

To: The Principal of each Special School

13th September 2022

Dear Principal

**ANNUAL SCHOOL CENSUS**

This year, as in previous years, we are requesting school census information for statistical and other purposes. A statistical return, using the C2k MIS system, should be made to the Department of Education, no later than **14 October 2022.** It is important that schools make a submission by this date, as all of the data is used by the Department of Education and certain categories of data are also used to determine the distribution of funding for the Education Authority and individual schools. It is therefore **essential that information is accurate and returned on time.**

When the Census Return has been exported it should be sent via AnyComms Plus to DE by 14th October 2022. It is important to check the content of the DeniOut folder in advance of attempting to upload files using AnyComms Plus. This is an important step to ensure that no old or unnecessary files are accidentally uploaded and sent to DE. Therefore, if there are files you do not wish to send to DE they should be deleted or moved to a different folder to ensure that **DE only receives the most recently generated DENI Census 2022 file**. The DENI Census file should not be renamed and should remain with the original name format (Cxxxxxxx\_nnn – where xxxxxxx is your school reference number and nnn is the number of the Census file).

**Data collected**

The census return should include all pupils on the school roll (i.e. registered pupils) at **7th October 2022**, who have attended for at least one day, whether or not accommodated on the school’s premises. In the case of the nursery and reception pupils, schools should regard a pupil as being registered if their name is on the General Register, or if their parents have agreed with the school that the pupil will be in attendance on, or before, **31st October 2022**.

Schools should ensure that all variables, e.g., those entitled to free school meals, SEN details, etc, are complete and accurate. Information about how to record pupils under these categories is listed in the C2k guidelines. **Definitions are also supplied in the supplementary notes to this letter.** Schools are reminded to ensure that they comply with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 in collecting information in relation to pupils, in that they should inform parents that data collected by the school may be shared with other education bodies, such as the Department and EA and with other Government Departments, for statistical and research purposes, where legislation permits. Data provided to the Department are treated as confidential and disclosive information is not published.

**Auditable documentation**

In addition, schools are asked to pay particular attention to the checking of data on summary tables produced as part of the reporting process. Principals should satisfy themselves that the data contained in these tables is correct before submitting the census return. Once satisfied that the tables accurately reflect data that schools wish to submit in their census return, a return should be made via the C2k MIS system. The summary tables, which should be treated as an auditable document, should be retained by the school. In addition, it is recommended that the summary tables should be recorded at the next meeting of the Board of Governors.

Where any subsequent changes are made, as a result of the DE validation process, the school’s system should also be updated to reflect these.

Any inquiries regarding the C2k MIS system should be directed to the C2k helpdesk 087 0601 1666. Should you have any queries regarding the school census please contact me on (028) 9127 9707 or Leonie Robinson on (028) 9127 9992.

Yours faithfully



**Gemma Thomson**

Statistics and Research Team

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