



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Óige
Department of Education
and Youth

2026 Home-Based Summer Programme to Support the Education or Care Needs of Students with Complex Needs

Overview - Terms and Conditions for Parents, Teachers, SNAs and Schools

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Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the Home-Based Summer Programme for 2026, explain the application process and outline the terms and conditions of the programme. It should be read carefully before making an application and also referred to throughout the duration of the programme.

The aim of the Department is to meet the needs of families and to ensure every eligible child is provided with a summer programme. The preferred approach is that the Summer Programme is provided for children in school settings where children may have access to fully qualified teachers, adapted fun based activity programmes, special needs assistants and interaction with student peers. The school-based programmes provide a more holistic experience for students and help retain the important connection with school and peers.

However, the Department recognises that not all schools will be in a position to provide a school-based programme. A home-based programme is available for students with complex special educational needs where the school-based programme is unavailable. It is important that the home-based programme provides support for the education and/or care needs of students with complex special educational needs during the summer break period.

As with previous years, grant funding is made available so that parents/legal guardians can engage the services of a teacher or a SNA to provide tuition or care support as appropriate to their child. The home-based programme should not replace the summer programmes that are available in schools. The programme must be delivered in person and cannot be delivered online.

Ideally, schools should consider their approach to the Home-Based Summer Programme by prioritising students with the greatest levels of need including those students in receipt of special class support in advance of offering it to other eligible students in the school.

Changes for 2026

For 2026, the Home Based Application Portal will be open in parallel with the School Based Application Portal.

Schools will continue to make an application for students for a home-based programme in the same way as in previous years. Once an application is submitted, schools will receive an email acknowledging receipt.

In the week commencing **25 May 2026**, schools will be engaged with on an individual basis where they will receive a follow-up email confirming the students approved to participate in this year's school-based summer programme. Decisions regarding a child's placement on the home-based programme will be communicated to schools and to parents/guardians **only after** school-based applications have been reviewed.

Opening and Closure of the Online Application Portals

The Online Application Portals will be open from **6 May 2026 to 15 May 2026**. Schools are asked to carefully note these dates as late applications will not be accepted. Once closed, the portal **will not be re-opened** again under any circumstance.

All references to “schools” refers to schools which are recognised under Section 10 (3) of the Education Act 1998.

Note: The term ‘parents’ as used in this overview document refers to parent, parents, legal guardian or carer.

What's continuing for 2026

Since the Programme was established, the Department has only ever sanctioned 1:1 tuition or tuition for siblings in the home. For 2025, the Department is continuing to allow a **Small Group Arrangement** whereby individual registered teachers can deliver a programme for students in group of up to three.

Children in these groups can avail of up to twice as many hours compared to the hours granted for 1:1 tuition. For further information, please refer to [Section 2.1](#).

Therefore, if parents wish, they may enter into an arrangement with a registered teacher to tutor their child in a small group, up to a maximum of 3 children.

This new arrangement is based on feedback that some students who are eligible for the home-based programme will benefit from a more holistic experience from peer and social interactions.

For groups of 4 or larger, the Department will continue to approve Private Group Provider Arrangements between parents and private providers as it has done in previous years. The terms and conditions of the Private Group Provider Arrangement must be followed where students are taken together as a group, around issues such as governance and child protection.

Additionally, allocations to siblings will no longer be a shared allocation; each student will be sanctioned on a individual basis.

1. Student Eligibility Criteria

A Home-Based Summer Programme is only available for children with complex special educational needs where their school is not running a Summer Programme or a place on a school-based programme or alternative is unavailable.

Where a school is not running the School-Based Summer Programme, they should prioritise those students with the greatest levels of need first for the home-based programme including students enrolled in special classes.

For the purposes of the Home-Based Summer Programme students with complex special educational needs are defined as:

1. Any student enrolled in a special school or a special class - primary and post primary.
2. Students presenting with the most significant needs in mainstream classes in primary and post-primary schools **who are accessing the highest level of the Continuum of Support (School Support Plus)** ¹. This will include a small number of students with enduring needs which significantly affect their capacity to learn, to function independently and to participate in education.

These students require highly individualised, intensive, targeted and additional teaching and learning supports as their special educational needs are enduring, and significantly impact on their learning and participation in the school environment. These students may present with the following:

- Significant needs with physical and/or sensory functioning (including students who are Deaf or have severe to profound hearing loss and students who are blind or have severe to profound visual impairment)
- Significant needs in cognitive functioning and independence/daily living skills (including students who have moderate to severe OR significant/profound learning disability)
- Significant needs in social communication, social interaction combined with rigid repetitive patterns of behaviour
- Students with Down syndrome
- Students with severe OR significant emotional behavioural needs to the extent that these behaviours of concern are impacting on a student's ability to learn, to function independently and to participate fully in school life.

¹ See Guidelines for Primary/Post Primary Schools Supporting Pupils with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools for guidance in identifying and responding to students' needs as part of the Continuum of Support, which gives worked examples

• <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/56c43-supporting-students-and-students-with-special-educational-needs-guidelines-for-schools/>

3. Students with autism are eligible for this Programme.
4. Children in the above categories entering primary school and Early Intervention autism classes in September 2026 are eligible for the programme.

Where a student who meets the eligibility criteria and is in their final year of school in the 2025/26 school year, they may participate in the Home-Based Summer Programme if a school-based programme is unavailable.

