taken and to ensure that objectives are being met in a timely manner.

This is very much a live document and feedback from stakeholders will be actively sought to inform adjustments and improvements. Key performance indicators will be monitored to evaluate the impact of actions on student outcomes, inclusion, and resource effectiveness.

Regular reviews will also provide an opportunity to identify emerging needs, incorporate new evidence, and make necessary refinements to the plan. This plan will remain responsive and aligned with evolving educational needs.

This ongoing monitoring and review process will ensure that the plan delivers clear results in a timely and accountable manner, supporting inclusive and effective education for all students.



1. Wider Legislative Changes

1.1: Consideration should be given to introducing legislation to include all school-age children under one Act that would provide a legal rights-based inclusive education. While the preferred method may be an amended Education Act, other legislative options may be considered.

Lead Responsible Body: Department of Education and Youth (DEY)

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Develop an options paper outlining potential legislative approaches, including amendments to the Education Act and alternative updated legislation. Clarification and identification of particular sections to be revised in updated legislation.	DEY have commenced engagement with the Office of the Attorney General (AGO) in relation to the options paper Options paper is being prepared currently and engagement with stakeholders will commence once completed.	Q3 2026 Completion of the options paper in relation to amended legislation. Q4 2026 Continued engagement with stakeholders in relation to proposed options paper.
Heads of Bill to be prepared.		Q3 2027 Subject to approval by Government on the options paper. Draft Heads of Bill to be prepared and consultation to continue with stakeholders.
Pre legislative scrutiny of the draft bill to occur.		Q1 2028 Pre legislative scrutiny to commence in relation to the Heads of Bill.
Bill to proceed through the stages of the Oireachtas		Q1 2028 – Q4 2029 Progression through the Houses of the Oireachtas to provide updated legislation that legislates for the right of all school-age children to inclusive education, ensuring consistency, easy to understand language, and aligns with national policy.

1.2: New legislation should maintain the functions of the National Council for Special Education (NCSE)**Lead Responsible Body: DEY**

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Review the current law that sets out the National Council for Special Education's (NCSE) functions to ensure they are fully reflected in any proposed legislative change.	A Periodic Critical Review of the NCSE is currently underway in collaboration with the NCSE and stakeholders.	Q3 2026 Recommendations of the Periodic Critical Review are to be considered by the department which will inform next steps.

1.3: Consideration should be given to including the mediation function outlined in section 38 of the EPSEN Act 2004, which was not commenced in new legislation.**Lead Responsible Body: DEY**

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Continue to progress the Education (Student and Parent Charter) Bill through the Houses of the Oireachtas and develop Charter Guidelines, which will include complaints procedures for parents and students, as provided for under the Bill.	In February 2026, Government approved a number of policy amendments to the Education (Student and Parent Charter) Bill. The Bill is scheduled to progress to Committee Stage in the Dáil immediately after the summer recess. The Education (Student and Parent Charter) Bill provides for Charter Guidelines which includes provision for standard complaints procedures for students and parents. Mediation is referenced in the Bill in the context of an option for inclusion in the complaints procedures.	2026 The Education (Student and Parent Charter) Bill to be enacted. Work to develop the Charter Guidelines, including complaints procedures for parents and students, to be advanced. 2028 Publication of the Charter Guidelines, including complaints procedures.

1.4: Consideration should be given to a review of the Disability Act 2005 and the legal framework governing Assessments of Need (AONs).

Lead Responsible Body: Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE)

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Amendment Act to be brought forward around part 2 of the Disability Act (AON).	The draft Disability (Amendment) Bill is being finalised by the Department and the Office of Parliamentary Counsel for submission to Government. The Bill sets out targeted amendments to Part 2 of the Disability Act 2005, which relates to Assessment of Need. DCDE has commenced a wider review of the Disability Act, starting with a public consultation process to inform the review. A call for submissions was launched in June 2026. This first consultation stage will be followed by a range of online and in-person consultation events.	Ongoing To ensure all children who apply for an Assessment of Need are directed to the appropriate supports at the earliest possible juncture, consistent with their needs and regardless of the determination of disability, as set out in the Act. To enable the use of appropriate and proportionate assessment for those children who have been identified as having a disability under the Act. Q3 2026 Review of the Disability Act call for submissions will run for a 3-month period (June to September 2026). The public consultation and research represent the first substantive steps in the wider review of the Disability Act. These steps will in turn inform further developments in the review process.

1.5: To work towards providing for a legal right of access to preschool includes and articulates the requirements to support the right of access for children with additional needs; and that, where applicable, the future statutory framework in the Early Learning and Care (ELC) context provides complementary provisions to those in the revised legislation and the EPSEN Act successor statutory framework.		
Lead Responsible Body: Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE)		
Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
A feasibility study for establishing a statutory right to Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), which reflects the changes in early learning and childcare provision and early years strategic policy since the original EPSEN Act 2004 was introduced.	A review of the ECCE Programme was completed in 2024, which provides initial context to inform a feasibility study for establishing a statutory right to ECCE. Scoping of a feasibility study is due to begin in the coming months.	A feasibility study to inform work on establishing a statutory right to ECCE, which reflects the changes in early learning and childcare provision and early years strategic policy since the original EPSEN Act 2004 was introduced.



1.6: All definitions of inclusive education and the characteristics ascribed to it in future legislation should comply with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and the core features of inclusive education which are set out in it.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Publication of the Inclusive Practice Guidelines.	Inclusive Practice Guidelines will inform the discussion as to the system within which Inclusive Education can exist and school led practices and change implementation required to do so. Action plan for the Inclusive Practice Guidelines is ongoing. This includes: • Engagement with wider stakeholder/focus groups on enablers of inclusive practice. • National survey of teachers. • Research outcomes on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) pilot/NCSE Relate/ Autism and Student voice outcomes. • Inclusive pedagogy literature review. • Critical friends review. • Ongoing NCSE Policy and Strategy Committee review. Inclusive Practice Guidelines and Development of NCSE Sustained support model tender process has completed in Q1 2026. National Support and roll-out. NCSE Inclusive Practice Guidance is to engage with students under the NCSE commissioned TALKING MATS University of Stirling project to incorporate student voice into the components of Inclusive practice.	Q1 2027 A National programme of Teacher Professional Learning (TPL) for Inclusive practice with launch due Q1 2027. Q1 2027 Publication of the Inclusive Practice Guidelines.

NCSE Relate.	NCSE Relate has commenced its two-year programme with schools to develop and support students emotional and behavioural needs. The project is under a research fellowship. The Relate Programme is running from September 2025 to June 2027 involving 375 schools. There are 85 mainstream primary schools, 144 post primary schools and 69 special schools receiving Exploring support and 205 mainstream schools and 16 special schools receiving Discovering support.	Ongoing National Roll-Out of NCSE Relate.
Inclusive Pedagogy review.	NCSE is conducting an Inclusive Pedagogy literature review, the outcomes of which will determine the Plan of Work (POW) of the Education and Curriculum. Q1 2026 The tender process is complete.	Q4 2026 Work is expected to be complete on literature in Autumn 2026 (for publication separately in Spring 2027). This work will directly affect “NCSE Connect – A Quality Practice Framework for All” (former Inclusive Practice Guidelines). Q1 2027 NCSE Quality Practice Framework (NCSE Connect to launch 2027 Q1).
Universal Design for Learning (UDL) pilot.	The Universal Design for Learning (UDL) pilot has entered its second year with an evaluation and externally procured research first draft report due October 2026. Interim report has been compiled for review.	Q1 2027 NCSE to publish final evaluation research report on the UDL pilot.

The Development of Integrated interdisciplinary support service at the heart of NCSE.	An NCSE co-designed, interdisciplinary wrap around service at the heart of service provision: Therapist (Occupational Therapist (OT)/Speech and Language Therapist (SLT)/Visiting Teacher (VT)/Advisor (multi-sectoral) and SENO. 1. Processes, Resources and Delivery. 2. Teacher and SNA Professional learning. 3. Wrap around service in crisis scenarios (placement breakdown/suspension/expulsion). 4. Inter-disciplinary research profile for best practice.	From Q3 2026 - Q3 2027 An interdisciplinary support service for Inclusion will be a fundamental part of the work of the NCSE. 1 and 3 - End to end process mapping is commencing in July 2026 on reduced school day 2. Review of NCSE Advisory Service is underway to include: In-school support In-class support 3. Extended Sustained support for schools under NCSE CONNECT 4. Subject to the continued successful recruitment progress of Education Therapy Service (ETS).
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Our Schools, Our Future Education 2050. To review definitions of inclusive education. Research to be completed during 2026 as part of Our Schools, Our Future Education 2050 Strategy to include what strategies at school or system level are in place in other countries to create an inclusive and equitable educational environment for children and young people who are dealing with wellbeing issues, such as disengagement, anxiety or trauma.	The department's Our Schools, Our Future, Education 2050 project are reviewing definitions of inclusive education that aligns with UNCRPD. DEY has established a high level action group (as one of three Department action groups) to lead on the development of a vision and strategy for high-quality inclusive education as part of Education 2050. In progressing this work, three key pillars for a high-quality inclusive education have been identified, these are: curriculum; inclusion; and wellbeing. This research commenced in Q4 2025. The department's Education 2050 project's Steering Group brings together the views of sections within the DEY, partner organisations and Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS). Synthesis of curriculum and inclusion papers will inform case study approach. Research question will be addressed in 2026: What are the features of curriculum in educational systems in countries that achieve high scores in international assessment tests across both wellbeing and academic domains?	Q3 2026 Interim progress report presented to Management Board in May 2026 and final report due in September 2026. Q1 2028 'Our Schools, Our Future' is due to be delivered.
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2. Support Planning for Children

2.1: Revised legislation should use the term Student Support Plans (SSPs) in place of Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) as the foundation for supports and resources, including a right to appeal.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Legislative revision will be guided by the early rollout of 2.2 below. Insights gained through this process will be used to shape the final legislative amendments.	As per 2.2 below, a group has been established in order to complete actions.	Q1-Q3 2027 Subject to approval by Government, draft Heads of Bill to be prepared and consultation to continue with stakeholders
Examine, once legislative steps have been undertaken (see Recommendation 2.2 below).		Q4 2027- Q1 2028 Pre legislative scrutiny to commence in relation to the Heads of Bill. Q1 2028 – Q4 2029 Progression through the Houses of the Oireachtas to provide updated legislation that legislates for the use of the term Student Support Plans (SSPs) in place of Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) as the foundation for support and resources, including a right to appeal.

