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Educational Provision for Children with Mild General Learning Disabilities in National Schools and Special Schools in the Republic of Ireland 1989 - 2004
Educational Provision for Children with Mild General Learning Disabilities in National Schools and Special Schools in the Republic of Ireland 1989 – 2004

Paul J. Stevens

Thesis submitted to the University of Dublin in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

May 2007
DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been submitted for a degree at any other university and that, with due regard to the acknowledgements made herein, it is entirely my own work. I hereby give permission that the library of Trinity College, Dublin, may lend or copy this thesis on request for study purposes subject to the normal conditions of acknowledgement.

[Signature]

Paul J. Stevens

25th May 2007
I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Professor A.M.E. O’Moore for her continued encouragement, invaluable advice and helpful direction at all stages of my research. Thanks also to Dr Michael Shevlin, Head of Education, Trinity College, Dublin, for his helpful advice.

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ABSTRACT

This exploratory nationwide study investigates teachers’ perceptions (n=588) of educational provision for pupils in the 8–12 age range with Mild General Learning Difficulties (MGLD) (formerly mild mental handicap) in 226 National and special schools in 1989 and 2004. The study is set against a backdrop of unprecedented change and fundamental transformation within the Irish special education sector. The key factors associated with this extraordinary expansion of provision are identified and their influence in shaping three distinct models namely, the special school, the special class, and the resource model, are evaluated. The research is unique in that it is the first time MGLD provision within these three models is investigated within one study on a longitudinal basis.

The initial impetus for the study emerged from repeated requests for research into educational provision for this population made by voluntary disability organizations and teachers’ unions in the mid-1980s. Many of the issues and concerns regarding provision were based on anecdotal evidence rather than quantitative data and a review of the limited existing literature revealed a small body of research limited by methodological constraints. However, common themes within the research literature were identified and provided the basis for the formulation of eleven research questions. These aspects of provision explored were: school characteristics, special education teaching body, pupil placement, integration and inclusion practices, school and classroom facilities, educational resources, curricular provision, schools’ psychological services, in-school support, external support services and home/school liaison.

A postal questionnaire addressing these themes was designed in collaboration with a group of special class and special school teachers. The first postal survey (n=159), completed by 47 special school and 112 special class teachers, quantified provision in a comprehensive manner within both models in 1989. Despite the subsequent period of reform and significant investment in and expansion of the system, the majority of issues investigated in 1989 remained a cause for concern in 2004. A revised questionnaire, based on the 1989 instrument, was administered in 2004 (n=429) and completed by 49 special school, 177 special class, and 203 resource teachers. The fact that the second survey revisited many of the same National and special schools made it possible to
provide a unique comparison of these two models following this period of significant change. High questionnaire response rates were recorded both in 1989 (79%) and 2004 (81%).

The findings suggested that the three models of provision operate largely as separate entities. In addition, there were significant differences in many aspects of provision between the special schools, special classes and the resource model. A comparison of the 1989 and 2004 data indicated areas where improvements had occurred but a significant number of issues still need to be addressed. Of particular note were the significant reduction in integrated activities in special classes, the significant drop in special school/National school interaction, high levels of reported teacher isolation and the failure of the schools' psychological service in meeting teachers perceived needs.

This study concluded that there have been a number of positive developments in terms of provision for MGLD pupils, but a number of identified challenges remain. In light of the introduction of the General Allocation Model and the forthcoming implementation of the 2004 Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act, recommendations to address some of the shortcomings of the current system of educational provision for MGLD pupils are proposed.
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<td>APA</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASTI</td>
<td>Association of Secondary Teachers of Ireland</td>
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<tr>
<td>ARTI</td>
<td>Association of Remedial Teachers of Ireland</td>
</tr>
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<td>ASA</td>
<td>American Sociological Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>BEd</td>
<td>Bachelor of Education</td>
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<td>BPS</td>
<td>British Psychological Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSA</td>
<td>British Sociological Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>BTC</td>
<td>Breaking the Cycle Educational Disadvantage Scheme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBFSAI</td>
<td>Central Bank and Financial Services Authority of Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCPSI</td>
<td>Conference of Convent Primary Schools in Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD</td>
<td>Compact Disc</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEC</td>
<td>Council for Exceptional Children</td>
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<td>CERI</td>
<td>Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CICE</td>
<td>Church of Ireland College of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CORI</td>
<td>Conference of Religious of Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLPAI</td>
<td>Cleft Lip &amp; Palate Association of Ireland.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPSMA</td>
<td>Catholic Primary School Managers’ Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>DAS</td>
<td>Disadvantaged Areas Scheme (formerly The Scheme of Assistance to Schools in Designated Areas of Disadvantage)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCF</td>
<td>Dublin City University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DES</td>
<td>Department of Education and Science (formerly Department of Education)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dip Sp Ed</td>
<td>Diploma in Special Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>DLCG</td>
<td>Disability Legislation Consultation Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>DVD</td>
<td>Digital Video Disk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DU</td>
<td>University of Dublin</td>
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<tr>
<td>EADSNE</td>
<td>European Agency for Development in Special Educational Needs</td>
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<td>ESAI</td>
<td>Educational Studies Association of Ireland</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESRI</td>
<td>Economic and Social Research Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>FPC</td>
<td>Fair Play for Children Campaign (UK)</td>
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<td>GAM</td>
<td>General Allocation Model</td>
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<td>GCEB</td>
<td>Giving Children an Even Break Educational Disadvantage Scheme</td>
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<tr>
<td>HEB</td>
<td>Health Education Bureau</td>
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<tr>
<td>HRB</td>
<td>Health Research Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>HSE</td>
<td>Health Services Executive (replacing seven regional Health Boards since 1st January 2005)</td>
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<tr>
<td>HSLC</td>
<td>Home School Liaison Community Educational Disadvantage Scheme</td>
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<tr>
<td>IABMSS</td>
<td>Irish Association of Boards of Management of Special Schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>IATSE</td>
<td>Irish Association of Teachers in Special Education (formerly NATSE)</td>
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<tr>
<td>IEP</td>
<td>Individual Education Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILEA</td>
<td>Inner London Education Authority (UK)</td>
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<tr>
<td>INTO</td>
<td>Irish National Teachers’ Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPA</td>
<td>Institute of Public Administration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPPN</td>
<td>Irish Primary Principals’ Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LST</td>
<td>Learning Support Teacher (formerly Remedial Teacher)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MGLD</td>
<td>Mild General Learning Difficulties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMH</td>
<td>Mild Mental Handicap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSRB</td>
<td>Medico-Social Research Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MWHB</td>
<td>Mid-Western Health Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NABMSE</td>
<td>National Association of Boards of Management in Special Education (formerly NABMSS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>NABMSS</td>
<td>National Association of Boards of Management of Special Schools</td>
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</table>
NAMHI  National Association for the Mentally Handicapped in Ireland
NASEN  National Association of Special Educational Needs (U.K.)
NATSE  National Association of Teachers in Special Education
NCCA  National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
NCSE  National Council for Special Education
NCTE  National Council for Technology and Education
NDA  National Disability Authority
NEPS  National Educational Psychological Service
NESC  National Economic and Social Council
NFER  National Foundation of Educational Research (UK)
NFVB  National Federation of Voluntary Bodies
NIDD  National Intellectual Disability Database
NIETI  Northern Ireland Education and Training Inspectorate (U.K.)
NPC-P  National Parents' Council - Primary
NRB  National Rehabilitation Board
NT  National Teacher Qualification
NUI  National University of Ireland
OECD  Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PGCE  Postgraduate Certificate in Education
PMLD  Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities
PSI  Psychological Society of Ireland
SES  Social Employment Scheme
SCG  Scrúdú le haghaidh Cáilíochta sa Ghaeilge
SCRE  Scottish Council for Research in Education (U.K.)
SENO  Special Educational Needs Organiser (formerly Special Needs Officer SNO)
SER  Special Education Resources
SES  Social Employment Scheme
SESS  Special Education Support Service
SET  Special Education Teacher
SIGSTMH  Special Interest Group of Speech Therapists in Mental Handicap
SLT  Speech and Language Therapy
SLD  Severe Learning Disabilities
SNA  Special Needs Assistant (formerly Classroom Assistant)
SPHE  Social Personal and Health Education
SPS  Schools' Psychological Service
SPSS  Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SSISI  Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland
TCD  Trinity College, Dublin
UCD  University College, Dublin
UL  University of Limerick
UNESCO  United Nations Educational Scientific & Cultural Organisation
VCR  Videocassette Recorder
VEC  Vocational Education Committee
WHO  World Health Organisation
NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

This study is concerned with children attending National schools and special schools who have been psychologically assessed and whose resultant scores lie within the Intelligence Quotient range of 50 to 70. The Report of the Commission of Inquiry on Mental Handicap (Government of Ireland, 1965) and the Report of the Special Education Review Committee (Government of Ireland, 1993a) describe such pupils as "mildly mentally handicapped". Special Schools for the Mildly Mentally Handicapped and National Schools with Special Classes for the Mildly Mentally Handicapped were the two forms of special educational provision in existence when the initial data was collected in 1989. When referring to these schools, classes, and children, the abbreviated term (MMH) is used in the text.

The Department of Education and Science's Circular SP.ED 08/02 entitled 'Applications for full-time or part-time resource teacher support to address special education needs of children with disabilities' (Government of Ireland, 2002a) officially replaced the label "mild mental handicap" with the term "mild general learning disabilities" to denote children in the I.Q. range 50 to 70. This is the term that was in use to describe this population when the 2004 follow-up surveys were undertaken in special schools and National Schools with special classes and among resource teachers. The abbreviation (MGLD) is used in the text where appropriate.

Finally, in the section outlining the historical development of special education in Chapter Two, outdated labels and categorisations in common usage at that time are used in the interests of historical accuracy.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

"After all, this is a world for the average man, and if there are funds available the bright child who will be an ornament of the state, and become a useful citizen, should be helped. I think it is a waste of time trying to teach children who can never learn and never be taught to learn".

(Department of Education official, cited in Clifford, 1938, p. 34)

Such a view expressed in the twenty first century would certainly meet with outrage, indignation, anger and demands for the official’s resignation illustrating the degree to which thinking regarding the education of special needs children has advanced. However, this view was probably not uncommon among education officials in the 1930s who worked in a Department which had no involvement in special education. The statement reflects an attitude which illustrates the Department’s reluctance to become involved and a desire to maintain a reactive rather than proactive role for many decades allowing religious congregations and other organisations to meet the educational needs of these children. Therefore, the official may have been mildly surprised to witness the Department of Education’s change of heart within a decade when it granted official recognition and starting funding special schools for ‘handicapped’ children. There was certainly no question of such children being educated in ‘ordinary’ National schools although undoubtedly some were and failed miserably at school for being ‘slow’ or they were kept at home out of the public eye.

The anonymous official would no doubt have been taken aback at how much things changed between the 1930s and 1950s with a growing voice nationally and internationally demanding specialised education for this section of the school population. Within a quarter of a century, the 1965 Report of the Commission of Inquiry on Mental Handicap was published and he would have been astonished by its breadth and recommendations mapping out the path for special educational provision for decades to come. This same report was to dramatically increase his Department’s role in
the process with a steady growth in special schools and latterly a rapid expansion of the special class system especially in socio-economically disadvantaged areas.

Had the same official been around to review matters sixty years later in 1998, he undoubtedly would have been flabbergasted and bewildered by what had happened. While special education remained a quite backwater for many years until the mid-1980s, the following two decades were to be a period of rapid dramatic change unprecedented in Irish educational history. The children “who can never be taught to learn” were now to the forefront of the education system supported by an enormous financial commitment maintaining a complex infrastructure of special educational provision including schools, staffing, transport and support services. The “funds available to the bright child”, which were augmented substantially by the economic boom of the 1990s, were now being distributed more equitably among the school-going population as a whole.

The official’s departmental colleagues, now understaffed and relocated to Athlone, were struggling to implement the many developments resulting from the recommendations of the 1993 Report of the Special Education Review Committee and the increasingly frequent departmental circulars concerning special education. He would have had sympathy for his colleagues trying to process a deluge of thousands of applications for resources emanating from the “automatic entitlement” introduced by the Minister for Education in 1998, a procedure often delayed by departmental officials having to prepare responses for Dáil questions concerning individual cases. His colleagues would possibly have informed him of the first historic Education Act and subsequent legislation pertinent to the disability sector culminating in the Education of Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act.

On reading newspapers, the besieged official would have learnt that hundreds of parents, now equal partners in education, were taking legal action through the courts against the Department of Education in an effort to obtain access to appropriate special education for their children. Newspapers also highlighted the repeated demands of school management bodies, teachers’ trade unions, parent organisations and various disability groups in relation to the Department’s role in making adequate provision for children with special education needs.

Had our beleaguered official visited an ‘ordinary’ National school he would have encountered pupils with a wide variety of disabilities being educated in schools frequently lacking in access, facilities and resources. He would have met anxious school
principals unable to access psychological assessments for pupils and teachers with no specialised training attempting to educate special needs children in their crowded mainstream classrooms. In visiting special schools, he would have come across similar difficulties in addition to children with supplementary complex needs and increasing levels of challenging behaviour.

Finally, had the by-now overwhelmed official been permitted to ask two questions, these would probably have been: “What is the current level of provision for these pupils?” and “Have all the developments and initiatives of the last two decades improved this provision?” The purpose of this study is to attempt to answer these questions.

1.2 THIS STUDY

This exploratory study consists of two projects, which taken together, constitute a unique programme of research in the Irish special education system. The two major national questionnaire surveys, the first conducted in 1989 and the second conducted in 2004 involved a total of 588 teachers in 226 schools. The research focuses on children with Mild General Learning Disabilities (MGLD) who, as the largest category of disability, constitute over half the school-going special needs population. It examines levels of educational provision for these pupils in the 8-12 age range in special schools and National schools. The elements of provision reviewed are those emerging from the review of previous studies and publications and focus on school facilities, educational resources, staffing, support services, inclusion, curricular provision, and facilities for home/school liaison. The results of both the 1989 and 2004 surveys provide an illuminating picture of changes in provision over a fifteen year period.

The initial 1989 survey of 47 special school and 112 special class teachers was prompted by frequent calls for research primarily by disability organisations and teachers’ trade unions due to the paucity of previous studies addressing special educational provision in these two models of provision. The small quantity of research which did exist was limited by methodological constraints. The many issues and concerns regarding provision which were raised at this period were based on anecdotal reports rather than quantitative data. Therefore, the central concern of this initial survey was to quantify provision in both models in 1989. This survey was prior a period of rapid expansion and development which was to occur in the years to follow. These
changes prompted primarily by the publication of the *Report of the Special Education Review Committee* in 1993 and a multiplicity of other external factors resulted in a significant transformation in a considerable number of aspects of provision. The creation and extraordinary expansion of the resource teacher model heralded the arrival of inclusive education in Irish National schools. This, combined with the “automatic entitlement” to special educational resources in 1999, contributed to a growth in teacher provision, an increase in the number of pupils accessing provision, and a measured increase in resources previously unseen in primary schools. However, it has been suggested that this period of expansion was not equally matched with the necessary supports and resources and, as a result, schools experienced difficulties in making appropriate provision. As a consequence of the expansion of the resource teacher model, there were resultant changes in the populations attending both special schools and special classes in National schools. The enactment of the first Education Act in 1998 and the establishment of the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) were among other significant milestones during this period. However, despite a period of rapid reform and enormous investment, anecdotal evidence suggests that many of the issues identified in 1989 had not been resolved and remained a matter of concern in 2004. In fact, the fundamental transformation in the special education system in the period 1989 to 2004 had created additional new difficulties for schools.

A noteworthy feature of the research is that the second almost identical survey was administered in 2004 after this period of development and reform in special education. The 2004 sample of 429 teachers was drawn from special schools (49 teachers), special classes (177 teachers) and resource teachers (203). Revisiting many of the same special schools and National schools with special classes makes it possible to provide a unique comparison of special educational provision in these two sectors following this period of reform. Much of the data presented in subsequent chapters directly compares teachers’ perceptions of provision in 1989 and 2004. In addition, the data gathered from resource teachers provides opportunities for comparing the three models of provision in operation in 2004.

The high level of co-operation from schools indicates the level of interest in and concern regarding provision for MGLD pupils. Additionally, the high response rates to the structured teacher questionnaire in 1989 (78.6%) and 2004 (80.8%) gives an assurance that the data is representative of the teacher populations surveyed.
This study is presented in nine chapters followed by supportive reference material.

Chapter Two provides the reader with a contextual background to the research area exploring the evolution of services and examining the key influential factors which have shaped special education for the MGLD school-going population. The primary conceptual and theoretical issues relating to integrated and latterly inclusive education are reviewed and their impact on transformation of the Irish special education system is discussed. The emerging three forms of provision namely the special school, special class and resource teacher model are appraised and the similarities and differences between them noted. A review of the limited literature suggests a variety of contentious issues requiring further study. These issues are then analysed in detail giving the essential foundations for this exploratory study.

The third chapter details the central questions being addressed: the level of educational provision and the extent of change between 1989 and 2004. The concerns identified in Chapter Two provide the basis for formulating eleven research questions exploring a variety of topics and sub-topics in order to construct a comprehensive profile of MGLD special education provision. Chapter Three also is concerned with the scope and delimitations of the research project.

Research methodology is the primary focus of Chapter Four detailing the target population, survey samples and the development of the research instruments. Questionnaire administration and response rates are also considered. Finally, the management of data, use of statistical analysis and ethical considerations are discussed.

The next three chapters present the findings of the 1989 and 2004 surveys and the end of each chapter contains a summary of principle findings. Direct comparisons between the two surveys are made throughout these three chapters. Chapter Five presents data on the characteristics of schools across the three forms of provision, reviews key issues relating to teachers, explores teachers’ perceptions of pupil placement, and finally details integration/inclusion practices. The findings of the surveys relating to school facilities, educational resources and special curricular provision are included in Chapter Six. Chapter Seven reports research results pertaining to schools’ psychological services, the in-school and external support services and finally current practices relating to home/school communication.
Chapter Eight discusses the results presented in the three previous chapters comparing and contrasting these findings to previous studies and highlights areas of significance and emerging trends. The final chapter contains concluding remarks and recommendations both for further research and for the agencies and bodies responsible for service provision for the MGLD population.
## Chapter Two

### Literature Review

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2.1 INTRODUCTION

This literature review is presented in four separate parts. The first section is a contextual background providing a brief overview of the Irish primary system of education. In addition, the dual system of special education which co-exists in mainstream and special schools is discussed and mention is made of the characteristics of both types of provision.

The second section of the review is concerned with the evolution of the Irish special education system and it is presented in five subsections. The earliest forms of provision are explored and the key influential factors are identified and their effects on the expansion of the system are examined. The two critical documents, the 1965 Report of the Commission of Inquiry on Mental Handicap and the 1983 Report of the Special Education Review Committee, are evaluated and their significant impact in determining policy and practice are reviewed. The final subsection focuses on more recent developments with particular reference to the EPSEN Act and its implications for special education in coming years.

Thirdly, educational provision specifically for pupils with MGLD between 1989 and 2004 is discussed. Initially, the administrative prevalence of MGLD among pupils of school-going age is examined. The three models of provision specifically for MGLD pupils namely the special school, the special class and the resource teacher are reviewed with particular attention paid to recent trends and identified areas of concern within each sector. The integration and inclusion debates which have preoccupied so much of the special education literature are briefly examined from an international and an Irish perspective. A review of Irish research reveals particular areas of concern and the limitations of previous research due to small sample sizes and narrow geographical focus are assessed. Consequently emerging key issues of concern among the special education sector are identified for further exploration.

The final fourth section of the literature review examines these emerging issues in detail, characteristics of Special and National schools, school facilities, support services, pupil placement, integration/inclusion, curricular provision, and facilities for home school liaison, are reviewed in relation to special school, special class and mainstream settings. The more detailed analysis of these identified areas reveals a lack of cohesive, comparative and recent data thus providing the basis for formulating the research questions which form a central part of study.
2.2 GENERAL SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

2.2.1 Introduction

The Irish Education System is a partnership between the state and various private agencies. Education has always been highly valued in Ireland and prior to the establishment of a national system of education in 1831, there was already in existence a network of schools. The evolution of education has shadowed the evolution of the economy. On independence, the new state did little to change the already existing structures and investment in education was low. Up to 1960 education was static and under-resourced (O.E.C.D., 1991). However, with the beginning of economic expansion and the publication of the State and OECD report Investment in Education (O.E.C.D., 1966) significant changes occurred in the Irish Education System. The State assumed an increasingly active role, the notion of investment in education and the demand for equality of opportunity all contributed to an expanded, accessible and more developed system of education. While the 1980s was a period of economic recession with its consequent effects on education, the more recent economic growth and unprecedented level of consultation, appraisal, analysis, policy formation, legislation, and financial investment has resulted in wide ranging developments and reform.

Education in Ireland is compulsory for children in age range six to sixteen years. However under Article 42.2 of the Irish Constitution, parents are the primary educator and therefore are free to provide education in their on homes and the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) has 100 such pupils registered. There has been a long tradition of children enrolling in primary schools after their fourth birthday. In 2003/2004, under half (45.6%) of four year olds and practically all (99.7%) of five year olds attended school (Government of Ireland, 2005a). Pupils transfer from primary to second level after eight years education aged 12/13 years. Students may leave second level education on the completion of three years education or at 16 years but approximately 80% fully complete post-primary education. Table 2.1 illustrates the number of persons attending the Irish Education System in 2003/2004:
Table 2.1: No. of persons in state-funded full-education in school year 2003/2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Educational Provision</th>
<th>No. of Persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary: National Schools: Ordinary Classes</td>
<td>429,971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Schools: Pupils in Special Classes</td>
<td>9,340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Schools</td>
<td>6,718</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total at primary level:</strong></td>
<td><strong>446,029</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary: Secondary, Vocational and Community &amp; Comprehensive Schools</td>
<td>338,029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary: H.E.A. Universities, Teacher Training Colleges, Institutes of Technology, &amp; Other</td>
<td>133,887</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>918,681</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The Minister for Education and Science’s administrative agency is the Department of Education and Science. Through the provisions of the Education Act (1998) and a system of departmental circulars, the DES manages the provision of education at all levels in the state. Educational administration is not organised on a regional basis (with the exception of Vocational Education Committees (VEC) at second level) and the DES’s administrative offices are centralised in Dublin, Athlone and Tullamore.

All primary and the majority of secondary schools are locally owned and managed. Each school is managed by a Board of Management representative of trustees, parents, teachers and the local community. Historically, the majority of primary schools are denominational (Coolahan, 1981) although there has been an increase in recent years in multi-denominational schooling. Higher education is provided mainly by universities, institutes of technology, colleges of education and a number of specialist institutes.

The majority of primary and secondary are funded directly or indirectly by the DES. A small proportion of schools are private and non-state aided. In 2003/2004 there were 3,155 primary schools, 752 second level schools, and 34 third level institutions funded by the state. Financial expenditure in 2003/2004 was €5,683 million with €4,300 being spent per pupil at primary level, €6,200 per second level student, and €10,300 for each third level student (Government of Ireland, 2005a). There has been a

2.2.2 Primary Education

The vast majority of Ireland's 3,155 primary schools are denominational schools, designed as either "Roman Catholic" or "Protestant" under the management of the relevant diocesan patronage. However, in recent decades, there has been a growing trend towards multi-denominational schools of which 39 schools now provide education for 6,631 pupils under the patronage of the "Educate Together" body. An Fóras Patrúnachta na Scoileanna Lán-Gaeilge Teoranta is the body which oversees management of the 121 Gaelscoileanna (Irish language medium schools) which cater for 22,558 pupils. The 128 special schools, most of which have students at post-primary level, are part of the National school system (Government of Ireland, 2005a). There are approximately 70 non-aided primary schools which are non-state funded and outside the remit of DES regulation (Eurydice, 2005).

The majority of National Schools are co-educational with just 16% operating as single-sex schools. These are located in the twenty six counties with one fifth 19% of them in the cities of Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Waterford.

In 2003/04, 62% of classes in primary schools were in single grade classes, 27% in consecutive classes and 21% in multi-grade classes. There are 54% of National Schools with less than 100 pupils and 44% have four or less teachers reflecting the large distribution of small schools primarily in rural areas (Government of Ireland, 2005a). Figure 2.1 illustrates the enrolment of pupils in National Schools which fell from 548,623 in 1989 to 429,971 in 2004 representing a drop of 22% over that period (Government of Ireland, 1999a, 2005a).
During the same period the number of primary teachers employed by the DES increased by 22% from 20,363 to 26,039. The issue of pupil teacher ratio and class size has been one of the most contentious issues in Irish education (Drudy and Lynch, 1993). There have been improved staffing arrangements in primary schools as a result of the agreement negotiated under the Programme for Economic and Social Progress. Under the agreement, posts that would have been suppressed between 1991 and 1993 were retained and additional posts sanctioned. The resulting teacher pupil ratio in 2003/04 was 1:18.4. However, this figure includes administrative principals, learning support teachers, resource teachers, Home School Community Liaison (HSCL) teachers, who are not assigned classroom duties. Therefore class-size reflects a more accurate actual teacher pupil ratio of 1:23.9.

There is on-going concern regarding the gender imbalance among primary school teachers where in 2003/04 only 18% of the total primary teaching force was male (Government of Ireland, 2005a).

Recent research indicates that there is broad public support for and general satisfaction with the primary education system in Ireland (Kelleghan, McGee, Milnar and Perkins, 2004).
2.2.3 Special Education

Ireland operates a dual model of provision through special schools and mainstream schools. Within the mainstream schools pupils are placed in either a special class designated for a particular disability or attend a resource teacher for a designated number of hours per week. Outside this dual model, there is also a Visiting Teacher Service and a small number of children are taught in their own homes.

The number of pupils in receipt of school based special education provision 2003/04 is shown in Table 2.2. below revealing that 7.7% of the primary school population is in receipt of special education.

Table 2.2: No. of pupils in special educational provision in National schools in school year 2003/2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Provision</th>
<th>No. of Pupils</th>
<th>% of total School Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pupils in Special Schools</td>
<td>6,718*</td>
<td>1.51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupils In Special Classes in National Schools</td>
<td>9,340*</td>
<td>2.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupils in Mainstream Classes in National Schools</td>
<td>18,221**</td>
<td>4.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>34,279</td>
<td>7.69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Placement is as a result of the outcome of psychological, and/or additional paramedical assessments in conjunction with parents and Special Educational Needs Organisers (SENOs) employed by the National Council for Special Education (NCSE). The model of provision is managed by the Special Education Section of the DES which develops policy and evaluates resource allocation. Through the SENO network, the NCSE operates at a local level processing applications and assigning staffing and material resources to schools. Special education is funded by annual capitation grants (higher than for mainstream pupils in the case of special school and special class pupils only) and a series of specific grants issued under DES Circular M14/05 (Government of Ireland, 1999b). Additional in-school support is available through specialist teachers and special needs assistants. External support services include the National Educational Psychological Service and other paramedical professionals accessed through voluntary bodies and local Health Services Executive (HSE) services.
There is a special school transport service using public transport, private buses and taxis where necessary. The services of a transport escort are provided when required and sanctioned. The general public is supportive of special education and Kellaghan et al. (2004) report that 93.8% of the public (n=1,511) were in favour of increasing the number of learning support and special education teachers.

2.2.3.a Special School System

While the DES Statistical Report of 2003/04 (Government of Ireland, 2005a) lists fourteen categories and 128 Special Schools, there appears to be some discrepancy regarding the number of Special Schools from official sources (Government of Ireland, 2005a, S.E.S.S., 2006) as illustrated in Table 2.3:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Special School</th>
<th>Special Education Support Service Website*</th>
<th>Department of Education &amp; Science Website**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schools for students with mild general learning disability</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools for students with moderate general learning disability</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools for students with severe &amp; profound general learning disability</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools for students with emotional and behavioural disturbance</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools for students with severe emotional and behavioural disturbance</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools for students with physical disability</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospital schools</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools for students with hearing impairment</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools for students of travelling families</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School for students with multiple disabilities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools for students with visual impairment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools for students with reading disability</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School for students with autism</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools for young offenders and disadvantaged students</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total No. of Special Schools:</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both the Department of Education and Science website and Special Education Support Service website were updated in July 2006 but provide differing numbers of special schools. Kenny, Shevlin with Loxley (2006) and McCarthy and Kenny (2006) also highlight differences (albeit different discrepancies) when reviewing the same sources in 2005. Over half (56%) of special schools (Government of Ireland, 2006a) are located in the cities of Dublin, Cork, Galway, Limerick or Waterford. The remaining schools are located primarily in large towns.

In 2003, the 6,718 pupils in special schools represented 1.51% of the total population of pupils in National schools (Government of Ireland, 2005a). While the population of National schools dropped by 20% from 560,116 to 446,029 between 1989 and 2003, the number of pupils enrolled in special schools fell by 28% from 8,572 to 6,718 representing a drop from 1.56% to 1.51% in terms of the number of special school pupils out of the total primary school population (Government of Ireland, 1999a, 2005a). In contrast, the number of pupils enrolled in specials classes in National schools increased dramatically from 2,921 to 9,340 in the same period whereby 0.53% of the total primary school population were in special classes rising to 3.60% in 2004 (Government of Ireland, 1999a, 2005a) as illustrated in Figure 2.2 reflecting the expansion in the special class model within the National school system.

![Figure 2.2: Pupil enrolments in special schools and special classes in National schools 1989-2004](image-url)

With reference to pupil gender, 64% of pupils in special schools were male in 2004 representing an increase of 4% since 1989. The pupil teacher ratios for different categories of special schools are identical to special classes.

2.2.3.b Provision in Mainstream National Schools

Within the mainstream National schools, special education is provided through the special class and resource teacher model, and more recently learning support teacher model in the case of MGLD pupils. In 2003/04 there were 650 special classes in 538 National Schools catering for eleven categories of disability. These classes accommodated 9,384 pupils, representing 2.11% of the total primary school population (Government of Ireland, 2005a). The largest category (49%) of special classes caters for pupils with MGLD. There has been growth in recent years in the number of classes catering for pupils with emotional/behavioural difficulties and pupils on the autistic spectrum. The majority of pupils with special educational needs representing 4.09% of the total primary school population are now located in mainstream classes (Government of Ireland, 2003a). Their distribution according to disability is illustrated in Figure 2.3 below:

**Figure 2.3: Pupils with assessed special needs in mainstream classes in National schools 2003. (n=18,221)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disability Category</th>
<th>Enrolment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mild general learning disabilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific learning disabilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borderline Mild GLD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional/behavioural disorders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple disabilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific speech &amp; lang disorders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate GLD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical disabilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autistic spectrum disorders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaf/hearing impairments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe emot./behav'1 disorders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual impairments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe/profound GLD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Kenny and Shevlin with Loxley, (2006). (p. 43)
The most catered for category of disability is MGLD and the least severe/profound GLD. In 2003, there were 3,075 resource teachers employed, 866 of whom were in part time positions. Twenty eight per cent of the full time posts were shared among two or more schools.

With regard to pupil teacher ratio, special classes and special schools have the same ratios depending on category of disability while pupils attending resource teachers are assigned a weekly resource teaching allocation. Table 2.4 summarises ratios and allocations across the three forms of provision (Government of Ireland, 1999c, 1993a, 2005b).

Table 2.4: Special school/special class teacher pupil ratios and resource teacher weekly time allocation 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Disability</th>
<th>Special Schools Pupil-Teacher Ratio *</th>
<th>Special Class Pupil Teacher Ratio**</th>
<th>Resource Teacher Weekly Time Allocation**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mild general learning disability</td>
<td>11:1</td>
<td>11:1</td>
<td>2.5 hours†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate general learning disability</td>
<td>8:1</td>
<td>8:1</td>
<td>3.5 Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe &amp; profound general learning disability</td>
<td>6:1</td>
<td>6:1</td>
<td>5 Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional and behavioural disturbance</td>
<td>8:1</td>
<td>8:1</td>
<td>3.5 Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe emotional and behavioural disturbance</td>
<td>6:1</td>
<td>6:1</td>
<td>5 Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical disability</td>
<td>10:1</td>
<td>10:1</td>
<td>3 Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing impairment</td>
<td>7:1</td>
<td>7:1</td>
<td>4 Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple disabilities</td>
<td>6:1</td>
<td>6:1</td>
<td>5 Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual impairment</td>
<td>8:1</td>
<td>8:1</td>
<td>3.5 Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific reading disability</td>
<td>11:1</td>
<td>11:1</td>
<td>Pupils attend L.S. Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autism/Autistic Spectrum Disorders</td>
<td>6:1</td>
<td>6:1</td>
<td>5 Hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Speech and Language Disorder</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>7:1</td>
<td>4 Hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


A more in-depth discussion of provision for pupils with MGLD in National schools is undertaken in sections 2.4.2, 2.4.3 and 2.5.
2.3 DEVELOPMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION IN IRELAND

2.3.1 Origins and Development of Provision 1750-1960

In Ireland, the development of special education has been a gradual process with significant improvements and changes occurring in the last two decades. This was due to the political, social and religious factors unique to Ireland. Philanthropic groups together with the religious orders played a key role in the development of services (Byrne, 1979) for children and adults with special education needs. Their legacy, together with the pioneering work of parents’ groups and voluntary bodies, has shaped much of the Irish special education system as it is today (O’Moore and Stevens, 1992).

The existence of segregated education can be traced back to the 18th century (Ruhl, 1983; Tomlinson, 1982) when little effort was made to understand or meet the needs of those with sensory, physical or mental disabilities. In the context of the time, it must be remembered that poverty and emigration were rampant (Mulhall, 1999) and school attendance was low with only 50% of teachers having any formal training (Coolahan, 1981). The earliest form of provision for those with special needs was in jails, bridewells, houses of industry, lunatic asylums, workhouses, hospitals and county homes, (Andrews, 2001, Finnane, 1981; McDonnell, 1992; O’Connor, 1995) Education was not considered a necessary element in the care of such children (Ryan and Thomas, 1987) and harsh discipline was considered a feature of daily life where children often had to earn a livelihood (Barnes, 1989). The principle of keeping children who were ‘defective’ apart from ‘ordinary’ children was considered sensible (Thomas, Walker and Webb, 1998). However, the 19th century brought a greater desire for understanding and a change in the type of care being provided. Various philanthropic groups and some religious orders were becoming aware of the different types of disability and efforts were made to identify and make appropriate provision (Mc Gee, 1990a).

McDonnell (1992) suggests that the provision of schooling was a form of social control whereby in 1831 steps were taken to establish main primary school as detailed in Akenson (1970). The parallel expansion in institutions and schools for special needs pupils from as early as 1816 mirrors this need for social reform in a country with an expanding population, increasing levels of unemployment and poverty with widespread social unrest and disorder (McCartney, 1987).
Provision for deaf children was being made in Dublin from 1815 (Mc Donnell, 1992; O’Dowd, 1956) and the first institution for blind opened in 1858 (Ellis, 1974; O’Fiachra, 1983; O’Keeffe, 1997). Provision was also made for juvenile offenders and the passing of The Industrial Schools Act (1868) preceded the opening of seventy one industrial schools by 1898. Special education provision for children with physical disabilities is predominantly a twentieth century phenomena with the first hospital school established in 1911 and day schools not opening until the 1950s (Government of Ireland, 1982a).

In England, educational provision for the intellectually disabled had been made under the Idiots Act of 1866, the Elementary Education (Defective and Epileptic Children) Act of 1899, the Mental Deficiency Act of 1913 and the two subsequent Education acts of 1914 and 1921. However, this legislation was not enacted in Ireland and therefore there existed no legal basis for providing special education.

In Ireland, provision for the mentally handicapped was minimal. Bodies such as the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland (SSISI) pressed for legislative reform (S.S.I.S.I., 1861, 1879, 1885) but the progress was hampered by the restricted financial commitment of successive governments. While a variety of appeals (Kidd, 1865; Pim, 1868) raised limited awareness, there was little to encourage voluntary groups to set up special centres. The one exception was Stewart’s Institution established in 1870 (Hyland, 1992) which continued to be the only form of provision for the mentally handicapped until 1929.

Concern for the ‘feeble minded’ populations’ in England resulted in the establishment the Egerton (1885) and Cross (1886) Commissions (Copeland, 2000) and also the Royal Commission on the Care and Control of the Feeble-minded in 1904 which included reviewing conditions in Ireland. The resulting report described how ‘imbecile’ children were suffering badly in workhouses and it was surprised to find children detained in asylums as dangerous ‘lunatics’ (Royal Commission, 1908). The Commission recommended the creation of a central authority known as the Commission for the Care of the Mentally Defective but the resultant legislation namely, the Mental Deficiency Act of 1913, did not apply to Ireland (Andrews, 2001) and consequently many mentally handicapped persons remained confined in mental hospitals and county homes (Robbins, 1986). This fact, combined with other historical influences delayed the development of special education. Ireland, unlike Britain, was a predominantly non-industrialised society and therefore lacked a large socially orientated middle class who
would contribute to establish institutions. As the attitude towards mental handicap in Europe was influenced by the eugenics movement and the intelligence testing movement (Potts, 1983), Ireland’s political and social energies were preoccupied with the issues of land-tenure and Home Rule. The demands of denominational single sex education (O’Buachalla, 1988), the lack of compulsory school attendance, and the absence of local education committees all over-shadowed the realisation of need to consider appropriate education for disabled children.

The creation of the Irish Free State in 1922 and newly established Department of Education did little to enhance the special education provision within the state. The administrative structures and political policies remained unchanged (Fitzgerald, 1974) and the relative poverty resulted in limited expenditure on education (Kitchin and Mulcahy, 1999). The Department of Education’s priorities lay in the revival of the Irish language (Durcan, 1972; Macnamara, 1966) and the amalgamation of small rural schools (Coolahan, 1981). Children with special needs continued to remain in hospitals, asylums and county homes.

However, this neglect did not go unnoticed and the 1920s and 1930s saw a steady growth in special education facilities pioneered by religious orders which received little or no state financial assistance (Hyland and Milne, 1992). The Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul opened its first school and home in 1926 (Swan, 2000). Other religious orders followed – the Hospitaller Order of St. John of God in 1931 (McCarrick, 1993; Stevens, 1987a), the Brothers of Charity in 1939 (Hyland, 1992), followed by the Sisters of Charity of Jesus and Mary in 1954 (Costello, 2003) and one year later witnessed the arrival of the Congregation of the Daughters of Wisdom (Hyland, 1992). The services provided by these religious orders tended to be residential to serve local needs and were funded by subscriptions, donations, and private funds. The newly established schools catered for children with various degrees of handicap operating on the principle of smaller class sizes and an appropriate curriculum (Jenkinson, 1997a). While the initiatives operated by religious orders are generally praised (Byrne, 1979; Hyland, 1992; Swan, 1986), McDonnell (1992) contends that special schooling was an evangelising or missionary enterprise.

These schools were not granted state recognition until the 1940s and 1950s. The early 1940s brought few changes in public acceptance where, for many, a mentally handicapped child still brought shame and disgrace on a family (Robbins, 1986) and consequently, such children continued to be educated away from their families in
segregated residential schools. The Irish National Teachers’ Organisation (INTO) however, was seeking an improvement in provision for less able pupils (I.N.T.O., 1947). The 1950s however, was the watershed in the development of a special education system. Increased public awareness, (Cole, 1989; McDonnell, 2003; McGee, 1990a), the influence of international bodies such as the World Health Organisation (WHO) (O’Moore and Stevens, 1992), the demands of the teachers’ unions (Byrne, 1979), and the establishment of non-denominational non-sectarian organisations (Costello, 2003; Hyland, 1992; McDonnell, 2003) increased public awareness tolerance and acceptance and spearheaded the expansion of services. Parents, friends and professionals formed themselves into voluntary groups and established schools which would subsequently be granted Department of Education recognition. Schools for the mentally handicapped were recognised for the first time in 1955 and were allocated a pupil-teacher ratio of 20:1 (O’Cuileanáin, 1968). By the end of the 1950s there was some indication that a more enlightened approach was being assumed as the Department of Education and appointed its first inspector responsible for special education in 1959 (Byrne, 1979; Swan, 2000). It also established the Diploma Course for Teachers of Mentally and Physically Handicapped Children in 1960 (Hughes, 2000). This increased consciousness and increasing interest by the teachers, parents and the public was instrumental in the setting up of a Commission of Inquiry on Mental Handicap in 1960 (Government of Ireland, 1965).

2.3.2 Consolidation and a New Direction 1961-1992

The 1960s saw Ireland change from an agricultural to industrial economy and changes in the special education sector were part of wider social, economic and educational changes (Breen, 1990; O.E.C.D., 1991). The publication of the Report of the Commission of the Inquiry on Mental Handicap was the first important milestone in the history of Ireland’s special education sector. This influential Commission validated a system of segregated schooling and bequeathed a framework for subsequent developments for the education of children with disabilities (Coolahan 1981; Hyland, 1993; Hyland and Milne, 1982). McGee (1990a) suggests that the creation of a parallel segregated system was perhaps the only acceptable alternative in terms of educational provision at that time. The report recommended that special education for mildly mentally handicapped pupils should be provided mainly in special schools but, in some
cases, use should also be made of special classes for slow learners (Government of Ireland, 1965). The report also envisaged that special educational provision for one percent of mentally handicapped pupils would be provided by 1975. According to O’Mordha (1980), this target was achieved by 1979.

The important influence of this report can be ascertained by the subsequent growth in special schools and latterly special classes. The comprehensive ninety six recommendations on key areas were to be the blueprint for provision for nearly three decades until the implementation of the Report of the Special Education Review Committee (SERC) published in 1993 (Government of Ireland, 1993a). Kitchin and Mulcahy (1999) suggest that schooling continued to be segregated for pragmatic and practical reasons such as school transport, medical facilities, centralised support, etc. The twelve special schools for the mentally handicapped which had been established by 1960 (Government of Ireland, 1961) had grown to thirty two schools by 1967 (O’Cuilleanáin, 1968) and the initiative for such schools came in most cases from voluntary groups (Robbins, 1986). McGee (1990a) contends that such initiatives were not spread evenly geographically and some newly built urban areas did not benefit from the special school infrastructure. In addition, there was a shift in policy in the early 1970’s and the Department of Education appeared to favour the education of mildly mentally handicapped pupils within the ordinary National school, (McGee 1990a; Government of Ireland, 1993a; Lynch, 1995). The 1970s, therefore, was a period of growth in special class provision (Swan, 1992) particularly in urban areas. These developments were primarily established in disadvantaged suburbs of Dublin (McGee, 2004) and to a lesser degree on an ad hoc basis in rural areas. While it was acknowledged that this model could result in special classes being isolated within National schools (Shevlin, 2002), it was generally seen as a positive step towards integrated education. The issuing of Circular 23/77 by the Department of Education (Government of Ireland, 1977) confirmed this preference and set out criteria for acceptance of pupils with mild mental handicap in National Schools. By the school year 1980/81, there were 157 special classes (Coolahan, 1981) in 133 National schools catering for 2,336 pupils (Government of Ireland, 1981) and it was envisaged that such provision would continue to expand (Travers, 1984). Departmental sources considered the special class to a form of integration which afforded a suitable learning environment for the majority of mildly mentally handicapped children (Mac Gleannáin, 1978) and by 1989 the Department of Education recognised 32 special schools and 142 special
classes for the mildly mentally handicapped in 113 National Schools nationwide (Government of Ireland, 1986a, 1987a). MaGee (1990a) and McDonnell (2003) contend that these special classes were providing ‘locational’ and a limited form of ‘social’ integration as defined by Wamock (1978) while others continued to emphasise the merits of special schools (Glennane, 1981). However, some critics suggest that the expansion of the special class system was motivated by financial considerations (Swan, 2000) rather than educational principles with unchallenged assumptions (Lyng, 1993).

During this period, the momentum for integrated education, despite being ill-defined and ambiguous, began to develop and this is reflected in subsequent policy documents published in the 1980s. The first Government statement on integrated education was equivocal. The White Paper on Educational Development (1980) proposed integration as the first option, including complete segregation, were maintained (Government of Ireland, 1980a). The 1980 Report of the National Economic and Social Council (NESC) Major Issues in Planning Services for Mentally and Physically Handicapped Persons (N.E.S.C, 1980) supported the concept of integrated education but forewarned that an adequate allocation of resources and personnel were necessary to make ordinary schools comparable with special schools.

The unwritten policy of the DES is described by the two Department officials (O’Mórdha, 1980, O’Fiachra, 1983) as “towards integration, while recognising a continuing need for some special services on a segregated basis.” (O’Fiachra, 1983, p.12). Other unpublished internal DES documentation supports this view (Government of Ireland, 1986b, 1986c).

Although not directly concerning the mildly mentally handicapped population, the Department of Health’s report Services for the Mentally Handicapped published in 1980 (Government of Ireland, 1980b) and the 1983 report The Education and Training of Severely and Profoundly Mentally Handicapped Children in Ireland (Government of Ireland, 1983a) both indicated significant inter-departmental collaboration which had previously had been absent.

The primary teachers’ union, the INTO, also supported the special class model in its document Accommodating Difference issued in 1983 (I.N.T.O, 1983a). It recommended that special classes and special schools be developed more fully in cooperation with each other. However, the union cautioned that it only supported the principle of integration when and where all the necessary support services had been
provided. In addition, the INTO warned that unplanned inclusion could be harrowing and harmful to pupils and teachers (I.N.T.O, 1983a).

Undoubtedly, these cautious statements regarding integration were influenced by the major movement towards integrated education internationally which was challenging the concept of segregated special schooling (Swan, 2000). The Education for All Handicapped Children Act Public Law 94-142 in the United States (Hurst, 1984) and the reports of Warnock (1980) and Fish (1985) in the United Kingdom and the resultant 1981 Education Act acted as a catalyst to public debate in Ireland. O'Connor (1983) suggests that parental opinion had turned against special schooling to some degree by 1983. However, official policy continued to remain ambiguous and, as McGee (1990b) observes, it did not discuss the meaning of 'integration', it did not make it mandatory, nor did it discuss resource implications. The Programme for Action in Education 1984-1987 (Government of Ireland, 1984a) recorded the establishment of special classes as a form of 'integration' while acknowledging that special schools would continue to operate catering for children with more serious learning disabilities. It also suggested that special schools act as resource centres to National schools. Costello (1997) notes that two special schools and two special classes were selected for a pilot study but no findings have been reported. The publication also stated that special classes "will be closely monitored so as to achieve the maximum possible by way of integration." No details of such monitoring were published subsequently (O'Moore and Stevens, 1992). The National Association for the Mentally Handicapped in Ireland (NAMHI) submission to the Department of Education in 1984 Special Education Priorities (N.A.M.H.I, 1984) highlighted the inequalities and inadequacies of provision at that time and requested a definitive official policy regarding the development of educational facilities for the mentally handicapped. The submission was important in special education in that it is one of the few papers which clearly and comprehensively identify key areas of provision which needed to be addressed as a matter of priority. In the same year, the Green Paper on Services for Disabled People, Towards a Full Life (Government of Ireland, 1984b) reiterated its commitment to integration and statistics quoted indicated that there was an increase in the numbers of disabled pupils availing of education in National schools although Smyth (1988) notes that this was not the case with children with more significant handicaps.
The year 1990 saw the publication of the Report of the Review Group on Mental Handicap Services *Needs and Abilities: A policy for the intellectually disabled* (Government of Ireland, 1990a) which made wide ranging recommendations including change in terminology, creation of stronger links between special and ordinary schools, etc. The Report also welcomed the fact that an increasing number of learning disabled children were being educated in their own environment (O’Murchú, 1993a).

However, official policy continued to be ambivalent as can be observed in the *Report of the Primary Education Review Body* (Government of Ireland, 1990b) which stated that Departmental policy in 1990 was in favour of integration where possible, while still retaining the option of segregation. The report admitted that there were considerable financial implications attached to the principle of integration. However, in the same year, the National Council for Curriculum an Assessment (NCCA), in its *Report of the Review Body on the Primary Curriculum*, (N.C.C.A, 1990) did acknowledge the necessity of resources to make differentiated provision for pupils with individual differences.

In 1990, the INTO clearly outlined its position favouring integration but again stressed the need for a planned cohesive approach and the need for the immediate provision of a comprehensive system of supports and resources to establish the conditions for effective integration (I.N.T.O, 1990a, 1990b, 1990c).

The formulation of Irish policy was also being influenced in the context of European awareness. *The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989* was signed and ratified (United Nations, 1989) creating obligations for all governments in relation to the rights of all children including those with disability (Vaughan, 2002). Secondly the conclusions of the EU Minister of Education concerning integration of handicapped children into ordinary schools (European Council, 1987) and the many calls from parent groups and teachers (I.N.T.O., 2000a, 2000b; McCartney, 2001) resulted in the EC Council of Ministers of Education (including the Irish Minister for Education) unanimously adopting a resolution ‘Concerning Integration of Children and Young People with Disabilities into Ordinary Systems of Education.’ (European Commission, 1990). Gash and Feerwick (1995) suggest that the signing of this EU charter as the true beginning of Ireland’s adoption of integrative education as future policies would be obliged to reflect the philosophies of international agreements (O’Murchú, 1993a; Hughes, 2000)
In terms of what was occurring in schools, there now were clearly two forms of provision co-existing within the primary education system. The enrolments in special schools had begun to drop while the number of pupils in special classes began to rise annually (Government of Ireland, 1999a). No official policy gave criteria for admission to one form of provision over the other although anecdotal evidence suggests geography, psychologists' recommendations, parental choice, and the need for residential care, were critical factors in selecting a placement in a special school or special class. It has been suggested also that special schools were beginning to cater for pupils with difficulties in addition to MGLD (MacGlennáin, 1986; McGee, 1990) and it is evident special schools were endeavouring to meet these additional needs (Casey, Horan, Schönheld and Sheehan, 1988; Stevens, 1990a). Parkinson (2001) observes that:

"Since 1990, it has been government policy that no further special schools be created for pupils with mild difficulties."

(Parkinson, 2001, p. 259)

Finally, 1990 witnessed one further development which signified the Government’s increasing commitment to special education. The establishment of a pilot Psychological Service to schools in Tallaght, Clondalkin and South Tipperary (Dunne, 1993) finally occurred. While this had been originally recommended by the 1965 Commission (Government of Ireland, 1965), nothing had happened for twenty five years which Swan describes as "an example of masterly inactivity by the Department of Education." (Swan, 2000, p. 27).

The Government Green Paper of 1992 Education for a Changing World, (Government of Ireland, 1992a) proposed an equitable and devolved educational system. It identified that the major issue in special education was how a balance was to be struck between the special school and mainstream provision (Hyland, 1992). The paper was not without its critics (Dunne, 1993). Halliday (1993) and Ó Murchú (1993b) questioned its philosophical basis and functional limitations. Other criticisms included: the need for new structures (O’Keeffe, 1993); fairer distribution of resources (Browne, 1993; I.N.T.O., 1992a, 1992b, 1992c) and a greater involvement for parents (Colgan, 1993). NAMHI (1992) welcomed the paper in general terms but raised concerns in relation to equity and access, use of resources, teacher training, and quality assurance.
Despite such shortcomings, Hughes (2000) argues that the Green Paper was significant as it initiated dialogue between interested educational partners.

The second significant milestone in the history of special education in Ireland was about to be reached. The Minister for Education set up a committee to review special education in 1991 (Government of Ireland, 1993a). This was to be the first comprehensive review of special education in the history of the state and its resulting report and recommendations were to form a new framework for the development of a white paper and subsequent legislation (O’Murchú and Shevlin, 1995).

2.3.3 S.E.R.C. and its Legacy 1993-1998

The publication of the Report of the Special Education Review Committee (SERC) (Government of Ireland, 1993a) was one of the most significant events in the modern history of special education instigating unprecedented debate among the relevant education partners. The Committee conducted a detailed examination of the many issues in special education and the Report proposed seven principles which would serve as basic guidelines for the future development of the system of special education. Principle 5 was the most central (Colgan, 1998) in that it proposes a ‘presumption in favour of inclusion’. The range and breadth of recommendations was broad and challenging (Hughes, 2000).

The report noted Ireland’s conspicuous lack of legislation (N.D.A, 2004) and was broadly welcomed especially by teachers (Dillon, 1994; Jordan, 1994; O’Murchú, 1996) and issues addressed included integration, linkages, teacher education, curriculum, assessment and pupil-teacher ratios. Steen (1994) welcomed these recommendations in principle issues but signalled caution due to resource and support staff implications. Swan (2000) states, that despite some shortcomings, it was a very comprehensive audit as was the view of O’Murchú and Shevlin (1995) who considered that the identifying of the system’s deficiencies provided the basis for the moving forward. While Jordan (1994) lauded the report’s recognition for the need to maintain a continuum of services, O’Keeffe (1994a) criticised it for not paying sufficient attention to the wealth of resources existing within the special school system. He further suggested that the report failed in that it did not address the financial resources necessary to establish special school/mainstream school links (O’Keeffe, 1994b) and rejected the notion that special schools should widen their entry criteria.
O’Hanlon (1994) contends that the SERC Report is not based on a premise of equal opportunity and social justice. The issue of continued categorisation and labelling of pupils is also discussed by Staunton (1994a; 1994b) and that the continued centralisation of some services was rooted in the medical model of disability as outlined by Oliver (1990). This view is supported by Kitchin and Mulcahy (1999), and McDonnell (2000, 2003).

Other criticisms centred on the lack of an adequate role for parents (Colgan, 1994a, 1994b; Finlay, 1994; Murphy, 1994; O’Hanlon, 1994), and the implications of the report on the training of teachers is considered by Eaton (1994). Disappointment was expressed in relation to how little cognisance had been taken of previous Irish research in the special education field (Griffin 1994; Halliday, 1994; Swan, 1994).

In conclusion, despite these criticisms, the Report was considered to be the most comprehensive, most searching and the best informed report the country has ever had (Swan, 1994). Furthermore, Swan comments on the timing of the report poised perfectly between the Green Paper of 1992 (Government of Ireland, 1992a) and the subsequent White Paper on Education which was to be published in 1995 (Government of Ireland, 1995). The SERC report was to exert considerate influence on policy decisions and delivery of special educational provision in the years to follow (N.C.C.A., 1999).

One of the key recommendations of the SERC Report was the establishment of resource teaching posts to cater for children with special educational needs on a withdrawal basis from mainstream classes within National schools. With immediate effect, the DES drew up a briefing sheet on the appointment of such teachers (Government of Ireland, 1993b) and within three years 46 Resource teachers had been appointed (Costello, 1997). Such a move signified the change from segregated and integrated education to a policy of inclusion. There now existed three forms of provision. Special schools continued to cater for MGLD pupils with schools’ enrolments falling (Government of Ireland, 2000a) while special classes in National schools also continued as an alternative form of provision. This new third form of provision, the resource teacher, was the new preferred model and was to expand dramatically in the years to follow.

While the SERC Report was being presented to the Department of Education, a case was being brought before the courts alleging that the State had failed to provide education under Article 42.4 of the Constitution Bunreacht na hÉireann (Government
of Ireland, 1937). The O’Donoghue case (O’Donoghue v. Minister for Education, 1993) involved the education of an eight year old boy with special educational needs. The High Court found in favour of the applicant and determined that children with special needs were entitled to primary education and that the state was obliged to make the necessary modifications to curriculum and teaching to ensure that they could make the best use of their inherent capacities (Carey, 2005; Ware, 2001; Whyte, 2002). High Court Judge, Mr Justice O’Hanlon, suggested education for severely or profoundly handicapped (mentally or physically) children required a greater deployment of resources, a reduction in pupil-teacher ratio and specifically noted the importance of early intervention, duration and continuity of primary education (O’Hanlon, 1993). On appeal, the Supreme Court endorsed the right of applicant to an appropriate primary education (O’Donoghue v. Minister for Education, Ireland and the Attorney General, 1996.)

The O’Donoghue case had huge significance for Irish education generally and for special education in particular and one of the practical outcomes was it prompted a stream of litigation on the issue which continues to the present time (Meaney, Kiernan and Monahan, 2005).

As in the previous decade, European developments also continued to exercise influence on Ireland’s policy formation. In June 1994, Ireland was one of ninety two governments which adopted The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (U.N.E.S.C.O, 1994a) which encouraged the move from ‘integrated’ to ‘inclusive’ education. The roles and responsibilities of individual governments are summarised in UNESCO (1994b) and UNESCO was unequivocal in asking the international community to endorse inclusive schooling (Vaughan, 2002). In UNESCO’s subsequent review, Ireland’s policy was described as having:

“....children with special educational needs enrolled in regular schools as far as possible.”


Quinn (2003) suggests that agreements such as this were influential in the formation of subsequent equality legislation which was to be enacted in the 1990s.

In November of 1994 the National Education Convention explored a number of issues pertinent to the development of special education. The Convention was
unprecedented in that it brought together representatives from forty two bodies (Coolahan, 1994) to facilitate genuine dialogue. It reflected on the complexities of the many aspects of the education system including special education and specifically the concept of integrated education and the schools’ psychological service. According to Hughes (2000), the Convention helped refine elements of Green Paper of 1992 and “was a key precursor to the 1995 White Paper” (Hughes, 2000, p. 70).

In the following year the Education White Paper Charting our Education Future (Government of Ireland, 1995) was published which espoused the principle of equality of access and participation for all students according to their potential. The need for flexibility was stated clearly in the paper with reference to “a continuum of provision” for pupils with special needs. In addition, it addressed issues such as: assessment procedures and the extension of a psychological service; curriculum development initiatives under the NCCA, increased teacher education, the role of parents in decision making; and the establishment of regional education boards (Government of Ireland, 1995). However, Flanagan (1995) remains cautious and states that while its aspirations were noble, he questions practical implementation of some of the recommendations. The White Paper was to form the basis of the forthcoming Education Act (U.N.E.S.C.O, 1996). The Government maintained its momentum in terms of educational reform by publishing Implementing the Agenda for Change (Government of Ireland, 1996) and details the developments in place as a result of the SERC Report.

The 1996 Report of the Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities (CSPD) A Strategy for Equality (C.S.P.D, 1996) was an authoritative document which was well informed by people with disabilities (Hughes, 2000). The overall focus of the report was on equality, maximum participation, independence, and choice. It encompassed the principles enunciated in previous reports and suggested a ‘Proposed Charter of Education Rights.’ Referring specifically to special education, the emphasis of the recommendations was the provision of appropriate education in mainstream schools, except in circumstances where such a placement would not benefit the student. It points out the responsibilities of schools, the need for resources, the need for teacher education, and the primacy of parents in decision-making. O’Murchú (1997) welcomes its suggestion in relation to the future role of special schools acting as resource centres for mainstream National schools. In addition, the Report identified barriers which hindered movement towards an inclusive education system in contrast to:
"...the inadequacy of the incremental, ad hoc approach that characterise education provision."

(Kenny and Shevlin with Loxley, 2006, p. 21)

Two Education Bills were drafted in 1997 (Government of Ireland, 1997a, 1997b). The first Education Bill was introduced in January 1997 but did not advance due to a change of Government. The Education (No.2) Bill maintained many of the features of the initial bill but incorporated some significant changes. Its publication was the culmination of the lengthy process of consultation over previous years although, not surprisingly, elements of both of the bills attracted criticism. O’Keeffe (1995) highlights the particular issues associated with special education in relation to proposed local Education Boards. This proposal was omitted from the No.2 Bill and it is noteworthy to comment that a number of particular recommendations of the Irish Association of Teachers in Special Education (IATSE) were included in the second Bill (I.A.T.S.E, 1997). One school principal described the Bill as extremely flawed as provision was only available “as far as resources permit” (Jordan, 1998, p. 70). This sentiment is echoed by Ó Murchú (1998) who queried why the Bill did not guarantee the rights of pupils to be educated in their locality, the right of appeal for parents and a guarantee of resources. Similarly, O’Mahony (1998) raised similar concerns including the absence of mention of “special schools” in the entire text of the Bill.

The resultant Education Act 1998 (Government of Ireland, 1998a) was enacted in December 1998 was “a momentous occasion in Irish educational history” (Hughes, 2000, p71) and provided a statutory basis for legislation, policy and practice in education (Kenny, McNeela, Shevlin and Daly, 2000). It was the first Act of the Oireachtas to deal specifically with the provision of education (Meaney et al., 2005). While the Act ensured a constitutional right to education, rights to support services, and parental rights (Mogensen, Phibbs, O’Shea, 2006), the range of resources to be provided were narrow in focus (Kenny et al., 2006). Although the Act emphasised the integration of children with special needs into ordinary schools, it did not make it compulsory (Parkinson, 2001). Hughes (2000) contends that reactions to the Act were slow to be articulated due to the fact that there was little of a controversial or novel nature to merit response, but this may, in part, be due to intense debate and contribution of the educational partners to the two Education Bills prior to the enactment of the Education Act.
By the time the 1998 Education Act had been enacted, there had been hundreds of High Court actions taken by parents seeking appropriate special education for their children (Boland, 2000; McGee, 2004). Pollak (1998a, 1998b) observed that there were fifty six families taking cases in November 1998 and this combined with high media coverage (Parkinson, 2001) was an important factor in:

“triggering the Minister’s famous press statement of November 1998 which used the word ‘guaranteed’ in relation to special education provision.”

(McGee, 2004, p. 75)

Parkinson (2001) suggests that:

“It is widely believed that the Minister’s announcement ……was an attempt to curb the costs and embarrassment of High Court settlements.”

(Parkinson, 2001, p. 259)

The Minister for Education’s press release of 5th of November 1998 outlined substantial measures which extended across the spectrum of special education (Government of Ireland, 1998b) and was received positively by the disability sector (Pollak, 1998a; C.P.S.M.A, 1999; N.A.M.H.I., 1999).

2.3.4 Gathering Pace: Policy and Practice 1999-2003

One of the most dramatic effects of the 1998 ‘automatic entitlement’ was an unprecedented increase in the number of resource teachers appointed. Concerns regarding resource teacher provision had already been flagged by the INTO (1997a) and Circular M08/99 (Government of Ireland, 1999b) elucidated the Department’s policy on resource teacher appointments. The circular was criticised for being preoccupied with categories, ratios, and statistics (McGee, 2004; Parkinson, 2001). This was superseded by Circular 08/02 which changed some procedural elements of teacher appointment and contained a definition of the resource teacher’s role (Government of Ireland, 2002a). In 1999, the DES also issued its first official communication in twenty one years in relation to special class provision. Circular 23/77 (Government of Ireland, 1977) was replaced by Circular 09/99 which detailed criteria for establishing special classes. It lists thirteen categories of special class including MGLD (Government of Ireland, 1999c).
In January 2000, a package was announced earmarking IR£4 million to further enhance special education promoting inclusion and equity (Government of Ireland, 2000b, 2000c). Such a move was broadly welcomed (C.P.S.M.S.A, 2000a, 2000b; Flynn, 2001; I.N.T.O., 2000a, 2000c) especially by NAMHI (2000) which reported increased numbers of parents experiencing difficulties in assessing psychological assessments and appropriate school placements. The DES responded to the resulting huge number of applications for resources by appointing resource teachers at an unprecedented rate. The two other forms of provision, special schools, and special classes, followed their now established trend. The number of pupils enrolled in special schools had dropped from 8,084 in 1993 to 7,124 by 2003 while the numbers in special classes had almost trebled from 3,435 to 9,092 during the same period (Government of Ireland, 2003b). Resource teachers were being appointed at an alarming rate whereby the number of posts grew from 46 in 1997 to 2,297 by 2004 (Government of Ireland, 2006b). With little infrastructure of support for schools in place, such expansion was giving cause for concern and McGee (2004) comments:

“It has been disturbing to watch an enormous expansion of provision.....”  

(McGee, 2004, p. 77)

The DES’s administrative unit dealing with resource applications, Special Education Section 1, was unable to cope adequately with the volume of incoming applications (Government of Ireland, 2004a). Indeed the Review of the Department’s Operations, Systems, and Staffing Needs, (Cromien Report) published in 2000 commented on the specific reasons for this inability to cope. Among these were:

- The growth of parental recourse to the court system.
- The 1998 “automatic response” to allocation of resources.
- The very significant growth in resource teachers, SNAs, and special classes.
- The delays resulting from Dáil deputies asking parliamentary questions on behalf of constituents.

The Cromien Report summarised the situation by stating:

“The section is bogged down in the detail of day to day operations and overshadowed by the volume of individual cases”

(Government of Ireland, 2000d, p. 24)
In conclusion, the report observed that the Special Education Section of the DES had neither the expertise nor the resources to meet the demands of the system and agreed with the recommendation of the DES’s internal Planning Group on Special Education to establish a national council specifically for special education (Government of Ireland, 2000d). To a degree, the Department itself admitted to these difficulties in Circular SP/ED 24/03 when it stated:

“Schools are asked to bear in mind, because of the large number of applications and the need to review resources already in schools, processing of applications will be a complex time-consuming operation”.

(Government of Ireland, 2003c, p. 2)

The circular was a milestone in that Departmental policy was moving towards a whole-school, and therefore more inclusive, approach to special educational needs within primary schools. Circular SP/ED 24/03 was significant in that it:

- stated that reviews undertaken by the DES Inspectorate and the National Educational Psychological Service revealed a misapplication by schools of previous circulars.
- decided to review all existing provision and conduct a SEN census to develop a database of special needs pupils (the census was not subsequently published nor the database established).
- announced it was engaging in discussions with the education partners regarding the creation of a “weighted system” within National schools.
- announced the formation of the National Council for Special Education.
- recommended a staged approach involving class teachers, learning support teachers, and resource teachers in responding to pupils with special educational needs.

It should be noted that this was the third circular from the DES regarding special education in 2003. Circular 08/03 (Government of Ireland, 2003e), issued in January, indicated the Department’s difficulties in coping with applications and requested schools to refrain from written or telephone enquiries. A follow-up circular SP/ED 22/03 (Government of Ireland, 2003f) was issued in response to schools’ continued enquiries.
In contrast, no departmental circulars pertaining to special schools or special classes were issued during the period 1999 to 2006 clearly indicating the Department’s focus lay solely on special needs pupils in mainstream classes in National schools.

Legislation continued to be a priority for the Government and in March 2002, the Minister for Education published the *Education for Persons with Disability Bill 2002* (Government of Ireland, 2002b). While the Bill was passed in the Seanad, it was interrupted by a subsequent General Election and was withdrawn to facilitate further consultation. (Flynn and Oliver, 2001; Hennessey, 2002; I.N.T.O, 2002a; Ruddy, 2003a). The revised Bill (Government of Ireland, 2003g) was expected to provide statutory framework within which the special educational needs of people with a disability could be guaranteed. There was considerable reaction from the education partners (Ruddy, 2003a, 2003b). School management authorities requested an urgent meeting with the DES to address certain issues (C.P.S.M.A, 2002). The INTO, while accepting the principal provisions, stated that considerable investment was required in teacher training, in-school support, school buildings, and external supports (I.N.T.O, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c, 2003d). The Irish Primary Principals Network, while also welcoming the Bill, expressed grave concern at the additional burden placed on school management especially principals (I.P.P.N, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c) as did the I.N.T.O. (2003d). In its oral submission to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Education and Science on 18th September 2003 the IPPN noted that the “role and existence of special schools had been ignored in the Bill” (I.P.P.N, 2003d; 2003e). The Irish Association of Teachers in Special Education echoed IPPN’s concerns and described the suggested role of the principal as:

“...very onerous and it does not appear to take into account the day-to-day running of the school”.

(I.A.T.S.E, 2003, p. 3)

Submissions were also received from NAMHI (2003) expressing concern that the Bill is confined to persons “not more than eighteen years of age” and that the Bill makes limited reference to pre-school education. A series of recommendations on all aspects of the Bill is contained in NDA (2003).
The following list summarises concurrent policy and legislative reform for the period 1999-2003 illustrating the backdrop against which special educational policy and practice was developing:

- 1999 - The establishment of the National Educational Psychological Service (Comhairle, 2001).
- 1999 - *The New Deal: A Plan For Educational Opportunity* was launched (Government of Ireland, 1999d).
- 2000 - Judgement in Synott Case (Synott V. Minister for Education, Ireland and the Attorney General, 2000) followed one week later by an announcement of increase in measures for children with autism one week later (Government of Ireland, 2000e).
- 2000 - The Equal Status Act (2000g) had significant implications for children with special education needs in that it implies that it is discriminatory if a child is excluded for behaviours arising from his needs (Government of Ireland, 2000g).
- 2000 - Publication of *A National Support Service for Special Education for Students with Disabilities* (Government of Ireland, 2000i).
2.3.5 EPSEN and Key Changes 2004-2006

While special education developments between 2004 and 2006 are not directly applicable to this study, the key changes are presented briefly as they are directly liked to the developments outlined heretofore.

The Education for People with Special Educational Needs Act 2004 (Government of Ireland, 2004b) was a further milestone in educational legislation and a comprehensive interpretation can be found in Meany et al (2005). Concerns regarding the interpretation of the Act are discussed in INTO (2004a) and Kenny et al (2006).

The comprehensive Circular SP/05 issued in 2005 (Government of Ireland, 2005b) provided clear guidelines to schools on the organisation of teaching resources within schools and galvanising the ‘whole-school approach’ set out previously in Circular SP ED 24/03 (Government of Ireland, 2003c). The key principles of the Circular centred on a staged in-school approach, intensive intervention followed by Individual Education Plan (IEP), a clear distinction between High and Low Incidence Needs, and no clear distinction between the titles of Resource and Learning Support teachers with the term ‘Special Education Teacher’ being favoured.

The most important development arising from the Circular 02/05 is the creation of the General Allocation Model (GAM) or ‘weighted system’ which changes disability categories from those outlined in Circular 24/03 to Low and High Incidence Needs. In relation to this study, the key change is that pupils assessed as having Mild General Learning Disabilities (MGLD) now attend the Learning Support teacher rather than the Resource teacher. Prior to 2005, MMH pupils could attend special schools, special classes or resource teachers. With the introduction of the GAM, pupils now attend special schools, special classes or learning support teachers thus eliminating the requirement for MGLD pupils to undergo psychological assessment prior to access SEN resources. Concerns with this development, and other issues associated with GAM are discussed in I.N.T.O (2004b, 2004c, 2004d, 2005a, 2005b) and IPPN (2004a, 2004b, 2004c). Of particular concern are the ratios for appointment of Learning Support teachers to schools with girls’ schools based on a ratio of 200:1 and boys’ schools 140:1.
The INTO has referred this matter to the Equality Authority for clarification (I.N.T.O, 2004b).

The second key development was the establishment of the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) (Government of Ireland, 2004c) whose functions are succinctly summarised by Kenny et al. (2006) and include responsibility for individual education plans, resources and supports, policy, and research and innovation. The special education functions passed to the NCSE on January 1st 2005 (Government of Ireland, 2005c). An explanation of how the DES, NCSE and the SENO service will interface and operate is contained in Curtin (2005) and Kenny et al (2006). The NCSE is responsible for the implementation of the EPSEN Act and has already taken submissions from the education partners (N.C.S.E., 2006a) to compile an implementation plan for submission to government in October 2006. The Council has already published comprehensive guidelines on the process of Individual Education Plans (N.C.S.E., 2006b).

The most recent DES directive on special education (Circular 0036/2006) (Government of Ireland, 2006b) addresses concerns arising from Circular 02/05 and the GAM, and issues new criteria for the suppression of teaching posts where the need for a special class within a school ceases.

These significant changes in the short period 2003-2006 are best summarised by IPPN (2006) which states:

"...perhaps the most significant reaction to the chaos that existed in special education was the EPSEN Act 2004 which saw the introduction of the General Allocation Model in 2005. This model has certainly reduced the backlog and combined with the setting up of the NCSE, provision for SEN is now more streamlined and efficient."

(I.P.P.N., 2006, p. 3)
2.4 EDUCATIONAL PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH MGLD 1989-2004

2.4.1 Administrative Prevalence of MGLD

The DES gathered pupil information to establish a special education database in 2003 (Government of Ireland, 2003a). However, this remains unpublished and no subsequent data has been gathered from National schools. In the absence of such a database, the prevalence of MGLD pupils and enrolments in schools is reviewed from information obtained from the National Intellectual Disability Database (NIDD).

Although a limited amount of data on MMH children is available from the 1974 and 1981 censuses of mental handicap (Mulcahy, 1976; Mulcahy and Ennis, 1976; Mulcahy and Reynolds, 1984), more useful data pertaining to school-aged children is available from the National Intellectual Disability Database (NIDD) undertaken by the Health Research Board (HRB) between 1996 and 2005 (Barron and Mulvany, 2004a, 2004b, 2005; H.R.B., 1997; Mulvany, 2000, 2001, 2003; Mulvany and Barron, 2003). This database, under the auspices of the Department of Health, gathers information through school principals (with parental consent) which is sent to the local HSE and collated by the HRB (Barron and Mulvany, 2005). For the purpose of this discussion data from two MGLD categories (aged 5-9 and 10-14) have been extracted for the period 1997 to 2005. It should be noted that the resulting data is referred to ‘administrative prevalence’ as opposed to ‘prevalence’ as the database is reliant on parental consent and school principal form completion and submission of data (Mulvany, 2006). The database also provides information on the number of pupils attending special schools, special classes and resource/visiting teachers.

Table 2.5 illustrates the numbers and administrative prevalence of children categorised as MGLD:
Table 2.5: Numbers and administrative prevalence of MGLD primary school-going population and day service provision from National Intellectual Disability Database 1996-2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Males Aged 5-14</th>
<th>Females Aged 5-14</th>
<th>Total Aged 5-14</th>
<th>MGLD Prevalence %</th>
<th>Special School</th>
<th>Resource/Visiting Teacher</th>
<th>Special Class Primary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>1,910</td>
<td>1,113</td>
<td>3,023</td>
<td>0.45%</td>
<td>2,813</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998/1999</td>
<td>1,680</td>
<td>973</td>
<td>2,653</td>
<td>0.45%</td>
<td>2,463</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>1,554</td>
<td>916</td>
<td>2,470</td>
<td>0.40%</td>
<td>2,502</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>558</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>1,520</td>
<td>897</td>
<td>2,407</td>
<td>0.39%</td>
<td>2,264</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>1,283</td>
<td>791</td>
<td>2,074</td>
<td>0.37%</td>
<td>2,041</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>1,213</td>
<td>791</td>
<td>1,946</td>
<td>0.35%</td>
<td>2,003</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>1,238</td>
<td>715</td>
<td>1,953</td>
<td>0.35%</td>
<td>2,039</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>1,195</td>
<td>683</td>
<td>1,878</td>
<td>0.34%</td>
<td>1,950</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The number of MGLD pupils in the 5 to 14 age range registered on the NIDD fell by over a third (37%) from 3,023 to 1,878 between 1996 and 2005. Similarly the number of pupils registered and attending MGLD special schools fell by 31% from 2,813 to 1,950 and those attending special classes (MGLD) fell 68% from 625 to 198. Conversely, those attending resource teachers/visiting teachers increased sixfold from 26 to 172. The drop in numbers of MGLD pupils registered and the increased (albeit minimal) numbers reported attending resource teachers reflects the anecdotal evidence that parents and principals are less likely to register the increasing number of MGLD pupils in mainstream classes attending resource teachers (Mulvany, 2006). The number of MGLD pupils registering is likely to continue decreasing especially in light of the GAM model (Government of Ireland, 2005b) whereby in-school pupil evaluations (with parental consent) result in MGLD pupils receiving learning support teaching without the need for psychological assessment. Pupils’ non-registration on the NIDD will undoubtedly have long-term implications in terms of individual pupils’ access to disability services in the future.

While MGLD children aged 5 to 14 continue to form the largest single disability category in the database, the nationwide administrative prevalence has dropped from 0.45% to 0.34% between 1996 and 2005. In 1996 MGLD pupils aged 5-14 constituted
54% of all categories of disability and this had dropped to 42% by 2005 as shown in Table 2.6 below:

### Table 2.6: Numbers and administrative prevalence of MGLD primary school-going population in relation to all categories of intellectual disability from National Intellectual Disability Database 1996-2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>MGLD Aged 5-14</th>
<th>MGLD Prevalence %</th>
<th>All Categories Aged 9-14</th>
<th>Total Prevalence %</th>
<th>MGLD % of all Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>3,023</td>
<td>0.45%</td>
<td>5,646</td>
<td>0.90%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998/1999</td>
<td>2,653</td>
<td>0.45%</td>
<td>5,110</td>
<td>0.80%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2,470</td>
<td>0.40%</td>
<td>4,871</td>
<td>0.80%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>2,407</td>
<td>0.39%</td>
<td>4,840</td>
<td>0.80%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>2,074</td>
<td>0.37%</td>
<td>4,481</td>
<td>0.80%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>1,946</td>
<td>0.35%</td>
<td>4,399</td>
<td>0.80%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>1,953</td>
<td>0.35%</td>
<td>4,446</td>
<td>0.80%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>1,878</td>
<td>0.34%</td>
<td>4,449</td>
<td>0.80%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


With regard to pupil gender, data in the NIDD revealed that 63% of MGLD 5-14 year old children were males and 37% were females in 1996 (H.R.B., 1997) which altered slightly to 64% male and 36% female by 2005 (Barron and Mulvany, 2005).