Continuum of Support

The Department has set out the Continuum of Support framework ([available here](#)) to assist schools in identifying and responding to student’s needs. This framework recognises that special educational needs occur along a continuum, ranging from mild to severe, and from transient to long term, and that students require different levels of support depending on their identified needs. The Continuum of Support is a problem-solving model of assessment and intervention that enables schools to gather and analyse data, as well as to plan and review the progress of individual students. Using this framework helps to ensure that interventions are incremental, moving from class-based interventions to more intensive and individualised support, and that they are informed by careful monitoring of progress. The Department’s Guidelines for Schools Supporting Pupils/Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools ([available here](#)) provide guidance for schools in identifying and responding to students’ needs as part of the Continuum of Support framework.

A Continuum of Support

2 Home-Based Programme

The Home-Based Programme should not commence until the sanction letter/email is received by the parent/legal guardian confirming eligibility.

2.1 Small Group Arrangements Allocation

Where possible, the small group arrangement is being promoted. To allow for small group arrangements (up to a maximum of 3 students), a shared allocation of hours is provided, as set out below:

Number of children supported per Teacher	Number of hours per week to be shared between participating children in each group
2	15 hours per week shared for four weeks (60 hours shared total)
3	20 hours per week shared for four weeks (80 hours shared total)

Allocations for small group arrangement are broadly reflective of the school grouping principle. This is where one teacher can be allocated to a class of up to six students with complex special educational needs in schools.

A teacher who provides tuition in a small group arrangement will be paid for each hour delivered e.g. if they provide 60 hours total between 2 children, they receive payment for 60 hours, if they provide 80 hours total between 3 children, they will receive payment for 80 hours.

Who can Deliver a Small Group Arrangement?

It is a requirement of the Small Group Arrangement that it must be delivered by a teacher who is qualified in the sector in which tuition is being provided, and is registered with the Teaching Council for the duration of the approved tuition, up to and including issue of final payment.

Where all efforts have failed to secure the services of a teacher qualified to teach in the sector concerned, the parent/legal guardian can engage a person who is registered with the Teaching Council and has a primary degree (minimum Level 7 on the National Framework of Qualifications) in a relevant area, e.g. Psychology.

To be eligible for the qualified rate of payment, a tutor must be registered and recognised by the Teaching Council in the sector for which the tuition is being provided. Tutors, who are retired, who are registered with the Teaching Council and who are in receipt of payment of a public service pension will be paid at the modified rate.

Further information on sourcing a teacher can be found in [Section 4](#).

The hours delivered to each child participating in a Small Group Arrangement should be recorded on the timetable page of each child's Grant Claim Form, as well as recorded by the Teacher on the Small Group Arrangement Cover Sheet. For example, if three children were taught together for one hour on a given day, those hours should be recorded on each child's timetable. The tutor should also fill in the Small Group Arrangement Cover Sheet to confirm the names of the three children and the dates/hours that were taken as a group.

The location of the delivery of the hours is a matter for agreement between the Teacher and the parents of the children involved.

2.2 One to One (1:1) Allocation of Hours

Where tuition/care support is provided on a 1:1 basis, the allocation of hours which can be provided to an eligible student on a week by week basis is strictly 10 hours maximum per week and for up to 4 weeks. For example if tuition takes place for 2 weeks the maximum hours that can be availed of is 20 hours. In addition to the eligibility criteria, an eligible student is one whose school is not participating in a school-based programme or is not in a position to offer them a place on a school-based programme (see *Frequency Asked Questions* for more information).

Parents should be aware that an initial sanction does not permit your child to attend a facility where tuition is provided on a group basis. Initial sanction is only provided on an individual student basis.

If engaging a private group provider, the parent/legal guardian must show the sanction email to provider to confirm that they are eligible to participate in the programme.

Both the parent(s) and tutors/SNAs must ensure that they make themselves aware of the contents of the sanction email with the hours sanctioned before commencing work on the programme.

Important Information for Parents

The sanction email contains a link to the claim form which has two options - one for individual provision and another for small groups.

A - Where tuition/care support has taken place on an individual basis in the home, the parent must complete the claim form and return to the Department.

B - Where tuition has taken place in a small group setting, parents must complete an individual grant claim and provide to the tutor. The tutor must gather all forms for all children participating in a small group setting and forward these completed documents together to the Department, confirming it was provided in a small group setting.

It is critical that the correct grant claim form, including declarations, are completed and signed by parents and tutors who are undertaking the work. Failure to do so will result in delayed or non-payment of claims.

Parents/legal guardians cannot provide tuition or care support to their own children under the terms of Home-Based Summer Programme. This applies irrespective of whether they are a qualified teacher or a SNA.

Important Information for Tutors

It is critical that tutors ensure that parents complete and sign the Grant Claim Form depending on whether the tuition was provided on an individual basis or in a small group setting.

If tuition has taken place as part of a Small Group Arrangement, the tutor must gather the forms for those children. They must also complete a 'Small Group Arrangement Cover Sheet', confirming that tuition took place in a small group setting.

The forms, together with the cover sheet should be returned to the Department.

Failure to complete and sign the appropriate forms will result in delayed or non-payment of claims.

If tutors wish to take more than 3 participants in a group, then they should follow the terms of the Private Group Provider Arrangements, which is outlined in more detail further on in this document.