2.2: Support to be put in place for the development of an infrastructure for effective Student Support File management and SSP implementation.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Special Education Teaching (SET) guidelines updated.	The SET Guidelines and Indicators of Effective Practice along with examples and templates were published on the 10th December 2024. https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/publications/set-guidelines-and-supporting-documentation-to-aid-schools-in-supporting-childrenyoung-people-with-special-education-needs/	Q4 2024 Completed on schedule and published 10th December 2024.
Review the Autism Good Practice Guidance for Schools	The Autism Good Practice Guidance for Schools is under review, and this also contains comprehensive guidance on support planning	Q4 2026 Completion of the review.
Develop training for educators.	Group to be established to develop training for education stakeholders to embed SET guidelines, indicators and exemplars and on expanding application to special schools.	Q1 2028 Roll out training for educators.
Roll this out in easy to use, child centred templates, for use across the education system to keep the process consistent. Capture insights and learnings from this process to guide future development.		Q3 2028 SSPs are used consistently across schools, with clear guidelines training, and a right to appeal in place.
Special Needs Assistant Workforce Development Plan (SNAWDP).	The published SNA Workforce Development Plan, to replace circular 30/2014 and 71/2011, and accompanying guidance note, includes proposals for a Learning and Development Programme with actions to support SNAs through training opportunities to build their individual capacity and that of the SNA workforce as a whole. The circular provides that SNAs shall be involved in the development, implementation and review of SSPs for students.	Q2 2026 Published the SNA Workforce Development Plan circular and guidance note. DEY will continue collaboration with NCSE and consultation with stakeholders to develop the SNA Learning & Development programme.

3. Assessment of Needs Process (AON)

3.1: The efficiency and timeliness of the AON review educational component process within the context of an inclusive framework of assessment should be improved.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Engage with the NCSE, the HSE, and other relevant stakeholders to review the current AON educational process. Identify areas for improvement. Develop and implement revised procedures to streamline the process. Monitor this on an ongoing basis.	The Department and the NCSE have worked intensively to ensure that the process put in place to support the educational component of the AON fulfils legal obligations and is one that is rooted in existing assessment practices in schools. In finalising the AON process, there has been extensive consultation with the education partners and with individual schools. 80 schools took part in trialling the process and in providing detailed feedback on the guidance documents and resources put in place to support the process. This process was completed in December 2022 and feedback from the schools involved, and stakeholders was incorporated into revised guidance documents and the AON Report of Education Needs form. The Department of Education and the NCSE have put in place comprehensive supports to assist schools in completing the educational component of the HSE's AON process. These include: • A guidance document which provides step by step instructions for the completion of the AON form. • A short video which provides instructions for the completion of the AON form. • Dedicated email support from the NCSE. • Dedicated phone support from NCSE advisors. • An FAQ document which will be updated regularly. • Completed exemplars for different school settings. • Where schools require additional support to that already listed, they can request an in-person support visit from an NCSE advisor to assist in the completion of the AON form. Assessment of Need (AON) Circular 0025/2024 and 0069/2025 published. Guidelines and support provided to schools.	Ongoing Agreed processes and procedures by all relevant parties. Continued engagement to relevant stakeholders to ensure the relevant supports are in place.

4. Inclusive Education

4.1: A roadmap for an inclusive education system should be developed.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
National Forum on Inclusive Education for Students with Special Educational Needs.	The Forum will bring together key stakeholders to develop a shared national vision for inclusive education and identify practical actions to support children and young people with special educational needs across the education system. The initiative forms part of Ireland's ongoing commitment to progressing inclusive education in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and builds on policy advice from the National Council for Special Education (NCSE), which advocates for a system where children and young people are supported to attend schools in their locality to the greatest extent possible.	Q3 2026 Establishment of National Forum on Inclusive Education for Students with Special Educational Needs.
Publish a Roadmap for inclusion with the assistance of the EU's Technical Support Instrument (TSI) programme: - The expected outputs of the project: - One report containing: - an in-depth analysis of current legal framework of both countries - an analysis of national/EU priorities and recommendations regarding specialist provision to support inclusive education in mainstream settings.	Continue work under the Technical Support Instrument (TSI) programme. As part the project the department and agency staff to-date have: - held internal and external consultation - have held 3 in-person workshops with stakeholders including parents, teachers, school leaders and higher education institutions.	Q3 2026 The final outcome, a Roadmap for Inclusive Education has been published. The recommendations will inform work on the development of a model of inclusive education in our schools.

One report on the key findings from the critical analysis of existing stakeholders, as well as existing training programmes and support in place for teachers and school leaders towards inclusive education. • One report containing: i. mapping of system's strengths, challenges, and opportunities for quality inclusive education; ii. identified strategies for addressing each system's needs; iii. lessons learnt from European good practice; iv. identification of common challenges and opportunities. • Capacity-building pilot actions on key priority areas, identified in the previous outputs, with selected target groups. • A roadmap detailing goals, actions, responsible actors, and resources needed (including upskilling of teaching profession and other system capacity building and strengthening activities). • Communication actions and outputs	The department visited schools to carry out student engagement workshops and to capture the student voice. The department and the agency took part in a study visit to Lithuania and Portugal with the intention of compiling a report on relevant EU/EEA country practice examples. Reports on the legislative framework and teacher professional learning have been completed. The Country System Analysis report is finalised and published.	
Traveller and Roma Education Forum.	Traveller and Roma Education Forum was established Nov 2024, met five times to date, ensuring direct community input.	Ongoing Traveller and Roma Education Forum engagement. Q1 2026 The third progress report for TRES Plan for Implementation and Action 2024-2026 was published in January 2026 and the final report will be published in Q3 2026. A new Plan for Implementation and Action 2026-2028 will also be published in Q3 2026.

Traveller and Roma Education Strategy (TRES).	Traveller and Roma Education Strategy (TRES) Oversight Group met three times in 2025, and three progress reports on the Plan for Action and Implementation 2024-2026 were published by January 2026. TRES is a six-year roadmap that strengthens existing work across the full continuum of education early years, primary, post-primary, further and higher education while focusing on equity of access, participation, and outcomes. A new Plan for Action and Implementation 2026-2028 will be published in Q3 2026.	Q3 2024 Publication of the Traveller and Roma Education Strategy (TRES) 2024-2030 and its Plan for Implementation and Action 2024-2026 on 16 July 2024. Ongoing Publish TRES progress reports. Further implementation of the TRES 2024-2030 with two more plans for action and implementation, 2026-2028 and 2028-2030.
A roadmap detailing goals, actions, responsible actors, and resources needed (including upskilling of teaching profession and other system capacity building and strengthening activities).	The DEIS Strategy to 2035 is the first long-term, whole-system approach to addressing educational disadvantage in all schools. This strategy recognises education as central to breaking cycles of disadvantage, lifting children out of poverty, expanding opportunity, and ensuring long-term security. It sets out an ambition to move to a more flexible model of support, so that resources are aligned with each school's level of need as it changes over time. A key action under the DEIS Strategy to 2035 is the introduction of the DEIS Plus scheme. The DEIS Plus scheme will provide enhanced, evidence based supports to a small cohort of primary and post-primary schools with the highest concentrations of children and young people at risk of educational disadvantage.	Q1 2026 The new DEIS Strategy to 2035, its first Implementation Plan 2026-2028, and the DEIS Plus scheme were published in March 2026.

	Schools in the DEIS Plus scheme will receive strengthened, research informed supports across wellbeing, attendance, engagement, guidance, leadership capacity, community partnerships and access to services, including the introduction of a new positive mental health and wellbeing initiative to support a whole school approach to student wellbeing.	
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4.2: A carefully managed transition to full inclusion should be promoted, with adequate access to specialist placements based on children's needs.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Review of Enrolment Circular and supporting schools in implementing the circular. After publication of circular, time is needed for the policy to embed and also identify any issues or queries emerging. It is planned after a full year to engage with NEPS and NCSE/ SENOs to determine if there are any emerging issues out in the school system with the practical implementation and especially around: - transitioning from primary special class to PP Special class - Students from special classes spending time in mainstream classes - Students transitioning fulltime from a special class to mainstream.	Engagement with NEPS and NCSE has commenced around the gathering of data and feedback from schools.	Q1 2025 Circular 0023/2025 Review of Enrolment in a Special Class issued in March 2025.

4.3: Close co-operation between mainstream schools and special schools/classes should be fostered.**Lead Responsible Body: DEY**

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Conduct a survey of mainstream and special schools to identify the benefits of working together. Analyse the findings of the NCSE pilot research to assess school interest and issues. Engage relevant stakeholders, including education professionals to explore practical ways of ensuring effective collaboration. Framework for Inclusive Practice.	Engagement with schools on co-located campuses both mainstream and special schools. Clusters of mainstream and special schools located on campuses are being supported to develop a framework for inclusive practices. A Framework for Inclusive Practice is being developed in collaboration with clusters of primary, special and post-primary schools. The framework, currently being drafted, explores the following five key pillars: • Leadership across the campus. • Staff professional learning on campus. • Teacher mobility across the campus. • Learner mobility across the campus. • Wellbeing / belonging across the campus	Q4 2026 A Framework for Inclusive Practices
Towards inclusion is a pilot funded through the Dormant Accounts Fund.	Towards Inclusion pilot 2025 is now complete and this pilot has continued into 2026.	Ongoing A scaled model to include all special schools is currently being considered.

4.4: The understanding and use of the continuum of support model should be examined.**Lead Responsible Body: DEY**

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
This is linked to recommendation 2.2 above	As per 2.2	As per 2.2

5. Language Use

**5.1: The language and terminology to be used in policy and practice should be clarified, with evidence-informed definitions where these are applicable.
In this context, the name of the NCSE should be reviewed.**

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Establish an expert group to review current terminology. Engage with stakeholders, including education professionals, parents, and advocacy groups. Develop updated guidelines and communication policies for schools.	Group has been established and the DEY is working closely with the National Disability Authority (NDA) to review current terminology under the National Human Rights Strategy for Disabled People. Stakeholder engagement is occurring as part of this important process.	Q3 2026 Clear evidence-based language in policy and practice, supporting inclusion and accessibility across all educational settings.
Our Schools, Our Future, Education 2050 Strategy to review definitions of inclusive education.	For further details on Our Schools, Our Future, refer to recommendation 1.6.	As per 1.6.
NCSE Autism and Behaviour Team to continue to review the terminology guide that has been developed.	NCSE Autism and Behaviour team have established a terminology guide. This is under constant review. NCSE is currently reviewing the terminology used in the sector through the medium of English and Gaeilge. Review conducted with key findings: • The National Council for Special Education (NCSE) acknowledge the variations in language used to describe educational needs and disability as well as the autistic experience. For some individuals, person-first language, for example, “person or individual with autism” is the preferred term. For most, their preference is identity first language (IFL), for example “autistic”.	Ongoing Terminology Guide utilised by NCSE reflective of best practice and policy and disseminated to education sector.

