

## Barbara Reilly

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**From:** Correspondence Unit <eCorrCorrespondenceUnit@education.gov.ie>  
**Sent:** 17 August 2018 16:30  
**To:** Barbara Reilly  
**Subject:** Department of Education and Skills

Ms. Barbara Reilly

breilly@sdblincoco.ie

**PLEASE QUOTE REF NUMBER ON ALL CORRESPONDENCE.**

Our Ref: CU01346-2018

Dear Ms. Reilly,

I refer to your recent e-mail to the Minister for Education and Skills, Mr Richard Bruton TD regarding the motion that was passed at the Lucan Area Committee Meeting in relation to learning support for St Andrews NS, Lucan

DES Circular 0013/2017 for primary schools set out the details of the new model for allocating special education teachers to schools.

The revised allocation process replaces the previous generalised allocation model combined with the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) allocation process which provided additional resource teaching supports to schools, to support pupils assessed as having Low Incidence disabilities.

The new Special Education Teaching allocation provides a single unified allocation for special educational support teaching needs to each school, based on each school's educational profile.

No school, has lost supports as a result of the implementation of the new model. In addition, no school received an allocation, for the support of pupils with complex needs, less than the allocation they received to support such pupils during the 2016/17 school year.

An additional 900 teaching posts have been provided to support the introduction of this new allocation model. The provision of an additional 900 teaching posts is a very significant investment in the provision of additional teaching support for pupils with special educational needs in our schools.

The additional funding provided additional supports to over 1300 schools who identified as needing additional supports as a result of the new model, while ensuring that no school received a reduced allocation.

In relation to the school referred to in this question, the special education teaching allocation provided for this school for 2017/18 was 115.25 hours.

The profiling model had indicated a profiled special educational need for this school of 102.5 teaching hours.

However, as no school received an allocation, on the introduction of the new model, which was less than the allocation they received in the previous 2016/17 school year, the school maintained an allocation of 115.25 hours and it was indicated that within this allocation there was a retained element of 12.75 hrs.

This allocation equates to over 4.5 full time additional Special Education Teachers. This is a very significant allocation for a school of this size, which had an enrolment of 343 pupils at the time the profiles were developed.

There has therefore been no reduction to the allocation of special education teaching support for this school and no loss of a teaching post.

Where a school profile significantly changes following the allocation process e.g. a developing school where the net enrolment numbers significantly increase year on year, additional allocations may be made.

The criteria for qualification for mainstream school developing school posts for the 2017/18 school year were set out in DES Circular 17/2017 (Primary School Staffing Schedule) and DES 10,11,12/2017 (Post Primary School Staffing Schedule).

Schools who qualified for additional mainstream developing school posts in accordance with these criteria also qualified for additional Special Education Teaching Allocations to take account of this developing status.

However, the criteria also provided that where a school has a retained allocation, any additional allocation they receive on the basis of qualification for developing posts will be a net allocation, less any retained element of their existing school profile allocation.

The school referred to in this question qualified for one developing post under the developing school criteria for the 2017/18 school year. This meant the school would have qualified for 3 hours additional SEN allocation, if the school did not have a retained element to their allocation.

However, as the school had a retained allocation of 12.75 hours, the school maintained their existing allocation.

There has been no reduction of allocation or loss of a teaching post for this school.

It is also acknowledged that there will be some schools where exceptional circumstances may arise.

The National Council for Special Education will be available to support schools where schools have developed and implemented appropriate plans for the deployment of their special education needs teaching resources, but the school considers that further support may be required. This support may involve Continuing Professional Development or further training for school staff, advice in relation to the support plans that are in place, and possibly a review process once schools can clearly demonstrate that exceptional circumstances have arisen in the school.

The NCSE has published details of how schools can seek a review of their allocations, including the utilisation of their allocations, in circumstances where a school considers that very exceptional circumstances have arisen subsequent to the development of the profile.

Should schools consider that they fulfil the criteria for a review on the grounds of exceptional circumstances, details of this review process are available at: <http://ncse.ie/review-of-special-education-teacher-supports-where-there-are-exceptional-circumstances-or-needs-arising-in-a-school>

I can also advise that profiles for all schools are currently being reviewed, based on updated data, with a view to making revised profiled allocations for all schools effective from September 2019.

Yours sincerely,

Derek Newcombe

Private Secretary