#### 2.4.2 The Special School (MGLD)

In 1989 there were 32 special schools specifically for MGLD pupils nationwide (Stevens, 1990b). By 2004 this was reduced to 30 schools by which stage all were co-educational (Government of Ireland, 2004d). All special schools are located in small town/urban settings and 80% of them have less than eight pupils (Kelly, Carey and McCarthy, 2004). While these 30 schools are designated for Mild General Learning Difficulties, it is generally acknowledged that such schools cater for pupils with additional or more complex needs (I.N.T.O., 2000b; Kelly et al, 2004; McGee, 1990).

Full data on special school enrolments is not fully available for the period 1989-2004. The SERC report concluded that there were 3,298 pupils enrolled in MGLD
special schools in 1993 representing 41% of the total special school population and 0.66% of the total primary population. While the number of pupils attending all category of special schools dropped 16% between 1994 and 2004 (Government of Ireland, 2005a) the reduction of pupils (aged under 12) attending MGLD special schools was greater at 38%. Figure 2.5 illustrates how pupil enrolments to these schools dropped from 1,065 to 652 reflecting parental choice and the growth of inclusive education within National schools.

![Figure 2.4: Number of pupils (under 12 years) attending MGLD special schools 1994-2004](image)

Although categorised as National schools, special schools cater for a significant number of pupils who are in the 12-18 age range. The INTO (2002a) reported that 59% of special school pupils were in the 12-18 age range and that the age profile was rising since 1984. With regard to special schools for MGLD pupils, the percentage of pupils is much higher – in 1993, 67% of pupils were aged 12-18 while in 2004 nearly three quarters (74%) of pupils in such special schools are over twelve years old. This would appear to indicate that the MGLD special school sector is increasingly meeting the post-primary needs of MGLD pupils.

There is also evidence that the gender profile of special schools is changing. Referring to all special schools, male/female ratio was 3:2 in the 1980s which has increased to nearly two males for each female pupil (I.N.T.O, 2002a). There are no data available for gender breakdown of MGLD special schools but recent research by Kelly
et al (2004) indicates that in special schools for intellectual disability (Mild, Moderate, Severe/Profound GLD), there were 65% male and 35% female pupils.

The recent debate in special education in Ireland has been primarily focused on primary schools and in the drive for inclusion, special schools have largely been ignored.

The absence of any official policy has been highlighted (I.N.T.O., 1996b, 2000b, 2001a, 2002b, 2005c, 2005d, 2006a, 2006b; McCarthy and Kenny, 2006; N.A.B.S.M.E., 1991a; N.C.S.E, 2006b) and there is a growing unease regarding the place of special schools in the special education continuum. Where earlier reports and debate centred on staffing and resource issues (I.N.T.O, 1989a, 1989b, 1990b; 1993a; N.A.B.M.S.S., 1978), there is increasing awareness of emerging problems particular to special schools. Feelings of isolation and lack of support from the DES, INTO, NEPS (McCarthy and Kenny, 2006), issues regarding pupil placement (I.N.T.O., 2002a; McGee, 2004; O’Keeffe, 2004), more complex pupil needs (I.N.T.O., 2006b) and increased challenging behaviour (Kenny et al, 2004) are issues high on the special school agenda.

The future role of special schools continues to be a topic of debate (I.N.T.O., 2002b, 2006b, McCarthy and Kenny, 2006; O’Keeffe, 1994; 1997; 2004; Ó Murchú, 1985a, 1985b) with strong suggestions for outreach programmes, dual enrolment (I.N.T.O., 2002b), centres of excellence (McCarthy and Kenny, 2006; Ó Murchú, 1995a; N.A.B.M.S.E., 1991b) and the establishment of links programmes between ordinary and mainstream schools (Ó Murchú, 1996). Buckley (1999) reported that already 55% of MGLD special schools were engaged in some form of linkage with a mainstream school. While much of this work is taking place, such collaborative efforts should be endorsed as models of good practice according to Griffin and Shevlin (2002).

2.4.3 The Special Class (MGLD)

The study undertaken by Martin and Hickey (1993) as a part of the SERC Report (Government of Ireland, 1993a) reported that there were 3,798 pupils in special classes, 2,364 of whom were in special classes for travellers and 1,192 pupils in special classes for MGLD representing 31% of the total special class population. These 1,192 MGLD pupils represent 0.23% of the total primary population for 1992 (Martin and Hickey, 1993). Pupil gender was reported at 60% male and 40% female.
The DES was able to provide details of the number of pupils attending MGLD special classes from 1994 onwards (Government of Ireland, 2006b) in two categories namely aged under 12 and over 12. Although the number of pupils in all categories of special class increased from 5,186 to 9,940 between 1986 and 2004 (Government of Ireland, 2005a) a different pattern emerges when the population attending MGLD special classes only is reviewed.

Figure 2.5 illustrates the steady increase in MGLD pupils enrolled in special classes from 1,593 in 1994 to 2,805 in 1999 whereupon it drops to 2,055 by 2004.

![Figure 2.5: Number of pupils attending MGLD special classes 1994-2004](image)

This significant reduction coincides with the expansion of the resource teacher sector in mainstream schools. The number of resource teachers employed rose from 342 in 1999/00 to 1,352 in 2001/02 (Government of Ireland, 2006b).

Unlike MGLD special schools, where the age profile of pupils is rising, the opposite is the case of pupils in special classes. In 1994, 66% were aged under 12 years and by 2004 this figure was 74% (Government of Ireland, 2002a). No data was readily available on gender profile of MGLD pupils in special classes.

While early research highlighted staffing, resources, support services, integration and post-primary transfer as issues (I.N.T.O., 1981a, 1981b; N.A.B.M.S.S., 1981a; St. Michael’s House, 1981) there has been little research since with the exception of Dunne (1993) who raised special class teachers’ concerns regarding challenging behaviour. In fact, while the concerns of special school teachers have been
aired recently (McCarthy and Kenny, 2006), the special class model of provision has been neglected in term of reviews being heavily overshadowed by the move towards inclusion in mainstreamed National schools. Analysis of the INTO documents discussing special schools and special classes (I.N.T.O., 2002a, 2006b) reveals that they focus primarily on special schools paying very little attention to issues specifically of concern to special class teachers.

2.4.4 The Resource Teacher

The greatest growth in special educational provision in primary schools has occurred in the resource teacher sector and the expansion of the service has occurred at an unprecedented rate (C.P.S.M.A., 2000a, 2000b; Government of Ireland, 2000c, 2001b; INTO, 2000b, 2000c, 2001a, 2002c). Anecdotal evidence suggests that they were seven resource teachers employed in 1993 (Government of Ireland 2004a) which grew to 2,301 full time posts by the school year 2004/05 (Government of Ireland, 2006b) as illustrated in Figure 2.6 below:

![Figure 2.6: Number of resource teachers employed in National schools 1997-2005](image-url)

Source: Government of Ireland 2006b.

In 2000, 56% of all National schools applied for a resource teacher posts and in that year 12% of schools were granted a full time post, 41% had posts shared with other schools and 17% had part-time posts (I.N.T.O., 2003e) while evidence from IATSE (2000) confirmed that half of the resource teaching force was shared among two or
more schools. While little data are available regarding the percentage of MGLD pupils taught by resource teachers, the 2003 unpublished census provides some limited information. Resource teachers catered for 18,221 pupils with special educational needs of whom 4,513 were assessed as MGLD implying that quarter (24.8%) of all resource teachers’ pupils were in the MGLD range (Government of Ireland, 2003a). This is in sharp contrast to Costello (1997) whose research indicated that 83% of pupils attending resource teachers were in the same disability category.

There were 1,723 full-time and 866 part-time resource teachers with an approximate teacher pupil ratio of 1:7 (Government of Ireland, 2003a). While Costello (1997) suggested that resource posts were distributed evenly between urban and rural settings, there has been criticism of the manner in which posts were assigned (Colgan 1998; Egan 2001; Kitchen and Mulcahy, 1999) and more recently the NFVB (2006) has highlighted the variability of access throughout the country. Research by Flatman-Watson (2004, 2005) suggested that, in Dublin and Kildare, 34% of parents have been unable to access appropriate educational provision for their children with SEN.

Costello (1997), IATSE (2000), Kelly(1994) and McCarthy (2001) all highlighted issues pertaining to resource teachers which are also of relevance to special class and special schools teachers namely lack of adequate resources, lack of support and inservice training needs. However, there are also a number of concerns particular to resource teachers. Firstly, the lack of guidelines and clarity regarding the role of the resource teacher has been commented upon (Costello, 1999; IATSE, 2000; O’ Donnell, 1996) although subsequent DES Circulars have sought to address this (Government of Ireland, 1999b, 2002a, 2002c, 2003e, 2005b; I.N.T.O., 2003f, 2003g). Secondly, the lack of time and opportunity to collaborate with mainstream class teachers has created on-going difficulties for resource teachers (Costello, 1997; INTO, 2005a; Kelly 1994; McCarthy, 2001; O’ Donnell, 1996). Finally, the resource model has evolved primarily as a withdrawal model similar to that of the learning support teacher (Colgan, 1998; Costello, 1993; Kelly 1994; Shiel, Morgan and Larney, 1998) with only 7% of resource teachers teaching pupils in the mainstream class (I.N.T.O., 1997a).
2.4.5 Integration and Inclusion

2.4.5.a Introduction: International Perspective

The continuance of segregated education and the development of integration and more recently inclusion have to be one of the most debated and contentious issues in the field of special education (Banerji and Daily, 1995; Carlberg and Kavale, 1980; Deno, 1970; Dunn, 1968; Farrell, 2000, 2001; Fuchs and Fuchs, 1994; Hall, 1997; Hegarty, 1982, 1988; Hornby 1999; Hornby, Atkinson, and Howard, 1997; Jupp, 1993; Meijer, Sip, Hegarty, 1994; Mercer, 1997). In the evolution of special educational theory the ideology of 'inclusive education' has superseded 'integration'. The term 'integration' was used to describe the assimilation by the mainstream of pupils with special educational needs (Booth, 1981; Swann, 1985; Fish, 1985). In other words, the child was introduced to a system that was adapted for his particular needs whereby children with and without special educational needs were educated together. Farley (1984) described it as the central contemporary issue in education in the 1980s. Inclusion, on the other hand, is a philosophy of acceptance and the provision of a framework within which all children can be valued equally (Gaden, 1996; Thomas, 1997a, 1997b) achieved through a whole-school approach (Daniels and Hogg, 1991; Rieser, 1995; Russell, 1995) whereby a school becomes an inclusive community. The aim of inclusive education is to eliminate social exclusion that is a consequence of attitudes and responses to diversity in race, social class, ethnicity, religion, gender and ability (Vitello and Mithaug, 1998). Therefore, the special needs child is not being accommodated – he is simply part of a system which recognises that all children are different. Inclusion is championed as a means of removing barriers, improving educational outcomes, and removing discrimination (Graves and Tracy, 1998; Northway, 1997). Inclusion involves a process of reform and the restructuring of a school as a whole (Mittler, 2000).

The evolution of 'integration' and 'inclusion' out of segregated education is based on complex historical, political and social factors and has been reviewed in detail (Barton, 1988, 1996; Barton and Tomlinson, 1984; Cole, 1989, Skrtic, 1991, Tomlinson, 1982). Since the 1960s, European education systems have been pursuing the principles of integration arising out of the Scandinavian concept of normalisation (Pedlar, 1990; Nirje, 1992; Wolfensberger, 1972) and mainstreaming (Idol, 1997; O’Hanlon, 1995; Strain and Kerr, 1981) associated with the U.S. Civil Rights
Movement in the 1960s and 1970s (Smyth, 1988). The concept has been the subject of much analysis and heated debate. While legal, ethical, educational and psychological arguments have been put forward in favour of integrated education, much of this deliberation has centered on the sociological perspectives of ‘rights based’ education (Thomas and Loxley, 2001; Tomlinson, 2001; Wilson, 1999, 2000, 2002; Wedell, 2005) emphasising a move from welfare and medical models to one based on the rights of the individual. Inclusion is increasingly being viewed as a form of social justice (Artiles, Hans-Murri, and Rostenberg, 2006) although it is also argued that the person with disabilities also has responsibilities in relation to his inclusion in society (van de Ven, Post, de Witte, and van den Heuvel, 2005). In essence, pupils have the right to an inclusive environment, and anything less is a denial of this right. Where integration was a goal of special needs provision, inclusion is now perceived as a right. Despite the flaws and shortcomings of the social model (Mithaug, 1998), Lindsay (1997, 2003) asserts that the ‘rights based’ model underpinning the move towards inclusive education has been very influential in policy formation and the development of legislation in the last twenty years.

Integration and inclusion have been complex, multi-faceted and controversial topics (Rispens, 1994). The opportunity of greater academic attainment, improved skills, increased self esteem and benefits to the non-disabled population have all been cited as justification in favour of integrated education (Block and Zemen, 1996; Dyson, Farrell, Polat and Hutcheson, 2004). Bless and Amrein, (1992) Hocutt (1996) Sharpe, York and Knight (1994) and Wildrodt and Claybrook (1995) suggest a positive link between inclusion and academic achievement but studies undertaken by Affleck, Madge, Adams, and Lowenbraun (1988), Tapasak and Walther-Thomas (1999), and Saint-Larent, Dionne, Giasson, Royer, Simard and Pierard (1998) found no significant evidence to suggest that inclusive education had a significant impact on academic performance.

Similarly, improved social benefits for SEN pupils are cited as a justification for inclusion (Bilken, Corrigan and Quick, 1989; Buysse and Bailey 1993; Hunt and Goetz, 1997; Vaughn, Elbaum and Schumm, 1996). However, Tapask and Walther-Thomas (1999) found no significant differences in pupil behaviour in mainstream and segregated settings. These findings were also confirmed by Cawley, Hayden, Cade, and Baker-Kroczynski (2002). Research does suggest however, that the inclusion of SEN pupils in mainstream classes can improve social skills (Bilken, Corrigan, and Quick...
(1989) and lead to increased understanding, tolerance and acceptance (Capper and Pickett, 1994; Fisher, Pumptain and Sax, 1998) and increased self esteem (Cambra and Silvestre, 2003; Zeleke, 2004). With regard to friendships between disabled pupils and their peers, Murray-Seegart (1989) and Staub, Schwartz, Gallucci and Peck (1994) assert that inclusion is a positive factor in the creation of friendships.

Those who are sceptical of the merits of full inclusion argue that it may not necessarily constitute the best possible learning environment for all children with special educational needs (Kauffman and Hallahan, 1995; Smelter, Rash and Yudewitz, 1994) and consequently some form of a continuum (Gartner and Lispky, 1989) of educational provision has remained in place in practically all countries. Arguments in favour of maintaining segregated special schooling include the efficiency and economy of centralising resources, disabled/non-disabled interactions are not always entirely positive (Buckley, 1999), second-level and training opportunities (Williams, 1993) and financial considerations (Westwood, 1997).

Many of the concerns regarding inclusive education arise from the tension between theoretical ideology and practical implementation (Kauffman and Hallahan, 1995; Garner and Gains, 2000; Hornby, 1999, Wilson, 1999, 2000) resulting in a large body of literature concerning the essential elements and criteria in making successful inclusive schools (Thomas, 1997a). Both Lindsay (1997) and Hornby (1999) both sound a cautionary note about fully embracing inclusion given its complexity and the problems it creates for schools. Lingard (1996) suggests that the promotion of inclusion as a philosophical model has diverted attention away from other possible innovations in special education. This view is supported by Crockett (1999) in the U.S.

Despite the continuing debate, most countries have embraced the philosophy of inclusive education (Kisanji, 1998; Labon, 1997; Sebba and Ainscow, 1996) including developing countries (U.N.E.S.C.O., 1998, 1999a, 1999b, 2002) and it has become central to special education policy formation. However, the transformation of the ideology of inclusion into practice appears to present a major challenge in many countries (Hughes, Schumm and Vaughn, 1996; Clarke, Dyson, Millward and Skidmore, 1997) and, as a result, progress in implementation has been slow and uneven (Burstein, Sears, Wilcoxen, Cabello and Spagna, 2004; Croll and Moses, 1998, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c; Thomas and Tarr, 1999).
2.4.5.b Integration and Inclusion: International Research

Borthwick-Duffy, Palmer and Lane (1996) suggest that the current propensity for inclusion is based on emotion rather than empirical evidence. While there is an abundance of empirical research on special education (Skidmore, 1996), the corresponding body of empirical research on inclusion is much less extensive. As within other areas of special education, researching the areas of integration and inclusion are not without their difficulties. As concepts they are ambiguous, may take many forms and operationalising them as variables is problematic. In addition, the population under review with its many variables in terms of disability, socio-economic status, etc, make evaluation increasingly complex. According to Lindsay (1997), integration and inclusion are not simple undimensional variables to examine.

However, despite these difficulties there is a substantial body of published research, but, in general, literature reviews have generally been inconclusive regarding the benefits of inclusion (Madden and Slavin, 1983; Hornby, 1992; Butler, 1996; Farrell, 1997; Knight, 1999). There have been a number of studies reviewing the evaluation of inclusion (Sebba and Sachdev, 1997; Hegarty, 1993; Tilstone, Florian and Rose, 1998) but again these do not provide clear evidence in favour of inclusive practice. Hegarty (1993) summarised a major international review by the OECD by stating that, primarily due to methodological difficulties, research had failed to establish integration as advantageous over segregation. In a meta-analysis by Carlberg and Kavale (1980), only 50 of 860 studies were methodologically sound and suitable for analysis. A further meta-analysis by Wang and Baker (1986) analysed 11 out of 60 studies and suggested some positive evidence in favour of integrated education. Others in the field (Gearheart, Weishahn, and Gearheart, 1996; Jenkinson, 1997a; Villa and Thousand, 1995) also concur that much research is beset by methodological problems.

Much of the research is concerned with the process and principles of inclusion rather than the outcomes (Dyson, Howes and Roberts, 2002) although a number of pioneering studies have now begun to address this issue (Lunt and Norwich, 1999; Dyson et al., 2004).

Case studies of integration or inclusion in individual schools (Beasley and Upton, 1989; Hegarty and Pocklington, 1981; Murray-Seegert, 1989) give valuable information on effective practice but do not provide data on comparative performance. Other research examining models of provision (Manset and Semmel, 1997; Mills, Cole,
Jenkins and Dale, 1998) provide equally unconvincing evidence. Recent research using a national database (NPD – National Pupil Database) in the UK, Florian, Rose, Black-Hawkins, and Jull (2004) outline the difficulties and possibilities for research using national databases. One major study by Dyson et al. (2004) using this database found no significant relationship between inclusion and pupil attainment although no negative impact was observed on the academic attainments of non-disabled students.

Although the findings of empirical research in inclusion are complex and sometimes contradictory (Farrell, 2000), a key theme running through many studies is that the success of inclusion depends to a great extent on the availability and quality of supports available and the identification of key elements in making an inclusive environment. This has resulted in suggested criteria for inclusive schools (Booth and Ainscow, 2002; C.E.C., 1994; C.S.I.E., 1996; Porter, 1997; Pijl and Meijer, 1997; Stainback and Stainback, 1990; Thomas, Walker and Webb, 1997). A number of common factors emerge from the literature which are deemed to be critical in the implementation of integration and inclusion policies.

Firstly, the need for committed school leadership is perceived as a crucial ingredient in the creation of inclusive schooling (Ainscow, 1991a, 1991b, 1999; E.A.D.S.N.E., 2003a, 2003b; Kugellmass and Ainscow, 2004; Riehl, 2000; Robbins, 1999) combined with a positive attitude to inclusion on the part of the principal (Ainscow and Muncey, 1990; Center, Ward, Parmenter and Nash, 1985). This, together with a planned whole school approach (Dean, 1996, Gross, 1993), is significant in successful inclusion.

Secondly, teachers are perceived to be a critical element in making schools inclusive (E.A.D.S.N.E., 2003b; Leyser and Tappendorf, 2001) and play a central part in service delivery (Fox, Farrell and Davis, 2004). Teachers’ attitudes to disabled children are described as central to the process (Center and Ward, 1987; Diebold and von Echenbach, 1991; McEvoy, Nordquist, and Cunningham, 1984; Harvey, 1985; van-Reusen, Shoho and Barker, 2000). Scrugg and Mastropieri (1996) reviewed 28 studies on teacher attitudes and reported that 65% of teachers supported inclusion. Aksamit, Morris, and Leunberger (1987) suggest that female teachers have more positive attitudes towards disabled children and these finding are supported by Eichinger, Rizzo and Sirontrnik (1991). However, Beh-Pajooh (1992) and Berryman (1989) do not consider gender to be a factor in teachers’ attitudes. The preservice and inservice training of teachers is also viewed as essential for successful integration and inclusion practices.
(Ainscow, 1996, 1997; Bowman, 1986; Bishop and Jones, 2002; Dew-Hughes and Brayton, 1997; Glæsel, 1997; Nutbrown and Clough, 2004; Shimman, 1989). This is supported by recent research by Wilkins and Nietfield (2006) and Winter (2006) who stress the need for training as teachers feel unprepared for the inclusive environment. Not surprisingly, research also indicates that those with special education qualifications are more positive towards inclusive education (Avramidis, Bayliss, and Burden, 2000a; Centre and Ward, 1987; Buell, Hallam, Gamel-McCormack and Scheer, 1999). However, there is no conclusive evidence that teaching experience and positive attitudes to inclusion are linked (Avramidis, Bayliss, and Burden, 2000b; Rogers, 1987; Stephens and Braun, 1980).

Thirdly, research suggests that the availability of support services play a vital role in the delivery of inclusive education. The employment on in-class support staff make a significant contribution to the process (Inglese, 1996, Lacey, 2001; Margerison, 1997; Muijs and Reynolds, 2003; Woolfe and Basset, 1988). In addition, the accessibility of external staff play a key part in supporting SEN children (Blyth and Milner, 1997; Oliver, 1983) although difficulties in collaborative approaches by multidisciplinary and paramedical staff are acknowledged by Sinclair (1994). The unavailability of such supports has been found to have a negative impact on teachers’ attitudes to inclusion (Avramidis, Bayliss, and Burden, 2000b; Avramidis and Norwich, 2002).

Other key elements required for successful inclusive schools include an appropriate physical environment (Avramidis and Norwich, 2002), adequate teaching resources (Beek, 2002; Center and Ward, 1987; Clough and Corbett, 2000; Walther-Thomas, Korinek, McLaughlin and Williams, 2000; LeRoy and Simpson, 1996) curricular inclusion (Ainscow, 1999; E.A.D.S.N.E., 2003b; Graves and Tracey, 1998; Russell, 2003; Wearmouth, 2001), and a meaningful collaborative role for parents (Elkins, van Kraayenoord, and Joblin, 2003; Fox, Farrell and Davis, 2004; Mittler, 1992a, 1992b).

2.4.5.c Integration and Inclusion: Irish Research

There has been a paucity of research relating to special education in Ireland and as a result there have been frequent calls for increased research (I.N.T.O, 1990a, 1991a, 1991b, 1991c, 1991d; 2000a; N.A.M.H.I, 1984; N.D.A, 2002; Shevlin, 2002; Stevens,
Generally research has been undertaken by organisations established in the field such as the INTO, NABMSE, NAMHI, various disability organisations, academics and teachers. More recently the NDA, as part of its brief, has supported an increasing body of research within the disability sector (N.D.A., 2002). The Department of Education and Science support has been meagre with no clear commitment to funding research in special education. In reviewing the DES-funded research between 1994 and 2000, only two of forty one projects were in the special education sector (Government of Ireland, 2002d). However, the increase in the number of postgraduate courses specifically in special education has led to a growing body of research, particularly in the last decade.

A review of books, journals articles, reports, conference papers and university theses reveals the major themes which have been researched. Policy, levels of integrated education, or more recently access to mainstream schools, surveys of models of provision, attitudinal research and evaluation of support services are among the topics that have been examined. However, significant amounts of such research have been focused on a particular sub-group or population and have been confined to particular geographical areas.

Much of the research on policy has already been quoted in Section 2.3 reviewing the development of special education in Ireland. The primary research papers concerning policy include: a historical overview of special education (Swan, 2000); a comparative review of policy in Italy, U.S. and Ireland (McGrath, 1999); reviews on policy documents in primary teacher union’s policy on integrated education (I.N.T.O, 1991a, 1993a) and more recently a comprehensive review of policy in Kenny et al (2006).

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Author and Bibliography Reference</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>* Full title may be found in Bibliography</th>
<th>Target Population</th>
<th>Sample &amp; Response (%)</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>NABMSS (1978)</td>
<td>1978</td>
<td>Report on Special Schools</td>
<td>30 Special Schools (MMH)</td>
<td>N = 30 (63%)</td>
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<td>Personnel and Services, Staffing, Facilities</td>
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<td>NRB (1979)</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>A Survey of Special Class Teachers from the Primary Sector</td>
<td>49 Special Classes (MMH)</td>
<td>N = 49 (97%)</td>
<td>Dublin Area</td>
<td>Class Size, Age Range, Integration, Support Services, Miscellaneous Data</td>
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<td>St. Michael’s House (1981)</td>
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<td>A Survey of Services available to Special Classes &amp; Special Schools</td>
<td>41 Special Classes &amp; 2 Special Schools (MMH)</td>
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<td>NABMSS (1981a)</td>
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<td>Report on Special Classes in the Dublin Diocese</td>
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<td>INTO (1982b)</td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>An Examination of the Implications of School</td>
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<td>INTO (1986c)</td>
<td>1986</td>
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<td>245 Special Classes (MMH) &amp; Travellers</td>
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<td>J. Curtin &amp; J. Tullo (1987)</td>
<td>1987</td>
<td>The Teaching of Art at Primary Level in Special Schools</td>
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<td>J. O’Toole (1990)</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>The Gap Widens – A Survey of Funding in Primary Schools</td>
<td>340 National Schools</td>
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<tr>
<td>INTO (1990d)</td>
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<td>Report of Survey on Special Schools</td>
<td>114 Special Schools</td>
<td>N = 114 (66%)</td>
<td>National</td>
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<td>A. Dunne (1993)</td>
<td>1993</td>
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<td>77 Special Class Teachers</td>
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<td>Focus groups of Special School Teachers</td>
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<td>NFVB Role n Educational Provision, EBSEN Act, Resources</td>
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<td>Law &amp; Policy, Profile of Need &amp; Provision, Views of Stakeholders</td>
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Many of the studies have been confined to a particular geographical location with the majority of research focused in the Dublin area only (Corcoran, 1995; Dunne, 1993).
1993; I.N.T.O, 1986a, 1987a; Kennedy, 1994; N.A.B.M.S.S, 1987a; N.R.B, 1979; O'Malley, 1998; Ó Muchú, 1995; St. Michaels House, 1981). Kitchen and Mulcahy’s (1999) research is focused on Dublin and Kildare. Research has been undertaken in other locations to a much lesser degree, although some minor research has been undertaken in Co. Clare (O’Shea, 2003), Offaly (O’Malley, 1998), Wexford (Kelly, 1996), Wicklow (Dagg, 2004) and Munster (Ni Chonaill, 2002). The level of exploration undertaken on a nationwide basis has been extremely limited with a number of notable exceptions of studies undertaken by IATSE (2000), Kelly et al (2004), McCarthy (2001) and Costello (1997).

Research population has also been an issue with many studies based on low sample sizes with the majority of studies using samples of less than 100 (Corcoran, 1995 [n=42]; I.N.T.O, 1997a [n=41]; Kennedy, 1994 [n=15]; N.A.B.M.S.S, 1978 [n=19]; N.R.B, 1979 [n=49]). These small sample sizes combined with the fact that much research is limited to particular regions makes generalisation of results more difficult.

The three models of provision available to MGLD pupils, special classes, resource teachers and special schools have been examined primarily through teacher survey. Special class surveys (Curtin and Tulie, 1997; Dunne, 1993; I.N.T.O, 1986a; N.A.B.M.S.S, 1981a; N.R.B, 1997) are practically all Dublin based with common themes of resources, pupil-assessment, class-size, teacher-education and support services emerging as areas of concern. There appears little recent research on the special class model.

Resource teacher surveys were initially undertaken by Costello (1997) [n=48], I.N.T.O (1997a) [n=41] and McCarthy (2001) [n=51]. Larger surveys of the resource teacher population by IATSE (2000) [n=114] with two follow-up studies (I.A.T.S.E., 2001) [n=54] and (I.A.T.S.E., 2002) [n=242] raise a variety of pertinent issues. The role of the resource teacher was examined by O’Donnell (1996) while Harty (2001) explored issues relating to collaboration between mainstream and resource teachers. In recent years the focus has changed somewhat from surveying resource teachers to examining issues surrounding access to mainstream primary school by special needs pupils and substantial research has been undertaken in this regard (Colgan, 1998; Flatman-Watson, 2004, 2005; Kenny et al, 2006; Kitchin and Mulcahy, 1999; N.F.V.B., 2006; Shevlin, Kenny and McNeela, 2001; 2002). Research into the special school as a model of provision has also been limited (I.N.T.O, 1990a; N.A.B.M.S.S, 1978) although recent
research reviews the concerns of teachers regarding the future of special schools (McCarthy and Kenny, 2006) and the increase in challenging behaviour is addressed comprehensively by Kenny et al (2004). Significant work has been undertaken, however, concerning the linkages between mainstream and special schools (Buckley, 1999; Noonan-Walsh, Shevlin, O’Moore, De Lacey and Stritch, 1996; Shevlin, 1998, 2001a, 2003) and the positive impact which such links programmes have on mainstream pupils (Shevlin and O’Moore, 1999, 2000a, 2000b).

A significant portion of Irish research has concentrated on the attitudes of principals, teachers, and children to inclusive education. McCormack and Smith (1990) reported that principals had positive attitudes to integration provided adequate resources were in place. Similarly, Keyes (2001) found that principals are positively disposed to inclusive education although the opinion was expressed that inclusion is not appropriate for all pupils. Mogenson, Phibbs and O’Shea (2006) explored principals’ attitudes and training needs while Dempsey (2005) examined principals’ attitudes to the future of special schools.

In general, Irish research indicates that teachers have positive attitudes towards inclusion (Bennett, Gash, O’Reilly, 1998; Dagg, 2004; Hand, 2001; Keyes, 2001; O’Connor, 1998; O’Malley, 1998). In an early study, Lawless and Colfer (1990) reported that 47% perceived integration as desirable with a further 24% considering it to be desirable but not practical. Bates (1993a, 1993b) reported a slightly higher figure of 81% of teachers in favour of integration in principle. Kearns (1997) and Kearns and Shevlin (2004) (cited in Kenny et al (2006)) considered the attitudes of teachers in pre-service training and Marley (1996) explored the effectiveness of inservice training in affecting teachers’ attitudes.

Children’s attitudes to disabled peers have been researched by Gash (1993a, 1993b, 1996), Gash and Coffee (1995) and Shevlin and O’Moore (1999). O’Moore (1980) reported that the attitudes of mainstream children are critical while Butler and Shevlin (2001) observed that school type at second level education are important factors. Feerwick (1996) found that mainstream pupils hold neither strong positive or negative attitudes to disabled peers and that special class children are not stereotyped.

There has been a significant increase in research into the role of in class support in the form of SNAs (Allen, 2006; Carrig, 2004; Craig, 2006; Lawlor and Cregan, 2003; Logan, 2001, 2003). The role of external supports has also received some attention with the work of psychologists being reviewed by Canney (1998), Kilbride (2004), and
Rahilly (2004). The support role of speech therapy was explored by Walsh (1999) and Byrne (2005) examined inter-professional collaboration between special school and paramedical support staff.

Research has also been undertaken to examine the transition of SEN pupils from one model to another. Conroy (2005) explored transition from primary to secondary while O’Moore (1981) reviewed the move from school to the workplace. The vocational needs of special class leavers were researched by Smith (1979) and the post-school adjustment of special class pupils were examined by Cooney (1999) and Breathnach (2005). In relation to special schools, post-school adjustment has been appraised by Carroll (1981), Dooley Groarke (1985) and Toomey and O’Callaghan (1983), and more recently by Drislane (1992), and McConkey and McCormack (1999).

Among other areas which have received attention are parental involvement (Mogensen et al., 2006; Nolan, 2003; O’Connor, 2005), the use of IEPs in schools (Fletcher, 1998; McCarthy, 2005; Mogensen, 2005; Nugent, 2002; O’Sullivan, 2002) and research into academic attainments and self-esteem of pupils in special schools and special classes (Stevens, 1991b).

At the time of writing, a nationwide review of all categories of special schools and special classes was underway. The first phase of this research involves gathering quantitative data by the Special Education Department, St Patrick’s College of Education, Dublin. The second phase, collecting more qualitative data, will be undertaken by the NCSE in the autumn of 2006 (N.C.S.E., 2006c).

Despite the growing body of research into special education in Ireland, there are a number of issues arising:

- Much research is at a micro-level specifically examining issues in particular geographical regions with small sample sizes. The need for nationwide research is a priority.
- There is an absence of longitudinal studies in relation to special educational provision in Ireland charting any changes or developments occurring within the system.
- There appears to be no research which compares current or past levels of provision within special schools, special classes and the resource teacher model.

When the literature on the three forms of provision is reviewed, a number of common themes emerge as follows:
1) Issues concerning characteristics of National schools and special schools including school location, pupil gender, class size, teacher allocation, etc.

2) The literature makes many calls for improved school facilities and educational resources. However, there is little data which quantifies current or past situation in terms of school accommodation and adequacy of resources.

3) There are particular issues arising for special education teachers including gender imbalance, teaching experience, qualifications, preservice and inservice training, and redeployment but little comparative data is available.

4) Similarly, although the literature frequently refers to the need for both in-school and external support services, there exists little comprehensive data on the current availability and adequacy of such services.

5) Pupil enrolment, pupil placement and the additional needs of a minority of pupils are all emerging issues across the three forms of provision.

6) Information is scant on integration/inclusion practices across the three forms of provision and the linkages which occur between the resource pupils, special class and special school (MGLD) pupils.

7) No comparative data appears to be available on the different types of curricular provision within special schools, special classes and the resources model, especially in terms of curriculum planning, implementation and time allocation for planning and consultation.

8) Finally, there is a paucity of data on schools infrastructure to implement home school links across the three models of provision.

These eight emerging issues are now addressed in detail in the context of special schools, special classes and resource teachers in the next section 2.5 'Emerging issues in the Education of MGLD Pupils' on page 61.
2.5 EMERGING ISSUES IN THE EDUCATION OF MGLD PUPILS

2.5.1 Characteristics of National Schools and Special Schools

2.5.1.a School Location

With regard to the national geographical location of schools, Table 2.8 outlines the distribution among Dublin City and County, other cities and other counties. The

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographical Area</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>National Schools</th>
<th>Special Classes</th>
<th>Special Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dublin City and County</strong></td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>12.9% (415)</td>
<td>46.5% (80)</td>
<td>41.0% (48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>13.1% (414)</td>
<td>31.0% (167)</td>
<td>42.2% (54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cork City, Limerick City, Waterford City, Galway City</strong></td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>10.7% (348)</td>
<td>8.1% (14)</td>
<td>14.5% (17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>10.7% (337)</td>
<td>14.3% (77)</td>
<td>14.1% (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All other Counties</strong></td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>76.4% (2,484)</td>
<td>45.4% (78)</td>
<td>44.5% (52)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>76.2% (2,399)</td>
<td>54.7% (294)</td>
<td>43.7% (56)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Government of Ireland (1990c) and Government of Ireland (2005a)

annual statistical reports for 1988/89 and 2003/04 (Government of Ireland, 1990a, 2005a) confirm that three quarters (76.4%) of National schools are located outside the major cities with no change between 1989 and 2004. The DES was unable to provide any information regarding the geographical distribution of National schools which employ resource teachers.

Special schools are located in Dublin in 41% of cases and in Cork, Limerick, Waterford and Galway in 14% of cases with the remaining 44% located in other counties. No indication is given in terms of large town/small town or rural categories. No official data is available regarding the geographical status of special schools in the MGLD category. However, research by Stevens (1990b, 1990c) suggested that practically all MGLD schools were located in towns or cities. More recent research by Kelly et al (2004) is in agreement detailing that special schools for the intellectually
disabled (MGLD, Moderate GLD, S & PLD) are geographically distributed as follows: 38% city; 27% large town and 22% small town.

The number of special classes increased significantly between 1989 and 2004 and the geographical distribution also altered. In 1989 Dublin City and County accounted for under half (46.5%) of all special classes which had dropped to under a third (31%) by 2004. In contrast 8% of special classes were located in other cities in 1989 which grew to 14.3% by 2004. An increase from 45% to 55% was also noted for special classes in all other counties. No specific information is available for special classes in the MGLD category although Stevens (1990b) reported that 50.9% of MGLD special classes were in the Dublin region.

2.5.1.b Gender Profile of School

All MGLD special schools are co-educational (Stevens, 1990b) but there appears to be no data available detailing the gender profile of mainstream National schools where resource teachers are employed or in which special classes are assigned. Limited information is available regarding National Schools from the DES statistical reports (Government of Ireland, 1990c, 2005a) as shown in Table 2.9. where the number of

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Boys only</th>
<th>Girls only</th>
<th>Mixed</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1989*</td>
<td>16.1% (2,850)</td>
<td>15.7% (2,782)</td>
<td>68.2% (12,054)</td>
<td>100% (17,686)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004**</td>
<td>12.0% (2,153)</td>
<td>12.1% (2,183)</td>
<td>75.9% (13,675)</td>
<td>100% (18,011)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: * Government of Ireland (1990c) ** Government of Ireland (2005a)

single sex schools dropped from 31.8% to 24.1% between 1989 and 2004 and conversely the number of co-educational schools increased from 68.2% to 75.9% during the same period.
2.5.1.c School Size

Special educational provision and school size is yet another aspect where there is an absence of statistical data. Again the DES annual statistical reports provide limited data on National schools as extracted in Table 2.10 below:

**Table 2.10: No. of schools by total teacher-size of school (ordinary classes only) 1989 and 2004**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1-5 Teachers</th>
<th>6-10 Teachers</th>
<th>11-15 Teachers</th>
<th>16-19 Teachers</th>
<th>20 Teachers plus</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1989*</td>
<td>65.8% (2,136)</td>
<td>18.0% (584)</td>
<td>8.6% (279)</td>
<td>4.9% (158)</td>
<td>2.7% (90)</td>
<td>100% (3,247)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004**</td>
<td>54.6% (1,719)</td>
<td>20.9% (659)</td>
<td>13.2% (417)</td>
<td>5.2% (165)</td>
<td>6.1% (190)</td>
<td>100% (3,150)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: * Government of Ireland (1990c) ** Government of Ireland (2005a)

Two thirds (65.8%) of schools in 1989 and over half (54.6%) of schools in 2004 have five or less teachers implying that the majority of primary schools in Ireland are small. There appears to be an increase in school size over this period where schools with six or more teachers have increased from 34% to 45% during the same period. However, this data provides no information on the school size and resource teacher or special class allocation.

Neither does the DES statistical reports provide any details on special school size. However, research by Kenny et al (2004) indicates that nearly three quarters (73%) of ID special schools have less than 80 pupils with 18% having 81-120 pupils, and a further 9% having 120-160 pupils.

2.5.1.d Teacher Pupil Ratio, Class Size or Caseload

Class size and teacher pupil ratio have been one of the most contentious issues in Irish primary mainstream education for decades. International studies (Biddle and Berliner, 2002; Finn, 2002; Finn, Gerber, Achilles and Boyd-Zaharias, 2001; Glass and Smith, 1979) all confirm the benefits of lowering class size in terms of modest increases in academic achievement, especially where class sizes are reduced to below 20 pupils among minority or socio-economically disadvantaged pupils.
The INTO has campaigned relentlessly for a reduction in class size in mainstream schools for decades with a major campaign initiated in the school year 2004/05 (I.N.T.O., 2005e, 2005f, 2005g, 2005h, 2006c). Such campaigns have more recently addressed class size in terms of the inclusion of MGLD pupils. This has been supported by a body of research which suggests that current mainstream class sizes are too large to accommodate the inclusion of disabled pupils (Doyle, 2004; Frawley, 1999; Kennedy, 1994; McCormack and Smith, 1990) and requests for a reduction in class size continued to be made (Kenny et al, 2006; N.F.V.B., 2006).

Under current DES regulations the inclusion of SEN pupils into mainstream classes has no bearing on the teacher pupil ratio or class size. Information is scant on the number of pupils in classes where disabled pupils have been included. Similarly, there is a paucity of recent data on the caseload size of resource teachers employed in National schools. While Parkinson (2001) suggested that resource teacher caseload varied considerably, Colgan (1998) found an average caseload of 6-8 pupils which is half the average of 15 reported by the INTO in the previous year (I.N.T.O., 1997a). This latter figure of 15 pupils is in line with the findings of McCarthy (2001) and IATSE (2000) which revealed that 42% of resource teachers had 12-15 pupils, 38% had a caseload of 1-11 pupils and 20% had more than 16 pupils. There is no current data available regarding resource teacher caseload on a nationwide basis since Costello (1997) who reported an average caseload of 15 pupils.

While MGLD special schools and special classes have had the same official teacher pupil ratio assigned by the DES, evidence suggests that the actual teacher pupil ratio in special classes is lower and therefore more favourable (McGee, 1990). Earlier surveys of Irish MGLD special schools have shown the average ratio to be 1:16 (Curtin and Tulie, 1987; N.A.B.M.S.S. 1978; Stevens, 1987b) indicating that such schools were operating close to the minimum requirements set forth by the 1965 Commission (Government of Ireland, 1965). Such ratios have been considered unsatisfactory by the INTO with frequent requests to reduce ratio/class size as a matter of priority (I.N.T.O, 1989a, 1990d, 1993a, 1993b, 1993c, 1999b, 2000b). The SERC Report’s recommendation of a ratio of 1:11 is now in place (Government of Ireland, 1993a) but no data appears to be available regarding actual teacher pupil ratios in MGLD special schools between 1990 and 2005.

Research also indicates that teacher pupil ratios in special classes have been lower than special schools. Findings illustrate ratios as follows: 1:11.6 (Curtin and
Tulie, 1987); 1:11.7 (I.N.T.O., 1981a); 1:12 (St. Michaels House, 1981); 1:12 (Travers, 1984); 1:11.6 (I.N.T.O., 1990d) and finally 1:14, (N.R.B., 1979), representing an overall average ratio of 1:12.2. This confirms a difference between special schools and special classes with special class teachers having an average of three or four pupils less in class. This imbalance also existed in the UK where Brennan (1985) maintained it compensated for the greater age range within the special class. As in the case of special schools, there have been calls to reduce the ratios in special classes (Dunne, 1993) with the INTO requesting a reduction of 2/3 pupils in 1989 (I.N.T.O., 1989a) and lowering the ratio from 1:15 to 1:10 (I.N.T.O., 1993a, 1993b). In 2004, the official DES ratio was 1:11 as recommended by SERC (Government of Ireland, 1993a) but no research has investigated actual teacher pupil ratios in MGLD special classes since the 1986 special class survey (I.N.T.O., 1986a).

2.5.1.e Pupil Profile

The absence of a national primary pupil database and the lack of database on special needs pupils have resulted in an incomplete profile of those in receipt of special educational provision in National schools and special schools. The gender profile of pupils attending National schools has remained unchanged between 1989 and 2004 with 51% male and 49% female pupils (Government of Ireland, 1999c, 2005a).

Referring specifically to special education and gender, information is varied with a greater number of males requiring special education. Costello’s (1997) review of the work of resource teachers found that 57% of pupils were boys and 43% girls. This mirrored the findings of Dunne (1993) which reported 57% male 43% female composition in MGLD special classes in line with international findings (Evans, 2003). This is not dissimilar to percentages reported for special schools as shown in Table 2.11 which illustrates how the number of male pupils has increased from 58.6%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Male</td>
<td>4,788</td>
<td>5,013</td>
<td>4,965</td>
<td>4,645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Female</td>
<td>3,380</td>
<td>3,482</td>
<td>3,094</td>
<td>2,741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male as % of Total</td>
<td>58.6%</td>
<td>59.0%</td>
<td>61.6%</td>
<td>62.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female as % of Total</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
<td>41.0%</td>
<td>38.4%</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

to 62.9% between 1980 and 1998 (I.N.T.O., 2003f). These findings are also corroborated by Kelly et al (2004) (62% male an 38% female). However, the DES is unable to provide a gender profile of pupils attending MGLD special schools specifically (Government of Ireland, 2006b).

Age profile and age range are two issues of concern among special educationalists. There appears to be limited data on age profile. The majority of special class pupils are of primary school age and the average age is falling annually (Government of Ireland, 2002a; N.R.B., 1979). In contrast, over 60% of pupils in special schools are over 12 years of age (Government of Ireland, 2006b; I.N.T.O., 2003f; Kelly et al., 2004).

While special schools are able to group pupils into classes of similar chronological age, the special class is drawn from a range of classes within the school and thus a wider range of ages. This wider age range within a single special class, has been one of the major criticisms of this model. Curtin and Tulie (1987) compared mean age ranges in special schools and special classes which were 2.4 years and 5.4 years respectively. The 2.4 years compares favourably with the mainstream class while the 5.4 years was found to be difficult for students (N.A.B.M.S.S., 1981a) as well as posing difficulties for teachers (I.N.T.O., 1981a). Similarly the NABMSS (1981a) reported 69% of MGLD special class teachers with an age range of more than three years within their classes. St. Michaels House (1981) reported a range of 8.5 to 12 years, Travers (1984) and INTO (1986a) described a range of 7 to 13 years, and the NRB (1979) recounted a range of 9 to 14 years. The obvious disadvantages of this aspect of the special class model resulted in calls for junior and senior special classes within schools (Government of Ireland, 1965; N.A.M.H.I., 1984) but this only occurred where the identification of sufficient assessed pupils merited the establishment of a second class.

It is not possible to compare special school and special class age profiles and age ranges comprehensively as no recent comparative data is available.

2.5.1.f Special Class Provision

A review of special class surveys indicate that approximately two thirds of schools with special classes had just one special class (69.4% according to N.A.B.M.S.S., 1981a and 63% according to I.N.T.O 1981a) with a further 25% with two classes and 6% with three or more classes (N.A.B.M.S.S., 1981a).
2.5.1.g Resource Teacher Provision

Research by Costello (1997) showed that over a third (37%) of resource teachers worked in one school only while just under half (49%) were employed in four or more schools. The findings of IATSE four years later suggested a change in the pattern of employment whereby over half (52%) were then employed in one school only and the number working in four or more schools had fallen to a fifth (21%) thereby reducing the loss of teaching time due to travel (I.A.T.S.E., 2000).

2.5.1.h Designated Disadvantaged Status

In 2004, certain primary schools benefited from designated disadvantage status under a number of designated schemes including ‘Giving Children an Even Break’, ‘Breaking the Cycle’, ‘Disadvantage Area Scheme’, and more recently the ‘Home School Community Liaison Scheme’ (Archer and Weir, 2004; Conaty, 2002; I.N.T.O., 2004e; Weir and Archer, 2004). Despite reviewing the operation of these schemes, no details are available of how many of these designated schools have MGLD special classes or resource teachers. Given that special classes were established in areas of socio-economic deprivation, it would be expected that a reasonable number of such schools would hold designated disadvantaged status.

Inexplicably, not one special school holds designated disadvantaged status. High levels of dissatisfaction among special school principals were observed by Weir (2004) regarding this issue. The non-acknowledgement of the socio-economic status of some special school pupils is noted by the INTO which states that a significant number of special school pupils come from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds (I.N.T.O., 2003f).
2.5.2 School Facilities

2.5.2.a Introduction

An appropriate physical environment and adequate educational facilities contribute to the quality of educational provision, particularly in the case of SEN children who will invariably have additional needs (Avramadis and Norwich, 2002; Bishop, 2001; Chazan, Laing, Shalelton and Jones, 1980; Carter, 2002). The condition and quality of primary schools has been the source of controversy over recent decades with increasing demands for an end to substandard schools. While the minimum requirements for school accommodation and amenities are set out in the Department of Education Circular 24/82 (Government of Ireland, 1982b) successive surveys by the INTO have indicated variable levels of accommodation with a significant number of primary schools lacking basic facilities (Government of Ireland, 1990b; I.N.T.O., 1992d, 1997b, 2000b). The growth of inclusive education in Irish schools has also highlighted access issues – where for example Kitchin and Mulcahy (1999) discovered that only 40% of primary schools in Dublin and Kildare were fully accessible. There has been acknowledgement of the problem by the DES when the Inspectorate reported that 50% of schools needed improved accommodation in its review of 50 primary schools (Government of Ireland, 2002e) and continued campaigning by the I.N.T.O. (2003h, 2003i, 2003j) has met with some success. The recent economic growth has witnessed an substantial capital expenditure on government building programme (I.N.T.O., 2004f, 2005i).

2.5.2.b School Accommodation

Limited information is available regarding the standard of accommodation in the special education sector. INTO building surveys (I.N.T.O., 1992d, 1997b, 2000b) identify inadequacies in mainstream accommodation but no mention is made of resource teacher or special class accommodation within these schools. McCarthy (2001) reported that 87.5% of resource teachers had a separate room in which to teach. Nic Craith (2005) stated that not all resource teachers had adequate accommodation confirming the INTO’s view that many are working in very confined spaces in primary schools.
The earlier small scale study of Curtin and Tulie (1987) indicated that 50% of special school and 66% of special class teachers were not satisfied with classroom accommodation. Recent research by McCarthy and Kenny (2006) reported that special school teachers consider accommodation to “be totally inadequate” (McCarthy and Kenny, 2006, p. 12). The limited literature on the other in-school accommodation facilities namely PE/assembly room, art/craft room, computer room and school library are reviewed below.

The requirement of a primary school to have a PE hall has been addressed in recent years by the provision of General Purpose (GP) rooms by the DES, although Deenihan (1990) has sharply criticised this policy as he argues that many such GP rooms are not suitable for PE activities. Between 1982 and 1997 there appears to be an improvement in primary schools access to PE facilities. In 1982, only 36% had access (I.N.T.O., 1982a) which increased to 49% ten years later (I.N.T.O., 1992d) with a further marginal increase to 51% by 1997 (I.N.T.O., 1997b). However later studies indicate contrasting results with only 45% of primary schools having adequate facilities in 2000 (I.N.T.O., 2006b) and a recent study of school principals confirmed that two thirds stated they had inadequate facilities for PE education (Fahey, Delaney and Gammon, 2005). A somewhat encouraging survey by the INTO revealed that 29% of rural schools and 86% of Dublin primary schools had PE facilities (I.N.T.O., 2004g). However, closer analysis revealed that 60% of Dublin schools’ facilities were inappropriate, inadequate or failed to comply with health and safety guidelines. The lack of adequate PE halls in primary schools is viewed as a significant factor in impeding active participation in this element of the curriculum (I.N.T.O., 2004g, 2005k; Murphy, 2004; Women in Sport, 2004). With regard to the special education sector, Curtin and Tulie (1987) reported that 20% of special classes and 50% of special school teachers had access to PE areas while a larger scale study by the INTO (1986a) reported that 89% of special class teachers had access.

The number of schools with access to a separate art/craft room in mainstream and special schools remains low. Curtin and Tulie’s (1987) study suggested that 80% of special schools and 66% of special classes had no art room. Referring specifically to MGLD special schools, Stevens (1987b) revealed that only 13.6% of such schools had a separate art/craft room.

Schools with special education facilities appear to be better resourced with separate computer room facilities. The INTO (2000b) reported that a quarter (24%) of
mainstream teachers had access to a computer room. These findings were supported by Mulkeen (2004) who confirmed that 28.7% of teachers in primary schools had a computer room. While no findings are available for special classes, research by IATSE (2000) discovered that 59% of resource teachers had a computer room within their schools. An even higher figure of 66% was reported for all categories of special school by Jackson and O'Callaghan (2003).

Finally, little data is available on the provision of library facilities. The available data is difficult to analyse as the term ‘library’ can be interpreted as a designated room with books or a collection of library books distributed throughout the school. Earlier surveys stating that 64% (I.N.T.O., 1982) and 66% (I.N.T.O., 1993b) had school libraries are more likely referring to the latter interpretation. Later studies indicated that a quarter (24%) of National schools reported having a separate library (I.N.T.O., 1997b, 2000b). Kitchin and Mulcahy’s (1999) study of schools in Dublin and Kildare indicated that 81.6% of schools had access to a school library.

Referring to special schools, Stevens (1987b) reported that 45.7% had a school library. This corresponds with 43% quoted by Brennan (1979) for comparable schools in England. No recent studies indicate information on library facilities for special schools or special classes.

2.5.2.c General Amenities

Information regarding school amenities of toilet facilities, school office and staffroom is meagre with very little data pertaining to the special education sector.

Although frequently cited in demands for improved facilities, there is little quantitative data on the adequacy of toilet facilities within the school system. The INTO (1997b) quoted that 39% of teachers reported inadequate pupil facilities as did 20% of special class teachers (I.N.T.O., 1986a).

Successive INTO school surveys have indicated that there has been an increase in the availability of school office and staffroom facilities between 1982 and 2000 as summarised in Table 2.12:
Table 2.12: Percentage of National schools with office and staffroom facilities
1982-2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>School Office</th>
<th>School Staffroom</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>INTO (1982b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>INTO (1992d)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>INTO (1997b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>INTO (2000b)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of schools with adequate staffroom accommodation has grown from 43% to 69% while school office facilities were found in 37% of schools in 2000 compared with just a quarter (25%) of schools in 1982 (I.N.T.O., 1982, 1992d, 1997b, 2000b). Recent research by IPPN (2005b) reported that 45% of primary schools still did not have a school office. No comparative data is available for special schools or special classes.

2.5.2.d Classroom Facilities

This subsection briefly reviews the classroom facilities of sink and running water, internet access, display area, electrical power points.

There has been a substantial increase in the number of National schools with running water in classrooms. In 1982, only 36% reported this facility (I.N.T.O., 1982) increasing to 55% ten years later (I.N.T.O., 1992d). By 1997, 61% of primary teachers reported having running water (I.N.T.O., 1997b). Access among special education teachers was higher. Curtin and Tulie (1987) reported a small number of special teachers without this facility while the INTO (1986c) reported 66% of special class and Stevens (1987b) reported 72% of special school teachers having access to running water within their classrooms.

Information on other classroom facilities is scant. Only 30.1% of National schools reported internet access within the class (Mulkeen, 2004) with a tiny minority accessing the internet by broadband (I.P.P.N., 2005b). A small number of special class and special school teachers expressed dissatisfaction with classroom display facilities (Curtin and Tulie, 1987; Stevens, 1987b). Finally, no current data indicates schools satisfaction with electrical power points within schools with the exception of a 20 year
old study by the INTO (1982b) which reported that three quarters (75%) of teachers were satisfied with this facility.

2.5.2.e Physical Environment

Table 2.13 illustrates information available regarding the perceived adequacy of heating, ventilation and electric lighting facilities within mainstream National schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Adequate Heating System</th>
<th>Adequate Ventilation System</th>
<th>Adequate Electric Lighting</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>INTO (1982b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>INTO (1992d)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>INTO (1997b)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In general there appears to be reasonable levels of satisfaction among teachers. The INTO list of 170 substandard schools does note that 30% of schools on the list have inadequate heating systems and half (50%) have unsatisfactory ventilation (I.N.T.O., 1993c). Special class teachers in 1986 expressed 72% satisfaction with heating and 94% reported electrical lighting as satisfactory.

2.5.2.f Physical Amenities

The level of storage, the adequacy of space, and the availability of appropriate furniture within schools are topics which have received little attention in research literature. Brennan (1985) and Carter (2002) and Meisals (1979) all argue that adequate space and storage are vital, especially given the additional teaching materials required for teaching SEN pupils (Hodgson, 1985). Brief reference to these amenities is made by McCarthy (2001) who reported that resource teachers had inadequate space and the INTO (2000b) which stated that 48% of primary teachers had inadequate storage facilities. Comparison with the UK suggests that 83% of English special schools and 74% of Northern Ireland’s special schools were satisfied with storage facilities (Swann and
Dwyer, 1983, 1985). No comparable data regarding Irish special schools are readily available.

Just over half (53%) of teachers expressed a need for additional or new furniture in mainstream primary schools (I.N.T.O., 2000b). Evidence suggests that satisfaction among the special education sector was higher in the 1980s. Curtin and Tulie (1987) revealed that the majority of specials school and 80% of special class teachers were satisfied with school furniture. This was slightly higher than the finding of the INTO special class survey which reported 72% satisfaction (I.N.T.O., 1986c). No recent data are forthcoming.

2.5.2.g Outdoor Recreational Facilities

Primary schools have traditionally been served with a hard surface area for recreational purposes and soft play areas to a lesser degree. Concrete, asphalt, and tarmacadam are the favoured surfaces (Andrews and O'Connor, 1980) despite the concerns regarding their safety (F.P.C., 1978). In 1982, 93% of National schools had a hard surface area for recreational activities. However, 25% of schools had an insufficient sized hard play area and a further 25% stated that the surface was unsuitable (I.N.T.O., 1997b). Five years earlier one third of teachers in mainstream primary schools complained of insufficient space (I.N.T.O., 1992d) reiterated a year later by 31% of teachers (I.N.T.O., 1993d) in the 170 identified seriously substandard schools, 14% were reported to have no hard play area whatsoever. No corresponding data have been published describing availability in special schools although Curtin and Tulie’s survey (1987) mentions that all special schools and special classes had access to this facility. Just over half (52.6%) of Northern Ireland’s and 77.8% of England’s special schools were served by this amenity according to Swann and Dwyer (1983).

While grass areas are the most common type of soft play area, there is an increasing number of schools installing alternatives including rubber matting, or bark mulch. Although Andrews and O’Connor (1980) cite specific examples of soft play areas in individual special schools, no comprehensive recent data are available. Similarly information regarding availability of access to playing fields is equally unavailable.
2.5.3 Educational Resources

2.5.3a Introduction

One of the recurring themes in Irish special education literature is the resourcing of schools in order to appropriately meet the needs of pupils. As provision has grown there have been parallel requests to adequately resource the special and mainstream sectors. Despite calls form teachers (I.A.T.S.E., 2000, 2001, 2002; I.N.T.O., 1988c, 1991b, 1991d, 1997a), parents (Colgan, 1998, 1990), and voluntary organisations (N.A.M.H.I., 1984; N.F.V.B., 2006), little effort has been made to quantify exactly the level of resources, teachers' perceptions of availability and adequacy, and teachers' perceived resource needs across the three models of provision for MGLD pupils.

Historically, it has been perceived that special schools were better equipped and resourced than their mainstream counterparts (Brennan, 1979) and this also appears to have been the case also in Ireland (Glennane, 1981; P.S.I., 1981). A number of factors were responsible for this inequity including centralisation of resources in one location, the financial contribution of religious orders managing special schools, and the fundraising capabilities of such schools. Special schools would argue that the Department of Education's reduction in grant aid in the 1990s (I.N.T.O., 1990d, 1999a) has affected the positive resourcing of special schools. Indeed recent anecdotal evidence indicates that there is considerable variation between individual special schools in terms of resources and the INTO has called for more equitable system of funding within the special school sector (I.N.T.O., 2003f) – a sentiment echoed by McCarthy and Kenny (2006).

The need for adequate materials are acknowledged as a key element of successful inclusion (Centre and Ward, 1987; Le Roy and Simpson, 1996) and considered vital by Walter-Thomas et al (2000). Irish literature has supported this view and the operation of under-resourced integrated/inclusive practices is considered as unjust and unfair (I.N.T.O., 1993b, 2003k; O'Toole, 1993). In the view of the INTO, each mainstream and resource teacher should be in a position to access the required resources (I.N.T.O., 2000a) prior to integration/inclusion (I.N.T.O., 2005c).

Teacher surveys have indicated that over half of mainstream teachers were dissatisfied with resources with 58% expressing dissatisfaction in 1992 (I.N.T.O.,
1992d) and 55% in 2000 (I.N.T.O., 2000b). O'Sullivan (2004a) observes that the resource requirements of the revised *Primary Curriculum* (Government of Ireland, 1999g) will further stretch resource provision. Levels of dissatisfaction among resource teachers were discovered to be higher than those of their mainstream colleagues with 75% (I.A.T.S.E., 2000, 2001) and 81% of resource teachers (McCarthy, 2001) expressed dissatisfaction with teaching resources, resulting in calls to increase grant allocations to resource teachers as a matter of urgency (I.N.T.O., 2003g). No information is forthcoming regarding special school and special class teachers’ perceptions of the adequacy of resources.

The next sub-section of the review examines the limited data available on the availability and adequacy of curricular materials and audio-visual and office equipment across the MGLD special education sector. In addition, the funding of pupils’ books and stationary is discussed briefly.

### 2.5.3.b Curricular Materials

Despite continuous requests for increased and improved educational materials, it is difficult to estimate teachers’ actual levels of satisfaction within schools with the absence of research. In fact, there is little research evidence to suggest that teachers are unhappy with resources available to them to teach core elements of the curriculum. Curtin and Tulie’s minor study reported that 90% of special school and 84% of special class teachers were satisfied with resources for the teaching of reading (Curtin and Tulie, 1987). In relation to mathematics resources, they claimed that 100% of special school and 71% of special class teachers were satisfied with materials. A more recent survey by the INTO in 2004 claimed that 79% of the mainstream teaching population was content with resources available for mathematics education (I.N.T.O., 2006d).

Special education teachers appear to have a more favourable allocation of resources than their mainstream colleagues in other areas of the curriculum. There has been official recognition that mainstream schools do not have adequate access to materials for the teaching of art activities (Government of Ireland, 1984c, 2002e) corroborated by NPCP (1990) and an INTO survey of mainstream teachers which confirmed that only 45% of teachers had adequate materials (I.N.T.O., 1997b). In contrast, 80% of special class teachers expressed satisfaction along with 100% of special school teachers (Curtin and Tulie, 1997) while Stevens (1987b) found that three
quarters (75.5%) of special school teachers expressed satisfaction with art and craft materials.

A similar pattern is observed in relation to resources for music and physical education. The need for increased music materials in Irish primary schools is highlighted by the INTO (1993b), NCCA (1990), and O’Flynn (1990). Mainstream teachers expressed satisfaction in just 48% (Desmond, 1988) and 32% of cases (I.N.T.O., 1997b). In contrast, Curtin and Tulie (1987) suggest that 84% of special school teachers had adequate music education resources. The paucity of resources for physical education has been charted by a series of INTO surveys with satisfaction levels varying from 28% to 33% (I.N.T.O., 1982, 1992d, 1997b, 2000b) with an even lower 20% reported by Deenihan (1990). Special school teachers fared better with 90% satisfaction reported by Curtin and Tulie (1997) and 70% by Deenihan (1990).

Substantially more research exists on the resources available to teachers for the implementation of ICT within schools. The need for appropriate resources has been discussed by Costello (1988), Cox (1994), EADSNE (2001), Florian and Hegarty (2004), Gallagher (2001), Holland (1997), NCTE (2001) continuously re-enforced by the INTO (I.N.T.O., 1993b, 1996a, 1999a, 1999b, 2002d) and the IPPN (I.P.P.N., 2005c). The recent growth in access to computer hardware and software can be attributed to the nationwide schools IT 2000 programme (Conway, 2000) with specific support for the special education sector (N.C.T.E., 2000a, 2000b). Back in the 1980’s special schools teachers reported access to computer hardware as follows: 69% (Sheehan), 52% (Stevens, 1987b) and 66% (Curtin and Tulie, 1987) with Murphy (1991) cautioning that distribution was not uniform nationally. Post Schools IT 2000, 91.2% of teachers had access (Mulkeen, 2004) with 100% access reported by Jackson and O’Callaghan (2003), distributed as follows: 66% in class access; 14% with a computer room; and, 20% access in other areas. Jackson and O’Callaghan (2003) also report that special schools had 20% more favourable computer allocation than mainstream schools.

Table 2.14 on page 77 outlines the steady increase in primary schools access to ICT between 1986 and 2000 with three quarters (75%) of teachers reporting adequate access in 2000. Mulkeen (2003) noted that boys’ schools were better equipped but the girls’ schools had more access with designated disadvantaged schools having the greatest computer allocation (Mulkeen, 2003, 2004). No data exist regarding special
class teachers’ perceptions of access but resource teachers were reported to have 88% access (Healy, 2001) and 90.5% access by O’Connor (2000).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Reported Access</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>INTO (1986a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>Sheehan (1987)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>INTO (1992d)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>INTO (1994)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>INTO (1997)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>Mulkeen (2004)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There appears to be significantly less satisfaction with the availability of appropriate computer software. Only a quarter (25%) of mainstream teachers (Kitchin and Mulcahy, 1999) and three quarters (76%) of special school teachers expressed complete satisfaction with software resources within their schools (O’Callaghan and Jackson, 2003).

2.5.3.3 Audio-Visual and Duplication Equipment

Little information is available regarding equipment in mainstream and special schools. Referring specifically to projection equipment, slide projections were available in the large majority of schools (88%) in 1992 (I.N.T.O., 1992d). Overhead projectors were reported in 100% of special schools (Curtin and Tulie, 1987), 48% of special classes (Curtin and Tulie, 1987; I.N.T.O., 1986a) and 38% of National schools (I.N.T.O., 1982). There appears to be no current information forthcoming on the availability of data projection equipment within primary and special schools.

In relation to audio-visual equipment, practically all schools had access to tape recorders: 100% of special schools (Curtin and Tulie, 1987), 97% (I.N.T.O., 1986a) and 93% of special classes (Curtin and Tulie, 1987) and 94% of National schools (I.N.T.O., 1982, 1992d). Surprisingly, more recent research by Kitchin and Mulcahy (1999) found
that only 23% of schools had a tape-recorder perhaps indicating increasing teacher preference for CD players. However, that same study reported that less than a fifth (17%) had access to CD players (Kitchin and Mulcahy, 1999).

Finally, 10% of schools had a photocopier in 1982 (I.N.T.O., 1982) which had increased to 82% within ten years (I.N.T.O., 1992d).

The ability to discuss and contrast access and availability of equipment with the mainstream and special education sectors is hampered by the absence of comprehensive and up-to-date data.

2.5.3.d Funding of Pupils’ Materials

The capitation and other DES grants are not sufficient to sustain the administration and maintenance of mainstream and special schools resulting in schools seeking funding from alternative sources. As far back as 1990, 35% of school funding was contributed by parents at primary level (N.P.C.P., 1990) and 91% of schools engaged in fundraising activities (O’Toole, 1990). Research by the INTO in 1997 indicated that the DES capitation grants did not cover basic costs in 47% of schools, 27% operated on an overdraft, and 81% fundraised raising IR£4.5 million in the school year 1995/96.

Recent research by O’Sullivan (2004a) suggests that 85% of mainstream primary schools seek a voluntary contribution each year. The average annual contribution for mainstream schools has been increasing from €20.00 in 2002 (N.P.C.P., 2002) to €53.50 (N.P.C.P., 2003) with the most recent reported average annual contribution at €60.00 (N.P.C.P., 2005). The National Parents Council - Primary estimates that approximately 63% of parents comply with schools’ requests for an annual contribution. No data are available regarding the number of special schools seeking annual voluntary contribution, the amounts requested, or parental response.

2.5.4 Special Education Teaching Body

The number of primary teachers employed in National schools increased by 9.9% from 21,150 to 23,285 between 1989 and 2004 (Government of Ireland, 1999a, 2005a). In that same period the special education sector increased significantly from 5.5% to nearly a quarter (23%) of the total teaching force (Government of Ireland, 1999a, 2005a). This section of the literature review is concerned with six areas namely teacher
gender, teaching experience, initial teacher education, qualifications, employment conditions and in-career education which are addressed in the following subsections.

2.5.4.a Teacher Gender

Table 2.15 illustrates the changes in teacher gender in National schools which have occurred over the period of this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
<td>76.1%</td>
<td>Government of Ireland (1990c)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>82.4%</td>
<td>Government of Ireland (2005a)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The trend whereby the number of male teachers employed continues to drop is a source of serious concern among educationalists (Drudy, Martin, Woods and Flynn, 2002; Government of Ireland, 2005d) mirroring an international trend (Coolahan, 2003; I.N.T.O., 2005h). This annual drop in male teachers is attributed to five primary causes by the I.N.T.O. (2004h, 2005h):

- Traditional attitudes to male/female roles
- Ending of the gender quota system in colleges of education
- Growing diversity of career opportunities
- The Irish language requirement
- Role models and stereotypes

In 2004, only 10% of BEd students in colleges of education were male (Government of Ireland, 2005d) and the INTO (2005h) contends that if this decline remains unchecked, there will be no male teachers in Irish National Schools by 2035.

The gender profile of the special education sector remains unresearched except in the case of resource teachers. The number of male resource teachers remains lower than the mainstream population at 10% (Costello, 1997). Later studies reported 13% male resource teachers (I.A.T.S.E., 2000, 2001; McCarthy, 2001).
2.5.4.b Teaching Experience

Teaching experience is an important aspect influencing the level of a teacher's professional functioning (Nash, 1973) and in the formation of positive teacher attitudes (Harisymiw and Hone, 1979). The 1965 Commission of Inquiry on Mental Handicap recommended that teachers in special schools and special classes should teach initially for a number of years in regular National schools (Government of Ireland, 1965). A review of the limited research confirms that this has occurred.

Referring to the total teaching experience of the special education sector, a minor study by Westman and O’Breacháin (1985) reported that a third (34%) had taught for less than 10 years, a further 15% taught for 11 to 15 years and the remaining 37% for 15 years or longer. However, the 1981 report by St. Michael’s House reported that 64% of special class teachers had less than 10 years experience (St Michael’s House, 1981). Stevens (1987b) on the other hand, found that 43% of special school teachers had less than 10 years experience. More recently, resource teachers were reported to have the least teaching experience with 81% having less than 10 years experience (I.A.T.S.E., 2000) which compares unfavourably with Northern Ireland where resource teachers in the same range have an average of 20.2 years (Winter and Kilpatrick, 1999).

Referring specifically to the number of years employed in special education, the reported level of teacher experience is more varied across the three levels of provision. Forty two percent of teachers in special schools had taught for less than 9 years (Stevens, 1987b) while special class teachers were less experienced with just under three quarters (73%) having less than 6 years special education experience (St. Michael’s House, 1981). Even less special education experience was reported among resource teachers where three quarters (76%) had less than 2 years experience (McCarthy, 2001) with IATSE stating that 83% had taught for less than 2 years (I.A.T.S.E., 2001).

2.5.4.c Initial Teacher Education

Data is scant regarding the initial teacher training of teachers employed across the three forms of provision in the special education sector. The DES stated it was not in a position to provide information on:

- Colleges of education attended by special education teachers
• The number of primary, secondary, Montessori trained and untrained teachers employed in special education in 1989 and 2004
• The number of unqualified personnel employed as teachers in the special education sector. The INTO is concerned about unqualified personnel being employed in schools (I.N.T.O., 2005j)
• Colleges of education attended by teachers employed in the education sector

Teachers trained outside Ireland were appointed to special schools with few restrictions until August 1981 as teachers unable to teach Irish were not permitted to be employed in regular National Schools. Special education therefore was the only sector within which foreign trained primary teachers could be employed, with the exception of private primary schools. While 78% of special class teachers were trained in Ireland (I.N.T.O., 1986c) the figure was even less (61%) in special schools reported in two separate studies (Stevens, 1987b; Westman and O’Brien, 1985). These teachers were not entitled to the same employment conditions as their Irish-trained colleagues as detailed in the next section 2.5.4.d.

2.5.4.d Teacher Qualifications

Teachers seeking employment in primary education require a BEd degree or if trained before 1972, an NT qualification. The recently innovated Graduate Diploma in Primary Education and certain types of Montessori training are also acceptable. DES conditions and procedures for the recognition of teachers trained outside the State, including those to whom EU directive 89/48/EEC applies, are set out in DES Circular 25/00 (Government of Ireland, 2000k). Anecdotal evidence suggests that special schools employ a greater number of teachers who have received their qualification outside the State. (I.N.T.O., 1997a). However, no current research reveals the primary qualification profile of teachers in the special education sector.

Referring specifically to postgraduate special education qualifications, the most established qualification is the Diploma for Teachers of the Mentally and Physically Handicapped, more commonly known as the Diploma in Special Education which was a one year full-time course provided by St Patrick’s College of Education in Dublin, which has recently be upgraded to a Masters programme. However, the DES has been sharply criticised as it is not available on a nationwide basis (Nic Craith, 2005) and is
limited to only 25 places annually (I.N.T.O., 2000a). As the number of special education teachers has expanded, there has not been a representative increase in course places and hence the numbers with the diploma has dropped across the three forms of provision. Stevens (1987b) reported that 67% of special school teachers had successfully completed the diploma compared with 54% of special class teachers in 1981 (St. Michael's House, 1981) and only one third (31%) of special class teachers five years later in 1986 (I.N.T.O., 1986a). This downward trend has continued where recent research among resource teachers suggests that only 12.6% of them had undertaken the diploma (Costello, 1997). Little data appears to be available regarding other special education qualifications. However, IATSE (2000) reported that 15% of resource teachers had an alternative special education qualification and 21% a remedial (LS) qualification.

2.5.4.e Employment Conditions

The appointment of a teacher to a permanent teaching post confers automatic redeployment rights in another school should his or her post become suppressed. There is no information on whether teachers in MGLD settings have selected special education as a career choice or simply because a permanent post is available. However Ware, Julian, and McGee (2005) found evidence that teachers in severe and profound GLD schools had taken up posts simply because they were of permanent status.

Details of regulations regarding diocesan panel arrangements were originally outlined in Rule 97 of Rules for National Schools with a number of subsequent alterations being invoked by the DES. Prior to 1992, special school and special class teachers who did not qualify to teach mainstream (primarily due to the lack of an Irish qualification) were not entitled to redeployment rights (I.N.T.O., 1982, 1990d). Negotiations between the DES and the INTO (I.N.T.O., 1983b, 1986b, 1988e, 1989b) culminated in the establishment of a National Special Panel operating in parallel to the main diocesan panel (Government of Ireland, 1992b; I.N.T.O., 1992b, 1992e). In 1996 a further revision of Rule 97 (1) enhanced redeployment opportunities for temporary teachers provided they meet certain criteria (Government of Ireland, 1996b). Information is lacking across the three models of provision in relation to:
The numbers in permanent/temporary teaching posts in 1989 and 2004
The numbers of teachers employed with mainstream panel and special panel redeployment rights
The numbers of teachers who selected posts simply for their permanency rather than a desire to work in special education

2.5.4.f Inservice Education

The provision of appropriate inservice education has been identified as a key underpinning element of successful special educational provision (Bowman, 1986; Government of Ireland, 1965, 2003b; I.N.T.O., 1983a, 1986a, 1991a, 1991b, 1991d). However, the general provision of inservice education in Ireland has been sharply criticised. In the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s pleas for a comprehensive inservice provision (Burke, 1988; C.C.P.S.I., 1975; N.C.C.A., 1990; N.C.P.P., 1987) met with limited official response. Available data on teachers' views of the adequacy of inservice training structures reveal little change over the period 1989-2004. Earlier studies showed that 81% of special school teachers were very dissatisfied with levels of inservice training with 40% of teachers attending some form of training (Stevens, 1987b). An earlier study of special class teachers described how 92% stated that they needed inservice training as a matter of urgency (St. Michael's House, 1981). Equally, surveys of resource teachers (Costello, 1997; I.A.T.S.E., 2000, 2001) reported low levels of satisfaction with access to opportunities for professional development. More recently the inclusion of MGLD pupils in mainstream has prompted requests for inservice training for mainstream teachers as a matter of urgency (Frawley, 1999; I.N.T.O., 2005c; O’Shea, 2003). Corcoran (1995) confirmed that 97% of mainstream teachers had no training whatsoever in special education. The INTO summarised the situation in 2003 as:

“...an appalling lack of professional development opportunities for teachers in special education.”