	• NCSE uses strengths focused language when describing autism and autistic learners (like using the word 'differences' instead of 'difficulties'). As of Q1 2025, NCSE uses language and encourages practice, that is reflective of current research and evidence. This language is reflected in NCSE training opportunities for schools and Stakeholder engagements. Q3 2025 NCSE has produced and now disseminates a video in training opportunities for schools which identifies the appropriate use of language for schools and stakeholders.	Q3 2025 Video produced.
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6. Rights of the Child

6.1: The age requirements for children with Special Educational Needs in special schools should be re-evaluated.		
Lead Responsible Body: DEY		
Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
The department will review the designation of special schools as primary schools with a view to aligning, where appropriate, the practice and provision for post-primary aged students in special schools with their peers in mainstream post-primary schools and post-primary special classes. Examine current upper age limits and in special schools and implement the outcome of the review ahead of special school admission processes for the 2027/2028 schoolyear.	The department has introduced a number of targeted supports for post-primary students in special schools in recent years. This includes: • the allocation of additional teaching hours to deliver post-primary subjects. • the introduction of and rollout of support and guidance for the new senior cycle Level 1 & Level 2 programmes which includes special schools. • enhanced capitation rates for post-primary aged students with effect from the 2026/2027 school year. Special schools have autonomy to recruit post-primary registered teachers.	Q4 2026 A report outlining findings and recommendations from the review. Recommendations implemented to take effect from the 2027/2028 schoolyear.

6.2: Educational reforms should be centred on upholding children's equal rights to access and participate in education.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Education Convention. The Convention will meet four times over weekends in March, May, September and November 2026 to discuss key issues about the future of education. The Convention will comprise 150 people across 4 groups: Children and young people (30 people). - Parents and guardians (30 people). - School employees and early years educators (30 people). - Education stakeholders (60 people).	Two of the four meetings of the Convention have taken place, the first in Athlone in March and the second in Limerick in May. The next meeting will take place in Sligo in September with the fourth meeting scheduled to take place in November. It is anticipated that the Convention will report on its findings and recommendations in early 2027. The agenda for the Convention was approved by Government in May and was informed by a National Conversation in which over 42,000 took part, either through completing a survey, uploading a submission, or attending a school community engagement or regional event.	Q2 2027 The Convention's agenda will be informed by a national conversation which commenced in 2026. It will look at what is working well, what challenges need attention, and what changes may be needed in the years ahead. Recommendations from the Convention will inform a new long-term Department of Education and Youth strategy for schools in Ireland.
Student Participation Implementation Plan.	The DEY Student participation implementation plan was published in October 2024. Implementation of the actions is progressing well, including the work to develop guidance to support the establishment of student councils in all schools.	2028 Publication of student participation Implementation Report. Publication of guidance for primary, special and post-primary schools to support the establishment of student councils.
Define a student voice toolkit.	NCSE Create is underway on a 2 year, evidence-based led programme, with year 1 underway. The programme is intended to define a student voice toolkit for schools nationwide. Year 1 is underway with 19 schools, primary, post-primary, gaelscoileanna and special schools. The project is evidence based, following an extensive literature review. Schools will compile a small research project on a chosen tool relevant to their student demographic.	Q3 2027 Following a two-year pilot, NCSE will produce a student voice and co-production support toolkit for schools nationwide.

6.3: Educational reforms should prioritise children's wellbeing and safety, recognising that these are enablers of children's educational progress.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Continue to implement Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying and publish annual Cineáltas implementation reports.	Implementation of Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying (2023-2027). The first implementation report for Cineáltas was published on 2nd July 2025 and advises that during 2023, implementation of 56 of the 61 actions commenced, with five of those actions being fully implemented. The Cineáltas Implementation Report for 2024, which was published on 5th January 2026, advises that, in the first two years of implementation of Cineáltas, 20 of the 61 actions have been fully implemented, with all remaining actions in progress. 17 actions are ongoing in nature, and they will be implemented continuously over the implementation period.	2023-2027 Implement the 61 actions contained in Cineáltas. Actions which have progressed include the updating of the 2013 anti-bullying procedures for schools, establishing a student participation unit in the department, provision of counselling supports to primary schools, updated training for teachers and the development of a wellbeing promotion inspection model.
SNA Development Workforce Plan to be published.	Details are contained within recommendation 2.2.	As per 2.2.
The Department of Education and Youth is undertaking a wide review to produce an updated Wellbeing Policy and implementation plan for its successor from 2026 onwards to be aligned to continued, adapted or new areas of focus with timelines and performance indicators.	The department's approach to supporting wellbeing and mental health is set out in its Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice which can be found at Wellbeing in education (https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/campaigns/wellbeing-in-education/) and informs the Department's extensive and ongoing work in the area of student wellbeing.	Q4 2026 Produce Wellbeing Policy. Enhanced wellbeing and safety for all students.

Research to be completed during 2026 as part of Our Schools, Our Future Education 2050 Strategy to include what strategies at school or system level are in place in other countries to create an inclusive and equitable educational environment for children and young people who are dealing with wellbeing issues, such as disengagement, anxiety or trauma.	For further details on Our Schools, Our Future, refer to recommendation 1.6.	As per 1.6.
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6.4: In-school therapy and early intervention services should be available for students who need them.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Design and development of the model of service for the Education Therapy Service (ETS).	Engagement is ongoing with the HSE and other existing children's services to ensure the model of service for the ETS adds value to the school system and works in a coordinated, complementary way with existing services. The governance structure includes a national oversight group across health and education, a steering group with responsibility for the design and development of the ETS and an expert advisory group to ensure service delivery is in line with best practice and is evidence informed.	Q4 2027 Therapy supports in all special schools by December 2027. Rollout of ETS to special classes and mainstream schools thereafter.
Engage with relevant stakeholders to ensure adequate college places for Health and Social Care Professionals (HSCP) graduates to deliver an Education Therapy Service.	DEY alongside the Department for Health, Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, the Department of Children, Disability and Equality and the HSE are working together to ensure an increased supply of clinicians in key clinical disciplines including speech and language therapists, occupational therapists and physiotherapists as a matter of priority. As a result of this engagement the	Ongoing

	Government approved an increase of 30 OT and SLT training places for 2025. DEY officials will continue to work with the relevant stakeholders on increasing of the supply of graduate therapists. The ETS will develop a practice development framework, ensuring an increase in the number of clinical placements available to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and students' therapists.	
Initially, rollout of ETS special schools commencing with 45 special schools later in the 2025/2026 school year and phased rollout thereafter.	The service commenced in 45 special schools in the 2025/26 school year. These 45 schools formed the initial clusters of schools for phase I of the ETS implementation. There was strong engagement with these schools in preparation for the assignment of the therapists.	Q2 2026
Subsequent rollout to special classes and mainstreams schools on a phased basis from 2028.	It is envisaged, depending on therapeutic resources, that the ETS will be rolled out to special classes and mainstream schools on a phased basis from 2028. In the interim the ETS provide two additional strands of supports which are available to all schools: Sustained In-School Therapy and Regional Therapy Supports. Sustained in-school therapy support (SIT) is provided to schools for a defined period of 18-24 months in line with the School Inclusion Model. 22 schools in the Eastern region and 28 schools in the Western region are receiving support under SIT in the 2025/2026 school year. Regional therapy support provides Teacher Professional Learning (TPL) with follow on/implementation support by NCSE therapists. The focus of this support is to build the capacity of schools and to embed the learning from TPL into their teaching practice, through In-school coaching and co-facilitation of interventions, strategies and resources. Regional Therapy Supports are available nationally for the 2025/2026 school year.	2028

7. Closer Government Stakeholder Engagement

7.1: Communication and co-ordination between all Government stakeholders and departments / agencies on inclusive education should be enhanced.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
The National Human Rights Strategy for Disabled People 2025-2030 has 5 pillars, Inclusive Learning and Education, Employment, Independent Living and Active Participation in Society, Wellbeing and Health, and Transport and Mobility. This is a whole-of-Government strategy that encompasses working across government, including DEY.	National Human Rights Strategy for Disabled People 2025-2030 was published in September 2025. The Department of Education and Youth is lead or co-lead on a number of actions contained in Pillar 1 of the strategy – inclusive education. Priority actions for the Department include transitions and the SNA workforce development plan.	Ongoing There will be a Programme Plan of Action every two years. In addition, progress reports on the agreed actions will be published twice yearly.
Our Schools, Our Future Education 2050.	For further details on Our Schools, Our Future, refer to recommendation 1.6.	As per 1.6.
First 5 Transitions Working Group.	The department is represented on the First 5 Transitions Working Group chaired by DCDE. This group was established in December 2025. The First 5 Transitions Working Group is an inter departmental group (DEY, DCDE, DFHERIS) tasked with developing a National Transitions Policy.	Q4 2026 A report on National Transitions Policy expected. Q2 2027 Develop policy on transition support.
The department's Inspectorate has been undertaking a comprehensive research and evaluation programme on the themes of access, participation, inclusion and equity in education.	The Inspectorate has published the first outcomes of that work in the Inspectorate Report (2021-2023) and Thematic Review. The Inspectorate Annual Report (2024) and Thematic Review was published in November 2025.	The Inspectorate has published three further reports in 2026 and will publish a final report on provision in special classes in post-primary schools in Q3.

8. Workforce Professional Learning

8.1: School leaders, teachers and SNAs should be supported to receive appropriate and consistent professional learning and development for effective inclusive practice.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Research to be completed during 2026 as part of Our Schools, Our Future Education 2050 Strategy to include what strategies at school or system level are in place in other countries to create an inclusive and equitable educational environment for children and young people who are dealing with wellbeing issues, such as disengagement, anxiety or trauma.	This research commenced in Q4 2025. For further details on Our Schools, Our Future, refer to recommendation 1.6.	As per 1.6.
Publication of the Inclusive Practice Guidelines on an inter-disciplinary basis (advisory, therapy, VT and SENO).	For further details on Inclusive Practice Guidelines, refer to recommendation 1.6.	As per 1.6.
NCSE to develop a platform for school training. Learning Management System (LMS) shortly to go to tender. The NCSE has reviewed its progression learning programme to include a proactive, supportive and responsive programme tailored to school communities learning needs. The programme is multi-modal to support schools incorporating as much sustained support as possible to embed practice in school communities over time and to liaise with existing school Education and Training Board (ETB), Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools (ACCS), Joint Management Board (JMB) and Irish Primary Principals' Network (IPPN) communities. ETB, ACCS, JMB and IPPN network communities.	The NCSE Learning Management System (LMS) will produce a platform for school learning, a lens on individual school training programme engagement, and a multi-modal programme of school engagement with inclusive practice.	Beginning Q4 2026 LMS is procured – the Moodle learning platform has been procured which will launch its first phase in September 2026 with a view to the continued multi-modal programme of school professional learning and practice development opportunities in inclusive practice.

