

Mr Brian Donaldson
request-702940-d5a52110@whatdotheyknow.com

Rathgael House
43 Balloo Road
Rathgill
Bangor
BT19 7PR

Our Ref: **DE/2020-0129**

Date: 26 November 2020

Dear Mr Donaldson

Freedom of Information Act 2000

I refer to your Freedom of Information request of 30 October 2020 requesting the following information. *“Can you confirm today how much monies from the Covid support has been provided specifically for the SEN in Northern Ireland? Also the total amount allocated to the department today’s from Covid monies. Can I also have the number of SEN pupils in Northern Ireland in primary education and the total amount of children in primary education?”*

The Department has now completed its search for the information you requested. The education budget is distributed in such a way that requires the Department to subsume your first two questions together for a combined response. That is, there are budget allocations which the Department makes to the Education Authority which will ultimately address the needs of both pupils in Special and mainstream schools. In the case of the latter, these allocations will benefit both pupils on the SEN register and those who are not.

As at the date of this letter the Department has received additional funding of c£106.5m for COVID-19 response measures and c£97.2m for Education Restart.

The funding secured is to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the education sector and includes funding towards the cost of substitute teachers, non-teaching staff and other school expenditure, Personal Protection Equipment (PPE), school wellbeing initiatives, home to school transport, childcare sector support, school holiday food grants, and support for special educational needs.

As part of the Education Restart funding, c£20.9m has been allocated to date directly to grant aided schools (other than Special Schools and Hospital Schools), to mitigate additional costs incurred as a result of COVID-19, beyond teacher substitution costs.

Restart funding for Special schools is being managed centrally by the Education Authority, in line with current delegations, and to date allocations of £6.9m have been made to the Education Authority specifically earmarked for Special Educational Needs.

There are further elements of the funding received by the Department, including school meals, which will be attributable to Special Educational Needs, but these cannot be disaggregated.

The Department received £5m towards the provision of a Restart Wellbeing fund for educational settings, £125k of which is being allocated to special schools.

In relation to the number of SEN children and total children in Northern Ireland in primary school education the link below will provide you with the latest numbers and percentages available for SEN children by school type. The information requested is located at Table 7 on the final page of the document.

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/education/revised%203rd%20March%202020%20-%20Annual%20enrolments%20at%20schools%20and%20in%20pre-school%20...pdf>

If you are unhappy with the level of service you have received in relation to your request, you may ask for an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this letter. You may write to the Departmental Information Manager, Rathgael House, 43 Baloo Road, Rathgill, Bangor BT19 7PR or send an email to: FOI@education-ni.gov.uk if you wish to make a complaint.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a review of our original decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

**Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF**

If you have any queries about this email, please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely

Stephen van Houten

**Stephen Van Houten
Acting Deputy Director of Finance**