(I.N.T.O., 2003f, p.5)

Despite the obvious levels of dissatisfaction among teachers, there has been little attempt to quantify the level of teacher attendance at inservice courses. However,
limited research tells of teachers’ identified needs for inservice. Courses addressing challenging behaviour (Kelly et al, 2004) use of IEPs and implementation of NCCA guidelines (N.F.V.B., 2006), have been requested by special school teachers. In Costello’s (1997) study, resource teachers identified their inservice needs as follows: use of IEP (27%), different categories of disability (13%), curricular implementation (13%) and behaviour modification programmes (9%). The DES has responded to the lack of access to postgraduate training (Government of Ireland, 2003g) by extending its availability to other locations (Government of Ireland, 2005e, 2005f, 2005g, 2005h). However, there is still a need for state recognised postgraduate online modular or long-distance courses as suggested by INTO (2003g) and IPPN (2003f). There is a clear absence of comparative data illustrating teachers’ attendance and perceived inservice needs over the period 1989 to 2004.

2.5.5 In-school Support Services

2.5.5.a Special Needs Assistants (SNAs)

The role of special needs assistants (SNAs) has been well defined internationally (Clayton, 1993; Jerwood, 1999; Lacey, 2001; Moran and Abbott, 2002; Muijs and Reynolds, 2003; Woolfe, 1988). In Ireland, special needs assistants, previously known as childcare assistants, were first officially introduced to assist MMH pupils in special schools in the school year 1979/80 with the creation of 70 posts (O’Mordha, 1980). A subsequent governmental embargo on public service sector appointments resulted in a drop in provision (I.N.T.O., 1990d) followed by a campaign by the INTO to rectify the issue (I.N.T.O., 1989a, 1991f). The 1990s witnessed a steady but slow increase in SNA appointments (I.N.T.O., 1999b, 2000a) but the historical ‘automatic entitlement’ to resources introduced by the government in Circular M08/99 (Government of Ireland, 1999b) was to initiate a massive expansion in SNA provision. Within a very short period, the number of SNAs had grown to 5,400 in 2003 (Bergin, 2005) to 6,000 by 2005 (Nic Craith, 2005) although recent anecdotal evidence suggests the DES is attempting to curb this growth.

There has been a growing body of research examining the work of SNAs in Irish schools (Allen, 2006; Bergin, 2004; Carrig, 2004; Craig, 2006; Costello, 1999). It emerges that there is general acceptance that the current defined role is limited and
needs to be expanded (Kenny et al, 2006; Nic Craith, 2005). In addition, Lawlor and Cregan (2003), Garner (2002), Doyle (2004), and O'Driscoll (2005) argue that the issue teacher/SNA collaboration needs to be explored further, as does the issue of collaboration with school principals (I.P.P.N., 2005e).

Official information regarding SNA allocation to schools is unavailable at present. Neither is data available regarding how SNA personnel are distributed in terms of pupil disability category. Early research in special schools reported that 42% of teachers have assistance of an SNA in 1981 (N.A.B.M.S.S., 1981b) and six years later the figure stood at 33% (many of whom were part-time) (Curtin and Tulie, 1987). Evidence from this period suggests that special classes were less likely to have support of SNAs as reported by Curtin and Tulie (1978) [0% SNAs] and the INTO (1986c) [7% SNAs]. More recent research among resource teachers found that 31% of resource pupils had services of an SNA but no indication is given regarding pupils’ categories of disability.

It is not possible to ascertain SNA allocation to MGLD pupils in special schools and classes in 1989 and in the three models of provision in 2004.

2.5.5.b Secretarial and Caretaking Services

Provision of clerk typists in schools was established by Circular 15/78 (Government of Ireland, 1978) but this scheme was disbanded five years later by Circular 19/03 (Government of Ireland, 1983b). Schools had little choice but to employ secretaries and caretakers through Social Employment Schemes (SES) operated by the national manpower agency FÁS - a move sharply criticised by the INTO (I.N.T.O., 1990c, 1990e, 1990f, 1990g, 1990h). Despite criticism of this unsatisfactory system (I.N.T.O., 1993b), this situation remained unchanged until a period of increased expenditure in education prompted primarily by the economic boom of the 1990s. Circulars 03/00 and 27/00 (Government of Ireland, 2000l, 2001m) established a new system whereby a prorata grant system pays an annual ancillary services grant to schools who then employ secretarial and caretaking personnel. The conditions of the scheme were further enhanced by Circulars 21/01 and 01/03 (Government of Ireland, 2001c, 2003h).

Table 2.16 page 86 illustrates the reported numbers of National schools with secretarial and caretaking personnel between 1982 and 1997.
Table 2.16: No. of National schools employing secretaries and caretakers 1982-1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Secretary</th>
<th>Caretaker</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>INTO (1982b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>INTO (1992d)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>INTO (1997d)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Firstly, a greater number of National schools employed caretakers than secretaries. Secondly there was an increase in the number of secretaries and caretakers employed between 1982 and 1997. No indication is given whether these figures reflect full-time or part-time positions. Minimal research evidence suggests that special schools were better served than National schools with secretaries (68%) (N.A.B.M.S.S., 1978). Since the establishment of the ancillary services grants (Government of Ireland, 2000l, 2000m, 2001c, 2003h) schools make their own arrangements regarding secretarial and caretaking personnel. Therefore the DES has no records regarding the distribution of these personnel across the three forms of provision.

2.5.5.c Support Teachers

The employment of specialist teachers is a trend which is primarily found in special schools and special classes and no recent research reveals trends relating to the employment of specialist teachers. However, earlier studies suggest varied results: NABMSS (1978): [46% part-time], Stevens (1987b) [6.2%], and Curtin and Tulie (1987) [67% part-time]. No data are available regarding the availability of specialist teachers in National schools with special classes and resource teachers or duties to which they were assigned.

Traditionally, remedial teachers, who are more recently referred to as learning support teachers, have not officially provided services to MGLD pupils. However, a 1981 survey of special classes discovered that 81% of special class pupils also attended the remedial teacher (St. Michael’s House, 1981). Learning support teachers constitute 10% of the total teaching population (Colgan, 1998) with 70% of pupils having access (Kitchin and Mulcahy, 1999). Under the terms of the GAM, all MGLD pupils will
attend learning support teachers instead of resource teachers (Government of Ireland, 2005a).

Finally, additional support teachers are available to schools under the various disadvantaged schemes alluded to in Section 2.5.1.h. Despite reviews of the schemes (Archer and Weir, 2004; Weir and Archer, 2004) no details of the distribution of support teachers in National schools with special classes and resource teachers are forthcoming.

2.5.6 External Support Services

2.5.6.a Introduction

Both Norwich (1983) and Roaf (2001) emphasise the vital part played by external support services in the provision of special education. In the Irish context, this includes psychological services, speech and language therapy, social work and a variety of paramedical supports. Key policy publications and research has criticised the level of these services over the last two decades (Colgan, 1998; I.N.T.O., 1981a, 1986b, 1992f 2003f; Frawley, 1999; Government of Ireland, 2003b; N.F.V.B., 2006).

Traditionally, it is perceived that special schools had better access to external support services while research in special classes indicates that 71% had access (Dunne, 1993) and only 53% of resource pupils reported access to a variety of support services. The following subsections examine these different services in more detail.

2.5.6.b Schools’ Psychological Service

Ireland’s earliest psychological services to schools were initiated by the Department of Health and WHO in 1952 (McKenna, 1986) followed shortly after by the establishment of a psychological service in 1960 by the Dublin VEC (O’Connor and Walshe, 1982) which provided a service to its schools from 1963 (O’Doherty and Chamberlain, 1969).

The Department of Education’s psychological service founded in 1965 was confined to post-primary schools only (O’Connor, 1980). Psychological services to those with special education were slow to develop in Ireland (Bishop, 1991; Chamberlain, 1985) with provision being made by psychologists employed by guidance clinics, health boards and voluntary organisations (Halliday, 1996, O’Connell and
McConkey, 1981; McConkey and O’Connell, 1982). The great majority of these psychologists were not educational but clinical psychologists (McLoone, 1988) who didn’t see supporting special needs teachers as part of their role (McGee, 1990). According to Oakland and Saigh (1987) Ireland had one of the lowest psychologist/pupil ratios in Europe.

The lack of official psychological service to schools resulted in limited access to services for schools with repeated calls for the establishment of a designated school-based service (C.P.S.M.A., 1997; I.N.T.O., 1986b, 1989a; Murchan and O’Reilly, 1994; N.A.M.H.I., 1983; O.E.C.D., 1991; P.S.I., 1974, 1981, 1985; Swan, 1992). A pilot project established in 1990 in Tipperary and Dublin (Walshe and O’Gorman, 1990) proved successful (Swan, 2004) and was the fore-runner of the establishment of the present service, namely the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), in 1999. Continued widespread dissatisfaction among teachers was noted in the period 1990-1999 (Frawley, 1999; Government of Ireland, 1990b; I.N.T.O., 1991a, 1991b, 1992e). While the creation of such a service was welcomed (C.P.S.M.A., 2001d; Government of Ireland, 2000n), it has not been without problems. Initial induction, acquisition of regional office facilities and difficulty in recruitment have all hindered the smooth development of the service (N.E.P.S., 2003). The recruitment issue had contributed to NEPS being unable to provide services to primary schools (Dwyer and Grogan, 2002) and has prompted requests to expand third-level training facilities (Government of Ireland, 2002f; N.E.P.S., 2003; Parkinson, 2004) to train an adequate number of educational psychologists to fill vacant posts.

The inability of NEPS to provide a comprehensive nationwide service to schools had resulted in widespread dissatisfaction with the INTO demanding a proper comprehensive service at each of its annual teacher conferences between 2000 and 2004 (I.N.T.O., 2004j). While NEPS contended that it provides services to 62% schools and 79% of pupils nationwide (Crowley, 2004; N.E.P.S., 2004), critics describe the service as totally inadequate (Carr, 2004; I.N.T.O., 2005d, 2006e) and suggest that it will be seriously unable to fulfill its duties in terms of the EPSEN Act (O’Sullivan, 2004d). The unavailability of NEPS psychological assessments for pupils has resulted in long waiting lists in special schools (N.F.V.B., 2006) and delays in pupils accessing resources (Flatman-Watson, 2005, 2006). This in turn had meant that concerned parents have financed private psychological assessments (O’Sullivan, 2004d; Kenny et al, 2006) creating inequality among the MGLD school-going population.
In response to the huge demand for psychological assessments caused by the 1998 ‘automatic entitlement’ NEPS did establish a ‘Scheme for Commissioning Private Psychological Assessments’ which permitted schools to contract psychologists in private practice to undertake assessments within schools (C.P.S.M.A., 2001b). The allocation of one annual assessment for schools with less than 50 pupils, two assessments for schools with 50-100 pupils, etc (N.E.P.S., 2003) combined with the unavailability of psychologists in private practice in remote rural areas, has not adequately addressed the difficulties facing schools (I.N.T.O., 2005d).

Research describing teachers’ access to psychological services pre and post the establishment of NEPS has produced varied results. Special schools in 1978 reported that 74% access (N.A.B.M.S.S., 1978) while Curtin and Tulie (1987) described how only half (50%) of special schools surveyed had access. Post NEPS figures showed that in Intellectual Disability special schools had 69% access to clinical and 76% access to educational psychologists (Kelly et al, 2004). Kenny et al (2006) also reported ‘limited access’ to psychology services in special schools.

Reported access by special classes has been even more limited. In 1979, 53% of special class teachers described services as ‘inadequate’ (N.R.B., 1979) while a survey conducted in 1981 indicated that 70% had access but experienced long waiting lists and just 16% were satisfied with the service (St. Michael’s House, 1981). This was in line with Curtin and Tulie’s (1987) findings which reported 20% of special class teachers expressing satisfaction. No further information is available on special class access since the establishment of NEPS.

With reference to mainstream National schools, resource teachers were found to have expressed satisfaction with psychological services in 52% of cases (Costello, 1997). Bates’s study (1993b) which was undertaken before the establishment of NEPS described how 61% of mainstream teachers requested increased access in contrast to research in 2006 which reported 70% of teachers had access to NEPS (Kenny et al, 2006). However, Enright (2003) cautioned that the NEPS network of services nationwide was unevenly distributed with schools having access in 71% of schools in the Midwest, 57% in the North-West, and just 44% in the Midlands. This varied geographical coverage was confirmed by NFVB (2006) three years later.

2.5.6.c Speech and Language Therapy Service
Ireland’s speech and language therapy (SLT) services began to develop in the 1950s (S.I.G.S.T.M.H., 1989) and grew slowly to a workforce of 70 therapists by 1979 (I.A.S.L.T., 1993, 1998). Within ten years there were 250 speech therapists divided equally between Health Board services and voluntary organisations catering for special educational needs (Browne, 1989). Earlier Irish studies suggested that 3% of all school-going pupils required services (Collins, 1978; Supple, 1980) while SIGSTMH (1989) contended that 87% of MMH pupils required some level of therapy. In 1989, speech and language therapists spent 39.5% of their time working in special schools and preschools (S.I.G.S.T.M.H., 1989).

In the ten year period 1989 and 1999, there was only a marginal increase in posts from 250 (Browne, 1989) to 277 (Walsh, 1999) despite a huge increase in the demand for services (I.N.T.O., 2001b, 20031, 2003m). This lack of growth of speech and language therapy services has been attributed to crises in recruitment caused by remuneration and promotion difficulties combined with greater employment opportunities abroad (C.L.P.A.I, 2002).

As special educational provision evolves, there has been increasing demands for an expanded comprehensive nationwide service serving all MGLD pupils (Becton, 1998; C.P.S.M.A., 2001b, 2002; I.N.T.O., 1991b, 1991c, 1993a, 2001a; Kelly et al, 2004; N.D.A., 2005a; N.E.P.S., 2000; N.F.V.B., 2006; O'Connor, 2004) prompted primarily by perceived inadequacy of services and difficulty in accessing therapy. Table 2.17 illustrates the number of special school teachers expressing satisfaction with speech and language therapy services between 1981 and 2004.

Table 2.17: Percentage of special school teachers expressing satisfaction with speech and language therapy services 1981-2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>% Satisfied</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>NABMSS (1981a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>Curtin and Tulie (1987)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>Kelly et al. (2004)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The studies quoted suggest that access to SLT services improved during this period.

Special class pupils’ access to SLT services was not as comparable to special schools with much lower access reported. Curtin and Tulie (1987) recorded 27% access and Dunne (1993) found that a fifth (21%) of pupils had adequate service. A
marginally higher access of 39% was reported for resource pupils (I.N.T.O., 1997a). The advent of inclusive education and increased MGLD population in mainstream education has further highlighted the urgent need for a comprehensive service (I.N.T.O., 2003m, 2003n; McCarthy, 1999; O’Connor, 2004; Walsh, 1999).

2.5.6.d Social Work Services

The role of the social work service in special educational provision has been defined by Oliver (1983) and Blyth and Milner (1997). Ireland’s earliest provision dates back to 1917 (Gilligan, 1990) with social workers working primarily in hospitals until the 1960s (Darling, 1972). Social work services expanded considerably in the 1970s and 1980s (O’Connor, 1987) mainly employed through the health boards, and to a lesser degree working with voluntary and religious organizations managing special schools. The work of social workers in Irish special schools is discussed by Murphy (1980) and Ingoldsby (1993). Very limited data exists on social work access although special school teachers gave details of higher access than special class colleagues. Special school teachers reported 63% access in 1978 (N.A.B.M.S.S., 1978), 60% access in 1987 (Curtin and Tulie, 1987) and more recently improved access of 90% in 2004 (Kelly et al, 2004). On the other hand, special class teachers reported social worker access in only 17% of cases in 1981 (N.A.B.M.S.S., 1981a) and just 13% of cases in 1987 (Curtin and Tulie, 1987). No current information regarding MGLD pupils’ access to social work services in National schools with resource teachers.

2.5.6.e Other External Support Services

Access to other services including physiotherapy, occupational therapy, psychiatry etc among the MGLD population is unresearched. Special class teachers reported adequate access at 14% in 1981 (N.A.B.M.S.S., 1981a) and 27% in 1987 (Curtin and Tulie, 1987) while more recent research amongst special schools found satisfaction among the majority (62%) of teachers (Kelly et al., 2004).
2.5.6.f Teacher Isolation and Support

Although there is an absence of quantitative data illustrating the level of teacher isolation among the special education sector, there have been suggestions that teachers do experience a sense of isolation (Bates, 1993a; Curtin and Tulie, 1987; I.N.T.O., 2003f) and that inadequate structures are currently in place to prevent this phenomenon (I.N.T.O., 2006b; McCarthy and Kenny, 2006).

While local education centres are attempting to support the special education teaching body (I.N.T.O., 2003g), 61% of resource teachers rated support as poor (I.A.T.S.E., 2000, 2001) and 42% of newly qualified mainstream teachers were dissatisfied with education centre support (Government of Ireland, 2005e). Similarly, the support provided by local area networks considered uneven and many resource teachers reported inaccessibility in remote rural schools (I.N.T.O., 2003g) despite suggestions reporting increased use of such networks (Gains, 1996; I.A.T.S.E., 2002).

Support from professional organisations such as the INTO and IATSE was also reviewed. While the INTO reported that both organisations were endeavouring to support teachers (I.N.T.O., 2003g), 83% of resource teachers did not consider the INTO to be supportive (I.A.T.S.E., 2000).

Finally, no information could be found regarding special educational teachers’ perceptions regarding access to appropriate special education publications.

2.5.7 Pupil Placement

2.5.7.a Pupil Enrolment

No data are available regarding teachers’ perceptions of enrolment procedures and practices concerning MGLD pupils’ transfer from mainstream to special class or special school. Just one minor survey in 1981 mentions teachers receiving pupil reports prior to enrolment. In this case 92% of special class teachers claimed to receive a report from the pupil’s previous teacher but only 35% considered this to be useful (St. Michael’s House, 1981). No details regarding receipt of reports or parental meetings prior to enrolment are available for special school or resource teachers.
2.5.7.b Suitability of Placement

There is no evidence which suggests special class or special school teachers would consider the MGLD pupils they teach to be better placed in one of the other forms of SEN provision. However, one survey of resource teachers in 1997 found that the majority (61%) of pupils they thought were appropriately placed in resource programmes in National schools (Costello, 1997). In the same study 32% claimed 'most', 2% said 'some' and 5% stated that none of their pupils were appropriately placed.

2.5.7.c Pupil Difficulties in Addition to MGLD

There has been growing recognition that special education facilities, especially special schools and special classes, have been accommodating an increasing number of pupils which have other difficulties in addition to MGLD. The INTO contends that:

"Special schools are now expected to cater for pupils with special needs above and beyond the category that the school was set up to deal with...."

(I.N.T.O., 2003f, p.11)

Even as early as 1981, there were indications that special classes had pupils with additional difficulties when the NABMSS (1981a) reported that MMH special class teachers indicated that just under half (47%) were in the MMH category only. This trend has been more prevalent in special schools however where MGLD schools are struggling to make provision for emotional difficulties (I.N.T.O., 2003f), complex learning and medical needs (Rose, 2005) and increasing levels of challenging behaviour (Kelly et al, 2004; Mulrooney, Harold, Rogers and Van Den Berg, 1999; Proctor, 2003). Kelly et al (2004) observed that in all intellectual disability special schools, 70% of boys and 30% of girls presented with challenging behaviour in addition to their intellectual disability. This study also explored levels of disability revealing that 24% of schools had pupils with two categories of disability and 20% had pupils with three or four categories illustrating that a significant number of schools are providing for pupils outside the designated category of the school which they attend. In addition, 12% of non-MGLD special schools cater for MGLD pupils (Kelly et al., 2004).
2.5.7.d Post-Primary Provision

With the evolution of special education provision in the primary sector, there has not been a parallel expansion at post-primary level. While some special schools established post-primary departments within their schools, there has been an acute shortage of second-level placements for special class pupils (Heelan, 2004; I.A.T.S.E., 2004; McGee, 1990; N.A.B.M.S.S., 1981a; N.A.M.H.I., 1984; N.R.B., 1979; Travers, 1984) especially in rural areas (I.N.T.O., 1990b).

The 1998 'automatic entitlement' (Government of Ireland, 1998b) has added greatly to the number of SEN children accessing extra support in primary schools (I.A.T.S.E., 2004). As these pupils transfer to second level, the inadequate level of facilities (A.S.T.I., 2004; Bergin, 2004) has created serious difficulties within these schools (Carr, 2003; I.A.T.S.E., 2004; I.N.T.O., 2005c; N.D.A., 2004).

Recent research by the NFVB (2006) discovered that of 1,363 mainstream pupils availing of services under organisations affiliated to NFVB, 481 transferred from mainstream settings to special schools primarily due to inadequate post-primary provision and lack of pupil support.

2.5.8 Integration and Inclusion

2.5.8.a Policy

While National schools are requested to formulate a policy on provision for SEN pupils within their schools (I.N.T.O., 2000a) and the positive benefits of such practice are extolled by both Ó’Sioráin (1993) and Sharkey (2000), information is scant as to the number of National and special schools which have a policy in place. In 1986, prior to the requirement to formulate a policy, over half (56%) of National schools with special classes had devised a written policy (I.N.T.O., 1986a).
2.5.8.b The Special Class

Although little research has been undertaken into special class integration in the last decade, studies up to then suggest varied levels of integrated activity primarily of a social nature with little structured curricular interaction.

Table 2.18 outlines the reported levels of special class pupil integration with mainstream peers.

Table 2.18: Percentage of special class teachers reporting pupil integration with mainstream peers 1970-1993.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>% Reporting Integration</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>NABMSS (1981a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>NRB (1987)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>NABMSS (1988)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>INTO 1986a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>Curtin &amp; Tulie (1987)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>Dunne (1993)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In general, the reported levels have increased. Closer analysis of one special class study revealed although integration levels of 94% were reported, only 40% were integrated for class activities (I.N.T.O., 1986a). Similarly Dunne’s (1993) study revealed that outings and sports accounted for 88% and 78% of integrated activities respectively, whereas only 15% of teachers stated that pupils were integrated for Maths and English. The greatest curricular integration occurred in PE (46%) although she described 53% of pupils in MMH special classes as isolated (Dunne, 1993). One 1981 survey of special classes not included in Table 2.18 reported the level of integrated activities as follows: P.E (19%), Religious Education (19%), Music (8%), and Drama (8%), Core Curricular Subjects (0%) (St. Michael’s House, 1981). No recent research appears to have addressed special class/mainstream joint activities or the time allocation for such activities.
The issue regarding special class location in relation to other classes is important in terms of inclusiveness and was found to be a critical factor in teacher satisfaction (Ware et al, 2005). In 1981, 12% of special classes were located separately from the rest of the school (St. Michael’s House, 1981) while Dunne (1983) reported 2.2% were located in prefabricated buildings. No recent data on special class location appear to be available.

2.5.8.c Special School/National School Links

While special schools and National schools have co-existed in a parallel fashion, no cohesive structured system linking both forms of provision has been established despite a variety of proposals and pleas for such a structure (Coolahan, 1982; Daultry and McAnaney, 1994; Government of Ireland, 1986c, 1993a; I.N.T.O., 1998, 2000g; N.A.M.H.I., 1984; Ó Murchú, 1985b, 1987). While successful individual links programmes have been described by Shevlin (1998, 2003), Shevlin and O’Moore (1999, 2000a, 2000b), Walsh and de Paor (2000), and Walsh et al. (1996), these initiatives lacked support and operated on the individual schools’ interest and goodwill. Detailed research by Buckley (1999) evaluates links between special schools and National schools revealing that 55% of MGLD special schools had established links with local schools to engage primarily in PE, Art and social activities. Of those schools involved in such links, 22% of National schools used special school facilities for sports. However, despite these findings, Buckley (1999) cautions that only 4% of mainstream schools are involved in linkages with special schools. This low level of contact is confirmed by INTO (2003f), McCarthy and Kenny (2006) and NFVB (2006).

2.5.8.d The Resource Teacher Model

While pupils in special schools and special classes integration/inclusion activities involve being introduced to mainstream peers, pupils attending resource teachers are included in mainstream classes for their majority of their school week. With 90% of teachers favouring the withdrawal model (Costello, 1997) the MGLD pupil leaves the mainstream class to attend the resource teacher for an allocated time per week. Although this arrangement no longer stands since the introduction of the General Allocation Model (Government of Ireland, 2005b) the allocated time for MGLD pupils

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was 2.5 hours per week (Government of Ireland, 1999c). Research by Colgan (1998) suggested that the majority of pupils spent 1-3 hours per week with the resource teacher which was corroborated by McCarthy (2001) who reported that 87.5% of pupils attended the resources teacher for the same period. However, Costello's (1997) study of resource teachers described pupils’ weekly time allocations as follows: 1-3 hours (21%), 4-7 hours (46%), 5 hours + (26%). There has been no published research investigating pupils’ weekly time allocation to attend the resource teacher since the enormous expansion of the resource teacher model since 2001 (Government of Ireland, 2006b).

2.5.9 Curricular Provision

2.5.9.a Curricular Planning

The provision of an appropriate curriculum for SEN children is considered a crucial element of special needs education and curricular planning forms an essential part of that process. The introduction of the newly revised *Primary School Curriculum* (Government of Ireland, 1999g), combined with the introduction of in-school planning structures, has also included planning for SEN pupils. However, the Irish education system does not easily facilitate the planning process as most schools have less than 8 teachers with multi-grade classes (Costello, 1999) and the structure of the school day is not conducive to the planning process (N.C.C.A., 2002). Colgan (1998) confirms this when she stated that curricular planning is solely determined by organisational factors. Perhaps the single key factor hindering comprehensive curricular planning is the lack of time and opportunity for teachers to consult and collaborate (Costello, 1999; I.N.T.O., 1997a; Kennedy, 1994). Reviewing the literature gives little insight into curricular planning practices in special schools and National schools.

Prior to 2002, the DES did not prescribe a set curriculum to the special education sector, resulting in teachers developing new or adopting existing curricula. In 1986, two thirds (66%) of special class teachers devised their own curricula while 67% of special school teachers adopted the then existing 1971 *New Curriculum* (Stevens, 1987b). The NCCA’s 1999 discussion paper on curriculum and SEN (N.C.C.A, 1999) preceded the publication of the NCCA’s *Draft Guidelines For Teachers For Students With Mild General Learning Disabilities* (N.C.C.A., 2002) which was welcomed as a
much needed resource (Nic Craith, 2005) and received positive teacher response (I.N.T.O., 2002d, 2003f). A follow up survey (n=416) MGLD teachers employed in the three models of provision revealed that 49% of teachers considered the guidelines to be an 'excellent' resource (N.C.C.A., 2004). The study also revealed that only half (50%) of special school teachers used the guidelines for planning (N.C.C.A., 2004) confirming the INTO's view that the guidelines were more useful for mainstream teachers rather than special school teachers (I.N.T.O., 2003). However, McCarthy's (2005) study suggested that only 55% of resource teachers use the guidelines with no comparable research indicating usage among special class teachers.

2.5.8.b Curriculum Implementation

The use of the Individual Educational Plan (IEP) has been reviewed in the international context by McCauseland (2005) and is perceived as a curriculum planning strategy which assists SEN pupils in engaging meaningfully in the curricular process (Kennedy, 1994). One key provision of the EPSEN act is that it will provide a legislative basis for the introduction of IEPs in schools. While the newly published comprehensive guidelines on IEPs (N.C.S.E., 2006b) are not yet binding, they will however come into force as a part of the implementation of the EPSEN act in due course (N.C.S.E., 2006c). Information regarding the use IEP across the three models of provision is scant. While Nugent (2002) reported that special teachers were positively disposed towards the use of IEPs, she cautioned that they could become more instruments of accountability rather than a teaching plan and aid. Resource teachers used IEPs in 50% of cases (I.N.T.O., 1997a). Later research by McCarthy (2005) found that 28% of special schools had an IEP policy and 35% of teachers always wrote an IEP. No information regarding what percentage of special class teachers used IEPs is available. Finally one interesting point emerging from the Costello study (1997) was that a fifth (21%) of resource teachers rarely consulted mainstream class teachers regarding the individual programmes of individual pupils attending resource. This is now clearly against the principles of the staged approach advocated by the DES in Circulars (2003c, 2005b).
2.5.9.c Collaboration and Consultation

The need for allocated time for teachers to consult with colleagues has been well documented internationally. (Creasey and Walther-Thomas, 1996; Diebold and von Echenbach, 1991; Myles and Simpson, 1989; Semmel, Abernathy, Butera and Lesar, 1991). In the case of SEN pupils research has indicted that inadequate time for planning can be a barrier to successful integration (Bauwens, Hourcade and Friend, 1989; Idol and West, 1987; Nowacek, 1992). This need has also been highlighted in the Irish context (Costello, 1999; I.N.T.O., 1997a; Kennedy, 1994; Kenny et al, 2006) with an identified lack of formal structures to facilitate planning (I.N.T.O., 2000g). McCarthy (2001) contended that among resource teachers time is spent on issues concerning pupil progress rather than planning while Costello (1997) found 55% of resource teachers spent just 10 minutes a week on teacher consultation. The DES Inspectorate commented on the low level of opportunities for teachers to plan in primary schools (Government of Ireland, 2002e) but makes no recommendation regarding improving these circumstances.

Comprehensive information regarding the time spent on planning and collaboration in special schools and National schools does not appear to be readily available.

2.5.9.d DES Support

The literature indicates that teachers in the special education sector perceive a shortage of DES inspectors to offer advice on curricular matters (I.N.T.O., 2003f). Special class teachers reported very poor inspectorate support (Travers, 1984) as did teachers employed in P & S MGLD schools (Ware et al, 2005).

Table 2.19 illustrates the various studies reviewed which seems to indicate that DES support is greater in mainstream schools. However, there is need for up to date research to evaluate teachers’ perceived levels of DES inspectorate support.
Table 2.19: Percentage of teachers expressing satisfaction with DES Inspectorate support 1987-2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>% Satisfied</th>
<th>Teacher Category</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>Special School</td>
<td>Curtin &amp; Tulie (1987)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>Special Class</td>
<td>Curtin &amp; Tulie (1987)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>Special Class</td>
<td>Dunne (1993)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>Resource</td>
<td>Costello (1997)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>Mainstream</td>
<td>Government of Ireland (2005i)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.10 Home School Links

2.10.a Introduction

In acknowledging the parent as the primary educator under Article 42 of the Constitution (Government of Ireland, 1937), over recent decades there has been a growing awareness of the importance of home/school links acknowledging parents’ role as partners in the education process. The need for effective home/school links in the special education sector is considered especially important (Colgan, 1993; Garvey and Niall, 1992; Kennedy, 1994; McConkey, 1985, 2003; O’Keeffe 1994; Russell, 2003, Whyte, 1990).

While Brothers of Charity (1986), Lynham (1987) and McCarthy and Lawless (1991) cite individual cases of home/school links in special schools, Ní Thiarnaigh (1989) contends that:

“….very few Irish schools in special education are affording a proper and fruitful role to parents.”

(Ní Thiarnaigh, 1989, p.57)

Similarly, Dunne’s (1993) study found that the majority of parents of children in special classes were uninvolved with the school. In reviewing home/school liaison in fifty mainstream schools the DES Inspectorate reported an absence of effective communication (Government of Ireland, 2002e). Referring to special education
provision within National schools, the NDA (2005b) considered parent/teacher accessibility variable from school to school. However, in contrast, Mogensen (2005) and Mogenson et al. (2006) found that schools were making genuine efforts to communicate effectively with parents.

Although not directly linked to teacher parent liaison, it is noteworthy to comment on parents’ communication with other professionals feature as a matter of concern. There is evidence to suggest that parents are not made fully aware of the different choices available to them in terms of enrolling their pupil into different forms of provision (Colgan, 1998; I.N.T.O., 2003f; Kenny et al., 2006; Lawlor, 2003; Lyng, 1993).

2.10.a Structures for Home/School Communication

The importance of schools transmitting information to parents of SEN children is emphasised by Bowers (1984), O’Hagan (1984), and NAMHI (1984). While structures are now in place whereby teachers have at least one formal meeting with parents annually (I.N.T.O., 2004k), there is little research detailing current practice in relation to parent/teacher meetings in special schools and special classes. However high levels of parental contact with resource teachers was described by Costello (1997) who reported informal parent teacher meetings as follows: daily (32%), weekly (18%), monthly (5%), one a term (14%), whenever necessary (27%).

The use of progress reports as advocated by Stakes and Hornby (2000) and the distribution of information booklets for parents (Darbyshire and Morrison, 1995) do not feature in Irish special education literature and hence require further research.

2.10.c Parents’ Associations

The establishment of parents’ associations within schools is considered one of the key elements in encouraging active parental involvement (Government of Ireland, 1991; Uí Dhúill, 1996). The establishment of the National Parents Council – Primary received widespread public support (I.N.T.O., 1997c) and its development as a voice for parents has been documented by Clusky (1996) and Walsh (1996).

The principles of operating an effective parents association are outlined by NPCP (2004) but the Council estimates that only one third of parents’ associations are
affiliated and suggests that three quarters of schools now operate a parent body (N.P.C.P., 2006).

This is confirmed by research by Mac Giolla Phádraig (2003) who found that 70.3% of schools surveyed had an active parents’ association. However school size was an important factor where prevalence was much greater in larger schools – 91% of large schools (7 teachers +) had a parents’ association in comparison to just 49% of small schools (1-3 teachers) (Mac Giolla Phádraig, 2003).

The same study reported that 11% of Gaelscoileanna and 38% of disadvantaged schools had parents associations, but no comparable data is available for special schools. In addition, no differentiation was made indicating National schools with or without special classes or resource teachers.

2.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter Two has outlined the place of special education in the wider context of primary education in Ireland identifying its origins and the major influences and reforms that shaped provision for children in the twentieth century. The slow transformation towards integrated and later inclusive education driven by international influences is traced with particular reference to parental, teacher and disability sector lobbying for change. The review of limited existing literature unveils particular concerns in relation to provision and when these are explored in detail, particular topics are brought to light which provide the foundations for this exploratory study.
CHAPTER THREE
THE PRESENT STUDY

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3.1 **INTRODUCTION**

Chapter Three discusses the purpose of the present study, presents the eleven research questions and details the scope and delimitations of the research.

3.2 **PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND TO STUDY**

3.2.1 **Statement of Purpose**

The education of MGLD pupils has traditionally occurred in special schools and special classes and more recently with resource teachers in National schools. The purpose of this study is to evaluate teachers' perceptions of provision in 1989 and again in 2004 under a number of key headings which have been identified in the literature review in Chapter Two. The study will provide a comprehensive document detailing perceived levels of provision in 1989 and 2004.

3.2.2 **Rationale for the Study**

- Between 1986 and 1995 the author has been employed in the education sector as a teacher in a MGLD special school. This experience made him acutely aware of the challenges facing parents, pupils, and special education teachers, and their continuing struggle to access resources, support and other elements of provision essential to special education provision. Discussions with special school colleagues in 1987/88 provided the initial impetus to evaluate provision in special schools and special classes at that time.

- Some preliminary reading at this time revealed the acute lack of research pertaining to the Irish MMH school-going population. Much research published at this time related to innovations and development in Great Britain and the U.S. and was not applicable to the Irish context. Such a paucity of research material indicated a need for necessary investigation into provision at that time. This concept was re-enforced by demands for research specifically by three publications in the early 1980's. Firstly the major review of mental handicap services in Ireland by the National Economic and Social Council noted:
“Until all areas are thoroughly examined, existing provision evaluated and necessary steps taken to improve arrangements and formally institute additional provisions, integration will not be achieved.”

(N.E.S.C., 1980, p. 77)

This identified need for research was echoed by the INTO which observed:

“Research is needed to objectively evaluate curricular programmes in special schools and special classes so that both these systems and other alternatives can continue to develop in a constructive and cohesive manner.”

(I.N.T.O., 1981b, p. 13)

Similar calls for research were also made by NAMHI in 1984 when it contended that:

“Research is also needed to objectively evaluate the relative advantages and disadvantages of various forms of special education provision so that such provision can continue to be improved and developed and so that policy will be based on objective data rather than current trends or economic expediency.”

(N.A.M.H.I., 1984, p. 3)

These forceful appeals for research together with the lack of recent research convinced the author in 1987/88 that a comprehensive study of the field would make a valuable contribution to current knowledge at that time.

- The first phase of the study was completed when data was gathered from special schools and special classes in 1989. The author’s work as a resource teacher from 1995 to 2000 and since 2000 as a school principal reinforced his misgivings that special education teachers were still facing many of the challenges and difficulties experienced fifteen years earlier. Discussions with teachers in all sectors suggested that despite the arrival of legislation, significant government investment, and the development of support services, a significant number of issues remained unresolved or unaddressed. However, much of these discussions were based on supposition and not supported by research evidence. The author considered it opportune therefore to administer an updated version of
the 1989 questionnaire in 2004 and include resource teachers in this survey. This was to constitute the second phase of the research.

3.2.3 Significance of the Study

This study is not simply an academic exercise but attempts to fill the current lacuna in relation to detailed information on MGLD primary-aged pupils. More specifically, the study is of importance for the following reasons:

- This is the first nationwide study comprehensively reviewing MGLD provision in the three models of provision which exist within National schools.

- It is the first time that an Irish study has examined MGLD provision on a longitudinal basis. In addition the fifteen year period between Phase 1 and Phase 2 was a time of unprecedented change and research provides an opportunity to record how that change manifested itself in schools.

- The research is unique in that it is the first time that the three models of provision (special schools, special classes and resource teachers) have been researched side by side within the same study using the same research instrument. Therefore, this research facilitates comparison between the three forms of provision.

- Both the 1989 and 2004 surveys were based on large sample sizes and high response rates making it the largest study of MGLD provision in Ireland to date. This high level of participation of MGLD special education teachers should enhance the significance of findings.

- The literature review revealed repeated requests for improved aspects of provision but these pleas are primarily based on anecdotal evidence rather than research data. For the first time, detailed data will quantify previously unresearched aspects of provision.
The study examines as many facets of special educational provision as possible within administrative and time constraints. This should provide a broad perspective of adequacy of provision across the three sectors.

The study will make a significant contribution to the field in responding to the numerous appeals for research by various voluntary organisations. The provision of quantitative data will validate or deprecate the varied recommendations these organisations have made in relation to special education.

In summary therefore, the importance of this study is based on the fact that it will satisfy the long awaited need for research, and provide the first comprehensive report on MGLD provision.

3.3. EMERGING RESEARCH QUESTIONS

3.3.1 Introduction

A series of eleven research questions were formulated. These questions are designed to provide comprehensive data on areas of provision identified in the literature review in Chapter Two. Each question refers to a particular topic regarding provision in 1989 and 2004. Under each question a number of sub-headings are listed indicating precise areas where data is sought. Where data was gathered in 2004 only, this is also noted.

3.3.2 Research Questions

**Question 1: What is the profile of National schools and special schools providing educational provision for MGLD pupils in 1989 and 2004?**

- Geographical location
- Gender profile of school
- School size
• Class size
• Resource teacher caseload (2004)
• Pupil profile
• Special class provision
• Resource teacher provision (2004)
• Designated disadvantaged status (2004)

**Question 2:** What is the profile of the special education teaching body, and teachers' perceptions regarding employment satisfaction and inservice training?

• Gender profile
• Teaching experience
• Teacher training
• Teacher qualifications
• Employment status
• Teacher job preference
• In-career education

**Question 3:** What are teacher perceptions of enrolment, suitability of placement, and provision for MGLD pupils in National schools and special schools?

• Adequacy of background information
• Prior parent/teacher meetings
• Suitability of pupil placement
• Pupils with additional needs
• Post-primary provision
• Enrolment trends (2004)
Question 4: What is the profile of integration/inclusion practices among special classes, special schools and resource teachers?

- Schools’ policy
- Special class inclusive practices
- Special class location
- Special school/National school contrast
- Use of special school facilities
- Inter-special school contact
- Teachers’ perception of inclusive activities
- Parental requests for increased integration (2004)

Question 5: What is the level of teacher satisfaction in the MGLD sector with availability of and access to facilities in National schools and special schools?

- School accommodation
- General amenities
- Classroom facilities
- Classroom physical environment
- Classroom physical amenities
- Outdoor recreational facilities

Question 6: What are teachers’ opinions regarding the availability and appropriateness of educational resources for MGLD pupils in National schools and special schools?
Question 7: What are current practices among teachers in relation to curricular planning, consultation, and planning for MGLD pupils?

- Support for planning
- Resources for planning
- Use of IEPs
- Resource/mainstream collaboration
- Time allocation for planning/consultation

Question 8: What are teachers’ perceptions of the schools’ psychological service and what issues face schools in relation to accessing psychological assessments?

- Adequacy and access to service
- Agencies providing service
- Availability of psychologist to undertake a variety of interventions
- Information/feedback to teachers
- Unavailability of psychological assessments
- Unavailability of SEN resources due to lack of psychological assessment (2004)
- Use of privately funded psychological assessment (2004)
- Assessed pupils awaiting DES sanction for SEN resources (2004)

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Question 9: What is the availability of in-school support services to teachers in National schools and special schools?

- The availability of SNAs
- Secretarial and caretaking services
- Learning support services
- Specialist teachers
- Support staff in disadvantaged schools (2004)

Question 10: What are the current levels of external visiting services and teachers’ perceptions of support?

- Social work services
- Speech and language therapy services
- Other paramedical support services
- Teacher isolation
- Education centre support
- Support from professional organisations
- Support from local area networks
- Access to SEN publications

Question 11: What structures are in place in special schools and National schools to facilitate home school links for parents of MGLD pupils?

- Parent/teacher meetings
- Progress reports
- School open day
3.4 SCOPE OF STUDY

3.4.1 Analysis of Scope

This research gathers data from special school and special class teachers in 1989. The 2004 survey replicated the 1989 survey but also includes data from resource teachers in National schools. The study targets teachers working with pupils in the 8 to 12 year age range. The reasons for selecting this group are two fold. Firstly, it is within this specified age range that there is a relatively equal number of children in special schools, special classes and attending resource teachers, and therefore this will facilitate a more accurate comparison between the three forms of provision. Secondly, pupils transferring from primary level special classes may experience difficulty securing second-level placement. The shortage of second level special classes could well hinder an accurate comparison between the different types of provision. Therefore, the ages of 8 up to 12 years are utilised as parameters within which teacher data is gathered. An analysis of current provision outside this age range would form the basis for separate full-scale research.

The term ‘special education provision’ has no universal definition. However, the eleven research questions outlined in the previous section are representative of the key elements of provision emerging from the literature reviewed in Chapter Two. For the purpose of this research, special educational provision will refer to the eleven areas reviewed and other areas not researched are identified in section 3.4.2.a.

3.4.2 Delimitations

3.4.2.a Areas Excluded From Research

- Preschool provision for MGLD pupils
- Non-state provision for MGLD pupils attending private schools
- Children with MGLD attending National schools who are not availing of SEN resources
• Second level provision and work experience provision for MGLD students
• MGLD pupils attending traveller special classes
• MGLD pupils in Gaelscoileanna
• Foreign-national pupils with MGLD
• School special transport provision

3.4.2.b Comparison of 1989 and 2004 Data

There are a number of points regarding the 1989 and 2004 data which need to be highlighted. Firstly, while the same special schools and classes were surveyed in 1989 and 2004, the questionnaire was not necessarily completed by the same teacher. Secondly, given the large investment in special education between 1989 and 2004 the expectations of teachers in 1989 may have been different from those in 2004 especially in terms of perception of facilities. Therefore, the direct comparison of 1989 and 2004 data is treated with some caution, although general trends are observed.

3.4.2.c Issues regarding Questionnaires

As a matter of courtesy, the questionnaires were sent to school principals. There may be an element of bias in teacher selection by principals. There is a possibility that principals may have selected teachers who they considered would complete the questionnaire in a way which would represent their school in a positive light.

There were also a number questionnaire items which proved unsatisfactory. The 1989 questionnaire omitted to gather data on the number of male/female pupils. The questionnaire item regarding funding for pupils’ stationary in the 1989 and 2004 questionnaires was poorly designed and proved difficult to analyse.

Chapter Four outlines the methodology of the research project.
CHAPTER FOUR

METHODS

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4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Four is divided into four sections outlining the methodology employed during the various stages of the research. The first section gives a brief overview of the 1989 and 2004 studies providing general information regarding the measures used and participating schools. The next section describes the 1989 study in detail specifically illustrating the target population, survey samples, instrument development, content and piloting of questionnaires, followed by a subsection which outlines questionnaire administration, follow-up strategies, and response rates. The third section of the chapter describes the methodology of the 2004 survey under these same headings. The fourth section is concerned with the analysis of data gathered in 1989 and 2004 and deals with procedures followed and the use of computer software for data management and statistical analysis. Finally, a number of ethical considerations are reviewed in relation to the study.

4.2 STRUCTURE OF RESEARCH PROJECT

4.2.1 Research Methodology

In selecting an appropriate research methodology, a number of factors were carefully considered. One of the primary objectives of the project was to gather a considerable volume of data from the teaching population working in the three forms of provision. In view of the nationwide nature of the intended sample, postal questionnaire was considered the only feasible method (May, 1993; Nardi, 2003). Time and resource constraints precluded the use of alternative methods of data collection such as face to face or telephone interviews for all respondents. As Bourque and Fielder (1995) note, the questionnaire as a means of investigation allows wide geographical coverage. In addition, given the large number of schools involved (n=145) the questionnaire was a method of data collection which was financially viable. The questionnaire also offered respondents a degree of anonymity possibly resulting in more truthful responses (Gall, Borg and Gall, 1983). Given that a large number of questionnaire items were of a descriptive nature requiring a simple ‘yes/no’ response, it was felt that teachers would generally answer these truthfully.
The disadvantages of the questionnaire as a research instrument have been well researched and documented (Cohen and Mannion, 1994; Labaw, 1990; Oppenheim, 1966; Moser and Kalton, 1971, 1993) highlighting a variety of factors which can affect the quality of research. These include the lack of a personal touch and the inability to seek clarification (Cohen and Mannion, 1994), the possibility that the questionnaire might not be completed by the intended respondent (Oppenheim, 1992) and most importantly, the issue of non-response, i.e. unreturned questionnaires (Belson, 1986; Hoinville and Jowell, 1978; Wilson and McClean, 1994). This has also been a significant factor in early small scale research into special educational provision in Ireland (Curtin and Tujle, 1987; Dunne, 1993; I.N.T.O., 1990d, 1996a; N.A.B.M.S.S, 1978, 1981a; N.R.B.; 1979; St Michael’s House, 1981; Stevens, 1987b) with reported response rates as low as 49%.

Despite the limitations of the questionnaire as an instrument (Fink, 1995; Fowler, 1993), it was considered that some of these difficulties could be minimized by careful planning and design (Berdie and Nienbuhr, 1986; Evans, 1984; Hague, 1993; Leady, 1997; Moser and Kalton, 1979), logical structure (Van Dalen, 1979), clear and attractive layout (Fowler, 1995) and a relatively short completion time (Boynton, 2004; Wolf and Hollander, 1999), although Bogen (1996) contends that a thorough review of available evidence indicates that questionnaire length is not a factor in participants responding.

In summary, the limitations of using just one sample population, namely teachers, and the single methodology of survey questionnaire are acknowledged. However, it was felt that this compromise was justifiable in that the merits of collecting a large volume of valuable data from front-line staff nationally outweigh the methodological limitations outlined.

4.2.2 1989 and 2004 Studies

The research project is concerned with teachers’ perceptions (n=588) of special educational provision for primary school children with Mild General Learning Disabilities (formerly Mild Mental Handicap) over the fifteen year period 1989 to 2004. The data collected from teachers (n=159) in 1989 provides a baseline of information on provision in that year. This information has been categorised into specific areas emerging from the research questions formulated in Chapter 3.
The follow up 2004 study (n=429) involves the same National and Special Schools fifteen years later and also includes additional National schools which had initiated special educational provision for this population during the period 1989 – 2004. The data collected is used for comparison, albeit acknowledging certain limitations discussed in Chapter Three, and provides information regarding teachers’ perceptions of how provision has altered during a period of significant policy change and substantial financial investment in the special education sector. In addition, data is gathered on newly developed areas of provision which have changed or been initiated since 1989.

4.2.3 Measures employed in Studies

Five postal questionnaires were developed specifically for this project to examine teachers’ perceptions of special educational provision in 1989 and 2004. The first five page A4 sized questionnaire (Appendix IV.C), divided into ten sections with 103 items, entitled “Educational Provision for the Mildly Mentally Handicapped in Special Classes and Special Schools”, was developed for teachers in special schools catering for the mildly mentally handicapped in 1989. The ten sections were: Teacher Data, School and Class Data, Perceived Adequacy of School Facilities, Access to School Equipment, Perceived Adequacy of Materials and Supplies, Non-Teaching Staff, Pupil Placement and Home School Links, Pupil Integration, Curriculum, and, Special Schools and Special Classes. An almost identical second questionnaire (Appendix IV.D), with 105 items, was constructed at the same time to survey teachers in National Schools with special classes catering for children with mild mental handicap.

The three follow up questionnaires developed in 2004 were largely based on those administered in 1989 with some minor changes reflecting modifications in terminology and taking into account the changes in provision which had occurred in the interim fifteen year period. The eight page A5 sized questionnaire in booklet form for teachers working in special schools in 2004, “Educational Provision in Special Schools for Primary Level Pupils with Mild General Learning Disabilities” (Appendix VII.D), was divided into thirteen specific sections with 135 items. The section titles in the 2004 questionnaires were: Teacher Data, School and Class Data, Access to School Equipment, Perceived Adequacy of Resources, Adequacy of School Facilities, Home School Links, Support Staff, Pupil Placement, Inservice Training, Curriculum, Teacher
Support, Integration and Inclusion, and General Remarks. Similarly, the format and content of the follow up questionnaire (Appendix IV.E) for special class teachers in National schools with special classes “Educational Provision in Primary Special Classes for Pupils” was practically identical, with the exception of one additional question. The fifth questionnaire “Educational Provision in National Schools for Pupils with Mild General Learning Disabilities” (Appendix VII.F), was developed to examine an aspect of provision which did not exist in 1989, namely the Resource Teacher Service. This questionnaire is also divided into thirteen sections with 139 items.

All of the five questionnaires were initially piloted (c.f section 4.3.2.b) and were corrected and revised where necessary prior to administration.

4.2.4 Participating Schools

The 226 schools which participated in the research project represented the total cohort of special schools and National schools with special classes and a random sample of National schools with resource teachers. These were all state funded National schools (special schools are also classed as National schools) managed by local Boards of Management, but under the auspices of the Department of Education and Science. The selected schools were listed as making special educational provision for pupils with mild metal handicap (MMH) latterly classified as mild general learning disabilities (MGLD), and were identified from unpublished internal administrative lists of the DES (Government of Ireland, 1986a, 1987a, 2001d, 2003i). The Executive Officer of Special Education Section 1 of the DES was unable to provide an updated list of National schools with resource teachers for the 2004 survey, and therefore a random sample of National schools was selected from the ‘service provider search engine’ on the DES website www.education.ie (Government of Ireland, 2004d).

All 32 special schools (MMH) in existence in 1989 (Government of Ireland, 1986) and all 113 National schools with one or more special classes (MMH) (Government of Ireland, 1987a), were identified for the administration of the teacher survey. For the 2004 follow-up surveys, the number of special schools (MGLD) had reduced to thirty (Ireland, 2003i), the number of National schools with one or more special classes (MGLD) had increased to 193 (Government of Ireland, 2001d), and a random sample of 290 possible National Schools with Resource Teachers (Government
of Ireland, 2004d) was selected (Appendices I.A & I.B). A total of 774 questionnaires were issued in 1989 and 2004.

4.3 STUDY 1 (1989)

4.3.1 Sources of Data

4.3.1.a Target Population

The target population for the 1989 study was the teaching body employed in all state National and special schools catering for the population described as “mildly mentally handicapped” in the 1988/89 school year. The DES (Government of Ireland, 1986a) listed thirty two such special schools, five of which were located in the greater Dublin area and the remaining twenty seven distributed nationwide throughout twenty counties. Details of these schools are listed in Appendix I.A as schools 001-009 and 010-038. Stevens (1990a) confirmed that two of these special schools were no longer in existence in 1989 bringing the eligible number of schools to be targeted to thirty.

In relation to special classes for the “mildly mentally handicapped”, the DES (Government of Ireland, 1987a) cited that sixty six National schools in the Dublin area (58%) operated special classes in this category while only forty seven schools nationwide (42%) had this facility. A total of 113 National Schools operated the 151 special classes listed in Appendix I.A as schools 004-009 and 039-144. However, subsequent investigation (Stevens, 1990b) revealed that nine of the listed classes had ceased to operate reducing the target population to 142 special classes.

4.3.1.b Description of Survey Sample

The sample for the 1989 study is drawn from every special school (MMH) and every special class (MMH) in Ireland. National schools cater for pupils of primary school age and pupils usually transfer to post-primary provision at 12/13 years of age (Coolahan, 1981). An anomaly exists within the Irish Education system whereby all categories of special school make second-level provision and are still categorised as National schools by the DES (Government of Ireland, 1986a; O’Mordha, 1980). This results in special schools (MMH) having a much wider pupil age range (4–18 years) compared with...
special classes (MMH) in National schools (O’Moore and Stevens, 1992). In order to compare both systems of provision on an equal basis in terms of age range, it was decided to draw the sample of teachers from those teaching the age range 8 to 12 years in special schools. Given that the majority of special schools (MMH) are relatively small in size (Stevens, 1987b), a sample of two teachers per special school was considered satisfactory. As it is accepted practice to address all educational research requests to the school principal as acting agent for the school’s board of management, the selection of two teachers to complete the questionnaire was at the principal’s discretion and, as alluded to on page 114, could create possible bias. Two questionnaires distributed to each of the thirty special schools (MMH) yielded a total sample of sixty teachers.

The sample for special classes (MMH) consisted of each of the 142 classes in operation nationwide in 1989 yielding a sample of 142 teachers. The total sample for the two questionnaire surveys to the two different types of special educational provision in 1989 was 202 teachers.

4.3.2 Development of Questionnaires (2)

4.3.2.a Questionnaire Design

The primary objective of the 1989 inquiry was to obtain detailed data on a range of diverse topics within the field of special educational provision for children (MMH) within primary schools. A variety of research methodologies was carefully reviewed including focus groups (Fowler, 1995; Greenbaum, 1998), case studies including personal interview (Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 1996) and action research (Ainscow, 1998; Greenwood and Levin, 1998; Krueger, 1988). It was decided to use qualitative and quantitative methods as suggested by Simpson (1992) and Jenkinson (1997b) underpinned by the pragmatic approach adopted by Johnson (1994) who suggested that the essential principle in planning effective research was to match the resources available with its completion.

The rationale for selecting the survey questionnaire is outlined in Section 4.2.1. The questionnaire design was undertaken in a number of stages. Initially, the research questions formulated in Chapter Three were reviewed and the questionnaire was developed to directly address these questions. In October and November 1988 the
The author conducted a number of preliminary meetings with two specific groups of teachers. Three meetings were held with a group of eleven special class teachers (MMH) who were members of the Special Class Support Group based in Dublin’s north inner city. This group was affiliated to IATSE and met on a regular basis as a forum for discussing pertinent issues in special classes and provide mutual professional support. The author also had two meetings with eight teachers teaching in special schools (MMH) and accessed them through a trade union meeting organised by the INTO meeting for special school teachers. The purpose of these meetings was to explore teachers’ views of provision at that time, identify strengths and inadequacies in the system, and to highlight perceived areas of concern. The resultant outcomes of these meetings combined with the emerging areas in the literature review were to form the basis of the areas to be explored in the questionnaires to be designed for special schools and special classes.

The second stage involved the writing of the questionnaire. The initial draft of the questionnaire for special school teachers entitled ‘Questionnaire to Teachers in Special Schools’ was drafted in December 1988, consisting of ten sections labelled A to J. These ten sections sought to collect data under the following headings:

A : Teacher Data
B : School & Class Data
C : Perceived Adequacy of School Facilities
D : Access to School Equipment
E : Perceived Adequacy of Material & Supplies
F : Non-Teaching Staff
G : Pupil Placement and Home School Links
H : Pupil Integration
I : Curriculum
J : Special Schools & Special Classes

Section A is concerned with gathering data on the teaching body including basic data such as gender, experience, education and qualifications, redeployment rights, attendance at inservice courses, and preferences in terms of mainstream and special education teaching. The second section seeks information on the type of school surveyed including pupil gender, demographic setting, school size, teacher numbers,
class sizes and age ranges within those classes. Section C examines teachers’ perceived satisfaction with school and classroom facilities. A six point rating scale ranging from ‘Excellent’ to ‘Very Inadequate’ was developed. Using this scale, teachers were requested to rate twelve areas under the subheading ‘School Facilities’ and nine areas under the subheading ‘Classroom Facilities’.

The next section reviews teachers’ perceived access to school equipment and teachers were asked to report whether they had adequate access to eleven items of educational equipment. In addition, two further questions in this section seek to establish the source of school equipment costs, parental levies and annual financial contributions. Section E examines teachers’ perceptions regarding the adequacy of educational materials and supplies using a rating scale to score ten subheadings. These include examining adequacy of materials for the teaching of literacy, numeracy and other curricular areas. The provision and availability of non-teaching staff is examined in Section F. This includes the availability of full-time and part-time administrative staff, non-teaching staff within the school, and external paramedical support staff. Teachers were also given an opportunity to indicate whether increased access to such staff would be beneficial, and if so to indicate the benefits.

Section G reviews two areas namely pupil placement and home school links. Teachers are requested to comment on the adequacy of background information received, the availability of reports from previous schools, the opportunity to meet parents prior to enrolment, and the appropriateness of pupil placement within their own classes. The items on home/school links concentrate on facilities, the existence of an active parents’ association, the availability of a home school liaison programme, and the frequency with which parents meet with teachers. Pupil integration is examined in Section H exploring the contact between special and mainstream schools. The existence of organised contact through sports, and other after-school activities is reviewed. In relation to special classes in National schools, information is sought regarding class location, after-school activities, and the contact with mainstream classes for curricular activities during the school day.

The questionnaire also has a section assessing the subject of curriculum available to special class and special school teachers reviewing by whom the curriculum is decided, the availability and benefits of advice from Department of Education Inspectors, teachers’ usage of the New Curriculum (Government of Ireland, 1971), and their views on the introduction of a curriculum specifically designed for the MMH
population. Section I also examines resources selected, published schemes in use, and subject choices within five specific areas of the curriculum. The final section of the questionnaire consists of seven general questions reviewing special school/special class teacher contact, teacher membership of NATSE (later IATSE), teacher access to appropriate publications, and teachers’ views as to how present provision could be further improved. Finally a space is provided for teachers to express any observations or comments.

In relation to the structure of the survey instrument, several kinds of question items (Hague, 1993; Wilson, 1996) including dichotomous questions, multiple choice questions, rating scales and open ended questions were included in this initial draft. The closed questions were used in areas where factual information was required and would be quick for the respondent to complete, making data coding simpler (Wilson and McLean, 1994). Where more detailed information or greater freedom of expression was required open ended questions were included. Likert scales (Likert, 1932) were utilised to measure teachers’ perceived adequacy of school facilities, and adequacy and access to resources. Special attention was given avoiding ambiguous wording (Youngman, 1984) and to ensure that the length and complexity was kept to a minimum to maximise respondents’ participation (Faulkner, Swann, Backer, Bird, and Carty, 1991; Leady, 1997).

An almost identical questionnaire entitled ‘Questionnaire for Teachers in Special Classes’ was developed simultaneously. The questionnaires examined identical areas of provision but differed only in terms of language appropriate to the two different forms of provision.

The third stage of development involved a preliminary review of the questionnaire, as suggested by Foddy (1993) and Fowler (1995), by twenty special education teachers. On 12th January 1989 the author reconvened a meeting with the two groups of teachers to review the proposed questionnaires prior to piloting them in schools. Questionnaires were distributed and teachers were asked to critically review the instruments. Discussions with these teachers led to the restructuring of some questions, the elimination of redundant questions and addition of other questions and a number of other alterations. The significant redevelopment of the questionnaire at this stage of the process was intended to reduce major alteration in the pilot survey stage. The resultant two questionnaires ‘Educational Provision for the Mildly Mentally Handicapped in Special Classes and Special Schools’ (Appendices IV.A and IV.B) were then ready to
be piloted in special schools and special classes in National schools. These two questionnaires were then completed by the twenty teachers at this meeting and retained for a further retest at a later date.

4.3.2.b Piloting of Questionnaire

The piloting of questionnaires has been extensively reviewed, and Anderson (1998), Boynton (2004), Converse and Presser (1986), and Oppenheim (1992) outline the advantages of the pilot survey to identify ambiguities and rectify omissions. Linsky (1975) suggests telephoning potential respondents prior to a survey to improve response rates. On 1st February 1989 the author telephoned the principal teachers of three special schools and six National schools with special classes to seek permission and establish their willingness to participate in the pilot survey of twelve teachers. This telephone contact was followed up with a copy of the pilot questionnaire, a stamped addressed envelope, and an explanatory letter (Appendices III.A and III.B) was posted on 8th February 1989. The letter was typed on good quality stationary and the purpose and importance of the study was outlined. An additional sheet included instructions and details for the provision of respondent feedback on the questionnaire with particular reference to completion time, questionnaire layout, ambiguity of questions, clarity of instructions and redundant questions. At this stage the questionnaire was also previewed by two Department of Education Schools inspectors and the author’s research supervisor at Trinity College, Dublin. All twelve teachers responded within the two week time-frame and expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the instrument. One spelling correction and the rewriting of an ambiguous question in sections F (Non-Teaching Staff) of both questionnaires were the only alterations deemed necessary. The final version of the two questionnaires entitled ‘Educational Provision for the Mildly Mentally Handicapped in Special Classes and Special Schools’ (Appendices III.C and III.D) was now ready for distribution to the selected sample.

4.3.2.c Questionnaire Reliability, Validity and Bias

Berdie, Anderson, and Neibuhr (1986) and Fowler (1995) stress the necessity and importance of reliable and valid measures in questionnaire design. Reliability refers to the consistency of measurement and the degree to which the instrument measures the
same way each time it is used under the same conditions with the same subjects. In the case of this study, a minor test-retest exercise was undertaken. The twelve teachers who received the pilot questionnaire in February 1989 were re-issued with an identical questionnaire two months later on 8\textsuperscript{th} April 1989. The two questionnaires completed by each of the twelve teachers were carefully compared and it was noted that there was a very high correlation of identical answers between the first and second questionnaires. Given the small sample, this process was completed manually and no statistical reliability analysis was employed. However, the manual interpretation and comparison of both questionnaires was sufficient to illustrate that teachers had given practically identical answers to the same instrument on two separate occasions before and after an eight week interval. It could be concluded therefore that the level of consistency of measurement for the purpose of the study was sufficient.

Belson (1986) identifies two viewpoints when discussing validity specifically in terms of postal questionnaires, namely whether respondents complete the instrument accurately and secondly whether or not uncompleted questionnaires would have yielded a similar distribution of answers as those returned. The accuracy of what was being measured was addressed through group discussion and thorough review of the instrument as discussed in the piloting stage of the questionnaire. With reference to the issue of non-response, the study addressed this particular difficulty as outlined in section 4.3.3 below. The survey does not claim to be generalisable to any other population other than teachers of MMH pupils in special schools and special classes.

Finally, given the author was employed in the special school sector, it was important to be aware of the possibility of personal bias when constructing the research instrument (Hutchinson, 1988) and to recognise and effectively manage any possible bias (Bassey, 1990; Faulkner, Swann, Backer, Bird, and Carty 1991). The involvement of teachers from both special classes in National schools and special schools at all stages of the research project was seen as a key factor in attempting to eliminate any such bias.

4.3.3 Questionnaire Administration and Response Rates

Sixty special school and 151 special class questionnaires were posted on 18\textsuperscript{th} April 1989 to the schools listed in Appendix I.A. Questionnaires were accompanied by a covering letter (Appendices III.C and III.D) outlining details of the research (Cohen et al, 2003),
details of the university in which the research was being undertaken (Edwards, Roberts, Clarke, Di Guiseppi, Pratap, Wentz, and Kwan, 2002), and a closing date of 28th April 1989. According to Henley (1976), setting a return deadline can help increase response. Respondents were allowed ten days during which to return questionnaires. In an effort to secure an improved response rate, a stamped addressed envelope was also included as suggested by Cohen et al (2003) and Edwards et al. (2002). Finally, a letter to class teachers (Appendices III.J and III.K) with instructions was attached to each questionnaire. The letter to principals of special schools differed slightly in that it requested questionnaires to be given to teachers teaching pupils in the 8–12 year age range.

With reference to confidentiality and anonymity being an element in improving response rates, debate seems to be divided between researchers who argue it is a positive factor (Cohen et al., 2000) and those (Campbell and Waters, 1990) who argue that anonymity does not improve response rates but concede that the use of reminders may do so. In an effort to maximise the response rate in this study questionnaires were coded (s = special schools; c = special classes) so that follow up letters could be posted to schools which had not returned completed questionnaires. Special school questionnaires were coded S013 to S060 and special class questionnaires were coded C069 to C220. This arrangement facilitated identifying a school for a reminder letter but the identity of the respondent teachers remained anonymous. An assurance was given to principals and teachers that all information would be treated in strictest confidence (Appendices III.C, III.D, III.J, and III.K).

During the initial ten day response period nine principals contacted the author by telephone or letter to report that the special class in his/her school had ceased to function bringing the total number of possible respondents in this category from 151 to 142. By the 7th May, 1989, 27 special school questionnaires and 80 special class questionnaires had been returned yielding an initial response rate of 45% and 56.3% respectively.

There is unanimous agreement among researchers that a variety of follow up strategies can dramatically improve survey response rates (Babbie, 1997; Chiu and Brennan, 1998; Cohen et al., 2003; Corcoran, 1985; Edwards et al., 2002; and Fox, Crask, and Kim, 1988) and such strategies were employed in this study. On 7th May, 1989, the first reminder letter (Appendices III.E and III.F) were posted to all schools which had not responded. During the following eleven days a further 11 special school
questionnaires and 17 special class questionnaires were received bringing the new response rate to 63.3% and 68.3%.

A second reminder letter (Appendices III.G and III.H.) was posted to schools on 19th May 1989. Another copy of the questionnaire and an additional SAE was included as suggested by Edwards et al. (2002). In the following ten days a further 7 special school questionnaires were received yielding a response rate of 75%, and 12 special class questionnaires were returned bringing the response rate to 76.8% in this category.

The occurrence of an unofficial dispute among employees of the national postal service An Post (Appendix V.A) from 11th May 1989 to 5th June 1989 may have had a minor effect on response rates from schools in the Dublin Postal Districts 3 to 14, 16, 17, and 20. Efforts were made to counteract any negative effects of this dispute and gather any outstanding uncompleted questionnaires by three strategies. A public notice (Appendix V.B) was displayed at the First National IATSE Conference in Dublin (15 – 17 June 1989) reminding that completed questionnaires were still welcome. Secondly, a final reminder letter (Appendices V.C and III.K) was posted to principals and teachers on 29th September 1989. Thirdly, a telephone call was made to all schools (Dillman, 2000) which still had not returned questionnaires.

The success of these interventions was limited producing only a further five returned questionnaires – two from special school teachers and three from special class teachers. This brought the final response rate to 78.3% for special schools and 78.9% for special classes with an overall average response rate of 78.6% for the total 202 questionnaires issued in 1989.

Although response rates for general postal questionnaire surveys can be as low as 10% to 30% (Boyd and Westfall, 1972; Luck, Wales, and Taylor, 1970), a meta analysis of 93 postal questionnaire surveys reported an average response rate of 47% (Yu and Cooper, 1983). Hox and de Leeuw (1994) reviewed response rates in 45 studies and reported an average response rate of 61% for postal surveys. However, referring specifically to educational postal surveys, Babbie (2001) suggested a response rate of 50-60% while Hoineville and Jowell (1978) recommended response rates between 60% and 80%. Cohen et al. (2000) stated that a well planned postal survey should achieve a realistic response rate of 70% to 80%. This is supported by Bailey (1987) and Dillman (2000) who recommend response rates in excess of 70%. Table 4.1 summarises the response rates for the 1989 survey and achieves similar levels of response pattern to
those outlined by the Office of Population Census Surveys cited in Cohen et al. (2000) which is considered satisfactory.

Table 4.1: Questionnaire response rates 1989

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Possible Respondents</th>
<th>Special Class 1989</th>
<th>Special School 1989</th>
<th>Total 1989</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100% (142)</td>
<td>100% (60)</td>
<td>100% (202)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaires returned by 6th May 1989</td>
<td>56.3% (80)</td>
<td>45% (27)</td>
<td>53.0% (107)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaires returned by 18th May 1989</td>
<td>68.3% (97)</td>
<td>63.3% (38)</td>
<td>66.8% (135)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaires returned by 29th May 1989</td>
<td>76.8% (109)</td>
<td>75.0% (45)</td>
<td>76.2% (154)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Questionnaires returned by 1st October 1989</td>
<td>78.9% (112)</td>
<td>78.3% (47)</td>
<td>78.6% (159)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4 STUDY 2 (2004)

4.4.1 Sources of Data

4.4.1.a Target Population

The 2004 target population consisted of teachers in all National and special schools making special educational provision for primary level pupils with "mild general learning disabilities" in the school year 2003/2004. This target population includes schools surveyed in 1989 still providing such a service in addition to newly established provision including the resource programme model introduced to mainstream National schools (Costello, 1997; Government of Ireland, 1993a).

Twenty nine of the thirty special schools surveyed in 1989 appear in the 'Directory of Special Schools' (Government of Ireland, 2003i). Five schools continue to be located in the greater Dublin area and the remaining twenty four are distributed among nineteen counties. Appendix I.A details these schools with school No. 029 no longer in operation. This brought the eligible number of special schools to 29 with a target population of 58 teachers.
Close comparison of the most recent version of the ‘List of National Schools with Special Classes’ (Government of Ireland, 2001d) with the earlier edition (Government of Ireland, 1987a) reveals a number of significant changes in the numbers of special classes operating in the intervening fourteen years. In 1989, 22 had closed leaving 120 special classes in operation. The National schools which maintained these special classes also established a further 21 special classes in the period 1987-2001. An additional 114 special classes were established in other National schools during the same period (Government of Ireland, 2001d) bringing the total number of classes eligible for the 2004 survey to 255.

Between 1987 and 2001 the number of National schools operating special classes increased from 113 to 158. Despite this increase, the geographical distribution remained practically unchanged. Ninety National schools in the greater Dublin area (57%) and 68 National schools nationwide (43%) operated special classes in 2001 representing a change of only 1% in geographical distribution since the 1987 figures.

All schools are listed in Appendix I.A and schools targeted or both 1989 and 2004 surveys are listed as school No’s 004 to 009 and 039 to 144. Schools in which special classes have closed are highlighted in the ‘2004 Q Code’ column with an additional explanation given in the ‘Notes’ column. Schools which were targeted for the 2004 survey only are listed as school No’s 146 to 225 in the same appendix. A summary of the 255 special classes is to be found in Appendix II.B.

Between November 2003 and February 2004 the Special Education Section (1) of the Department of Education and Science was contacted and a list of National schools with resource teachers was requested. One request was made in writing and two subsequent telephone enquiries were made to the Executive Officer of that section. However, the DES was unable to provide a comprehensive updated list at this time. The explanation given was that due to the frequency and number of part-time and full-time resource teacher appointments being made, no complete centralised list was available for research purposes. In the absence of such information, it was decided to target all National schools and select a sample of schools. Given that previous research indicated that 86% of all schools nationally had access to a resource teacher (INTO, 2004f), it was hoped that the target sample would yield a satisfactory number of resource teachers to complete the questionnaire. The 290 schools targeted are listed as school No’s 226 to 515 in Appendix I.B.
It should be noted that subsequent communications with the Executive Officer and the Principal Officer of the Special Education Section (1) resulted in the acquisition of a list of schools with resource teachers in December 2004. This list was extracted from the unpublished internal departmental data entitled ‘Census of Special Education in all National Schools 2003’ (Government of Ireland, 2003a). This list was not used to target the resource teacher population as it was received after the postal survey to this sector was administered.

4.4.1.b Description of Survey Sample

The sample population for the 2004 study was drawn from three distinct populations within the special education sector in National schools. Two of these, special schools and special classes, had been surveyed in 1989, while the additional Resource teacher model was also included for the 2004 study.

A cluster sample was used to establish the sample for National schools with resource teachers. The sampling for special school teachers follows closely the procedure followed in 1989 as described in 4.3.1.b. A sample of two teachers (teaching in the 8 to 12 year age range) was drawn from every special school (MGLD) in Ireland. Two questionnaires distributed to each of the twenty nine special schools yielded a total sample of fifty eight teachers. Similarly, all special classes (MGLD) were identified for survey. The sample consisted of all special classes in operation nationwide yielding a total of 255 teachers.

The web based search facility ‘Education Search Provider’ on the Department of Education and Science’s website www.education.ie was used to access a list of all National schools in the country. A list of schools in each county except Dublin was printed and every third school was selected on each county list until a total of ten schools in each county had been identified. This sample yielded 250 schools from 25 counties. The DES website divides Dublin into four specific categories based on the four Dublin local authorities namely Dublin City, Dublin Fingal, Dublin South, Dublin Dun Laoghaire. Ten schools were randomly (every third school) selected from each of the lists of schools in these four districts. This yielded a sample of 40 schools for the Dublin area, bringing the total sample for the resource teacher survey to 290 teachers. Details of the 290 schools in this sample may be found in Appendix II.B.
The total sample for the three questionnaire surveys in the 2004 study was 603 teachers.

4.4.2 Development of Questionnaires (3)

4.4.2.a Questionnaire Design

The primary function of the 2004 survey was to gather detailed data on the diverse range of topics pertaining to special educational provision reviewed in the 1989. A secondary function was to obtain information on areas requiring further analysis, issues which continue to be contentious, and difficulties and developments highlighted Chapter 3. The 1989 questionnaires were successful in gathering a substantial body of specific data. Given that it was intended to obtain an increased amount of data from an even greater nationwide population, the reissuing of a questionnaire was considered to be the most suitable instrument for the 2004 study. May (1983) considers the postal questionnaire survey to be the only feasible methodology in circumstances similar to this study. The two 1989 questionnaires (Appendices IV.C and IV.D) were selected to form the basis of the preliminary design of the 2004 instruments. Particular emphasis was placed on establishing clearly defined aims and purpose as proposed by Oppenheim (1992) and Sapsford (1999) and creating a clear design as suggested by Boynton and Greenlaugh (2004). Suggestions to ensure attractiveness of the instrument (Charles, 1995; Faulkner et al., 1991) and to make the resultant questionnaire appealing to the respondent (Keeter, Kennamer, Ellis, and Green, 2001; Leady, 1997) were also reviewed and applied where appropriate.

On 10th November 2003, a group of nine resource teachers from the West Cork Special Education Support Group was convened in Bantry, Co Cork. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss current perceptions of special educational provision and to identify issues of concern regarding education of MGLD pupils. A similar meeting was held in North County Dublin on 3rd December 2003 which was attended by eleven special class teachers and six special school teachers. Both meetings generated considerable debate and the emergent issues and concerns were noted by the author.

The 1989 questionnaires, combined with the new issues generated by the literature review, and the concerns identified by the two teachers’ meetings, were to form the foundation of the three questionnaires for the 2004 study.

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The three new questionnaires entitled ‘Educational Provision in Special Schools for Primary Level Pupils with Mild General Learning Difficulties – Questionnaire for Teachers’ (Appendix VII.A), ‘Educational Provision in Primary Special Classes for Pupils with Mild General Learning Difficulties – Questionnaire for Teachers (Appendix VII.B)’, and ‘Educational Provision in National Schools for Pupils with Mild General Learning Difficulties – Questionnaire for Resource Teachers’ (Appendix V.II.C), were drafted in December 2003. There were undoubtedly many similarities between the 1989 and 2004 questionnaires but a number of differences evolved due to factors including a significant change in terminology, changed and newly evolved special education practices, and issues which remained unresolved requiring further analysis.

The thirteen sections in the newly drafted questionnaires sought to gather data under the following headings.

A : Teacher Data
B : School & Class Data
C : Access to School Equipment
D : Perceived Adequacy of Resources
E : Adequacy of School Facilities
F : Home School Links
G : Support Staff
H : Pupil Placement
I : Inservice Training
J : Curriculum
K : Teacher Support
L : Integration/Inclusion
M : General Remarks

Questions included in both the 1989 and 2004 versions of the questionnaires are not detailed here and may be found in Section 4.3.2.a of this chapter. However, questions which have been omitted, newly added items, or items which have been further developed are noted in the following paragraphs.