SNA Workforce Development Plan.	For further details on the Special Needs Assistant Workforce Development Plan, refer to recommendation 2.2.	As per 2.2.
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8.2: Approaches that support inclusive practice should be integrated across the continuum of teacher education, from initial teacher education to in-service professional learning and development.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Engage with the Teaching Council and relevant stakeholders to determine the best approach for professional learning in inclusive education.	In October 2020 the Teaching Council published revised Céim Standards for Initial Teacher Education (ITE). The revised standards place inclusive education as one of seven core elements which shall underpin all aspects of programmes of ITE. All new and existing ITE programmes were aligned with Céim from 2022. The Council's view of a truly inclusive approach to professional practice recognises that teachers encounter a diverse range of needs in the course of their teaching, regardless of setting. In October 2024, the Teaching Council provided a report on the implementation of Céim, with a particular focus on Global Citizenship and Inclusive Education. The report provides a snapshot at system level of the range of approaches and innovative practice reflective of different contexts, in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), across the State. On review of the report's findings, in March 2025, the DEY initiated a process with the Teaching Council to move towards a mandatory assessed placement period in a special education need (SEN) setting for all student teachers. In seeking to gain a deeper understanding of the current landscape of school placement provision in special education settings, the Teaching Council issued a survey across all TPL providers. Subject to Council approval, a Guidance Note for HEIs will then be developed, around an assessed student placement period in a SEN setting, working toward interim enactment in September 2026.	Q3 2026 Guidance note for HEIs on supporting school placement in SEN settings.

Develop and implement training programs and resources for school staff.	Oide, in the design of all Teacher and Professional Learning (TPL), include advice for teachers on inclusive practice, where relevant. For type core 1 designs, a design review day is held which is attended by relevant stakeholders including the NCSE. The NCSE representative provides feedback on the designs and advice on inclusive practice. Type 2 and Type 3 designs ensure inclusive pedagogy is central to the key messages. At primary level, Oide provide inclusive practice (Professional Learning Events) PLEs including Team Teaching in-school support as well as supporting English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners through bespoke in-school, in-person and online PLEs. Oide also provides a full day Fostering an Inclusive Culture in Primary Schools PLE which supports teachers and school leaders to foster an inclusive culture where all learners are valued as individuals and enabled to reach their full potential. Oide have a dedicated Inclusive education section in post-primary that provided TPL for L1 and L2 programmes in Junior and Senior Cycle and team teaching to support inclusion.	Ongoing
Publication of the Inclusive Practice Guidelines.	For further details on Inclusive Practice Guidelines, refer to recommendation 1.6.	As per 1.6.
NCSE to develop a platform for school training.	For further details on Learning Management System (LMS), refer to recommendation 8.1.	As per 8.1.

8.3: The introduction of mandatory professional learning for all teachers relating to special education should be considered where appropriate, possibly as a condition of registration.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Publication of the Inclusive Practice Guidelines.	For further details on Inclusive Practice Guidelines, refer to recommendation 1.6.	As per 1.6.
NCSE to produce a platform for school training.	For further details on Learning Management System (LMS), refer to recommendation 8.1.	As per 8.1.

Immersive Special Education Learning Period (ISELP).	Initiation of the development of guidance for an Immersive Special Education Learning Period to be undertaken during ITE undertaken through 2025. Finalisation of the ISELP guidance. Supporting HEIs in the implementation of ISELP. This survey was issued between March and May 2025 and received responses across all 53 accredited primary and post-primary programmes. The findings from the survey, along with a subsequent data mapping exercise, informed the development of an initial draft Guidance Note between September and December 2025. The final Guidance (ISELP Guidance Note) which outlines an Immersive Special Education Learning Period (ISELP), was approved by the Teaching Council Board at its March 2026 meeting and was issued to HEIs in April 2026.	Q3 2026 This guidance will apply to all primary and post-primary programmes of ITE from September 2026. Q4 2027 Findings from the ISELP will inform the Céim Review in 2027.
Report on Implementation of Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education.	In 2024, the Teaching Council completed the Report on Implementation of Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education following the conclusion of the second cycle of accreditation. It was agreed with the Department of Education that the Teaching Council would provide a report on standards, quality and good practice in initial teacher education, based on findings from the second cycle of accreditation. The report had a particular focus on the core elements of inclusive education and Global Citizenship Education. The report also offered the opportunity to present an overview of ITE provision, nationally. The report findings showed that HEIs are all doing extensive work on Inclusive Education, particularly in SEN, as part of the requirements set out in Céim.	Completed. This report was completed in 2024 and made available to the DEY in Q4 2024.
Céim review.	The Teaching Council commenced a review of the Céim standards in January 2026. The review is unfolding across six stages, is research informed, attuned to national priorities and includes broad stakeholder engagement as a cornerstone of the process.	Q1 2026 - Q1 2028

Review of the Droichead Induction Framework Policy.	The Review of the Droichead Induction Framework Policy, which was completed in March 2025, saw extensive stakeholder consultation throughout the course of the review, in the form of interviews, focus groups, and plenary sessions, with feedback collected from these sessions. Two of the key areas of focus within the review were Tailored Supports for diverse classroom settings, regarding support and resources needed for Newly Qualified Teachers (NQT) in areas of Teaching for Diversity, Teaching for Inclusion and Leadership in Teaching. Another key focus area was Droichead's alignment with Céim and Cosán, and the ability for NQTs to implement the skills which they have learned in ITE, as a Newly Qualified Teacher. A number of stakeholders were met as part of this review process, including the Higher Education Institutions (HEI), the DEY and Inspectorate, management bodies, principal bodies, parents bodies, teaching unions, Association for Higher Education Access & Disability (AHEAD) and AslAm. One of resulting findings from the review informed an update to policy which formally allows for NQTs to complete their Droichead process in a SEN setting. This change will also enable Oide to develop additional resources for supporting NQTs in these settings. Additionally, the Cluster Meeting structure in the Policy has been updated, to allow for a General, then Focused Cluster Meeting. This focused meeting will allow for context-specific meetings aligned to the NQTs development needs.	Q1 2026 The updated Droichead Policy has been published on the Teaching Council website, as of January 2026, along with key information about the changes mentioned above, in advance of the commencement of the updated policy changes in September 2026 - Droichead: The Integrated Professional Induction Framework Professional Learning The Teaching Council. Q2 2026 Dissemination of new policy to all registered teachers, HEIs and stakeholder organisations. Q3 2026 Implementation of revised Droichead policy.
Droichead Quality Assurance.	The review of the Droichead Quality Assurance process is currently underway, following the review of the Droichead Policy. This review will look at how the Droichead Policy can continue to be quality assured, and will consider the findings from the Droichead review, in any changes that may come to the process.	Q4 2026 Review to be completed.

8.4: Exposure to a variety of placement options during pre-service / initial teacher education should be increased.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
As per recommendation 8.2, a guidance for HEI will be developed.	In March 2025, the DEY initiated a process with the Teaching Council to move towards a mandatory assessed placement period in a special education need (SEN) setting for all student teachers. In seeking to gain a deeper understanding of the current landscape of school placement provision in special education settings, the Teaching Council issued a survey across all TPL providers. Subject to Council approval, a Guidance Note for Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) will then be developed, around an assessed student placement period in a SEN setting, working toward interim enactment in September 2026.	Q3 2026 Guidance note for HEIs on supporting school placement in SEN settings.
Special School Student Placement.	The Special School Student Placement was introduced in 2024. Under this initiative, graduate teachers and final-year Professional Master of Education (PME) student teachers were given the opportunity to work as student teachers in Special Schools from the 3rd week of May until the conclusion of the school's Summer Programme. Q1 2024 - Q1 2025 Special School Student Placement: In 2024, 40 student teachers took up this new role. In 2025, 53 student teachers took up this role.	Ongoing Student teachers gain an enhanced knowledge of working in a special school setting, providing them with valuable practical experience which assists in preparing them for future roles within the education sector.

8.5: Universal Design for Learning (UDL) should be established as a foundational principle underpinning teacher education for inclusive practice and curriculum development.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
UDL Pilot ongoing.	For further details on UDL Pilot, refer to recommendation 1.6.	As per 1.6.
Inclusive Pedagogy review.	For further details on Inclusive Pedagogy review, refer to recommendation 1.6.	As per 1.6.

8.6: Positive attitudes among educators, peers and school communities towards students with special educational needs should be further encouraged, fostering a sense of belonging and inclusivity in schools and higher education institutions.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
SNA Workforce Development Plan.	For further details on the Special Needs Assistant Workforce Development Plan, refer to recommendation 2.2.	As per 2.2.
Action plan for the Inclusive Practice Guidelines.	For further details on Inclusive Practice Guidelines, refer to recommendation 1.6.	As per 1.6.
NCSE Create.	For further details on student voice toolkit/NCSE Create, refer to recommendation 6.2.	As per 6.2.

9. Transitions

9.1: Transition processes should be standardised with a rights-based approach within education, including the improvement of planning and data sharing.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
To develop policy on transition support.	The department is represented on the First 5 Transitions Working Group chaired by DCDE. This group was established in December 2025. The First 5 Transitions Working Group is an inter departmental group (DEY, DCDE, DFHERIS) tasked with developing a National Transitions Policy. For further detail on transitions, refer to recommendation 4.2.	Q4 2026 Work is ongoing with a report on a National Transitions Policy expected. Q2 2027 Develop an implementation plan on transitions supports.
Comprehensive Employment Strategy (CES) Transitions pilot.	The CES Transitions Pilot programme in 41 special schools has been extended for the 2025/26 school year. In addition, the Department, through the Dormant Accounts Fund is supporting the WALK programme who are working with an additional ten schools to support the transition of students to adult life. Both programmes are subject to an external evaluation. The evaluation of CES 2022-2024 is available now on the research section of the NCSE website. The main points are: - Dedicated time to plan for transitions. - Majority of students felt prepared for the next step. - Open new pathways and options for students. - High family engagement. - Increased teacher capacity through TPL. - Funding needed to travel to different post school locations. - More national consistency needed regarding places, timelines, funding etc. in post school options.	Evaluations for both programmes have been completed. A transition support service for all special schools has been announced and will commence in September 26. The programme will provide an additional 34 teaching days to special schools to support transitions.

