



**An Roinn Oideachais
agus Scileanna**
Department of
Education and Skills

Frequently Asked Questions on Summer Programme for DEIS Post-primary Schools

What is Reconnecting with School: Summer Programme for Post-primary DEIS Schools?

It is acknowledged that teachers and principals throughout the school system have made huge efforts and undertaken a lot of work in order to adapt their teaching approaches to facilitate a move to remote learning. While significant work has been carried out at school level in order to encourage all students to engage in learning, not all students have engaged. For many socio-economically disadvantaged students remote learning presents a particular challenge as many of these students and their families have limited opportunity to engage with learning in a remote teaching environment.

It is generally acknowledged that these pupils are at more risk of disengaging in a remote learning environment relative to their peers, and may fail to make successful transition to a more senior class or struggle to re-engage with school. It is therefore considered appropriate to provide a programme in DEIS post-primary schools, for those students who are now deemed to be at significant risk of disengagement or of dropping out of the school system.

By availing of the Summer Programme schools can support those students to reconnect and continue their education. The emphasis in this programme is on supporting those students to re-engage with education, on building their confidence and increasing their motivation, and thereby preparing students to reintegrate into the school system in September

Where will I get details on what the programme should entail?

While schools have autonomy in deciding how best to run this programme to meet the needs of their student cohort, the Inspectorate has developed a guidance document entitled Reconnecting with School: Guidance on Summer Programme for post primary schools participating in the DEIS programme, which is available at www.education.ie/en/Parents/Services/summerprovision/reconnecting-with-school-guidance-on-summer-programme.pdf

Will public health guidelines be available to schools in advance of running this programme?

Schools are required to operate camps in accordance with the relevant public health guidelines. The Department has requested advice from the health authorities in relation to the re-opening of schools and the operation of a summer education programme. The Department will ensure that advice is made available to schools before the beginning of summer education programmes.

What is the application process for schools?

An expression of interest form should be completed and returned no later than Friday 26th June. All applications will be approved and the form is available here <https://checkbox.education.gov.ie/checkbox/School-Summer-Programme-DEIS-Postprimary-Schools.aspx>

As a DEIS Post-primary school, do I have to run this programme?

No, this is an entirely voluntary programme. It is acknowledged that schools and teachers have already had to undertake significant work in dealing with the challenges of schools closures and remote learning. However, the Department would encourage schools to avail of this opportunity and all the necessary support and advice will be provided.

What criteria should be used to select students for the programme?

Schools understand their own students' context and circumstances and are best placed to determine which students may benefit most from attending the programme. In the context of a school's DEIS plan the school has already identified a list of those students most at risk of educational disadvantage. The school should review their available data regarding the level of engagement these particular students have had since school closures, and identify those who are now deemed to be most at risk of educational disadvantage or early school leaving. Other students who are shown to have disengaged should also be considered for inclusion in the summer programme.

How long will the programme run for and when?

The programme will run for one week and may be offered in either July or August. While it is considered that the optimal timing of delivery of the summer programme is as close to the official reopening of schools as possible, this is completely at the schools discretion.

How long should the school programme day be?

The time allocated should be based on the existing school timetable in terms of beginning and end times each day. Teachers should use time at the beginning and end of the day for planning and review. Students should begin no later than 10.00 am and finish no earlier than 3 pm.

What funding is provided to run the programme?

All details in terms of funding and staffing are available at www.education.ie/en/Parents/Services/summerprovision/terms-and-conditions-for-reconnecting-with-school-summer-programme-in-deis-post-primary-schools.pdf

Will training be provided to teachers running summer camps?

All programme teachers will be required to attend an online training/information webinar, which will take place over two sessions. Each session will take a maximum time of 1hr 30mins. The first session has been developed by NEPS with a focus on the impact of Covid 19 on teacher and student wellbeing and reconnecting with school in the current situation. The second session will cover the principles of the summer programme providing advice on the approach to be taken and will be provided by the relevant support services.

The webinars will be recorded and made available for further reference and it is intended that this training will be delivered as early as possible.

Is this the same as the School Completion Programme summer camp?

This programme is separate to summer programmes run under the School Completion Programme, and is a specific initiative in response to school closures from March 2020 due to Covid-19 restrictions.

This programme is intended to supplement, not replace, the School Completion Programme which is a targeted programme funded by Tusla under the remit of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and operationalised by Local Management Committees.

All relevant information on this programme can be found in guidance document

www.education.ie/en/Parents/Services/summerprovision/reconnecting-with-school-guidance-on-summer-programme.pdf

and in the

www.education.ie/en/Parents/Services/summerprovision/terms-and-conditions-for-reconnecting-with-school-summer-programme-in-deis-post-primary-schools.pdf