Section A is concerned with basic data on the teaching body employed in the three sectors of provision. Supplementary items in the 2004 version include whether teachers are employed in a permanent or temporary capacity, and whether or not they...
are entitled to be placed on a special redeployment panel for qualified primary teachers with restricted DES recognition because they do not fulfil the Irish language requirement. Information regarding the type of teacher training is also sought to clearly identify the increasing number of graduates who have achieved recognition as primary teachers in National schools by completing the Graduate Diploma in Primary Education (GDPE) qualification now available in Irish and overseas teacher training colleges.

The section examines the type of school surveyed and additional items incorporate schools assigned designated disadvantaged status, the number of special classes, and the number of resource teachers employed if any. The questionnaire to resource teachers contains questions regarding caseload numbers, and whether or not the post is shared with other National schools.

Section C reviews teachers’ perceptions of access to educational equipment and the sources of income to fund such equipment. A number of resources included in 1989 namely, posters and charts, filmstrips, and slides, have been omitted in the 2004 versions. However, three items of audio visual equipment have been included as they have become more prevalent in national schools. The equipment in question is DVD players, CD players, and data projectors. Respondents are asked to report whether they have access to or have these items in their classrooms.

Section D focuses on the adequacy of educational materials and resources and is identical to section E of the 1989 questionnaires. One additional item queries teachers’ views whether or not increased resources would improve educational provision for MGLD pupils. The following section examines teachers’ perceptions relative to school and classroom facilities. The six point rating scale has been maintained and a small number of items changed. The facilities of swimming pools, gymnasium, and gardens have been excluded while two items ‘classroom’ and ‘natural light’ have been added.

Section F examines links between school and home. Respondents are asked to identify the availability of e-mail and information booklets for parents within their schools. Section G ‘Support Staff’ is more detailed than its equivalent section in the 1989 questionnaires. Additional items include Home School Liaison Community (HSCL) teacher and Disadvantage Coordinator introduced since 1989 and the term ‘Remedial Teacher’ is replaced by ‘Learning Support Teacher’. Detailed data is sought regarding the perceived psychological support received by teachers including whether this support is provided by the designated national service NEPS or an alternative agency. Teachers are requested to rate the overall adequacy of the service, frequency of
accessibility, availability to undertake psychological assessments of referred pupils, and
the availability of a psychologist to undertake interventions, and access to information
provided by the service. The ongoing difficulty concerning delays in pupils accessing
psychological assessment is also addressed in Questions 4 to 7 focusing on assessment
delay, inability of pupils to avail of educational provision due to lack of assessment, and
the frequency with which pupils have availed of psychological assessment from
psychologists in private practice.

Section H poses questions regarding the teaching body’s views on pupil
placement which were sought in Section G of the 1989 questionnaires. The issue of
whether teachers consider that pupils are appropriately placed has been further
developed. Question 5 in this section explores pupil placement, pupils with additional
special needs, behavioural and emotional difficulties, and whether pupils would be
better placed in an alternative form of special educational provision. Respondents are
requested to rate these items on a scale. Views on the level of adequate post-primary
provision are requested and teacher attitude to whether enrolments have been affected
by the resource teacher model is also explored.

The matter of teacher inservice training is reviewed in Section I. Supplementary
information is requested regarding the identity of bodies organising inservice courses
attended by respondents.

There are marked differences in the 1989 and 2004 questionnaires in relation to
the curriculum provided in the three forms of special educational provision. Teachers
are invited to express their views on The Revised Primary School Curriculum
(Government of Ireland, 1999) and the usefulness of the NCCA Draft Guidelines for
Teachers of Students with Mild General Learning Disabilities (N.C.C.A., 2002). The
teaching of Irish, as suggested by the guidelines is addressed as is the implementation of
Individual Education Plans (IEPs). Provision of adequate time for teacher consultation
and curriculum planning is also queried. Questions 5 to 9 in Section I of the 1989
questionnaires focuses on curricular resources used in the subjects of English,
Mathematics, Environmental Studies, and Education for Life. Such programmes and
published schemes of work identified in 1989 are no longer in use in schools and
therefore it was considered irrelevant to gather similar data in 2004.

Section K of the newly devised questionnaires addresses the matter of teacher
isolation and perceived support from external agencies such as local Education Centres,
the Irish National Teachers’ Organisation, the Irish Association of Teachers in Special
Education, and locally established support groups. Integration and Inclusion among the different forms of provision is the topic of Section L. Questions have been added relating to schools’ availability of a written policy document on inclusion, satisfaction with current levels of integration, and whether an increase in these levels would benefit their MGLD pupils. Finally, one item queries whether or not teachers have been subjected to pressure from parents to increase levels of integration for their children.

The final section of the newly drafted questionnaires is entitled General Remarks and gives respondents opportunity to make general observations. Teachers are requested to rate the current system of special educational provision and the proposed new weighted system of provision (Government of Ireland, 2003c) originally scheduled to be introduced to schools in September 2004. Finally, respondents are requested to list three priority areas of provision which they feel need to be addressed.

The structure of the 2004 questionnaires was similar to the earlier questionnaires with a variety of question types as suggested by Wilson (1996). The newly drafted questionnaires had an increase of approximately 30 items, and therefore matter of questionnaire format was reviewed. An A4 and A5 booklet version, as advised by Boser (1990), of each questionnaire was produced with a coloured cover as suggested by Greer and Lothia (1994), Jobber and Sanderson (1983), and Leady (1997).

The two groups of teachers were reconvened on 16th January 2004 and 21st January 2004 to evaluate the newly designed questionnaires. The 23 teachers in attendance were given an A4 and A5 versions of the questionnaire. The A5 booklet questionnaire was unanimously selected as being more attractive, more readable and easier to complete. Teachers were requested to pay particular attention to the wording of all questions as advised by Ruane (2005) and Schuman (2002). Critical review of the questionnaires resulted in a number of minor typographical and semantic alterations. In addition, all item boxes which were to be ticked, were inserted using a box symbol in Microsoft Word as opposed to being drawn by hand which was done in the initial drafts. The three corrected questionnaires ‘Educational Provision in Special Schools for Primary Level Pupils with Mild General Learning Difficulties – Questionnaire for Teachers’ (Appendix VII.A), ‘Educational Provision in Primary Special Classes for Pupils with Mild General Learning Difficulties – Questionnaire for Teachers Appendix VII.B)’, and ‘Educational Provision in National Schools for Pupils with Mild General Learning Difficulties – Questionnaire for Resource Teachers’ (Appendix VII.C), were now ready to be piloted in a sample of 15 schools. These three questionnaires were then
completed by the twenty three teachers at these two meetings and retained for a further retest at a later date.

4.4.2.b Piloting of Questionnaire

The piloting of the three questionnaires followed an identical procedure to that followed in 1989. On 10\textsuperscript{th} February 2004 the author telephoned the principal teachers of three special schools, six National schools with special classes, and six National schools with Resource teachers to seek permission and establish their willingness to participate in the pilot survey of eighteen teachers. All schools were agreeable to participate in the research project. This telephone contact was followed up with a copy of the pilot questionnaire, a stamped addressed envelope, and an explanatory letter (Appendices VI.A, VI.B and VI.C) was posted on 17\textsuperscript{th} February 2004. The letter explained details of the 1989 review of provision and the importance and advantages of a follow up study was outlined. An additional sheet included instructions and details for the provision of respondent feedback on the questionnaire with particular reference to completion time, questionnaire layout, ambiguity of questions, clarity of instructions and redundant questions. The questionnaire was also reviewed by a Department of Education divisional inspector and the author’s research supervisor at Trinity College, Dublin. Sixteen of the eighteen teachers responded within the specified ten day time-frame and expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the instrument.

A number of minor alterations were suggested by some teachers. Firstly, each section of the questionnaire was labelled with a capitol letter ‘A’ to ‘M’ to simplify questionnaire navigation. Secondly, in Section B referring to School and Class data, the term ‘Disadvantaged’ was altered to ‘Designated Disadvantaged’ to avoid ambiguity for schools located in disadvantaged areas but which had not received official designated status from the Department of Education and Science. Thirdly, Question J.4 referring to the Department of Education’s “New Curriculum” (Government of Ireland, 1971) was incorrectly dated 1975 and this was corrected to 1971. Finally, an additional question, M.4, was included to elicit respondents’ views as to whether MGLD pupils should continue to undergo psychological assessment once the proposed DES “Weighted System” has been introduced.

The final revised version of the three questionnaires ‘Educational Provision in Special Schools for Primary Level Pupils with Mild General Learning Difficulties –
Questionnaire for Teachers' (Appendix VII.D), 'Educational Provision in Primary Special Classes for Pupils with Mild General Learning Difficulties – Questionnaire for Teachers Appendix VII.E)', and 'Educational Provision in National Schools for Pupils with Mild General Learning Difficulties – Questionnaire for Resource Teachers’ (Appendix V.II.F), was now ready for distribution to the selected sample.

4.4.2.c Questionnaire Reliability, Validity and Bias

Measures which were employed to address questionnaire reliability, validity and bias in 1989 were similarly employed in 2004. The twenty three teachers who completed the pilot questionnaires at two meetings in January 2004 were re-issued with identical questionnaires two months later on the 24th and 26th March 2004. The questionnaires completed by each of these teachers were carefully compared and it was noted that there was a very high correlation of identical answers between the first and second questionnaires. With such a small sample this process was completed manually and no statistical reliability analysis was employed. However, the manual interpretation and comparison of both questionnaires was sufficient to illustrate that teachers had given practically identical answers to the same instrument on two separate occasions before and after an eight week interval. It was concluded therefore that the level of consistency of measurement for the purpose of the study was sufficient.

Belson’s (1986) concerns relating to accurate questionnaire completion and uncompleted questionnaires were addressed in a similar fashion to the 1989 study. The accuracy of what was bring measured was addressed through group discussion and thorough careful and thorough review of the instrument as discussed in the piloting stage of the questionnaire. Regarding the matter of non-response, the study addressed this particular difficulty by achieving high questionnaire response rates through a variety of follow-up strategies.

It was felt that the procedures employed in 1989 to reduce personal bias in questionnaire design were successful. Similar procedures were adhered to in 2004 and the involvement of teachers from the three sectors of special education provision at all stages of the research project was seen as a key factor in attempting to eliminate the occurrence of such bias.
4.4.5 Questionnaire Administration and Response Rates

Identical administration procedures were adopted for the 1989 and 2004 surveys. Fifty eight special school questionnaires, 255 special class questionnaires, and 290 Resource teacher questionnaires were posted on 20th April 2004 to the schools listed in Appendices I.A and IB. As a large volume of commercial, promotional, and advertising mail is currently received by schools, it was considered necessary to attract principals’ attention. Therefore each envelope bore a white sticker with the words “Important – Please Read” printed in red ink. Questionnaires were accompanied by a covering letter to school principals (Appendices VI.D, VI.E, VI.F, and VI.G) outlining details of the 1989 study and the proposed follow up surveys. As in the 1989 study, the letter to principals of special schools differed slightly in that it requested questionnaires to be given to teachers teaching pupils in the 8 – 12 year age range. Schools which had been part of the 1989 study received a synopsis of some findings relating to special schools and special classes in 1989 (Stevens, 1990a) in a ten page A5 booklet (Appendix VIII.A). It was hoped that the provision of this information would act as an incentive (Church, 1993) and encourage a greater response from school principals. Bourque and Fielder (1995) noted that the provision of an abbreviated copy of results can act as a motivator in participant response. A stamped addressed envelope was included and a closing date of 27th April 2004 was set allowing respondents ten days during which to return questionnaires. Finally, a letter to class teachers (Appendix VI.N) with instructions was attached to each questionnaire.

Special school questionnaires were coded T013 to T068, special class questionnaires were coded D069 to D337 (Appendix I.A) and resource teacher questionnaires were coded R 333 to R662 (Appendix I.B). The same identifying number was used where a school participated in both 1989 and 2004 studies. For example if a school was issued with Questionnaire No. S068 in 1989, then the school was issued with Questionnaire No T068 in 2004. A similar procedure was followed for special class questionnaires. A special class issued with, for example, Questionnaire No. C150 received Questionnaire No. D150 in the follow up survey. Where additional classes had been established since 1989, then the questionnaire number remained unchanged but the prefix letter was altered as in the case of Questionnaire Nos. D150, E150, F150. This arrangement facilitated recording returned questionnaires, identifying a school for a reminder letter, while keeping the identity of the respondent teachers anonymous.
During the initial ten day response period 22 principals and nine special class teachers contacted the author by telephone, letter, fax, or e-mail to report that the special class in his/her school had ceased to function bringing the total number of possible respondents in this category from 255 to 224. During the same period three principals in the greater Dublin area and 33 principals and five resource teachers nationwide contacted the author to state that the National school to which they were attached did not employ a resource teacher. Details of these schools are listed in the ‘Notes’ column of Appendix I.B. Thus, of the total 290 schools sampled 41 did not have a Resource teacher suggesting that 14% of National schools in the sample which responded did not have the services of a resource teacher. By the 30th April 2004, 32 special school questionnaires, 119 special class questionnaires, and 284 resource teacher questionnaires had been returned yielding an initial response rate of 55.2%, 53.1% and 53.4% respectively representing an even response pattern over the three categories.

The follow up strategies to improve questionnaire response rates as suggested by Chiu and Brennan (1998) which had been employed in the 1989 study were also applied to the 2004 questionnaire surveys. On 3rd May 2004 the first reminder letter (Appendices VI.H, VI.I, VI.J) were posted to all schools which had not responded. During the following 24 days a further 61 completed questionnaires were returned. The response rate for special schools was now 36 (62.1%). Special classes had now returned 136 questionnaires (60.7%), while resource teachers had returned 173 completed questionnaires (69.5%), bringing the total overall average response rate to 64.2%.

A second reminder letter (Appendix VI.K) was posted to schools on 28th May 2004. Another copy of the questionnaire and an additional S.A.E. was included as suggested by Edwards et al. (2002). This letter resulted in a further nine special school questionnaires signifying a response rate of 77.6%, 33 special class questionnaires bringing the response rate to 75.4%, and an additional 16 Resource teacher questionnaires giving a response rate of 75.9% in this category.

A final reminder letter (Appendices VI.L and VI.O) was posted to principals and teachers on 6th June 2004, followed by a telephone to all schools which had not responded to previous reminders. By 1st July 2004, a further 26 completed questionnaires were received. The final response rate for special schools was 84.5%, special classes 79%, and resource teachers 81.5% as illustrated in Table 4.2.
The response rates for 2004 (Appendices II.B. and II.C) compare favourably with those achieved in 1989 and slightly higher rates are recorded in each category. The rate for special schools increased from 78.3% to 84.5%. Response rates for special classes for 1989 and 2004 were practically identical at 78.9% and 79%. The highest response was achieved in the resource teacher category with a final response of 81.5%. The overall rates had improved marginally from 78.6% in 1989 to 80.8% in 2004. The overall levels of response attained are well within those considered acceptable for educational research as reported by Cohen at al. (2003).

Referring specifically to the participation rate of special schools and special classes in both 1989 and 2004 survey, 100% of special schools participated in both studies and 83.8% of special classes participated (Appendix II.D).

4.5 ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.5.1 Data Coding and Entry

4.5.1.1 Quantitative Data

In October 1990 the 47 special school and 112 special class questionnaires were all examined prior to data coding. Checks were to make ensure completeness, accuracy and uniformity as advocated by Moser and Kalton (1977). Once examined, responses to
closed questions were entered into a customised database on the mainframe computer at the St John of God Research Centre located in Blackrock, Co Dublin. The entered data was then transferred to SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) – a data software programme which can perform a variety of data analyses and graphical presentation of data. The version used in 1989 was SPSS.PC+. The resulting file consisted of a data file with 189 named variables, each with a range of variable values. On completion of data entry, details for each record were listed on a printout and each item was individually checked against the original record to ensure the correct response was entered. This was not done randomly as is sometimes the case – each individual item on each individual record was checked. Once completed, this data was saved on a 5¼ inch floppy disc which was in standard use at that time.

In November 2003 the now obsolete 5¼ inch floppy disc containing the complete 1989 data was taken to a computer data management company and the data converted and transferred to a contemporary 3½ inch floppy disc. The original SPSS.PC+ files were converted to SPSS.11 with the assistance of the Research Department at the Health Research Board in Dublin making it possible to read the 1989 data using the more recent SPSS programmes.

In July and August 2004 the 49 special school, 177 special class, and 203 resource teacher questionnaires were all checked prior to data entry. Once examined, responses to closed questions were imputed on the author’s computer into the software programme SPSS Data Entry Builder which automatically creates SPSS data files for analysis. The new file contained the 1989 data listed under the 189 named variables along with the 2004 data listed under a new total of 273 variables reflecting the differences between the two survey instruments. This new file facilitated comparison of 1989 and 2004 data. On completion of data entry, details for each record were listed on a printout and each item was individually checked against the original record to ensure the correct response was entered.

4.5.1.b Qualitative Data

In processing the 1989 questionnaires, qualitative data gathered from the open ended responses and supplementary remarks from the 159 questionnaires were coded manually. Subsequently the 429 questionnaires from 2004 were analysed in a similar manner and qualitative comments were used to support information gained from
quantitative data or to qualify or extend it. The qualitative data gathered provided additional information on: School Funding and Parental Contributions, Agencies providing Psychological and other Support Staff, Inservice Education, Activities within Schools, and Respondents’ Priorities in Special Education, and General Comments. These data are presented in Appendix X (Tables X.1 to X.17).

4.5.2 Rationale for Statistical Tests

The data was analysed using SPSS.11.0, SPSS.11.5 and latterly SPSS.12.0. Initially, the variables that could be tested for normality yielded mixed results but the majority were parametric. The 1989 and 2004 datasets were subjected to the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S Test) and the Shapiro-Wilk Test for Normality which showed that the distribution of data was, on the whole, significantly normal ($p<0.05$).

As the majority of the variables are categorical, the range of statistical techniques employed was limited. Pearson Chi-Square ($\chi^2$) was the primary non-parametric statistical technique applied to compare groups and explore differences. In interpreting findings, the output is presented in term of Chi-Square value ($\chi^2$), degrees of freedom ($df$) and significance ($p$). Significance levels are presented as $p<0.05$ or $p<0.005$. Where 2 x 2 tables (i.e. each variable having only two categories) were crosstabulated, the value of Yates’ Correction for Continuity was applied in order to compensate for the overestimation of the Chi-Square value occurring in the 2 x 2 table.

When reviewing the relationship between two independent continuous variables or one continuous and one dichotomous variable, Pearson’s Product-Moment Correlation ($r$) was used. Results were presented in terms of the strength and direction of the correlation ($r$), sample size ($n$), and significance level ($p$).

Independent t-tests were used where it was required to establish whether there were statistically significant differences in the mean scores of a continuous dependent variable between two groups. Details of t-test score ($t$), mean scores ($M$), standard deviation ($SD$) and significance ($p$) levels are included. Eta squared values are not provided and therefore values were calculated manually as detailed by Pallant (2001). Eta squared values were interpreted using the guidelines suggested by Cohen (1988). Although data was collected from the same schools on two separate occasions (1989 and 2004), paired-samples t-tests (repeated measures) could not be used as it was
unlikely that the teacher completing the 1989 questionnaire in special schools or special classes would also complete the 2004 questionnaire.

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to establish if there were significant differences in the mean scores on dependent variables, across the three sectors of provision. While the $F$ value of the ANOVA signified that the mean scores in the different groups were not equal, Tukey’s HSD (Honestly Significantly Different) Post Hoc Test was applied to establish which means were significantly different from each other. One-way repeated measures ANOVA was not used given uncertainty of whether the same respondents had completed both 1989 and 2004 questionnaires.

4.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

4.6.1 Introduction

Ethical considerations in relation to undertaking educational research as discussed by Cresswell (2003), Punch (1998), Sapsford and Jupp (1996) and Sieber (1998) were carefully reviewed in light of this study and the author studied a selection of published codes of professional ethics (A.P.A., 2001; A.S.A., 1997; B.P.S., 2000; B.S.A., 2002; P.S.I., 2000). The issues pertaining to this study were identified as follows: the research participants, informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality, ethics of language and ethics in relation to data analysis and statistics.

4.6.2 Research Participants

The 588 participants in the five questionnaire surveys were all teachers employed in one of the three forms of special educational provision. The participants’ rights to privacy, and protection from any kind of physical, mental or legal harm (Sieber, 1998) were all examined in light of the different stages of the research project including questionnaire design, sampling, data analysis and disseminating the findings. The individual respondents were never identified by name and remained unknown to the author. While the questionnaires contained a number of sensitive items requesting teachers’ attitudes to and perceptions of a variety of issues within their schools, each respondent was provided with an SAE to ensure that he could return the questionnaire directly without it being viewed by the principal or colleagues.
4.6.3 Informed Consent

Informed consent is viewed as a key factor in educational research (Burgess, 1989; Evans and Jakupec, 1996). This was addressed by providing all participants with an explanatory letter (Appendices III and VI) clearly informing them of the purpose, procedures, and benefits of the proposed research. In addition, an address, telephone number, and latterly an e-mail address were provided so that the participant could contact the author if any clarification or further information was required. The right of the teacher to refrain from participating was also respected as suggested by Cresswell (2003) and Fraenkel and Wallen (1990). It can be assumed that this right was exercised by a small minority who did not respond and also by a number of teachers who declined to complete a number of the sensitive items in the questionnaire.

4.6.4 Anonymity and Confidentiality

The ethical value of these two concepts in research are widely discussed in the literature by (Cresswell, 2003; Nardi, 2003; Ruane, 2005; Sieber, 1998) among others. Anonymity was assured by ensuring that there was no way of linking any identifying information with the teachers completing the survey. As no names were given, it was not possible to identify the participants. However, in order to maximise response rates, questionnaires were coded to identify schools. Therefore it could be argued that it was possible to link data with individual schools. For this reason, an assurance was given in all communication (Appendices III and VI) that all information would be treated in strictest confidence. The identifying codes for these schools are listed in Appendix I but once the data was entered and checked, they were deleted. Therefore, confidentiality was guaranteed and subsequently no individual school can be linked with specific responses.

4.6.5 Other Ethical Considerations

Finally, two further issues were reviewed. First, the APA (2001) highlights the ethical importance of the use of language that is sensitive to particular populations. Given the nature of the population being researched, the author considered the use of unbiased language at each stage of the research process from questionnaire construction to the
writing of the report. A note on terminology and language used in the study has been included in the preliminary materials of the thesis.

Secondly, the ethical considerations in relation to data analysis were also explored as detailed by Raffe, Blundell, and Bibby (1983) and Sammons (1989) to ensure that the interpretation of the data would be as accurate as possible and that findings would not be suppressed, falsified, or invented.

4.7 SUMMARY

The methodology of the present study had been addressed in Chapter Four. The rationale for selecting the research design has been provided, and measures described, and administration procedures discussed. In addition, data analysis and ethical considerations have also been reviewed. Table 4.3 presents a summary of methodological approach to of the research project. The results section of the present study will be presented in Chapters Five, Six, and Seven.

Table 4.3: Summary of methodology employed in 1989 and 2004 surveys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument Selected</th>
<th>Special Classes 1989</th>
<th>Special Schools 1989</th>
<th>Special Classes 2004</th>
<th>Special Schools 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire Format</td>
<td>A4</td>
<td>A4</td>
<td>A3</td>
<td>A3</td>
<td>A3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of pages in Questionnaire</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of items in Questionnaire</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Schools identified</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Pilot Questionnaires</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Questionnaires issued</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Response Rate</td>
<td>78.9%</td>
<td>78.3%</td>
<td>79.0%</td>
<td>84.5%</td>
<td>81.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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5.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

5.6.1 Introduction

5.6.2 General Characteristics of Schools Surveyed

5.6.3 The Teaching Body

5.6.4 Pupil Placement

5.6.5 The Inclusive School
5.1 INTRODUCTION

Given the quantity and complexity of the data gathered, it was decided to divide the reporting of the results into three sections namely Chapters Five, Six, and Seven. Chapter Five presents the results of four of the eleven identified elements of special educational provision which deals with the general characteristics of the National and special schools which participated in the two 1989 and three 2004 surveys.

The first section of the chapter describes the characteristics of the special schools and National schools with special classes and resource teachers which participated in the 1989 and 2004 surveys. Geographical location, designated disadvantaged status, gender profile of the school and school size are all reviewed. Class size and resource teacher caseload, pupil profile including gender, distribution and age profile are all examined in the three forms of special education. In addition, the distribution of special class and resource teacher provision is studied.

The second section of Chapter Five is concerned with the teaching body employed in the special education sector. The ratio of male/female teachers, and their general mainstream and special educational teaching experience are appraised. Initial teacher training, the differing types of trained teacher within the sector, and the general and specialized qualifications of such teachers are all evaluated in this section. An analysis of employment status, teachers' redeployment rights, and teaching preferences is also undertaken. Further in-career training is also reviewed with teachers' perceived needs being noted.

The next section is concerned with pupil placement and examines the areas of school policy, perceived suitability of pupil placement. The issues of other special needs and behavioural/emotional difficulties in addition to MGLD, are also explored. Post primary provision is examined as is the negative effect of the resource teacher model on some school enrolments.

Finally, the question of integration/inclusion of special needs pupils with their mainstream peers is addressed. The prevalence of school policy, and current practices in terms of contact, activities and time allocation in the three forms of provision are reviewed. Teachers' perceptions of current practice, the benefits of increased integration, and parental pressure for improved mainstream/special education contact are also studied.
5.2 GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF SCHOOLS SURVEYED

5.2.1 Participation and Response Rates

Table 5.1 shows the number of schools surveyed and their participation rates in the 1989 and 2004 surveys. Each survey had a high response rate, of at least 82%. Twenty-six of the 31 special schools surveyed in 1989 responded giving a participation rate of 84%. This increased to 97% in the 2004 follow-up survey when 28 out of 29 special schools responded. The 1989 participation rate for National schools with special classes was 88% with 95 of 108 schools returning questionnaires. This was also improved upon when in 2004 it increased to 92% when 144 schools of the 156 National schools with special classes returned questionnaires.

Table 5.1: Number of schools surveyed and participation rates 1989 & 2004 (n=496)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Schools Surveyed</th>
<th>Schools which Participated</th>
<th>Participation Rate %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1989 Survey of Special Schools</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>84.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Special Schools</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>97.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989 Survey of Special Classes</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>88.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Special Classes</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>92.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Resource Teachers</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>82.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>573</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>87.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An 82% participation rate for National schools with resource teachers was recorded when 203 of the 249 schools surveyed responded. In total, 121 schools participated in the 1989 study while 375 schools responded in the 2004 study.

As a number of schools in both studies had more than one teacher complete a questionnaire, there are differences between the rates of school and teacher participation. Table 5.2 illustrates the teacher participation and response rates for 1989 and 2004. Forty seven teachers responded from special schools in 1989 yielding a
response rate of 78%. An improved response rate of 85% was achieved fifteen years later when special school teachers were resurveyed. Despite an increase in the number of special classes between 1989 and 2004, the response rates were identical on both occasions. One hundred and twelve of 142 teachers responded in 1989 and 177 of 224 special class teachers responded in 2004 giving a response rate of 79% for both surveys. The school participation rate and teacher response rate for National schools with resource teachers was identical as only one questionnaire was sent to each school in the sample. Two hundred and three questionnaires of 249 possible responses were returned by resource teachers yielding a school participation and teacher response rate of 82%.

The favourable response rates outlined above suggest that the results of the five questionnaires administered are representative of the five groups of teachers surveyed.

### 5.2.2 Geographical Location of Schools

Table 5.3 illustrates the geographical location of schools as reported by teachers. Teachers were requested to identify whether their schools were classified as urban or rural. In all surveys over 80% of special class and special schools were considered to be urban. The table shows 84% of special school teachers considered their school to be in an urban location in 1989 and this increased only slightly to 87.5% in 2004. Similarly, 86% of special classes were identified as urban both in 1989 and 2004. However, only

---

**Table 5.2: Number of teachers surveyed and response rates 1989 & 2004 (n=588)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Questionnaires Issued</th>
<th>Questionnaires Returned</th>
<th>Response Rate %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1989 Survey of Special Schools</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>78.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Special Schools</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>85.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989 Survey of Special Classes</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>79.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Special Classes</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>79.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Resource Teachers</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>82.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>733</td>
<td>588</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
44% of resource teachers identified their schools as being located in an urban setting while 54% stated their schools were located rurally.

Table 5.3: Reported geographical location of schools surveyed 1989 & 2004 (n=491)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989 Survey of Special Schools</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>84.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Special Schools</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989 Survey of Special Classes</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>86.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Special Classes</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>86.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Resource Teachers</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>44.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data in Table 5.3 is extracted from the teachers’ responses. It was decided to also analyse school addresses corresponding to returned questionnaires. The addresses of 121 schools from the 1989 survey and the 375 schools surveyed in 2004 were reviewed and classified into three categories namely ‘City / Suburbs’, ‘Town’, and ‘Village/ Rural’. Table 5.4 shows that 12% of special schools were located in a town in 1989.

Table 5.4: Geographical location of schools surveyed 1989 & 2004 (n=496)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Total n</th>
<th>City / Suburbs</th>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Village/Rural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989 Survey of Special Schools</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Special Schools</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989 Survey of Special Classes</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Special Classes</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Resource Teachers</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
which is 4% lower than the figure reported by teachers. Forty two per cent were located in a city or suburbs and 46% in a large town. The percentages for the 2004 town or rural location in follow up study remain relatively unchanged: 11% in a rural location, and 39% located in city / suburbs and 50% in a town.

In relation to National schools with special classes, 86% reported an urban location in 1989. In the analysis of school addresses, the resultant figure was 54% in City /suburbs and 12% in a town giving a total figure of 66%. Reported rural location was only 14% according to teachers while address analysis yielded a figure of 31% signifying that perhaps a sizeable number of schools reported as ‘rural’ may in fact have been located in villages or small country towns. Although the number of special classes increased between 1989 and 2004, an almost identical pattern emerges in the 2004 survey in relation to geographical location. Some 86% of teachers reported their school to be in a urban location and 14% in a rural school. Analysis of school addresses revealed that 59% of special classes were schools in a city or suburb, and 16% located in a large town. Fourteen per cent of teachers reported in 2004 that their special class was located in a rural setting while address analysis revealed that a quarter (25%) of special classes were located in small town / rural locations. This would appear to signify that in the follow up survey, a sizeable number of special classes in the rural category are in fact in villages or small towns nationwide.

This trend is even more obvious when the geographical locations of National schools with resource teachers are reviewed. Teachers reported that 56% of resource teachers were located in rural schools. When school addresses were examined under the category ‘Small town / rural’, this figure rose to 74%. Only 16% of resource teachers are located in city / suburb locations while only 11% are located in large town settings.

The above findings indicate that distribution of the geographical locations of special schools and special classes have remained relatively unchanged over the 15 year period 1989-2004 while newly established resource teacher provision is more prevalent in rural areas.

5.2.3 Gender Profile of School

Due to a number of school amalgamations which occurred prior to the commencement of this study, all special schools surveyed in 1989 and 2004 were co-educational.
Table 5.5 below outlines the gender profile of all schools surveyed. In the 1989 survey of special classes, 39% of teachers stated that their school were co-educational, while 35% of schools were male and 31% were female.

Table 5.5: Gender profile of schools surveyed 1989 & 2004 (n=516)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Co-educational</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989 Survey of Special Schools</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Special Schools</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989 Survey of Special Classes</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Special Classes</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Resource Teachers</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The gender profile of these schools is illustrated in Figure 5.1. By 2004, the number of teachers working in male schools had dropped from 30% to 18%, and the

Figure 5.1: Gender profile of National schools with special classes 1989 & 2004 (n=261)
number working in female National schools from 31% to 20%, accounting in the rise of co-educational schools from 39% to 62%. A crosstabulation (n=85) of gender profile and location in 1989 indicates 37% of urban schools were co-educational compared with 58% of rural schools. By 2004 however, 62% of urban schools were co-educational as were 64% of rural schools (n=151). The number of teachers teaching in boys' urban schools had doubled from 16% to 32%, suggesting an increase in single sex special classes in the period 1989-2004. A crosstabulation between school location and school type was significant among resource teachers \( \chi^2 = 25.82, df/2, p=0.000, p<0.005 \) where there were more co-educational schools in rural (92.6%) in contrast to urban settings (69.7%).

**Figure 5.2**: Gender profile of National schools with resource teachers 2004 (n=186)

![Gender profile chart](image)

Figure 5.2. shows the gender profile of National schools with resource teachers in 2004. The majority of these schools (82%) are co-educational, with only 10% male and 8% female. Of this 82% of co-educational schools (n=141), 38% are located in an urban setting while 62% are rural.

### 5.2.4 School Size

As different pupil ratios are assigned to different categories of National school, the Department of Education and Science determines the size of a primary school by the number of teaching posts sanctioned. The next section reviews the sizes of schools...
surveyed based on this method and in addition, reports on the number of classes located within these schools.

5.2.4.a Number of Sanctioned Teaching Posts

Details of the number of teachers employed in special schools and National schools with special classes and resource teachers are shown in Table 5.6. In 1989 the survey of special schools indicated that special school size varied from two teachers to a maximum of 16 teachers with the mean number of teachers being $M = 8.28$, $SD = 3.20$. By 2004, the number of teachers employed in special schools had increased with the smallest special school now having five teachers and the biggest employing 23 teachers. The mean number of teachers in special schools in 2004 was $M = 11.59$, $SD = 4.69$. A similar increase in the number of teachers employed in National schools with special classes is apparent. In 1989 the smallest National school with a special class had six teachers, while the largest school employed 26 teachers with a mean number of teachers of $M = 14.05$, $SD = 4.56$. The 2004 survey revealed that the smallest school with a special class was now employing five teachers while the largest had a staff complement of 35 teachers with a mean number of teachers for all such schools ($M = 18.40$, $SD = 6.63$).

A one way between groups analysis (ANOVA) was conducted to explore number of teachers in schools and the five groups surveyed, namely: special schools in 1989 and 2004; special classes in 1989 and 2004; and resource teachers in 2004. There

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Minimum No.</th>
<th>Maximum No.</th>
<th>Mean (M) No.</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1989 Survey of Special Schools</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8.28</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>3.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Special Schools</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11.59</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>4.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989 Survey of Special Classes</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14.05</td>
<td>13.00</td>
<td>4.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Special Classes</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>18.40</td>
<td>17.00</td>
<td>6.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Resource Teachers</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>9.83</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>6.95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
was a statistically significant difference at \( p < .05 \) level in the five groups \([F(4, 511) = 48.93, p = .000]\). Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean number of teachers differed significantly for the five groups; Special Classes 1989 \((M = 14.05, SD = 4.56)\); Special Classes 2004 \((M = 18.48, SD = 6.63)\); Special Schools 1989 \((M = 8.28, SD = 57.30)\); Special Schools 2004 \((M = 11.59, SD = 4.69)\); and, Resource Teachers 2004 \((M = 9.83, SD = 6.95)\).

National schools with resource teachers had the greatest range in terms of school size with schools two teacher up to 36 teacher schools in the sample. The mean number of teachers for National schools with resource teachers in 2004 was \( M = 9.83 \) teachers. This mean of \( M = 9.83 \) for the resource teacher survey is much lower than the mean \( M = 18.4 \) for the special class survey of the same year \((SD = 6.63)\), indicating that resource teacher provision is generally located in smaller size schools which are more likely to be in rural settings. Further analysis reveals that in 2004, 65% of resource teachers were working in a school of 10 teachers or less while only 9.4% of special class teachers worked in a school of similar size. Over half (55.8%) of special class teachers worked in a school with 11 to 20 teachers while only a quarter (26.2%) of resource teachers worked in the same category of school.

The relationship between the number of teachers working in the school and whether the school was located in an urban or rural setting was investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. There were medium negative correlations between these two variables in the 2004 surveys of special classes \((r = -.469, n = 148, p < .01)\) (two-tailed); special schools \((r = -.324, n = 48, p < .05)\) (two-tailed); and, and, in the case of resource teachers strong negative correlation \((r = - .583, n = 174, p < .05)\) (two-tailed), indicating that schools with greater number of teachers were less likely be located in a rural location.

5.2.4.b Number of Classes

Historically National schools assigned one class per teacher and therefore, for example, a three teacher school would have three classes, albeit some of these classes would be multi-grade classes with a number of standards. The employment of specialist teachers in special schools resulted in them having slightly more teachers within their schools. As the number of classes within a school is closely linked to the number of teachers employed, it was decided to examine the number of classes within schools when
reviewing school size. Table 5.7 shows the number of classes in the schools surveyed. The smallest special school had two classes in 1989 while the largest had 15 classes. By 2004, the smallest special school had increased to four classes and the largest to 17 classes with a mean of $M = 7.58$ classes ($SD = 3.20$). When these findings are compared with the minimum and maximum number of teachers employed, it is evident that by 2004, special schools have more teachers than classes and the bigger the special school the more non class-based teachers are employed. Similarly, the smallest National school with a special class in 1989 had 6 classes and the largest had 24 with a mean of $M = 12.33$ classes ($SD = 4.39$). By 2004, this figure had altered to a minimum of 5 classes and a maximum of 30 classes ($M = 12.68$, $SD = 5.09$). However, in 2004 the biggest school employed 35 teachers implying that larger National schools had a greater number of teachers assigned to non class-based duties.

As with the number resource teachers employed in National schools, the number of classes in these schools was less than in schools with special classes. The smallest school had just one class while the largest had 24 classes yielding a mean score of $M = 8.08$ classes ($SD = 4.55$). Comparison between the two forms of provision indicates that special class schools have a greater number of classes ($M = 12.68$, $SD = 5.09$) than schools with resource teacher provision ($M = 8.08$, $SD = 4.55$). Eighty per cent of resource teachers worked in schools with less than 10 classes while 41% of special class teachers worked in schools with the same number of classes.

Table 5.7: Number of classes in schools surveyed 1989 & 2004 ($n=517$)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum No.</th>
<th>Maximum No.</th>
<th>Mean (M) No.</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1989 Survey of Special Schools</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7.58</td>
<td>8.00</td>
<td>3.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Special Schools</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9.14</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>3.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989 Survey of Special Classes</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12.33</td>
<td>12.00</td>
<td>4.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Special Classes</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12.68</td>
<td>12.00</td>
<td>5.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Resource Teachers</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8.08</td>
<td>8.00</td>
<td>4.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.2.5 Class Size or Caseload

The Department of Education and Science has always determined the same pupil teacher ratio of special schools and special class for pupils with MGLD. However, examining pupil teacher ratio will not reveal the number of pupils enrolled in classes in special schools and special classes or attending a resource teacher. Table 5.8 illustrates the variance in class sizes in the schools surveyed. In 1989 special schools ranged in size from seven to 18 pupils with a mean class size of $M = 14.33$ pupils ($SD = 2.00$). In 2004 class sizes in special schools had dropped to $M = 10.06$ pupils ($M = 5.58$) per class broken down into a mean of $M = 6.39$ boys per class $M = 3.69$ girls per class.

The average size of a special class in 1989 was $M = 11.38$ ($SD = 2.38$) which dropped to $M = 8.89$ ($SD = 3.00$) in 2004. Twenty eight of the 172 teachers reported having no boys in their classes while other classes ranged from one to 19 boys. The mean number of boys in special classes was $M = 5.04$. The number of girls in special classes ranged from one to 14 with a mean number of $M = 4.05$ per class, while 27 special class teachers reported having no girls at all in their classes.

Table 5.8: Class Sizes in schools surveyed 1989 & 2004 (n=552)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Minimum Class Size</th>
<th>Maximum Class Size</th>
<th>Mean (M) Class Size</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1989 Survey of Special Schools</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14.33</td>
<td>15.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Special Schools</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>10.06</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>5.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989 Survey of Special Classes</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11.38</td>
<td>11.00</td>
<td>2.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Special Classes</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8.89</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Resource Teachers</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>9.92</td>
<td>8.00</td>
<td>7.30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The case load of resource teachers ranged from one to 34 pupils. Sixteen resource teachers reported having no boys and 34 said they did not have girls in their caseload. The mean number of pupils per caseload ranged from $M = 3.47$ girls to $M = 6.45$ boys giving a total mean of $M = 9.92$ pupils per resource teacher ($SD = 7.30$).
5.2.6 Pupil Profile

5.2.6.a Distribution of Pupils

Figure 5.3. shows the distribution of pupils located in the schools surveyed. In 1989, 635 (34%) pupils attended special schools while 1,229 (66%) attended special classes attached to National schools resulting in a total of 1,874 pupils. This figure had more than doubled by 2004 when 3,890 pupils were attending the three forms of special educational provision. Only 13% were now attending special schools while 40% attended special classes and 47% attended resource teachers. Clearly the establishment of the resource teacher model since 1989 has met the need for increased provision among a greater number of pupils.

![Figure 5.3: Distribution of pupils in special educational provision 1989 & 2004 (n=5,766)](image)

5.2.6.b Gender Profile

One limitation of the two surveys conducted in 1989 was that information was not requested regarding the gender of pupils. As a result, no information is available regarding the gender profile of pupils in 1989. This was rectified in the follow-up 2004 survey which reveals that 61% of pupils in schools were male and 39% were girls. When this figure is examined more closely differences are noticed between the gender profile among different forms of provision. Of the special school population, 63% were
male and 37% were female. The gender balance in special classes is slightly more equal with 56% of pupils being male and 44%. The highest pupil gender imbalance occurs among pupils in National schools with resource teachers – 66% are boys and 39% are girls. Table 5.9 summarises these findings:

Table 5.9: Gender profile of pupils in schools surveyed 2004 (n=3,890)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Special Schools</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Special Classes</td>
<td>867</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>693</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Resource Teachers</td>
<td>1,206</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,385</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>1,505</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A one way between groups analysis (ANOVA) was conducted to explore the number of boys in schools and three groups surveyed, namely: special schools in 2004; special classes in 2004; and, resource teachers in 2004. There was a statistically significant difference at $p<.05$ level in the three groups [$F(2, 405) = 4.28, p = .014$]. Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean number of boys differed significantly for the three groups: special classes 2004 ($M = 5.04, SD = 3.86$); special schools 2004 ($M = 6.37, SD = 3.65$); and resource teachers 2004 ($M = 5.85, SD = 4.78$).

A one way between groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) revealed there was no significant difference in the number of girls attending among the three groups surveyed in 2004 [$F(2, 399) = 1.31, p = .27$].

Chapter 5: Results
5.2.6.c Age Profile

The age range of pupils within classes was also reviewed. Special schools historically had a wide age range as they also frequently catered for second level special needs pupils. However, the data sought related to the age range within each respondent’s class.

A one way between groups analysis (ANOVA) was conducted to explore minimum ages of pupil in schools and the five groups surveyed, namely: special schools in 1989 and 2004; special classes in 1989 and 2004; and, resource teachers in 2004. Firstly, in relation to minimum age, there was a statistically significant difference at p<.05 level in the five groups [F(4, 555) = 23.32, p = .000]. Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean ages of pupils differed significantly for the five groups; special classes 1989 (M = 8.17, SD = 1.94); special classes 2004 (M = 8.16, SD = 1.91); special schools 1989 (M = 9.62, SD = 2.29); special schools 2004 (M = 9.80, SD = 2.75); and, resource teachers 2004 (M = 7.31, SD = 2.12). Similarly, an ANOVA examining maximum age among pupils also revealed statistically significant differences [F(4, 557) = 11.78, p = .000] with Tukey HSD test results showing significant differences among all three forms of provision in 1989 and 2004: special classes 1989 (M = 13.14, SD = 1.72); special classes 2004 (M = 12.41, SD = 1.45); special schools 1989 (M = 12.19, SD = 2.42); special schools 2004 (M = 13.08, SD = 2.71); and, resource teachers 2004 (M = 11.83, SD = 1.54).

It would be expected that only small special schools with few teachers would have a wide age range among pupils. Table 5.10 illustrates findings in relation to the 1989 and 2004 surveys. In 1989, special school teachers reported pupils from as young as five and as old as 19 in their classes. The mean minimum age was M = 9.62 years and the mean maximum age was M = 12.19 years giving a mean age range of M = 2.57 years within classes. The results of the 2004 follow up survey were almost identical with reported ages from four to 19 years and a mean age range of M = 3.28 years.

A wider mean age range was reported for special classes both in 1989 and 2004. In both surveys teachers reported pupils from four to 18 with a mean age range of M = 4.97 years in 1989 and M = 4.25 years in 2004. The lack of post-primary provision combined with the fact that one special class can serve the entire school population are likely to be factors in these resultant age ranges.
Table 5.10: Profile of age ranges of pupils in schools surveyed 1989 & 2004 (n=560)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Min Age</th>
<th>Max Age</th>
<th>Mean Age Range (M)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1989 Survey of Special Schools</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Special Schools</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989 Survey of Special Classes</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Special Classes</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Resource Teachers</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similarly, given that the resource teacher model works on a pupil withdrawal from the whole school population, a higher mean age range would be expected. The findings indicated that resource teachers taught pupils aged from four to 15 with a mean age range of 4.52 years.

5.2.7. Special Class Provision

Figure 5.4 illustrates the pattern of distribution of special classes in National schools in

Figure 5.4: Number of special classes in National schools in 1989 and 2004 (n=216)
In 1989, 69% reported having one class, 26% had two classes, 4% had three classes, and just 1.4% had four or more classes. The pattern had changed by 2004 with more schools having two or more special classes – 45% now had one class, 39% had two classes, while 15% had three or more special classes. These increased levels indicate an improved special class provision within schools. In 1989, rural schools had a maximum of two special classes with 5.5% of urban schools having three or more classes. In 2004 rural schools had a maximum of three special classes with 8% of urban schools having four to eight special classes within their schools.

5.2.8 Resource Teacher Provision

Information on the distribution of resource teachers was gathered from two 2004 surveys of National schools with special classes and National schools with resource teachers. The numbers of schools with resource teachers was practically identical in both samples. Of the sample (n=177) of special class teachers, 85% had a resource teacher in their schools and 86% of the second sample (n=249) had the services of a resource teacher. Forty eight percent of both samples had both a special class and a resource teacher.

The distribution of resource teachers in terms of school location differed in the two samples. The special class sample revealed that 86% of resource teachers were

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 5.5: Gender profile of National schools with resource teachers and National schools with special classes 2004 (n=344)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Special Class</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-Educational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resource Teacher</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-Educational</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
located in urban schools (n=147) while the resource teacher sample reported that only 44% were located in an urban setting (n=176). Similarly differences were observed when both samples were compared when reviewing gender profile of the schools with resource teachers. Figure 5.5 illustrates the differences in the two samples in terms of gender profile of schools. The special class sample reports 61% of resource teachers are in co-educational schools while the resource teacher sample reports a much higher 80% illustrating a distinct difference between schools with a resource teacher and schools with a special class and resource teacher.

Details of the distribution of posts within individual schools is given in Figure 5.6. Over half of schools (52%) with a resource teacher have just one post within the school. Just under a quarter (24%) have two posts with 13% have three posts and a further 11% having four or more posts. Of the 52% of schools with just one resource teacher post, the majority of these (78%) are located in rural National schools compared with only 36% in urban schools indicating that the bigger urban schools have more resource teacher posts.

Figure 5.6: Number of resource teacher posts in National schools 2004 (n=328)

The majority (61.9%) of resource teachers (n=189) are based in one National school but the remaining 38.1% are shared among two or more schools. Just under a fifth (18.5%) is based in two schools while 10.1% are shared between three schools. Only 9.5% of resource teachers have to provide a service in four National schools.
5.2.9 Designated Disadvantaged Status

Schools participating in one of the four schemes [Disadvantaged Area Scheme (DAS); Home School Community Liaison (HSCL); Breaking the Cycle (BTC); or, Giving Children an Even Break (GCEB)] addressing educational disadvantage in primary schools, are classified as ‘designated disadvantaged’ by the DES.

The two 2004 surveys of National schools indicate that 29% are categorised as designated disadvantaged. Closer analysis as presented in Figure 5.11 reveals contrasting results – 47% of schools with special classes are disadvantaged compared with only 14% of National schools with resource teachers. A crosstabulation between school location and disadvantaged status reveals that 41% of urban schools and 12% of rural schools are disadvantaged and significance was observed among special class teachers \( \chi^2 = 7.30, df = 1, p = 0.007, p < 0.05 \). Special class teachers indicated that 54%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Special Classes</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Resource Teachers</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(n=128) of them teach in urban disadvantaged schools as opposed to 19% of resource teachers (n=78) in the same category of school. Even in rural areas, a higher percentage (23%) of special class teachers work in disadvantaged schools compared to their counterparts working as resource teachers (10%). No significant differences were noted between the gender profile of the disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged National schools.

Chapter 5: Results
5.3 SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHING BODY

5.3.1 Gender Profile of Teachers

The overall male/female ratio for teachers who participated in the study was 16% to 84% (n=569). The ratio for the 1989 surveys was 15% male and 85% female (n=158) compared with a higher male ratio of 21% and 79% female in the 2004 surveys (n=411) reflecting an overall 6% increase in male teachers during the fifteen year period 1989 – 2004.

Table 5.12 shows the male/female ratios for the three differing types of special educational provision during this period. The number of male teachers in special schools increased somewhat from 20% to 22%. This trend was also evident in the special class sector where the percentage of male teachers increased from 16% to 18% over the same period.

The results also show that the male/female ratios for special schools (22% and 78%) and special classes (18% and 82%) are broadly similar while only 10.5% of resource teachers are male and 89.5% female, indicating that there was a higher percentage of female teachers in the resource teacher model of special education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989 Survey of Special Schools</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>9 19.6%</td>
<td>37 80.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Special Schools</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>11 22.4%</td>
<td>38 77.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989 Survey of Special Classes</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>18 16.1%</td>
<td>94 83.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Special Classes</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>31 18.1%</td>
<td>140 81.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Resource Teachers</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>20 10.5%</td>
<td>171 89.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.3.2 Teaching Experience

5.3.2.a General Teaching Experience

A preliminary review of the data indicates that the teaching body in the special educational sector form an experienced cohort of teachers. For the purpose of this research, teaching experience is taken as the number of years for which a teacher has worked within the educational system.

A one way between groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) revealed there was no significant difference in the number of years teaching experience among the five groups surveyed \[F(4,536) = 1.20, p = .31\].

Referring to the general teaching experience (including mainstream and special educational teaching) of teachers employed in 1989, the mean number of years teaching was \(M = 16.2\) years (n=144) compared with \(M = 18.0\) years in 2004 (n=397) signifying a slightly more experienced teaching force in 2004.

Table 5.13 illustrates the general teaching experience of teachers in the various forms of provision. No major differences are observed between special school and special class teachers. The mean number of years of general teaching experience of special class teachers in 1989 was \(M = 16.4\) years \((SD = 8.64)\) (n=101) which increased slightly to \(M = 17.9\) years \((SD = 10.09)\) in 2004 (n=169). Similarly, the experience of special school teachers increased marginally from \(M = 15.9\) years in 1989 \((SD=7.77)\)
Resource teachers were found to have the greatest general teaching experience with a mean of $M = 18.6$ years ($SD = 10.67$) ($n=179$). In relation to experience and teacher gender, an independent-samples $t$-test was conducted to compare years teaching scores for males and females. There was no significant scores for males ($M = 17.97, SD = 10.48$) and females ($M = 17.53, SD = 9.68$; $t(528) = 0.33, p = .71$) The magnitude of the differences in the means was very small ($\eta^2$ squared = .0002).

### 5.3.2.b Special Education Teaching Experience

Analysis indicated that a significant majority of primary teachers worked in mainstream education prior to becoming special education teachers, suggesting that only a part of their teaching careers have been spent in special education.

The mean combined special education teaching experience of special school and special class teachers did not change in the period 1989 to 2004: $M = 9.87$ years and $M = 9.75$ years respectively. However, as Table 5.14 shows, special school teachers had almost double the special education experience ($M = 12.50$ years in 1989, $SD = 5.73$ and $M = 12.90$ years in 2004 $SD = 8.90$) compared with their colleagues in special classes ($M = 7.50, SD = 5.05$ in 1989 and $M = 6.60, SD = 6.66$ in 2004). The lowest mean number of years teaching in special education was among resource teachers with just $M = 4.40$ years ($SD = 4.97$) ($n=178$).

#### Table 5.14: Special education teaching experience of teachers surveyed ($n=545$)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>$n$</th>
<th>Minimum No.</th>
<th>Maximum No.</th>
<th>Mean (X) No.</th>
<th>s.d.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1989 Survey of Special Schools</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>12.50</td>
<td>5.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Special Schools</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>12.90</td>
<td>8.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989 Survey of Special Classes</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7.50</td>
<td>5.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Special Classes</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>6.60</td>
<td>6.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Survey of Resource Teachers</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>4.97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In analysing special educational experience and teacher gender, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare special education teaching scores for males and females. There was no significant scores for males ($M = 7.16, SD = 6.16$) and females ($M = 6.99, SD = 6.74$; $t(534) = 0.26, p = .83$) The magnitude of the differences in the means was very small (eta squared = .0001).

A one way between groups analysis (ANOVA) was conducted to explore experience in special education and the five groups surveyed, namely: special schools in 1989 and 2004; special classes in 1989 and 2004; and, resource teachers in 2004. There was a statistically significant difference at $p<.05$ level in the five groups [$F(5, 540) = 29.08, p = .000$]. Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean number of years in special education differed significantly for the five groups; Special Classes 1989 ($M = 7.26, SD = 5.05$); Special Classes 2004 ($M = 6.55, SD = 6.66$); Special Schools 1989 ($M = 12.48, SD = 5.72$); Special Schools 2004 ($M = 12.90, SD = 8.91$); and resource Teachers 2004 ($M = 4.41, SD = 4.97$).

It is interesting to review the 2004 findings for general and special education teaching experience together. Special school teachers are the most experienced and resource teachers the least. Special school teachers on average spent $M = 12.90$ years in special education and just $M = 4.60$ years in mainstream education. The reverse appears to be the case among special class teachers who worked a mean of $M = 11.30$ years in mainstream education and a mean of $M = 6.60$ years in special education. Resource teachers had the greatest general teaching experience ($M = 18.60$ years) but the least in the special education sector ($M = 4.40$ years) suggesting that mainstream teachers in schools have taken up newly sanctioned resource posts in National schools as the resource model has developed.

The relationship between general teaching experience and special education experience was investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient for the five groups. There was a strong positive correlation between the two variables for special school teachers both in 1989 ($r = .878, n = 41, p<.01$) (two-tailed) and in 2004 ($r = .859, n = 48, p<.01$) (two-tailed).
5.3.3 Teacher Education

5.3.3.a Colleges of Education

Irish primary teachers receive their initial teacher education in Colleges of Education affiliated to one of two universities. St Patrick’s College of Education, Dublin, Mary Immaculate College of Education, Limerick, were both affiliated to the National University of Ireland (NUI), as was the now closed Carysfort College of Education. St Patrick’s College became affiliated to Dublin City University (DCU) in 1993 and Immaculate College of Education became affiliated to University of Limerick (UL). Three smaller colleges, St Mary’s College of Education, Marino, Froebal College of Education, and the Church of Ireland College of Education (CICE) are all affiliated to Trinity College Dublin (TCD) the University of Dublin.

![Figure 5.7: Number of teachers who attended Irish Colleges of Education 1989 and 2004 (n=383)](image)

Of the teachers surveyed (n=546), three quarters (74.7%) trained in Ireland. Seventy per cent attended one of the above colleges with a notable 26% being trained abroad and a further 4% having trained as Montessori teachers in this country.

In examining the 70% of teachers who trained in Ireland, Figure 5.7 shows the number of teachers who attended NUI and University of Dublin Colleges. The pattern of special class teachers attending the colleges remained practically unchanged between 1989 and 2004. In 1989, 63% of special class teachers were NUI graduates while 11.7%
were TCD graduates compared with 64.5% DCU and UL graduates and 13.2 TCD graduates in 2004. A comparable ratio is observed for resource teachers in 2004 with 63.3% of them being graduates of DCU and UL and 10.2% being graduates of TCD.

However, this trend changed when the location of initial teacher training is reviewed especially in the case of special school teachers. Only just over half (52.3%) of teachers in special schools in 1989 attended an Irish College of Education (27.3% NUI and 25% TCD) while this dropped to 37.4% in 2004, suggesting that 62.6% of special school teachers did not receive their initial teacher training in an Irish College of Education. As can be seen in Table 5.15 this is in sharp contrast with

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location of Initial Teacher Education</th>
<th>Special Class 1989</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 1989</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NUI (1989) DCU &amp; UL (2004)</td>
<td>63% (70)</td>
<td>64.5% (107)</td>
<td>27.3% (12)</td>
<td>37.4% (18)</td>
<td>63.3% (112)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TCD College</td>
<td>11.7% (13)</td>
<td>13.2% (22)</td>
<td>25% (11)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>10.2% (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal: Ireland</td>
<td>74.7% (83)</td>
<td>77.7% (129)</td>
<td>52.3% (23)</td>
<td>37.4% (18)</td>
<td>73.5% (130)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK Colleges</td>
<td>23.4% (26)</td>
<td>11.4% (19)</td>
<td>36.3% (16)</td>
<td>33.4% (16)</td>
<td>9% (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montessori</td>
<td>0.9% (1)</td>
<td>5.4% (9)</td>
<td>2.3% (1)</td>
<td>10.4% (5)</td>
<td>4.5% (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (USA etc)</td>
<td>0.9% (1)</td>
<td>5.4% (9)</td>
<td>9.1% (4)</td>
<td>18.8% (9)</td>
<td>13% (23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal: Abroad</td>
<td>25.3% (28)</td>
<td>22.3% (37)</td>
<td>47.7% (21)</td>
<td>62.6% (30)</td>
<td>26.5% 47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (111)</td>
<td>100% (166)</td>
<td>100% (44)</td>
<td>100% (48)</td>
<td>100% (177)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

the other two forms of provision where only a quarter of teachers received their initial teacher training outside Ireland.

Teachers who attended UK Colleges of Education accounted for 23.4% of special class teachers in 1989 although this dropped to 11.4% in 2004. A similar figure of 9% was recorded for resource teachers in National schools in the same year. However in contrast, the biggest group of UK trained teachers was to be found among special school teachers – 36.4% in 1989 and 33.4% in 2004.
Similarly, the greatest number of Montessori trained teachers were to be found in special schools rising from 2.3% to 10.4% over the fifteen year period between the two surveys. Only one Montessori trained teacher worked in special classes in National schools in 1989 and these increased to nine teachers (5.4%) by 2004. In National schools with resource teachers, eight Montessori trained teachers (4.5%) were employed in 2004.

The relationship between teaching experience and where teachers were trained was also investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. There was a medium negative correlation between the two variables ($r = -.314$, $n = 386$, $p<.01$) (two-tailed).

A total of 46 teachers (8.4%) trained in other colleges of education (excluding Ireland, UK, and Montessori). These worked in special classes (0.9% in 1989 and 5.4% in 2004), special schools (9.1% in 1989 doubling to 18.8% in 2004) and resource teacher posts (13%).

It is evident that the greatest diversity of teacher training exists among special school teachers surveyed in 2004 as illustrated below in Figure 5.8:

![Figure 5.8: Colleges of education attended by special school teachers 2004 (n=48)](chart)

In reviewing teacher gender, a number of interesting observations emerge. It was found that there were no male Montessori trained teachers in any of the three forms of provision in 1989 or 2004. Neither had any male teachers in the special education sector trained at Froebal College of Education or Church of Ireland College of
Education. Of the population of male teachers, 63.6% had graduated from NUI colleges and 11.4% from TCD colleges compared to their female colleagues 57.7% of whom attended NUI colleges and a higher 29.2% attended TCD colleges (primarily Froebal College of Education – 22.9%). No gender differences were observed among teachers who trained in the UK – 15.9% male and 15.5% female.

5.3.3.b Type of Training

While all National and special schools are under the auspices of the Primary Section of the DES, not all teachers working in this sector are trained as primary teachers. There are a number of qualified secondary, Montessori trained, and untrained personnel working within the system. Figure 5.9 details the number of qualified primary teachers working in special education in 2004.

It is interesting to note that 14.2% of special class teachers and 21.6% of resource teachers are not primary trained. An even higher figure of 30.6% is observed for special schools, but it should be noted that a number of these schools make provision for post-primary aged pupils. There is a small number of qualified secondary teachers employed within the system namely 5.9% in special classes, 16.3% in special schools, and 9.5% in resource posts. A similar pattern emerges with Montessori trained teachers which has been discussed in relation to initial teacher training. Referring to the matter of untrained
teachers working in special education, the findings of the 2004 surveys state that 4% of special class teachers were untrained as were 7.9% of resource teachers. No untrained teachers were employed in special schools at this time.

5.3.3.c Teaching Qualifications

The required teaching qualification for state National schools is the Bachelor of Education (BEd) degree conferred by Dublin City University, University of Limerick, or University of Dublin. Teachers who trained prior to 1972 completed a two year teacher training course resulting in the National Teachers (NT) qualification. Only teachers with an excess of 32 years experience would have the NT qualification in 2004. All newly qualified Irish teachers undergo a period of probation (Government of Ireland, 2005i) which once complete entitles them to full recognition to teach in an Irish primary school.

BEd graduates from abroad who do not possess the Irish qualification may teach with DES “provisional recognition” for a period of five years during which the teacher must work to pass the Irish language qualification “Scrúdú le haghaidh Cáiliochta sa Ghaeilge” (SCG) (Government of Ireland, 2000o, 2004e). DES “restricted recognition” is granted to foreign trained teachers employed in the special education sector in primary National schools and special schools where Irish is not a curricular requirement.

In recent years, persons with a primary degree and honours Leaving Certificate Irish have been eligible to do a full-time eighteen month postgraduate Graduate Diploma in Education at St Patrick’s College of Education, Mary Immaculate College of Education, and a variety of UK colleges of education.

Table 5.16 illustrates the number of teachers with the three year BEd or NT qualifications. In reviewing the table, it should be noted that the number of teachers with the NT qualification reduced significantly during the period 1989 to 2004 due to retirements and conversely the number of teachers with the BEd increased. While 94.4% of special class teachers had a BEd or NT in 1989, this dropped slightly to 87.1% in 2004. However, the number of special class school teachers increased 69.4% to 77.2% during the same period. In 2004, the resource teacher sector was the group with the least number of teachers with a BEd or NT qualification (76.3%) implying that just under one quarter of resource teachers held alternate qualifications.
Table 5.16: Number of teachers with primary teaching qualification 1989 & 2004 (n=564)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Special Class 1989</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 1989</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Teacher (NT)</td>
<td>67.5% (75)</td>
<td>14.7% (25)</td>
<td>56.3% (26)</td>
<td>4.2% (2)</td>
<td>13.8% (26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Education (BEd)</td>
<td>26.9% (30)</td>
<td>72.4% (123)</td>
<td>13.1% (6)</td>
<td>73% (35)</td>
<td>62.5% (118)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NT or BEd Total</td>
<td>94.4% (105)</td>
<td>87.1% (148)</td>
<td>69.4% (32)</td>
<td>77.2% (37)</td>
<td>76.3% (144)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of teachers with the NT, (i.e. having taught in excess of 32 years) still teaching in 2004 was 11% divided among special classes (1 male and 24 females) and resource teachers (5 males and 21 females). Pearson’s Chi-Square produced no significant relationship between gender and teacher qualifications.

5.3.3.d Special Education Qualifications

The one year full-time Diploma in Special Education (Dip Sp Ed) qualification is viewed as the postgraduate qualification which traditionally provided teachers with the required knowledge and skills to work in the special education field. A number of part-time courses and qualifications in learning support education have also been undertaken by teachers. Table 5.17 clearly details that more teachers in special schools have completed the Diploma in Special Education than any other sector. In 1989, 34.7% of these teachers had undertaken the Diploma and this number had increased to 41.7% by 2004. While the number of special classes increased, the number of special class
teachers with the Dip Sp Ed dropped from 27% to 21.8%. Only 13.2% of resource teachers have obtained this diploma.

While learning support qualifications are not specifically designed to include teaching the MGLD population, it is available to interested National teachers. The above table highlights the low number of teachers who have availed this training – 2.1% of special school teachers in 2004 with a disappointing higher uptake in National schools (7.6% among special class teachers and 6.9% among resource teachers).

5.3.3.e Additional Postgraduate Qualifications

Table 5.18 below indicates the number of special education teachers that held postgraduate qualifications in addition to the NT, BEd, or Dip Sp Ed. In 2004, over a quarter (25.7%) of teachers in this sector held additional qualifications: 19.4% of special class teachers, 22% of special school teachers, and 28.6% of resource teachers. Such figures indicate teachers’ commitment to undergo further academic training.

Table 5.18: Number of teachers with additional postgraduate qualifications excluding NT, BEd, and Dip Sp Ed 1989 & 2004 (n=154)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Special Class 1989</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 1989</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's Degree</td>
<td>16.4% (21)</td>
<td>9.4% (16)</td>
<td>8.7% (4)</td>
<td>8.3% (4)</td>
<td>15.3% (29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's Degree</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>6.5% (11)</td>
<td>6.5% (3)</td>
<td>6.3% (3)</td>
<td>4.8% (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Postgraduate Qualification</td>
<td>9.9% (11)</td>
<td>3.5% (6)</td>
<td>19.6% (13)</td>
<td>14.6% (7)</td>
<td>8.5% (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>26.3% (33)</td>
<td>19.4% (33)</td>
<td>34.8% (20)</td>
<td>29.2% (14)</td>
<td>28.6% (54)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3.4 Employment Conditions

5.3.4.a Employment Status

A question regarding teachers’ employment status was included in the 2004 surveys only. Teachers were asked to identify whether the teaching position they occupied was
“permanent” (conferring redeployment rights) or “temporary” status. Permanent status ensures that where the teaching post of the most junior teacher on a school staff is being suppressed, he or she is guaranteed a permanent post in another school within a certain geographical area. Therefore a “permanent” teaching post ensures job security for the teacher. Across all three sectors of special education, 82.2% of teachers had permanent posts.

Having examined these responses (n=383) of teachers in special schools, teachers in special classes, and resource teachers, it was found that the greatest security was to be found among special school teachers with 93.6% in permanent posts compared with 82.3% of special class teachers and 79.1% of resource teachers. Figure 5.10 illustrates the number of teachers (n=68) in temporary positions in 2004.

A fifth of resource teachers (20.9%) and 17.7% of special class teachers are in temporary positions and therefore are the most junior teachers in their schools with no guarantee of future permanent employment.

It is generally accepted that the more experienced a teacher is, the greater the likelihood of him or her securing a permanent position. The relationship between teaching experience and where teachers were in permanent or temporary posts was investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. There was a low negative correlation between the two variables ($r = -0.277$, $n = 364$, $p<.01$) (two-tailed).
indicating that teachers with longer experience were more likely to be in permanent teaching posts.

Independent samples T-tests in each of the three sectors confirmed this view. An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the ‘number of years teaching’ for permanent and temporary teachers across the resource teacher category. There was a significant difference in years for permanent teachers \((M = 20.90, SD = 8.76)\), and temporary teachers \((M = 14.57, SD = 14.21)\) at \(t = 2.038\), and \(p = 0.049\). The magnitude of the differences was quite small (eta squared = 0.03).

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the ‘number of years teaching’ for permanent and temporary teachers across the special school 2004 category. There was a significant difference in years for permanent teachers \((M = 18.48, SD = 9.35)\), and temporary teachers \((M = 3.33, SD = 1.52)\) at \(t = 9.106\), and \(p = 0.000\). The magnitude of the differences was very large (eta squared = 0.65).

Finally, an independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the ‘number of years teaching’ for permanent and temporary teachers across the special class 2004 category. There was a significant difference in years for permanent teachers \((M = 19.49, SD = 9.70)\), and temporary teachers \((M = 10.04, SD = 8.85)\) at \(t = 4.898\) and \(p = 0.000\). The magnitude of the differences was quite large (eta squared = 0.13).

This confirms that the number of years a teacher has been teaching does have a significant impact on whether the teacher holds a permanent or a temporary position. All teachers working for more than fifteen years had permanent posts while only 61.1% of teachers (n=54) teaching less than five years had secured permanent positions. No t-tests were computed for 1989 special classes and special schools as no cases were recorded, that is, there was no data had been collected for those two categories.

Some differences were noted when employment status as viewed in light of gender. More women held permanent posts than men. In 2004, 75.9% of male teachers had permanent posts compared with 83.2% of females (n=316). Among the male population (n=58), the least number of permanent posts was in the resource teacher sector where only 63.2% had secured such a post leaving over a third (36.8%) in temporary positions. The female teaching population (n=316) had 18% of special class teachers and 19.2% of resource class teachers in temporary posts with practically all (97.3%) female special school teachers in permanent posts.

In assessing employment status in relation to where special education teachers (n=364) received their initial teacher education it emerged that a higher percentage of
those trained in Ireland (86%) in permanent teaching posts in 2004 compared to those
who had trained abroad (80%).

5.3.4.b Redeployment Rights

In the case of a teaching post being suppressed, the most junior permanent teacher has
the right to have his or her name placed on the redeployment panel which is managed by
the DES in conjunction with, in most cases, the relevant diocesan office. The
redeployment opportunities for special education teachers with DES restricted
recognition have improved considerably in the period 1989 to 2004 with the
establishment of the “special panel” established in 1992 (Government of Ireland,
1992b). This operates alongside the national panel and guarantees redeployment for
special education teacher who do not have the qualification in Irish language (SCG).

One fifth (22.4%) of special class teachers (n=107) and 64.4% of special school
teachers (n=45) were not entitled to redeployment panel rights in 1989. This situation
had improved dramatically by 2004 with only 14.3% of special class teachers (n=112)
and 11.9% of special school teachers (n=42) without panel rights.

![Figure 5.11: Special education teachers without panel redeployment rights 1989 and 2004 (n=172)](image)

Figure 5.11 above shows the number of teachers without redeployment rights. The
greatest improvement has occurred for teachers in special schools where the number
without rights has dropped from 64.4% to 11.9% (largely due to the fact that 38.1% of
these teachers were now eligible for inclusion on the special panel. The group of
teachers with the least security is resource teachers with nearly a quarter (23.6%) of
them having no redeployment rights and therefore no guarantee of job security.

A crosstabulation of redeployment rights and gender yielded no significant
differences between male and female teachers. In reviewing teachers in their first year
of work (n=31), it was noted that just over half (54.8%) had redeployment panel rights
indicating that 45.2% had no job security in 2004.

Significant differences were noticed between sectors when redeployment rights
and location of initial teacher training were reviewed. Teachers who had trained at Irish
colleges of education fared marginally better with that those trained abroad. In 2004,
87.2% of Irish graduates (n=196) had access to panel rights (81.6% to main national
panel and 5.6% to special panel) compared with 83% of foreign trained teachers (n=53)
with a significantly different distribution of 49% having special panel rights and only
34% having rights to the main national panel \( \chi^2=66.80, df=2, p=0.000, p<0.005 \). The
greater number of non Irish trained teachers having access to the special panel as
opposed to the general main panel obviously indicates that these foreign trained teacher
had not yet acquired the Irish language qualification (SCG) which would have granted
them access to the main panel and consequently a greater choice of schools in which to
be redeployed. Figure 5.12 summarises findings in relation to teacher panel
redeployment rights and location of training.

![Figure 5.12: Panel redeployment rights among teachers trained
in Ireland and abroad (n=249)](image-url)
5.3.4.c Teacher Job Preferences

Teachers’ job choice, and whether or not they were working in their desired area of choice was examined among all respondents (n=552). Teachers were asked to state whether or not they were teaching in special education by choice, and secondly, if they would prefer to be employed in the mainstream sector.

In 1989, 13% of teachers (n=156) commented that they were not teaching in special education by choice suggesting that special education was not their first choice but were teaching in this area because they had either not succeeded in securing mainstream teaching posts or their training or qualifications precluded them from applying for such posts. This figure had risen to 17% (n=396) by 2004 indicating that nearly a fifth of special education teachers were working in a field they had not chosen. Closer analysis of this 17% revealed that over a quarter (28.6%) of special school teachers were not teaching in special education by choice.

An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare years teaching in special education scores for those teaching in special education by choice and those who were not. Significance was noted among those teaching by choice (M = 7.16, SD = 6.48) and those not teaching by choice (M = 4.90, SD = 5.09; t(518) = 0.28, p<.005) The magnitude of the differences in the means was small (eta squared = .014).

Some differences were noted in the responses of male (n=84) and female teachers (n=458). In 1989, all male teachers were in special education by choice but by 2004 some 17.9% claimed that this area was not their first choice with nearly a third (31.6%) of them being resource teachers. Among female teachers the greatest number of teachers not in the field by choice was special school teachers with a reported 33.3%.

An analysis of teachers’ job preference and where they had received initial training was significant among special class teachers \([\chi^2=5.69, df = 1, p=0.017, p<0.05]\)and resource teachers \([\chi^2=39.5, df = 1, p=0.047, p<0.005]\). Ninety one percent of Irish trained teachers (n=307) (and therefore with full DES recognition) reported that they were in special education by choice. The greatest satisfaction was among resource teachers (93%) and the least among special school teachers (76.2%). Those trained abroad, and therefore more limited in the posts for which they can apply, were in the post of their choice in only 71.4% of cases. As with their Irish trained colleagues, least satisfaction was expressed by special school teachers with 41.7% of them stating that they were not in special schools by choice.
A similar related trend was observed when evaluating teacher choice and the permanent or temporary status of the teaching post. In 2004 only 9.9% of permanent teachers (n=294) were not in special education by choice as compared with 30.8% of temporary teachers (n=65) inferring that nearly a third of the temporary special education teaching body is not there by choice.

Teacher preference to work in mainstream education has also changed. In 1989, 15% of teachers would have preferred this option, but this increased to 22% by 2004. The greatest desire to transfer is among special class teachers (25.3%) followed by special school teachers (22.7%), and lowest among resource teachers (16.8%).

In relation to gender, differences were noted between teachers’ preferences to transfer to mainstream education in 2004: 35.5% of males as compared with 21.9% of female special class teachers favoured a move, 10% male and 26.5% female special school teachers indicated that they would prefer mainstream, as would 38.9% of male and 13.5% of female resource teachers. There appears to be a considerable minority of teachers employed in the special education sector who would prefer to work in mainstream education.

This was also the case when teacher preferences and panel rights was reviewed. While only 18.5% of permanent special education teachers employed in 2004 would prefer to move to mainstream, over a third (34.4%) of temporary teachers would move with over half (51.9%) of these being special class teachers.

Similarly, the greatest desire to leave special education and join the mainstream teaching body was found among teachers trained outside Ireland. Only 18.1% of Irish trained teachers (n=293) would prefer mainstream against twice as many (36.9%) non Irish trained teachers (n=65) signifying a desire among those trained abroad to join the teaching staffs of regular National schools.

5.3.5. Professional Development

5.3.5.a Teacher Attendance

About three quarters (76%) of special education teachers (n=570) had attended some form of inservice training within the two years prior to completing the questionnaire. The numbers increased slightly from 74% in 1989 to 79% in 2004. In examining the different types of provision during this period, it was observed that there was drop in
attendance by special class teachers from 80.7% to 67.8% while the number of special school teachers attending increased from 67.4% to 91.7%. Figure 5.13 below displays this data:

![Figure 5.13: Teacher attendance at inservice training 1989 and 2004 (n=570)](image)

In 1989, male special education teachers attended more inservice training than their female colleagues (80.6% compared with 72.0%) but the reverse was the case by 2004 when only 66.1% of males attended compared with 81.1% of females. Closer examination of the data reveals that in 2004 there were: no differences between special school teachers (90% male and 92.1% female); more female than male resource teachers attended (80.4% female and 60% male); and the greatest difference was among special class teachers where only 48.4% male teachers attended as opposed to 70.8% females.

Employment status was also a factor influencing teacher attendance at courses. Permanent teachers (n=310) were more likely to attend (79.4%) than those in temporary teaching posts (n=66) with only 59.1% in attendance. In examining the different forms of provision, the greatest differences occurred among special class teachers with 70.7% permanent and 53.6% temporary teachers availing of inservice education \( \chi^2=9.85, df 1, p=0.002, p<0.005 \).

Whether or not teaching by choice also appeared to be a factor in teacher attendance as teachers working in special education by choice were more likely to avail of inservice education. In 2004, 80.4% of teachers in special education by choice
availed of training while only 60.8% of those who would to prefer to work in mainstream did. The poorest attendance (39.1%) was among special class teachers not working in special education by choice.

