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The Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (ORS)

The Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (ORS) provides direct support to individual students with the highest needs to enable them to be present, participate and learn. ORS provides support through additional teacher time, specialists, teacher's aide support and a Consumables Grant.

High or very high needs – what this means

When you and the parent/s are notified your student has been accepted into ORS you will be informed which scheme they will be on and whether their needs are considered as high or very high. This will determine how much additional teacher time they will receive and also the level of funding for specialist services, the Consumables Grant and teacher's aide support.

How ORS works

ORS is in four parts. The first three are allocated or paid directly to your school and are on top of what you already receive to teach your student.

1. Additional teacher support.

Your school receives a staffing allocation to provide additional teacher time. If you're a private school, this is provided as funding at a set amount that is intended to be a combination of both direct and indirect support for your student. Your school will need to make sure the student's information is in ENROL (complete the *ORS Staffing Roll Change Request* form from the *Funding, Staffing and Allowances Handbook*) to generate this staffing allocation. If your student has high needs your school will receive funding for 0.1 full time equivalent additional teacher time. If your student has very high needs your school will receive funding for 0.2

full time equivalent additional teacher time. Some schools combine this support and share the additional teacher between schools.

2. Funding for a teacher's aide.

The level of teacher's aide support your student receives is determined by a moderation process. Funding is paid to your school each term through your student's fund holder.

3. Consumables Grant. Your school receives funding each term to cover the cost of small items your student specifically needs, such as computer software, extra-size pens and pen grips, Braille machine paper, laminating pouches, or toileting products. Students with very high needs receive a higher amount.

4. Specialist services. Specialists employed by Special Education or contracted by the fund holder, such as special education advisors, speech-language therapists, psychologists, occupational therapists or physiotherapists, are provided on the basis of each student's needs.

About fund holders

The money for students funded by ORS does not necessarily go directly to their school but is held by a fund holder. In some districts Special Education is the fund holder. In other districts, schools with a number of students on ORS are the fund holder for their school and others nearby.

These schools hold the funding for students receiving ORS and organise and pay for specialist services themselves. They buy these services either from Special Education or from specialists working in the community.

The fund holder makes sure the money is used fairly and pays schools their teacher's aide and Consumables Grant money each term.

Referring a student to the service

Most students starting school with high and very high needs will already be receiving support through an Early Intervention service.

For new entrants already receiving an Early Intervention service, an Early Intervention specialist, together with the specialists who work in schools, will work with your school to ensure appropriate support is in place and that the

student's transition to school is planned and agreed.

Sometimes a student will start school with unidentified high needs. Others might have needs that increase over time.

If you believe a child might qualify for support from ORS, talk with your school's SENCO if you have one, your Resource Teacher: Learning and Behaviour (RTLB) or with someone in your local Special Education office.

To read the criteria for ORS go to the Ministry of Education website. You can find detailed information and case studies in the *ORS Guidelines*.

You can also find an overview of the range of Special Education support and services in our booklet *A Quick Guide to extra support* available on the Educator section of the Ministry's website.

The support available

The team supporting your student includes the classroom teacher, the additional 0.1 or 0.2 teacher, the teacher's aide and specialist support staff. Depending on your student's needs specialist services can include:

- ▶ psychologists
- ▶ special education advisors
- ▶ music therapy
- ▶ orientation and mobility
- ▶ occupational therapy
- ▶ physiotherapy
- ▶ advisers on deaf children
- ▶ speech-language therapists
- ▶ kaitakawaenga (Māori cultural advisors).

The specialist services are provided to directly assist your student and to support others working with your student.

The classroom teacher has the primary responsibility for teaching the curriculum to all the students in their class, including those on ORS. The scheme is intended to provide the teacher with the support to accomplish this. As with all students in the class, the family/whānau should also be involved in their child's classroom programme.

Many schools have a SENCO who oversees all the special education programmes in the school.

For students on ORS this person can organise communication between the teachers, home and specialists etc. Sometimes the SENCO works as the additional teacher.

Property modifications

Your school is responsible for carrying out any recommended property modifications to ensure your school is accessible for your students. This needs to begin well before your student starts.

The Ministry of Education will fund the modifications once they have been approved.

