

## PERMANENT SECRETARY'S MEETING NOTE

PRE-BRIEF
  MEETING
  TELEPHONE CALL

<b>TIME AND DATE OF MEETING:</b>		Monday 2 March 2026 at 2pm	
<b>TITLE/ORGANISATION:</b> (Include INV number where possible and ensure title on pre-brief and meeting notes are the same)		Meeting with DE/EA re SEN Summer Scheme 2026 provision	
<b>VENUE:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Castle Buildings	<input type="checkbox"/> Parliament Buildings	<input type="checkbox"/> Other – please specify Hybrid
<b>LIST OF ATTENDEES:</b>		David Malcom (PS DE) Richard Pengelly (CEX EA) Tomas Adell (EA) Deirdre Ward (DE)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Minister	<input type="checkbox"/> SpAd	<input type="checkbox"/> Perm Sec	PS unable to attend
<b>OFFICIALS:</b>	Maria McIlgorm Mark McGuicken [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]		
<b>KEY POINTS DISCUSSED:</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both DE and DoH Minister s keen to resolve.</li> <li>• Conscious of the impact on headteachers and staff.</li> <li>• Discussion on whether the ask for additional staff and training could be put in place in time for this year’s schemes.</li> <li>• 34 schools offer summer school provision up to 7000 children – lengthy discussion on exact nos of children who would require assistance for complex needs</li> <li>• EA clear that the provision of the summer scheme for SEN pupils is not an educational responsibility, not part of the curriculum.</li> <li>• Largely respite for children who attend. Large variations across schools’ population and varying levels of complexity.</li> <li>• Heavily reliant on Classroom assistants.</li> <li>• Ongoing issues with staff previously reporting concerns about safety and lack of confidence in the ability to deliver safe services.</li> <li>• Cohort of 1500 children out of the totality of 7000 children who are likely to require additional support.</li> <li>• DoH highlighted difficulty in planning based on lack of detail on specific details of numbers across scheme settings and complexity of needs.</li> </ul>			

- EA highlighted that the conversation had started re SEN nursing last summer. DoH accepted this but noted that the discussion on summer schemes only commenced in recent weeks and confirmed that they had only received the 2023 Report last week.

**ACTION POINTS / OFFICIAL RESPONSIBLE:**

- DOH/DE officials to consider over the next 2 weeks.
- Scope out specific details of what is required. To include the schools intending to run 2026 schemes, identify children likely to attend and associated their healthcare needs and appropriate means of healthcare provision. Further clarification of the staff available to provide health care cover and identify shortage in existing skills.
- CNO offer of regional training in core skills for all non- registrant staff via CEC.
- Direct relevant CCN leads to work with school to ensure that specific training is provided to staff expected to support children with specific needs.
- Consideration on how assurance can be provided to CAs providing healthcare provision for the 2026 scheme.
- DoH to consider options to provide healthcare professionals with responsibility for oversight of summer schemes across school setting.

**NOTE WRITTEN BY:** [REDACTED]

**DATE:** 3/3/26

**Signed and Dated: Mark McGuicken 11/03/26**