Of the teachers surveyed in 2004, 21% indicated that they had not attended any course, 42.5% had attended one course, 30.2% had attended two courses, and 6.3% had attended three or more courses, with no major differences across the three different forms of provision.

5.3.5.b Types of Training Undertaken

Teachers’ qualitative responses regarding the types of inservice training undertaken in the two year period prior to 2004 can be found in Table X.8 in Appendix X. The responses have been categorised broadly into three areas namely curricular areas, specific topics and other inservice attended.

The most attended inservice training by special education teachers (78.3%) in 2004 centred on the introduction of the revised curriculum, probably explained by the fact that the DES was providing compulsory inservice education in this area to all National schools. Attendance at specific elements of the curriculum was small: SPHE (13%); Visual Arts (12.6%); ICT (11.1%) and Music Education (0.75%).

Eight areas featured among the specific inservice topics attended by teachers. In general, the numbers attending the different topics were low except in the case of special school teachers and the three specific areas: Autism (48.3%); Emotional & Behavioural Difficulties (45.1%); and, General Learning Disabilities (45.1%). The mean attendance at inservice featuring these specific topics for all special education teachers in 2004 (n= 285) was as follows: ADHD (3.6%), Autism (25.4%), Cerebral Palsy (1.1%), Downs Syndrome (3.2%), Dyslexia (16.3%) Dyspraxia (2%), Emotional & Behavioural Difficulties (19.8%); and, General Learning Disabilities (29%).

Teachers also attended training in the areas of Addressing Challenging Behaviour, Assessment & Testing, and Individual Education Plans (IEP). It is worth observing that 58% of special school teachers who completed inservice did so in the area of Addressing Challenging Behaviour compared with 2.5% of special class teachers and 8.6% of resource teachers. On the other hand, it was resource teachers who attended inservice on Individual Education Plans (IEPs) in greatest numbers (28.2%).

Table 5.19 illustrates course providers of inservice education attended
by teachers in 2004. Teachers' centres provided the courses most attended by special education teachers (57.7%) in the period 2002 to 2004 as follows: 53.6% special class teachers; 64.3% special school teachers, and only 44.2% special school teachers. Conversely, more special school teachers (60.5%) attended DES organised courses with lower numbers from special classes and resource teachers: 41.8% and 39.6% respectively. Other course providers accounted for a smaller percentage of attendance by special teachers: Colleges of Education (19.3%); the INTO (13.0%); other course providers (15.3%) and only 2% attending universities suggesting perhaps that teachers were seeking more practical courses rather than those with more academic content.

5.3.5.c Perceived Training Needs

Respondents had the opportunity to identify perceived inservice training needs in 1989 and 2004. This data is to be found in Table X.9 and Table X.17 in Appendix X. Just over 44% of teachers responded in 1989 and the same percentage again in 2004 and some differences can be noticed in the changing perceived needs. In addition, the perceived differing needs among the three types of provision can be observed.

In identifying priorities for special education in general, over half of teachers (51.5%) identified the provision of a comprehensive and adequate inservice training
model as an urgent need. There were calls for particular types of courses with all teachers (58.8%) suggesting the provision of a general course specifically addressing special educational needs (SEN).

Special class and resource teachers seemed to have similar perceived inservice training needs. In 2004, 47% of these teachers were seeking courses which addressed specific disabilities and topics (especially in the case of 33.6% of resource teachers). Similarly both these groups raised the issue of inservice accessibility for rural schools (22.5%), the need for special education inservice for mainstream class teachers (20.1%), and the possibility of distance learning courses (6.4%). The need for in school training was also highlighted as a priority by 46.5% of resource teachers.

Teachers also made suggestions regarding inservice training in curricular areas. All respondents advocated inservice education in the core curricular subjects: 15.7% of special school teachers; 22.3% of special class teachers, and 23.7% of resource teachers. Suggestions of specific curricular topics were low except in the case of SPHE which 25% of special school teachers as an inservice need.

Special school teachers also appeared to have a greater inservice training need in the areas of challenging behaviour and IEPs. A substantial 63.1% of these teachers singled out Challenging Behaviour as a pressing inservice need compared with 21% of special class teachers and 11.8% of resource teachers. In addition, 66.6% of special school identified challenging behaviour as one of their three priorities requiring attention. The provision of training in the area of IEPs was sought by 36.8% of special school teachers, 27.6% of special class teachers and 22.7% of resource teachers.

The issue of assessment & testing was also identified as a training need with greatest need among resource teachers (23.7%). Suggestions were also made that all inservice education for teachers should be funded by the DES.
5.4 PUPIL PLACEMENT

5.4.1 Enrolment of Pupils

5.4.1.a Adequacy of Background Information

Teachers were asked if they had received adequate background information on pupils prior to enrolment into their classes. Their reported satisfaction improved somewhat between 1989 and 2004. In 1989, 54.1% of teachers (n=158) stated that adequate prior information had been received while this had increased to 60.4% by 2004 (n=400). These results are summarised in Table 5.20 below. The number of teachers reporting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adequate Background Information</th>
<th>Special Class 1989</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 1989</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>47.3% (53)</td>
<td>60% (99)</td>
<td>60.9% (28)</td>
<td>60.4% (29)</td>
<td>62.6% (117)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>3.6% (4)</td>
<td>3.6% (6)</td>
<td>4.3% (2)</td>
<td>2.1% (1)</td>
<td>4.8% (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>49.1% (55)</td>
<td>36.4% (60)</td>
<td>34.8% (16)</td>
<td>37.5% (18)</td>
<td>32.6% (61)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (112)</td>
<td>100% (165)</td>
<td>100% (46)</td>
<td>100% (48)</td>
<td>100% (187)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

that they only sometimes received sufficient information remained low. For special class teachers, the number of teachers not receiving information prior to enrolment had dropped from 49.1% in 1989 to 26.4% in 2004. However, the same was not the case among special school teachers where 34.8% in 1989 and 37.5% in 2004 claimed they received insufficient pupil information prior to enrolment. In general terms, over one third (35.5%) of special education teachers employed in 2004 did not receive adequate information on pupils being enrolled to their classes.

Teachers in schools which were designated disadvantaged appeared to receive more background information. In reviewing special class and resource teachers in 2004 (n=291), it emerged that only 29.1% of teachers in disadvantaged schools did not receive sufficient pupil information compared with 36.8% of their colleagues in non-
disadvantaged National schools. Significance was observed in the case of special class teachers only where \( \chi^2=8.99, df = 8, p=0.011, p<0.05 \). Analysis also indicated that teachers employed in urban schools (n=239) were more likely to receive information on pupils prior to enrolment. Just over a three quarters (77.7%) of them claimed received enough information compared with less than half (44.3%) of their colleagues in rural schools (n=121). No significance was noted when Pearson Chi-Square was applied.

5.4.1.b Prior Parent/Teacher Meetings

Information was also sought on whether or not teachers met with a prospective pupil’s parents prior to enrolment. Table 5.21 below indicates teachers’ responses. The

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parental Meeting</th>
<th>Special Class 1989</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 1989</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>32.7% (36)</td>
<td>76.9% (130)</td>
<td>57.4% (27)</td>
<td>79.6% (39)</td>
<td>58.2% (110)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>52.7% (58)</td>
<td>1.2% (2)</td>
<td>29.8% (14)</td>
<td>2% (1)</td>
<td>1.1% (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>14.5% (16)</td>
<td>21.9% (37)</td>
<td>12.8% (6)</td>
<td>18.4% (9)</td>
<td>40.7% (77)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (110)</td>
<td>100% (169)</td>
<td>100% (47)</td>
<td>100% (49)</td>
<td>100% (189)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

frequency with which special school teachers met with parents increased dramatically between 1989 and 2004. In 1989, they met parents in 32.7% of cases and sometimes met them in 52.7%. By 2004 however, teachers met enrolling pupils’ parents in 76.9% of cases. A similar improvement was noted in the case of special schools where formerly 57.4% met and 29.8% sometimes met which had improved to 79.6% by 2004. In general, about a fifth (20.2%) of special school and special class teachers met with parents prior to enrolment in contrast to 40.7% of resource teachers.

Schools with designated staff working directly with parents were more likely to have pre enrolment meetings with parents in 2004. In schools with HSCL teachers, 76.4% met with parents as opposed to 67.2% of teachers from schools without a HSCL (n=405). Correspondingly in schools with Disadvantage Coordinators, 84% of teachers met parents compared with 68.7% of teachers in schools with no coordinators.
Schools with structures in place to accommodate parents appeared to have more meetings with parents: schools with a designated parents' room met in 79.8% of cases in contrast to 63.7% of those without; schools with an information booklet met parents in 73.1% of situations while those without an information booklet met less (64.4%). Only slight differences were noticed in schools where an active Parents’ Association was present: 74.4% and 69.8%.

5.4.2 Pupil Placement

5.4.2.a Suitability of Pupil Placement

Teachers generally felt that the pupils they were teaching were appropriately placed in their schools as shown in Table 5.22. Special class teachers stated that all or most of their pupils were suitably placed (92% in 1989 and 89% in 2004). Comparable results were observed for special school teachers where 95.3% in 1989 and 91.9% in 2004 felt pupils were in an appropriate educational setting. Resource teachers expressed 87.6%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>19.3% (21)</td>
<td>34.7% (60)</td>
<td>20.9% (9)</td>
<td>14.3% (7)</td>
<td>35.7% (66)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most</td>
<td>70.6% (77)</td>
<td>54.3% (94)</td>
<td>74.4% (32)</td>
<td>77.6% (38)</td>
<td>44.9% (83)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some</td>
<td>10.1% (11)</td>
<td>10.4% (18)</td>
<td>4.7% (2)</td>
<td>8.2% (4)</td>
<td>17.3% (32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Few &amp; None</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>0.6% (1)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>2.2% (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (109)</td>
<td>100% (173)</td>
<td>100% (43)</td>
<td>100% (49)</td>
<td>100% (185)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

satisfaction. Only a small minority indicated that they felt that few or none of their pupils were in appropriate placements (one special class and four resource teachers).

More teachers in schools designated disadvantaged felt that their all or most of their pupils were appropriately placed 91.6% compared with 83.2% of teachers in non-
disadvantaged schools. Differences were especially noticed among resource teachers where only 7.7% of teachers in disadvantaged schools felt that few or none of their pupils were appropriately placed compared with 19.4% of resource teachers in non-disadvantaged schools. Pupils in urban schools were also considered by their teachers to be more appropriately placed (89% against 74.7% of teachers in rural schools) with significance observed in special schools \( \chi^2=6.14, df=2, p=0.047, p<0.05 \) and special classes \( \chi^2=6.84, df=2, p=0.033, p<0.05 \). Interestingly, 19.4% of rural resource teachers felt that few or none of their pupils were appropriately placed with them.

5.4.2.b Perceived Alternative Pupil Placement

While the majority of teachers stated that in their opinion pupils were appropriately placed, they were asked to judge whether pupils would be better placed in an alternative form of provision. Special class and resource teachers in National schools were asked to evaluate whether their pupils would be better placed in special schools. Figure 5.14 illustrates the findings. It can be observed that 54.7% of special class and 66.3% of resource teachers felt that none of their pupils would benefit from special school placement \( \chi^2=8.25, df=2, p=0.017, p<0.05 \). In addition, a greater number of special class teachers (36.6%) would send “some” pupils than resource teachers (22.8%). Teachers in schools for boys were more likely to feel that pupils would be better placed
in a special school. Teachers in male schools (n=49) would transfer "some" or "few" pupils in 57.1% of cases. A much lower percentage was revealed for teachers in female schools (32.1%) and co-educational schools (22.8%). In reviewing Figure 5.15,

Figure 5.15: Special class and resource teachers suggesting special school placement by school gender (n=243)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>No pupils</th>
<th>Few pupils</th>
<th>Some pupils</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-Educational</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

it was observed that boys' schools (20.4%) would send "some" pupils compared with 9.1% of teachers in coeducational schools and 4.1% in female schools.

Urban based teachers (both special class and resource) were more likely to feel that their pupils would be better placed in special schools (n=204). Forty two per cent of these teachers felt "some" and "few" pupils would be benefit from special school placement compared with 33% of teachers in rural schools (n=115). In the case of special class teachers significance was noted [$\chi^2=7.04$, $df=2$, $p=0.03$, $p<0.05$]. No differences were noted between designated disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged schools.

Where pupils were perceived to have behavioural or emotional difficulties, teachers were more likely to suggest pupils would be better placed in special schools. Figure 5.16 illustrates how resource and special class teachers were more likely to transfer pupils to a special school if they had increased behavioural or emotional difficulties. Where "few" pupils had difficulties 27.2% of teachers would place them in a special school in contrast to 61.6% of teachers who considered "most" of their pupils to have difficulties.

Chapter 5: Results
Resource teachers in National schools (n=179) were asked whether their pupils would be better placed in a special class. Results indicated that 53.6% felt pupils were best placed in a resource programme. Thirty two per cent stated that they would transfer

![Figure 5.16: Special class and resource teachers suggesting pupil special school placement 2004 (n=408)](image)

"few" pupils, 10.6% would transfer "some" pupils, 2.2% would move "most" pupils while only 1.7% would transfer "all" pupils. No differences were noted among urban and rural resource teachers or in disadvantaged or non-disadvantaged schools.

Special school teachers (n=48) also gave their views regarding their pupils being better placed in the two forms of provision in National schools, namely special classes and resource programmes. Fifty eight percent thought their pupils would be better remaining in a special school rather be better placed in a special class and 76.6% in the case of a resource programme. Figure 5.17 shows how 39.6% of special school teachers would send "few" pupils to a special class compared with 19.1% to a resource teacher. The numbers who considered sending "some" pupils was low. The results indicate that special schools judged special classes to be a preferable option to resource programmes. Unlike special class and resource teachers, special school teachers were less likely to suggest that pupils with behavioural and emotional difficulties transfer to an alternative form of provision.
5.4.3 Perceived Additional Special Needs

5.4.3.a Special Needs in addition to MGLD

Table 5.23 below shows teachers’ perceptions of whether pupils they teach have difficulties in addition to mild general learning difficulties. By far more special school teachers considered the pupils they teach to have extra difficulties. While only 34.3% of special class teachers and a quarter (25.6%) of resource teachers felt that “all” or “most” of the pupils they thought had additional problems, 70.8% of special school teachers

Table 5.23: Pupils with difficulties in addition to MGLD 2004 (n=407)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers’ Perceptions Of Pupils</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All or Most Pupils</td>
<td>34.3% (59)</td>
<td>70.8% (34)</td>
<td>25.6% (48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Pupils</td>
<td>49.4% (85)</td>
<td>27.1% (13)</td>
<td>52.4% (98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Few or No Pupils</td>
<td>16.2% (28)</td>
<td>2.1% (1)</td>
<td>22.0% (41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100 (172)</td>
<td>100 (48)</td>
<td>100 (187)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
did. At the other end of the scale 16.2% of special class and 22% of resource teachers felt “few” or “none” of their pupils had additional needs but only 2.1% of special school teachers felt their pupils were into this category. Clearly the special school is the form of provision where teachers feel their pupils have the greatest additional needs.

**Figure 5.18:** Special school pupils with difficulties in addition to MGLD 2004 (n=48)

![Pie chart showing the distribution of teacher responses to the question of additional difficulties.]

- 2% felt “All”
- 8% felt “Most”
- 27% felt “Some”
- 63% felt “Few”

Figure 5.18 represents the views of special school teachers only. Over eight percent felt “all” pupils, 62.5% said “most” pupils, 27.1% stated that “some” pupils, and 2.1% of teachers reported that their pupils had additional difficulties.

When viewing the three models of provision in relation to school gender and pupils with additional difficulties, no differences were observed. Thirty one percent of teachers in boys schools, 30.6% of teachers in girls schools, and 30.3% of those in coeducational schools felt that “all” or “most” had additional difficulties. School location was significant among special class teachers where teachers in urban schools perceived significantly more pupils to have additional difficulties \( \chi^2=10.79, \ df \ 2, p=0.039, p<0.05 \).

5.4.3.b Pupils with Behavioural and Emotional Difficulties

The research findings indicated that special school teachers considered their pupils to have more behavioural and emotional difficulties than their colleagues in the other two forms of provision in National schools. Table 5.24 shows these results:
Table 5.24: Pupils with behavioural or emotional difficulties in addition to MGLD 2004 (n=403)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers' Perceptions Of Pupils</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All or Most Pupils</td>
<td>18.1% (31)</td>
<td>53.2% (25)</td>
<td>10.8% (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Pupils</td>
<td>53.8% (92)</td>
<td>38.3% (18)</td>
<td>41.1% (76)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Few or No Pupils</td>
<td>28.1% (48)</td>
<td>8.5% (4)</td>
<td>48.1% (89)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100 (171)</td>
<td>100 (47)</td>
<td>100 (185)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Over half of special school teachers (53.2%) considered their pupils to have behavioural or emotional difficulties compared with only 18.1% of special class teachers and an even smaller number (10.8%) of resource teachers. Conversely, special class and resource teachers felt that a much greater number of their pupils fell into the “few” or “none” categories, 28.1% and 48.1% respectively, in contrast to only 8.5% of special school teachers. It can be deduced from Table 5.24 that teachers perceived that the most behaviourally and emotionally challenging pupils are to be found in special schools and the least in resource programmes in National schools. When asked whether pupils with behavioural difficulties would be more appropriately placed in special schools

Figure 5.19: Pupils with behaviour or emotional difficulties by National school type (n=387)

![Figure 5.19: Pupils with behaviour or emotional difficulties by National school type (n=387)](image-url)
significant differences were observed between special class teachers \( \chi^2=16.24, df 4, p=0.039, p<0.05 \) and resource teachers \( \chi^2=20.55, df 4, p=0.008, p<0.05 \). Boys' schools were considered to have the greatest number of pupils with behavioural or emotional problems, although no significance was noted using Pearson's Chi-Square. Figure 5.19 illustrates teachers perceptions in different types of schools. In the categories “all” or “most” pupils, 28.5% of teachers in boys' schools, 8.5% of teachers in girls schools, and 19.6% of teachers in coeducational schools remarked that their pupils had behavioural or emotional problems. Teachers considered that girls had least problems with no teachers at all reporting that “all” their pupils had such difficulties.

Teachers reporting pupils with the least behavioural or emotional difficulties were to be found in rural schools. When teachers were asked to reflect on whether “few” or “none” of their pupils had behavioural difficulties, 48.8% of rural teachers reported that their classes could be classified as such compared with only 27.8% of teachers in urban schools. Eighteen percent of rural resource teachers claimed to have no pupils with behavioural or emotional difficulties.

To a lesser degree, a similar pattern was revealed when teachers in disadvantaged schools \( n=396 \) revealed that they considered that “few” or “none” of their pupils (29.3%) had such problems compared with 36.2% of their colleagues in non-disadvantaged schools.
5.4.4 Post Primary Provision

Just over half (52.9%) of teachers surveyed in 2004 reckoned that post primary provision was adequate for pupils leaving primary school. Special school teachers considered their pupils to have the greatest access to adequate post primary education in 64.4% of cases, probably due to the fact that so many special schools provide post-primary education for their pupils.

![Figure 5.20: Teachers' perceptions of adequacy of post-primary provision 2004 (n=391)](image)

Both forms of provision in National schools deemed the provision inadequate in 48.4% of cases (49.7% of special class and 47.1% of resource teachers).

When special class and resource teachers’ responses are examined more closely, differences emerged in terms of school type. Special class teachers reported adequate post primary provision in the case of 53.6% of boys’ schools and 37.5% of girls’ schools while 30% of resource teachers in male schools and 80% in female schools reckoned adequate provision was available for their pupils where \( \chi^2=8.64, \text{ df } 2, p=0.013, p<0.05 \). No differences were observed between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged schools.

Equally, no significant differences were observed when urban and rural schools (n=354) were compared (52.1% and 51.7% respectively) although the area with the lowest access to adequate post primary provision was among rural special classes (66.7%).
5.4.5 The Effects of the Resource Teacher Model on Enrolments in Special Schools and National Schools

There was strong feeling among special class and special school teachers (n=202) that the development of the resource teacher model within National schools had affected their schools enrolments in a negative fashion. Three quarters (74.8%) of special class teachers and 89.9% of special school teachers considered that their school enrolments had been affected.
5.5 THE INCLUSIVE SCHOOL

5.5.1 Schools with an Integration/Inclusion Policy

Teachers were asked to indicate whether their schools had a policy concerning the integration/inclusion of pupils with special educational needs. In general terms, 57.3% of teachers surveyed (n=370) indicated that their school had such a policy. Figure 5.22 above outlines the findings where over half of teachers in the three forms of provision worked in schools with a policy on integration/inclusion: 56.3% of special class teachers; 53.7% of special school teachers; and 59.1% of resource teachers.

Some slight differences were observed when school type and policy was examined (n=353). Among special class teachers, 66.7% of those in male schools, and 61.3% in co-educational schools had a policy on integration, compared with only 41.2% of their colleagues in female schools. In contrast, 100% resource teachers in female schools had such a policy compared with 50% of resource teachers in male schools and 56.3% of those in co-educational schools where \( \chi^2=9.33, df \, 2, p=0.009, p<0.05 \). An analysis of school location and integration policy showed that more urban schools with special classes had a policy while rural special school teachers reported having a policy in greater numbers. Special class teachers in urban National schools reported to have a policy in 58.5% of cases compared with only 35% of their rural colleagues. Rural and
urban resource teachers were similar with a reported figure of 59.4% and 55.8% respectively.

No significant differences were observed between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged schools or schools employing a HSCL teacher.

5.5.2 Integration/Inclusion and the Special Class

5.5.2.a Special Class/Mainstream Class Contact and Joint Activities

Special class pupils have contact with mainstream pupils in nearly all primary schools (98.8%) with just two teachers reporting that their pupils had no contact whatsoever. When the activities shared between special class and mainstream pupils were examined, it was noted that little change occurred between 1989 and 2004. Figure 5.23 shows the

![Figure 5.23: Special class/mainstream class joint activities 1989 and 2004 (n=147)](image)

Based on Table X.14 in Appendix X

shared activities in which pupils were engaged and how this level of shared activity has dropped in most areas since 1989. The main activity was in the playground presumably at school opening, closing and playtimes. Nearly all special class pupils (98.6%) had contact with their peers in 1989 and this had dropped slightly 94.8% by 2004. Sports activities were shared by special class and mainstream pupils in 69.6% in 1989, but fifteen years later only 47% were having joint shared pursuits. Similarly, the level of joint after-school activities dropped from 35.7% to 26.4% during the same period.
Interestingly, the only field where an increased level of special class/mainstream activity occurred was in the curricular area showing a marginal increase from 60.7% in 1989 to 67.5% in 2004.

Further analysis showed that the majority of joint special class/mainstream class activity was in the non-academic areas of the curriculum. Of the special class teachers (n=117) who had contact for curricular activities in 2004, only 5.9% reported pupils having shared experiences in the core subjects (English, Mathematics, and Irish). The aesthetic aspects of the curriculum faired better: 50.4% for Visual Arts; 43.5% for Music; and, 20% for Drama as shown in Figure 5.24 above. Physical Education was a shared curricular activity in 39.3% of cases and 37.6% of teachers reported that special classes and mainstream classes jointly shared SPHE classes.

Figure 5.24: Special class/mainstream class joint curricular activities 2004 (n=117)

Based on Table X.15 in Appendix X
5.5.2.b Time Allocation for Inclusive Activities

The level of contact depended on the amount of time which both sectors spent together

Table 5.25: Daily time allocation for special class/mainstream class joint activities 2004 (n=116)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minutes Per Day</th>
<th>0-29</th>
<th>30-59</th>
<th>60-89</th>
<th>90-119</th>
<th>120-149</th>
<th>150-179</th>
<th>180-209</th>
<th>210+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

and this time allocation varied from school to school ranging from 15 minutes up to four hours. The daily time allocation is shown in Table 5.25 (based on Table X.16 in Appendix X), and shows that over a third (34.6%) of special class pupils spent between one and two hours per day with their mainstream peers, while a further 41.8% had contact for two to three hours each school day. The mean number of minutes special class/mainstream class contact each day was 117 minutes, representing 34.4% of the standard primary school day of 5 hours 40 minutes.

5.5.2.c Special Class Location

Teachers (n=284) were requested to state whether the physical location of the room occupied by the special class pupils was integrated within the school or located separately from the other classes. Figure 5.25 outlines the reported situation in 1989 and 2004. It was noted that 16.4% of special classes were separate from the rest of the school in 1989 and by 2004 the situation had worsened slightly with 18.4% of classes not being physically integrated within the school \[\chi^2=31.60, df=4, p=0.003, p<0.005\]. Of this 18.4%, teachers rated 9.4% of these classrooms as inadequate. The segregation of special classrooms was especially noticeable in the case of girls’ schools where 28.6% of them were located separately from mainstream classes in 2004, compared with 17.1% in co-educational and 10% in boys’ schools. Some changes had occurred during the fifteen years where 11.3% of urban and 25% of rural classrooms were segregated in 1989 as opposed to 19.2% of urban and 18.2% of rural special classes not being located.
within the school. Resource teachers reported teaching in a room separate location in 40% of cases in 2004 which is not surprising as the majority of resource teachers withdraw pupils from the mainstream classroom.

5.5.3 The Special School and Integration/Inclusion

5.5.3.a Special School/National School Contact and Joint Activities

Over one third teachers (35.4%) in special schools (n=48) in 2004 reported that they had contact with National schools in their locality. Contact was more likely in urban schools with 39% having contact in contrast to only 16% of rural schools.

The reported level of inter special school mainstream National school visits was low. Just 12.5% of special school teachers reported taking their pupils to a National school, and in all cases these were urban special schools. Similarly, the level of special class visits to special school was equally low: 10.9% in 1989 reduced to 8.1% in 2004. No great differences were noted between urban and rural special classes visiting special schools. Only 2.1% of resource teachers in National school had been to a special school with their pupils.
Table 5.26 illustrates how special school/National school contact had lessened considerably over the period 1989 to 2006.

Table 5.26: Special school / National school joint activities 1989 & 2004 (n=50)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Special School 1989</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sporting activities</td>
<td>42.5% (20)</td>
<td>16.3% (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After School activities</td>
<td>21.3% (10)</td>
<td>4% (2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1989, 42.5% of special schools had regular contact for sporting activities which had dropped to 16.3% by 2004. Equally, the contact afforded through after school activities had dropped from 21.3% to a mere 4% in the same period, signifying a fall in the level of special school/National school joint activities.

The question regarding frequency with which special school pupils visit National schools was poorly answered (Table X.13 in Appendix X). Of a total of ten special schools, one visited two or three times a week, three visited once a week, one visited fortnightly, three visited monthly and a further three once a month, and finally, two schools less frequently. In general terms, the reported level of special school/National school contact was extremely low.

5.5.3.b National School Use of Special School Facilities

Special school teachers were also requested to state whether National schools availed of their facilities. Results are displayed in Figure 5.26 showing that the number of National schools using special school facilities had halved between 1989 and 2004. In 1989 over a quarter (26.2%) of special schools reported that local National schools made use of their facilities while this had dropped to 12.2% fifteen years later. In 2004, facilities were used in four urban and two rural special schools nationwide.
5.5.3.c Inter Special School Contact

While contact and joint activities between special schools and National schools were poor, the level of contact between special schools and other special schools was better. This inter special school contact included a variety of activities including a range of sports, quizzes, and other competitions. In 1989, 65.9% of special school teachers reported pupils having contact with other special schools. By 2004, this had improved to nearly three quarters (73.5%) of special school teachers surveyed.

5.5.4. The Resource Model and Integration/Inclusion

5.5.4.a Resource Teacher/Pupil Activities

Resource teachers working in National schools stated that 96.9% of pupils had contact with other pupils in their schools. Since the resource model is based on the principle of pupils being in mainstream classes and being granted allocated ‘resource hours’ each day, it is not clear how the remaining 3.1% (six teachers) reported that their pupils did not have contact with their peers.
Figure 5.27 (based on Table X.10 in Appendix X) shows that the most popular activities which were undertaken by resource teachers with MGLD pupils were literacy (89.7%) and numeracy (80%).

The other activities undertaken accounted for a very small part of the resource teacher’s work. Sixteen per cent of teachers engaged in visual arts activities, while an equal number (11.7%) undertook ICT and SPHE activities. Just 4.4% of resource teachers did music with their pupils. It is clear from these findings that the primary focus of resource teachers’ activities with MGLD pupils centres on the provision of literacy and numeracy programmes.

With reference to where such activities occur, resource teachers (n=190) reported in the majority of cases pupils were seen on a withdrawal basis in a separate resource room. However, over a quarter (28.4%) of resource teachers stated that worked in the mainstream class with pupils.

### 5.5.4.b Time Allocation for Resource Teacher Activities

The mean amount of time per day spent by pupils with the resource teacher was 50.6 minutes. Table 5.27 illustrates how the majority (69.8%) of pupils spend between 30 minutes to an hour with the Resource teacher. This implies that nearly 70% of pupils in
the resource category spend four hours and forty minutes or longer each day in the mainstream class without input from a resource teacher. Only 16.9% of teachers were able to teach their pupils for periods between one and two hours.

When questioned about the level of satisfaction regarding the time allocation per pupil, 28.6% of resource teachers (n=185) stated that the time assigned to teach MGLD pupils was insufficient. The greatest satisfaction with time allocation was expressed by teachers based in one school only (36% stating time was sufficient) while the least satisfaction was amongst resource teachers shared between four schools (6.3%).

### 5.5.4.c The Special Class and Resource Teacher

While a number of schools have one or more special classes and the services of a resource teacher, pupils should only be in receipt of one form of provision, i.e. attend a special class or resource teacher, but not both. It was decided to examine whether this DES recommendation was being observed in National schools.

Just 5.3% of resource teachers (n=190) reported teaching pupils from special classes. These were in co-educational primary schools divided equally between urban and rural schools.

However, when special class teachers (n=153) were asked to state if they send pupils to a resource teacher nearly a quarter (23.5%) responded positively. The discrepancy between the reported attendance by resource teachers (5.3%) and special class teachers (23.5%) may have occurred because only 9.6% of the resource teachers surveyed reported having a special class in their school. When the resource teacher cohort with special classes in their schools (n=24) was analysed, 20.8% of resource teachers stated that indeed they did teach special class pupils also.
In boys’ only and co-educational schools 23.7% of special class teachers sent pupils to the resource teacher while this was the case in only 14.3% of girls’ schools. This practice was much more common among urban special classes (25%) than in their rural counterparts (4.8%) and in National schools with two or more resource teachers.

5.5.5 Teachers’ Perceptions of Integration/Inclusion

5.5.5.a Teacher Satisfaction with Current Integration/Inclusion Practice

Figure 5.28 shows that only just over half teachers (n=214) in special classes and special schools are satisfied with current levels of integration for special needs pupils with their mainstream peers. In special classes, 59.8% of teachers were not satisfied as were 53.3% of their special school colleagues, implying that there is a sizeable proportion of teachers (43.4%) not pleased with current integration practices. Resource teachers (n=194) reported 70.8% satisfaction rate in 2004. An analysis of school location and teacher satisfaction indicated that special class and special school teachers (n=192) were less satisfied in rural schools with 62.9% stating that they were not satisfied with pupil integration levels compared with 40.6% in urban schools. No differences were noticed between teachers in schools designated for boys, girls, or co-educational schools.
Some differences were noticed among special school and special class teachers in schools where a specific policy on integration was in place. Figure 5.29 indicates how teacher satisfaction regarding integration levels of pupils was higher among special class teachers in schools with a policy (69.4%) in contrast to those where no defined policy existed (40.3%). The opposite was found in the case of special school teachers where teacher satisfaction was 35% in the case of special schools with a policy and a higher 61.1% in schools without.

While an analysis of teacher gender showed that 60.8% of males were satisfied with pupil integration compared with 55.1% of females, closer examination revealed that this gap was wider among special school teachers. In special schools, 70% of males were satisfied compared to only 48.6% of their female teaching colleagues. Teachers trained abroad also expressed higher levels of satisfaction (66%) compared with 52.8% of Irish trained teachers. Special school teachers trained overseas were satisfied in 66.7% of cases in contrast to 46.2% of their Irish trained co-workers.

Higher levels of satisfaction with pupil integration were also noted among teachers where they were working in educational sector of their choice. Those in posts of their choice were satisfied in 53.9% of instances (62% in special schools and 45.8% in special classes) against 41.7% of those in posts where they were not teaching by choice (39.1% of special class teachers and 44.4% of special school teachers. No
correlation was observed between teaching experience and satisfaction with integration levels.

5.5.5.b Teachers’ Views on Benefits of Increased Integration/Inclusion

Over half of special class and special school teacher (n=203) considered that their pupils would benefit from increased levels of integration. Figure 5.30 demonstrates how 60% of special class and 45.8% of special school teachers valued the concept of increased contact between special and mainstream provision. Interestingly resource teachers, working in the sector where the greatest integration/inclusion occurs, reported that they felt increased special education/mainstream contact would be favourable. Teachers in rural schools (79.2%) were more likely to favour increased integration than those in urban schools (49.3%) with the greatest variation in special schools where 83.3% of rural schools deemed increased integration to be advantageous as opposed to 41.5% of urban special schools. Referring to school type, teachers in girls’ schools were least likely to suggest increased integration (46.7%) where teachers were most likely to favour increased contact in co-educational schools (64.5%).

Where schools had no integration policy in place, 72.6% of special class teachers recognised the merits of increased pupil integration compared with 54.4% of teachers in schools with a policy in place \( \chi^2=4.35, df 1, p=0.027, p<0.05 \). More special school teachers (59.1%) favoured increased integration in schools with a policy
in contrast with 47.4% of teachers in special schools with no policy. Special class teachers with an integration policy in place were significantly satisfied with current levels of integration \([\chi^2=12.93, df 1, p=0.001, p<0.005]\).

Male teachers were found to be more in favour of increased integration compared to females. In special classes, 73.3% of males approved of improved integration as opposed to 57.4% of females. Similarly 54.5% of male special school teachers were in favour compared with 43.4% of female teachers. Three quarters of overseas graduates teaching in special classes (75%) supported increased contact while 58% of Irish trained teachers were in favour. In relation to teaching experience, special class teachers working for less than five years were most in favour (77.3%) of improved pupil contact.

Special class teachers not teaching by choice were much more likely to favour increased integration (87% compared with 57% of those teaching by choice) and this finding was corroborated by special class teachers who would prefer to teach in mainstream education \([\chi^2=61.17, df 1, p=0.013, p<0.05]\). A crosstabulation \((n=139)\) between increased integration and preference for mainstream employment revealed that 82.5% of special class teachers preferring mainstream compared with 53.8% whose preference was to remain in special education.

5.5.6. Parental Requests for Increased Integration/Inclusion

Teachers in all forms of provision in 2004 were asked to state whether they felt there was pressure from pupils’ parents to increase the level of integration/inclusion with mainstream peers. Over a quarter (26%) of teachers \((n=407)\) reported that, in their opinion, parents would like increased contact with mainstream for their children. Figure 5.31 illustrates how this was spread across the three forms of provision. The greatest demand was perceived to be among National school parents (29.9%) of special class parents and 27.2% of parents with children attending resource and the lowest among special school parents (20.8%). When school type was crosstabulated with parental desire for improved integration, it emerged that the greatest expectation was among over a third of parents of pupils in co-educational schools with special classes (36.5%) \([\chi^2=7.60, df 2, p=0.022, p<0.05]\) compared a quarter (26.7%) of those in girls’ schools,
and only 10.3% in boys’ schools. A parallel pattern was observed among parents of pupils attending resource teachers where 30.5% of parents of pupils in co-educational schools, 18.8% of those in girls’ schools, and 15% of those in boys’ schools desired improved special education mainstream contact.

Twice as many parents in rural schools (48.8%) desired increased integration compared with those in urban schools (24.1%). In the case of special class teachers, 24.2% of those in urban schools reported parental pressure in contrast to 47.6% of their rural colleagues [$\chi^2=3.83$, df 1, $p=0.049$, $p<0.05$]. Resource teachers reported only a 7.8% difference between urban and rural schools.

Parents of pupils in special classes in schools designated disadvantaged (19.7%) were less likely to seek increased integration for their children than those in non-disadvantaged schools (38.6%) [$\chi^2=6.08$, df 1, $p=0.014$, $p<0.05$]. No significant differences were recorded among resource teachers in disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged schools (26.9% and 26.7% respectively).
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

5.6.1 Introduction

A summary of the key findings of Chapter Five is provided the four subsections that follow. A number of quantitative terms are used in the summary sections of Chapters Five, Six, and Seven as detailed in Table 5.28 below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantitative term used</th>
<th>Approximate percentage of occurrence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>almost all</td>
<td>More than 90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most</td>
<td>75 – 90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majority</td>
<td>50 – 74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fewer than half</td>
<td>25 – 49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a small number</td>
<td>16 – 24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a few</td>
<td>up to 15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.6.7 General Characteristics of Schools Surveyed

- **Location**: Geographical differences were noted between the three different forms of provision where 89% of special schools, 75% of special classes and 44% of schools with resource teachers were located in urban locations. [5.2.2]

- **School Size**: School size, based on the number of permanent teachers employed, increased between 1989 and 2004 with larger schools more likely to be located in urban settings. Special classes were more likely to be located in larger schools and resource teachers located in smaller rural schools. [5.2.4.a]

- **No. of Classes within Schools**: The number of classes within special schools and National schools did not alter significantly for the duration of the study. [5.2.4.b]

- **Pupil/Teacher Ratio**: Pupil teacher ratio dropped in special schools from 1:14 in 1989 to 1:10 in 2004. A similar reduction was observed in special classes where the ratio dropped from 1:11 to 1:9. The pupil teacher ratio among resource teachers was reported to be 1:10. [5.2.5]
• **Pupil Distribution:** In 1989, one third (34%) of the school-going population of MGLD pupils attended special schools and two thirds (66%) attended special classes. By 2004, this had changed whereby just less than half (47%) of pupils attended National schools with resource teachers, 40% were in special classes, and a few (13%) were enrolled in special schools. [5.2.6.a]

• **Pupil Gender:** The gender profile of pupils in 2004 was 61% male and 39% female with a slight variation in National schools with resource teachers (66% to 34%). [5.2.6.b]

• **Pupil Age Profile:** The lowest mean age of all pupils was among those attending resource teachers (7 years 4 months) and the highest among those enrolled in special schools (13 years 1 month). Age range within classes was highest among children attending resource teachers (4 years 6 months) and lowest among those within classes in special schools (3 years 3 months). [5.2.6.c]

• **No. of Special Classes:** Over the duration of the study, the number of National schools with more than one special class increased. By 2004, 45% of schools had one special class, 39% had two such classes and 16% had three or more special classes. [5.2.7]

• **No. of Resource Teachers:** Most (86%) of National schools surveyed had at least one resource teacher. Half of schools (52%) had just one post, 24% had two posts, and 24% had three or more posts. The majority (61%) of resource teachers were based in one school. [5.2.8]

• **Disadvantaged Status:** 29% of National schools in the study had designated disadvantaged status. [5.2.8]

### 5.6.3 The Teaching Body

• **Gender Profile:** The gender profile of teachers within the special education sector was 15% male and 85% female in 1989. By 2004, this had altered to 21% male and 79% female. However, only 10% of resource teachers in National schools were male. [5.3.1]

• **Teaching Experience:** The general teaching experience of the special education teaching body increased slightly over the fifteen year study period with the mean number of years teaching experience being reported as at 18 years. [5.3.2.a]

• **Special Education Experience:** In relation to special education teaching experience, teachers in special schools were more experienced (mean 12 years 11 months) compared with special class teachers (mean 6 years 7 months). Resource teachers had the least teaching experience in special education (4 years 5 months). [5.3.2.b]
• **Teacher Education**: Across the three forms of provision, three quarters (75%) of special education teachers trained in the Republic of Ireland. However, the majority (63%) of special school teachers were reported to have trained abroad. [5.3.3.a]

• **No. of Primary Trained Teachers**: Most of special class teachers (86%) and resource teachers (78%) and the majority (69%) of special school teachers trained as primary teachers. [5.3.3.b]

• **Special Education Qualification**: Special school teachers had undertaken special education qualifications in a significant minority (42%) of cases in contrast to a small number (22%) of special class and a few (13%) resource teachers. [5.3.3.d]

• **Employment Status**: Teachers in special schools reported being employed in a permanent capacity in almost all (94%) cases compared with most (82%) special class and resource teachers (79%). A teacher was more likely to be in permanent employment if she was experienced, female, or trained in Ireland. [5.3.4.a]

• **Redeployment Rights**: A few special school teachers (12%), a small number of special class teachers (14%), and a quarter (24%) of resource teachers did not have redeployment panel rights. The introduction of the 'special panel' in 1992 greatly improved the redeployment prospects for teachers especially in the special school sector where panel rights increased from 46% to 88% between 1989 and 2004. [5.3.4.b]

• **Employment Choice**: The number of teachers not teaching in the special education sector by choice increased from 13% to 17% over the study period. In 2004, 29% of special school teachers were not working in the special education by choice. [5.3.4.c]

• **Employment Preference**: Nearly a quarter of special education teachers (22%) would prefer to work in mainstream education if given a choice. [5.3.4.c]

• **Inservice Training Attendance**: Most (79%) of teachers attended inservice training during the period 2002-2004. Teacher gender and whether teaching by choice were identified as factors influencing attendance. [5.3.5.a]

• **Inservice Provision**: The majority of inservice training attended was compulsory and provided by the Department of Education and Science as a part of the introduction of the 1999 Revised Primary School Curriculum. A minority of teachers across the three sectors attended a variety of inservice courses on specific topics. [5.3.5.b]

• **Teachers' Inservice Needs**: In identifying possible inservice training topics, special class and resource teachers highlighted the need for courses relating to understanding MGLD and associated issues while special school teachers expressed an interest in courses addressing challenging behaviour and the planning and implementation of individual education plans. [5.3.5.b]
5.6.4 Pupil Placement

- **Background Information:** The majority of special education teachers (60%) reported receiving adequate background information on pupils prior to enrolment. Teachers in urban schools expressed higher satisfaction in this regard. [5.4.1.a]

- **Parent Enrolment Meeting:** There was a marked increase among special class and special school teachers in meeting pupils' parents prior to enrolment. In 2004, most special class teachers (77%) and 80% of special school teachers met parents, while this was the case in 58% of resource teachers. [5.4.1.b]

- **Appropriate Placement:** In general terms, teachers considered that most of the pupils they taught to be appropriately placed in schools. Urban teachers were more likely to express satisfaction with the appropriateness of pupils education placement than rural teachers. [5.4.2.a]

- **Alternative Placement:** A significant minority (40%) of teachers in National schools stated that some pupils would be better placed in special schools. Special school teachers considered some pupils would benefit from education in a special class (42%) or resource programme (23%). They were, however, less likely to transfer pupils who they perceived to have behavioural and emotional difficulties. [5.4.2.b]

- **Additional Difficulties:** The majority of special school teachers (71%) considered most or all of their pupils to have difficulties in addition to MGLD compared to a third of special class teachers (34%) and a quarter of resource teachers (26%) [5.4.3.a]

- **Behavioural and Emotional Difficulties:** Just over half (53%) of special school teachers judged their pupils to have behavioural and emotional difficulties in addition to MGLD in contrast to a small number (18%) of special class and a few (11%) resource teachers. [5.4.3.b]

- **Post-Primary Provision:** Post-primary provision for MGLD pupils was considered adequate according to just over half (53%) of special education teachers. [5.4.4]

- **Pupil Enrolments:** Most special class (75%) and almost all special school teachers (90%) believed that the establishment of the resource teacher model in National schools had affected pupil enrolments to their own schools in a negative manner. [5.4.5]

5.6.5 The Inclusive School

- **Integration/Inclusion Policy:** The majority (57%) of teachers reported that their schools had a formal integration/inclusion policy. [5.5.1]
• **Special Class/Mainstream Contact:** Between 1989 and 2004, the level of reported special class/mainstream pupil out of class contact dropped slightly while the level of in-class contact increased from 16% to 18% reflecting low levels of integration/inclusion. [5.5.2.a]

• **Contact Time per Day:** Special class pupils had contact with mainstream pupils for mean period of 1 hour 57 minutes per day representing 34% of the total school day. [5.5.2.b]

• **Locational Integration:** The number of special classrooms physically located separately from mainstream classes increased from 16% to 18% between 1989 and 2004. [5.5.2.c]

• **Special School/ National School Contact:** The level of National school/special school contact decreased during the fifteen year period under review. The level of shared sporting activities reduced from 43% to 16% and after-school activities dropped from 16% to 4% indicating a deterioration in contact between the two sectors. [5.5.3.a]

• **Use of Special School Facilities:** The number of National schools using special school facilities halved from 26% in 1989 to just 12% in 2004. [5.5.3.b]

• **Inter-Special School Contact:** The level of inter-school contact between special schools rose from 66% to 74% over the duration of the study. [5.5.3.c]

• **Resource Teacher’s Role:** Resource teachers focus primarily on literacy and numeracy with MGLD pupils and little time is assigned to other curricular areas.[5.5.4.b]

• **Time per Day with Resource Teacher:** The mean period of time per day spent by a MGLD pupil with a resource teacher is 50 minutes. 29% of resource teachers regarded the current time allocation as insufficient. [5.5.4.b]

• **Attending Two Types of Provision:** A small number (21%) of resource teachers reported that they taught MGLD pupils who were also enrolled in a special class within their schools. [5.5.4.c]

• **Teachers’ Perceptions of Integration/Inclusion:** 60% of special class teachers and 53% of special school teachers were satisfied with integration/inclusion levels within their schools. [5.5.5a]

• **Increased Integration/Inclusion:** The majority of special class (60%) and less than half (46%) of special school teachers suggested that their pupils would benefit form increased integration/inclusion.

• **Parental Demands for Increased Integration/Inclusion:** The greatest demand for increased integration/inclusion by parents was reported among special class teachers (30%) and the least among special school teachers (21%). [5.5.6]
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6.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

6.6.1 Introduction

6.6.2 Perceived Adequacy of School and Classroom Facilities

6.6.3 Perceived Adequacy of Educational Resources

6.6.4. Special Curricular Provision
Chapter Six is divided into three sections reporting teachers’ perceptions of the adequacy of school and classroom facilities, educational resources and special curricular provision. Each of these three areas is further divided into a variety of sub-topics.

The first section of the chapter dealing with the adequacy of school and classroom facilities has been subdivided into six areas as follows: school accommodation, general amenities, classroom facilities, physical environment, physical amenities and recreational facilities. In the questionnaire format, respondents were requested to rate a variety of facilities into one of six categories namely, ‘excellent’, ‘very good’, ‘adequate’ ‘inadequate’, ‘very inadequate’, and ‘not available’. Given the large volume of data collected in this section and to facilitate a clearer and more concise presentation of results, these six categories have been recoded into four new categories. Variables 23 to 43 dealing with facilities were recoded as follows: ‘excellent’ (value 5) and ‘very good’ (value 4) recoded to ‘very good’; ‘adequate’ (value 3) unchanged; ‘inadequate’ (value 2) and ‘very inadequate’ (value 1) recoded to ‘inadequate’; and, ‘not available’ (value 9) unchanged.

The second section is concerned with the adequacy of educational resources in National schools and special schools. Areas reviewed include: resources for curricular subjects; audio-visual resources, duplication equipment, school funding; and, teacher opinion on increased resources. The modified rating scale described above is also applied in this section.

The third and final section reviews curricular provision with particular reference to staff involvement, DES Inspectorate support, and the availability of curriculum planning resources. Other issues including the prevalence of the Individual Education Plan (IEP), the teaching of the Irish language, and time requirements for planning and consultation are briefly explored.
6.2 PERCEIVED ADEQUACY OF SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM FACILITIES

6.2.1 School Accommodation

Respondents were requested to report on five areas of school accommodation within their schools. Classroom accommodation, assembly hall, art and craft room, computer room, and school library were all examined in terms of availability and perceived adequacy.

6.2.1.a Classroom Accommodation

In general, teachers (n=408) reported positively on classroom accommodation across the three models of provision with over 60% stating that their classrooms were ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ and in excess of another 25% considering it to be ‘adequate’. Table 6.1 illustrates the findings showing that 9% of teachers considered the classes within which they worked to be inadequate. Twice as many resource teachers (12.6%) reported dissatisfaction compared with only 5.9% of special class and 6.3% of special school teachers. A quarter of resource teachers (25%) in boys’ schools were particularly unhappy with classroom facilities in contrast to only 6.3% in girls’ schools and 12.6% in co-educational schools.

Differences were also noted in terms of school location where 9.1% of urban resource teachers compared with 15.3% of their rural colleagues viewed their classroom accommodation as ‘inadequate’ or ‘very inadequate’. More special class teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers’ Perceptions of Classroom</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Inadequate’ or ‘Very Inadequate’</td>
<td>5.9% (10)</td>
<td>6.3% (3)</td>
<td>12.6% (24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Adequate’</td>
<td>31.2% (53)</td>
<td>29.2% (14)</td>
<td>26.8% (51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Very Good’ or ‘Excellent’</td>
<td>62.9% (107)</td>
<td>64.6% (31)</td>
<td>60.5% (115)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (170)</td>
<td>100% (48)</td>
<td>100% (190)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(9.1%) in disadvantaged schools considered their classrooms to be ‘inadequate’ than their colleagues (3.3%) in non-disadvantaged National schools. The reverse was found to be the case among resource teachers where 13% in disadvantaged and 7.4% in non-disadvantaged schools stated their classrooms were of inadequate standard. Data regarding perceived adequacy of classroom accommodation were gathered in the 2004 surveys only.

6.2.1.b Assembly Hall

The results of teachers surveyed (n=558) yielded no noticeable changes between 1989 and 2004 in relation to school assembly halls being available to the special education population. While the number of special classes did increase during this period, 12% of special class teachers in 1989 and 11.6% in 2004 stated that they had no access to an assembly hall. Special schools were in a more fortunate position with all schools having access in 1989 and only one school not having access to in 2004. The sector with least access to an assembly hall was resource teachers who reported that nearly a third (31.5%) had no access in 2004. School location was an important factor in terms of availability of an assembly hall. In 2004, 7.8% of urban special class teachers had no access to hall compared with 33.3% of rural teachers. Similarly 16.7% of urban resource teachers had no access in contrast to 47.2% of their rural colleagues with significance observed among schools with special classes \(\chi^2=915.03, df=2, p=0.002, p<0.005\) and among special schools \(\chi^2=10.19, df=2, p=0.017, p<0.05\).

Table 6.2 Teachers’ perceived adequacy of assembly hall 1989 & 2004 (n=466)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers’ Perceptions of Assembly Hall</th>
<th>Special Class 1989</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 1989</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'Inadequate' or 'Very Inadequate'</td>
<td>7.4% (7)</td>
<td>8.5% (13)</td>
<td>4.5% (2)</td>
<td>8.3% (4)</td>
<td>7.1% (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Adequate'</td>
<td>31.6% (30)</td>
<td>28.1% (43)</td>
<td>50% (22)</td>
<td>35.4% (17)</td>
<td>30.2% (38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Very Good' or 'Excellent'</td>
<td>61.1% (58)</td>
<td>63.4% (97)</td>
<td>45.5% (20)</td>
<td>56.3% (27)</td>
<td>62.7% (79)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (95)</td>
<td>100% (153)</td>
<td>100% (153)</td>
<td>100% (48%)</td>
<td>100% (126)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter 6: Results
Of those with access to an assembly hall, teachers reported a high level of satisfaction with adequacy. If the categories of ‘adequate’, ‘very good’, and ‘excellent’ are combined, 92.7% of special school teachers expressed satisfaction in 1989 followed by 91.5% in 2004. Similarly, special class teachers recorded 95% in the same categories in 1989 and 91.7% fifteen years later. Resource teachers (92.9%) in 2004 stated that their assembly hall accommodation was ‘adequate’ or better. The greatest improvement appears to have occurred in special schools where in 1989 50% perceived their assembly hall to be ‘adequate’ and 45.5% felt it was ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’. By 2004, this had improved to 35.4% rating it as ‘adequate’ and 56.3% reporting that it was ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’. The number of teachers considering their assembly hall to be ‘inadequate’ or ‘very inadequate’ remained under 9% in all sectors over the fifteen year period.

6.2.1.c Art & Craft Room

Although the availability of an art and craft room to teachers has improved somewhat over the period of the study (n=542), there remains in 2004 a considerable number of schools with no access to such a facility. As shown in Figure 6.1, three quarters of special class teachers (75.8%) reported in 1989 that they did not have an art room and this had reduced to 57.6% by 2004. A parallel improvement was observed in special
school whose teachers recounted that it as unavailable to 52.5% of teachers in 1989 which reduced to 28.6% fifteen years later. The lowest access to an art and craft room in 2004 was in National schools with resource teachers who stated that only 38.3% had access leaving a considerable 61.7% without.

A crosstabulation between art room access and school type revealed that the greatest access was amongst special class and resource teachers in co-educational National schools (60.9%) and the least among boys’ schools (22.6%) while availability in girls’ schools was found to be somewhat better at 37.2%. \( \chi^2=3.80, df 1, p=0.023, p<0.05 \). In terms of school location and lack of access to an art and craft room, significant differences was noted among rural resource teachers in 2004 \( \chi^2=10.24, df 1, p=0.017, p<0.05 \).

Of the teachers (n=220) who had access to an art and craft room, a high level of satisfaction (75.5% in 1989 and 81.8% in 2004) was reported among special school and special class teachers who considered the art and craft room in their schools to be ‘adequate’, ‘very good’, or ‘excellent’. The reported satisfaction of special class teachers (66.7%) in 1989 had increased to 75% by 2004. A minor improvement was also noted among special school teachers where satisfaction increased from 84.2% to 88.6% during the period of the study. Three quarters (75.7%) of resource teachers in 2004 considered their art and craft room to be ‘adequate’, ‘very good’, or ‘excellent’.

6.2.1.d Computer Room

Data regarding the availability and adequacy of a designated computer room in schools were sought in 2004 only (n=408). Figure 6.2 illustrates how the greatest availability was found in National schools with special classes (71.8%), with slightly less access in special schools (67.3%), and the least access in National schools with resource teachers (57.7%).

Among those teachers with access (n=264), the majority of teachers (88.6%) expressed satisfaction with the adequacy of their computer room facility (i.e. stating the computer room to be ‘adequate’, ‘very good’, or ‘excellent’) spread evenly over the three sectors of provision. No differences were noted for school type, location, or disadvantaged status.

Chapter 6: Results
6.2.1.e School Library

Figure 6.3 shows teachers' reported access to school libraries in special education (n=546). No significant improvements in library availability were observed during the duration of the study. Over three quarters (78.5%) of special class teachers had library access in 1989 falling slightly to 72.8% by 2004. Access for special school teachers did
not improve and remained unchanged over the same period: 54.1% in 1989 and 55.1% in 2004. Just over half of resource teachers (53.3%) reported having access to a library within their schools in the 2004 survey and this finding was significant among rural resource teachers \[\chi^2=11.82, df=3, p=0.008, p<0.05\].

In 2004, more urban teachers (63.7%) had library access than to their rural colleagues (53.8%) while teachers in disadvantaged schools reported 69.7% access compared with 59.9% of teachers in non-disadvantaged schools.

Teachers in schools where a school library was available (n=352) reported positive levels of satisfaction as outlined in Table 6.3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers’ Perceptions of School Library</th>
<th>Special Class 1989</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 1989</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Inadequate’ or ‘Very Inadequate’</td>
<td>29.8% (25)</td>
<td>22.8% (28)</td>
<td>25% (95)</td>
<td>14.8% (4)</td>
<td>13.3% (13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Adequate’</td>
<td>27.4% (23)</td>
<td>29.3% (36)</td>
<td>40% (8)</td>
<td>25.9% (7)</td>
<td>34.7% (34)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Very Good’ or ‘Excellent’</td>
<td>42.9% (36)</td>
<td>48% (59)</td>
<td>35% (7)</td>
<td>59.3% (16)</td>
<td>52% (51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (84)</td>
<td>100% (123)</td>
<td>100% (20)</td>
<td>100% (27)</td>
<td>100 (98)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teachers’ perceptions of adequacy improved between 1989 and 2004. Special class teachers (70.3%) reported that their school libraries were ‘adequate’, ‘very good’, or ‘excellent’ in 1989 and this had increased to 77.3% by 2004. A marginally greater increase of 10% was noted among special school teachers: 75% in 1989 and 85.2% in 2004. An equally high satisfaction rating was observed among resource teachers when 86.7% reported their school libraries to be ‘adequate’, ‘very good’, or ‘excellent’.

6.2.2 General Amenities

This section reviews teachers’ perceptions of the basic school amenities of toilet facilities, school office and staffroom which are considered essential in the day to day functioning of the school.

Chapter 6: Results
6.2.2.a Toilet Facilities

As expected, all teachers (n=569) confirmed that their schools had toilet facilities but all sectors reported levels of inadequacy (10.5% in 1989 and 13.1% in 2004). No notable improvements in schools' toilet facilities were observed to have occurred during the fifteen year duration of the study. In 1989, 10.9% of special school teachers reported ‘inadequate’ facilities and this dropped somewhat to 8.3% in 2004. Conversely, dissatisfaction among special school teachers increased significantly from 10% to 13.4% during the same period. In 2004, a sizeable 17.6% of resource teachers reported ‘inadequate’ toilet facilities in their schools [$\chi^2=7.63, df=2, p=0.022, p<0.05$]..

In 2004, only half of the teachers surveyed (51%) considered toilet facilities in their schools to be ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ comprised of: 45.9% of special class teachers; 56.3% of special school teachers; and, 50.8% of resource teachers. All teachers in girls’ schools reported toilets to be ‘adequate’ or better. In boys’ schools, 6.7% of special class teachers and 30% of resource teachers reported ‘inadequate’ facilities compared with 17.3% of special class teachers and 19% of resource teachers in co-educational schools.

While no differences were detected between urban and rural schools, teachers in disadvantaged schools reported better facilities: only 9% expressed dissatisfaction compared with 17.8% in non-disadvantaged schools.

6.2.2.b School Office

A small minority of the total number of teachers surveyed (n=561) stated that their school had no office: 7.3% in 1989 and 5.9% in 2004. By 2004 (n=409) only six special schools with special classes (3.5%) and only one special school (2%) were without this facility. However, 12.1% of National schools with resource teachers reported having no school office and this figure rose to 18.9% in the case of rural National schools.

With regard to schools with an office (n=523), Table 6.4 illustrates teachers’ perceptions across the three sectors of provision. The level of teacher dissatisfaction (‘inadequate’ or ‘very inadequate’) increased over the study period of fifteen years. While 7.9% of special class teachers considered their school office to be ‘inadequate’ or ‘very inadequate’ in 1989, this increased to 12.2% by 2004. An even greater increase was observed among the special school population where dissatisfaction increased from...
7% to 14.6% during the same period. Resource teachers reported school offices to be ‘inadequate’ or ‘very inadequate’ in 13.8% of cases in 2004.

In general terms, only half of teachers considered the office facility within their schools to be ‘very good’, or ‘excellent’ with no improvements noted between 1989 and 2004.

Table 6.4: Teachers’ perceived adequacy of school office 1989 & 2004 (n=523)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers’ Perceptions of School Office</th>
<th>Special Class 1989</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 1989</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Inadequate’ or ‘Very Inadequate’</td>
<td>7.9% (8)</td>
<td>12.2% (20)</td>
<td>7% (3)</td>
<td>14.6% (7)</td>
<td>13.8% (23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Adequate’</td>
<td>33.7% (34)</td>
<td>28.7% (47)</td>
<td>37.2% (16)</td>
<td>31.3% (15)</td>
<td>32.3% (54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Very Good’ or ‘Excellent’</td>
<td>58.4% (59)</td>
<td>59.1% (97)</td>
<td>55.8% (24)</td>
<td>54.2% (26)</td>
<td>53.9% (90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (101)</td>
<td>100% (164)</td>
<td>100% (43)</td>
<td>100% (48)</td>
<td>100% (167)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2.2.c Staffroom

Practically all schools reported having a staffroom within their schools. In 2004 just 1.2% of special class teachers and 7.9% of resource teachers reported not having this facility. However in general terms, teachers (n=545) perceived that the adequacy of staffrooms had deteriorated and there was an increase in the number of teachers rating their staffrooms as ‘very inadequate’ or ‘inadequate’ between 1989 and 2004. In the earlier survey just 6.5% of special class teachers expressed dissatisfaction but this had increased nearly threefold to 18.9% fifteen years later. In a similar fashion 13.6% special school teachers reported inadequate staffroom facilities in 1989 but this had nearly doubled to 24.5% by 2004 implying that just under a quarter of special school teachers were dissatisfied with current staffroom arrangements.

Less than half of teachers (49.3%) stated that their staffroom was ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ in 2004, with greatest satisfaction among special class teachers (59.1%) and almost identical ratings in special schools (44.9%) and resource teachers (44%).

As in other amenities under discussion in this section, resource teachers in National schools reported significant dissatisfaction with 18.8% considering their
staffrooms to be ‘very inadequate’ or ‘inadequate’. In the case of boys’ schools, 36.8% of resource teachers were dissatisfied as were well over half (60%) of resource teachers in rural National schools (the comparative figure for urban resource teachers was just 16%) \( [\chi^2=12.75, df=4, p=0.047, p<0.05] \).

Rural special class teachers were significantly dissatisfied with their staffroom facilities in the 1989 survey \( [\chi^2=14.06, df=2, p=0.001, p<0.005] \).

Disadvantaged schools also had better staffroom facilities with only 14.3% of special class and 4.2% of resource teachers expressing dissatisfaction in contrast to their colleagues in non-disadvantaged schools where 21.3% of special class teachers and 20.1% of resource teachers rated their staffrooms as being substandard.

6.2.3 Classroom Facilities

This subsection reviews the data gathered regarding teachers’ perceptions of provision within their classrooms referring specifically to the essential basic facilities of running water and sink, display area, and electric power sockets. In addition, information regarding the availability and adequacy of internet access within classrooms is discussed.

6.2.3.1 Sink and Water

The majority of classrooms were appointed with running water and sink, although there was a slight increase in the number of teachers (n=556) reporting non-availability between 1989 and 2004. In 1989, 5.5% of teachers had no running water or sink in their classroom increasing to 9.6% by 2004. The sector with the greatest lack of this facility was among resource teachers at 11.6%.

In classrooms with this facility, there was also an increase in the perceived adequacy among teachers (n=511) where 14.5% rated this facility as ‘very inadequate’ or ‘inadequate’ in earlier surveys which increased to one fifth (20.1%) of teachers by 2004. This dissatisfaction ranged from 17% in the case of special school teachers to 22.8% of special class teachers.

The mean number of teachers rating sink and water facilities as ‘adequate’ in 2004 was 37.5%. Slightly more teachers (42.5%) rated their facilities as ‘very good’ and ‘excellent’.
6.2.3.b Display Area

All teachers (n=569) reported having display space in their classrooms with the exception of ten resource teachers (5.2%).

Figure 6.4 shows the level of perceived adequacy among those teachers (n=553) during the fifteen years of the study. There was an increase in perceived inadequacy in 2004 with 20.6% of special class teachers, 10.6% of special school teachers, and 23.6% of resource teachers categorizing display space within their classrooms as ‘inadequate’ or ‘very inadequate’. The highest rate of dissatisfaction was found to among resource teachers in boys’ schools (35%) and urban schools (37.1%).

The number of teachers choosing the ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ category remained constant at approximately half the teaching force except in the case of resource teachers who rated their display area as being such in 37.9% of cases.

6.2.3.c Electric Power Points

As expected, all teachers (n=569) stated that they had electrical power sockets within their classrooms except one special class teacher (0.6%).

With reference to teachers’ perceived adequacy of power sockets, full details can be found in Table 6.5. Dissatisfaction fell from 23.3% in 1989 to 16.4% in 2004. The
Table 6.5: Teachers’ perceived adequacy of electrical power points 1989 & 2004 (n=567)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Inadequate’ or ‘Very Inadequate’</td>
<td>27.0% (30)</td>
<td>20.6% (35)</td>
<td>19.6% (9)</td>
<td>10.4% (5)</td>
<td>18.2% (35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Adequate’</td>
<td>36.1% (40)</td>
<td>35.9% (61)</td>
<td>43.5% (74)</td>
<td>31.3% (15)</td>
<td>38% (73)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Very Good’ or ‘Excellent’</td>
<td>36.9% (41)</td>
<td>43.5% (74)</td>
<td>37% (17)</td>
<td>58.3% (28)</td>
<td>43.8% (84)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (111)</td>
<td>100% (170)</td>
<td>100% (46)</td>
<td>100% (48)</td>
<td>100 (192)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

group expressing greatest dissatisfaction was special class teachers in 1989 and also in the follow up study where 20.6% of them reported inadequate provision of power points compared with only 10.4% of special school teachers. Conversely, the greatest level of satisfaction (‘very good’ and ‘excellent’) was found among 58.3% of special school teachers.

6.2.3.d Internet Access

Data on the availability and internet access were gathered in the 2004 surveys only. Teachers reported high levels of access with 95.8% of special school teachers, 88.4% of special class teachers, and 87.7% of resource teachers had an internet access within their classrooms.

Levels of adequacy are displayed in Figure 6.5 showing that dissatisfaction was distributed reasonably evenly over the three sectors of provision (n=362) with least dissatisfaction in special schools. Resource teachers expressed dissatisfaction particularly in the case of rural schools (27.3%) and disadvantaged schools (9.2%).

Teachers rating their internet access as ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ presented more varied results ranging from 38.4% of resource teachers to more satisfied teachers in special schools (52.2%). No differences were observed when internet access was crosstabulated with school type, school location and disadvantaged/non-disadvantaged status.
With reference to the availability of electronic mail (e-mail), 88.4% of schools reported having this facility distributed among three sectors as follows: special class teachers (92%); special school teachers (100%) and resource teachers (82.4%). \( \chi^2 = 15.62, df = 2, p = 0.000, p < 0.005 \).

6.2.4. Physical Environment

Respondents were requested to provide information on the physical conditions contributing to the classroom environment. This sections reviews heating, ventilation, natural lighting, and electric lighting within the environment in which the teachers and pupils are located.

6.2.4.a Heating System

Table 6.6 clearly demonstrates the general levels of satisfaction where, in 2004, 64.5% of special class teachers, 72.9% of special school teachers, and 65.1% of resource teachers categorised heating systems within their schools as ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’. In addition, the numbers of teachers reporting heating to be ‘adequate’ was distributed evenly across the three forms of provision but some significant findings were observed when school type was analysed. Special class teachers in boys’ schools expressed
Table 6.6: Teachers’ perceived adequacy of heating system 1989 & 2004 (n=571)

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Inadequate’ or ‘Very Inadequate’</td>
<td>9.8% (11)</td>
<td>7% (12)</td>
<td>4.3% (2)</td>
<td>4.2% (2)</td>
<td>5.2% (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Adequate’</td>
<td>21.4% (24)</td>
<td>28.5% (49)</td>
<td>23.4% (11)</td>
<td>22.9% (11)</td>
<td>29.7% (57)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Very Good’ or ‘Excellent’</td>
<td>68.8% (77)</td>
<td>64.5% (111)</td>
<td>72.3% (34)</td>
<td>72.9% (35)</td>
<td>65.1% (125)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (112)</td>
<td>100% (172)</td>
<td>100% (47)</td>
<td>100% (48)</td>
<td>100% (192)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

significantly higher levels of satisfaction [$\chi^2=12.05$, $df=4$, $p=0.017$, $p<0.05$] compared with their colleagues in girls’ and coeducational schools. However, among resource teachers, the lowest levels of satisfaction were expressed by those working in boys’ schools [$\chi^2=13.52$, $df=4$, $p=0.035$, $p<0.05$].

Levels of dissatisfaction among a minority of teachers remained relatively unchanged over the duration of the study. Special class teachers expressed dissatisfaction in 9.8% of cases in 1989 and 7.0% in 2004. During the same period levels of dissatisfaction among special school teachers remained unchanged (4.3% and 4.2%). The overall dissatisfaction level of resource teachers was 5.2% but closer analysis revealed higher levels of perceived inadequacy among resource teachers in rural schools (8.1%) and disadvantaged schools (11.5%) in contrast to 1.3% in urban schools and 4.3% in non-disadvantaged schools.

6.2.4.b Classroom Ventilation

Teachers’ perceptions of classroom ventilation within schools were generally acceptable with reasonable levels of satisfaction as detailed in Table 6.7. In 2004, special school teachers were the sector most satisfied with ventilation systems with 97.9% of them categorising systems within their schools as adequate or better. The table also illustrates how teachers considered facilities had deteriorated in special classes over the fifteen years of the study: only 6.4% were dissatisfied in 1989 but this had more than doubled to 15.1% by 2004. An identical level of dissatisfaction was also noted in National schools with resource teachers where 15.1% expressed dissatisfaction in 2004.
Table 6.7: Teachers’ perceived adequacy of ventilation system 1989 & 2004 (n=568)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers’ Perceptions of Ventilation System</th>
<th>Special Class 1989</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 1989</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Inadequate’ or ‘Very Inadequate’</td>
<td>6.4% (7)</td>
<td>15.1% (26)</td>
<td>8.7% (4)</td>
<td>2.1% (1)</td>
<td>15.1% (29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Adequate’</td>
<td>29.1% (32)</td>
<td>29.7% (51)</td>
<td>28.3% (13)</td>
<td>37.5% (18)</td>
<td>41.1% (79)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Very Good’ or ‘Excellent’</td>
<td>64.5% (71)</td>
<td>55.2% (95)</td>
<td>63% (29)</td>
<td>60.4% (29)</td>
<td>43.8% (84)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (110)</td>
<td>100% (172)</td>
<td>100% (46)</td>
<td>100% (48)</td>
<td>100% (192)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2.4.c Natural Lighting

Information regarding the availability and adequacy of natural light in classrooms was sought in 2004 only. Only two teachers (0.5%) in National schools (one special class and one resource teacher) of 414 teachers surveyed, reported that they did not have natural light.

With reference to adequacy, special schools teachers were clearly more pleased than teachers in National schools. Only 2.1% of teachers in special schools reported ‘inadequate’ natural light compared with 11.6% of special class teachers and 9.4% of resource teachers. Conversely, levels of satisfaction (‘very good’ or ‘excellent’) were

Table 6.8: Teachers’ perceived adequacy of classroom natural light 2004 (n=412)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers’ Perceptions of Natural Light</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Inadequate’ or ‘Very Inadequate’</td>
<td>11.6% (20)</td>
<td>2.1% (1)</td>
<td>9.4% (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Adequate’</td>
<td>29.7% (51)</td>
<td>25% (12)</td>
<td>35.9% (69)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Very Good’ or ‘Excellent’</td>
<td>58.7% (101)</td>
<td>72.9% (35)</td>
<td>54.7% (105)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (172)</td>
<td>100% (48)</td>
<td>100% (192)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
much higher among special school teachers (72.9%) compared with those in National schools (56.7%). Twice as many resource teachers in urban schools (13.2%) reported inadequate natural light compared to their colleagues in rural schools (6.1%).

6.2.4.d Electric Lighting

Levels of adequate electric lighting within schools were high with 93.9% satisfaction over all sectors in 1989 and 2004 (n=570). In 2004 special class and special schools rated their amenities as 'very good' or excellent in 67.8% and 66.7% of cases respectively, while 57% of resource teachers judged the electric lighting to be in the same categories. Levels of perceived inadequacy altered slightly but still remained relatively low as detailed in Table 6.9.

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'Inadequate' or 'Very Inadequate'</td>
<td>5.4% (6)</td>
<td>7% (12)</td>
<td>4.3% (2)</td>
<td>6.3% (3)</td>
<td>6.2% (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Adequate'</td>
<td>33.3% (37)</td>
<td>25.6% (44)</td>
<td>30.4% (14)</td>
<td>27.1% (13)</td>
<td>36.8% (71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Very Good' or 'Excellent'</td>
<td>61.3% (68)</td>
<td>67.4% (116)</td>
<td>65.2% (30)</td>
<td>66.7% (32)</td>
<td>57% (110)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (111)</td>
<td>100% (172)</td>
<td>100% (46)</td>
<td>100% (48)</td>
<td>100% (192)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.2.5. Physical Amenities

This subsection reviews teachers' perceptions regarding classroom storage, space within the classroom environment, and adequacy of classroom furniture.

6.2.5.a Classroom Storage Facilities

In general, practically all teachers reported access to classroom storage with the exception of one teacher in 1989 and six teachers in 2004. Approximately one quarter of teachers, distributed evenly over all sectors, expressed dissatisfaction with classroom
storage and this did not change over the period of the study. Among special class teachers, 23.5% were dissatisfied in 1989 (n=111) while this remained unaltered in 2004 (23.6%) (n=169). Similarly, no improvement was noted among special school teachers: 23.5% in 1989 (n=47) compared with 25% in 2004 (n=48). Dissatisfaction among resource teachers was slightly higher at 30.6% (n=190).

Although not statistically significant, there was an improvement in boys’ schools where 29.6% of special class teachers were dissatisfied in 1989 reducing to 16.7% in 2004. Conversely, levels of dissatisfaction in girls’ schools increased from 14.8% to 32.3% among the same population during the same period. In terms of school location, more resource teachers in rural schools (40.2%) expressed dissatisfaction compared to their urban colleagues (22.7%) (n=172).

The number of teachers expressing adequacy with classroom storage is represented in Table 6.10.

Table 6.10: Teachers’ perceived adequacy of classroom storage 1989 & 2004 (n = 554)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers’ Perceptions of Classroom Storage</th>
<th>Special Class 1989</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 1989</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Adequate’</td>
<td>38.7% (43)</td>
<td>37.9% (64)</td>
<td>29.8% (14)</td>
<td>41.7% (20)</td>
<td>42.6% (81)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Very Good’ or ‘Excellent’</td>
<td>37.8% (42)</td>
<td>38.5% (65)</td>
<td>46.8% (22)</td>
<td>33.3% (16)</td>
<td>26.8% (51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>76.5% (85)</td>
<td>76.4% (129)</td>
<td>76.6% (36)</td>
<td>75.0% (36)</td>
<td>69.4% (132)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Satisfaction is spread evenly among special class and special school teachers although more special school respondents reported ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ storage facilities in 1989.

6.2.5.b Classroom Space

The results of teachers’ perceptions of classroom space were, in general, quite positive. In analysing the data, only one teacher reported having no classroom space. Over half the teachers in special classes and special schools expressed positive satisfaction categorizing space within their classrooms as ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ although some disimprovement was noted over the fifteen year period of the study. In 1989, special
class teachers (n=110) reported ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ classroom space in 67.3% of cases which reduced to 51.2% by 2004 (n=172). Although not statistically significant, a similar disimprovement was observed among special school teachers of whom 61.7% perceived this facility as ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ in 1989 (n=47) as opposed to 54.2% (n=48) in 2004. The reduction in teachers expressing space as ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ in 1989 and in 2004 was especially obvious among teachers in co-educational schools: 71.4% down to 48.6% over the period of the study. Compared with special school and special class teachers, fewer resource teachers (41.5%) rated space within their classrooms as such.

While the number of teachers expressing positive satisfaction reduced, conversely there was an increase in the perceived inadequacy of classroom space. In 1989, only 5.5% of special class teachers selected ‘inadequate’ or ‘very inadequate’ but this had increased to 20.3% by 2004. A similar pattern was noted among special school teachers (14.9% in 1989 increased to 22.9% in 2004). Over a quarter of resource teachers (27.5%) expressed dissatisfaction in 2004, with the greatest increase in dissatisfaction (20.4%) observed among teachers in girls’ National schools.

6.2.5.c Classroom Furniture

The provision of appropriate classroom furniture was also explored in the study. Analysis of data revealed that while satisfaction was high among the majority of teachers, teachers felt that adequacy had improved in special schools and deteriorated in special classes over the period of the study.

The number of special class teachers rating classroom furniture as ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ increased from 37.8% in 1989 (n=111) to 49.4% (n=172) in 2004, the number of teachers recording ‘adequate’ provision dropped from 53.2% to 31.4%. The net result was an overall increase in dissatisfaction where the number of teachers rating classroom furniture as ‘inadequate’ or ‘very inadequate’ increased from 9% to 19.2%.

The reverse was found in the case of special school teachers where the number rating classroom furniture as ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ increased from 44.7% to 58.3% over the period of the study. Conversely, the number expressing dissatisfaction dropped from 10.6% in 1989 (n=47) to just 6.3% in 2004 (n=48).