The Department will only pay one hour's pay for each hour worked regardless of the setting. Where students are approved for 1:1 tuition but provision is subsequently provided in a small group, the maximum number of hours that can be claimed per day by a tutor is 6 hours.

Each teacher/SNA should ensure they are aware of how many hours a child is entitled to before they commence tuition/care support. Unsanctioned excess hours will not be funded.

Hours worked as a tutor/SNA must be provided between 9am and 6pm on a weekday (excluding bank holidays). Tuition/care support should not take place **under any circumstances** on bank holidays, at weekends or after schools have re-opened for the new school year.

The approved parent/legal guardian of the sanctioned student for the Home-Based Summer Programme must complete and sign the Payment Claim Form.

Forms signed prior to the completion date of the tuition/care support can not be accepted by the Department.

The Department of Education and Youth's standard policy in cases where a false declaration has been made for the purposes of claiming resources from the Department, is that payment is withheld by the Department and the matter may be referred to An Garda Síochána, and if appropriate, the Teaching Council.

If it is not clear from the claim form that the terms and conditions of the Programme are being adhered to, further information may be requested by the Department. The signature provided by the parent/legal guardian may be used for verification.

If the groups are comprised of more than three students, please refer to Private Group Provider Arrangements, details of which are outlined in [Section 2.5](#) below.

Allocations to siblings will no longer be a shared allocation; each student will be sanctioned on an individual basis.

Where a parent or a teacher/SNA has any further queries or is in doubt regarding allocations they should email the Department at: homebasedsummerprogram@education.gov.ie

2.3 Engaging Teachers or SNAs to deliver the Programme

It is expected that, in most instances, parents will seek the services of a registered teacher to implement a programme of learning. Alternatively, some parents may choose to avail of the services of a SNA to provide a programme of care to a child who meets the eligibility criteria.

In these circumstances, parents are advised to engage with their child's school on the additional care supports which are included in their Personal Pupil Plan (PPP) and which could be provided by the SNA for the summer programme.

Circular 30/2014, outlines the role of an SNA in a school context. The following are examples of care needs which the SNA may assist with in the home environment **under the direction of the parent/legal guardian**:

- Assistance to attend or participate in recreational activities, walks, or community-based outings.
- Assistance with mobility and orientation: where a child with special needs requires adult assistance.
- Implementing activities drawn, as appropriate, from the plan for the child.

Each teacher/SNA must complete PARTS 2, 3(A), 3(B), (3(C) – if applicable), 3(D), 4 and 5 of the Grant Claim Form.

2.4 Engaging Multiple Teachers or SNAs

Parents can engage the services of more than one Teacher/SNA to deliver the allocated hours to their child/children on a 1:1 basis.

Where more than one teacher or SNA is engaged by parents to provide the hours, each teacher/SNA must complete PARTS 2, 3(A), 3(B), (3(C) – if applicable), 3(D), 4 and 5 of the Grant Claim Form. The forms for teachers/SNA for that child or children should be returned together.

The combined hours of the teachers or SNAs engaged **must not exceed the total hours** sanctioned and for which the child/children are eligible.

2.5 Private Group Provider Arrangements

The Department will approve a group provider arrangements between parents and private providers. This is subject to the private providers being in compliance with the published terms and conditions for Private Group Provider Arrangements and being approved to participate in advance of the programme commencing. Such arrangements must be sourced and procured by parents/legal guardians. Where it becomes known to the Department that a new private provider intends to provide this service, the Department will alert schools in the locality.

If the parent is planning to participate in a Private Group Provide Arrangement they should contact the provider to discuss the completion of the form. For more information please review the terms and conditions for Private Group Provider Arrangements which is published on www.gov.ie/summerprogramme.

The Private Group Provider Arrangement terms and conditions document must be followed where students are taken together as a group, maximum of 6 and minimum of 4. The group provider must seek approval from the Department before they can proceed with the arrangement.

On engaging a private group provider the parent/legal guardian must show the sanction email to the provider to confirm that they are eligible to participate in the programme.

No additional hours will be funded beyond what the student has been sanctioned under the terms of the Home-Based Summer Programme.

For further queries please email homebasedsummerprogram@education.gov.ie

3. Teacher/SNA Information

3.1 Who is eligible to participate in the programme?

In order to participate in the Home-Based Summer Programme a parent must engage the services of:

- a qualified teacher, registered and vetted with the Teaching Council of Ireland to provide tuition

Where a parent cannot source a teacher who is qualified in the same school sector as their child, primary or post primary, they may engage the services of a teacher/tutor who is registered with the Teaching Council of Ireland and who has a degree (minimum Level 7 on the National Framework of Qualifications) in a relevant area. The grant rate for these teachers will be the Modified Rate.

OR

- an SNA who has been vetted and has been employed by a school in some capacity (full, parttime or temporary basis) and is aged 17 or over, to provide care support.

The Teaching Council and Irish Primary Principals Network (IPPN) will promote the summer programmes with this year's graduate teachers, Professional Masters of Education (PME) student teachers and undergraduate students to increase the supply of available teachers this summer. More information is available for each category in the relevant sections below.

Graduate/Newly Qualified Teachers

Graduate/newly qualified teachers can work on the Home-Based Summer Programme where they have commenced their registration process with the Teaching Council prior to the first day of tuition and where the following conditions are fulfilled:

1. They have received their final results from their HEI confirming they are eligible for registration with the Teaching Council.
2. Garda vetting has been completed as part of their application for registration with the Teaching Council.
3. Their registration with the Council will be finalised prior to 02 October 2026.

