



## Circular Pay 21/04

### To the Management Authorities of Primary Schools

#### 1. Revision of Rates of Pay for Regular Part-Time Special Needs Assistants

- 1.1 The Minister for Education and Science wishes to inform Management Authorities of Primary Schools of the revised pay arrangements for regular part-time special need assistants employed in the 2004/2005 school year.
- 1.2 Part-time special needs assistants who are employed for a regular number of hours each week over the course of the full school year will be paid at the appropriate revised hourly rate for each hour worked w.e.f. 1st September 2004. A copy of the revised rates is attached as Appendix A.
- 1.3 Special Needs Assistant employed in an Infant class for the full duration of the infant school day will be paid for 27 hours per week at the appropriate hourly rate. The school managerial authority must verify annually that the Special Needs Assistant is working in an Infant's class for the full duration of the infant school day.
- 1.4 [The issue of arrears of pay for the 2001/2002, 2002/2003 and 2003/2004 school years will be addressed in a further Circular.](#)

#### 2. Supervision and Special Needs Assistants

- 2.1 The arrangements for supervision of students during assembly, recreational and dispersal periods are comprehended by the supervision/substitution scheme as outlined in [Circular Letter PPT 01/03](#). This scheme provides resources to schools for the paid supervision of students on school premises by teachers and/or external supervisors outside of specified classroom teaching duties. The resources are determined by the teacher allocation to the school.
- 2.2 Part of the contractual duties of Special Needs Assistants is to assist teachers in the supervision of students during assembly, recreational and dispersal periods. Special Needs Assistants should not be instructed to directly supervise students during these periods
- 2.3 Managerial authorities are requested to ensure that the arrangements for supervision in schools are such that they do not conflict with the contractual duties of the Special Needs Assistant and are in compliance with the terms of the supervision/substitution scheme.

#### 3. Modernisation Issues

- 3.1 The terms of Sustaining Progress provide that payment of the final two phases of the benchmarking increase and the general round increases is dependent, in the case of each sector, organisation and grade on verification of co-operation with flexibility and ongoing change, satisfactory implementation of the agenda for modernisation, maintenance of industrial relations and absence of industrial action in respect of any matters covered by the Agreement.

- 3.2 Details of the modernisation agenda agreed for Special Needs Assistants are attached as Appendix B. The agreement applies in the case of all Special Needs Assistants whose posts are approved and funded by the Department of Education and Science. The terms outlined in the agreement supersede any previous local arrangements or conditions which may have existed.

#### **4. Dissemination**

Management authorities are requested to bring the details outlined in this Circular to the attention of special needs assistants employed in the schools. You are also requested to give a copy of the Circular to the parents' representatives on the Board of Management.

P. Maloney,  
Principal Officer,  
October 2004.

## Appendix B

### Sustaining Progress

#### Modernisation agenda for Special Need Assistants

##### 1. Attendance Patterns

Primary School Special Needs Assistants are required to be available to schools for a couple of days at the start and finish of each school term. It is agreed that these days (12 in total) may be combined at the discretion of school management to be utilised flexibly throughout the year for work appropriate to the grade including training. These days will not exceed 5 consecutive days and will immediately follow or precede school terms or within a couple of days thereof. The agreement reached under PCW in respect of pupils in special schools and special classes who have extra attendance at school for respite care/holiday programmes remains unaffected.

##### 2. Restructuring and rationalisation of resources

Full engagement in a fundamental review of the special needs assistant service including restructuring and rationalisation of the service.

##### 3. Co-operation with ongoing change

**Training and development** - Special Needs Assistants will co-operate with programmes for implementing change in the workplace and will co-operate with workplace training for change in work practices where provided.

**School Development Planning** – Co-operation with school development planning is a future oriented process and may involve development and changes in various aspects of the school's policies and practices. Special Needs Assistants will participate in the school development planning process where appropriate and will co-operate with any such changes in policies and practices arising from the school development planning process.

**Curricular and legislative change** – Special Needs Assistants will continue to co-operate with curricular and legislative change.

**Flexibility** – Work demands may lead to change in the way in which work is organised involving a redistribution of tasks among staff and more flexibility in regard to reporting. Special Needs Assistants will agree to be re-assigned to other work appropriate to the Special Needs Assistant grade as outlined in their relevant contracts when special needs pupils are absent from school or when particular urgent work demands arise. In addition Special Needs Assistants will report to other senior school personnel as authorised by school management from time to time.

#### **4. Maintenance of stable industrial relations environment**

The parties recognise the importance of stable industrial relations and are committed to maintaining a well-managed industrial relations climate to minimise disputes. Special Needs Assistants will agree to utilise available dispute resolution mechanisms industrial relations procedures (both statutory and non-statutory) including

- Grievance procedures
- Disciplinary Procedures
- School related policies in respect of Health and Safety and the relevant codes of practice in respect of bullying and harassment in the workplace.

#### **5. Customer Service**

Special Needs Assistant will commit to the schools' culture and traditions and reflect these through interaction where appropriate with parents, pupils, teachers, management and the wider school community. Special Needs Assistants will implement and co-operate with directives issued by the school authority or the Department of Education and Science including new arrangements for parent-teacher meetings, staff meetings and the standardised school year. Special Needs Assistants will engage with parents of special needs pupils in both formal and informal structures as required and directed by school management.

## Appendix A:

Special Needs Assistants - Salary Scales

Rates effective from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2004

Point on Scale	Full Time	Hourly Rate
1	€20,128	€ 12.05
2	€21,073	€ 12.62
3	€22,016	€ 13.19
4	€22,961	€ 13.75
5	€23,907	€ 14.32
6	€24,851	€ 14.88
7	€25,795	€ 15.45
8	€26,735	€ 16.01
9	€27,682	€ 16.58
10	€28,623	€ 17.14
11	€29,572	€ 17.71
12	€31,353	€ 18.78
13	€32,621	€ 19.54