The number of resource teachers rating facilities as ‘adequate’ and ‘very good/excellent’ were approximately equal (44.5% and 42.4% respectively) with 13.1%
rating classroom furniture as ‘inadequate’ or ‘very inadequate’ in 2004. Figure 6.6 below illustrates these findings.

![Figure 6.6: Teachers’ satisfaction with school furniture in National schools and special schools 1989 and 2004 (n=569)](image)

Significant differences in expressed inadequacy were noticed among special class teachers when the urban/rural variable was analysed. By 2004 (n=150), the perceived inadequacy of classroom furniture had increased from 9.6% (n=84) in 1989 among urban special class teachers to 18.8%, and from 9.1% to 18.8% in the case of rural special class teachers \[\chi^2=7.95, df=2, p=0.019, p<0.05\].

Some differences, although not significant, were observed when adequacy of furniture and type of National school were analysed. Levels of inadequacy increased between 1989 and 2004 in girls’ National schools (from 0% to 30%) and co-educational National schools (from 5.7% to 18.1%) compared with boys’ National schools where teachers’ perceptions of adequacy improved over the same period. In 1989, 22.2% of teachers in boys’ National schools rated classroom furniture as ‘inadequate’ or ‘very inadequate’ but this decreased to 10% by 2004.

No significant differences in dissatisfaction were noted among teachers in disadvantaged (16.5%) and non-disadvantaged National schools (22.2%).
6.2.6. Outdoor Recreational Facilities

This final subsection reviews the reported access to and teachers’ views regarding perceived adequacy of schools’ external recreational facilities namely hard play area, soft play area, and a playing field.

6.2.6.a Hard Play Areas

The basic facility of a concrete, tarmacadam, or other hard surface play area was to be found in the majority of schools surveyed (n=567). By 2004, a total of 16 schools (3.9%) reported the absence of this school facility.

Data on the adequacy of hard play facilities at schools is summarized in Table 6.11 below. The number of special school and special class teachers classifying their hard play area as ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ increased between 1989 and 2004. Special class teacher satisfaction increased from 42.2% in 1989 (n=109) to 47.9% (n=163) fifteen years later while special school teachers positive responses increased from 38.3% (n=47) to 51.1% (n=47). However, the number of teachers which claimed that the hard play area in the school in which they worked was ‘adequate’ dropped while the numbers with ‘inadequate/very inadequate’ play areas increased. The overall trend, therefore, is that teachers’ satisfaction (‘adequate’, ‘very good’, or ‘excellent’) dropped slightly among special class teachers from 82.2% to 79.2% during the period of the study. Similarly, levels among special school teachers dropped from 78.7% to 72.7%.

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'Inadequate' or 'Very Inadequate'</td>
<td>13.8% (15)</td>
<td>20.9% (34)</td>
<td>21.3% (10)</td>
<td>27.7% (13)</td>
<td>14.3% (26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Adequate'</td>
<td>44.0% (48)</td>
<td>31.3% (51)</td>
<td>40.4% (19)</td>
<td>29.8% (14)</td>
<td>34.6% (63)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Very Good' or 'Excellent'</td>
<td>42.2% (46)</td>
<td>47.9% (78)</td>
<td>38.3% (18)</td>
<td>42.6% (20)</td>
<td>51.1% (93)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (109)</td>
<td>100% (163)</td>
<td>100% (47)</td>
<td>100% (47)</td>
<td>100% (182)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter 6: Results
The greatest satisfaction was noted among resource teachers (85.7%) (n=182) while the greatest dissatisfaction was observed among teachers in special schools (27.7%) (n=47).

A crosstabulation between hard play facilities and school type revealed some differences, albeit not statistically significant. From 1989 to 2004 the number of teachers in special classes in National schools which reported inadequate hard play areas increased from 12% to 16.7% in boys’ schools and 7.1% to 21.9% in girls’ schools while dissatisfaction in co-educational schools remained unchanged at 22.8%. In 2004, resource teachers reported inadequate hard play areas in the three types of school as follows: 26.8% in boys’ schools; 6.3% in girls’ schools; and, 14% in co-educational schools.

6.2.6.b Soft Play Areas

While the majority of schools had access to hard play area, there was a significant number who did not have access to a soft play area for pupils. A soft play area is defined as a play space for pupils within the school grounds with a surface of grass, bark mulch, rubber tiling, or some other low impact underfoot material. Playing fields were categorized separately and addressed in section 6.2.6.c.

Figure 6.7: Number of teachers in schools with no access to soft play area 1989 and 2004 (n=526)
The number of teachers reporting no access to a soft play area is shown in Figure 6.7. Over half special class teachers reported having no access to a soft play area in 1989 (53.3%) (n=90) with no change having occurred by 2004 (53.9%) (n=167). The situation was somewhat better in special schools with a decrease in the lack of access between 1989 (38.2%) (n=34) and 2004 (20.4%) (n=49). In 2004, four in every ten resource teachers (39.4%) reported pupils having no access to a soft play area within their schools (n=186) \( \chi^2=41.32, df^2, p=0.001, p<0.005 \).

Some differences were observed when lack of access to a soft play area was reviewed in relation to school type. Figure 6.8 shows that between 1989 and 2004 the number of special class teachers in boys' schools with no access increased from 42.9% to 50% while a greater increase from 59.1% to 74.2% was noted in girls' schools. The lack of access for special class pupils in co-educational schools reduced from 59.1% to 47.1% during the same period. Analysis of data concerning school location revealed an equal distribution between urban and rural schools except in the case of special class teachers in National schools in 2004 where 50.4% of urban teachers reported no access compared with 71.4% of their rural colleagues. It was also noteworthy to observe that pupils in disadvantaged schools (74.1%) had better access to a soft play area than those in non-disadvantaged schools (58.1%).

Of the 292 teachers who reported having a soft play area within their schools, levels of perceived adequacy altered over the period of the study. While the numbers of
teachers expressing dissatisfaction increased, so too did the numbers categorizing their facility as ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’. As a result, the percentage of special class teachers who classified soft play areas as ‘adequate’ dropped from 54.8% in 1989 (n=42) to 20.8% in 2004 (n=77). Similarly, the same was true of special school teachers whose ‘adequate’ ratings dropped from 47.6% down to 23.1%. $[\chi^2=19.74, \ df \ 8, \ p=0.012, \ p<0.05]$.

Table 6.12: Teachers’ perceived adequacy of soft play areas 1989 & 2004 (n=292)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers' Perceptions of Soft Play Areas</th>
<th>Special Class 1989</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 1989</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Inadequate’ or ‘Very Inadequate’</td>
<td>23.8% (10)</td>
<td>36.4% (28)</td>
<td>28.6% (6)</td>
<td>30.8% (12)</td>
<td>27.4% (31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Adequate’</td>
<td>54.8% (23)</td>
<td>20.8% (16)</td>
<td>47.6% (10)</td>
<td>23.1% (9)</td>
<td>31.9% (39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Very Good’ or ‘Excellent’</td>
<td>21.4% (9)</td>
<td>42.9% (33)</td>
<td>23.8% (5)</td>
<td>46.2% (18)</td>
<td>40.7% (46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (42)</td>
<td>100% (77)</td>
<td>100% (21)</td>
<td>100% (39)</td>
<td>100% (113)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As illustrated Table 6.12 above, over one quarter of teachers in each of the three sectors reported soft play areas within their schools as ‘inadequate’ or ‘very inadequate’.

6.2.6.c Playing Fields

Data concerning the availability of a playing field to pupils yielded significant results which are summarised in Figure 6.9.

Levels of access to pupils in special classes improved between 1989 (n=106) and 2004 (n=170) from 34.9% down to 25.9%. However, special school teachers reported a notable increase in the unavailability of playing fields as an amenity. The earlier survey (n=41) revealed that 9.8% of teachers stated that their pupils had no access but this had increased to over a quarter of teachers (26.5%) by 2004 (n=49) (n=188) $[\chi^2=29.38, \ df \ 12, \ p=0.003, \ p<0.005]$. Resource teachers in National schools reported unavailability of a playing field in 21.3% of cases in 2004.
An analysis of non-availability of this amenity in relation to school type in 2004 revealed that girls’ schools (n=49) had least access (61.6%) when compared with boys’ schools (77.5%) (n=50) and co-educational schools (79%) (n=245). Differences were also detected concerning school location. Access to playing fields among urban special class teachers improved from 64.3% in 1989 (n=81) to 81.8% in 2004 (n=149) while the reverse was the case among rural special class teachers where access decreased from 81.8% to just 50%. Disadvantaged National schools had less access (69.2%) to playing fields than non-disadvantaged schools (79.8%).

Of the teachers surveyed with access to a playing field (n=416), significant differences were observed in terms of perceived adequacy (n=188) \( [\chi^2=16.13, \ df \ 8, p=0.041, p<0.005] \) as outlined in Table 6.13 below:

### Table 6.13: Teachers’ perceived adequacy of playing fields 1989 & 2004 (n=416)

<table>
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<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Inadequate’ or ‘Very Inadequate’</td>
<td>15.9% (11)</td>
<td>11.9% (15)</td>
<td>32.4% (12)</td>
<td>27.8% (10)</td>
<td>13.5% (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Adequate’</td>
<td>39.1% (27)</td>
<td>30.2% (38)</td>
<td>27.0% (10)</td>
<td>25.0% (9)</td>
<td>30.4% (45)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Very Good’ or ‘Excellent’</td>
<td>44.9% (31)</td>
<td>57.9% (73)</td>
<td>40.5% (15)</td>
<td>47.2% (17)</td>
<td>56.1% (83)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (69)</td>
<td>100% (126)</td>
<td>100% (37)</td>
<td>100% (36)</td>
<td>100% (148)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In 2004, teacher satisfaction was highest among special class teachers (57.9%) (with no teacher in boys' schools expressing dissatisfaction) and resource teachers in National schools (56.1%) who rated playing fields in their schools as 'very good' or 'excellent'. The highest number of teachers categorising their facility as 'inadequate' or 'very inadequate' in 2004 was special school teachers (27.8%).

6.3 PERCEIVED ADEQUACY OF EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

6.3.1. Teaching Resources for Core Subjects

This first subsection briefly reviews teachers' perceptions relating to the adequacy of educational materials and resources for the teaching of the core curricular areas of reading, language, and mathematics in National schools and special schools.

6.3.1.a Reading Resources

Results regarding the adequacy of materials indicated significant positive improvement during the period of the study. Table 6.14 details the changes which occurred between 1989 and 2004.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers' Perceptions of Reading Resources</th>
<th>Special Class 1989</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 1989</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'Inadequate' or 'Very Inadequate'</td>
<td>7.4% (8)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>8.5% (4)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>4.1% (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Adequate'</td>
<td>34.3% (37)</td>
<td>32.0% (55)</td>
<td>31.9% (15)</td>
<td>16.3% (8)</td>
<td>34.7% (68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Very Good' or 'Excellent'</td>
<td>58.3% (63)</td>
<td>68.0% (117)</td>
<td>59.6% (28)</td>
<td>83.7% (41)</td>
<td>61.2% (120)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (108)</td>
<td>100% (172)</td>
<td>100% (47)</td>
<td>100% (49)</td>
<td>100% (196)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The initial most striking result is that no special class or special school teachers in 2004 considered reading materials within their schools to be inadequate. Furthermore, rates of satisfaction were high across all sectors with a significant 83.7% of special school teachers classifying reading materials as 'very good' or 'excellent'. In 2004, the lowest
levels of perceived adequacy were among resource teachers (n=196) with 4.1% rating materials as ‘inadequate’ or ‘very inadequate’, 34.7% reporting ‘adequate’ materials, and, 61.2% stating that reading resources were ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ \( \chi^2=26.61, df \ 8, p=0.009, p<0.005 \).

With regard to adequacy of reading materials and school type, a significant differences were recorded in the case of 1989 special class teachers where 82.1% of teachers reported ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ reading resources in girls’ schools, compared to 53.8% in boys’ schools and 33.3% in co-educational schools. (n=188) \( \chi^2=14.83, df \ 4, p=0.005, p<0.05 \). This pattern was also revealed in the 2004 resource teacher survey where a significant number \( \chi^2=10.38, df \ 4, p=0.039, p<0.05 \) of resource teachers (82.4%) in National schools classified reading materials as ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ relative to 59.3% of teachers in co-educational schools and 45% of teachers in boys’ schools.

School location was significant in the case of rural resource teachers \( \chi^2=10.06, df \ 2, p=0.001, p<0.005 \) none of whom reported ‘inadequate’ or ‘very inadequate’ reading resources within their schools.

Finally, one worthwhile observation was the relationship between perceived adequacy of resources and whether or not a teacher was in special education by choice. Nearly three quarters (72.9%) of special class teachers in special education by choice were significantly more likely \( \chi^2=10.45, df \ 1, p=0.001, p<0.005 \) to categorise materials as ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ compared with 39.1% of those not in the sector by choice. This finding may perhaps indicate that those teaching by choice may be more positively disposed to the teaching materials they use.

6.3.1.b Language Development Materials

Teachers’ responses indicated significant improvement in the access to and adequacy of educational materials and resources for language development in schools \( \chi^2(8,N=559) = 0.001, p<0.005 \) over the duration of the study. Figure 6.10 depicts these reported changes. Satisfaction among special class teachers improved between 1989 (n=104) and 2004 (n=170) where the ‘very good/excellent’ rating increased from 37.5% to 60% while the numbers of teachers categorising language resources decreased from 26.9% to 11.2%. The number of special school teachers reporting resources to be ‘very good/excellent’ also increased from 58.1% to 67.3% although an increase from 4.7% to
8.2% was observed in the ‘inadequate/very inadequate’ category.

In general terms, teachers expressed satisfaction with language materials across all sectors.

6.3.1.c Mathematics Resources
The adequacy of mathematic materials and resources available in National schools and special schools improved significantly between 1989 and 2004. Levels of reported adequacy are displayed in Figure 6.11 on page 249. Special class teachers reported improved adequacy from 1989 (n=108) when 38% rated mathematics materials as ‘very good/excellent’ which had increased to 59.5% by 2004 (n=173). Conversely, the number of teachers rating resources as ‘inadequate/very inadequate’ dropped from 24% to 5.8% during the same period. Similar improvements were detected among special school teachers where dissatisfaction decreased from 17.4% in 1989 (n=46) to just 4.1% in 2004 (n=49) and the number categorising mathematics materials as ‘very good/excellent’ increased from 50% to 73.5% \[\chi^2=40.30, df=12, p=0.000, p<0.005\].

The greatest level of dissatisfaction (13.4%) with mathematics resources in 2004 was among resource teachers (n=194) in National schools.

6.3.2 Teaching Resources for other Curricular Subjects

6.3.2.a Visual Arts

In the initial survey of special schools and special classes (n=146) all teachers indicated that they had access to appropriate visual arts materials (referred to as ‘art and craft’ in 1989 surveys) in National schools. However, a small number (10 teachers) in the 2004 surveys (n=384) reported no access to suitable resources. These were distributed evenly among special class teachers (3%) and resource teachers (3%).

Of those teachers reporting access to visual arts materials (n=529) the results were generally quite positive with a significant improvement between 1989 and 2004 as depicted in Table 6.15 below.

Table 6.15: Teachers’ perceived adequacy of visual arts materials 1989 & 2004 (n=529)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Inadequate’ or ‘Very Inadequate’</td>
<td>20.8% (22)</td>
<td>14.6% (24)</td>
<td>8.9% (4)</td>
<td>6.1% (3)</td>
<td>20.0% (33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Adequate’</td>
<td>40.6% (43)</td>
<td>25.0% (41)</td>
<td>37.8% (17)</td>
<td>26.5% (13)</td>
<td>41.8% (69)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Very Good’ or ‘Excellent’</td>
<td>38.7% (41)</td>
<td>60.4% (99)</td>
<td>53.3% (24)</td>
<td>67.3% (33)</td>
<td>38.2% (63)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (106)</td>
<td>100% (164)</td>
<td>100% (45)</td>
<td>100% (49)</td>
<td>100% (165)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Among the special class population, teachers in 1989 (n=106) reported ‘very good/excellent’ materials in 38.7% of cases rising to 60.4% in 2004 (n=164), with a reciprocal reduction in ‘inadequate/very inadequate’ ratings for 20.8% to 14.6%. As special schools were initially better resourced in 1989 (n=45) the improvement was less noticeable (53.3% up to 67.3% in the ‘very good/excellent’ rating and conversely a slight reduction from 8.9% to 6.1% in the ‘inadequate/very inadequate’ category in 2004 (n=49) \( [\chi^2=30.67, df 8, p=0.001, p<0.005] \).

In 2004, the sector most satisfied with visual arts materials was special school teachers (67.3%) while the least satisfied were resource teachers (n=165) where one in five teachers (20%) categorized visual arts materials as ‘inadequate’.

The availability of an art & craft room within a school was a factor in teachers’ perceptions regarding adequacy of materials. In 2004, special class teachers in National schools with an adequate art & craft room reported significantly higher levels of satisfaction with materials \( [\chi^2=25.95, df, p=0.001, p<0.005] \). This was also the case among resource teachers \( [\chi^2=17.59, df6, p=0.007, p<0.05] \).

Figure 6.12 illustrates teachers’ views on inadequacy of resources in boys’ and girls’ schools where special class teachers reported the greatest dissatisfaction (21.9%) while no resource teachers in girls’ National schools indicated inadequate materials. However, resource teachers (n=15) experienced significantly higher levels of

**Figure 6.12: Inadequacy of visual arts materials in National schools by school type 2004 (n=313)**

![Bar chart showing inadequacy of visual arts materials in National schools by school type 2004 (n=313) with special class teachers reporting the greatest dissatisfaction (21.9%) while no resource teachers in girls' National schools indicated inadequate materials.](image-url)
dissatisfaction [$\chi^2=6.50$, $df=2$, $p=0.039$, $p<0.05$] in rural schools (29.9%) compared with colleagues in urban schools (11.9%).

Finally, an analysis of data gathered in 2004 indicated a strong positive relationship between adequacy of visual arts materials and adequacy of sink and water facilities among all three areas of provision: special class teachers [$\chi^2(6, N=161) = 0.001, p<0.005$]; special school teachers [$\chi^2=11.34$, $df=4$, $p=0.023$, $p<0.05$]; and, resource teachers [$\chi^2=15.05$, $df=4$, $p=0.020$, $p<0.05$].

6.3.2.b Music Education

As in the case of visual arts materials, all teachers surveyed in 1989 ($n=144$) reported access to resources for music education resources but a minority of teachers in National schools indicated lack of access by 2004 namely 3.7% of special class teachers and 8.6% of resource teachers.

Table 6.16 details perceived adequacy in all sectors for the duration of study.

Table 6.16: Teachers’ perceived adequacy of music education resources 1989 & 2004 ($n=499$)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers’ Perceptions of Music Resources</th>
<th>Special Class 1989</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 1989</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Inadequate’ or ‘Very Inadequate’</td>
<td>21.8% (22)</td>
<td>21.8% (34)</td>
<td>25.0% (11)</td>
<td>4.1% (2)</td>
<td>26.2% (39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Adequate’</td>
<td>47.5% (48)</td>
<td>34.6% (54)</td>
<td>34.1% (15)</td>
<td>32.7% (16)</td>
<td>44.3% (66)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Very Good’ or ‘Excellent’</td>
<td>30.7% (31)</td>
<td>43.6% (68)</td>
<td>40.9% (18)</td>
<td>63.3% (31)</td>
<td>29.5% (44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (101)</td>
<td>100% (156)</td>
<td>100% (44)</td>
<td>100% (49)</td>
<td>100% (149)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A significant improvement was noted in special schools where the number of teachers categorising music education resources as ‘inadequate’ or ‘very inadequate’ in 1989 ($n=44$) decreased from 25% to just 4.1% in 2004 ($n=49$). A reciprocal increase in teachers rating resources as ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ from 40.9% to 63.3% was observed during the same period [$\chi^2=26.57$, $df=8$, $p=0.001$, $p<0.005$].

One in five special class teachers (21.8%) expressed dissatisfaction with music resources in both surveys indicating no improvement although the number classifying
resources as ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ did increase from 30.7% to 43.6%. As in the case of visual arts resources, the most satisfied sector was special school teachers (63.3%) and the greatest dissatisfaction was noted among resource teachers (n=149) where one in four (26.2%) reported inadequate adequacy of resources and only 29.5% stated that resources were of an excellent standard.

Differences were also evident when adequacy of music materials was crosstabulated with school type. Analysis of resource teachers’ responses indicated significant [χ²=13.61, df 4, p=0.009, p<0.05] differences where teachers in girls’ schools reported much higher levels of satisfaction with no teachers selecting the ‘inadequate’ or ‘very inadequate’ categories and over half (58.3%) reporting excellent music resources. On the other hand, over third (37.5%) of teachers in boys’ schools rated music resources as ‘inadequate’ or ‘very inadequate’ and no teachers reported resources to be ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’. Resource teachers also reported twice as much dissatisfaction (34.7%) with music resources in rural schools compared with 15.3% of urban resource teachers [χ²=6.46, df 2, p=0.04, p<0.05].

6.3.2.c Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE)

Data regarding the availability and adequacy of teaching materials for Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) was collected in 2004 only (n=342). All teachers reported having access to appropriate materials with levels of adequacy distributed evenly across
National schools as follows: ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ (52%); ‘adequate’ (35.9%); and, ‘inadequate’ or ‘very inadequate’ (14.1%). No significant findings were recorded when adequacy of SPHE teaching materials was reviewed in relation to school type, school location, school size, designated disadvantaged status, etc.

6.3.2.d Computer Education (ICT)

This subsection highlights the significant growth in computer and computer education materials within the special education sector. Analysis focused on two specific areas namely the availability of computer hardware within classrooms and the adequacy of resources for ICT education.

Figure 6.14 demonstrates the significant growth in the availability of computers in National schools over the fifteen years of the study and how a much higher number of teachers reported higher access in 2004. In 1989, only 15.7% of special class teachers (n=108) and 10.6% of special school teachers (n=47) had a computer within the classroom setting. By 2004 however, this had increased enormously to 86.9% in the case of special classes (n=175) and to 91.8% in special schools. In fact by 2004, practically every classroom had at least one computer (special classes: 98.9%; special schools: 98%; and, resource teachers: 96.4%) \( \chi^2=255.31, df=8, p=0.001, p<0.05 \).
Secondly, access to resources for computer education improved dramatically in a similar fashion \( \chi^2=19.41, df \ 8, p=0.013, p<0.05 \). The level of dissatisfaction ('inadequate' or 'very inadequate' ratings) reduced from 22.7% to 8.9% while the numbers expressing satisfaction ('very good' or 'excellent' ratings) increased during the same period 57.6% up to 70.8%). This improvement in teacher satisfaction with computer education resources was mirrored in special schools to a lesser degree. In 1989, 11.1% of special school teachers (n=27) recorded dissatisfaction compared with 4.1% in 2004 (n=49), with a slight increase in positive ratings from 63% to 69.4%. These findings are summarized in Table 6.17.

Table 6.17: Teachers’ perceived adequacy of computer education resources 1989 & 2004 (n=488)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers’ Perceptions of Computer Education Resources</th>
<th>Special Class 1989</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 1989</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Inadequate' or ‘Very Inadequate’</td>
<td>22.7% (15)</td>
<td>8.9% (15)</td>
<td>11.1% (3)</td>
<td>4.1% (2)</td>
<td>6.2% (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Adequate’</td>
<td>19.7% (13)</td>
<td>20.2% (34)</td>
<td>25.9% (7)</td>
<td>26.5% (13)</td>
<td>26.4% (47)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Very Good’ or ‘Excellent’</td>
<td>57.6% (38)</td>
<td>70.8% (119)</td>
<td>63.0% (17)</td>
<td>69.4% (34)</td>
<td>67.4% (120)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (66)</td>
<td>100% (168)</td>
<td>100% (27)</td>
<td>100% (49)</td>
<td>100% (178)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis also revealed that teachers who reported access to a computer within their own classrooms also rated the adequacy of computer education materials more positively. It was noted that teachers who expressed greatest satisfaction with computer room facilities also expressed greatest satisfaction with resources. This was the case in all three sectors: special class teachers \( \chi^2=50.46, df \ 6, p=0.001, p<0.005 \); special school teachers \( \chi^2=35.32, df \ 6, p=0.000, p<0.005 \); and, resource teachers \( \chi^2=36.38, df \ 6, p=0.000, p<0.005 \).

In general terms, teachers experienced high levels of satisfaction (mean 95.6% in 2004) in terms of the provision of computer education resources in all sectors of special educational provision within National and special schools.
Information was gathered relating to teachers’ perceptions of the adequacy or resources available to teach physical education (PE). This subsection focuses on the availability of PE equipment as distinct from a hall or area in which PE is taught (such a facility has already been discussed fully in 6.2.1.b).

Firstly, with reference to access to PE equipment in 2004, a small minority of teachers in National schools (3.6% of special class teachers and 5.4% of resource teachers reported having no access.

Table 6.18 outlines the significant improvement in the adequacy of PE resources which occurred over the duration of the study.

Table 6.18: Teachers’ perceived adequacy of physical education (PE) resources 1989 & 2004 (n=518)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers’ Perceptions of Physical Education (PE) Resources</th>
<th>Special Class 1989</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 1989</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Inadequate’ or ‘Very Inadequate’</td>
<td>21% (22)</td>
<td>6.8% (11)</td>
<td>19.1% (9)</td>
<td>6.3% (3)</td>
<td>11.5% (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Adequate’</td>
<td>30.5% (32)</td>
<td>32.3% (52)</td>
<td>31.9% (15)</td>
<td>20.8% (10)</td>
<td>32.5% (51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Very Good’ or ‘Excellent’</td>
<td>48.6% (51)</td>
<td>60.9% (98)</td>
<td>48.9% (23)</td>
<td>72.9% (35)</td>
<td>56.1% (88)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (105)</td>
<td>100% (161)</td>
<td>100% (47)</td>
<td>100% (48)</td>
<td>100% (157)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The greatest improvement was observed among special class teachers where teacher dissatisfaction dropped from 21% in 1989 to 6.8% in 2004 while simultaneously ‘very good’ and ‘excellent’ ratings increased from 48.6% to 60.9%. This trend was also noticed among special school teachers where perceived inadequacy dropped from 19.1% to 6.3% and satisfaction increased from nearly half the teachers (48.9%) to nearly three quarters (72.9%) over the same fifteen year period $\chi^2=20.02$, $df=8$, $p=0.001$, $p<0.005$.

Resource teachers ($n=151$) expressed greatest dissatisfaction (11.5%) and the lowest positive rating in just over half the respondents (56.1%). Resource teachers in rural National schools expressed significantly [$\chi^2=9.80$, $df=2$, $p=0.001$, $p<0.005$].
[p<0.005] higher levels of dissatisfaction (14.1%) in comparison to urban resource teachers (9.4%).

6.3.3 Projection Equipment

6.3.3.a Slide Projector

The 1989 surveys of special schools and special classes gathered information on access to the availability of slide projectors as an educational resource. However, while data indicated that this resource was used widely in schools at this time (special classes: 91.7%; and special schools: 80.9%) its popularity subsequently decreased due largely to the growth in educational videos and latterly the availability of educational materials in DVD format. This resulted in significant differences between 1989 and 2004 whereby slide projectors were not available to 43.2% of special class teachers, 33.3% of special school teachers, and 60.4% of resource teachers in 2004 [\(\chi^2=98.79, df 8, p=0.001, p<0.005\)].

6.3.3.b Overhead Projector

Similarly, it can be reasonably assumed that the use of overhead (OH) projectors did not grow as expected due to growth in alternative media materials as outlined in 6.3.3.a above. However, some growth in usage did occur and significant increased availability was observed among teachers. In 1989 (n=108), 63.9% of special education teachers had access to an OH projector and this had increased to 77.6% by 2004 (n=174). An almost identical trend was observed among special school teachers where initial access in 1989 (n=47) was 61.7% which had increased to 79.2% by 2004 (n=48). A lower access rate of 57.9% was noted among resource teachers (n=197) in 2004 [\(\chi^2=26.84, df 8, p=0.001, p<0.005\)].

6.3.3.c Data Projector

The arrival of the digital data projector as an educational tool in the late 1990’s heralded the possibility of projecting computer software, television images, and DVD media. Analysis of the 2004 surveys indicate that nearly three quarters (72.4%) of special
education teachers did not have access to a data projector distributed evenly among special classes (70.1%), special schools (70.8%), and resource teachers (74.9%). Expense and lack of adequate training were suggested in the qualitative data as being reasons for non-availability.

6.3.4 Audio Equipment

Respondents were requested to provide information on the availability of tape recorders and compact disc players within schools.

6.3.4.a Tape Recorder

Teachers reported very significant access to tape recorders within the school environment. The number of teachers without access was very small (2% in 1989 and 2.4% in 2004). By 2004, in-class access to tape recorders was very good with 69.5% of special class teachers (n=174) with a further 30% having general access. Three quarters (75.5%) of special school teachers (n=49) had in-class access with a further 22.4% having general access [$\chi^2=23.21$, $df=8$, $p=0.003$, $p<0.005$].

Only half (50.3%) of resource teachers (n=197) had a tape recorder within their classrooms and a further 45.2% had access. Further analysis of resource teachers' responses revealed significant differences between school type. The highest in-class access was among teachers in girls’ schools (82.4%) compared with boys’ schools (50%) and co-educational schools (45.2%) [$\chi^2=6.53$, $df=2$, $p=0.039$, $p<0.05$]. In addition, school location was a significant factor among resource teachers where in-class access was higher in urban schools (54.4%) than rural schools (41%) [$\chi^2=17.53$, $df=4$, $p=0.002$, $p<0.005$].

6.3.4.b Compact Disc (CD) Player

Data relating to the availability of CD player was gathered in 2004 only. Access was significantly higher in special schools and special classes [$\chi^2(4,N=418) = 0.002$, $p<0.005$] than among resource teachers. Over half of special school teachers and special class teachers (58.3% and 54.3% respectively) had in-class access to a CD player compared with over a third (36.4%) of resource teachers.
The least access was among resource teachers. Further analysis of resource teachers' responses indicated significant differences among different school types \(\chi^2(4,N=187) = 0.048, p<0.05\) where 9.8% of resource teachers in co-educational schools had no access to a CD player unlike their colleagues in boys' and girls' schools who had full access.

School type was also a factor among special class teachers in National schools where teachers in girls' schools had the greatest in-class access (60.8%) but also the greatest number of teachers with no access (14.3%).

Finally, it was noted that resource teachers (n=191) in disadvantaged schools had full access to CD-players while 11% of their colleagues in non-disadvantaged schools had no access whatsoever.

6.3.5 Audio-Visual Equipment

6.3.5.a Television

Teachers reported that access to television had improved significantly as illustrated in Figure 6.19.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-Class Access</td>
<td>4.6% (5)</td>
<td>27.4% (48)</td>
<td>17.0% (8)</td>
<td>64.6% (31)</td>
<td>15.3% (30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Access</td>
<td>77.8% (84)</td>
<td>72.0% (126)</td>
<td>74.5% (35)</td>
<td>35.4% (17)</td>
<td>79.1% (155)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Access</td>
<td>17.6% (19)</td>
<td>0.6% (1)</td>
<td>8.5% (4)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>5.6% (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (108)</td>
<td>100% (175)</td>
<td>100% (47)</td>
<td>100% (48)</td>
<td>100% (196)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among special class teachers, lack of access improved dramatically from 17.6% in 1989 (n=108) to all teachers having access by 2004 (n=175). A similar pattern was obvious in special schools here access increased from 91.5% to 100% with a particularly high number (64.6%) having a television within their classroom. Lowest levels of access to this facility were among resource teachers (n=196) where only 15.3% had in-class access.
access, 79.1% had general access and 5.6% had no access [$\chi^2=109.56$, df 8, $p=0.001$, $p<0.005$].

6.3.5.b Videocassette Recorder (VCR)

Access to videocassette recorders also improved during the study with significant results being noted between different forms of provision. Responses have been summarized in Table 6.20.

Table 6.20: Teachers’ access to audio visual equipment: video recorder (VCR) 1989 & 2004 (n=574)

<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-Class Access</td>
<td>1.9% (2)</td>
<td>25.9% (45)</td>
<td>8.5% (4)</td>
<td>61.2% (30)</td>
<td>9.7% (19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Access</td>
<td>80.6% (87)</td>
<td>67.2% (117)</td>
<td>78.7% (37)</td>
<td>36.7% (18)</td>
<td>71.9% (141)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Access</td>
<td>17.6% (19)</td>
<td>6.9% (12)</td>
<td>12.8% (6)</td>
<td>2.0% (1)</td>
<td>18.4% (36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (108)</td>
<td>100% (174)</td>
<td>100% (47)</td>
<td>100% (49)</td>
<td>100% (196)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most striking result is that 61.2% of special school teachers have a VCR within their classrooms in comparison with just a quarter (25.9%) of special class teachers and even less (9.7%) resource teachers.

By 2004, the number of teachers with no access to a VCR was quite small (6.9% of special classes and 2% special schools). However, among resource teachers in National schools, there was nearly a fifth (18.4%) still with no access [$\chi^2=111.01$, df 8, $p=0.001$, $p<0.005$].

6.3.5.c Digital Video Disk (DVD) Player

DVD players within schools were not as readily available as televisions or video recorders. Access was best in the case of special schools (n=49) where 12.2% of teachers had in-class access and 40.8% had general access. Fewer (7.5%) special class
(n=174) teachers reporting having a DVD player within their classrooms with a further third (33.9%) having general access within the school. The poorest accessibility was among resource teachers (n=196) where just 6.6% had a VCR in their room and over a quarter (27%) had general access.

There was still a sizeable proportion of teachers across all sectors with no access to a DVD player: 46.9% in special schools; 58.6% in special classes; and, 66.3% of resource teachers. These data are illustrated in Table 6.21 below:

Table 6.21: Teachers' access to audio visual equipment: DVD player 2004 (n=419)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers' Access to Audio Visual Equip. DVD Player</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-Class Access</td>
<td>7.5% (13)</td>
<td>12.2% (6)</td>
<td>6.6% (13)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Access</td>
<td>33.9% (59)</td>
<td>40.8% (20)</td>
<td>27.0% (53)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Access</td>
<td>58.6% (102)</td>
<td>46.9% (23)</td>
<td>66.3% (130)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (174)</td>
<td>100% (49)</td>
<td>100% (196)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.3.6 Duplication Equipment

The primary paper duplication resource in use within primary schools is the paper photocopier. The availability of this resource improved very significantly during the study period. By 2004, practically all (99.3%) special education teachers (with the exception of four) reported having the use of a photocopier within their schools.

Respondents in the 1989 surveys were asked to provide information on stencil duplicators which have since become obsolete. Even in 1989 (n=155), the photocopier was more popular form of paper duplicator (91.5%) than the stencil copier (47.9%) \( \chi^2 = 27.37, df = 8, p = 0.001, p < 0.005 \).
6.3.7 School Funding for Educational Resources

6.3.7.a Pupils' Schoolbooks and Stationary

Data regarding the source of funding for pupils' schoolbooks and stationary was sought in questionnaire items D.2 (1989) and C.2 (2004) and coded as variable q55. However, this questionnaire item was poorly designed (c.f. Section 3.2.3) resulting in seven combinations of response making in-depth analysis difficult. Some basic data were retrieved manually which is shown in Table 6.2.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Funding</th>
<th>Special Class 1989</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 1989</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Only</td>
<td>15.7% (17)</td>
<td>51.7% (78)</td>
<td>54.3% (35)</td>
<td>62.2% (28)</td>
<td>47.6% (90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents Only</td>
<td>35.2% (38)</td>
<td>17.8% (27)</td>
<td>6.5% (3)</td>
<td>4.4% (2)</td>
<td>32.8% (62)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Sources</td>
<td>11.1% (12)</td>
<td>8.7% (13)</td>
<td>2.2% (1)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>12.7% (24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combination of School/Parents/Other</td>
<td>38.0% (41)</td>
<td>21.8% (33)</td>
<td>37.0% (17)</td>
<td>33.3% (15)</td>
<td>3.7% (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Only</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>3.2% (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (108)</td>
<td>100% (151)</td>
<td>100% (46)</td>
<td>100% (49)</td>
<td>100% (189)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on Table X.2 in Appendix X

In 2004 special schools were the most likely form of provision to supply school books and stationary to their pupils (62.2%). Approximately half (51.7%) of special class teachers (n=151) and 47.6% of resource teachers (n=189) made similar provision. Parents were sole providers in only 4.4% of special schools and 17.8% of special class pupils but this figure was much higher among resource pupils where a third (32.8%) of pupils' parents purchased school textbooks and stationary for their children.

A fifth of special class teachers (21.8%) and a third (33.3%) of special school teachers recorded that these materials were purchased by a combination of parents, school, and other sources while this only happened in 3.7% of National schools with
resource programmes. Six resource teachers (3.2%) also reported having purchased these items themselves from personal funds.

6.3.7.b Annual Parental Contribution

The existence of an annual parental levy or voluntary contribution to raise finance for educational expenditure was explored and significant differences were noted between the different special education sectors. Figure 6.15 represents these findings.

![Figure 6.15: Annual parental levy for educational resources 1989 and 2004 (n=513)](image)

The number of schools implementing a policy of parental levy or contribution increased over the period of the study. In 1989, nearly a third (31.4%) of special classes (n=86) were requesting a financial contribution from parents and this had increased to just over a half (50.9%) by 2004 (n=171). Twice as many special school teachers (61.5%) reported an annual levy in 1989 (n=26) which also increased substantially to 82.2% fifteen years later (n=26). Resource teachers stated that a financial contribution was sought from parents in just under half (47.2%) (n=185) of cases. The above information signifies that parental financial contributions constitute an important part of schools' financial budget [$\chi^2=35.17$, df 4, $p=0.001$ $p<0.005$].
6.3.7.c Amount of Annual Parental Contribution

The annual parental contribution requested by special schools in 1989 ranged from IR£5.00 to IR£30.00 with a mean contribution of $M = \text{IR£12.84}$ while special class contributions ranged from IR£3.00 to IR£45.00 with a mean of $M = \text{IR£8.41}$ (cf Table X.3 in Appendix X). The 2004 mean contribution amounts expressed in euros (€) and were as follows: special schools, $M = \text{€45.00}$; special classes, $M = \text{€33.70}$; and, resource teachers, $M = \text{€43.00}$ (cf Table X.4 in Appendix X). The differences between 1989 and 2004 contributions are displayed in Figure 6.16. The 1989 Irish Punt (IR£) amounts have been converted to 2004 equivalents allowing for Euro (€) conversion and inflation rates for the years 1990 to 2004 (CBFSAI, 2006).

![Figure 6.16: Mean annual parental levy (£) in schools 1989 and 2004 (n=246)](image)

* IR£ converted to € (CBFSAI, 2006)

An initial review indicates that contribution amounts have increased between 1989 and 2004 (allowing for euro conversion and inflation). By 2004, mean contribution rates were highest in special schools (€45.60) and resource classes (€43.01) compared with a lower mean amount of €33.70 in special classes.

A one way between groups analysis (ANOVA) was conducted to explore the amounts of parental contributions and the five groups surveyed, namely: special schools in 1989 and 2004; special classes in 1989 and 2004; and, resource teachers in 2004. There was a statistically significant difference at $p<.05$ level in the five groups [$F(4, 210) = 14.05, p = .000$]. Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD test indicated that
the mean parental contributions differed significantly for the 2004 groups: special classes 2004 ($M = 33.70, SD = 15.34$); special schools 2004 ($M = 45.06, SD = 31.94$); and, resource teachers 2004 ($M = 43.01, SD = 25.22$).

Annual contributions were higher in non-disadvantaged schools. An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare the contribution amounts in disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged schools in 2004. Significant differences were noted for disadvantaged schools ($M = 29.07, SD = 16.77$), and non disadvantaged schools [$M = 36.93, SD = 25.81; t (170) = -1.83, p = .025$]. The magnitude of the differences in the means was small (eta squared = .03).

### 6.3.8 Teachers’ Perceptions Regarding the Value of Increased Resources

Not surprisingly, the majority (80.3%) of teachers surveyed in 2004 (n=345) indicated they considered that an increase in educational resources would benefit educational provision for MGLD pupils. This support was reasonably evenly distributed as illustrated in Figure 6.17.

![Figure 6.17: Teachers' views whether increased resources would benefit MGLD provision 2004 (n=345)](image)

Special school teachers showed greatest support (86.4%) for increased resources while the least was among special class teachers (75.4%).

While not statistically significant, small differences were noticed when support for an increase in resources was examined in terms of different types of school. Special
class teachers (n=131) favoured increased resources in 76.9% of girls’ schools and 76.8% of co-educational schools compared with only 65.2% of boys schools. Among resource teachers (n=129) a slightly different pattern was noticed where 88.9% of boys’ and 82.7% of co-educational schools in contrast with two thirds (66.7%) of teachers in girls’ schools.

Other similarly interesting if not significant findings were noted among the special class teaching population:

- 77% of urban teachers favoured improved resources compared with 64.7% of their rural colleagues
- More non-disadvantaged schools (80.9%) supported increased resources as opposed to 70.3% of teachers in disadvantaged schools
- Support for increased resources was greater among teachers trained outside Ireland (89.5%) in contrast to Irish trained teachers (72.6%)
- Teachers in permanent posts (85.7%) were more in favour of increased support for MGLD provision compared to teachers occupying temporary teaching posts (71.4%)

6.4 SPECIAL CURRICULAR PROVISION

6.4.1. Curriculum Planning

6.4.1.a School Staff and Planning

Respondents indicated different levels of staff involvement in the curriculum planning and development process within schools. In addition, significant changes in the level of staff participation occurred between 1989 and 2004. Figure 6.18 illustrates this information. Clearly, the responsibility on individual teachers to plan special curricular provision independently has lessened considerably since the study commenced. In the case of special class teachers, 62.6% of them planned their curricula without input from others in 1989 (n=107) but this figure had halved to 29.2% fifteen years later (n=168). The numbers planning special curricula with other teachers dropped from 28% to 18.5% while the number of teachers undertaking planning with support staff remained unchanged at 9.4%.
However, the most substantial change was the enormous increase in the number of schools where the principal undertook special curricular planning in conjunction with teachers. In 1989, no special class teachers reported principals being involved in the curriculum planning but 42.9% had become involved by 2004.

These changes in staff participation were also prevalent in special schools between 1989 (n=47) and 2004 (n=49). The level of individual teachers planning the curriculum dropped from 31.9% to 10.2% over the duration of the study. Curriculum planning by groups of teachers also dropped from 36.3% to 26.5% while the number of teachers planning in conjunction with support staff halved from 20.4% to 10.3%. Conversely, there was significant growth in the involvement of principals in the curriculum planning process which increased from 11.4% to 53%.

The involvement of the school principal in curriculum planning was also high (46.6%) in National schools with resource teachers (n=189). Curriculum planning with support staff occurred in 24.9% while planning with other teachers was undertaken in only 9% of cases. Respondents indicated that 18.5% of resource teachers planned special curricula with no input from others.

Analysis of staff participation and school size indicated that special class teachers in smaller schools were more likely to plan curricula without the involvement of the principal, colleagues or support staff [$\chi^2=31.0, df=4, p=0.002, p<0.005$].

Chapter 6: Results
6.4.1.b DES Support in Curricular Planning

Questionnaires for this study were issued prior to the establishment of the Special Education Support Service (SESS) and the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) so no data were gathered regarding their roles in supporting teachers in curriculum planning. Firstly, respondents were questioned whether they had discussed curricular provision with their local district DES Inspectorate, and secondly whether or not these discussions proved beneficial.

The number of teachers which had discussed curricular issues with their local DES Inspector dropped significantly between 1989 and 2004 are shown in Table 6.23. According to special class teachers, the level of teacher/inspector consultation has fallen where 69.7% of teachers reported having discussions with a DES inspector in 1989 (n=109) compared with 40.4% in 2004 (n=171). A similar pattern was observed in special schools where teacher/inspector curricular consultations dropped from 73.9% to 54.2% between 1989 (n=46) and 2004 (n=48). The lowest level (29.3%) of teacher/inspector discussions on curricular matters occurred in National schools with resource teachers (n=188) \[ \chi^2 = 63.77, df 1, p=0.001, p<0.005 \].

Table 6.23: No. of teachers who discussed curriculum planning with DES inspectorate 1989 & 2004 (n=562)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>69.7% (76)</td>
<td>40.4% (69)</td>
<td>73.9% (34)</td>
<td>54.2% (26)</td>
<td>29.3% (55)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>30.3% (33)</td>
<td>59.6% (102)</td>
<td>26.1% (12)</td>
<td>45.8% (22)</td>
<td>70.7% (133)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (109)</td>
<td>100% (171)</td>
<td>100% (46)</td>
<td>100% (48)</td>
<td>100% (188)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis of data regarding teacher/inspector consultations and school type, location, etc yielded no significant results. However, one significant observation was that only one fifth (21.8%) of newly appointed teachers (teaching one year or less) had met with their local DES inspector \[ \chi^2 = 12.68, df 8, p=0.001, p<0.005 \].

Table 6.24 below recounts the whether or not teachers found consultation with their local DES inspector of benefit.
Table 6.24: No. of teachers who felt curriculum planning discussions with DES inspectorate were beneficial 1989 & 2004 (n=562)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>71.6% (53)</td>
<td>48.7% (37)</td>
<td>81.3% (26)</td>
<td>41.4% (12)</td>
<td>71.7% (43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>28.4% (21)</td>
<td>51.3% (39)</td>
<td>18.8% (6)</td>
<td>58.6% (17)</td>
<td>28.3% (17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (74)</td>
<td>100% (76)</td>
<td>100% (32)</td>
<td>100% (29)</td>
<td>100% (60)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to a drop in the number of teacher/inspector consultations, the level of satisfaction with these discussions also dropped significantly for the duration of the study. Nearly three quarters (71.6%) of special class teachers (n=74) in 1989 felt that discussions had been beneficial but this had dropped to below half (48.7%) by 2004 (n=76). Teacher dissatisfaction was also halved among special school teachers was from 81.3% in 1989 (n=32) to 41.4% in 2004 (n=29) \([\chi^2=21.39, df 4, p=0.001, p<0.005]\). Resource teachers (n=60) expressed the highest levels of satisfaction (71.7%) with the benefits of teacher/inspector consultation.

6.4.1.c Resources for Curricular Planning

The need for curricular guidelines for teaching children with mild general learning disabilities were clearly identified in 1989 (n=155) when 89% of teachers indicated that they would support the introduction of curriculum guidelines by the then Department of Education (88.2% of special class teachers and 91.1% of special school teachers).

While no specific curricular guidelines were available to teachers in 1989, 57.2% of those surveyed (n=145) used *The New Curriculum* (Government of Ireland, 1971) as a resource for curriculum planning. This publication, introduced as the primary curriculum for mainstream National schools, continued to be used by a quarter (25.9%) of special education teachers in 2004 (n=379). The 1971 curriculum was replaced by the mainstream *Revised Primary School Curriculum* (Government of Ireland, 1999g) which was also a resource for special education teachers in 2004 (n=411). This publication was used widely by: special class teachers, 83.5%; special school teachers, 91.8%; and, resource teachers, 86.5%.
The publication of *Draft Guidelines for Teachers of Students with Mild General Learning Difficulties* by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA, 2002) signified, for the first time, the introduction of specific curricular guidelines for this population in special classes and special schools. Preliminary analysis of the data (n=412) revealed high usage in special schools (87.5%) and special classes (84.1%) with significantly less resource teachers (75.3%) using the guidelines \[ \chi^2 = 9.45, df 4, p=0.041, p<0.05 \]. Further analysis exploring school type indicated higher usage among special class teachers in co-educational schools (88.5%) and girls’ schools (84.8%) compared with significantly lower usage (70%) in boys’ schools \[ \chi^2 = 6.04, df 6, p=0.049, p<0.05 \].

Although not statistically significant, the following findings were also noteworthy:

- More resource teachers used mainstream *Revised Primary School Curriculum* (86.5%) as a curricular resource than *Draft Guidelines for Teachers of Students with Mild General Learning Difficulties* (75.3%) which is designed specifically for the MGLD population they teach.
- More male (100%) than female (81.1%) teachers in special schools use the NCCA draft guidelines (n=48).
- More resource teachers (80.8%) in disadvantaged schools use the *Draft Guidelines for Teachers of Students with Mild General Learning Difficulties* than 72.6% of their colleagues in non-disadvantaged schools (n=190).
- Teachers trained overseas (n=166) were more likely (95.5%) to use the NCCA guidelines as a resource compared with teachers trained in Ireland (82.6%).
- Teachers (n=165) who had selected to work in the special education sector were more likely (85.2%) to implement the *Draft Guidelines for Teachers of Students with Mild General Learning Difficulties* compared with those not working in special education by choice (73.9%).

The 2004 surveys requested respondents to rate the NCCA’s *Draft Guidelines for Teachers of Students with Mild General Learning Difficulties* in terms of usefulness for curriculum planning. Table 6.25 details the results.
Table 6.25: Teachers’ perceived usefulness of NCCA Draft Guidelines for Teachers of Students with Mild General Learning Disabilities 2004 (n=341)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rate NCCA Guidelines in terms of Usefulness</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Inadequate’ or ‘Very Inadequate’</td>
<td>14.1% (21)</td>
<td>32.6% (15)</td>
<td>11.7% (17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Adequate’</td>
<td>32.9% (49)</td>
<td>34.8% (16)</td>
<td>26.7% (39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Very Good’ or ‘Excellent’</td>
<td>53.0% (79)</td>
<td>32.6% (15)</td>
<td>61.6% (90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (149)</td>
<td>100% (46)</td>
<td>100% (146)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant differences were observed between the different forms of provision. Teachers in National schools were more positively disposed to the guidelines compared to their special school colleagues. Over half (53%) of special class teachers and 61.6% of resource teachers rated the NCCA guidelines as ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ in contrast to just under a third (32.6%) of special school teachers. While the number of teachers judging the guidelines to be ‘adequate’ was evenly distributed, clearly more special school teachers (32.6%) considered them to be ‘inadequate’ or ‘very inadequate’ compared with 14.1% of special class teachers and 11.7% of resource teachers \[\chi^2=21.78, df 8, p=0.005, p<0.05\].

Female resource teachers rated the Draft Guidelines for Teachers of Students with Mild General Learning Difficulties significantly more positively than their male colleagues (62.4% females rated the guidelines as ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ compared with 46.6% of male teachers). Conversely, over a third (33.6%) of males considered the guidelines to be ‘inadequate’ or ‘very inadequate’ compared with 8.8% of female teachers \[\chi^2=13.33, df 4, p=0.01, p<0.05\].

6.4.2. Curriculum Implementation

6.4.2.a The Individual Education Plan (IEP)

Data gathered regarding the use of an ‘Individual Education Plan’ (IEP) by special education teachers yielded significant results where its use was more prevalent in National schools (86.8% in special classes and 87% among resource teachers) in
contrast with only two thirds (66.7%) of special school teachers $[\chi^2=13.53, df\ 4, p=0.009, p<0.05]$.

Further analysis revealed two points regarding resource teachers. Firstly, resource teachers were more like to implement an IEP in girls’ schools (100%) than in boys’ (70%) or co-educational (88.1%) schools $[\chi^2=13.77, df\ 4, p=0.0008, p<0.05]$. Secondly, resource teachers who had selected to work in special education were much more likely (91%) to implement an IEP in their classes rather than a resource teacher not working in the sector by choice (52.6%).

6.4.2.b Resource Provision and the Mainstream Curriculum

Resource teachers were questioned regarding the integration of mainstream class curricula and resource teaching curricula to enhance learning and maximise pupils’ acquisition of knowledge and skills. Respondents indicated that two thirds (65.6%) of resource teachers surveyed (n=224) integrated their resource curricula with pupils’ mainstream class curricula. The remaining on third (34.4%) of teachers made curricular provision with no reference to pupils’ class based learning.

All teachers (100%) in girls’ schools reported a dovetailing of mainstream and resource curricula compared with 61.3% of teachers in co-educational schools and only 41.2% of teachers in boys’ schools $[\chi^2=14.83, df\ 4, p=0.004, p<0.005]$.

6.4.2.c The Teaching of Irish

The majority of pupils with MGLD being educated in National schools and special schools are not taught the Irish language as a part of their curriculum. Table 6.26

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Are pupils taught the Irish language as part of curriculum?</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>14.3% (25)</td>
<td>4.1% (2)</td>
<td>7.1% (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>85.7% (150)</td>
<td>95.9% (47)</td>
<td>92.9% (183)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (175)</td>
<td>100% (49)</td>
<td>100% (197)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
illustrates that the teaching of Irish is more prevalent in National schools (14.3% of special classes and 7.1% of resource classes) compared with just 4.1% of special schools.

6.4.3. Time Allocation for Planning and Consultation

6.4.3.a Adequacy of Time Available for Curricular Planning

There was general consensus among special education teachers (n=418) that there was insufficient time available for curriculum planning and development. Nearly three quarters of teachers (73.4%) stated they had inadequate time for curriculum planning distributed as follows: special class teachers, 73.6%; special school teachers, 87.5%; and, resource teachers, 69.9%. Although not statistically significant, the following findings were noted:

- Resource teachers reported having more time for curriculum planning in girls’ schools (56.3%) compared with boys’ (30%) and co-educational (25.3%) schools (n=182)
- Special class teachers in urban schools had more time available (27.5%) for planning than their rural colleagues (18.2%) (n=153)
- Special class teachers in larger schools (ten teachers or more) had more time available for curriculum planning (n=169)

6.4.3.b Adequacy of Time Available for Staff Consultation

A similar pattern was recorded when availability of time to consult with colleagues and support staff was examined. Over three quarters (78.5%) of teachers surveyed in 2004 (n=413) reported inadequate time available to consult with other staff. Special school teachers were the most dissatisfied (87.5%) compared with 79.9% of resource teachers and 74.3% of special class teachers. Resource teachers in boys’ National schools reported significantly less time (90%) for staff consultation than teachers in girls’ schools (68.8%) and co-educational schools (81.3%) \( \chi^2 = 11.91, df = 4, p = 0.018, p < 0.05 \).
6.5 CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

6.5.1 Introduction

A summary of the key findings for Chapter Six is outlined below:

6.5.2 Perceived Adequacy of School and Classroom Facilities

- **Classroom Accommodation**: In general, the majority of teachers expressed satisfaction with the standard of classroom accommodation, with slightly lower levels being expressed by resource teachers. [6.2.1.a]

- **Assembly Hall**: Access to a school assembly hall varied across the three sectors of provision. In 2004, special schools had access to a hall while a third (32%) of resource teachers and a few (12%) special class teachers did not have access. [6.2.1.b]

- **Art and Craft Room**: Only half of schools (51%) had access to an art and craft room in 2004. Special schools teachers (71%) were best served with this facility while only half (48%) of special class and fewer than half of resource teachers (39%) reported access to such an amenity. [6.2.1.c]

- **Computer Room**: Most special class teachers (72%) and the majority of special school teachers (67%) and resource teachers (58%) indicated that they had access to a designated computer room within their schools. [6.2.1.d]

- **School Library**: Nearly three quarters of National schools with special classes were reported to have adequate access to a school library in contrast to just over half (55%) of special schools and resource teachers. [6.2.1.e]

- **Toilet Facilities**: While all teachers indicated that schools had access to toilet facilities, 13% stated that these were inadequate in 2004 and no significant improvement in facilities were reported since 1989. Only half of teachers surveyed considered facilities to be very good or better. [6.2.2.a]

- **School Office**: A few teachers (6%) reported having no school office within their schools, with particularly high lack of access commented upon in rural schools. Only 50% of teachers judged school office facilities to be very good in 2004. [6.2.2.b]

- **Staffroom**: The majority of schools conveyed that they had access to a staffroom with one fifth (21%) of teachers highlighting substandard conditions. Only 49% stated that they considered staffrooms to be above standard or better. [6.2.2.c]
• **Sink & Water**: A few teachers (10%) indicated that they had no running water within their classrooms, and of those who did, 20% expressed dissatisfaction. Less than half of teachers (43%) judged this facility to be good. [6.2.3.a]

• **Display Facilities**: Fewer than half (38%) surveyed considered display facilities in classrooms to be good, with 18% saying the adequacy of display facilities was unacceptable. Teachers in boys' schools (35%) and urban schools (37%) communicated particular unhappiness in this regard. [6.2.3.b]

• **Electrical Power Points**: The majority of special school teachers (58%) reported contentment with the adequacy of electrical power points within classrooms compared to 44% of special class and resource teachers. [6.2.3.c]

• **Internet & e-mail Access**: Internet (96%) and e-mail access (100%) were highest among special schools and lowest among resource teachers, 88% of whom reported internet availability and 82% of whom reported e-mail access. [6.2.3.d]

• **Central Heating Facilities**: Teachers' happiness with central heating systems within schools was high with only 7% indicating discontent. [6.2.5.a]

• **Ventilation Systems**: The availability of adequate ventilation within schools had disimproved over the fifteen year study period with 15% of special class and resource teachers highlighting inadequate facilities in 2004. Highest rates of satisfaction were among special school teachers. [6.2.4.b]

• **Natural Lighting**: The level of natural lighting in classrooms was reported to be adequate by almost all special class teachers (98%) and most resource (91%) and special class teachers (88%). [6.2.4.c]

• **Electrical Lighting**: The majority of teachers 57% expressed positive comments regarding the adequacy of electric lighting within classrooms with a few (7%) teachers conveying negative comments. [6.4.2.d.]

• **Storage Facilities**: One quarter of teachers reported substandard or inadequate storage facilities. [6.2.5.a]

• **Classroom Space**: Levels of space within classrooms were reported to have deteriorated between 1989 and 2004. Special class teachers' reported dissatisfaction climbed from 6% to 20% as did the discontent of special school teachers (25% to 23%). Resource teachers reported highest levels of space inadequacy (28%) in 2004. [6.2.5.b]

• **School Furniture**: The majority of teachers were content with the availability, appropriateness and quality of school furniture. However, dissatisfaction increased from 9% to 19% among special class teachers and decreased from 11% to 6% among special school teachers. [6.2.5.c]
• **Hard Play Area:** Resource teachers (86%) reported highest levels of happiness with school hard play areas in comparison to 79% of special class and 72% of special school teachers. [6.2.6.a]

• **Soft Play Area:** Significant differences emerged among the three sectors in relation to soft play areas where special class teachers were best served (53.9%). Resource teachers reported access in 39% of cases and the situation in special schools deteriorated from 38% to 20% access over the study period. [6.2.6.b]

• **Playing Fields:** In 2004, a quarter of teachers had no access to a playing field. Lack of access reported by special class teachers improved from 35% in 1989 to 26% in 2004. However, special school teachers indicated an increase in lack of access from 10% to 27% over the same period. [6.2.6.c]

### 6.5.3 Perceived Adequacy of Educational Resources

• **Reading Resources:** Feedback regarding the adequacy of reading materials was very positive with no special class or special school teachers classifying materials as inadequate. Just 4% of resource teachers expressed negative comments. Levels of satisfaction were highest among special school teachers. [6.3.1.a]

• **Language Materials:** Almost all teachers expressed satisfaction with the availability of language materials with particular improvement noted amongst special class teachers. The most positive ratings were given by special school teachers. [6.3.1.b]

• **Mathematics Resources:** Significant improvements were reported in the quality and availability of mathematics resources over the fifteen year study period. Almost all special school (96%) and special class (94%) teachers and most (87%) resource teachers indicated contentment in 2004. [6.3.1.c]

• **Visual Arts:** there was varied availability of suitable materials across the three sectors. While a few teachers (6%) indicated they did not have adequate materials, 15% of special class and 20% of resource teachers reported dissatisfaction. Highest rates of happiness with visual arts resources were among teachers in special schools. [6.3.2.a]

• **Music Education:** One fifth (21%) of special class teachers reported inadequate materials in 1989 and again in 2004. A quarter (26%) of resource teachers reported dissatisfaction while the level of discontent dropped from 25% in 1989 to just 4% by 2006. The majority (67%) of special teachers gave positive ratings for music resources. [6.2.3.a]

• **SPHE Resources:** Half (52%) of teachers surveyed considered SPHE resources to be satisfactory with a small number (14%) reporting inadequacy. [6.2.3.c]
Computer Education Resources: The availability of computers grew enormously during the period 1989-2004. Almost all special school teachers (92%), most special class teachers (87%), and the majority of resource teachers (73%) stated that they had a computer within their classrooms. [6.3.2.e]

P.E. Equipment: There was a uniform improvement in the adequacy of PE equipment between 1989 and 2004. Dissatisfaction was expressed among a small number of special class teachers (21%) and special school teachers (19%) in 1989. By 2004, this had fallen to just 6%. Highest levels of adequacy were among special school teachers and lowest among rural resource teachers. [6.3.2.e]

Projection Equipment: At the time of the 1989 surveys most schools had access to a slide projector. By 2004, most special school and special class teachers (78%) and the majority of resource teachers (58%) reported access to an overhead projector. Just over a quarter of teachers (28%) indicated availability of a data projector within their schools in 2004. [6.3.3]

Audio Equipment: Practically all teachers indicated access to tape recorders. Over half of special school (58%) and special class teachers (54%) claimed they had access to a CD player. Access was poorest among resource teachers, a third (36%) of whom indicated they had access to a CD player. [6.3.4]

Audio-Visual Equipment: Access to television improved dramatically over the duration of the study with almost all teachers reporting access in 2004. Most special schools and special classes also had a video recorder although 18% of resource teachers indicated they did not. Access to DVD players was varied. The majority of special school teachers (53%) had access in contrast to less than half of special class teachers (41%) and a third of resource teachers (34%). [6.3.5]

Duplication Equipment: Practically all special education teachers (99%) had access to suitable photocopying equipment in 2004. [6.3.6.]

Provision of Books & Stationary: The majority of special school teachers (62%) and approximately half of special class (52%) and resource teachers (48%) provided books and stationary for pupils. [6.3.7.a]

Parental Contribution: Over the study period, the numbers of parents making annual financial contributions increased by 20% according to special school and special class teachers. In 2004, most parents in special schools (82%) made an annual contribution in contrast to half of special class (51%) and resource pupils’ parents (47%). [6.3.7.b]

Contribution Amount: Allowing for inflation and Euro (€) conversion, the mean annual contribution doubled from €16.08 to €33.70 over fifteen years in special classes and increased from €15.09 to €46.80 in special schools. Resource teachers reported a mean annual contribution of €43.01. [6.3.7.c]
Increased Resources: Most teachers in all sectors considered that an increase in resources would benefit the education of MGLD pupils. [6.3.8]

6.5.3 Special Curricular Provision

Curriculum Planning: Substantial changes in staff involvement in curriculum planning between 1989 and 2004. There was a reduction in the number of teachers planning curricula individually and in increase in the participation of school principals in the process. [6.4.1.a]

DES Support: There was a reduction in the number of teachers that had discussed curriculum matters with the DES inspectorate. In addition, the number of teachers who considered these discussions beneficial fell considerably. The number of special school teachers who had benefited dropped from 81% to 41% and among special class teachers from 72% to 49%. Highest reported levels of satisfaction with inspectorate advice were among resource teachers. (72%) [6.4.1.b]

Curricular Guidelines: A variety of publications were used for curriculum planning by teachers including the NCCA’s Draft Guidelines for Teachers of Students with Mild General Learning Disabilities. Almost all special class and resource teachers found this resource useful in contrast to one third (33%) of special school teachers [6.4.1.c]

I.E.P.: Most special class and resource teachers (87%) use an IEP while only two thirds (66%) of special school teachers do [6.4.2.a]

Resource Teacher Planning: One third (34%) of resource teachers indicated that they made curricular provision for pupils with no reference whatsoever to class-based learning. [6.4.2.b.]

Irish Language: A small number of MGLD pupils are taught Irish according to special school (4%), resource (7%) and special class teachers (14%). [6.4.2.c]

Time for Planning & Consultation: Three quarters (73%) of special education teachers claimed they had insufficient time for curriculum planning and equally, 79% reported insufficient time for consultation with colleagues. [6.4.3]
CHAPTER SEVEN

RESULTS

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Chapter Seven is divided in four separate sections reporting special education teachers’ perceptions of the schools’ psychological service, in-school support services external support services, and home school links. Each of these sections has been further subdivided to present in-depth results.

The first section examines psychological services under a number of headings namely: teachers’ perceptions of access and adequacy of the service available; perceptions the adequacy of the psychological assessment and other interventions; and finally, teachers’ views regarding a number of critical issues relating to the unavailability of psychological assessments within schools.

The next section reviews staffing issues in terms of in-school support services. Findings are presented relating to the availability of Special Needs Assistants (SNAs), ancillary secretarial and caretaking services, Learning Support (LS) teachers, and the employment of specialist teachers. In addition, the availability of specific support staff within designated disadvantaged schools is discussed.

The third section is concerned with the external supports available to teachers employed in the special education sector. The first subsection presents findings regarding access to and availability of visiting professional support staff including social workers, speech and language therapists, and other paramedical support staff. Secondly, non-staffing support for individual teachers is also reviewed. Special education teachers’ sense of isolation is examined along with perceived support received from local education centres, professional organisations, and local area support groups. Findings relating to teachers’ access to appropriate special education publications are also presented.

Finally, the fourth section presents some key information provided by teachers relating to home-school links within the special education sector including the manner in which schools share information with parents.
Access to a schools' psychological service improved significantly over the duration of the study \( \chi^2=166.87, df=4, p=0.000, p<0.005 \). This was especially apparent among special class teachers where access increased from just 12.6\% in 1989 \((n=87)\) to 89.6\% fifteen years later \((n=164)\) indicating a dramatic improvement in this sector. In 1989, special schools \((n=27)\) were much better served (most likely due to their historic association with voluntary disability groups and religious orders) with over half (55.6\%) having access to psychological services. While access did increase to 66.7\% by 2004, there was still a third (33.3\%) of teachers in special schools claiming to have no access to a psychologist in 2004 \((n=48)\). Special schools were identified as the one form of provision that have gone from having the greatest access in 1989 to having least access in 2004.

Just over three quarters (77.6\%) of resource teachers in 2004 \((n=170)\) reported having access to a schools psychological service within their schools.
Analysis of data relating to school type revealed that access to psychological services was significantly lower among special class teachers in girls' schools (73.4%) when compared with boys' (92.9%) and co-educational schools (93.2%) \(\left[ \chi^2=10.13, df/2, p=0.006, p<0.05 \right] \). School location was also a significant factor among resource teachers in National schools where teachers in urban schools had access to a psychologist in 87% of cases in contrast to 67.9% of rural teachers \(\left[ \chi^2=7.68, df/1, p=0.007, p<0.005 \right] \). A similar if not as pronounced trend was also noted among special class teachers where 89.4% of urban and 81.8% of rural teachers reported access to a schools' psychological service.

### 7.2.1.b Agencies Providing Schools' Psychological Service

Respondents were requested to identify which agencies providing a schools' psychological service were assigned to their schools. Analysis revealed that 13.4% of teachers reported that their schools were without a designated service provider for psychological services distributed as follows: special classes, 12.3%; special schools, 10.4%; and resource teachers, 15.1% \(\left[ \chi^2=4.77, df/6, p=0.000, p<0.005 \right] \).

It is interesting to compare responses regarding access to a service with the responses relating to provision of designated service providers as it appears there are some schools to which an agency has been assigned but yet the teachers report not having access to a psychologist. While 89.6% of special schools had an assigned schools' psychological service, some 33.3% had no access. This discrepancy was lower among special class teachers where 12.3% reported no assigned service and 10.4% with no access. In the case of resource teachers, 15.1% reported not having a designated provider of schools' psychological services yet 22.4% claimed not to have access to a psychologist. These findings indicate clearly that there were some schools (special schools and to a lesser degree National schools with resource teachers) where, despite having a designated schools' psychological service, teachers experienced difficulties in accessing a psychologist.

In 2004, psychological services were provided to schools by the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) and a variety of voluntary disability service providers nationwide. Initial analysis indicated that three quarters (74.3%) of teachers reported NEPS as their psychology service provider, while 15.8% were attached to one
of the voluntary service providers, with the remaining 9.9% receiving psychological services from both NEPS and one of the voluntary agencies as illustrated in Figure 7.2.

![Figure 7.2: Agencies providing schools’ psychological services to schools 2004 (n=292)](image)

Further analysis suggested that the distribution of psychology service providers over the three forms of educational provision differed \( \chi^2=17.21, df \ 4, p=0.000, p<0.005 \) as shown in Table 7.1.

**Table 7.1: Distribution of agencies providing schools’ psychological service in special schools and National schools 2004 (n=292)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NEPS</td>
<td>67.5% (77)</td>
<td>58.1% (25)</td>
<td>85.2% (115)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Agency</td>
<td>23.7% (27)</td>
<td>11.6% (5)</td>
<td>10.4% (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combination of NEPS and Other Agency</td>
<td>8.8% (10)</td>
<td>30.2% (13)</td>
<td>4.4% (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (114)</td>
<td>100% (43)</td>
<td>100% (135)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of the NEPS caseload was with resource teachers (85.2%) compared with 67.5% of special classes and 58.1% of special schools. Other agencies were more involved in providing services to special classes (23.7%), special schools (11.6%), and
National schools with resource teachers (10.4%). The assignation of both NEPS and another agency was most common in special schools (30.2%) with much less involvement in special classes (8.8%) and schools with resource teachers (4.4%).

Agencies other than NEPS providing schools’ psychological services included local health boards, voluntary and religious disability groups, and private psychologists as listed in Table 7.2.

Table 7.2: List of agencies providing schools’ psychological service in special schools and National schools 1989 & 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Agency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local Health Board*</td>
<td>National Rehabilitation Board (NRB)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mater Clinic, Dublin*</td>
<td>St Michael’s House, Dublin*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temple St Clinic, Dublin*</td>
<td>COPE Foundation, Cork*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Education*</td>
<td>Our Lady’s Hospital, Crumlin*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brothers of Charity Services*</td>
<td>Hospitalier Order of St John of God*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Care*</td>
<td>Sisters of Charity Services*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewart’s Hospital, Dublin*</td>
<td>Moore Abbey, Co Kildare**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Remedial Clinic (CRC)*</td>
<td>Private Assessment**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Identified in 1989 & 2004 Surveys
**Identified in 2004 surveys only

Full details of levels of involvement of these agencies in schools in 1989 and 2004 can be found in Tables X.5 and X.6 in Appendix X. These findings are not presented in this main text as survey samples for 2004 were small: special school teachers (n=16); special class teachers (n=21); and resource teachers (n=12).

While not statistically significant, the following observations were considered to be of interest:

- NEPS was assigned to a greater number of special classes in co-educational schools (74.7%) compared to girls’ schools (47.6%) (n=109)
7.2.1.c Teachers' Perceived Adequacy of Schools' Psychological Service

Teachers across the three forms of provision in 2004 were requested to rate the overall adequacy of Schools' Psychological Service on a five point rating scale ranging from 'excellent' to 'very inadequate'. High levels of dissatisfaction were expressed as highlighted in Figure 7.3.

One fifth of teachers (20.5%) stated that they considered the service to be 'very inadequate' with a further 41.8% ranking it as 'inadequate'. Only a quarter (24.8%) considered school psychology services as 'adequate' with just a further 9.2% indicating service to be 'very good'. A very small minority of teachers (3.8%) perceived schools' psychological service as 'excellent'. Clearly there was a very strong feeling among
teachers in all sectors that the schools' psychological service is not adequate and is not meeting pupils' needs.

Further investigation of data confirmed significant differences between teachers in special schools, special classes and resource posts [$\chi^2=58.35$ $df$ 8, $p=0.000$, $p<0.005$] as outlined in Table 7.3.

Table 7.3: Teachers' perceived adequacy of the schools' psychological service in special schools and National schools 2004 (n=371)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers’ Perceived Adequacy of Schools’ Psychological Services</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>3.2% (5)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>5.3% (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>11.9% (19)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>8.8% (15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>20.1% (32)</td>
<td>7.1% (3)</td>
<td>33.5% (57)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate</td>
<td>45.9% (73)</td>
<td>33.4% (14)</td>
<td>40.0% (68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Inadequate</td>
<td>18.9% (30)</td>
<td>59.5% (25)</td>
<td>12.4% (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (159)</td>
<td>100% (42)</td>
<td>100% (170)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The special school sector was undoubtedly the most dissatisfied form of provision with a large majority of 92.9% of teachers indicating unhappiness with school psychology services (33.4% ranking services as ‘inadequate’ and 59.5% selecting ‘very inadequate’). The remaining small minority of just 7.1% conceded that the services they received were ‘adequate’. Most notable of all was that not one special school teacher judged the school psychological services to be ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’.

Similar findings were noted in the other two sectors although slightly higher levels of satisfaction were observed. Special class teachers reported school psychology services to be ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ in 15.1% of cases, and an ‘adequate’ ranking was chosen by 20.1%. However, well over half (64.8%) of special class teachers rated school psychology services as below standard (45.9% selecting ‘inadequate’ and 18.9% rating services as ‘very inadequate’).
In general terms, teachers’ responses revealed that over half the teaching body in each of the three forms of provision considered school psychological services to be inadequate with particularly high levels of dissatisfaction emerging in special schools.

No significance was revealed when levels of teachers’ perceived adequacy was crosstabulated with the different agencies providing a schools’ psychological service. Results are displayed in Table 7.4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers’ Perceptions of Different Agencies</th>
<th>NEPS</th>
<th>Other Agency</th>
<th>NEPS &amp; Other Agency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Very Good’ or ‘Excellent’</td>
<td>12.0% (23)</td>
<td>11.9% (5)</td>
<td>15.3% (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Adequate’</td>
<td>27.6% (53)</td>
<td>19.0% (8)</td>
<td>11.6% (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Inadequate’ or ‘Very Inadequate’</td>
<td>60.4% (116)</td>
<td>69.1% (29)</td>
<td>73.1% (19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (192)</td>
<td>100% (42)</td>
<td>100% (26)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.2.2 Teachers’ Perceptions of Available Services

7.2.2.a Frequency of Attendance at School

Respondents were requested to rate levels of satisfaction regarding the frequency with which psychologists visit National schools and special schools. Very high levels of dissatisfaction were observed as illustrated in Figure 7.4. Nearly three quarters (72%) of teachers expressed unhappiness (39.8% rated frequency of visits as ‘inadequate’ and 32.2% selected ‘very inadequate’) while only a fifth
(20.1%) of the total surveyed population (n=334) considered the frequency of psychologists’ visits to be ‘adequate’. The percentage reporting positive levels of satisfaction remained very low at just 7.8% (1.8% ranking frequency as ‘excellent’ and 6% as ‘very good’).

Significant differences [χ²=22.69, df 4, p=0.004, p<0.005] emerged when teachers’ perceived satisfaction was reviewed across the three forms of special educational provision. These differences are presented in Table 7.5. The most striking

Table 7.5: Teachers’ satisfaction with frequency of psychologists’ visits to special schools and National schools 2004 (n=334)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers’ Satisfaction with Frequency of Psychologists’ Visits</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>0.7% (1)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>3.5% (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>5.2% (8)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>8.4% (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>20.3% (31)</td>
<td>10.5% (4)</td>
<td>22.4% (32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate</td>
<td>44.4% (68)</td>
<td>28.9% (11)</td>
<td>37.8% (54)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Inadequate</td>
<td>29.4% (45)</td>
<td>60.5% (23)</td>
<td>28.0% (40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (153)</td>
<td>100% (38)</td>
<td>100% (143)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
observation is that special school teachers expressed the least levels of satisfaction (10.5% rating frequency as ‘adequate’ compared with 20.3% of special class teachers and 22.4% of resource teachers). Conversely, this sector reported very high levels of discontent with the frequency of psychologists’ visits to special schools. In fact the number of special school teachers classifying visits to schools as ‘very inadequate’ was more than twice that (60.5%) that of their special class (29.4%) and resource teacher (28%) colleagues. No significant findings emerged when the frequency of psychologists’ attendance was crosstabulated with the different service providers.

School location was a significant factor in terms of satisfaction with psychologists’ attendance at National schools. Among resource teachers there was significantly \( \chi^2=12.94, df 4, p=0.012, p<0.05 \) greater dissatisfaction among rural teachers (40% rating the situation as ‘very inadequate’) in comparison to their urban colleagues (18.8%). A similar trend, albeit not statistically significant, was observed among special class teachers where 35% of rural teachers considered the frequency of psychologists’ attendance to be ‘very inadequate’ in contrast to 28.1% of urban special class teachers (n=134).

Special class teachers in boys’ National schools also reported higher levels of unhappiness: 44.4% compared with 17.9% in girls’ and 29.8% in co-educational schools (n=149).