Once the above conditions are met, graduate/newly qualified teachers will be paid at the qualified rate for hours delivered from the date their Teaching Council registration comes into effect.

The qualified rate will only apply where they are teaching in the same sector (i.e. a Primary qualified teacher with a Primary student or a Post-primary qualified teacher with a Post-primary student).

The Modified Rate will apply to all tuition delivered before their Teaching Council registration comes into effect.

PME student teachers

A PME student teacher registered with the Teaching Council under Route 3 - Further Education can also be engaged by parents for the Home-Based Summer Programme.

PME student teachers currently in Year 1 of the programme who have applied for registration with the Teaching Council under Further Education prior to the first day of tuition can be engaged by parents for the Home-Based Summer Programme where the following conditions are fulfilled:

1. Garda vetting has been completed as part of their application for registration with the Teaching Council.
2. Their registration with the Council under Further Education will be finalised prior to 02 October 2026.

PME student teachers registered with the Teaching Council under the Further Education route will be paid at the modified rate for hours delivered from the date their Teaching Council registration comes into effect.

Undergraduate student teachers (Route 5)

A student teacher registered with the Teaching Council under Route 5 can be engaged by primary schools.

Undergraduate student teachers registered with the Teaching Council under Route 5 will be paid at the modified rate for work on the summer programme.

A student teacher registered with the Teaching Council under Route 5 can be engaged by parents to work on the Home-Based Summer Programme. They will be paid at the modified rate for hours delivered after the date their Teaching Council registration comes into effect.

Who is not eligible to participate in the programme?

A teacher/SNA who is availing of approved paid or unpaid leave from his/her employment during the period of the Home-Based Summer Programme is not eligible to participate in the Home-

Based Summer Programme. However, a teacher/SNA who is on Career Break or Jobsharing may be employed as a teacher/SNA during the period of the Home-Based Summer Programme.

Teachers who have retired on ill health are not permitted, under the rules of the relevant pension scheme to deliver tuition. Teachers who have availed of an early retirement scheme should refer to the conditions of said scheme before carrying out tuition.

Parents/legal guardians cannot receive funding for providing tuition or care support to their own children under the terms of Home-Based Summer Programme. This applies irrespective of whether they are a qualified teacher or a SNA.

3.2 Step by Step Process - From Applying for Sanction to Submitting Completed Grant Claim Forms

Step 1 – Applying for sanction

Each of the steps below should be read carefully. Failure to follow the steps may lead to ineligible claims or a delay in payment. Payment cannot be made in respect of children who are not covered by the programme

- Schools will contact the parents of eligible children and provide them with this Overview/Terms and Conditions document.
- An Online Sanctioning Portal will be available to schools from 06 May 2026. Schools will use this to input the details of eligible children who wish to participate in this year's programme.
- The school can also provide a Form for Sanctioning where the parent can fill in the details of their child and their contact details, if this is more convenient for the school. The parent should then return the form to the school. A separate form should be completed for each eligible child in the family.
- The school enters the child's details and confirms their eligibility for the Home-Based Summer Programme. The closing date for the school to enter details on the Online Registration Portal is Friday **15 May 2026**.
- When the school enters the child's details and confirms their eligibility, an automatic acknowledgement email will issue to the school.
- In the week commencing 25 May 2026, schools will be engaged with on an individual basis where they will receive a follow-up email confirming the students approved to participate in this year's school-based summer programme. Decisions regarding a child's placement on the home-based programme will be communicated to schools and to parents/guardians **only after** school-based applications have been reviewed.
- The decision letter, when issued, will confirm the child's eligibility for the programme and outline the number of hours allocated to the child, if sanctioned.
- The sanction email will also contain a link to the Grant Claim Form for the programme.
- Once the parent has received the sanction email, this is confirmation that their child is eligible for the home-based summer programme and they can engage a teacher/SNA. **No further approval issues from the Department.**
- Where possible the school should provide to the parent, the details of a teacher/SNA who is available to participate on the home-based programme
- The school, in conjunction with the parents, should provide information on the supports that could be provided by a teacher/SNA for the summer programme. This may include information on a student's Personal Pupil Plan (PPP) and any relevant information from the teaching team.

Step 2 - Parent receives sanction email with link to Grant Claim Form

- In respect of eligible pupils, the decision letter that issues to the parent and school will contain a link to a Grant Claim Form.
- The parent can complete PART 1 of the Grant Claim Form with their own details and that of their child as soon as they receive the form.