9.2: Coherent transition policies should be established across Government Departments.**Lead Responsible Body: DEY**

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
First 5 Transitions.	The department is represented on the First 5 Transitions Working Group chaired by DCDE (as per 9.1).	Q4 2026 Work is ongoing with a report on a National Transitions Policy expected.
Policy working groups to be established between the DCDE DFHERIS and DEY. Implementation plan to be agreed. Explore the optimal conditions for supportive transition from ELC to primary school.	Developing a joint policy on transitions in, to and through early learning and care and onto school will require cross-Departmental work to address policy barriers. DCDE and DFHERIS currently engaging with DEY as lead in establishing National Steering Group on Transitions.	Q2 2027 Develop policy on transition support. Agreed joint policy on transitions with implementation plan for transitions from home to early learning and care and on to primary school.

9.3: Clear processes for planning and supporting students as they transition between different stages of education should be developed.**Lead Responsible Body: DEY**

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
SNA Workforce Development Plan.	For further details on the Special Needs Assistant Workforce Development Plan, refer to recommendation 2.2.	As per 2.2.
First 5 Transitions. Policy working groups established between the DCDE, DFHERIS and DEY. Implementation plan to be agreed.	For further details on the First 5 Transitions, refer to recommendation 9.2.	As per 9.2.

9.4: Consistent data collection methods should be implemented.**Lead Responsible Body: DEY**

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Data sharing agreement between NCSE and Better Start.	NCSE and Better Start (Pobal) are working to develop a data sharing agreement to ensure data is available across early learning and care and primary school stages.	Q3 2026 Data sharing arrangement and agreement to use data to facilitate coherent transitions from early learning and care to primary school
Develop a central database for schools to record information on students with SEN. Provide training and guidelines for schools on effective use of the database. NCSE to develop a platform for school training.	For further details on Learning Management System (LMS), refer to recommendation 8.1.	As per 8.1.



10. Resources

10.1: In keeping with the earlier recommendation regarding Student Support Planning, Student Support Files should be used as a key basis for resource allocation and school profiling.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Use data collected from Student Support Files to inform resource allocation and school profiling. Engage with stakeholders to ensure effective implementation.	Initial exploratory analysis of data held in school underway to inform how this can be used effectively, consistently, and transparently as a basis for future allocation models.	Q3 2026 Data analysis to inform next steps.

10.2: The possibility of resourcing schools through unified Special Education Teacher allocation model that includes mainstream and special class settings should be examined.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Explore the feasibility of a unified allocation model for all SET resources in mainstream schools, incorporating special classes. Ensure that any proposal that is developed includes appropriate engagement with stakeholders.	Existing data in relation to SET mainstream allocations and special class allocations is being examined along with enrolment data to look at possible parameters that could be considered.	Q2 2027 Through engagement with stakeholders, establish if the development and implementation of a unified SET allocation system is appropriate so that schools can be resourced to meet the needs of all children with identified need in a school.

11. Irish Language Education

11.1: There should be comprehensive professional training and development on Irish-medium education for teachers and Special Needs Assistants (SNAs).

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
SNA Workforce Development Plan.	Actions are included in Pillar 3 of the plan - Learning and Development, to meet Irish language training needs of SNAs. For further details on the Special Needs Assistant Workforce Development Plan, refer to recommendation 2.2.	As per 2.2.
Polasaí don Oideachas Lán-Ghaeilge / Policy for Irish-medium Education (POLG).	DEY published the policy and the first action plan in November 2025. The central vision of the policy is that high-quality Irish-medium education will be available to all in settings that are inclusive and multicultural. The first action plan (2025-27) for the policy for Irish-medium education (published in November 2025) includes a number of actions in this area: - Establish a network for organisations dealing with special educational needs in the Irish-medium education sector. - Establish communities of practice for SNAs in Irish-medium schools.	Q4 2025 Policy and first Action Plan published. Q2 2026 Establish a network for organisations dealing with special educational needs in the Irishmedium education sector. Q3 2026 Establish communities of practice for SNAs in Irish-medium schools.

	- Develop and deliver supports for SNAs in Irish-medium schools, including language supports and training on immersion education. Publish a guide on special educational needs for Irish-medium and Gaeltacht primary schools. - Examine possibilities to establish a postgraduate diploma programme in inclusive and special education through the medium of Irish. Further actions will be included in successive action plans. The policy for Irish-Medium Education outside the Gaeltacht can be found at Policy for Irish-Medium Education outside of the Gaeltacht.	Q4 2026 Develop and deliver supports for SNAs in Irish-medium schools, including language supports and training on immersion education. Q3 2027 Examine possibilities to establish a postgraduate diploma programme in inclusive and special education through the medium of Irish.
NCSE engagement.	NCSE has engaged significantly with COGG, An Foras Pátrúnachta and Gaeloideachas to develop: An NCSE Advisory service operating as Gaeilge. An NCSE Special Education Needs Organiser (SENO) service fluent as Gaeilge. NCSE has recruited two full-time NCSE advisors operating through the medium of Gaeilge on key NCSE related TPL opportunities.	Ongoing A comprehensive TPL programme for Gaelscoileanna and Gaelcholáistí and Gaeltacht schools.

11.2: Students with special educational needs should be supported to access the supports they require without compromising their Irish language learning, particularly for those transitioning from Irish-medium primary schools.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Polasaí don Oideachas Lán-Ghaeilge / Policy for Irish-medium Education (POLG).	There are a number of actions in the first action plan for the Policy for Irish-Medium Education outside of the Gaeltacht (POLG). These include: - Increasing the provision of TPL for teachers in relation to SEN. - Ensuring awareness (of families, schools, education professionals) that Irish-Medium Education (IME) is appropriate for learners with SEN, by communications and facilitation campaign. - The commissioning of a programme to support learners with literacy difficulties such as dyslexia. - Provide opportunities for education professionals to improve their Irish. - Work with education professional organisations to ensure that families and schools are given research-based advice in relation to learners with special educational needs in Irish-medium educational settings.	Q4 2025 Policy was published in November 2025. Ongoing Increase provision of TPL for teachers in relation to SEN. Q2 2026 Development of communications and facilitation campaign. Delivery ongoing once developed. Q2 2027 Commission a programme to support learners with literacy difficulties such as dyslexia. Q3 2027 Provision of research-based advice.

11.3: Provision of tailored assistance and resources to Irish medium schools through the NCSE should be increased.**Lead Responsible Body: DEY**

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
NCSE Irish Language Co-Ordinator.	Irish-language Co-ordinator for the NCSE was appointed in January 2025.	Completed Q1 2025.
NCSE engagement.	For further details on NCSE Engagement, refer to recommendation 11.1.	As per 11.1.

11.4: The access of children with special educational needs to places in Gaelscoileanna and Gaelcholáistí should be enhanced.**Lead Responsible Body: DEY**

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Polasaí don Oideachas Lán-Ghaeilge / Policy for Irish-medium Education (POLG).	The POLG is seeking to expand Irish Medium Education provision, which would give students with special educational needs more opportunities to receive their education through Irish. A Taskforce on Models of Provision for Irish-Medium Education has been established as a key action under the POLG. The taskforce will facilitate collaboration between the department and key stakeholders to co-design approaches to increasing the provision of Irish-medium education. The work of the taskforce will be guided by the vision that high-quality Irish-medium education will be available to all in settings that are inclusive and multicultural.	Q4 2026 Report of taskforce to be completed.

11.5: Where possible, diagnostic and standardised testing materials should be specifically in Irish, rather than relying on translations of English versions.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Development and updating of diagnostic testing as Gaeilge is being prioritised by the Education Research Centre (ERC). COGG to work with relevant organisations to explore the gaps in relation to assessment during Q2 2026.	Preparation for the validation of the Drumcondra Tests of Early Literacy (DTEL) and Early Numeracy (DTEN) is ongoing, including for the Irish language versions of these tests. The Irish language version of DTEL - Triail Luathlitearthachta Dhroim Conrach (TLLDC) – is a unique assessment of Irish literacy with all material developed in Irish, rather than translated. As the mathematics curriculum is the same in Irish- and English-medium schools, it is considered appropriate for the numeracy test to be equivalent in both languages. The Irish version of DTEN - Triail Luathuimhearthachta Dhroim Conrach (TLUDC) – is a translation of the English version of the test but the test was piloted in both languages. Preparation for piloting the redeveloped standardised tests of Irish reading and listening at primary level is ongoing.	Ongoing
The Measúnú agus Diagnóisic Litearthachta don Iarbhunscoil – Gaeilge (MDLI-G).	The Measúnú agus Diagnóisic Litearthachta don Iarbhunscoil – Gaeilge (MDLI-G) has been developed by the Department of Education and Youth, through the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) in collaboration with the Educational Research Centre (ERC). Development of the assessment began in Autumn 2021 and aimed to create a parallel test that assesses Irish literacy, sharing the same structure as Post-Primary Assessment and Diagnosis – English (PPAD-E), with bespoke content developed specifically for Irish-medium schools. The MDLI-G offers Irish-medium post-primary schools subtests to assess Word Reading, Reading Comprehension, Spelling, Reading Fluency and Writing. The MDLI-G is the first Irish-normed test for literacy at post-primary level. The MDLI-G is appropriate for First-Year and Third-Year students for administration in the Autumn term and was published in Autumn 2025. The test also provides a suite of resources to schools including the scoring and reporting tool, administration and marking and scoring manuals as well as training videos. The MDLI-G offers reports and recommendations for participating students relevant to their area of need and bespoke to the context of Irish-medium education. Schools are currently able to purchase the newly developed test from the ERC. https://www.erc.ie/studies/programme-of-work/measunu-agus-diagnoisic-litearthachta-don-iarbhunscoil-ghaeilge-standardisation-mdli-g/	Ongoing Training for staff on administering assessments in Irish. Availability of specialist assessment reports in Irish. Provision of additional resources to support Irish-medium assessments.

