

DE/2026-068 – Freedom of Information Request

Request:

I am e-mailing to make a Freedom of Information request for the following information held by the Department:

1. Details of all correspondence in the years 2025 - 2026 concerning the operation of summer schemes for children in special schools, between the department and any of the following bodies or individuals: Education Authority, Department of Health and Health Minister
2. Details of all meetings including copies of the minutes, held between the Department and any of the above organisations or ministers in the years 2025 - 26 concerning the operation of summer schemes for children in special schools

Department Response:

Thank you for your request for information relating to **the operation of summer schemes for children in special schools in 2025-26**. The request was received on 15 April 2026.

I am writing to advise that the Department has completed a search of its records and can confirm that we hold information which is relevant to your request. I will respond to each of your requests separately below.

- **Request 1: Details of all correspondence in the years 2025 - 2026 concerning the operation of summer schemes for children in special schools, between the department and any of the following bodies or individuals: Education Authority, Department of Health and Health Minister.**

In relation to your first request, it has become apparent that the collection of this information would involve a significant diversion of staff resources, and we have estimated that the costs involved in identifying, locating and extracting the documentation involved would exceed the FOI limit for central government of £600.

As a result, the Department is not obliged to comply with your request under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Annex A provides further information regarding this exemption.

The information requested is very extensive, and therefore we have determined that your request for information would exceed the appropriate limit set by section 12 of the [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#). Upon an initial search of documents which may contain information about you request over 762 items were found. Specifically, even if five minutes were allocated to each item, we estimate that locating, retrieving, and compiling the information would take approximately 63.5 hours (over 7 working days), costing around £1,588.

However, if you wish to refine the scope of your request, for example specifying a shorter time period it may be possible to provide information within the cost limit.

- **Request 2: Details of all meetings including copies of the minutes, held between the Department and any of the above organisations or ministers in the years 2025 - 26 concerning the operation of summer schemes for children in special schools.**

In relation to your second request, I can confirm that the Department holds the information requested.

Staff names have been redacted in accordance with current DE policy, that only details relating to staff at Grade 6 or below are exempt from disclosure and should therefore be removed - these names have been redacted under exemption 40(2) and as it is an absolute exemption a public interest test is not required.

Please note that some redactions have been made within documents to remove content not in scope with the information requested.

I have attached redacted copies of the minutes of the following meetings;

- Appendix 1- Meeting with EA on SEN Summer Scheme Provision, 18 August 2025
- Appendix 2- Regional Inclusive Respite and Recreation Forum- Extract of meeting notes 18 November 2025
- Appendix 3- Meeting with Education Minister, Minister Nesbitt and representatives of NAHT Special Schools Committee, 3 February 2026
- Appendix 4- Meeting with DE and EA on Special School Summer Scheme Provision, 19 January 2026
- Appendix 5- Meeting with DE, DoH and EA- Special School Summer Scheme Provision, 17 February 2026
- Appendix 6- Meeting with DE and EA- Special School Summer Scheme Provision, 23 February 2026
- Appendix 7- Meeting with DE and EA- SEN Summer Scheme 2026 provision, 2 March 2026
- Appendix 8- Joint Health/Education Oversight Group meeting note extract, 9 March 2026
- Appendix 9- SEN Review meeting extract, 12 March 2026
- Appendix 10- SEN Review meeting extract, 19 March 2026
- Appendix 11- SEN Summer School Provision meeting- Education Minister and EA, 27 March 2026
- Appendix 12- Minute of Meeting – Summer Schemes, 8 September 2025

Appendices 8 – 10 are extracts from meeting minutes that contain information relevant to this request.