Step 3 - Parent engages a Teacher/SNA

- Once the parent has received a sanction email from the Department, they may engage the services of a teacher/SNA. Information on sourcing a teacher/SNA where the school cannot recommend one is provided in [Section 4](#).
- If the parent is planning to participate in a Private Group Provider Arrangements through a private provider, they should contact the provider to discuss the completion of the form. More information about Private Group Provider Arrangements is available in the [Section 2.5](#).
- When the parent is engaging a teacher/SNA, they must show the sanction email to the teacher/SNA to ensure they are aware that their child is eligible for the programme.
- Where the 1:1 tuition/care support is chosen, the parent can engage more than one teacher/SNA to provide the hours to their child. However, they must advise each teacher/SNA of how many hours each of them can provide, and that the total hours must not exceed what have been sanctioned.
- No additional hours will be funded beyond what the student has been sanctioned under the terms of the Home-Based Summer Programme.
- Before any tuition/care support can commence the teacher/SNA **must** complete the following parts of the Grant Claim Form:

- PART 2 (Form of Undertaking). This is to confirm that they have shared the results of their vetting search to the parent. The parent must also sign to confirm that they have seen the results and are satisfied to appoint the teacher/SNA
- PART 3(A) with their own details.
- PART 3(B) - Statutory Declaration
- PART 3(C) – Small Group Arrangement Cover Sheet (if applicable)
- PART 3 (D) – Teacher / SNA Form of Agreement

- A Checklist (Part 6) for Parents and Form of Agreement (Part 3 (D)) for teacher/SNA must also be completed at the end of the programme. However, the Department recommends that both parents and teachers/SNAs review these documents before tuition/care support commences to ensure they are following the terms and conditions of the programme.

- Once the above has been completed the parent can provide any supporting information they may have received from the school to the teacher/SNA and agree a programme of support to be delivered to the student as part of this year's Home Based Summer Programme.

Step 4 - Delivery of programme

- The hours and dates of tuition/care support must be recorded on the Timetable in PART 4 of the Grant Claim Form.
- In all cases a timetable should be recorded in respect of each child. The timetable should not be completed in advance of the hours being delivered.
- If tuition has taken place in a Small Group Arrangement tutors must record hours and gather all completed forms from the parent of all child participating in a small group setting. Full details in [Section 2.1](#).
- It is recommended that tutors retain a copy of the timetable of each child with whom they work as part of the Home-Based Summer Programme.

Duration/Scheduling of programme

Home-based tuition/care support can take place at any time during the school summer holidays, excluding weekends and Bank Holidays.

The programme should be provided for a minimum of 2 weeks and a maximum of 4 weeks. The weeks of the programme do not need to be consecutive.

Where Teachers/SNAs are providing the programme on a 1:1 basis, under no circumstances should they provide more than 10 hours per week to an eligible child, and more than 5 hours in any one day for 1:1 support.

Where tutors are engaged to support multiple students under the 1:1 tuition arrangements, the maximum number of hours that can be claimed per day by a tutor is 6 hours.

Where an individual teacher is taking more than one student in a Small Group Arrangement the maximum number of hours per week are outlined in the table in [Section 2.1](#).

Teacher/SNA working with more than one family

Where Teachers/SNAs are delivering the programme on a 1:1 basis, they may provide the programme to more than one family over the course of the summer.

Teachers who carry out tuition in a Small Group Arrangement may carry out more than one such arrangement over the course of the summer. However, for each individual group, the children in the group should remain the same.

In delivering the programme, teachers/SNAs must adhere to the published terms and conditions of the programme and allow time for travel to and from each child's home and for rest breaks.

Guidance for teaching and learning

The NCSE provide resources to support the Home-Based Summer Programme. The resources support tutors to provide fun and engaging learning experiences for students that focus on consolidating relationships, supporting physical, social and emotional well-being, developing resilience, building their confidence as learners and developing skills and routines to support successful transition into the next stage of their schooling. The resources are available at this link: [Home-based Summer Programme Resources – National Council for Special Education – Working to deliver a better special education service.](#)

Step 5 - Completion of programme – submitting completed Grant Claim Form

- When the programme of tuition/care support has finished, the parent and teacher/SNA must both sign Part 5 - Declaration to confirm the times and dates that have been provided to the child and ensure they have completed all parts of the Grant Claim Form. Please note that Parts 4 and 5 of the Grant Claim Form should not be signed and dated prior to completion of provision
- **All** parts of the form should then be submitted to the Department of Education and youth at the address provided on the form:

**Department of Education and Youth
Home-Based Summer Programme
Special Education Section
Cornamaddy
Athlone
Co. Westmeath
N37 X659**

- The form should be returned as soon as the provision has concluded.
- The closing date for receipt of forms is **04 September 2026**.
- Where a registered teacher has provided tuition as part of a Small Group Arrangement they should send all claims with the completed **Small Group Arrangement Cover Sheet** for those children together. Failure to do so will result in delays in processing the claims for payment.

4. Sourcing a Teacher/SNA

The Teaching Council and Irish Primary Principals Network (IPPN) will promote the summer programme with this year's graduate teachers, Professional Masters of Education (PME) students and undergraduate student teachers to increase the supply of available teachers.

To help parents source a teacher/SNA for the summer programme in their local area, the IPPN has created a Summer Programme Noticeboard for teachers and SNAs to advertise their availability for the programme. Parents can also post notices on the board to source suitable candidates. The Summer Programme Noticeboard is available on www.educationposts.ie.

Parents may also wish to check with service providers and advocacy groups like AsIAM, Inclusion Ireland or Down Syndrome Ireland to see if they can support or advise or help make connections.

Parents are required to carry out the required qualification, vetting and child protection procedures regardless of how they source a teacher/SNA.

5. Child protection procedures and Garda vetting

The Children First Act 2015, which was fully commenced by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs from 11th December 2017, put elements of the Children First-National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children on a statutory footing.

[Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017](https://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/9e0b6-child-protection-in-schools/) outlines the statutory obligations that apply to mandated persons such as registered teachers and the statutory obligations that apply to organisations (such as schools) under the Act. It also sets out the best practice (non-statutory) obligations which are in place for all individuals and for all sectors of society. The Children First Act, 2015 operates side-by-side with the Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017. Information on Child Protection can be obtained on the Department's website at <https://www.gov.ie/en/policy-information/9e0b6-child-protection-in-schools/>

As the Home-Based Summer Programme takes place outside the usual school structure, parents/legal guardians should be mindful of additional risks or potential dangers involved in engaging Teachers/SNAs in a private arrangement.

It is the responsibility of the parents/legal guardians to ensure that all appropriate and necessary child protection and welfare safeguards are in place in respect of the tutoring/care support arrangement.

Parents/legal guardians should satisfy themselves that teachers/SNAs are aware of the child's medical or behavioural needs in advance of commencing the programme.

It is the responsibility of parents/legal guardians to undertake all relevant checks regarding a prospective teacher/SNA's suitability to work with their child/children and to satisfy themselves regarding the suitability of the person to carry out tuition/care support with their child.

Parents/legal guardians must ensure that home tuition/care support is supervised by a responsible adult at all times for the protection and welfare of the child.

Vetting Requirements for Teachers/SNAs

It is a requirement under the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016 (NVB Act) that individuals who work with children and vulnerable persons be vetted by the National Vetting Bureau.

All **teachers** must be vetted by the Teaching Council of Ireland prior to commencing the delivery of tuition.

Parents/legal guardians must satisfy themselves that the selected teacher/SNA has completed the vetting process.

Parents/Legal Guardians are advised to request a newly issued vetting disclosure in circumstances where they are engaging the services of a teacher/SNA for the first time.

Parents/legal guardians should be aware that vetting does not provide clearance for tutors teacher/SNAs to work with children, but simply provides particulars of any criminal record and/or specified information in respect of the teacher/SNA concerned or, where there is no criminal record or specified information, states this fact. The final decision in relation to the person's suitability, from a child protection perspective, to work with the child or children is a matter for the parents/legal guardians concerned. In that regard, parents/legal guardians should note that the outcome of Garda vetting is just one factor to consider in making that decision.

Parents/legal guardians are also advised to consider whether a newly issued vetting disclosure is necessary if they have previously engaged the teacher/SNA and they have not been vetted in the previous 3 years.

The factors that a parent/legal guardian may wish to take into account in determining whether a newly issued vetting disclosure is required may include the following:

- The period of time since previous vetting was obtained.
- As part of teaching council registration, re-vetting of all registered teachers takes place on a three year cycle so it would be important to consider:
 - Whether there are any gaps in the person's employment/career/educational history which have not been satisfactorily accounted for.
 - Whether comprehensive references have been made available in respect of previous employments.

The above is not an exhaustive list of factors that parents/legal guardians may wish to take into consideration.

- Parents/legal guardians should note that all registered teachers can apply to be vetted through the Teaching Council of Ireland's website. The process is free of charge and can take approximately 6 weeks.
- Parents/legal guardians can confirm that tutors/teachers are vetted and view the outcome and date of that vetting by viewing the result of the teacher vetting search, known as a Vetting Disclosure, which they can share with you by providing your email address.
- Thorough checks of the person's suitability are an essential element of good child protection practice and are the responsibility of the parents/legal guardians. As outlined above, these should include, but are not limited to, seeking and following up of references and ensuring that any unexplained gaps in employment records/curriculum vitae are satisfactorily accounted for. Vetting should not take the place of those checks but must be used as part of same.

Form of Undertaking & Statutory Declaration

Both the parent and the teacher/SNA must complete PART 2 (Form of Undertaking) of the Grant Claim Form. The form of undertaking must be completed as close as possible to, and in any case before, the commencement of the Home Based Summer Programme.

Teachers and SNAs engaged with the programme must ensure they have completed the **dedicated** Home-Based Summer Programme/Home Tuition Statutory Declaration form (i.e. Part 3(B) of the Grant Claim Form). **Please note that a School Statutory Declaration form is not acceptable for the Home-Based Summer Programme.**

Where the teacher/SNA plans to work with more than one family, one Statutory Declaration will suffice for their work on the home-based summer programme. A Statutory Declaration that has been completed for the Home-Based Summer Programme in the calendar year 2025 will remain valid for the 2026 programme. If the teacher/SNA has any query as to whether there is a valid Statutory Declaration form already held on file for them, they should contact the Summer Programme team via email at homebasedsummerprogram@education.gov.ie

6. Payment information for Teachers/SNAs

Teachers/SNAs are paid per hour of tuition/care support delivered. The Department will only pay one hour's pay for each hour worked regardless of the setting.

Rates per hour of tuition

Fully Qualified Primary Teacher Rate: €50.69 per hour.

This is paid to a primary qualified teacher providing tuition to a primary student.

Fully Qualified Post-Primary Teacher Rate: €55.92 per hour

This is paid to a post-primary qualified teacher providing tuition to a post-primary student

Modified Rate: €43.34 per hour

This is paid to:

- A post-primary qualified teacher providing tuition to a primary student or;
- A primary qualified teacher providing tuition to a post-primary student or;
- A teacher who is registered with the Teaching Council of Ireland and who has a degree (minimum Level 7 on the National Framework of Qualifications) in a relevant area or;
- A PME student teacher registered with the Teaching Council under Route 3 or;
- Undergraduate student teachers registered with the Teaching Council under Route 5 or;
- A teacher who is registered and qualified and who is in receipt of a public service pension

Rates per hour of care support

SNA: €20.07 per hour

IMPORTANT: The above grant payment rates cover tuition/care support only and there is no additional grant aid available outside of that outlined above, to cover any other expenses which may be incurred by the teacher/SNA (i.e. travel, fuel, subsistence, resources, materials etc).