12. School Buildings and Location

12.1: Suitable building designs and physical spaces that support inclusion should be used, with careful consideration of language and terminology, such as “inclusive school” instead of “campus”.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Technical Guidance Documents / School Design Guides (TGDs / SDGs). Continue to review and revise school design guidance based on inclusivity and the continued development of curriculums and learning and teaching methods. For example, the development of design guidance for collaborative and creative learning spaces in schools which cater for all children and young people equally.	To facilitate the design of school buildings the DEY has developed a suite of Technical Guidance Documents (TGDs) for schools and School Design Guides (SDGs) on all aspects of school design, with a view to offering better guidance to school authorities and Design Teams. These have been in operation for a number of years and are continually reviewed and updated based on an ongoing policy of research and feedback. School Design Guide SDG-02-04 - Primary & Post Primary School Specialist Accommodation for Pupils with Special Educational Needs published in April 2021, which includes guidance on inclusive educational environments.	Q4 2025 The publication of specific updated design team procedures and school design guidance. These documents are available at the following link School Design Guidance.

12.2: Special schools should be located within the heart of communities, wherever possible.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Forward Planning.	Forward planning for special schools and special class placements is a continual process involving close collaboration by the department's Special Education Section, Planning and Building Unit and the NCSE. The process is overseen by each of the assistant secretary generals of the department's Special Education Section and Planning and Building Unit.	2025-2027 20 new special schools have been established in recent years including 5 new special schools for the 2025/26 school year and 4 new special schools for the 2026/2027 school year. Continued expansion, whether through newly established special schools or expanding capacity at existing special schools, is under ongoing consideration

13. Curriculum Development

13.1: Life and vocational skills education should be incorporated into the curriculum, particularly for students transitioning out of post-primary education, in collaboration with their parents.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
To provide information to inform guidance on Transition policy going forward.	The CES Transitions Pilot programme in 41 special schools was extended for the 2025/26 school year. A new transitions programme, scaled to all special schools, was recently announced. The new programme will provide each special schools with an addition 34 teaching days per year to support student transitions.	Q2 2026 External evaluation of the CES pilot transitions programme was completed.

13.2: Activity-based, multi-sensory approaches to learning, teaching and assessment in curriculum design should be encouraged, underpinned by the principles of Universal Design for Learning.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Inclusive Practice Guidelines.	For further details on Inclusive Practice Guidelines, refer to recommendation 1.6.	As per 1.6.
NCSE Create.	For further details on student voice toolkit/NCSE Create, refer to recommendation 6.2.	As per 6.2.
Our Schools, Our Future Education 2050.	For further details on Our Schools, Our Future, refer to recommendation 1.6.	As per 1.6..

13.3: Consideration should be given to the development of customised curriculum options for exceptionally able students**Lead Responsible Body: DEY**

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Engage with relevant stakeholders to explore needs and priorities. Review and analyse approaches to customised curriculum options for exceptionally able students in other jurisdictions.	In addition to the ongoing work of the steering group, the department is exploring a number of approaches to test best practice and to create a network of schools and education centres throughout the country that can provide support and advice for exceptionally gifted students in their region. Saibhriú: This pilot programme fosters local collaboration between primary and post-primary schools to establish how they can most effectively work together to support the needs of students who are exceptionally able and gifted. The pilot is being extended for the 2026/27 school year.	Q4 2026 Expected completion of evaluation for Saibhriú.
Summer programme for students.	Summer Programme for Students: In 2025 two schools participated in a summer programme for exceptionally gifted students in their locality. This programme was funded through the existing Summer Programme scheme and was in addition to the current programmes running in the schools. An additional two schools have been invited to participate in the programme in Summer 2026.	Q4 2026 Review of the Summer Programme in 2 schools.

14. Parental Involvement and Rights

14.1: Boards of Management should be encouraged to actively engage and consult with parents on matters related to their children's education.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Continue to progress the Education (Student and Parent Charter) Bill through the Houses of the Oireachtas and develop Charter Guidelines, which will include complaints procedures for parents and students, as provided for under the Bill.	For further details on the Education (Student and Parent Charter) Bill, refer to recommendation 1.3.	As per 1.3.
NCSE Engagement.	NCSE progresses a programme of parental engagement annually and with Advocacy and Parental Groups. NCSE has established a parental voice working group to identify the elements of a parental voice forum terms of reference (TOR). Work has been ongoing over 2024/25 and 2025/26 to formulate the TOR and establish a periodic forum. TOR under review.	Design work is underway under NCSE SUPPORT. Establishment of an NCSE parental liaison forum will be re-commenced in Q3 2026 for development work and assigned leadership.

14.2: The rights of parents in educational decision-making processes should be clarified and reinforced, recognising the vital role parents play in understanding and supporting their children’s educational needs.		
Lead Responsible Body: DEY		
Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
The Education (Student and Parent Charter) Bill has passed the Seanad and is due to progress to Committee Stage in the Dáil in 2026.	For further details on the Education (Student and Parent Charter) Bill, refer to recommendation 1.3.	As per 1.3.
NCSE Engagement.	For further details on NCSE Engagement, refer to recommendation 14.1.	As per 14.1.



15. Student Support Services

15.1: Age-appropriate wellbeing supports and mental health services should be available to students when required.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Keep resources reviewed and up to date.	A dedicated wellbeing portal has been established, bringing together all the wellbeing supports and resources that have been developed by the department. The department's support services are available at https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/campaigns/wellbeing-in-education/ .	Q4 2026 Keep wellbeing portal resources reviewed and up to date.
Continue to add to Neart offerings to post-primary schools through additional eLearning, webinars, regional conferences and podcasts.	NearT supports post-primary schools through resources, webinars, in-person events and eLearning courses for school staff, Student Support Teams and parents, delivered by Jigsaw in partnership with NEPS. https://jigsaw.ie/neart/	Q4 2026 Nearth support services will be delivered.
The Department of Education and Youth to publish the external evaluation of both strand 1 and strand 2 of the Counselling in Primary Schools Pilot, which has been completed by the Centre for Effective Services.	In 2023, the department established a pilot programme of Counselling and Mental Health supports for primary schools. Strand 1 is the provision of one-to-one counselling to a small number of children in Cavan, Laois, Leitrim, Longford, Mayo, Monaghan, Tipperary and two clusters of Dublin DEIS schools. Strand 2 is the introduction of Education Wellbeing Teams in cluster areas in Cork, Carlow, Dublin 7 and Dublin 16.	Q3 2026 The external evaluation report has been completed and arrangements for its publication are currently underway. Strand 1 and Strand 2 of Counselling and Mental Health supports to be delivered.

15.2: Support for schools in understanding and engaging with students' social, emotional, academic and behavioural needs should be considered.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
SNA Workforce Development Plan.	For further details on the Special Needs Assistant Workforce Development Plan, refer to recommendation 2.2.	As per 2.2.
NCSE Relate.	For further details on NCSE Relate, refer to recommendation 1.6.	As per 1.6.
Design and development of the model of service for the Education Therapy Service (ETS).	For further details on the model of service for the ETS, refer to recommendation 6.4	As per 6.4.
Engage with relevant stakeholders to ensure adequate college places for Health and Social Care Professionals (HSCP) graduates to deliver a National Therapy Service.	Details are set out under recommendation 6.4 and apply equally here.	Ongoing
Initially, rollout of ETS special schools commencing with 45 special schools later in the 2025/2026 school year and phased rollout thereafter.	The information under recommendation 6.4 is relevant to this action.	Q3 2026
Subsequent rollout to special classes and mainstream schools on a phased basis from 2028.	The details outlined under recommendation 6.4 also applies here.	2028

Provision of casework and support & development service for all schools.	NEPS provides a school-based educational psychological service to all primary, post primary and special schools, through the application of psychological theory and practice to support the wellbeing, academic, social and emotional development of all learners. In addition to a casework service NEPS offer a support and development service to schools. The focus of the NEPS Support & Development Service is to help enhance school systems, to maximise a whole-school approach to creating school environments that are inclusive, flexible and responsive to the needs of all and to build school capability to provide evidence-informed prevention and early intervention support as part of the Continuum of Support framework.	Ongoing. Training of school staff to continue.
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15.3: A data management system should be established to examine the extent of placement breakdowns for mainstream schools, special classes and special schools.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Develop a CAS (Central Application System) and placement process. Provide training for schools and guidelines for parents on using the system.	Q4 2025 Pilot of CAS - Apply to School - with a module on application to special class places, was completed. DEY held ongoing discussions with NCSE for admissions into special class placed throughout 2025/2026. Applications to post-primary will continue to allow for the application to mainstream classes, special classes, or both. Currently schools provide the number of places available for each class type.	Q3 2026 Pilot 2 (Expanding to more schools and more functionality) is planned.

16. Support Services

16.1: The NCSE Council should include representatives with lived experience of disability.

Lead Responsible Body: DEY

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Take into consideration for next council recruitment campaign.	The council includes members nominated by parental, school and disability bodies and representatives with lived experience of disability.	Ongoing
Collaborate with the National Disability Authority (NDA) to nominate members with lived experience of disability for appointment to the NCSE Council. Engage with disability advocacy and representative groups.	Engagement with the NDA takes place in the recruitment of the council members of the NCSE, together with associations for parents, school management organisations and teacher representatives. Section 21 (4) (a) says: 2 members from among persons nominated for such appointment by the National Disability Authority (and equal numbers of men and women shall be nominated by that Authority for that purpose).	Q1 2027 Council renewal. Enhanced representation and insight into policy development, aligned with the principles of the UNCRPD.

16.2: The role of NEPS should be clearly defined and communicated to schools and families.**Lead Responsible Body: DEY**

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Content on gov.ie relating to NEPS to be reviewed.	Engagement with education stakeholders is taking place on an ongoing basis.	Q3 2026 NEPS to review of content on website regarding supports available.
Psychologists to communicate to schools at School Planning Meetings at the start of the school year the range of supports available from NEPS and outline clearly how NEPS can support schools.	Comprehensive information is shared by NEPS psychologists at the start of the school year outlining the range of supports available from NEPS.	Q4 2026 Psychologists communicate with schools regarding NEPS supports.

6.3: A clearer and more streamlined access to SENOs for schools and parents should be introduced.**Lead Responsible Body: DEY**

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Develop a system to facilitate access to and communication with SENOs for schools and parents. Engage with stakeholders to ensure the system meets practical needs.	- Customer Relationship Management Tool (CRMT) under consideration by NCSE. - Quality Service Standards (QSS) project completed with 5 QSS identified. - Stakeholder engagement included over 900 parents and 51 schools.	To be re-considered under new NCSE Strategy Statement. Q4 2026 – Q1 2027 QSS Project findings implemented. Stakeholder engagement completed.