You will need to follow a process that involves the parent/s, the Property team at the Ministry and a physiotherapist or occupational therapist from Special Education. You can find more detail in the *Property Management Handbook for State Schools*, section 3, page 13.

A child does not have to be funded through ORS for property changes to be recommended.

Other support available

Your student might be able to get support with transport to school through Special Education School Transport Assistance (SESTA) and with equipment, such as special keyboards and software, through Assistive Technology Support. You can find more information on these on the Ministry website (www.minedu.govt.nz).

Individual Education Plans (IEPs)

All students on ORS will have an IEP.

Your school will work together with the family/whānau and Special Education to develop, implement and monitor your student's IEP.

About 30 per cent of all ORS money is currently spent on specialists. There's high demand for specialists' services. At IEP meetings it's important everyone agrees on the specialist services your student needs most at that time.

You can find a copy of the IEP Guidelines on the Ministry website, including examples of several students with different needs and what their IEPs look like.

Frequently asked questions

Q: Does a child on ORS have to be at school all day every day?

A: You cannot send a student home early or say they cannot attend on a particular day, such as when a teacher's aide is not available. This might be breaching the Education Act 1989.

Students with special education needs, including those on ORS, have the same right to attend school as others. No student can be asked to stay home because of resource issues.

However, some students might find it a struggle to be at school full time. This might be because of health problems, because it's too stressful and exhausting for them, or because they've just moved from an early childhood centre to school. The family/whānau, your school, and any specialists must all agree to your student attending school for fewer hours each week and this should be reviewed frequently. There must be a plan in place to work towards your student attending full time.

When a student receiving ORS is at secondary school they're expected to be at school during exam time and for Term Four just as all students are. If your student isn't sitting an exam, you need to provide them with another programme.

Q: If a student changes schools what happens to their ORS funding?

A: The teacher time and teacher's aide funding provided through ORS moves with your student to

their new school. Your student is likely to have a different teacher's aide and the amount of teacher's aide support might change. If a student transfers in or out of your school, please contact the fund holder as soon as possible.

Q: How is teacher's aide support decided?

A: The process for working out teacher's aide support is called the moderation process. It takes place when your student starts on ORS, then once a year – usually during Term 3.

Your school and Special Education will work together with the parent/s to determine your student's needs and to fill in a *Request for teacher's aide resource* form. All requests for teacher's aide support in your district are then considered by Special Education staff and often a reference group of local principals, teachers and parents. They will use benchmarks to ensure students with similar needs receive similar levels of support. The decisions they make must be within the district's budget.

Your student's teacher's aide support might change each year and they might not get the exact amount of support their team requested. After discussion with the school and lead worker, you and/or the parent/s can ask for a review of the decision. Every region or district has a review process.

If there is any change to your student's support needs, talk to the fund holder.

Q: What makes a teacher's aide most effective?

A: Teachers' aides are most effective when:

- ▶ the class teacher meets with the teacher's aide weekly. This is to go over the student's programme, look at what's working well, decide what changes might be needed and to look at whether everyone is on track to meet the goals set out in the student's IEP
- ▶ there's good communication between the class teacher and teacher's aide
- ▶ they have a good relationship with the class teacher and feel they're working in partnership to support the student
- ▶ discussions between the class teacher and the teacher's aide during class time relate to what needs to happen in the classroom
- ▶ there's time to discuss their work and there's feedback from the class teacher
- ▶ they receive a good amount of time for training

- ▶ they know the delicate balance between providing enough support and spending too much time with the student they're supporting. Spending too much time with the student can lead to them becoming isolated from the rest of the class. Teachers' aides also need to be careful not to take on the role of stopping the student 'bothering' the class teacher.

Consider using a different teacher's aide to support the student in the playground, if it's necessary, so there's less risk of them becoming too dependent on one person.



For more information

If you're unclear about any part of our service or have questions about the help your student receives, please talk with staff at your local Special Education office, or call the Special Education information line on **0800 622 222**.

You can get more detailed special education information, including *A Quick Guide to extra support*, under the educator section of our website: www.minedu.govt.nz, or on Te Kete Ipurangi a website that provides educational material for teachers and schools: www.tki.org.nz.

New Zealand Government

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