Payment procedures

Payment for the Home-Based Summer Programme 2026 will issue to teachers/SNAs via the Non-Teaching Staff (NTS) payroll operated by the Department of Education. Payment is made directly to the teacher/SNA's bank account.

It is recommended that completed forms are submitted as soon as possible after the programme of tuition/care support has concluded and no later than the deadline date of 04 September 2026 to facilitate earlier processing of payments.

Further information on payment dates will be published during the summer on www.gov.ie/summerprogramme.

Bank details

It is the responsibility of participating teachers/SNAs to ensure that the bank details held by the Department of Education and Youth are current. Where a teacher/SNA's bank details need to be set up or amended the Bank Details Form provided at the back of the Grant Claim Form should be completed and returned.

The Department does not hold the bank details of staff employed in ETB schools unless they have previously participated in a Department scheme.

Deductions made from Home-Based Summer Programme payments

Under the terms of the Home-Based Summer Programme, parents/guardians engage teachers and SNAs in a private arrangement. **Teachers/SNAs who work on the programme are considered self-employed.** The Department acts as a payroll agent only on behalf of the parents/guardians. This is to facilitate compliance with statutory deduction provisions including taxation and associated provisions.

Statutory deductions such as PAYE, USC and PRSI are made at source via the Department's Non-Teaching Staff payroll.

PAYE

A teacher/SNA who is engaged under the Home-Based Summer Programme 2026 who:

- a) is currently not in receipt of payment via a payroll operated by this Department, or
- b) is employed by an Education and Training Board in any position,

should contact their local Revenue Office to obtain a Certificate of Tax Credits and Standard Rate Cut-Off Point for their work under the Home-Based Summer Programme.

Where a teacher/SNA is participating in the Home-Based Summer Programme for the first time in 2026, payment will be taxed at the emergency rate. It is the responsibility of the Teacher/SNA to contact Revenue to apply for a tax refund after payment has issued.

The Department of Education and Youth cannot alter tax details for any Teacher/SNA and must act on instruction from the Revenue Commissioners.

The Revenue Office will require their Personal Public Service Number (PPSN), and the Employer Registration Number (for Payroll purposes) for their work on the Home-Based Summer Programme 2026.

This Employer Registration number is 9599516K.

USC

The Universal Social Charge (USC) on gross income came into effect on 1 January 2011. Further information on the USC is available at www.revenue.ie/en/tax/usc/index.html.

Queries on tax or USC should be directed to the Office of the Revenue Commissioners at: www.revenue.ie.

PRSI

PRSI is administered by the Department of Social Protection. Within the PRSI system, the Department of Social Protection has classified payments made under the Home-Based Summer Programme as being liable for PRSI deductions at class "S".

Queries on PRSI should be directed to the **Department of Social Protection** at www.welfare.ie.

Please note that as the Department of Education and Youth acts as a payroll agent on behalf of the parent, it is not in a position to complete Social Welfare forms for Teachers/SNAs participating in the Home-Based Summer Programme.

Overpayments

In the event of an overpayment under the Home-Based Summer Programme, the overpayment will be recouped by the Department in consultation with the Teacher/SNA. If the Teacher/SNA is also in receipt of a salary or pension which is paid through a payroll operated by this Department, the overpayment will be recovered from that payment. As public monies are involved, the Department, where necessary, will recover the overpayment by legal means.

7. Further queries

If you have any further queries about the Home-Based Summer Programme 2026 please contact the dedicated Department email address for support:

homebasedsummerprogram@education.gov.ie

A Summer Programme helpline is also available at 090 648 4292.

8. Frequently Asked Questions

This FAQ should be read in conjunction with the 2026 Home-Based Summer Programme Overview document - Terms and Conditions for Parents, Teachers, SNAs and Schools.

Q1. I am a teacher. I am interested in carrying out tuition in a small group arrangement. How many hours of tuition can I provide to this group and how many hours will I be paid for?

A1. The following table outlines the breakdown of hours which can be provided in a shared setting.

Number of children Supported per Teacher	Number of hours per week to be shared between participating children in a group setting.	Number of hours paid
2	15 hours per week shared for four weeks (60 hours shared total)	60 hours
3	20 hours per week shared for four weeks (80 hours shared total)	80 hours

Q2. I am a teacher/SNA. I am not available to carry out tuition/care support for 4 weeks on the home-based Summer Programme. What is the maximum number of hours that I provide tuition/care support?