16.4: The provision of support to Special Education Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) to enhance the role should be examined.**Lead Responsible Body: DEY**

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Conduct a review of the current SENCO role and supports to identify opportunities for enhancement. Develop a clear framework outlining the roles, responsibilities, and parameters for the SENCO role to support child centred practice, improve co-ordination, and optimise the use of existing resources. Provide guidance and support to schools in relation to expectations and scope of the role. Create training and professional supports for individuals currently in the SENCO role.	The department recognises the importance of the SENCO role in supporting children's needs and has already secured resources across the past two Budgets to facilitate coordination, including hours in post primary schools.	Q4 2027 Review of SENCO role in primary and post primary to be completed to include clear roles and responsibilities, guidance and training opportunities.

16.5: The role of the SNA should be clearly defined, using the SNA Workforce Development Plan.**Lead Responsible Body: DEY**

Action	Progress to Date	Outcome
Provide clarity for whole school community on the SNA role.	The new circular 0032/2026 and guidance note developed in close consultation with stakeholders provides clarity for the whole school community on the SNA role and duties. For further details on the Special Needs Assistant Workforce Development Plan, refer to recommendation 2.2.	As per 2.2. Provide clarity for whole school community on the SNA role.

Key Terms and Information

- **Céim** – Standards for Initial Teacher Education, developed by the Teaching Council of Ireland, set the requirements for all Initial Teacher Education programs in the country. It serves as a benchmark for teacher education, ensuring that all programs meet specific quality standards necessary for accreditation.
- **CES Transitions pilot** - Comprehensive Employment Strategy (CES) includes a number of actions supporting transitions and progression in education from early childhood through to further education and training and higher education. The NCSE are currently running a transitions pilot in 41 special schools nationwide. The aims of this pilot are:
 - o To explore the various pathways available to students
 - o Build skills and capabilities in the students to help with their transition from school
 - o Lead to more successful transitions
 - o Develop teacher capacity in transitions

The transitions pilot is a result of the actions, goals and commitments of the CES. Each school in the pilot has been designated a cohort of hours to work on transitions to post school options. The work in the schools will be varied and exciting. Schools, who know their students best, are encouraged to be creative and innovative in their practice in how to best lead to a successful transition. One pathway is not being promoted over another, rather the optimal destination for our young people is being looked at. This pilot will help to inform future practice in this area across all special and mainstream schools.

Each school has an allocation of an extra 6 hours per week for a teacher to work specifically on transitions. This work is supported by the NCSE staff through regular visits and shared learning days.

- **Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying** - Provides a collective vision and clear roadmap for how the whole education community and society can work together to prevent and address bullying behaviour in our schools. Find more information at <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/publications/cine%C3%A1ltas-action-plan-on-bullying/>
- **Circular 30/2014 on role of SNA** - Circular to the Management Authorities of Primary Schools, Special Schools, Secondary, Community and Comprehensive Schools and the Chief Executive Officers of the Educational Training Boards. The Special Needs Assistant (SNA) scheme to support teachers in meeting the care needs of some children with special educational needs, arising from a disability. Find more information at <https://circulars.gov.ie/pdf/circular/education/2014/30.pdf>
- **Circular 32/2026** - The Role of Special Needs Assistants in recognised primary, post – primary and special schools. Find more information at <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/circulars/the-role-of-special-needs-assistants-in-recognised-primary-post-primary-and-special-schools/>
- **Continuum of Support Model** – This encompasses a graduated problem solving model of assessment and intervention in schools comprised of three distinct school based processes, Classroom Support, School Support and School Support Plus. Find more information at <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/collections/special-education-needs-a-continuum-of-support/>
- **Counselling in Primary Schools Pilot (CPS-P) 2025-2026** – In June 2023, the Department of Education and Youth launched a €5 million pilot of counselling and wellbeing supports in primary schools in selected counties. The pilot includes two strands and works to support children's wellbeing and mental health in schools. Find more information at <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/publications/counselling-in-primary-schools-pilot-2023-2026/>

- **DEY Student Participation Implementation Plan 2024-2026** – Implementation of the actions in this plan will help the department to make sure that the voices of children and young people inform policy development across the department. Find more information on Student Participation in Education at <https://assets.gov.ie/307440/9f3899bf-ba95-4578-b476-82e357fb8cf1.pdf>
- **Disability Act 2005** - Find more information at <https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2005/act/14/enacted/en/html>
- **ECCE Programme** - Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme is a government-funded initiative in Ireland that provides two years of free, universal preschool education for children before they start primary school. Find more information at <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-children-disability-and-equality/publications/early-childhood-care-and-education-programme-ecce/>
- **Education 2050** - A number of action groups have been established to deliver ‘Our Schools, Our Future’ (Education 2050 Strategy), with each Action Group covering important strategic areas of development. The focus of Action Group 3 of the department’s Education 2050 project is high-quality inclusive education. The project’s steering group are reviewing definitions of inclusive education that aligns with UNCRPD, by bringing together the views of DEY, partner organisations and DFHERIS. In progressing this work, three key pillars for a high-quality inclusive education have been identified, these are: curriculum; inclusion; and wellbeing.
- **Enrolment Circular** - The purpose of this circular (Circular 0023/2025) is to support schools with the review process for children and young people enrolled in special classes. Regular review of enrolment in a special class is good practice. It also helps to ensure that all children and young people enrolled in a special class have a positive and inclusive educational experience that is tailored to their strengths and needs.
- **ETSS** - Education Therapy and Support Service was established in 2024. The appointment, on a permanent basis, of occupational and speech and language therapists, as well as behaviour practitioners to the National Council for Special Education (NCSE). Find more information at **Ministers Foley and Naughton announce the establishment of an Educational Therapy Support Service (ETSS)**
- **First 5 Transitions Working Group** - First 5 is a Whole-of-Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families 2019-2028, which recognises that the move to primary education from home or an Early Learning Care (ELC) setting is a major transition in young children’s lives and that a smooth transition can ensure a positive start to school for children. The First 5 Transitions Working Group is an interdepartmental group, comprised of representatives from DEY, DCDE and DFHERIS. This group is chaired by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE) and tasked with developing a National Transitions Policy. The group was established in December 2025.
- **Global Citizenship Education (GCED)** - As per the Céim standards on Initial Teacher Education, GCED aims to empower learners of all ages to assume active roles, both locally and globally, in building more peaceful, tolerant, inclusive and secure societies. GCED ensures that “all learners are provided with the knowledge and skills to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development” (UNESCO). [ceim-standards-for-initial-teacher-education.pdf](#)

- **Inclusive Education** - As per the Céim standards on Initial Teacher Education, the term inclusive education refers to any aspect of teachers' learning aimed at improving their capacity to address and respond to the diversity of learners' needs; to enable their participation in learning; and remove barriers to education through the accommodation and provision of appropriate structures and arrangements to enable each learner to achieve the maximum benefit from his/her attendance at school. The Council's view of a truly inclusive approach to professional practice recognises that teachers encounter a diverse range of needs in the course of their teaching, regardless of setting. This will include additional learning needs (e.g. autism, dyslexia, dyspraxia) and learning needs associated with diverse linguistic, socioeconomic, cultural and ethnic (including Traveller community, Roma) backgrounds. [ceim-standards-for-initial-teacher-education.pdf](#)
- **Inclusive Practice Guidelines** - NCSE have an action plan for Inclusive Practice Guidelines, which are at heart of teacher and school led practice. The NCSE scope of practice to deliver a national programme for Teacher Professional Learning.
- **Inclusive Pedagogy Literature Review** - NCSE Education and Curriculum Team to lead an Inclusive Pedagogy literature review on components of Inclusive Pedagogy programme and module design, the outcomes of which will determine the POW of the Education and Curriculum.
- **Inspectorate Report and Thematic Review** - Published by the Inspectorate of DEY. The report provides an analysis of the quality of educational provision in primary schools, special schools, post-primary schools, and early learning and care settings. More information on The Inspectorate Annual Report (2024) and Thematic Review at [The Department of Education and Youth Inspectorate Report \(2024\) and Thematic Review](#)
- **ISELP** - "Immersive Special Education Learning Period" and is an assessed, two-week, school placement period that has an enhanced focus on supports for children with persistent, significant and enduring special educational needs. ISELP is currently in the design phase with a guidance note, to inform the process at HEI level, in the latter stages of development by the Teaching Council.
- **MDLI-G** - The Measúnú agus Diagnóisic Litearthachta don Iarbhunscoil Gaeilge (MDLI-G) is a standardised test of literacy in Irish for use in post-primary schools as a screening and diagnostic tool for assessing literacy skills. For more information at <https://www.erc.ie/studies/programme-of-work/measunu-agus-diagnoisic-litearthachta-don-iarbhunscoil-ghaeilge-standardisation-mdli-g/>
- **National Convention on Education** - This will bring together stakeholders in education, including children, young people, parents, educators and wider society to help shape Ireland's education system for decades to come. Its work will inform a new long-term strategy for education in Ireland. The focus of the Convention will be on primary and post-primary (secondary) schools as well as the transitions from early years into primary, and from post-primary into further and higher education. Find more information at <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/press-releases/minister-helen-mcentee-announces-national-convention-on-education/>
- **National Human Rights Strategy for Disabled People 2025-2030** - This is Ireland's plan to advance the realisation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This has 5 pillars, Inclusive Learning and Education; Employment; Independent Living and Active Participation in Society; Wellbeing and Health; and Transport and Mobility. This is a whole-of-Government strategy that encompasses working across government, including DEY. Find more information at [The National Human Rights Strategy for Disabled People 2025-2030](#).
- **NCSE Create** - NCSE evidence led student voice 2-year pilot that is ongoing. NCSE has developed toolkit for use with children with additional needs.