Finally, there was a trend where teachers in larger schools expressed greater contentment with the frequency of psychologists’ attendance than teachers in smaller schools. Resource teachers (n=133) for rated the frequency of psychologists’ as ‘very inadequate’ as follows: 1-5 teacher schools, 38.8%; 6-10 teacher schools, 19.4%; 11-15 teacher schools, 6.7%; and, and schools with 16 or more teachers, 0.0%.

7.2.2.b Availability of Psychologists to Undertake Cognitive and Academic Assessments

High levels of discontentment were also expressed by teachers when questioned about the availability of psychologists to undertake cognitive and academic assessments in schools. These results are displayed in Figure 7.5. Respondents rated psychologists availability to undertake assessments positively in a very small percentage of cases (7.5%) (comprised of 2.4% giving an ‘excellent’ rating and 5.1% selecting ‘very good’.
65.6% of teachers considering the situation to be ‘inadequate’ or ‘very inadequate’.

Figure 7.5: Teachers’ satisfaction with psychologists’ availability to undertake cognitive and academic assessments 2004 (n=376)

As revealed in Sections 7.2.2.a and 7.2.2.b, special school teachers were most disillusioned with psychological services and this was also confirmed in relation to the availability of psychologists to undertake assessments. Over half (59.1%) rated the situation as ‘very inadequate’ compared with just over a quarter (29.6%) of special class teachers and just under a quarter (23.7%) of resource teachers. Table 7.6 indicates how special school teachers were significantly \( \chi^2=26.18, df 4, p=0.000, p<0.005 \) the most dissatisfied sector in relation to the availability of psychological assessments.

No significant differences were observed in relation to school type although special class teachers (n=155) ranked assessment availability as ‘very inadequate’ in 35.7% of male and 37.5% of female schools as opposed to 25.3% of co-educational schools. A slightly different trend was noticed among resource teachers (n=163) where 26.5% of male and 23.5% of co-educational National schools compared with 31.3% of female schools.

Analysis of the availability of assessments and school location and disadvantaged status yielded no significant results. However, according to special school teachers (n=44), the greater the size of the school the greater the likelihood of psychologists being available to undertake cognitive and academic assessments \( \chi^2=29.58, df 4, p=0.000, p<0.005 \).
Table 7.6: Teachers’ satisfaction with psychologists’ availability to undertake cognitive and academic assessments in special schools and National schools 2004 (n=376)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Availability of Psychologists’ to Undertake Assessments</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>0.6% (1)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>4.6% (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>4.4% (7)</td>
<td>4.5% (2)</td>
<td>5.8% (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>20.8% (33)</td>
<td>11.4% (5)</td>
<td>24.9% (43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate</td>
<td>44.7% (71)</td>
<td>25.0% (11)</td>
<td>41.0% (71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Inadequate</td>
<td>29.6% (47)</td>
<td>59.1% (26)</td>
<td>23.7% (41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (159)</td>
<td>100% (44)</td>
<td>100% (143)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No significant findings emerged when the availability of psychologists’ intellectual assessments was crosstabulated with the different service providers although some differences are noted when the ‘inadequate’ and ‘very inadequate’ ratings are combined: NEPS, 69.4%; other agency, 76.8%; NEPS & other agency, 88%.

7.2.2.c Availability of Psychologists to Undertake Therapeutic Interventions
Overall contentment among teachers (n=316) concerning the level of psychological input into areas other than intellectual assessment was low. Figure 7.6 demonstrates how only 19.3% of teachers considered psychologists’ availability to provide other interventions to be ‘adequate’ with just a further 6.9% evaluating the situation as ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’. As in other aspects of the schools’ psychological service, the majority of teachers (73.7%) expressed dissatisfaction (39.2%) stating the availability of psychologists for interventions was ‘inadequate’ and 34.5% selecting the rating ‘very inadequate’.

Investigation of data reveal significant \( \chi^2=23.69, \ df\ 8, \ p=0.003, \ p<0.005 \) differences between special schools and National schools as presented in table 7.7.

**Table 7.7: Teachers’ satisfaction with psychologists’ availability to undertake other therapeutic interventions in special schools and National schools 2004 (n=316)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Availability of Psychologists’ to Undertake Intervention</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>5.2% (7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>4.2% (6)</td>
<td>2.6% (1)</td>
<td>5.9% (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>18.9% (27)</td>
<td>10.5% (4)</td>
<td>22.2% (30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate</td>
<td>43.4% (62)</td>
<td>26.3% (10)</td>
<td>38.5% (52)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Inadequate</td>
<td>33.6% (48)</td>
<td>60.5% (23)</td>
<td>28.1% (38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (143)</td>
<td>100% (38)</td>
<td>100% (135)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Special school teachers reported higher levels of unhappiness with 60.5% categorizing availability of psychological interventions as ‘very inadequate’ in sharp contrast with special class teachers (33.6%) and resource teachers (28.1%).

Resource teachers (n=134) in designated disadvantaged schools were significantly more satisfied with the level of psychological intervention \( \chi^2=12.08, \ df\ 4, \ p=0.017, \ p<0.05 \) than their colleagues in non-disadvantaged schools. Resource teachers in schools where they considered pupils to have emotional/behavioural problems were
also more likely to have the services of a psychologist for therapeutic interventions \( \chi^2=31.46, df=8, p=0.012, p<0.05 \).

7.2.2.d Information/Feedback on Individual Pupils from Psychologists

Over half (56.9%) the respondents to the 2004 surveys stated that the level of information/feedback about individual pupils that they received from psychologists was adequate or better. The remaining 43.1% expressed unhappiness with the levels of pupil information received (24.3%) classifying situation as ‘inadequate’ and a further 18.8% considering the lack of information to be ‘very inadequate’ as indicated in Figure 7.7.

It also emerged that the greatest level of satisfaction with psychologist information/feedback was among resource teachers (43.3%) and the lowest among special school teachers (26.7%). These findings have been displayed in figure 7.8.
Table 7.8: Teachers’ satisfaction with information/feedback on individual pupils from psychologists in special schools and National schools 2004 (n=374)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers' Satisfaction with Information on Individual Pupils</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>2.5% (4)</td>
<td>4.4% (2)</td>
<td>6.4% (11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>12.7% (20)</td>
<td>0.0% (0)</td>
<td>15.8% (27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate</td>
<td>39.9% (63)</td>
<td>26.7% (12)</td>
<td>43.3% (74)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate</td>
<td>24.7% (39)</td>
<td>31.1% (14)</td>
<td>22.2% (38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Inadequate</td>
<td>20.3% (32)</td>
<td>37.8% (17)</td>
<td>12.3% (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (158)</td>
<td>100% (45)</td>
<td>100% (171)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.2.3 Issues regarding Unavailability of Psychological Assessments to Schools

The literature review raised a number of pertinent issues concerning the unavailability of psychological assessments for MGLD pupils and implications in terms of these pupils’ ability to access appropriate educational resources. This subsection briefly discusses the study’s findings in relation to these issues.

7.2.3.a Schools in which Pupils are awaiting Psychological Assessment

Data revealed that 80.2% of teachers (n=409) reported having pupils in their schools awaiting psychological assessment with significant differences between the three different forms of provision [$\chi^2=8.53, df 2, p=0.014, p<0.05$]. Teachers who reported having pupils awaiting assessment (n=328) were distributed across the three sectors of provision as illustrated in Figure 7.8.
The special school was the area with the fewest pupils awaiting assessment (11.6%) while special class and resource teachers greater numbers (45.7% and 42.7% respectively).

7.2.3.b Schools where Pupils are unable to avail of Special Educational Provision due to Unavailability of a Psychological Assessment

In 2004, the granting of any special educational resources to a pupil with MGLD was dependent on the submission to the DES of a current cognitive and academic report completed by a qualified psychologist. Nearly two thirds of teachers (64.8%) (n=395) in National and special schools indicated that they had pupils who were unable to avail of educational resources due to pupils not having a current psychological intellectual assessment. These teachers (n=256) were distributed across the special education sector as follows: special class teachers, 40.2%; resource teachers, 49.2%; and, special schools, 10.5%.

A crosstabulation was undertaken to establish if there were pupils who were awaiting assessment and unable to access resources due to lack of an assessment. Significance was recorded across all sectors. In the case of resource teachers, a large majority (87.6%) reported pupils awaiting assessment and unable to access resources [$\chi^2=93.63$, df 1, $p=0.000$, $p<0.005$]. Special class teachers (71%) reported similar
circumstances \( \chi^2 = 40.78, df = 1, p = 0.000, p < 0.005 \) as did 70.6% of teachers working in special schools \( \chi^2 = 5.37, df = 1, p = 0.000, p < 0.005 \).

According to resource teachers, there were significantly more pupils in urban National schools (76.3%) awaiting assessment than pupils in rural schools (59.8%) \( \chi^2 = 4.44, df = 1, p = 0.035, p < 0.05 \).

7.2.3.c The use of Privately Funded Psychological Assessments to access Special Educational Provision

Given the delays experienced by pupils in accessing psychological services and therefore subsequent delays in the granting of educational resources, information was gathered to establish whether pupils had undergone privately funded psychological assessments.

Initial analysis confirmed that nearly three quarters (71.1%) of teachers reported having pupils in their classes who had undergone private psychological assessment, distributed evenly over the three forms of provision as follows: special school teachers, 75%; resource teachers, 74.5%; and, special class teachers, 66.3%.

Although not statistically significant, the following trends were noteworthy:

- Only 52.9% of special class teachers in girls’ schools reported pupils having undergone private assessment in contrast to 75.9% of boys schools
- More urban resource teachers (79.2%) recounted pupils having undergone private assessment as opposed to 69.5% of rural resource teachers (n=172)
- More resource teachers in non-disadvantaged schools (76.3%) indicated pupils availing of private assessments compared with 64% of teachers in designated disadvantaged schools

7.2.3.d Pupils who have been Psychologically Assessed who are waiting for DES Sanction to receive Special Educational Provision

The literature review revealed that schools which submitted the required documentation (including psychological assessment) to the Special Education Section of the DES requesting resources for MGLD pupils experienced delays in the sanctioning of resource hours, entry to special class, SNA support, etc.

Respondents were requested to report whether delays were apparent in sanctioning resources for MGLD pupils with up-to date psychological reports. Data
analysis of the responses yielded significant \( \chi^2=14.46, \ df \ 1, \ p=0.001, \ p<0.005 \) results where the majority of teachers were aware of assessed pupils awaiting DES sanction.

Over half (53.8%) of special class teachers and nearly three quarters (73.4%) reported having such pupils in their schools.

### 7.3 IN-SCHOOL SUPPORT SERVICES

This section reviews the availability of support staff within schools across the special education sector. With the exception of Special Needs Assistants SNAs, the support staff listed are considered a general resource to the school as a whole, and as a result, a support to teachers of MGLD pupils in a broad sense. Information is presented regarding the employment of various support staff within individual teachers’ schools. The role and duties of these support staff are not reviewed as such details are outside the remit of this study.

#### 7.3.1 The Special Needs Assistant (SNA)

Figure 7.10 highlights the significant improvement \( \chi^2=207.02, \ df \ 4, \ p=0.000, \ p<0.005 \) in the availability of SNAs within the special education sector between 1989 and 2004. SNAs (formerly known as classroom assistants) were reported to be supporting 9.2% of
special class teachers in 1989 (50% of these posts were part-time) with a marked improvement by 2004 where the majority (91.3%) reported having the support of an SNA (86.7% of which were full-time posts).

Special school teachers reported higher levels of SNA support in 1989 (59.3%) and this sector also experienced growth in SNA employment where by 2004, 98% of teachers had SNA support. As in the case of special class teachers, the majority of these posts were of a full-time nature.

Resource teachers in National schools reported having SNA support in 70% of cases with a significant number of these posts being full time (64.1%) and located in schools in which resource teachers perceived their pupils to have emotional/behavioural difficulties in addition to MGLD \( \chi^2=15.56, df 4, p=0.004, p<0.005 \).

### 7.3.2 Secretarial and Caretaking Services

#### 7.3.2.a The School Secretary

Data analysis indicated a significant improvement \( \chi^2=46.5, df 4, p=0.000, p<0.005 \) in the number of school secretaries employed in National schools and special schools and a significant reduction in part-time posts with a reciprocal increase in full-time positions.
Special class teachers (n=87) in 1989 reported having a school secretary in nearly three quarters (72.4%) of cases. Just over half (55.6%) of these secretaries were employed on a part-time basis. By 2004 the number of National schools with special classes employing secretarial staff had increased to 93.1% with three quarters of these (71.7%) being employed on a full-time basis. Special class teachers also reported that significantly more urban schools (96.9%) had secretarial services compared to 68.2% of rural schools \([\chi^2=23.15, df 1, p=0.000, p<0.005]\).

Secretarial employment in special schools also expanded from 55.6% to 89.6% over the duration of the study with 79.5% being full-time positions. Special school teachers reported the lowest access (55.6%) in 1989 and still had the lowest access (89.6%) in 2004.

Resource teachers reported access in 90.3% of cases with significant differences being noted when urban (94.9%) and rural (84.8%) of schools were compared \([\chi^2=3.69, df 4, p=0.048, p<0.05]\).

National schools with office facilities which were positively rated by teachers were more likely to have secretarial services. This relationship was found to be significant in the case of special class teachers \([\chi^2=9.80, df 3, p=0.026, p<0.05]\) and resource teachers \([\chi^2=20.58, df 3, p=0.000, p<0.005]\).
7.3.2.b The School Caretaker

Significant improvements were noted in the level of caretaking staff employed in National schools and special schools between 1989 and 2004 $[\chi^2=244.99, df=4, p=0.000, p<0.005]$. However, while there was growth in the number of posts, many of these positions were part-time only.

![Figure 7.12: Availability of school caretakers in National schools and special schools 1989 and 2004 (n=532)](image)

National schools with special classes were better served with caretaking provision both in 1989 (n=87) and 2004 (n=174). In 1989, 82.8% of teachers reported working in a school with a caretaker (51.8% full-time and 31% part-time) which had improved to 93.7% by 2004 of which 69% of posts were full-time.

Special school teachers recounted poorer provision with 63% stating their schools were appointed with a caretaker in 1989 with just 29.4% of these being full-time posts. By 2004 (n=49) the number of caretakers employed had grown with 79.6% of teachers stating this support was available (48.9% were full-time positions).

Resource teachers stated they had caretaking facilities in 79% of cases but the majority (49%) of these posts were part-time.

National schools in urban areas had higher levels of caretaking provision when compared with rural schools. Special class teachers reported access to a caretaker in 96.2% of urban schools in contrast to 72.7% of rural schools $[\chi^2=15.38 df=1, p=0.000, p<0.005]$.
Similarly the urban rural distribution reported by resource teachers was 88.6% and 71.7% respectively \( [\chi^2 = 7.61, df = 1, p = 0.006, p < 0.05] \).

Finally, analysis showed that school size was an important factor where larger National schools had greater access to caretaking provision. Significance was noted in the cases of special class teachers \( [\chi^2 = 18.40, df = 3, p = 0.000, p < 0.005] \) and resource teachers \( [\chi^2 = 13.16, df = 3, p = 0.004, p < 0.005] \).

### 7.3.3 The Learning Support (LS) Teacher

The availability of learning support teachers (formerly known as remedial teachers) was also explored. While learning support teachers were not officially directly involved in educational provision to MGLD pupils between 1984 and 2004, ironically Circular SP.ED. 02/05 *Organisation of Teaching Resources for Pupils who need Additional Support in Mainstream Primary Schools* (Government of Ireland, 2005a) directed that learning support teachers were now to replace resource teachers in providing supplementary teaching to MGLD pupils.

In 1989 \((n = 114)\), special class teachers indicated that the large majority of National schools had a remedial teacher \((89.7\%)\). By 2004 \((n = 173)\) practically all schools had the services of a learning support teacher according to 96.5% of special class teachers \((91.6\% \text{ of these posts were full-time})\).

While resource teachers \((n = 196)\) reported equal access \((96.9\%)\), there were significant differences between National schools with special class and resource teachers where half \((51.1\%)\) the learning support posts in resource teacher schools were part-time only \( [\chi^2 = 11.65, df = 1, p = 0.000, p < 0.005] \).

### 7.3.4 The Specialist Teacher

Special schools and National schools have in some cases created teaching posts within schools where teachers are not assigned a class but engaged in teaching a specific aspect of the curriculum or an extra curricular activity. In general, full-time posts have been created through adjusting the DES staffing schedule: i.e. increasing the number of pupils in each class to release a teacher to work as a specialist teacher. In some instances, schools may historically have retained a concessionary post due to a school amalgamation or other exceptional circumstances.
Part-time posts are generally supported through private non-state funding furnished by parents’ associations, religious and voluntary bodies, and in the case of some special schools with second-level provision, by the local Vocational Education Committee (VEC). Special schools posts are primarily funded by the DES.

Figure 7.13 illustrates the number of specialist teachers employed by the three sectors of provision.

The employment of specialist teachers has expanded significantly \( \chi^2 = 70.27, \text{ df } 4, p=0.000, p<0.005 \) between 1989 and 2005 with significant changes also observed in the full-time/part-time status of such posts \( \chi^2 = 10.257, \text{ df } 4, p=0.036, p<0.05 \).

The 1989 survey indicated that 12.6% of special class teachers reported the employment of specialist teachers in their schools which had grown to 30.4% by 2004. National schools with resource teachers reported lower levels of specialist teachers (13.8%) in 2004 divided evenly between full-time and part-time posts.

By far the greatest level of employment of specialist teachers was in the special school sector. Teachers in 1989 reported having such a teacher on their staffs in 44.4% of cases which was higher than the figures reported by resource teachers and special class teachers fifteen years later in 2004. By 2004, nearly two thirds (65.3%) of special school teachers reported having access to specialist teacher (primarily in a full-time capacity) within their schools. Clearly, special schools have a distinct advantage over National schools in terms of additional teachers in non-classroom settings.
7.3.5 Support Staff in Designated Disadvantaged Schools

7.3.5.a The Disadvantaged Schools Co-ordinator

Qualified teachers were appointed as Disadvantaged Schools Co-ordinators in a selected number of primary schools as part of two schemes addressing educational disadvantage namely Breaking the Cycle (BTC) (1997) and Giving Children an Even Break (GCEB) (1999).

Of the respondents (n=368) in the 2004 surveys of National schools, 10.5% of special class teachers and just 3.6% of resource teachers reported having Disadvantaged Schools Co-ordinators \( \chi^2=5.83, df \ 1, p<0.005 \).

7.3.5.b The Home School Community Liaison Teacher (HSCL)

Additional staff within primary schools the address home school liaison issues did not exist at the time of the 1989 surveys. However, these two surveys did ask respondents (n=104) to indicate whether their schools operated some form of home/school liaison. Over half the special school teachers (52%) and 39.2% of special class teachers reported some form of scheme in operation.

The Home School Community Liaison (HSCL) scheme established in 1990 resulted in the subsequent appointment of HSCL teachers initially to urban schools and subsequently, to a lesser degree, to rural National schools.

Results suggested significant differences in the availability of HSCL teachers between special class teachers (50%) and resource teachers (9.8%) \( \chi^2=73.31, df \ 1, p=0.000, p<0.005 \). In both cases, the majority (84.9%) of these posts were full-time. It was also reported that HSCL teachers were significantly more likely to be appointed in urban schools among special class teachers (n=152) \( \chi^2=13.40, df \ 1, p=0.000, p<0.005 \) and to a lesser degree among resource teachers (n=176) \( \chi^2=3.92, df \ 1, p=0.000, p<0.005 \). Special class teachers in 58.5% of cases in urban schools reported access to a HSCL teacher compared with just 13.6% of teachers in rural schools. The urban/rural ratio for resource teachers was 15.2% : 5.2%. Figure 7.14 summarizes the availability of Disadvantaged Schools Co-ordinators and Home School Community Liaison (HSCL) teachers in National schools.
There was significantly strong support for the introduction of additional HSCL teachers to schools. There was nearly unanimous agreement among special school teachers of whom 95.7% indicated support for the appointment of HSCL teachers. Both sectors in National schools were also positively disposed towards an increase in this service (87.5% of special class teachers and 69.1% of resource teachers) \( [\chi^2=27.81, df 4, p=0.001, p<0.005] \).

7.4 EXTERNAL SUPPORT SERVICES

7.4.1 External Visiting Services

At the time of writing (July, 2006), a range of additional visiting support services for children with disabilities are provided by the Health Services Executive (HSE). These services include social work services, speech and language therapy services, occupational therapy, and physiotherapy. Provision for school-going children is made either directly by the HSE or voluntary bodies which are grant-aided by the HSE.

At the time of data collection in 1989 and 2004, this same range of services was provided by seven regional Health Boards which were amalgamated into the newly formed HSE on 1\textsuperscript{st} January 2005. For the purpose of this study, the availability of social...
work services and speech therapy services are discussed in sections 7.4.1.a and 7.4.1.b. Findings relating to any other paramedical support services are presented in 7.4.1.c.

7.4.1.a Social Work Services

The regional Health Boards were obliged to provide social work services for children considered ‘at risk’, children who were economically disadvantaged, and in some cases, children with disabilities. The majority of social workers employed by the Health Boards (and subsequently the HSE) worked with children of school-going age. The significant growth in social work services across the special education sector is illustrated in Figure 7.15. The greatest expansion occurred in National schools with special classes where a small minority of just 5.7% of teachers reported social worker access in 1989 (n=87) which grew to nearly half (48.5%) of teachers by 2004 (n=163) \( [z^2=64.93, df=4, p=0.000, p<0.005] \). Special schools were the sector best served by social work access in both 1989 and 2004. The earlier survey (n=27) indicated that 44.4% of special school teachers reported social work access. This expanded to 63.3% of teachers by 2004 (n=49) making this the form of provision with best social work access in 2004.

Resource teachers reported 32% access in 2004 (n=172). Social work access in this sector was revealed to be significantly greater in disadvantaged National schools.
(52%) compared with non-disadvantaged schools (9.2%) [$\chi^2=4.07$, $df$ 1, $p=0.044$, $p<0.05$] (Yates' Correction for Continuity). No significant results were found when data relating to school size, location, gender, etc. were analysed.

7.4.1.b Speech and Language Services

The regional Health Boards were also responsible for employing speech and language therapists to provide assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of children with communication difficulties in local health centres, hospitals, and schools, including schools catering for MGLD pupils. Speech and language therapy services are another area which improved significantly over the period 1989-2004. The improvement in the availability of speech therapy services followed a similar pattern to that of social work services whereby the greatest growth in access to services was in National schools with special class teachers reporting access of 13.8% in 1989 (n=87) which increased to 62.8% by 2004 (n=164) [$\chi^2=75.36$, $df$ 4, $p=0.000$, $p<0.005$]. Just over half (51.9%) of special schools teacher indicated access to speech therapy services in 1989 (n=27) which increased by over 50% to 79.6% by 2004 (n=49) making special schools the sector with most access to these services in 2004. More than half (57.5%) of resource teachers (n=174) in National schools stated that they had to speech therapy services in 2004. These findings are displayed in Figure 7.16.

![Figure 7.16: Availability of speech and language therapy services in National schools and special schools 1989 and 2004 (n=501)](image-url)
Although not statistically significant, the following findings from the three 2004 surveys were considered worthy of mention:

- Special class teachers (n=161) reported lower levels of speech therapy access in boys' schools (46.4%) when compared with girls' (61.3%) and co-educational (68.6%) schools.
- Special class teachers also recounted slightly greater access in urban schools (64.2%) than in rural schools (56.6%) (n=162).
- Resource teachers reported greater access in girls' schools (66.7%) in contrast to boys' schools (50%) and co-educational schools (n=162).

7.4.1.c Other Support Services

Physiotherapy, occupational therapy, and other paramedical support services are also provided by the seven regional Health Boards at the time of questionnaire distribution in 1989 and 2004. As with social work and speech therapy services, these other facilities were made available directly by the area Health Board or a voluntary organisation funded by it. These additional paramedical professionals worked, to a greater degree, with the population described as 'low incidence' pupils as defined by the DES in *Circular SP ED 24/03 Allocation of Resources* (Government of Ireland, 2003c). However, a minority of MGLD pupils who have additional difficulties may avail of such services. For the purpose of data collection, teachers were requested to categorise these services as 'other support staff'. Figure 7.17 shows the 2004 levels of availability of these services within the special education sector. While levels of access appear quite high, it should be noted that the small sample of 52 respondents represents only 12.1% of the total possible cohort of 429 teachers, implying that these levels of reported access should be interpreted with caution.
7.4.2 External Teacher Support

7.4.2.a Teachers’ Impressions of Isolation

Figure 7.18 depicts teachers’ responses in 2004 when asked if they experienced isolation in their special education teaching posts. Of a sample of 396 teachers, 43.2%
stated that they felt isolated. When further analysed in terms of the three levels of provision, the greatest level of isolation among teachers was in National schools where 45.7% special class teachers (n=164) and 41.9% of resource teachers (n=186) reported a sense of isolation. Special school teachers indicated that they experienced isolation in 39.1% of cases (n=46). These findings are summarised in Table 7.9.

Table 7.9: Special education teachers' perceived isolation in National schools and special schools 2004 (n=396)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers Perceived Isolation</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>45.7% (75)</td>
<td>39.1% (18)</td>
<td>41.9% (78)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>54.3% (89)</td>
<td>60.8% (28)</td>
<td>58.1% (108)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (164)</td>
<td>100% (46)</td>
<td>100% (186)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In examining the National school responses, a number of significant findings emerged. Firstly a crosstabulation of teacher gender and isolation revealed that male special class teachers expressed greater feelings of isolation: 63.3% stated they felt isolated as a special education teacher compared with 40.8% of female teachers (n=160) [$\chi^2=5.01$, df 1, $p=0.042$, $p<0.05$]. School location was also identified as a significant factor where 73.7% of rural special class teachers expressed isolation in contrast to 44% of their urban colleagues (n=144) [$\chi^2=5.82$, df 1, $p=0.03$, $p<0.05$]. Teachers in schools that reported inadequate staffroom facilities were also discovered to express greater levels of isolation as highlighted among resource teachers [$\chi^2=16.39$, df 3, $p=0.01$, $p<0.05$] and, to a lesser degree, among special school teachers [$\chi^2=6.62$, df 2, $p=0.036$, $p<0.05$].

Secondly, teachers' attitudes to special education were also a feature in relation to teachers' sense of isolation. Both resource and special class teachers recounted higher levels of isolation when not teaching in special education by choice. Special class teachers working in special education of their own volition reported a sense of isolation in 40.4% of cases in contrast to 73.9% of teachers not in special education by choice (n=159) [$\chi^2=8.89$, df 1, $p=0.006$, $p<0.05$]. Similarly, resource teachers not teaching in special education by choice reported even more significant levels of isolation where 38.5% of those teaching by choice experienced this feeling as opposed to twice as many (82.4%) of teachers in special education against their will [$\chi^2=12.08$, df 1, $p=0.01$, $p<0.05$]. Of the special class teachers (n=152) who indicated that they would prefer
to teach in mainstream, 71.8% expressed a sense of isolation and 28.2% did not \[\chi^2=13.15, \ df \ 1, \ p=0.000, \ p<0.005\]. Likewise, resource teachers who would prefer to teach in mainstream education experienced isolation in 84% of cases \[\chi^2=19.64, \ df \ 1, \ p=0.000, \ p<0.005\]. In relation to teacher isolation and job security, the data also revealed that special class teachers \(n=108\) who did not have redeployment rights experienced a sense of isolation in 68.8% of cases \[\chi^2=10.86, \ df \ 2, \ p=0.004, \ p<0.005\].

Thirdly, lack of time for consultation with colleagues was also cited as a contributory factor in teacher isolation. Of special class teachers \(n=160\) experiencing isolation, 84.7% stated that they did not have sufficient time to consult colleagues while 15.3% reported that they did \[\chi^2=6.40, \ df \ 1, \ p=0.011, \ p<0.05\]. This was even more apparent among resource teachers \(n=183\) where 9.1% of isolated teachers had adequate time for consultation in contrast to 90.9% who declared they had insufficient time for consultation \[\chi^2=11.97, \ df \ 2, \ p=0.001, \ p<0.005\].

Finally, for special school teachers \(n=46\), a greater sense of isolation was experienced among teachers who perceived that pupils in their schools were not appropriately placed \[\chi^2=10.73, \ df \ 2, \ p=0.005, \ p<0.05\].

7.4.2.b Support from local Education Centres

Figure 7.10 displays teachers’ perceptions of whether or not they considered their local

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception that local Education Centre is Supportive?</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>52.6% (80)</td>
<td>61.2% (30)</td>
<td>73.9% (130)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>47.4% (72)</td>
<td>38.8% (19)</td>
<td>26.1% (46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (152)</td>
<td>100% (49)</td>
<td>100% (176)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.10: Special education teachers’ perceptions regarding support from local education centre 2004 \(n=377\)

Education Centre to be supportive in their role as special education teachers. The greatest differences in levels of perceived support was between special class teachers \(n=152\) and resource teachers \(n=176\). Over half (52.6\%) of special class teachers considered local Education Centres to be supportive in contrast to over three quarters.
(73.9%) of resource teachers. Sixty one percent of special school teachers considered local Education Centres to be of support.

Closer analysis revealed significant findings relating primarily to special class and resource teachers. Teachers who considered that local education centres were more likely to feel less isolated. Of the special class teachers who found education centres supportive, 32.5% experienced isolation and 63.6% did not [$\chi^2=14.00$, $df=2$, $p=0.001$, $p<0.005$]. Similarly, resource teachers reported that of those who judged Education Centres as supportive, 33.9% felt isolated as compared with 63.1% who did not and a small minority of 3.1% who experienced occasional isolation [$\chi^2=10.97$, $df=2$, $p=0.004$, $p<0.005$].

Teachers’ attitudes to special education and employment choice were also factors in whether or not teachers perceived local centres to be supportive. Special class teachers ($n=150$) who had elected to work in special education considered local education centres supportive in 56.6% of cases compared with 28.6% not in special education by choice [$\chi^2=5.69$, $df=1$, $p=0.017$, $p<0.05$]. Similarly, three quarters (76.3%) of resource teachers ($n=168$) working in the special education sector by choice found teachers centres supportive compared with half (50%) who did not [$\chi^2=3.91$, $df=2$, $p=0.048$, $p<0.05$].

Correspondingly, teachers wishing to remain in special education were more likely to find their local education centre more supportive. Special class teachers ($n=139$) who considered education centres to be supportive wished to remain in special education teaching in 56.4% of cases as opposed to 36.8% who would opt for mainstream [$\chi^2=3.49$, $df=1$, $p=0.039$, $p<0.05$]. In addition, special class teachers ($n=102$) in secure employment with full redeployment rights were more likely to report local education centres as supportive (61.8%) in contrast to those with no panel rights (26.7%) or teachers with special panel rights (27.3%) [$\chi^2=11.48$, $df=2$, $p=0.009$, $p<0.05$].

Finally, only 19% of special class teachers trained abroad considered their local education centres to be supportive compared with 57.5% of their Irish trained colleagues [$\chi^2=10.66$, $df=1$, $p=0.002$, $p<0.005$].
i. Irish National Teachers’ Organisation (INTO)

Only a third (33.8%) of special education teachers employed in 2004 perceived the Irish National Teachers’ Organisation to be supportive to them in their role in special education. Table 7.11 shows levels of perceived support across the three sectors where resource teachers felt most supported (39.3%) followed by special class teachers (32.1%). Only a fifth of teachers (21.3%) working in special schools considered the I.N.T.O. to be supportive to them.

Although not statistically significant, the following results were of interest:

- Female resource teachers (40.5%) considered the INTO to be supportive compared with 26.7% of their male colleagues (n=146)
- Nearly a third (30%) of special school teachers who had trained abroad regarded the union to be a support in contrast to just 12% of Irish-trained teachers (n=45)
- Only 21.7% of teachers working in boys’ National schools felt supported by the INTO as opposed to 37.9% of those working in girls’ schools and 34.6% of teachers working in co-educational schools (n=133)

Exploration of the data revealed no significant findings regarding the perceived support of the INTO in relation to school location, designated disadvantaged status, or employment or redeployment status.
Over half the teachers (55.8%) surveyed in 2004 reported that they regarded the Irish Association of Teachers in Special Education (IATSE) to be a supportive organisation. Levels of support as distributed between special class, special school and resource teachers are illustrated in Figure 7.19. Special school teachers reported highest levels of support (61.2%) while special class and resource teachers conveyed almost equal perceived levels of support at 55.5% and 54.4% respectively.

Special class teachers in permanent teaching posts expressed significantly higher perceptions of IATSE support (90.5%) in permanent positions in contrast to only 9.5% in temporary posts [$\chi^2=4.81$, $df$ 1, $p=0.028$, $p<0.05$]. As the majority of temporary teachers were newly qualified, it was decided to crosstabulate teachers’ perceptions of support with teachers teaching for just one year. Newly appointed special class teachers reported that they considered IATSE to be of support in just 16.7% of cases [$\chi^2=12.14$, $df$ 1, $p=0.000$, $p<0.005$]. This was also found to be the case among resource teachers working for just a year where 24% of them reported this association as supportive [$\chi^2=11.17$, $df$ 1, $p=0.001$, $p<0.005$].

Although not significant the following observations merit mention:
Female special class teachers considered IATSE to be supportive in 58.3% of cases compared with 46.2% of male teachers (n=134). A similar trend was noted for 55.7% of female and 35.7% of male resource teachers (n=145).

Teachers trained in Ireland reported higher levels of support – 58.6% of special class (n=134) and 58.2% of resource teachers (n=132) trained in Ireland in contrast to 38.9% and 45.5% of their colleagues trained overseas.

Special class teachers in rural schools (62.5%) reported higher levels of support compared to 52.4% of urban teachers (n=119).

Of special class teachers employed in the sector by choice, 88.2% considered IATSE to be a support to them (n=76).

7.4.2.d Local Area Support Groups

In some instances, special education teachers have established a variety of local teacher support groups to facilitate sharing of ideas and resources, seek advice and provide mutual support. Respondents were requested to state whether or not they considered these groups to be a support. Figure 7.20 highlights the differences between the three forms of provision.

Figure 7.20: Perceptions regarding support from local support groups among special education teachers in National schools and special schools 2004 (n=320)

It is evident that resource teachers are the sector deriving most support from local teacher support groups (47.3%). Special class teachers reported such groups to be
supportive in 29.5% of cases while only 10% of special school teachers judged such a facility as helpful.

Referring specifically to resource teachers (n=127), teachers in permanent posts (53.3%) were more likely to find such support groups helpful when compared with temporary teachers (18.2%) \[\chi^2=9.01, df 1, p=0.003, p<0.005\].

Of the special class teachers who found local groups to be supportive, 100% were teaching in special education by choice \[\chi^2=9.42, df 1, p=0.005, p<0.05\]. Special class teachers whose preference it was to remain in the sector found local support groups of help in 89.2% of cases \[\chi^2=8.09, df 1, p=0.004, p<0.005\] and almost identical results were recorded among resource teachers where 90% of those wishing to remain in special education considered local area groups to be supportive \[\chi^2=8.09, df 1, p=0.004, p<0.005\].

7.4.2.e Access to Special Educational Publications

Just under half of teachers (46.8%) surveyed in 2004 reported having adequate access to appropriate publications relating to special education. The distribution across special class, special school, and resource teachers is displayed in Table 7.12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>49.0% (73)</td>
<td>41.7% (20)</td>
<td>46.3% (74)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>51.0% (76)</td>
<td>58.3% (28)</td>
<td>53.8% (86)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (149)</td>
<td>100% (48)</td>
<td>100% (160)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Male special class teachers in National schools reported having less access than their female colleagues. They reported 28.6% access against 54.7% access among female teachers \[\chi^2=6.17, df 1, p=0.013, p<0.05\].

National school teachers with access to publications were also more likely to use Individual Education Plans (IEPs) with their pupils. Of special class teachers (n=149) and resource teachers (n=157) with adequate access, 97.3% used an IEP and 2.7% did
Yates' Continuity Correction for special class teachers was $[\chi^2=11.10, df 1, p=0.000, p<0.005]$ and resource teachers was $[\chi^2=12.08, df 1, p=0.000, p<0.005]$.

7.5 HOME SCHOOL LINKS

7.5.1 Information Sharing

7.5.1.a Parent/Teacher Meetings

Table 7.13 illustrates the frequency with which special class, special school and resource teachers conduct formal parent/teacher meetings with parents of the pupils they teach.

Significant differences emerged between the three forms of provision in 2004 where resource teachers met more frequently that special school or special class teachers. Resource teachers ($n=189$) met once a term in 47.1% of cases as opposed to a third (36.3%) of special class teachers ($n=171$) and just a quarter (25%) of special school teachers ($n=48$). The numbers of teachers meeting once a month or more frequently were low. Special school teachers met with parents least often – 62.5% met on formal basis only once a year in contrast to 47.4% of special class (47.4%) and 36.5% of resource teachers $[\chi^2=23.67, df 8, p=0.003, p<0.005]$.
Further analysis revealed that resource teachers in disadvantaged National schools met parents more frequently (26.9% met once a month compared with 8.8%) than teachers in non-disadvantaged schools \( [\chi^2=11.77, df \ 4, p=0.019, p<0.05] \).

### 7.5.1.2 Progress Reports

Respondents were requested to indicate how frequently they send written school progress reports to parents. Table 7.14 summarizes the information received.

**Table 7.14: Frequency with which teachers send school progress reports to parents 1989 & 2004 (n=547)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Special Class 1989</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Special School 1989</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Resource 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>64.2% (61)</td>
<td>78.6% (136)</td>
<td>82.5% (33)</td>
<td>71.4% (35)</td>
<td>74.7% (142)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a Term</td>
<td>29.5% (28)</td>
<td>14.5% (25)</td>
<td>7.5% (3)</td>
<td>22.4% (11)</td>
<td>18.4% (35)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>3.2% (3)</td>
<td>1.2% (2)</td>
<td>5.0% (2)</td>
<td>2.0% (1)</td>
<td>4.3% (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>3.2% (3)</td>
<td>5.8% (10)</td>
<td>5.0% (2)</td>
<td>4.1% (2)</td>
<td>2.6% (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (95)</td>
<td>100% (173)</td>
<td>100% (40)</td>
<td>100% (49)</td>
<td>100% (190)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The frequency with which teachers sent progress reports to parents reduced during the period of the study 1989-2004. Among special class teachers, the sending of reports once a term halved from 29.5% in 1989 to 14.5% in 2004, while conversely the numbers sending annual reports increased from 64.2% to 78.6%. On the other hand, report sending amongst special school teachers increased during the same period. Annual reports reduced from 82.5% to 71.4% while correspondingly, termly report sending increased from 7.5% to 22.4%.

Three quarters (74.7%) of resource teachers sent reports just once a year, 18.4% sent reports once a term, and the remaining 6.9% sent them more frequently. Resource teachers in disadvantaged schools sent reports more frequently than their colleagues in non-disadvantaged schools. Nearly a fifth (18.5%) sent monthly reports compared with just 1.9% of those in non-disadvantaged schools \( [\chi^2=16.31, df \ 3, p=0.001, p<0.005] \).
In overall terms, approximately three quarters of special education teachers in 2004 sent a written progress report to pupils’ parents just once a year.

7.5.1.c School Open Day

Figure 7.21 depicts the number of teachers who indicated that their school held an annual ‘open day’ for parents.

![Figure 7.21: Number of teachers in National schools and special schools which host an ‘Open Day’ 1989 and 2004 (n=517)](image)

In 1989, just under half of National schools held an annual parents’ ‘open day’ (45.9% of special class teachers and 47.4% of special school teachers). By 2004, this had not increased among special class teachers with 51.2% stating their schools hosted ‘open days’. However, special school teachers reported a significant increase by 2004 where three quarters (74.5%) reported having such a day [$\chi^2=11.06, df=1, p=0.026, p<0.05$].

In 2004, just over half (54.6%) of resource teachers claimed their schools organised a ‘open day’. Resource teachers in girls’ schools were more likely (81.3%) to host an ‘open day’ compared with boys’ schools (36.8%) or co-educational schools (53.8%) [$\chi^2=703, df=2, p=0.03, p<0.05$].
7.5.1.d Information Booklet

The 2004 surveys requested teachers to specify whether or not the schools within which they worked produced an information booklet which was available to parents. Findings indicated that special schools were most likely to provide such a booklet for parents. Figure 7.22 shows that 72.9% of special school teachers indicated that an information booklet for parents was available in contrast to 62.1% of special classes and 55.8% of National schools with resource teachers.

![Figure 7.22: Number of teachers in National schools and special schools which provide information booklet for parents 2004 (n=421)](image)

Schools with a formal written special educational needs policy were more likely to have an information booklet available for parents distributed as follows: special class teachers, 68.5%; special school teachers, 76.2%; and, resource teachers, 67.3%. Significance was reported in the case of special class teachers \([\chi^2=5.17, df 1, p=0.035, p<0.05]\) and resource teachers \([\chi^2=10.12, df 1, p=0.002, p<0.005]\).

7.5.2 Schools' Parents' Associations

The number of schools with active parents' associations in the special education sector
is reported in Figure 7.23 showing an increase during the period of the study. Special class teachers reported an increase in the existence of such associations from 60.7% in 1989 to 81.1% by 2004. A less striking increase of just 3% was noted in special schools. In 2004, 81% of National schools with resource teachers reporting having an active parents’ association within their schools. No significant differences were noted in terms of school location, school type, or designated disadvantaged status.
7.6 CHAPTER SEVEN: SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

7.6.1 Introduction

A summary of the key findings for Chapter Seven is outlined in four subsections below:

7.6.2 Schools’ Psychological Service

- **Access to Service**: Access to schools’ psychological service increased significantly over the study period and by 2004 almost all special class teachers (90%) and most resource teachers (78%) and the majority of special school (67%) reported access. [7.2.1.a]

- **SPS Service Providers**: Three quarters (74%) of teachers received their psychological services from NEPS, a small number (16%) from voluntary and disability organisations, and the remaining 10% from a combination of both. [7.2.1.b]

- **Adequacy of Service**: There was widespread dissatisfaction among teachers regarding the adequacy of service. Almost all special school teachers (93%) and the majority of special class (65%) and resource teachers (52%) deemed the schools’ psychological service as inadequate. [7.2.1.c]

- **Frequency of Visits**: Teachers were very dissatisfied with the frequency with which psychologists visited. Nearly three quarters (72%) of teachers described the frequency of visits as inadequate or very inadequate. [7.2.2.a]

- **Psychological Assessments**: Most special school teachers (85%) and the majority of special class (74%) and resource teachers (65%) were not satisfied with psychologists’ availability to undertake cognitive and academic assessments within their schools. [7.2.2b]

- **Therapeutic Interventions**: A significant majority of special school (87%), special class (75%) and resource teachers (67%) were not happy with the availability of psychologists to provide therapeutic interventions. [7.2.2.c]

- **Information**: Less than half of special class teachers (45%) and resource teachers (35%) were not satisfied with the adequacy of information and feedback from psychologists. Discontent was particularly high among special school teachers (69%) [7.2.2.d]

- **Waiting Lists**: Most special education teachers reported having pupils in their schools awaiting psychological assessment. [7.2.3.a]
• **Inability to Access Education**: Most teachers reported that there were pupils within their schools unable to avail of educational resources due to the unavailability of a psychological assessment and subsequent report. Most resource teachers (88%) reported knowing such pupils, the majority of whom were located in urban schools. [7.2.3.b]

• **Private Psychological Assessment**: Three quarters of resource and special class teachers and two thirds of special school teachers reported pupils having undergone private psychological assessment in order to access educational resources. [7.2.3.c]

• **DES Delay**: Over half (54%) of special class and three quarters of resource teachers reported having pupils who had been psychologically assessed but were still awaiting DES sanction before being able to avail of special educational placement. [7.2.3.d]

7.6.3 In-School Support Services

• **SNA**: Significant improvements in SNA support were observed between 1989 and 2004. Almost of special class (91%) and special school (98%) and the majority (70%) of resource teachers had support of SNAs within their classrooms in 2004. [7.3.1]

• **School Secretary**: Provision of secretarial services had grown significantly since 1989 with almost all (91%) reporting secretarial support. [7.3.2.a]

• **School Caretaker**: Almost all special class teachers (94%) indicated having the services of a school caretaker while most (80%) of special school and resource teachers reported such a support. Caretaking provision was higher in urban areas. [7.3.2.b]

• **LS Teacher**: Practically all National schools indicated that there was a LS (Learning Support) teacher employed. [7.3.3]

• **Specialist Teacher**: Part-time and full-time specialist teachers were most prevalent in special schools (65%), compared less than half of special class teachers (44%) and just a few resource teachers (14%) reporting such a support. [7.3.4]

• **Disadvantage Co-ordinator**: A few teachers (7%) indicated the availability of this support within their schools. [7.3.5.a]

• **HSCL Co-ordinator**: Half of special class teachers (50%) stated they had the support of a HSCL co-ordinator in contrast to only 10% of resource teachers. There was strong support among teachers in all sectors for the development and expansion of the HSCL scheme. [7.3.5.b]
7.6.4. External Support Services

- **Social Work Services:** While access to social work services had improved somewhat over the fifteen year study period, reported access was still poor with most (78%) resource teachers and the majority of special class (51%) and a third (34%) of special school teachers expressing dissatisfaction at the adequacy of the social work service. [7.4.1.a]

- **Speech and Language Therapy Services:** An improvement in services was observed between 1989 and 2004 but 42% of resource, 37% of special class and 20% of special school teachers recounted having inadequate access to such services in 2004. [7.4.1.b]

- **Paramedical Services:** Other paramedical services such as physiotherapy and occupational therapy were available to most special schools (80%) and the majority of special classes (68%) and children attending resource teachers (65%). [7.4.1.c]

- **Teacher Isolation:** A significant minority of teachers (42%) indicated they experienced isolation in their work as special education teachers. Being male, not teaching by choice, and lack of time to consult with colleagues were factors contributing to teacher isolation. [7.4.2.a]

- **Teachers’ Centres:** Nearly three quarters of resource teachers viewed teachers’ centres as supportive in contrast to 61% of special class teachers and just over half (53%) special school teachers. [7.4.2.b]

- **INTO:** The majority of teachers did not consider the INTO to be supportive. Fewer than half (39%) of resource teachers, a third (32%) of special class teachers, and a small number (21%) of special school teachers considered the primary teachers’ trade union to be support. [7.4.2.c]

- **IATSE:** The majority of teachers surveyed indicated that they believed IATSE to be a support to them as special educators. Greatest perceived support was among special school teachers (61%) and least among resource teachers (54%). [7.4.2.c]

- **Local Support Groups:** Resource teachers were the sector which considered local support groups to be supportive (47%). Only 30% of special class teachers and just 10% of special school teachers judged local support groups to be helpful. [7.4.2.d]

- **Access to Publications:** The majority of teachers (54%) across the three sectors stated that they did not have access to suitable special educational publications [7.4.2.e]
7.6.5. **Home School Links**

- **Parent/Teacher Meetings**: Significant differences relating to the frequency of parent/teacher meetings were observed between the three forms of provision with special school teachers meeting parents less often than their special class or resource teacher colleagues. [7.5.1.a]

- **Progress Reports**: The majority of teachers (75%) sent progress reports to parents once a year with more special school sending schools sending reports once a term than in 1989. [7.5.1.b]

- **Annual Open Day**: Three quarters (75%) of special school teachers reported that their schools hosted an annual open day compared with 52% of special class and 55% of resource teachers. [7.5.1.c]

- **Information Booklet**: The availability of an information booklet for parents was reported to be highest among special schools (73%) and lowest in National schools with resource teachers (56%) [7.5.1.d]

- **Parents’ Associations**: Most teachers (80%) reported in 2004 that the school within which they worked had an active parents’ association. [7.5.2]
CHAPTER EIGHT

INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS & DISCUSSION

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8.1 INTRODUCTION

Firstly, this discussion chapter re-visits the eleven topics which formed the basis for the research questions posed in Chapter Three. These areas are now reviewed in light of the results presented in Chapters Five, Six, and Seven, and existing relevant research in the field. Similarities and differences between the three forms of provision and how these compare and contrast with the findings of other researchers are discussed. Particular trends are noted and areas of concern are highlighted and where appropriate discussed in relation to developments since 2004. Secondly, the systemic difficulties emerging from the data are reviewed and explored in terms of their affect on special educational provision for the MGLD population.

8.2 DISCUSSION OF ISSUES EXAMINED

8.2.1 School Characteristics

The geographical locations of schools already providing special educational provision for MGLD pupils remained relatively unchanged over the fifteen year study period. The majority of special schools (84% in 1989 and 88% 2004) were located in urban settings substantiating the finding of Stevens (1987b) and later research by Kelly et al. (2004). This is hardly surprising given the lack of change in the special school model during the research period with the exception of the closure of two schools. Despite the expansion of the MGLD special class model, the geographical locations of the schools have remained unchanged. In both surveys, special class teachers reported their schools to be located in urban settings in 86% of cases, indicating that irrespective of the establishment of new classes, the urban/rural distribution remained unaltered. The expansion of the resource teacher model has resulted in an increase in rural provision on a nationwide basis, whereby over half (56%) of resource teachers were employed in rural settings.

The development of the resource teacher model has also affected the gender profile in schools in which special educational provision is available. In the mainstream school going population, the number of single-sex schools dropped from 32% to 24% while the number of co-educational schools rose from 68% to 76% (Government of Ireland, 1990c, 2005a). This change was a result of school amalgamations and closures.
However, special educational provision in boys’ only National schools dropped from 30% to 18% with a similar drop from 31% to 20% in girls’ only schools. As a result, special educational provision in co-educational National schools expanded from 39% to 62% primarily as a consequence of the appointment of resource teachers to rural schools, the vast majority of which are co-educational.

The size of both special schools and National schools with special classes or resource teachers also increased during the study period. Special schools’ mean teacher allocation in 1989 was 8 teachers compared with 12 teachers in 2004. Similarly the mean number of teachers employed in schools with special classes increased from 14 to 18 teachers, mirroring a nationwide increase in teacher appointments in the mainstream sector (Government of Ireland, 1990c, 2005a) due to a reduction in population size combined with an improvement in teacher pupil ratio. In general terms, National school provision has evolved with larger urban schools offering special classes and smaller rural schools employing resource teachers.

Class size or teacher pupil ratio is one aspect where significant improvements have occurred in both special schools and special classes. Curtin and Tulie (1987) NABMSS (1978), and Stevens (1987b) indicated a mean teacher pupil ratio of 1:16. The 1989 survey reported a ratio below this of 1:14 while the subsequent 2004 survey yielded 1:10 which is within the ratio of 1:11 recommended by the SERC report (Government of Ireland, 1993a). Similar reductions in class sizes in National schools with special classes are observed where earlier research indicated a mean ratio of 1.12 (Curtin and Tulie, 1987; I.N.T.O., 1981a; St. Michael’s House, 1981; Travers, 1984). The first survey of this study reported a ratio of 1:11 and the second survey a ratio of 1:9, again well within SERC recommendations (Government of Ireland, 1993a). This research also confirms the suggestion by McGee (1990) that special classes have more favourable actual ratios. However, qualitative evidence suggests that this is due to a shortage of pupils meeting admission criteria rather than planned smaller class sizes to better cater for wider age ranges as suggested by Brennan (1985). Despite these improved ratios, there continues to be demands for further reductions especially from the special school sector where increasingly complex pupil needs and challenging behaviour are factors in effective classroom management. The reported mean caseload of ten pupils for resource teachers is in between reported caseloads of previous research where Colgan’s (1998) findings reported seven pupils and McCarthy (2001) and Costello (1997) reported resource teachers with an average caseload of 15 pupils.
The introduction of the resource teacher model has dramatically changed the distribution of pupils in terms of type of provision attended. In 1989, 34% of MGLD pupils attended special schools dropping to just 13% by 2004. Two thirds (66%) pupils attended special classes and this dropped to 40% over the fifteen year research period. In 1989, 69% of National schools had one special class closely reflecting the earlier findings of NABMSS (1981a) and INTO (1981a). Over the period of the study the number of schools with two special classes increased from 26% to 39% and the number with three or more classes increased from 5% to 15%. These results indicate that the expansion of the special class system occurred in schools where special classes already existed, with little or no development in schools without special classes. By 2004, nearly half (47%) of MGLD pupils now attended resource teachers, a trend not set to continue due to the implementation of the General Allocation Model (Government of Ireland, 2003c, 2005b). The distribution of the increasing number of resource posts followed a reverse pattern to special classes with the number of single posts within schools increasing from 37% (Costello, 1997) to 52% (I.A.T.S.E., 2000) to 62% in this study with a converse reduction in the number of schools with two or more posts. Findings indicate that the expansion of resource teacher provision occurred primarily in schools with no existing special educational provision. Results relating to pupil gender are in line with previous Irish and international research with an overall result of 61% male and 39% female pupils. Closer analysis showed some variation among the three models of provision. The 2004 survey revealed that 56% of special class pupils were male complementing the findings of Dunne (1993) who reported 57%. Special schools had 63% male pupils again closely mirroring earlier findings of INTO (2003f) which also reported 63%. However, this study revealed that 66% of resource pupils were male in contrast to 57% reported by Costello (1997). It should be noted that this second survey was undertaken seven years after the Costello survey and the resource model had expanded enormously during that period perhaps accounting for the difference between the two results.

Pupil age range within models continues to be a factor in special educational provision. The mean age range within special classes fell marginally from 5 years in 1989 to 4.3 years in 2004 due to possibly to the reduction in the number of MGLD pupils attending such special classes (Government of Ireland, 2002a). The mean range with classes in special schools increased slightly from 2.6 years in 1989 to 3.3 years in 2004 at a time when special schools were increasingly catering for older pupils.
The finding that National schools still have pupils aged 18 in special classes and aged 15 attending resource teachers is a source of concern emphasising the availability of adequate post-primary facilities.

Finally, the study reveals that National schools providing special educational provision were three times more likely to be designated disadvantaged. In 2004, 311 (9.9%) of the 3,155 national schools were designated disadvantaged (Government of Ireland, 2006e). However, this study revealed that 21% of schools surveyed fell into this category. Closer analysis suggested that National schools with resource teachers (14%) were much closer to the national figure (9.9%) compared with nearly half (47%) of National school with special classes, confirming earlier suggestions that special classes are generally located in area of high socio-economic disadvantage (McGee, 1990). The issue regarding special schools being ineligible for disadvantaged status as discussed by Weir (2004) was also raised as a matter of concern among a minority of participants in this study.

8.2.2. Special Education Teaching Body

The study reveals that gender, training job status, and redeployment rights are all factors which affect teacher appointment across the three sectors of provision. These factors also affect teacher mobility and whether or not individual teachers work in the sector by choice with serious implications in terms of job satisfaction, motivation and commitment. The lack of an established adequate model for professional development continues to pose difficulties for teachers in preparing them to discharge their professional duties effectively. The gender inequity among primary teachers continues to be a matter of concern although slight variations were noted between the mainstream primary teaching body and their special education colleagues. While the general trend has been that the number of male teachers is decreasing, the reverse was found with special education teachers in this study. The number of males employed in the mainstream sector dropped from 24% to 18% between 1989 and 2004 (Government of Ireland, 1990c, 2005a) but in this study the number of males in special schools increased from 20% to 22% and similarly from 16% to 18% among special class teachers. While the percentages are small, it suggests a trend contrary to the mainstream teaching population with no clear reasons for such, indicating the need for further research. The male/female gender profile of resource teachers was more aligned
to the mainstream population with 11% male resource teachers in 2004. This corresponds with previous research findings of 10% male (Costello, 1997) and 13% male (I.A.T.S.E, 2000, 2001; McCarthy, 2001).

The level of general teaching experience across the three forms of provision suggests an experienced body of teachers with a mean of in excess of 17 years in 2004. Referring specifically to special education experience, teachers in special schools are the longest serving with a mean of 13 years. This confirms the earlier findings of Stevens (1987b) who found that 67% of teachers had in excess of ten years special educational teaching experience. The lack of Irish qualifications and the absence of mainstream/special school transfer arrangements make for inflexibility for special school teachers whereby they must often remain in the special school system. On the other hand, the mean number of years of special educational teaching experience of special class teachers was half of that of special school colleagues at 6.6%, closely reflecting earlier research (St Michael’s House, 1981). More flexibility is available for special class teachers as they can interchange with mainstream colleagues provided they meet the Irish language criteria. Finally not surprisingly, the special education experience of teachers in the newly established resource teacher model was less at 4.4 years reaffirming earlier findings by IATSE (2001) and McCarthy (2001).

A clear understanding of the differences between teachers in the three forms of sectors emerges when teacher training and qualifications are examined. The single most striking factor is that a quarter (26%) of all special teachers were trained outside Ireland. Closer analysis reveals that the number of special school teachers trained abroad rose from 48% to 63% over the study period. This cohort is by far the most diverse with 38% trained in Ireland, 33% in the UK, 19% in other countries and 10% with Montessori training. One third (31%) of special school teachers were secondary trained which may be advantageous in that the majority of special school pupils are now of post-primary school age. In 2004, 22% of special class teachers and 27% of resource teachers were foreign trained with only 14% of secondary trained teachers employed as resource teachers.

Specialised postgraduate training in the form of the Diploma in Special Education continues to be a source of concern as there now appears to be a smaller number of teachers with this qualification than earlier research suggested (INTO, 1986a; St. Michael’s House, 1981; Stevens, 1987b). By 2004, 42% of special class teachers, 22% of special class and 13% of resource teachers had completed the Diploma in
Special Education confirming the difficulties facing resource teachers in accessing appropriate postgraduate training as already suggested by Costello (1997) and McCarthy (2001). The issue of untrained personnel in National schools has not impinged greatly on the special education sector with no untrained teachers employed in special schools and just 4% untrained special class teachers and 8% resource teachers.

The status of the teaching posts and access to redeployment rights are also factors meriting comment. The study indicated that permanent teachers were more likely to be trained in Ireland with greater opportunities for redeployment. In 2004, 18% of special school, 6% of special class and 21% resource teachers were in temporary posts. Special class teachers had no redeployment rights in 22% of cases in 1989 improving to 14% by 2004. The greatest improvement in redeployment rights was among special school teachers where 36% had rights in 1989, in contract to 88% in 2004 primarily due to the establishment of a special national panel (Government of Ireland, 1992b). In 2004, there were still a quarter (24%) of resource teachers without panel rights making this the sector in which the most change can occur with teachers moving to permanent positions in mainstream as they occur. Interestingly, when asked whether or not they were employed in special education by choice, 31% of temporary teachers stated they were not indicating that a third of such teachers were employed in the sector simply because it was the only available post which may have implications in terms of teacher commitment and motivation.

The question of teacher choice is also of relevance in terms of special school teachers. In special schools, 29% of teachers were not there by choice citing lack of Irish qualifications, lack of mobility and pupils’ challenging behaviour as reasons. One quarter (25%) of special school, 23% of special class, and 17% of resource teachers would prefer to teach in mainstream, again having implications in terms of teacher satisfaction. An even higher number (37%) of foreign trained teachers indicated a preference to teach mainstream. Such figures suggest that a significant cohort of special education teachers is employed in a sector in which they have no desire to work.

These issues also manifest themselves in teachers’ attendance at professional development where only 75% had attended in-service training within two years of the 1989 and 2004 surveys. More females (81%) attended than males (66%). More permanent teachers (79%) attended than temporary teachers (59%), and a higher percentage of those teaching by choice (80%) attended compared to 61% not teaching by choice. The majority of in-service training attended was mandatory as a part of the
introduction of the revised curriculum with much lower attendance a training addressing specific topics. The differing needs of teachers across the three models of provision are reflected in the variety of agencies providing training. Teacher centres, colleges of education, and the INTO provided more courses for special class and resource teachers while specialised courses run by other a variety of organisations were much more popular among special school teachers.

The already identified need for a structured model for continued professional development is still a major concern with 52% prioritising it as an urgent need and 59% requesting training specifically in SEN. The need for specific training in challenging behaviour highlighted by Kelly et al. (2004), IEPs (Costello, 1997), and training in curricular guidelines (NFVB, 2006) all continue to be areas of serious disquiet among the teachers surveyed in this study. In addition, the needs of teachers in rural schools, training for mainstream class teachers, and specific training in the area of children with complex needs, all continue to be topics which teachers perceive have not yet been adequately addressed.

8.2.3. Pupil Placement

Some improvements were noted in information availability prior to pupil enrolment. Teachers across all sectors perceived pupils to be appropriately placed but the data suggest that special schools are much more likely to make provision for pupils with complex additional needs and behavioural difficulties. Special schools also had greatest levels of post-primary provision with the other two sectors expressing concern at the lack of placements for MGLD pupils transferring from primary schools. Improvements were observed among teachers regarding some aspects of the pupil enrolment process. There was an increase in the number of teachers who had an opportunity to meet prospective pupils prior to enrolment – from 33% in 1989 to 77% by 2004 in the case of special class teachers and from 57% to 80% in the case of their special school colleagues. In 2004, 58% of resource teachers had an opportunity to be introduced to prospective pupils prior to enrolment. Schools employing HSCL teachers and with an established infrastructure for home school links were much more likely to meet pupils prior to enrolment. However, teachers continued to be dissatisfied with the level of pupil background information received. In 2004, one third of teachers were still not receiving reports from pupils’ previous schools. Access to reports was found to be
better in designated disadvantaged and urban schools, many of which had HSCL teachers. With regard to pupil placement, there was a general feeling that most or all pupils were appropriately placed. Resource teachers, especially those in urban schools, were most likely to question the appropriateness of pupils' placements. A fifth (19%) stated that 'some', or 'few' of the pupils were not in a suitable educational placement mirroring Costello's (1997) findings which suggested that 39% of pupils were not well placed.

When questioned about an alternative form of placement for their pupils, 9% of special class and 11% of resource teachers would send pupils to special schools – especially from boys' only National schools in which pupils present with emotional and behavioural problems. Special school teachers however, were reluctant to send pupils with behavioural difficulties to National schools. This perception among teachers that special schools cater for more complex needs and behaviourally challenging pupils is confirmed by this study. Nearly three quarters (71%) of special school teachers considered that 'all' or 'most' pupils to have additional needs compared to a third (34%) of special class and a quarter (26%) of resource teachers. This corroborates the findings of NABMSS (1981a). Similarly, the suggestion that special schools are managing greater levels of challenging behaviour as intimated by INTO (2000f) and Kelly et al. (2004) is confirmed by the evidence of this study. Over half special school teachers (53%) reported that all or most pupils were exhibiting challenging behaviour compared to 18% special class and 11% of resource teachers. In National schools, more challenging behaviour was reported in urban locations, particularly in boys' only National schools. The earlier concerns regarding lack of adequate post-primary provision (N.R.B., 1979; McGee, 1990) have not abated and the second survey undertaken in 2004 confirm the findings of other research at that time (ASTI, 2004; Bergin, 2004; Heelan, 2004) emphasising the need for an adequate post-primary system to cater for the increasing numbers of mainstream MGLD pupils leaving primary schools. Provision was considered better in special schools (64%), with 50% of special class and 53% of resource teachers reporting adequate provision. Referring to post-primary provision and gender of National schools, boys' schools reported much better availability (54%) of post primary placement than girls only (38%) schools. In addition, lowest access was described by rural resource teachers.
Finally, a majority of special class teachers (75%) and special school teachers (90%) acknowledged that the establishment of the resource teacher models had affected enrolments to their schools.

8.2.4. Integration and Inclusion

Firstly, the number of schools with a written policy on integration or inclusive education was distributed equally among the three forms of provision. Only just over half of teachers reported having a policy as follows: special schools (55%), special classes (56%) and resource teachers (59%) indicating no major changes over the duration of this study in line with the earlier findings of the INTO (1986a) which reported 56% of schools had such a policy. Given that the special class and special school models are established for a much longer time than the resource model, it possibly would have been expected to record a higher number of schools with a policy in these two sectors.

The findings relating to special classes and integrated activities give cause for concern as the levels of shared activities has dropped over the period 1989 to 2004. The level of joint special class/mainstreamed class activities dropped from 70% to 47% while after school activities dropped from 36% to 26%. No significant changes were observed in levels of social integration (96% in 1989 and 95% in 2004) where pupils jointly share school playgrounds. Although the level of joint classroom activities rose slightly from 61% in 1989 to 68% in 2004 (significantly higher than Dunne's findings in 1993), only 6% of pupils had shared activities for core elements of the curriculum. The findings suggest that the integration levels in special classes and the activities undertaken remained relatively unchanged over the study period. Given that many National schools now have MGLD pupils integrated into mainstream classes, this may adversely affect the effort to create mainstream/special class joint activities. The time per day given to such activities was 1 to 2 hours in 35% of cases and 2 to 3 hours in 42% of cases with the mean amount of time assigned to integrated activities at 34.4% or one third of the school day. In relation to the physical location of special classes, the situation has worsened. The earlier figure of 12% of special classes located separately from other classes quoted by St Michael's House (1989) has increased. The 1989 data in this study revealed that 16% of special classes were separate as were 18% in 2004. The situation was particularly acute in girls' only schools where 29% of special classes
were situated away from the main body of the school. This is a particularly disappointing finding which could easily be remedied by school management.

The reduction in integrated and inclusive activities is also prevalent in National school/special school activities. In 2004, although 35% of special schools had some form of contact with National schools, only 8% of class teachers and just 2% of resource teachers reported contact. Joint sporting activities dropped from 43% to 16% and after school activities from 21% to just 4% over the 15 year research period. The increase of an identified special needs population within primary schools combined with the lack of a comprehensive infrastructure to support links has resulted in a reduction of contact and an increase in special school levels of isolation. A significant drop in National school’s usage of special school facilities is also noted. In 1989, 26% of special schools facilities were used by National schools. Ten years latter, Buckley (1999) reported usage at 22%. However, the 2004 survey of this study reported usage at just 12% again highlighting the reduction in special school/National school liaison. Interestingly, this has occurred as special school contact with other special schools has increased from 66% in 1989 to 74% in 2004.

One of the primary differences between the special school and special class models and the newly established resource model is that pupils attending resource teachers are withdrawn from mainstream to work primarily in the areas of literacy (90%) and numeracy (80%). While the official DES recommended time allocation was 2 hours 30 minutes a week in 2004, pupils were an average in receipt in excess of this at 4 hours 10 minutes per week. This is better than earlier findings reported by Colgan (1998) and McCarthy (2001) but in line with Costello’s research which discovered that half of pupils attended resource pupils for 4 – 7 hours per week (Costello, 1997). Despite this generous time allocation to MGLD pupils, over 29% of resource still felt that the allotted time was insufficient. Not surprisingly, resource teachers based in one school only were more satisfied than those who had to travel to three or four National schools. As already alluded to, MGLD pupils no longer attend resource teachers but now form part of the learning support teachers’ caseload.

Teachers expressed reasonable levels of satisfaction regarding current integration/inclusion practices: special classes (60%), special schools (53%), and resource teachers (71%). Gender, training and choice were all factors affecting the findings. Male teachers expressed higher satisfaction (70%) compared with female colleges (49%). Teachers who trained abroad were satisfied with integration/inclusion
practice in 67% of cases compared with 46% of their Irish trained colleagues. Those teaching by choice also expressed higher levels of satisfaction. Mirroring these results, male teachers were more in favour of increased integration/inclusion as were teachers trained outside the state. Levels of parental requests for increased integration/inclusion were highest in special classes (30%) and lowest in special schools (21%).

8.2.5. School and Classroom Facilities

The general consensus among special education teachers surveyed was that classroom accommodation was satisfactory in 2004. Only 6% of special class and special school teachers in 2004 claimed that classroom accommodation was inadequate which contradicted with the findings of McCarthy and Kenny (2006) in special schools. However, 13% of resource teachers expressed dissatisfaction (25%) in boys’ schools and 15% in rural schools) confirming the findings of Nic Craith (2005).

Similarly access to assembly halls within schools was present among resource teachers in National schools with 32% reporting no access. In contrast, all special schools had this facility (a significant improvement since Curtin and Tulie’s 1987 report of 50% access) and 12% of special class teachers reported lack of access in both 1989 and 2004). National schools with resource teachers were also least likely to have access to an art room with 62% having no access. Some improvements were noted in special schools where access had improved from 48% to 71% between 1989 and 2004. Access among special class teachers also increased from 24% to 42% over the same period. The findings in relation to availability of a computer room conflicted with previous research in special schools. Where Jackson and O’Callaghan (2003) reported 66% in special schools, this survey found only 33% with this facility. However, as the quoted study also included special schools with physical and sensory disabilities, this may indicate that such schools have significantly greater access to computer rooms. The findings for special class teachers (28%) were in line with previous research in mainstream National schools (25% - INTO, 2006; 29% - Mulkeen, 2004). However, access in schools with resource teachers was higher at 42%. Finally, access to school libraries did not improve over the study period. Special schools reported no access (46%) 1989 and (45%) in 2004 closely mirroring the findings of Stevens (1987b)(46%). Similarly, special class teachers reported a minor decrease in access (78% down to 73%) over the same period. Lowest access was reported among resource teachers.
In general the greatest access to school library was found in urban schools and schools designated as disadvantaged.

The adequacy of toilet facilities within the special education sector did not improve over the fifteen year study period. In 1989, 11% of teachers among the three forms of provision categorised toilet facilities as ‘inadequate’ or ‘very inadequate’. This however, was better than reported in adequacy in mainstream schools as reported by the INTO (1997b) (39%) and INTO (1986a) (20%). While levels of perceived inadequacy were low, only 51% rated facilities as ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ in 2004 implying that there is still considerable scope for improvement.

The special education sector appears to be better appointed with school offices in comparison to mainstream. Earlier research (INTO, 1982b, 1992d, 1997b, 2006b) suggests that only 35% of schools have an office while this study found that in 2004, 94% of schools in special education had this facility. Again, schools with resource teachers were worst served with 12% not having an office.

A similar pattern emerged in relation to availability of staff rooms. While the INTO (2000b) found 69% of schools with a staff, practically all schools in this survey had. However, the survey also indicates that the adequacy of this facility had disimproved in special schools and special classes. Inadequate staff rooms were highlighted by a quarter (25%) of special school teachers and 19% of special class and resource teachers. In general, no significant improvements occurred in special schools and special classes in relation to the amenities outlined above with resource teachers reporting least satisfaction.

In comparison to earlier research in mainstream classes, (INTO, 1982, 1997b) access to sink and running water has improved significantly. In 2004, 10% of teachers reported having this facility evenly distributed across the three forms of provision. This was in contract to the findings of Stevens (1987b) and INTO (1986c) which revealed 72% and 66% access respectively.

Practically all teachers (with exception of 5% of resource teachers) had access to display facilities with highest levels of dissatisfaction among the resource teacher sector. The availability of electrical power sockets was best among special schools with significant improvements noted over the study period and most dissatisfaction noted in National schools. Similarly access to internet facilities was greatest in special schools (96%) compared to National Schools with special classes (88%) and resource teachers.
With regard to the adequacy of internet connections, least dissatisfaction was expressed by special schools teachers in contrast to resource teachers.

Clearly special schools are best served and have seen the greatest improvement in the provision of these four amenities.

Findings in relation to the standard of school heating are positive and are in line with findings of previous research. In 1992 and 1997, the INTO reported that 91% of teachers were satisfied with heating systems (INTO, 1992d, 1997b). This study reported that, in 2004, 93% of special class, 96% of special school, and 95% of resource teachers were satisfied. Closer analysis did reveal that 8% of resource teachers in rural schools and 12% of teachers in disadvantaged schools expressed dissatisfaction. While earlier research indicated 79% of National schools expressed satisfaction with ventilation systems (I.N.T.O., 1982d), this study revealed slightly higher levels among resource teachers and special class teachers (85% in both cases), and the highest satisfaction among special school teachers (98%). Special schools also had highest reported satisfaction levels (98%) with natural lighting in comparison to special class (88%) and resource teachers (91%). Finally, levels of satisfaction relating to electric lighting provision were over 90% in all cases comparing favourably with earlier research indicating satisfaction levels of 86% in National schools (INTO, 1982b, 1992d).

Approximately three quarters of teachers expressed satisfaction with the level of classroom storage available to them. This was higher than that expressed (52%) by the mainstream teaching population in INTO (2000b). The findings of this study are similar to those of Swann and Dwyer (1985) for Northern Ireland and England. However, this study does highlight that a quarter of teachers operate in classrooms without adequate levels of storage.

Similarly teachers are concerned about the lack of physical space within classrooms ranging from 20% reporting of special class teachers reporting to 28% of resource teacher reinforcing the comments of Nic Craith (2005).

Over half (51%) of mainstream primary teachers stated they required new furniture (INTO 2000b). However, satisfaction levels in this study were higher, with 87% of resource teachers expressing satisfaction. The study did note however that special class teachers’ dissatisfaction increased from 9% to 19% between 1989 and 2004 but was still better than 28% reported by INTO (1986c). Contrastingly, special
school teachers dissatisfaction improved from 11% to just 6%, well within dissatisfaction levels reported earlier of 20% by Curtin and Tulie (1987b).

While all schools reported having had a play area, there were ranging levels of satisfaction across the three forms of provision with disimprovment noted among special school and special class teachers. Special school staff expressed dissatisfaction in 21% of cases in 1989 and 27% in 2004. This was significantly lower than in the UK (Swann and Dwyer, 1983). Similarly dissatisfaction rose from 14% to 20% among special class teachers. Only 14% of resource teachers were dissatisfied which was considerably lower than the 25% of mainstream teachers quoted by INTO (1997b).

Access to soft play areas was best among special school teachers (80%) in 2004 and poorest among resource teachers (61%). Of those with access to such a facility, one third expressed discontent. With reference to playing fields, access disimproved in special schools from 90% to 73% while the reverse occurred in special classes with an increase from 65% to 74% between 1989 and 2004. Reported best access in 2004 was among resource teachers in National schools (79%).

In summary, there remains a considerable degree of dissatisfaction among the three sectors of provision regarding access and the adequacy of outdoor recreational facilities for pupils.

8.2.5. Educational Resources

The results of this study indicate high levels of satisfaction with resources for teaching, reading, language and mathematics in the special education sector despite previous research indicating poor resourcing (INTO, 1992d, 2000b; IATSE, 2000; McCarthy, 2001). In fact, in relation to English resources, not one teacher in special classes or special schools classified materials as inadequate in 2004. Earlier research by Curtin and Tulie (1987) suggested also high satisfaction levels (90% in special schools and 84% in special classes). The resource sector reported dissatisfaction in just 4% of cases in 2004. A positive rating of ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ was observed in 84% of cases. Similarly, satisfaction with resources for language teaching was very positive and best among special school teachers. A particular improvement was noted among special class teachers where dissatisfaction dropped from 24% to just 6% over the study period 1989–2004. This trend was also evident in reviewing mathematics materials where satisfaction grew from 76% to 94% among special class teachers and 83% to 96% in
special schools in line with Curtin & Tulie’s (1987) research. Resource teachers in 2004 expressed satisfaction in 87% of cases which is slightly higher than the INTO findings for mainstream teachers (79%) for the same year (INTO, 2006d). In general terms, teachers were pleased with resources for the core elements of the curriculum, especially in special schools, with improvements noted over the study period.

Despite reported poor access to visual arts resources (Government of Ireland, 1984c, 2002e; INTO, 1997b), this study noted improvements in access and adequacy. The best access and levels of satisfaction were recorded in special schools with 81% adequacy in 1989 closely mirroring the findings of Stevens (1987b) and Curtin and Tulie (1987). By 2004 this had improved slightly to 94% with 67% of teachers categorising resources as ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’. Equally, improvements in the special class sector were observed with adequacy reported increasing from 79% to 85% and the number of teachers giving positive ratings increasing significantly from 39% up to 60%. However, National schools with resource teachers expressed greatest dissatisfaction (20%) and only 38% giving positive ratings for resources indicating yet again that the resource sector is under-resourced in comparison to the other two sectors. While the special education sector expressed higher levels of satisfaction with resources for music education than previous research in the mainstream sector (Desmond, 1988; INTO, 1997b), differences were noted between the three forms of provision. Greatest improvements occurred in special schools with satisfaction levels increasing from 75% to 96% while no change was observed among special class teachers (79%). Resource teachers were again the sector which was least satisfied with over a quarter (26%) reporting inadequate music resources. It is worth noting the gender differences observed – 38% of boys’ schools reported inadequate music resources compared to no girls’ schools whatsoever. Conversely, 58% of girls’ schools rated music resources as ‘very good’ or ‘excellent’ with no boys’ only schools selecting this category.