A2. The allocation of hours per eligible child where tuition/care support is provided on a 1:1 basis is 10 hours per week. If you are not available for the 4 calendar weeks and are the only teacher/SNA being sourced by the parents, the maximum hours of tuition/care support which can be provided by you will be reduced on a pro-rata basis (see table following). Under no circumstances will you be permitted to provide tuition/care support in excess of 10 hours per week to any one child. Should you do so, the excess hours will not be paid. A pro-rata breakdown of hours are as follows:

Tutor/SNA available for:	Maximum hours which can be provided on a 1:1 basis	Maximum hours which can be claimed
1 week only	Week 1 – 10 hours	10 hours
2 weeks only	Week 1 – 10 hours, Week 2 – 10 hours	20 hours
3 weeks only	Week 1 – 10 hours, Week 2 – 10 hours, Week 3 – 10 hours	30 hours
4 weeks	Week 1 – 10 hours, Week 2 – 10 hours, Week 3 – 10 hours, Week 4 – 10 hours	40 hours

Q3. I am a parent. My child is only available to take part in the home-based programme for 2 weeks. Can I ask a tutor/SNA to provide 40 hours over a period of 2 weeks.

A3. Like above, if your child can only participate in the programme for 1 or 2 weeks, tutors/SNAs should not be asked to provide more than 10 hours of tuition/care support for each week being worked. The home based summer programme is not intended to replicate the school day.

Q4. I am a parent. I have sourced a teacher/SNA but they are only available to provide tuition/care support for 2/3 weeks. Can I engage a second teacher/SNA to deliver the remaining hours?

A4. Yes, providing that the overall hours delivered per week does not exceed the maximum threshold outlined in the table above.

Q5. I am a parent. Does the programme have to be carried out during the month of July and does the weeks have to be consecutive?

A5. No. The programme can be delivered anytime during the school summer holidays and the weeks do not have to be consecutive.

Q6. I am a parent. How many hours of tuition/care support can the tutor/SNA provide on any one day to my child?

A6. Provided the 10 hours maximum threshold is not exceeded per week, the tutor/SNA can provide up to 5 hours of tuition/care support between 9am and 6pm on any one day to an eligible child.

Q7. I am a teacher/SNA. I have been asked by a parent to work on a bank holiday/ Saturday/ Sunday. Am I allowed to work on these days?

A7. No, tuition/care support cannot be delivered on a Bank Holiday or a Saturday or Sunday. Strictly, payment will not be made if delivered on these days.

Q8. Can tuition be provided online?

A8. No, tuition must be carried out in person and face to face.

Q9. I am a teacher/SNA. I am providing the home-based Summer Programme to more than one child. Am I entitled to claim for travel time and rest breaks?

A9. No, while it is recommended that appropriate time is allotted for rest breaks and for travelling to and from an eligible child's home from a health and safety perspective, such time is not considered working time. A tutor/SNA can therefore not claim for travel time or for rest breaks.

Q10. I am a tutor/SNA/parent/legal guardian. Can the Department contact me in relation to a home-based Summer Programme claim?

A10. The Department has internal control procedures in place to ensure that Summer Programme payments are being claimed in line with the sanction provided by the Department and that the terms and conditions of the programme have been adhered to correctly. As part of these arrangements a review of a random sample of payment claims is carried out periodically. Failure to respond to queries arising out of such a check will result in the delayed processing of the payment claim or it being withheld in its entirety.

Q11. I'm a teacher/SNA/parent/legal guardian and I have made an error with the claim submitted, can I submit an amended claim form?

A11. No. The Department does not normally accept amended claim forms as it undermines the claims process. It is vital therefore that claim forms are carefully checked before being submitted.

Q12. I am a tutor, if I am giving one to one (1:1) tuition to more than one child, is there a limit on the number of hours I can deliver per week or per day?

A12. Yes there is a limit. No more than 6 hours per day may be claimed by a teacher or SNA if delivering tuition to more than one child in a 1:1 setting. No more than 10 hours per week per eligible child can be claimed.

Q13. I am a tutor/SNA. I have mislaid the Home-based Statutory Declaration form. Can I send in the School-based Statutory Declaration?

A13. No, if you send in the School-based Statutory Declaration, you will then be requested to send in the appropriate Home-based Statutory Declaration (Part 3(B)). If you do not have the Home-based Statutory Declaration, you can request one by emailing homebasedsummerprogram@education.gov.ie.

Q14. I am a parent/legal guardian. I am also a qualified teacher/SNA. Can I provide home tuition/care support to my own child on the home-based Summer Programme?

A14. No. Parents are not permitted to provide home tuition/care support to children under their care under the Home-based Summer Programme.

Q15. I am a tutor/SNA. Can I provide the home-based Summer Programme after I finish my day working in school?

A15. Yes, provided that the child or young person who is eligible for the home-based programme is on summer holidays, i.e. the school that awarded the Home Based programme is closed for the summer.

Q16. I am a tutor/SNA. Can I deliver the summer Programme without having seen the decision letter confirming the student's eligibility?

A16. A tutor/SNA should not provide tuition/care support without first seeing the parent's confirmation /decision letter and having satisfied themselves that the provision being provided is for the approved child/young person.

Where tuition/care support has been delivered and it subsequently transpires that the student was not sanctioned for a place on the programme or that no application was submitted by the school on their behalf, the associated payment claim will not be processed.

It is therefore crucial and expected that tutors/SNAs ensure that:

- (a) They have sight of the decision letter/confirmation email and
- (b) The confirmation clearly relates to the student to whom they are providing tuition/care support.

The above are only a sample of the most frequently asked questions. If you have a query concerning the Home-based Summer Programme which has not been answered above, please refer to the Overview document. If your query is still unanswered, please contact the Summer Programme Team via email at homebasedsummerprogram@education.gov.ie or via the Summer Programme helpline at 090 648 4292.