- **NCSE LMS** - The NCSE Learning Management System (LMS) will produce a platform for school learning, a lens on individual school training programme engagement, and a multi-modal programme of school engagement with inclusive practice. The NCSE has reviewed its progressional learning programme to include a proactive, supportive and responsive programme tailored to school communities learning needs. The programme is multi-modal to support schools incorporating as much sustained support as possible to embed practice in school communities over time and to liaise with existing school ETB, ACCS, JMB and IPPN network communities.
- **NCSE Relate** - NCSE Relate is a comprehensive resource to support school staff to understand and reframe behaviour. It places relationships at the heart of all support and takes a regulation first approach in understanding and supporting students. Find more information at <https://ncse.ie/relate>
- **NCSE Sustained Support Model** - The NCSE has reviewed its progressional learning programme to include a proactive, supportive and responsive programme tailored to school communities learning needs. The programme is multi-modal to support schools incorporating as much sustained support as possible to embed practice in school communities over time and to liaise with existing school ETB, ACCS, JMB and IPPN network communities.
- **Neart** - Neart supports post-primary schools through resources, webinars, in-person events and eLearning courses for school staff, Student Support Teams and parents, delivered by Jigsaw in partnership with NEPS.
- **People Plan Strategy** - NCSE's People Plan Strategy 2023-2026 is an internal strategic plan that outlines four strategic objectives, including supporting leadership; enhancing people experience; supporting and developing people; and striving to have a diverse, inclusive and supportive work environment within the NCSE.
- **Policy for Irish-medium education outside the Gaeltacht (POLG)** - This policy sets out the department's vision that high-quality Irish-medium education will be available to all, in inclusive and multicultural educational settings; a particular affinity with and love for the Irish language and culture will be fostered in children and young people so that they will continue to use the language competently and with pride throughout their lives; and an ecosystem of appropriate supports and resources is available to Irish-medium education settings and their communities. Find more information at <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/publications/policy-for-irish-medium-education-outside-of-the-gaeltacht/>
- **Saibhriú** - Saibhriú, is a pilot initiative established in 2025 to support the needs of students that are exceptionally able, funded through the Dormant Accounts Fund will foster local collaboration between primary schools and post-primary schools to establish how schools can most effectively work together and how staff expertise and best collaborative teaching approaches can be identified and shared.
- **SDGs** - School Design Guides (SDGs) is a suite of documents published by the Department of Education and Youth to provide design teams and school authorities with guidance on all aspects of the design of primary and post-primary schools including the design of specialist accommodation for pupils with special educational needs. Find more information at <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/publications/technical-guidance-documents/school-design-guides/#technical-guidance-documents-school-design-guides>
- **Section 29 appeals** - Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998 provides for an appeal where a board of management, or a person acting on behalf of the board of management (normally the school principal) expels a student; suspends a student for a period or periods totalling not less than 20 days in a school year; or refuses to admit a student to a school, where the decision to refuse admission is due to the school being oversubscribed, or a reason other than the school being oversubscribed. **Section 29 Appeals Board - Homepage**

- **SET Guidelines and Indicators of Effective Practise** - A series of documents were published in December 2024 to provide ease of access for schools, parents/guardians, children and young people in relation to the application and deployment of Special Education Teachers (SET) in mainstream classes in primary and post primary schools. Schools can access a series of documents to aid them in supporting children and young people with special education needs in their mainstream classes. Parents/Guardians can access a short leaflet providing an overview of the Special Education Teacher allocation and deployment process which may help parents/guardians. Children and young people in our mainstream schools they may access short explanations of the Special Education Teaching support. This may also help children and young people to understand that everyone needs help from time to time, and that's ok. Find more information at <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/publications/set-guidelines-and-supporting-documentation-to-aid-schools-in-supporting-childrenyoung-people-with-special-education-needs/>
- **SNAWDP** - The Special Needs Assistant Workforce Development Plan (SNAWDP) was published by the department on 3 June 2026. The Plan reflects a consistent and planned approach to meeting present and future needs of the SNA workforce. It encompasses an understanding of the SNA role and how they and other stakeholders can best be supported to provide the most effective service to children with significant care needs in our schools. <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/campaigns/special-needs-assistant-sna-workforce-development-plan/>
- **SNAWDU** - Special Needs Assistant Workforce Development Unit (SNAWDU) is a dedicated unit within the Special Education division of the Department of Education and Youth, responsible for the review and development of policy in relation to SNAs.
- **Special School Student Placement** - Introduced in 2024, this initiative provides graduate teachers and final-year Professional Masters of Education students teachers the opportunity to work as student teachers in Special Schools and participate in the Summer Programme.
- **SSP** - A student support plan is an individualised educational document used in schools to address the needs of students requiring additional support.
- **Student Support File** - Find more information at <https://assets.gov.ie/41225/dbb957b3172c41efab580705bfaf2d90.pdf>
- **Summer Course for Teachers** - The department via Mayo Education Centre hosted a summer course for teachers.
- **Summer Programme for Students** - All recognised primary schools, post –primary schools and special schools can offer a summer programme for pupils with complex special educational needs and those at risk of educational disadvantage. A school-based programme provides a more holistic experience for pupils and helps keep the connection with school and peers. Find more information at <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/publications/summer-programme-2026/>
- **Technical Support Instrument** - The Technical Support Instrument (TSI) provides tailor-made technical expertise to EU Member States to design and to implement reforms within the Public Service. Find more information at https://reforms-investments.ec.europa.eu/technical-support-instrument-0/tsi-how-it-works_en
- **The Education (Student and Parent Charter) Bill** - The Education (Student and Parent Charter) Bill 2019 provides for each school's board of management to prepare, publish, and implement a charter in line with guidelines issued by the Minister for Education and Youth. It also enables the Minister to issue directions to boards regarding charter implementation. The Education (Student and Parent Charter) Bill, when enacted, will strengthen students and parents' participation at school level and introduce standardised complaints procedures through the accompanying charter guidelines.

- **TGDs** - Technical Guidance Documents (TGDs) are published to accompany each part of the Building Regulations indicating how the requirements of that part can be achieved in practice. The Department of Education and Youth also publish a suite of technical guidance documents (TGDs) relating to schools. These are available on the DEY website at the following link: **DEY TGD**.
- **Towards Inclusion** - The “Towards Inclusion” pilot program is an initiative involving a number of special schools working in partnership with a mainstream school aimed at fostering inclusive educational practices through collaborative efforts between neighbouring institutions. The program facilitates the sharing of expertise and creates new opportunities for teachers and students to engage in collaborative learning experiences, deepen inter-school relationships, and enhance educational outcomes.

Essentially, the programme seeks to break down the barriers between specialist and mainstream provision such that it may prompt conversations at local level around inclusion, inclusive practices and opportunities for collaboration. The objective of the programme is to assist schools in developing synergies in effective teaching approaches for students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) through Communities of Practice involving clusters of mainstream and special schools. The programme is funded through the Dormant Accounts Fund and will continue in 2026.

- **TRES** - Traveller and Roma Education Strategy 2024–2030 sets out the Government’s strategic approach to Traveller and Roma Education, with the aim of enhance the educational experience and outcomes for Travellers and Roma across the whole education system. The TRES acknowledges that Travellers and Roma are among the most disadvantaged and marginalised groups in Ireland. It also recognises that educational outcomes for Travellers and Roma, whilst they have improved over the years, are significantly lower than those of the general population. Find more information at <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/consultations/traveller-and-roma-education-strategy/>
- **UDL** - Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a framework to improve and optimise teaching and learning for all students by offering choice and flexibility. <https://www.ncse.ie/ncse/research/current-research-projects/>
- **UDL Pilot** - NCSE’s Universal Design for Learning pilot project to introduce or build on existing good practice in the area of UDL. Find more information at <https://ncse.ie/advancing-inclusive-education-ncses-udl-pilot-project>
- **UNCRPD** - United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is a UN treaty which affirms and protects the human rights of people with disabilities. Find more information at <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-children-disability-and-equality/publications/what-the-uncrpd-is/>
- **Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice** - The Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice sets out the department’s ambition and vision for wellbeing promotion, building on the many guidelines and frameworks that are already available to support and promote the wellbeing of children and young people. Find more information at <https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/campaigns/wellbeing-in-education/>

Abbreviations

ACCS	- Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools
AHEAD	- Association for Higher Education Access & Disability
AON	- Assessments of Need
CAS	- Central Application System
CES	- Comprehensive Employment Strategy
COGG	- An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta
CPS-P	- Counselling in Primary Schools Pilot
CRMT	- Customer Relationship Management Tool
DAF	- Dormant Accounts Fund
DCDE	- Department of Children, Disability and Equality
DEIS	- Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools
DEY	- Department of Education and Youth
DFHERIS	- Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science
DG	- Director General
DTL	- Drumcondra Tests of Early Literacy
DTN	- Drumcondra Tests of Early Numeracy
EAL	- English as an Additional Language
ECCE	- Early Childhood Care and Education
ELC	- Early Learning and Care
ERC	- Education Research Centre
ETB	- Education and Training Board
ETS	- Education Therapy Service
ETSS	- Educational Therapy Support Service
FET	- Further Education and Training
GCED	- Global Citizenship Education
HEI	- Higher Education Institution
HSCP	- Health and Social Care Professionals
HSE	- Health Service Executive
IEP	- Individual Educational Plan
IME	- Irish-Medium Education
IPPN	- Irish Primary Principals' Network
ISELP	- Immersive Special Education Learning Period
JMB	- Joint Management Board
LAOS	- Looking at Our Schools

MDLI-G - The Measúnú agus Diagnóisic Litearthachta don Iarbhunscoil Gaeilge

NCSE - National Council for Special Education

NCSE LMS - National Council for Special Education Learning Management System

NDA - National Disability Authority

NEPS - National Educational Psychological Service

NQT - Newly Qualified Teacher

OT - Occupational Therapist

PAS - Public Appointments Service

PLE - Professional Learning Events

PME - Professional Master of Education

POLG - Polasaí don Oideachas Lán-Ghaeilge / Policy for Irish-medium Education

PPAD-E - Post-Primary Assessment and Diagnosis - English

QSS - Quality Service Standards

SDG - School Design Guides

SEN - Special Education Needs

SENCO - Special Education Needs Co-ordinator

SENO - Special Education Needs Organiser

SET - Special Education Teaching

SIT - Sustained in-school therapy support

SLT - Speech and Language Therapist

SNA - Special Needs Assistant

SNAWDP - Special Needs Assistant Workforce Development Plan

SSP - Student Support Plan

TGD - Technical Guidance Document

TGD-G - Triail Ghaeilge Dhroim Conrach do Scoileanna Gaeltachta agus Lán Ghaeilge

TGD-R - Triail Ghaeilge Dhroim Conrach do Scoileanna Rialta

TI26 - Towards Inclusion 2026

TLLDC - Triail Luathlitearthachta Dhroim Conrach (Irish language version of DTEL)

TLUDC - Triail Luathuimhearthachta Dhroim Conrach (Irish version of DTEN)

TOR - Terms of Reference

TPL - Teacher Professional Learning

TRES - Traveller and Roma Education Strategy

TSI - Technical Support Instrument

UDL - Universal Design for Learning

UNCRPD - United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

VT - Visiting Teacher