ICT resources within schools are the single aspect of resource provision in which the greatest improvement occurred. General school and in-class access improved dramatically as a result of the IT 2000 schools initiative. Reported access was best among special schools (92%) and poorest among resource teachers where a quarter (24%) reported no access mirroring the findings of Mulkeen (2004) who found 25% of mainstream teachers without computer access. In general, teachers were very satisfied with ICT resources and resources for the teaching of PE.
The study findings in relation to projection equipment were unsurprising. While earlier studies (INTO, 1992d) suggested that schools were well resourced in terms of slide projectors, this study confirms anecdotal suggestions that there is a drop in usage due to the growth of other projection media. Similarly the usage of overhead projectors has dropped somewhat although they are widely available in special schools and special classes (79%) and to a lesser degree in National schools (58%) reflecting the earlier findings of 80% by Curtin and Tulie (1987) and 48% by the INTO (1986a). The newest form of projection equipment, the data projector, is available to 70% of special class and special school teachers, and a slightly higher number (75%) of resource teachers.

Tape recorders are commonplace in schools with 98% of teachers having access confirming the earlier findings of Curtin and Tulie (1987) and the INTO (1982, 1986a, 1992d). In-class access to this teaching aid was highest in special schools (76%) and lowest among resource teachers (50%). It was expected that the vast majority of teachers would have had access to a CD player, but this was not the case. Only half of special class and special schools teachers and a third of resource teachers reported access. While this is significantly higher than the 17% reported by Kitchin and Mulcahy (1999), it is still a matter of concern given the increasing level educational resources being supplied in CD format.

The now familiar pattern whereby special schools are best resourced and resource teachers the least was found to be the case in relation to audio-visual equipment. Practically all schools had access to television with 65% of special school teachers with in-class access. Access to video recorders (VCR) followed a similar pattern – 98% of special school teachers with access in comparison to 82% of resource teachers. Finally, as in the case of CD players, a surprisingly low number of teachers had access to DVD players. Given the amount of resources now issued to schools in DVD format, it was expected that the majority would have access. However, only just over half (53%) of special school teachers, 41% of special class teachers and just over a third (34%) of resource teachers had access to DVD player.

Finally practically all schools (99%) provide photocopying facilities for their teachers which indicates a significant improvement since the INTO reported 82% access in 1992 (INTO 1992d).

In 1989, 31% of special class teachers and 62% of special school teachers requested an annual financial levy from parents. By 2004, this had increased by 20% in both sectors where 51% of special class and 82% of special school teachers reported
their schools request for an annual parental contribution corresponding with a similar growth in the mainstream sector (NPCP, 1990; O’Sullivan, 2004a). In 2004, special school teachers requested a levy in 82% of cases closely corresponding with O’Sullivan (2004a) for mainstream schools (85%). However, the figures for special classes and resource teachers were significantly lower than mainstream at 51% and 47% respectively.

The amount of this annual levy appeared to be lower than the mean annual contribution for mainstream education in 2004. Highest contributions were sought from special schools (€43.01) while the lowest contribution sought was from schools with special classes (€33.70). All these figures were below the average contribution for mainstream schools in 2003 of €53.50 (NCPP, 2003). In summary, special schools are most likely to seek parental contributions and have the highest mean contributions among the three forms of provision.

8.2.6. Special Curricular Provision

The single most striking finding in relation to curricular planning is the increased involvement and participation of staff in the planning process within schools. Whereas the earlier survey indicated high levels of individual teachers planning and implementing special educational curricula, the second 2004 survey highlights a more collective approach with significantly increased participation of school principals. This change is not surprising as the time span of this research was a period during which the school planning process, primarily driven by the DES, was to develop and become well established in all state primary schools. The one disappointing revelation was that the participation of support staff remained low in the planning process. The inclusion of SNAs in school planning would assist in expanding the existing limited role as suggested by previous research (Doyle, 2004; Lawlor and Cregan, 2003; O’Driscoll, 2005).

The study also confirmed the findings of earlier research relating to the lack of DES support to teachers in relation to special educational curricula. In fact over the period 1989–2004, there was a drop in the number of teachers who consulted with members of the DES inspectorate and only 30% of resource teachers in 2004 had met with their district inspector. Of those who did have contact with DES inspectors, there was a significant decrease in teachers’ perceived helpfulness from these officials.
Special school teachers' positive views of inspectors' assistance fell from 81% to 41% over the study period as did special class teachers (72% down to 49%) closely reflecting similar views revealed in corresponding research (Costello, 1997; Curtin and Tulie, 1997; Dunne, 1993; IATSE, 2000). Anecdotal evidence suggests that this reduction in availability of DES inspectors to provide support was caused primarily by the involvement of the inspectorate in dealing with the increase in litigation as a result of parents attempting to access appropriate educational resources for their children. It has also been suggested that this situation has eased considerably since the appointment of SENOs and since the NCSE has taken over many of the special educational functions which were previously the responsibility of DES inspectors. In contrast, perceived support in mainstream schools was much higher with 72% of resource teachers considering inspectorate support as positive which was broadly in line with the 86% of mainstream teachers quoted in Government of Ireland (2005i).

The study period also witnessed the introduction and provision of new curricular guidelines for the special education teaching population. The 1989 survey highlighted the need for written curricular guidelines with 89% of teachers requesting a designated curriculum. Many teachers indicated that they used the mainstream primary school curriculum (Government of Ireland, 1971) and adapted it to their individual needs. Two years before the 1989 survey, Stevens (1987b) had reported that 67% of special school teachers were utilising this resource. By 2004, the two newly published resources, namely the revised primary curriculum (Government of Ireland, 1999g) and the NCCA Guidelines (NCCA, 2002) were being used, albeit to different degrees across the three models of provision. In 2004, one quarter (26%) of teachers were still using the 1971 curriculum and usage of the 1999 revised curriculum and 2002 NCCA guidelines was high. The NCCA guidelines were in use by 88% of special school teachers, 84% of special class teachers and 75% of resource teachers. Despite the publication of these specific guidelines for MGLD pupils, more teachers were still using the general mainstream revised primary curriculum issued in 1999 (84% of special class, 92% of school and 87% of resource teachers). The reason for this may lie in teachers' perceived usefulness of the NCCA guidelines. In a survey undertaken by the NCCA itself (NCCA, 2004), it suggested that the majority of teachers found the guidelines helpful. However, the findings of this research found that only 33% of special schools considered them to be beneficial affirming suggestions by the INTO (2002o) that these guidelines did not meet the particular needs of special schools.
Special class teachers considered the guidelines useful in 53% of cases as did 62% of resource teachers mirroring the findings of McCarthy (2005). The higher usage of the 1999 revised primary curriculum among resource teachers can most likely be attributed to their familiarity with this resource due to the fact that their experience has been primarily in mainstream education combined with the fact that their work is concerned with literacy and numeracy in most cases. While this research raises issues regarding the usefulness of the NCCA guidelines as a curricular resource, some of these concerns may be addressed by the publication of newly revised guidelines by the NCCA which are currently being reviewed by the DES and will be issued to schools in 2007.

The finding that only two thirds of resource teachers consult with mainstream class teachers regarding the curricular needs of pupils is also a cause of some concern. One third of teachers (34%) in 2004 provided intervention to pupils with no reference to the mainstream class based programme which is contrary the staged ‘whole–school’ approach advocated by the DES in circular SP ED 24/03 (Government of Ireland, 2003c) reinforced two years later by circular 02/05 (Government of Ireland, 2005b). This lack of resource teacher/mainstream teacher liaison needs to be addressed to ensure effective provision.

The use of IEPs in 2004 was highest among resource teachers (87%) and special class teachers (87%) which indicated an improvement in usage compared with previous research (INTO, 1997a). While the use of IEPs in special schools increased (67%) compared with 35% mentioned by McCarthy (2001), it might have been expected that usage in special schools would have equalled that of the other two sectors given that it is the longest established form of provision. The future implementation of IEPs across all sectors will be determined by the implementation of the EPSEN Act (Government of Ireland, 2004b) in line with recently published guidelines (N.C.S.E., 2006b).

Finally, the lack of designated time allocated for curriculum planning continues to be a major concern. Three quarters (74%) of special class teachers, 88% of special schools and 70% of resource teachers indicated lack of planning time as a serious concern. This re-affirms similar assertions made by Costello (1997, 1999), INTO (1997a), Kennedy (1994) and Kenny et al (2006) regarding the inadequacy of time availability for curricular planning in the special education sector. Equally, the majority of teachers (84%) surveyed were dissatisfied with the time available for consultation with colleagues as also reported by Colgan (1998) and Costello (1999). These two issues need to be addressed through the establishment of an appropriate infrastructure.
permitting time for planning and consultation as previously suggested by INTO (2000g).

### 8.2.8. Schools' Psychological Service

The findings of the 1989 and 2004 surveys reveal that schools' access to schools' psychological services (SPS) has improved significantly since the establishment of NEPS in 1999 mirroring the pre-NEPS research findings of Curtin and Tulie (1987), NABMSS (1978), NRB (1979) and post-NEPS research of Kelly et al (2004) and Kenny et al. (2006). The greatest improvement in access occurred among special class teachers (access up from 13% to 90%) with a much more limited increase among special school teachers (from 56% to 67%). The higher initial access among the special school sector was largely due to their access to psychologists employed by religious and voluntary agencies involved in the management of the special school sector. Special school teachers were the single sector with the most access in 1989 and least access in 2004. Resource teachers reported 78% access in 2004. In general, access to psychological services was found to be geographically uneven being higher in urban areas validating the findings of Enright (2003) and NFVB (2006).

According to NEPS (2004) it provided psychological services to 79% of pupils while the remaining pupils were served by voluntary agencies (16%) and a combination of these agencies with NEPS (10%). In relation to the three forms of provision, results of the 2004 survey indicated that NEPS served 85% of primary schools with resource teachers, 68% of special class teachers, and just over half (58%) of special school teachers. In addition, a discrepancy was observed between designated provision and actual access.

However, despite the reported increase in access, there were widespread high levels dissatisfaction among teachers regarding the adequacy of the psychological services being provided. While Curtin and Tulie (1987) recounted that 80% of special class teachers were dissatisfied, this study reported that 65% of teachers were discontented with the service. Levels of dissatisfaction were found to be 52% among resource teachers closely mirroring the findings of Costello (1997) (48%). Special school teachers had serious misgivings about the adequacy of the service with 93% of them categorising the service as unsatisfactory validating the claims of Carr (2004) and
the INTO (2004j, 2005d, 2000e) which suggested that the schools’ psychological service was totally inadequate and unable to provide the necessary support to teachers.

This serious level of discontent among teachers was especially apparent regarding three aspects of the psychological service namely the frequency of attendance, the ability to access cognitive and psychological assessments and the provision of therapeutic interventions. Nearly three quarters (72%) of teachers were disillusioned with the frequency with which psychologists attended their school. Discontent was highest among special school teachers (89%) and lowest among resource teachers (66%). Findings also indicated that attendance was better in larger urban schools and poorest in rural smaller schools. Only 11% of teachers were happy with the level of psychological assessments undertaken with high levels of teacher dissatisfaction expressed (84% among special school teachers and 67% among resource teachers). Practically identical levels of frustration were experienced by teachers with regard to the availability of psychologists to undertake therapeutic interventions with 87% of special school, 78% of special class, and 67% of resource teachers recording their dissatisfaction. Teachers’ perceptions regarding the sufficiency of pupil information and feedback were also low. Less than half of special class (45%), a third (35%) of resource and 69% of special school teachers were discontent with this aspect of the service. Clearly, these findings suggest that the psychological service to schools is failing to meet teachers’ expectations and calls into question its ability to provide an adequate service as intimated by Dwyer and Grogan (2002) and the INTO (2004j).

The inadequate functioning of the schools’ psychological service has resulted in particular difficulties for the special education sector. The long waiting lists for pupil assessment reported by St Michael’s House (1981) and latterly by NFVB (2006) continue to be a feature in schools. Under half (45%) of special classes and 43% of resource teachers stated in the second survey that they were aware of pupils awaiting psychological assessment. The much lower figure of 12% for special school teachers is presumably because the entry criteria for these schools require psychological assessment prior to pupil enrolment. The delays in pupils accessing psychological assessment have resulted in some parents paying for private assessments. This study revealed that 71% of teachers had knowledge of pupils who had been privately assessed by psychologists in private practice. The failure of the designated service providers to make available an adequate psychological service to schools has meant that pupils from financially advantaged backgrounds can access assessment services and therefore avail
of special educational placement more quickly than those depending on the public service. This inequity has been sharply criticised by Kenny et al. (2006) and O’Sullivan (2004d).

Secondly, a significant number of pupils were unable to avail of educational resources due to the absence of a psychological assessment. Half (49%) of resource teachers and 40% of special class teachers reported having pupils in this position. This unacceptable scenario was also confirmed by more recent research by Flatmen-Watson (2005, 2006). Furthermore, teachers also reported pupils who had undergone assessment were awaiting DES sanction to access resources – 54% of special class and 73% of resource teachers reported knowing of pupils in this category. The waiting lists for assessment and the delay in processing applications for MGLD pupils attending resource teachers or special classes should no longer be an issue since the introduction of the General Allocation Model outlined in Curricular 02/05. Under this arrangement pupils suspected of being in the MGLD range are catered for by means of a whole school approach and no longer require a psychological assessment prior to receiving additional support. The principal, special needs co-ordinator and/or mainstream teacher, with parental consent, can assign as MGLD pupil to a learning support teacher without a supporting psychological report. In effect, the result of Circular 02/05 was to eliminate the waiting lists for MGLD pupils, the largest group in the disability sector, awaiting assessment from NEPS. In addition, the waiting lists of MGLD pupils requiring DES sanction for teaching hours were eliminated instantly (IPPN, 2006). While this new arrangement has yet to be reviewed by the DES, school management and special education teachers in 2007, 75% of teachers surveyed in the 2004 survey indicated that they considered that MGLD pupils should continue to be assessed prior to accessing support teaching from learning support teachers in National schools.

While the effects of the newly established General Allocation Model eliminate the need for psychological assessment and the need for DES sanction for MGLD pupils, teachers continue to have expectations and need appropriate support from a schools’ psychological service. However, the findings of this research indicate that teachers perceived the service to be failing in this regard in 2004.
8.2.9. In-School Support Services

The number of SNAs employed to assist children in the special education field has increased considerably with the greatest expansion in the special class sector. In 1989, just 10% of special classes (7% reported by INTO, 1986c) had SNAs employed in the classroom. By 2004, this had grown to 92%, an increase confirmed by Bergin (2005), INTO (1999b, 2000a), and Nic Craith, 2005. Special school teachers traditionally had more access to SNAs and 42% of teachers indicated they were employed in their classrooms in 1978 (N.A.B.M.S.S., 1978). This study found 59% of teachers having SNAs in 1989 increasing to 98% by 2004. Just under three quarters (74%) surveyed in 2004 indicated that SNAs were employed in their schools.

In recent years the criteria for appointment of SNAs has become increasingly stringent and it is unlikely that pupils with MGLD only will be eligible for SNA support. However, pupils with MGLD with additional needs such as toileting needs, behavioural difficulties and pupils requiring physical support will continue to be eligible for full-time or part-time SNA support.

Improvements have also occurred in the availability of secretarial and caretaking services to schools in the special education sector. Even in 1989, secretarial support to special classes (92%) and special schools (55%) was more prevalent than in mainstream National schools (12% in 1982; 21% in 1992) (INTO, 1982b; 1992d) albeit a significant number of these posts were part-time positions. By 2004, 91% of schools now had secretarial services with a much greater number in full-time posts than heretofore. A similar pattern was observed in relation to the employment of caretakers. The general levels of satisfaction expressed suggest that, the scheme by which Boards of Management employ such personnel under the terms of Circulars 03/00 and 27/00 is successful and is meeting the majority of needs. There do remain however, a number of employment related issues regarding working conditions of these employees.

The employment of learning support (formerly remedial) teacher has increased over the research period. The 1989 survey indicated that 90% of schools had access to a learning support teacher which was considerably higher than the findings of 70% by Kitchin and Mulcahy (1999). Access had increased to 97% by 2004 indicating that nearly every National school nationwide had the services a learning support teacher. While not of direct relevance to the MGLD pupils under review in this study, earlier research indicated that up to 81% of special pupils were also attending learning support
teachers. The major changes brought in by the General Allocation Model (Government of Ireland, 2005) bring the learning support teacher population to the fore as they now will have responsibility for the provision of support teaching for MGLD pupils. It yet has to be seen how this arrangement impacts on learning support teachers caseloads and the effectiveness of literacy/numeracy support only to MGLD pupils has to be evaluated. Of particular concern is the issue of time allocation for MGLD pupils. Under the resource teacher model a MGLD pupil was granted 2.5 hours teaching each week. However, under the General Allocation Model, there is no designated time allocation for MGLD pupils and the teaching time is dependent on the learning support teacher’s caseload and timetable. In addition, other needs may remain unidentified.

The study also found improvement in the level of specialist teachers available especially in the special school sector. While previous research suggested that 46% of special schools had additional specialist teachers employed (Curtin and Tulie, 1987), the 1989 survey of this study revealed 44% of special school teachers with specialist teachers in their schools. By 2004, this had increased to 65%, 28% of whom were part-time employees. To a lesser degree, specialist teachers were employed in schools with special classes increasing from 12% to 30% between 1989 and 2004. Specialist teachers were least likely to work in National schools with resource teachers where an incidence of 14% was reported. While the availability of an additional specialist teacher obviously is of benefit across all sectors, the DES currently only funds such appointments in special schools (Government of Ireland, 2006).

Finally, the presence of disadvantage co-ordinator’s in National schools with special classes (11%) and resource teachers (4%) and a greater number of HSCL teachers (50% in special classes and 10% in schools with resource teachers) signifies that a considerable number of MGLD pupils attend schools which have been designated as disadvantaged. Research indicates that environmental factors frequently contribute to the incidence of MGLD. Therefore, the circumstances whereby no special schools have disadvantaged status needs to be addressed. The vast majority of respondents in the 2004 survey valued the role of HSCL teachers within the school community as 96% of teachers indicated that the HSCL scheme was or would be of benefit to their schools.
8.2.10 External Support Services

Results of this study revealed improvements in the availability of external support services to teachers in schools during the period 1989 to 2004. However, despite this enhancement in access to services, there still remains concern in terms of adequacy of access to social workers, speech therapists and other paramedical staff.

Early research indicated poor access to social workers among special class teachers (17% - NABMSS, 1981a; 13% - Curtin and Tulie, 1987). The 1989 survey of this study revealed even lower access reported at 6%. However, this had increased significantly to 48% by 2004. The initial survey revealed higher access among special schools with 44% access due primarily to religious orders and voluntary agencies employing their own social workers in addition to high HSE involvement due to the more complex needs of special school MGLD pupils. By 2004, social work access among special school teachers had increased to 63%. This increase confirms a similar improvement revealed by other researchers (Kelly et al., 2004). The findings of this study did not reveal access as high as Kelly et al (2004) and the qualitative evidence suggests that teachers would welcome further improvements in services. Reported access among resource teachers in National schools was lowest at just 32%.

A similar pattern was observed in the results relating to speech and language therapy with significant improvements noted over fifteen year study period. The improvements in special school access from 52% to 80% corroborate the parallel research of Curtin and Tulie (1987) (57%) and Kelly et al (2004) (84%). Dunne’s (1993) research in special classes suggested 20% access to speech and language services. In contrast, the results of this study revealed 14% access in 1989 improving to 63% by 2004. Despite the increase provision in SLT services, teachers indicated a continued need for increased provision of such services and that stated current services fell far short of their expectations. These demands have more recently been endorsed by others (NDA, 2005a; N.F.V.B., 2006; O’Connor, 2004).

The provision of other paramedical services to schools have also improved when the results of earlier research are considered (Curtin and Tulie, 1987; NABMSS, 1981a) but there still remains a need for improved provision across the three sectors of special educational provision.

The study raises serious concerns regarding the level of teacher isolation experienced by the special education teaching body with 43% expressing feelings of
seclusion from mainstream teaching peers. The isolating effects of teaching in special education have already been raised by Bates (1993a), Curtin and Tulie (1987), and INTO (2003f). This study highlights the degree to which teachers sense isolation – 46% special class teachers, 42% of resource teachers and 39% of special school teachers. These high levels of isolation confirm the inadequate infrastructure to address this difficulty as identified more recently by INTO (2006b) and McCarthy and Kenny (2006).

Teachers identified varying levels of support from education centres, professional organisations and local support groups. Just over half (53%) of special class teachers rated local education centres as supportive, compared to 61% of special school teachers. While IATSE (2000, 2001) reported that 39% of resource teachers rated education centres as supportive, nearly twice as many (74%) of resource teachers participating in this study reported feeling supported. These figures compare favourably with reported satisfaction of (58%) of mainstream class teachers as reported recently by Government of Ireland (2002e). Local support networks were least popular with special school teachers (10%) and most popular with resource teachers (47%) with anecdotal evidence suggesting that this is so because local networks have been set up primarily in rural areas.

Levels of perceived support from the teachers’ trade union (INTO) and IATSE yielded differing results. Perceived INTO support was low among special class (32%) and resource teachers (39%) although a study by IATSE (2000) reported support to resource teachers as low as 17%. Only a fifth (21%) of special school teachers perceived the INTO as supportive in their role as teachers. In contrast, IATSE was seen as a supportive by over half of special class (55%) and resource teachers (54%) with highest levels of support reported among special school teachers (61%). The level of perceived support received from the Special Education Support Service (SESS) was not examined in the 2004 survey as the service had not long been established. The clear sense of isolation and lack of perceived support is of significance as it impinges on teacher morale, motivation and job satisfaction. Clearly this issue needs to be addressed. Had a control group of mainstream teachers been included in this study, it would have been possible to establish isolation levels among the teaching body as a whole.
8.2.11 Home School Links

Levels of home school liaison varied between the different forms of provision. Special school teachers had parent teachers meeting least often compared with special class and resource teachers but sent pupil progress reports home more frequently. Also, special schools were more likely to have an open day (75%) compared to 53% in the other two sectors. Resource teachers meet parents most frequently but not as often as detailed by Costello (1997) and 75% of them sent progress reports just once a year. Information booklets for parents were most likely to be available in special schools (73%) compared to special classes (62%) and resource teachers (56%). Finally, the number of schools with parents’ associations was higher (80%) than findings for mainstream schools (70%) as reported by Mac Giolla Phádraig (2003). In general terms, results indicated varying levels of home school liaison activity as described by INTO (2002e).

8.3 THIS RESEARCH IN CONTEXT OF CURRENT PROVISION

8.3.1 Overview

In reviewing this research in general terms, the findings indicate that areas in which improvements occurred in the 1989 to 2004 period tend to be tangible and directly attributable to government investment of a financial nature. Conversely, the identified aspects which continue to pose difficulties within the sector are more likely to be more multi-faceted, intangible and complex and often associated with systemic issues of inadequate capacity, structural inadequacy and unaddressed anomalies.

The research highlights a general improvement in three specific areas over the three forms of provision. The improved financial investment in primary education over the timescale of this research has paid positive dividends in terms of teachers’ perceptions of educational resources, school and classroom facilities and certain internal school supports. The very high levels of satisfaction expressed by teachers in relation to available educational resources are directly linked to schools’ purchasing capacity and an improvement in the range and quality of resources available. The special education sector, according to its teachers, has witnessed a significant and welcome change for the better in this regard, although it must be acknowledged that there remains a number of
minor concerns primarily in relation to audio-visual resources. A similar, if not as strong, result was identified when school and classroom facilities were explored. Although special schools continue to score highest in terms of amenities and physical environment, the 1989 - 2004 period witnessed a significant number of improvements in many mainstream primary schools. While there are still particular concerns in a variety of specific areas, it should be remembered that the baseline against which primary school conditions were compared in the first instance was extremely low given the decades of departmental neglect within the sector. Such improvements can undoubtedly be linked to the significant investment in infrastructure through the DES Schools’ Building Programme. Similarly, the reported improvements in secretarial and caretaking services are equally attributable to departmental intervention in providing appropriate specific grant-aid to school Boards of Managements.

However, the unresolved issues which emerge from this research are more complex and cannot be solved simply by financial investment. The single most worrying outcome of this research must be the poor levels of inclusive practice which have been reported across the three forms of provision. The urgent need to establish a formal structure for special school/mainstream school interaction has been identified and requested on numerous previous occasions. However, this research indicates that levels of integration/inclusion have dropped significantly over the fifteen year research period. Special schools no longer occupy the centre stage of the special education system and have become more isolated and have increased contact with other segregated schools while becoming more alienated from their mainstream counterparts. Ironically, in some cases, the improvement in mainstream primary schools’ facilities has eliminated their need to use facilities in local special schools thus reducing valuable contact. Within National schools, special classes have also become more isolated with a significant reduction in interaction with mainstream classes. Perhaps the ill-prepared mainstream primary schools’ struggle to cope with the hasty implementation of inclusion has affected their ability to maintain and develop meaningful levels of contact with special classes and special schools. Resource teachers confirm these difficulties when they relate the total lack of preparedness for inclusion that it is evident in National schools.

These levels of low inclusion combined with the findings concerning pupil placement, the teaching body, and support services, as outlined in Section 8.2 not only highlight the serious shortcomings of special educational provision but also illustrate the
complexity of these problems which are not resolved solely by substantial financial intervention but also require partnership among the stakeholders, structural change, and policy formation and implementation over a viable timeframe. These difficulties are addressed in greater detail in Section 8.3.2.

8.3.2 Systemic Difficulties

The research findings highlighting inadequate levels of special educational provision illustrate the serious systemic shortcomings within the current system. In broad terms, these difficulties can be subdivided into six specific subheadings as follows:

- lack of appropriate structures
- insufficient capacity to deliver services
- absence of specific directives and/or policies
- knowledge deficits
- absence of vital linkages
- historical anomalies

Firstly, the lack of established structures impinges negatively on many aspects of special educational provision in Ireland. The present system is a result of evolution rather than systematic planning and therefore lacks cohesive organisation on many levels. This is illustrated by a number of examples from the current research. Firstly, in analysing the data referring to teachers, there is significant evidence that the lack of a framework facilitating teacher employment mobility has affected teacher attitudes in special schools. The historical legacy whereby teachers without an Irish language qualification could only teach in special education has resulted in a majority (69%) of non-Irish trained teachers within the sector. This fact is of little consequence in its own right but is of serious concern when viewed with the fact that 29% of special school teachers would prefer not to teach in special schools which must obviously have implications in terms of teacher motivation, commitment and job satisfaction. Similarly the lack of an appropriate structure for continuing professional development for teachers is strongly criticised by teachers. This research highlights that attendance at inservice training has dropped significantly with respondents citing the lack of an established inservice model offering appropriate relevant professional education as a key factor.
Other structural deficiencies also become apparent from the findings. Teachers reported that the lack of a formal framework affording opportunities for colleague consultation and curricular development had adversely affected the school planning process in all sectors. Over half of teachers also yet again highlighted the absence of an adequate framework of provision for second-level MGLD pupils. The absence of an adequate structure to support teachers was obvious with 42% of special educators experiencing isolation.

The absence of capacity to deliver provision is a second systemic difficulty obvious from the research findings. The earlier findings of the Cromien Report outlining the Department of Education and Science’s inability to respond to sanctioning teaching and material resources were reinforced by this research. With over half of special class and three quarters of resource pupils experiencing delays in receiving departmental sanction in 2004, this indicates a serious deficit in the Department’s operational capacity at this time. However, it should be acknowledged that the establishment of the nationwide SENO network by the NCSE has alleviated this difficulty to a significant degree. In addition, MGLD pupils no longer require a psychological assessment to access resources since the introduction of the General Allocation Model. A second capacity issue emerging from the study centres on teachers’ perceptions of NEPS. Although significant improvements are noted in terms of access, teachers are scathing in their views of adequacy of service. Widespread dissatisfaction with frequency of visits, inability to access psychological assessments, and the absence of therapeutic interventions are strongly highlighted across all sectors clearly questioning NEPS’s ability to deliver an adequate psychological service to schools. The lack of trained educational psychologists combined with the government’s reticence in filling vacant posts suggests that the capacity of NEPS to provide a comprehensive service will not be addressed in the short term. Other issues emerging from the findings relating to capacity issues include: the capacity of special schools to make adequate provision for a population with increasing challenging behaviour and the inability of schools to be financially viable without parental funding.

A third systemic difficulty relates to the lack of policy and official direction in relation to many aspects of provision. The DES has issued very few circulars to special schools and special classes over the last decade. This absence of direction has manifested itself in significant differences emerging between the special schools, special classes and resource teacher models. While the official criteria for entry to
special education provides no direction whatsoever for selecting one model over another, the data suggest that the populations attending special schools, special classes and resource teachers all differ significantly. Despite the finding that 71% of special school children have difficulties in addition to MGLD compared to 34% of special class and 26% of resource teacher pupils, this is not officially recognised by the DES. Similarly, the significantly higher levels of challenging behaviour (53%) in special schools compared to 18% and 11% in special classes and resource respectively receives no official attention. This study confirms that there remain no official enrolment procedures and criteria for placement and therefore a wide range of practice exist across the three sectors. Equally, the absence of an official directive on the practice of having a policy on inclusion or implementing IEPs with pupils manifested itself by a wide range of results with special schools surprisingly reporting significantly less usage than the other two sectors. It is envisaged that many of these shortcomings will be addressed with the staged enactment of the EPSEN (2004) Act.

There are also clear indications in the data that there are a number of identifiable knowledge deficits within the system. Teachers themselves admit that they are ill-equipped and unsupported in many cases. Resource teachers, frequently younger and more inexperienced (mean 4 years teaching compared with 13 years for special school teachers) have undertaken a special education diploma in 13% of cases compared with 42% in special schools. This combined with the total lack of preparation of mainstream class teachers for the introduction of inclusion has led to a certain level of unease within the National school system. Teachers report a sense of "unpreparation". Since 1999, they have received a significant level of inservice education concerning the revised primary school curriculum. However, since the introduction of the historic "automatic entitlement" in 1998, preparation for the introduction of all special needs pupils into mainstream classrooms has never been addressed. The absence of a framework of inservice education already mentioned combined with the absence of preparation with mainstream teachers has adversely affected the confidence of teachers according to respondents. Other knowledge deficits were apparent from the findings including the lack of parental information on school choice following psychological assessment.

Fifthly, the lack of vital linkages also emerged as a systemic flaw in the provision of MGLD education. The need for special school/mainstream school links has already been discussed. The continuing absence of such an essential structure is clearly evident in this study with contact deteriorating over the study period. Secondly, the
absence of established effective links between the Department of Education and HSE continues to be problematic as is borne out by the results indicating uneven and unequal access to HSE support and paramedical staff.

Finally, there are a number of historical anomalies within the special educational system. Firstly, special schools continue to be a part of the primary school system despite the fact that the majority of the MGLD special school population are of post-primary age. Despite being attached to primary system, there is an increasing number of pupils undertaking second-level state examinations. The respondents from special schools used the NCCA MGLD guidelines considerably less than their primary school colleagues reflecting the differing nature of their curricula. The second anomaly occurs whereby special schools are not granted designated disadvantaged status by the DES despite a number of them being located in designated disadvantaged areas. Given the established correlation between educational disadvantage and MGLD, it seems discriminatory that special schools cannot be designated in a similar fashion to National schools. Respondents cited the obvious benefits including enhanced capitation grants and the appointment of a HSCL teacher. The third systemic anomaly concerns DES pupil funding across the three models of provision. Each MGLD pupil in special schools and special classes is allocated an additional annual grant. However, this grant has never been paid in respect of MGLD pupils (or indeed any other category) attending resource teachers. Respondents considered this unjust echoing the demands of the INTO to rectify this inequality.

8.3 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Firstly, the discussion section reviewed the characteristics of schools making MGLD provision noting changes in type of school, school and class size and pupil profile which changed over the fifteen year study period. No significant differences were noticed in pupil gender or school location and the effects of the newly created provision in the form of resource teachers are discussed.

The pertinent issues for teachers relating to employment, redeployment rights and teacher mobility were also reviewed and significant differences between the three forms of provision in relation to gender, experience, qualifications and initial training were examined. The research also highlighted the acute lack of an adequate infrastructure for the professional development of teachers.
The third subsection of the discussion chapter addressed teachers’ perceptions regarding pupil placement with improvements noted in the frequency of pre-enrolment meetings but continued dissatisfaction in relation to the level of background information received prior to enrolment. Teachers indicated that they perceived the majority of pupils to be appropriately placed educationally, although it was acknowledged that special schools were increasingly catering for pupils with more complex needs and pupils with challenging behaviour.

In discussing the issues of integration and inclusion, significant reductions in contact between MGLD pupils and their peers were noted in special classes and the level of special school/mainstream school contact was observed to have lessened considerably with a converse increase in activity between special schools themselves. Reference was also made to time allocations for integrated activities and teachers’ and parents’ perceptions of current integration and inclusive practice.

The varying results regarding school and classroom facilities across the three sectors of provision were examined and any improvements over the study period noted. Levels of satisfaction, areas of concern and issues which continue to remain unaddressed were highlighted. The study reveals that, while there were particular areas which had been enhanced, there still were a significant number of facilities requiring upgrading across all sectors but particularly in National schools with resource teachers.

Similarly, teacher satisfaction with educational resources was reviewed with positive feedback noted for resources for core elements of the curriculum and varied results for resources for other subjects. The access to and adequacy of audio-visual equipment was also explored with inadequacies emphasised. Significant differences were detected between access among special school teachers and National schools with resource teachers. The number of schools which request an annual contribution and the amount of such levies was reported as less than mainstream schools.

The sixth section outlined the curriculum planning process and reviewed the role of the DES inspectorate in supporting teachers, curricular resources used, the use of IEPs and teachers’ high levels of discontent with the paucity of time for planning and colleague consultation.

Schools’ psychological services were reviewed in terms of access, adequacy and difficulties particular to the special education sector. While access had improved considerably over the research period, a discrepancy was revealed whereby schools were officially designated a psychological service but had no actual access. The very
high levels of discontent among teachers with the service were discussed in terms of psychologist attendance at schools, availability of cognitive assessments and therapeutic interventions. The issues of waiting lists for assessment and resource sanction, private assessments, were also appraised in light of the General Allocation Model.

In-school support is considered in relation to SNAs, secretarial and caretaking services, learning support teachers, specialist teachers and support staff employed in designated disadvantaged schools with improvements and continuing adequacies highlighted.

The availability of external support to teachers was reviewed in terms of visiting support services to schools and resources providing personal professional support to teachers. Results indicated that improvements had occurred in social work, speech therapy and paramedical services over the research period but general access to and adequacy of these services was still below an acceptable level. The findings of this research also indicated high level of teacher isolation and teachers’ perceptions of the supportiveness of a variety of professional support services were discussed.

The practices of special school, special class and resource teachers in relation to home school liaison were reviewed. Frequency of parent meetings, issuing of progress reports, availability of information booklets and existence of parents’ associations across the three sectors were analysed.

Finally, a number of systemic shortcomings are identified in the data and these are explored in terms of their implications for MGLD educational provision.

Concluding comments and recommendations arising from this discussion chapter, including suggested further research, are presented in Chapter Nine.
CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

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9.1 INTRODUCTION

This brief final chapter summarises the main findings of the study and their implications in terms of the forthcoming implementation of the EPSEN Act. It also alludes to the limitations of the research and makes a number of recommendations and suggestions for further research. Some concluding comments bring the thesis to a close.

9.2 CONCLUSIONS

This first nationwide exploratory study of educational system for MGLD school-going children provides two snapshots of the provision in place in 1989 and 2004. The study provides an audit of and details the strengths and weaknesses of a wide range of facilities in a system that has undergone a period of reform, significant investment and enormous change. More importantly, it identifies the challenges and difficulties which, according to teachers working in the field, still need to be addressed. What makes these challenges so pertinent is that the special education sector currently awaits the implementation of the 2004 EPSEN Act which will chart the future direction of services for years to come.

The study, while identifying these challenges, did have a variety of limitations. Firstly, the breadth of topics under review as identified by teachers and the literature resulted in a broad overview of provision and therefore did not provide in-depth analysis in a number of areas. The role of particular support staff, funding of resources, inter-staff collaboration were among the topics on which limited data was gathered, and could merit more thorough and comprehensive investigation. Secondly, while the use of limited initial teacher meetings and the postal questionnaire as a research tool were cost effective and practical in the context of a nationwide sample, had time permitted, the use of additional methods such as in-depth interviews and focus groups would have further enhanced the data collected. Thirdly, while in many cases the same schools were surveyed in 1989 and 2004, there was no guarantee that the same respondents participated in both surveys. This combined with possible changes in teachers’ expectations over the study period, made it difficult to make detailed direct comparisons between the results of the two surveys. Despite these limitations, it is possible to proffer a number of conclusions from the research undertaken.
The results suggest that, while three forms of provision exist for MGLD pupils exist, they appear to operate as separate entities which differ significantly and have no sense of being interconnected in any way. Despite this, there are no policies or guidelines which outline the entry criteria or benefits of one sector over another. The special school, in general, caters for older pupils who have more complex needs and possible challenging behaviour and although is better resourced than the other two sectors, it still has serious unmet needs. Special classes continue to make provision in National schools but there is no evidence of a rationale why pupils should attend a special class as opposed to a resource teacher. It seems that special classes continue as a form of provision simply because they already exist in schools and meet the more complex needs of a minority of pupils. The resource teacher model has expanded so dramatically that, as a result, its teachers are highly aware of their lack of experience, their lack of training, poor accommodation and resources and the lack of a whole school approach within their schools. MGLD pupils no longer attend the resource teacher and there is a worry that they will be ‘lost’ as a part of the General Allocation Model. However, despite these misgivings, there is general agreement among teachers that the majority of MGLD pupils are placed appropriately within the system. In summary, these three forms of provision co-exist but lack any cohesion and sense of connection with each other contributing to a lack of direction and sense of isolation among teachers.

It is also evident from the present study that levels of integrated activity have dropped in the special class sector and the contact and interaction between special schools and National schools has lessened considerably. This has occurred against a background of promotion of inclusion within the National school where the DES focus has concentrated on making all schools inclusive environments for all children. While this is to be commended, the neglect in terms of policies and support for special schools and special classes has increased their sense of isolation. The continued lack of structures, commitment and funding for special school/mainstream school linkages is a matter of serious concern.

It is also possible to conclude that appropriate systems of transfer continue to be unavailable. No structures exist for inter-school transfer for pupils whereby a pupil can opt to change from one form of provision to another if necessary. The identified lack of post-primary MGLD provision continues to present difficulties for pupils once they have completed their primary education. Results also indicate that teachers would
welcome a scheme whereby teachers could exchange with colleagues within the education system as a whole. This lack of ability to transfer should be reviewed seriously given the number of respondents in this study who indicated that they were not employed in special education by choice combined with the high levels of teacher isolation reported. These levels of isolation are exacerbated by the perceived lack of support experienced by teachers. The failure of the schools' psychological service in meeting their needs, combined with inadequate professional and personal support from other sectors, are issues which respondents have identified as requiring urgent attention.

This study also suggests that improvements have occurred in school and classroom facilities over the study period which have been acknowledged by teachers. However, there continues to be difficulties in relation to particular areas of provision especially in the resource teacher sector reflecting the difficulties experienced in mainstream National schools emanating from decades of neglect of school buildings and facilities. There still needs to be major capital investment across the three forms of provision to ensure that all pupils and teachers can avail of appropriate facilities. Similarly, it is evident from the study that improvements have occurred in access to certain educational resources but these are not equitable across the three forms of provision. While the full delivery of the curriculum may be hampered by resource restrictions, there are also broader difficulties including the allocation of designated time for consultation and planning which present particular challenges for teachers. Varying levels of parental involvement have been achieved but this needs to be enhanced possibly by extending the HSCL scheme to more schools and considering eligible special schools for designated disadvantaged status.

These identified major challenges in conjunction with issues raised in Chapter Eight form the basis for the recommendations suggested in sections 9.3 and 9.4.

9.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

9.3.1 General Recommendations

- Prior to the implementation of the EPSEN Act (2004), a strategic plan and policies need to be put in place which interconnect the three forms of provision clearly outlining roles and responsibilities and making adequate financial and
human resources available to ensure that special education supports MGLD pupils in an appropriate and equitable manner.

- The NCSE should establish and maintain a database of all pupils (including MGLD) as a matter of urgency to facilitate resourcing and future planning in schools. School principals should be encouraged to complete the annual National Intellectual Disability Database and return to the local HSE disability database division. The data collection process should have an inter-agency context whereby the NCSE, NEPS and HSE can ensure streamlined delivery of appropriate services.

- Systems and programmes in operation in other countries should be fully explored and investigated and where appropriate considered for piloting in the Irish education system.

- All schools should have in place a written policy on the whole-school inclusion and special schools and special classes should ensure that such a policy endorses increased and meaningful integrated activities for their pupils.

- A policy is required and structures need to be established to facilitate the enrolment of pupils into special educational provision. Pre-enrolment meetings for parents and pupils and teacher access to appropriate information need to be a integral part of that process.

- Systems of pupil transfer and dual enrolment between the differing forms of provision need to be explored to facilitate pupils availing of the most appropriate educational placement to meet their individual needs.

- The DES and school authorities should review as a matter of urgency the serious shortage of placements within post-primary schools and remediate the situation to ensure the smooth transition from primary to post-primary education by all MGLD pupils. The practice whereby MGLD pupils in their mid and late teens attend National schools should be discontinued.
An audit needs to be undertaken of the number of pupils with additional learning, medical and behavioural needs across the sector. In acknowledging these needs, adequate and appropriate training, resources, and other supports need to be put in place.

Systems of teacher exchange and teacher transfer between mainstream and special education would assist in skills and knowledge acquisition and assist in augmenting the number of teachers working in the special education sector by choice.

All schools should have equal access to school and classroom facilities of a minimum standard. The DES needs to extend its various building programmes to ensure that these standards are met in all schools and the particular needs of special education pupils need to be catered for as a matter of priority.

The DES needs to increase the capitation grants for children with MGLD and end the anomaly whereby MGLD children in mainstream do not qualify for special capitation grants. This move, combined with increased investment, should ensure that pupils across the three sectors have equal and sufficient access to appropriate educational resources.

The availability of the Diploma in Special Education qualification and other certified postgraduate training need to be extended a greater number of teachers as a matter of urgency. Modular and distance-learning options should be explored as viable alternatives in an attempt to meet the needs of teachers in isolated locations.

A comprehensive system of continued professional development for teachers needs to be established as a matter of importance. This system should address the issues of specialised course content, certification and teacher substitution for attendance.
It is recommended that MGLD pupils continue to be psychologically assessed thus providing pertinent information for the writing of IEPs. In addition, such pupils should be included in an inter-agency database to ensure they can fully access a variety of support services.

9.3.2 **Recommendations for the Special School Sector**

- Special schools should continue to be maintained and resourced adequately with a clear policy outlining their future role in the special educational continuum. Their increasingly differing role should be acknowledged by granting appropriate financial and human resources.

- Given that special schools are now catering primarily for MGLD pupils of post-primary age, school structures, curricula, staffing and other supports should reflect an environment which is significantly different from the primary school.

- An audit of challenging behaviour and the additional needs of MGLD pupils in special schools should be undertaken to identify schools’ needs in terms of training, resources and other supports required in order to adequately meet the needs of such pupils.

- Existing criteria for designated disadvantaged status should be extended to special schools and eligible schools should be permitted to join the scheme.

- The much requested scheme whereby special schools operate a links programme with mainstream National schools should be established as a matter of priority. Sufficient funding, resources, training and supports should be provided to encourage realistic and meaningful contact between pupils in both sectors.

- The suggestion that special schools should act as resource centres to mainstream schools is a recommendation that has frequently been made in previous research.
This now should be given serious consideration as a matter of precedence and an appropriate infrastructure established.

- The particular deficits in terms of facilities and resources particular to special schools highlighted in this study should be addressed without delay.

### 9.3.3 Recommendations for the National School Sector

- The role of the MGLD special class as a part of National school provision should be clearly defined in terms of future provision.

- School management should ensure that existing special classes are physically located within the main body of the school interchanging the special class with a mainstream class if necessary.

- Primary schools with special classes should review current practices for mainstream/special class contact and facilitate an increase in levels of meaningful integration where necessary.

- The role of the learning support teacher in providing support teaching to MGLD pupils needs to be examined in terms of caseload and time allocation to ensure pupils are accessing adequate teaching time under the General Allocation Model.

- Principals and teachers should receive training and assistance in implementing the whole-school approach advocated by the General Allocation Model ensuring regular liaison between the mainstream, learning support and resource teachers in delivering appropriate education to special needs pupils.

- Adequate resources, training and allotted time for colleague consultation should be afforded to mainstream teachers who are expected to meet educational needs of MGLD pupils.
9.3.4 Recommendations for Support

- The current service provision of NEPS to schools needs urgent evaluation and review. There is an identified need for change whereby schools can access psychology services within reasonable time constraints. This review should also evaluate the manner in which NEPS coordinates its services with psychology services in the voluntary sector as schools receiving services from both appear to be very poorly served. The outcome of this review should ensure the establishment of a schools’ psychological service which can meet the needs of the school community.

- To ensure equity, parents of pupils awaiting psychological assessment who experience unreasonable delay should be grant-aided to pay for access to private assessments where necessary.

- An inter-agency (DES, NCSE, HSE) structure should be established which ensures that adequate access of speech therapy, social work and other paramedical services to schools. The Departments of Health and Education and Science should ensure that there are adequate human resources to ensure a minimum acceptable service to schools.

- Teachers should be equipped to play a full professional role in multidisciplinary teams through the provision of appropriate training.

- The DES should ensure that the level of in-school support staff be increased where necessary. The scheme of employing specialist teachers should be extended and the inclusion of SNA support in the General Allocation should be considered.

- Education Centres should review current structures of support to teachers in the special education sector and provide increased support where necessary. Education centres could also facilitate the establishment of local support networks particularly in isolated areas.
Professional organisations such as the INTO and IATSE should also evaluate their roles in supporting special education teachers and effect suitable supportive structures across the three sectors of provision.

The DES should review its role in terms of teacher support and increase the capacity of the inspectorate to provide practical support to teachers.

9.3.5 Other Recommendations

The forthcoming NCCA revised curricular guidelines need to be evaluated given the differing needs of the three sectors of provision. Given the age profile and other factors relating to special school pupils, consideration should perhaps be given to issuing separate MGLD curricular guidelines to special schools.

Issues concerning curriculum planning need to be addressed particularly the issue regarding the need for time for teachers to plan and consult with colleagues and other professionals. This will be of vital importance in relation to the successful implementation of the IEP process.

Parents need to be supported in facilitating increased participation in school matters. The extension of the HSCL scheme to all schools in the special education sector could increase the inclusion of parents especially those from minority communities.

Resources need to be made available to establish an adequate information service for parents so that they are fully informed concerning decisions they take regarding their children’s education.
9.4 SUGGESTED FURTHER RESEARCH

The following are suggested as areas in which further investigation would enhance current knowledge of special educational provision:

- A comprehensive investigation into educational provision of MGLD pupils now attending learning support teachers is necessary. It would be important to ascertain whether this cohort of pupils has benefited or has been disadvantaged by this significant change in provision. Such research would also need to examine their functioning in the mainstream class and establish whether their holistic educational needs are being met fully.

- An examination of the academic attainments, social skills and self-concept of MGLD pupils across the three sectors of provision would supply invaluable data on the educational and social benefits of each model differentiating any significant variations between the models.

- An investigation into teacher isolation among special education teachers to identify the factors which contribute to this sense of separateness from their mainstream colleagues. Such research would need to include mainstream class teachers to establish the degree to which this phenomenon is experienced in the education sector as a whole.

9.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Ireland’s special education system is now at a crossroads. The three earlier milestones of the 1965 Commission report, the 1993 SERC report, and the 1998 ‘automatic entitlement’ have all had significant influence on the formation of the current special educational system. The fourth milestone will undoubtedly be the implementation of the 2004 EPSEN Act. The provisions of this act and how they are introduced will be critical in charting a successful future for special education in this country. The recommendations of the NCSE’s report submitted to the DES on 1st October 2006 will be decisive in identifying factors and suggesting solutions for the successful
implementation of the act. The participants of this study have revealed some of the obstacles and challenges that need to be addressed. Inter-agency structures, meaningful inclusion, inter-school liaison, a cohesive strategy, adequate funding, skills and knowledge training, adequate support services and structures are some of the key issues which need to be tackled. The government will need to commit to investment, policy formation, research, and planned infrastructures in order to create a system of total inclusiveness which will have the capacity to respond fully to the needs of MGLD pupils, their teachers, their families, and their communities in providing them with a meaningful, equitable, and comprehensive education.

This study has shown that, in the last two decades, some of this has already been achieved, but there still remains considerable work to be done. The opening quotation of this thesis was from an anonymous official employed by the Department of Education under the 1937-42 Fianna Fáil government. Perhaps the most appropriate closing quote summing up the development of special educational provision during the period 1989 to 2004 should be from the present Fianna Fáil government’s election manifesto of 2002 which stated:

“A lot done and more to do”

(Fianna Fáil, 2002, p. 1)


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APPENDIX I


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### APPENDIX I: SCHOOLS SURVEYED, DISTRIBUTION OF 1989 & 2004 QUESTIONNAIRES & RESPONSE RATES (2)

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* Questionnaires to schools nos 063-065 coded 'X' instead of 'D' to avoid confusion with those issued to school nos 04-07 on page 1 of this appendix.
### APPENDIX I.A.: SCHOOLS SURVEYED, DISTRIBUTION OF 1989 & 2004 QUESTIONNAIRES & RESPONSE RATES (7)

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# APPENDIX I.A.: SCHOOLS SURVEYED, DISTRIBUTION OF 1989 & 2004 QUESTIONNAIRES & RESPONSE RATES (9)

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APPENDIX I: SCHOOLS SURVEYED, DISTRIBUTION OF 1989 & 2004 QUESTIONNAIRES & RESPONSE RATES (15)

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# Appendix I

## Schools Surveyed, Distribution and Response Rates (1989 & 2004)

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### Notes
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### Notes

- 2 Surveys Retained

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**NOTES**
- N: Class established after 1989 survey
- ✓: Class established after 1989 survey
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- ✓: Class established after 1989 survey

**Appendix I: Schools Surveyed, Distribution and Response Rates (1989 & 2004)**

475
### APPENDIX I.A.: SCHOOLS SURVEYED, DISTRIBUTION OF 1989 & 2004 QUESTIONNAIRES & RESPONSE RATES (20)

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## APPENDIX I


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Appendix I: Schools Surveyed, Distribution and Response Rates (1989 & 2004) 484

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<td>St Etchen's N.S., Kennegad, Co Westmeath</td>
<td>R594</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>488</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>WEST-MEATH</td>
<td>Scoil Cholmain Naofa, Bellview, Mullingar, Co Westmeath</td>
<td>R595</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>489</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>WEST-MEATH</td>
<td>S.N. Chumin Naofa, Multyfarnan, Co Westmeath</td>
<td>R596</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>490</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>WEST-MEATH</td>
<td>S.N. Mhanachain, Tubber, Co Westmeath</td>
<td>R597</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>491</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>WEST-MEATH</td>
<td>Rathowen N.S., Rathowen, Co Westmeath</td>
<td>R598</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>492</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>WEST-MEATH</td>
<td>St Michael's N.S., Castletown-Finea, Mullingar, Co Westmeath</td>
<td>R599</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>493</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>WEST-MEATH</td>
<td>Moyvere N.S., Moyvere, Co Westmeath</td>
<td>R600</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>494</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>WEST-MEATH</td>
<td>Crowenstown N.S., Crowenstown, Delvin, Co Westmeath</td>
<td>R601</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>495</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>WEST-MEATH</td>
<td>Castlepollard Mixed N.S., Castlepollard, Co Westmeath</td>
<td>R602</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>496</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>WEXFORD</td>
<td>Convent of Mercy N.S., Kennedy Park, Wexford</td>
<td>R603</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>497</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>WEXFORD</td>
<td>Gusserane N.S., New Ross, Co Wexford</td>
<td>R604</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL NUMBER</th>
<th>TYPE</th>
<th>COUNTY</th>
<th>SCHOOL NAME &amp; ADDRESS</th>
<th>2004 Q CODE</th>
<th>Note</th>
<th>RETURNED</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>498</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>WEXFORD</td>
<td>Naomh Maodhog N.S., Ferns, Co Wexford</td>
<td>R605</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>499</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>WEXFORD</td>
<td>S.M. Abbain, Adamstown, Co Wexford</td>
<td>R606</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>WEXFORD</td>
<td>S.N. Bearna na h-Aille, Oylegate, Enniscorthy, Co Wexford</td>
<td>R607</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>501</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>WEXFORD</td>
<td>S.N. Clochar Mhuire, St John's Road, Wexford</td>
<td>R608</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>502</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>WEXFORD</td>
<td>S.N. Cul Greine, Coolgreaney, Gorey, Co Wexford</td>
<td>R609</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>503</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>WEXFORD</td>
<td>S.N. Mhaolhoig, Poll Fothair, Fethard, Co Wexford</td>
<td>R610</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>504</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>WEXFORD</td>
<td>S.N. Olibheir Beannaithe, Duncannon, Co Wexford</td>
<td>R611</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>505</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>WEXFORD</td>
<td>S.N. Shean Bhoth, New Ross, Co Wexford</td>
<td>R612</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>506</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>WICKLOW</td>
<td>Ballintemple N.S., Ballintemple, Avoca, Co Wicklow</td>
<td>R613</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(1) No Resource Teacher post</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>507</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>WICKLOW</td>
<td>St Kevin's N.S., Glendalough, Co Wicklow</td>
<td>R614</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>508</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>WICKLOW</td>
<td>St Cronan's N.S., Bray, Co Wicklow</td>
<td>R615</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>509</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>WICKLOW</td>
<td>Greystones N.S., Greystones, Co Wicklow</td>
<td>R616</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>510</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>WICKLOW</td>
<td>St Jodeph's N.S., Newtownmountkennedy Co Wicklow</td>
<td>R617</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>511</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>WICKLOW</td>
<td>Rathdrum B.N.S., Rathdrum, Co Wicklow</td>
<td>R618</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>512</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>WICKLOW</td>
<td>St Michael's N.S., Arklow, Co Wicklow</td>
<td>R619</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>513</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>WICKLOW</td>
<td>St Ernana's N.S., Rathnew, Co Wicklow</td>
<td>R620</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL NUMBER</th>
<th>COUNTY</th>
<th>SCHOOL NAME &amp; ADDRESS</th>
<th>2004 Q CODE</th>
<th>Note</th>
<th>RETURNED</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>514</td>
<td>WICKLOW</td>
<td>Tinaheely N.S., Tinaheely, Co Wicklow</td>
<td>R621</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>515</td>
<td>WICKLOW</td>
<td>St Francis N.S., Newcastle, Co Wicklow</td>
<td>R622</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>(1) No Resource Teacher post</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX II

SUMMARY OF SCHOOLS SURVEYED

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1989 SURVEY: DETAILS</th>
<th>SPECIAL SCHOOLS</th>
<th>SPECIAL CLASSES</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Special Schools (MMH) and National Schools with Special Classes (MMH) in 1989. Extracted from “Directory of Special Schools 1986” (Government of Ireland, 1986a) and “List of National Schools with Special Classes” (Government of Ireland, 1987a)</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Questionnaires posted on 18th April 1989.</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Questionnaires which could not be completed (letter or telephone call to state special school or special class had ceased since publication of Government of Ireland (1986) and Government of Ireland, 1987a)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of possible Questionnaire responses from Special Schools and Special Classes</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Questionnaires received after initial posting</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Questionnaires received after 1st Reminder issued on 7th May 1989 (Appendices III.E. &amp; III.F.)</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Questionnaires received after 2nd Reminder issued on 19th May 1989 (Appendix III.G.)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Questionnaires received after Final Reminder issued on 29th May 1989 and follow-up telephone calls (Appendices III.H. &amp; III.K.)</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Questionnaire Response Rate (%)</td>
<td>78.3%</td>
<td>78.9%</td>
<td>78.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### APPENDIX II.B.: SUMMARY OF RESPONSE RATES OF 2004 SURVEY OF SPECIAL SCHOOLS (MGLD) AND NATIONAL SCHOOLS WITH SPECIAL CLASSES (MGLD)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2004 SURVEY: DETAILS</th>
<th>SPECIAL SCHOOLS</th>
<th>SPECIAL CLASSES</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Special Schools (MGLD) and National Schools with Special Classes (MGLD) surveyed in 1989 that do not appear in “Directory of Special Schools 2003” (Government of Ireland, 2003i) and “List of National Schools with Special Classes” (Government of Ireland, 2001d)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of National Schools with Special Classes (MGLD) surveyed in 1989 that have established additional Special Classes as listed in “List of National Schools with Special Classes” (Government of Ireland, 2001d)</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Special Classes established in other National Schools (81) since 1989 survey as listed in “List of National Schools with Special Classes” (Government of Ireland, 2001d)</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Updated no. of Special Schools and Special Classes for 2004 Survey</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Questionnaires posted on 20th April 2004</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Questionnaires which could not be completed (letter, fax, e-mail or telephone call to state special school or special class provision had ceased since Government of Ireland, 2001d and Government of Ireland, 2003i)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of possible Questionnaire responses from Special Schools and Special Classes</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Questionnaires received after initial posting (Appendices IV.D., IV.E., IV.F., &amp; IV.M.)</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Questionnaires received after 1st Reminder issued on 3rd May 2004 (Appendices IV.H. &amp; IV.I)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Questionnaires received after 2nd Reminder issued on 28th May 2004 (Appendix IV.K. &amp; IV.O.)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Questionnaires received after Final Reminder issued on 6th June 2004 (Appendices IV.L. &amp; IV.P.) and follow-up telephone calls</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Questionnaire Response Rate (%)</td>
<td>84.5%</td>
<td>79.0%</td>
<td>81.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX II.C.: SUMMARY OF RESPONSE RATES OF 2004 SURVEY OF RESOURCE TEACHERS IN NATIONAL SCHOOLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2004 SURVEY: DETAILS</th>
<th>10 PER COUNTY</th>
<th>DUBLIN 10 PER BOROUGH</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No of National Schools selected at random using “Education Provider Search” on D.E.S. Website <a href="http://www.education.ie">www.education.ie</a></td>
<td>250</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Questionnaires posted on 20th April 2004</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Questionnaires which could not be completed (letter, fax, e-mail or telephone call to state that school did not have a Resource Teacher Post)</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of possible Questionnaire responses from National Schools with a Resource Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Questionnaires received after initial posting (Appendices VI.G., &amp; VI.M.)</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Questionnaires received after 1st Reminder issued on 3rd May 2004 (Appendices VI.H.)</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Questionnaires received after 2nd Reminder issued on 28th May 2004 (Appendix VI.K)</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Questionnaires received after Final Reminder issued on 6th June 2004 (Appendices VI.L. &amp; VI.P.) and follow-up telephone calls</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Questionnaire Response Rate (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>81.1 %</td>
<td>83.8 %</td>
<td>81.5 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### APPENDIX II.D.: SUMMARY OF SPECIAL SCHOOL AND NATIONAL SCHOOL PARTICIPATION IN 1989 & 2004 SURVEYS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1989 &amp; 2004 SURVEY: DETAILS</th>
<th>SPECIAL SCHOOLS</th>
<th>SPECIAL CLASSES</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Possible no. of Special Schools (MGLD) and National Schools with Special Classes (MGLD) surveyed which could be included in both 1989 and 2004 Surveys.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final no. of Special Schools (MGLD) and National Schools with Special Classes (MGLD) that participated in both 1989 and 2004 Surveys.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final % of Special Schools (MGLD) and National Schools with Special Classes (MGLD) that participated in both 1989 and 2004 Surveys.</td>
<td>100 %</td>
<td>83.8 %</td>
<td>88.3 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX III

CORRESPONDENCE FOR STUDY 1
(1989)

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Appendix III.K: Final Reminder to teachers in Special Schools and National Schools with Special Class(es).........................512
Dear Principal,

I am a teacher in the above school which caters for pupils with mild learning difficulties. I am currently studying at Trinity College, Dublin and am conducting a study which aims to examine the current level of educational provision for the mildly mentally handicapped in Special classes in 'ordinary' primary schools and special schools. The study will, hopefully, provide a complete and accurate assessment of the present situation and indicate areas of provision which could be improved with particular reference to special classes.

I hope to acquire much of my information through a questionnaire completed by teachers. I realise how busy you must be, and indeed how often you receive questionnaires, but I have selected your school for an initial pilot survey of 12 teachers. The more responses I receive, the more accurate the eventual results will be, so I would really appreciate your co-operation.

Naturally all returned questionnaires will be treated in strictest confidence and no mention of individual schools will be made in the findings.

I would be grateful if you could give the enclosed questionnaire to your special class teacher. If your school employs two special class teachers please pass it on to the teacher working with children in the 8 - 12 year old age range. A stamped addressed envelope has been included with each questionnaire so that they can be returned by Wednesday, 15th February '89.

Looking forward to your co-operation and wishing you continued success in your good work.

With many thanks,

Yours sincerely,

Paul Stevens
Dear Principal,

I am a teacher in the above Special school which caters for pupils with mild learning disabilities. I am currently studying at Trinity College, Dublin and am conducting a study which aims to examine the current level of educational provision for the mildly mentally handicapped in special schools and special classes in 'ordinary' primary schools. The study will, hopefully, provide a complete and accurate assessment of the present situation and indicate areas of provision which could be improved.

I hope to acquire much of my information through a questionnaire completed by teachers. I realise how busy you must be, and indeed how often you receive questionnaires but I have selected your school for an initial pilot survey of 12 teachers. The more responses I receive the more accurate the eventual results will be so I would really appreciate your co-operation.

Naturally all returned questionnaires will be treated in strictest confidence and no mention of individual schools shall be made in the findings.

I would be grateful if you could distribute the enclosed questionnaires to two teachers working with children in the 8 - 12 year age range. A stamped addressed envelope has been included with each questionnaire so that they can be returned by Wednesday, 15th February, 1989.

Looking forward to your co-operation and wishing you continued success in your good work.

With many thanks,

Yours sincerely,

Paul Stevens
APPENDIX III.C. : Letter to Principals of National Schools with Special Class(es)

St. Augustine's School
Obelisk Park, Carysfort Avenue, Blackrock, Co. Dublin.
Telephone: 881771/887533

18th April, 1989

Dear Principal,

I am a teacher in the above school which caters for pupils with mild learning difficulties. I am currently studying at Trinity College, Dublin, and am conducting a study which aims to examine the current level of educational provision for the mildly mentally handicapped in special classes in 'ordinary' primary schools and special schools. The study will, hopefully, provide a complete and accurate assessment of the present situation and indicate areas of provision which could be improved with particular reference to special classes.

I hope to acquire much of my information through a questionnaire completed by teachers. I realise how busy you must be, and indeed how often you receive questionnaires but in an effort to make the report as complete as possible, I am sending questionnaires to all special schools and special classes catering for the mildly mentally handicapped. The more responses I receive, the more accurate the eventual results will be, so I would really appreciate your co-operation.

Naturally all returned questionnaires will be treated in the strictest confidence and no mention of individual schools will be made in the findings.

I would be grateful if you could give the enclosed questionnaires to your special class teachers. A stamped addressed envelope has been included with each questionnaire so that they can be returned by Friday, 28th April, 1989.

Looking forward to your co-operation and wishing you continued success in your good work.

With many thanks,

Yours sincerely,

Paul Stevens
Dear Principal,

I am a teacher in the above Special school which caters for pupils with mild learning disabilities. I am currently studying at Trinity College, Dublin and am conducting a study which aims to examine the current level of educational provision for the mildly mentally handicapped in special schools and special classes in 'ordinary' primary schools. The study will, hopefully, provide a complete and accurate assessment of the present situation and indicate areas of provision which could be improved.

I hope to acquire much of my information through a questionnaire completed by teachers. I realize how busy you must be, and indeed how often you receive questionnaires but in an effort to make the report as complete as possible I am sending questionnaires to all special schools and special classes catering for the mildly mentally handicapped. The more responses I receive the more accurate the eventual results will be so I would really appreciate your co-operation.

Naturally all returned questionnaires will be treated in strictest confidence and no mention of individual schools shall be made in the findings.

I would be grateful if you could distribute the enclosed questionnaires to two teachers working with children in the 8 - 12 year old age range. A stamped addressed envelope has been included with each questionnaire so that they can be returned by Friday, 28th April, 1989.

Looking forward to your co-operation and wishing you continued success in your good work.

With many thanks,

Yours sincerely,

Paul Stevens
APPENDIX III.E. : 1st Reminder to Principals of National Schools with Special Class(es)

st. augustine's school
OBELISK PARK, CARYSFORT AVENUE, BLACKROCK, CO. DUBLIN.
TELEPHONE: 881771/887533

7th May 1989

Dear Principal

You may remember receiving a letter from me a number of weeks ago along with some questionnaire(s) for teachers working with a special class/classes.

In order to ensure that the survey I'm undertaking is comprehensive, I hope to receive as many completed questionnaires as possible. Although the response has been very good, I don't appear to have received all questionnaires yet, and I wonder if you could gently remind teachers to complete and post them if they have not already done so.

I appreciate the many demands on teachers' time, but a high return of questionnaires would enhance the accuracy of the final report. Should the questionnaire(s) be lost or mislaid, I would be delighted to send you a spare copy.

With many thanks for your help in this matter

Yours sincerely

Paul Stevens
7th May 1989

Dear Principal,

You may remember receiving a letter from me a number of weeks ago along with questionnaires for two teachers in your school working with children in the 8-12 age group.

In order to ensure that the survey I am undertaking is comprehensive, I hope to receive as many completed questionnaires as possible. Although the response has been very good, I don't appear to have received all questionnaires yet, and I wonder if you could gently remind teachers to complete and post them if they have not already done so.

I appreciate the many demands on teachers' time, but a high return of questionnaires would enhance the accuracy of the final report. Should the questionnaire(s) be lost or mislaid, I would be delighted to send a spare copy.

With many thanks for your help in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Stevens
Dear Principal

You may remember receiving letters and a questionnaire from me a number of weeks ago in connection with a survey on educational provision in special schools and special classes.

In order to ensure accurate results, I am anxious to receive all questionnaires. I would appreciate therefore, if you could again gently remind teachers to complete and return all questionnaires immediately, if they have not already done so.

I understand the many demands on teachers' time, but can only stress the importance of receiving as high a proportion of questionnaires as possible, if the research I am completing is to be of any value. For your convenience, I enclose an extra copy of the questionnaire.

Looking forward to hearing from you

With many thanks and best wishes

Yours sincerely

Paul Stevens
29th September 1989

Dear Principal,

You may remember my writing to you last term and asking a number of your teachers to complete a questionnaire regarding the current level of educational provision in special schools and special classes.

The excellent response to the survey indicated the high level of interest among teachers and many were keen to highlight the many inadequacies of our present system.

Unfortunately the an Post dispute disrupted responses and I never received responses which a number of teachers had kindly completed and posted. I am still eager to gather the views of as many teachers as possible and I note that I did not receive questionnaires from your school. If you would not consider it an imposition, I would be grateful if you would pass on the enclosed materials to the teacher(s) concerned.

My apologies for troubling you yet again, but as you can understand, I wish to make the survey as complete as possible. All information received will be treated in strictest confidence.

With best wishes for the new school year,

Many thanks,

Yours sincerely,

Paul Stevens
0th February 1989.

Dear Teacher,

I am a teacher in the above Special school which caters for pupils with mild learning disabilities. I am currently studying at Trinity College, Dublin, and am conducting a study which aims to examine the educational provision for mildly mentally handicapped pupils in special schools and special classes in 'ordinary' primary schools. The study will, hopefully, provide a complete and accurate assessment of the present situation and indicate areas of provision which could be improved.

I have selected your school for an initial pilot survey of 12 teachers and hope you can find time to fill out the attached questionnaire. Although the questionnaire is almost five pages, it should not take too much time as most of the responses simply require a 'tick' in the appropriate box. I hope to receive all 12 initial questionnaires back so I would appreciate it if you could send the completed questionnaire directly to me in the enclosed S.A.E. by the 15th February 1989.

All information received will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Thank you for your co-operation.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Paul Stevens
Dear Teacher,

I am a teacher in the above Special school which caters for pupils with mild learning disabilities. I am currently studying at Trinity College Dublin, and am conducting a study which aims to examine the educational provision for mildly mentally handicapped pupils in special schools and special classes in 'ordinary' primary schools. The study will, hopefully, provide a complete and accurate assessment of the present situation and indicate areas of provision which could be improved.

I am sending questionnaires to all special schools and classes catering for the mildly mentally handicapped so I hope you can find time to fill out the attached questionnaire. Although it is almost five pages, it should not take too much time as most of the responses simply require a 'tick' in the appropriate box. I hope to receive all questionnaires back so I would appreciate it if you could send the completed questionnaire directly to me in the enclosed S.A.E. by Friday, 28th April, 1989.

All information received will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Thank you for your co-operation,

Yours sincerely,

Paul Stevens
Dear Teacher

You may remember receiving a questionnaire from me last term regarding the current level of educational provision in special schools and special classes in National schools.

The excellent response to the survey indicated the high level of interest among teachers and many were keen to highlight the many inadequacies of our present system.

Unfortunately the An Post dispute disrupted responses from a number of areas and I never received questionnaires which a number of teachers had kindly completed and posted. I am still eager to gather the views of as many teachers as possible, and if you did not complete a questionnaire, I would greatly appreciate it if you could fill out the one attached and return it to me as soon as possible.

If you were kind enough to complete a questionnaire last term, I unfortunately did not receive it, and wonder if you would consider completing another? Should you feel this an imposition, I understand fully, and ask you to simply return the blank form.

All information will be treated in strict confidence.

With many thanks and wishing you success in the new school year.

Yours sincerely

Paul Stevens

29th September, 1989
APPENDIX IV

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS
(1989)

APPENDIX IV.A: Questionnaire to Teachers in Special Schools:
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APPENDIX IV.A : Questionnaire to Teachers in Special Schools:
1989 Survey [1st Draft]

EDUCATIONAL PROVISION FOR THE MILDLY MENTALLY HANDICAPPED IN
SPECIAL CLASSES AND SPECIAL SCHOOLS.

A

TEACHER DATA (please tick √)

(1) [ ] Male [ ] Female
(2) [ ] 0–5 [ ] 6–10 [ ] 11–20 [ ] 21–30 [ ] 30+
(3) [ ] N.T. [ ] B.Ed. [ ] Dip. in Sp Ed [ ] H. Dip. in Ed. [ ] Master's Degree
(4) [ ] Training College:
(5) [ ] No. of years in Special Education?

Do you have panel right?
[ ] Yes [ ] No

Are you teaching in a special school/class by choice?
[ ] Yes [ ] No

Would you prefer to teach in an ordinary class/school?
[ ] Yes [ ] No

Have you attended any inservice courses?
[ ] Yes [ ] No

If you answered yes to Q. 9, how many courses have you attended in the last two years?

B

SCHOOL & CLASS DATA (please tick √)

(1) [ ] Boys [ ] Girls [ ] Urban [ ] Mixed
(2) [ ] No. of classes
(3) [ ] No. of Teachers
(4) [ ] No. of pupils
(5) [ ] Age range of your class?

C

PERCEIVED ADEQUACY OF SCHOOL FACILITIES (please tick √ in appropriate column)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilities</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
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<tr>
<td>School Facilities</td>
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<td>Sink &amp; water</td>
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<td>Display Area</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX IV.A: Questionnaire to Teachers in Special Schools: 1989 Survey [1st Draft] (continued)

D

ACCESS TO SCHOOL EQUIPMENT (please tick [ ])

(1) Does your class have use of or adequate access to any of the following?

- Posters & Charts
- Filmstrips
- Slide Projector
- Slides
- Tape Recorder
- Television
- Video Recorder
- Computer
- Overhead Projector
- Stencil Copier
- Photocopier

In class Access to:

(2) Costs of schoolbooks, copies, pencils, etc are met by:

- School
- Parents
- Other

(3) Is there an annual levy on parents?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please state amount: £______

E

PERCEIVED ADEQUACY OF MATERIALS & SUPPLIES (please tick [ ] in appropriate column)

(1) Do you have adequate materials to conduct the following activities in a satisfactory manner?

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<tr>
<th>Equipment or Materials for:</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Art &amp; Craft</td>
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<tr>
<td>Music</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment or Materials for:</th>
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<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
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<td>Play</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

F

NON-TEACHING STAFF (please tick [ ])

(1) Please indicate if any of the following are employed in your school:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Staff</th>
<th>Full-Time</th>
<th>Part-Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom aide</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Creaturer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary/Typist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support Staff</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specialist Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remedial Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychologist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Worker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech Therapist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) If any of the following are not employed on a full-time basis within the school, please state to which agency or organisation they are attached:

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psychologist</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Worker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech Therapist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(3) If you have little or no contact with a psychologist, social worker, or speech therapist, would you like increased availability of their services?

- Yes
- No
APPENDIX IV.A : Questionnaire to Teachers in Special Schools:
1989 Survey [1st Draft] (continued)

NON-TEACHING STAFF (continued)

(4) In what way do you or would you find the services of a psychologist useful to you as a class teacher?

G

PUPIL PLACEMENT & HOME SCHOOL LINKS (please tick □)

(1) When a new pupil is enrolled in your class do you receive adequate background information? □ Yes □ No

What improvements would you like to see in this area?

(2) Do you receive reports from the pupil's previous class/school? □ Yes □ No

What improvements would you like to see in this area?

(3) Do you think pupils in your class are appropriately placed? □ All □ Most □ Some □ Few

(4) Does your school have □ Telephone □ Waiting area for parents □ Room for meeting parents

(5) Does your school have a programme of home/school liaison? □ Yes □ No

(6) Do you have an opportunity to meet parents prior to a pupil's enrolment? □ Yes □ No

(7) Does your school have an open day for parents? □ Yes □ No

(8) How often is a progress report sent to pupils' parents? □ Once a year □ Once a term □ Once a month □ Once a week

(9) Does your school have an active Parents' Association? □ Yes □ No

(10) Would you like to see the appointment of a Home/School Liaison Officer? □ Yes □ No

H

PUPIL INTEGRATION (please tick □)

(1) Do your pupils have contact with pupils in other special schools? □ Yes □ No

(2) Do pupils in your class have contact with pupils in 'ordinary' schools through any of the following: □ Playground □ Sports or P.E. □ After School activities □ Classes with other schools □ No contact Specify:

(3) Do other schools use your school facilities? □ Yes □ No

I

CURRICULUM (please tick □)

(1) The school curriculum is decided by: □ Individual teacher □ Group of teachers □ Teachers & support staff

(2) Have you discussed any aspects of the curriculum with a visiting Dept. of Education Inspector? □ Yes □ No

If yes, did you find this discussion beneficial? □ Yes □ No

Appendix IV: Research Instruments (1989)
APPENDIX IV.A: Questionnaire to Teachers in Special Schools: 1989 Survey [1st Draft] (continued)

**CURRICULUM: (continued)**

1. Would you like the Dept. of Education to introduce curriculum guidelines for the teaching of the Mildly/Moderately Handicapped? [ ] Yes [ ] No

2. Do you find the ‘New Curriculum’ useful when planning your class programme? [ ] Yes [ ] No

3. Which of the following reading schemes do you follow? [ ] Read, Write & Remember [ ] Hopsotch [ ] Trog Readers

   [ ] First Aid in English [ ] Ginny 360 [ ] Other:

   [ ] Over the Rainbow [ ] Story Chest

   [ ] Ann & Barry Series [ ] Wide Range Reader

3. Are you satisfied with the reading scheme in operation? [ ] Yes [ ] No

4. Which of the following mathematics schemes does your class use? [ ] Maths Mastery [ ] S.R.A. Maths Kit

   [ ] The explanation [ ] Figure it Out [ ] Meeting Mathematics

   [ ] Busy at Maths [ ] McDougall Maths

   [ ] Other:

4. Are you satisfied with the mathematics scheme in operation? [ ] Yes [ ] No

5. Education for Living

   (i) Is there a set scheme of work for this subject? [ ] Yes [ ] No

   (ii) Are any of the following topics covered with your class? [ ] Social Skills [ ] Hygiene [ ] Diet & Nutrition [ ] Safety [ ] First Aid [ ] Gardening [ ] Hobbies [ ] Civics

5. Are any of the following included in your class programme? [ ] Physical Education [ ] Music [ ] Singing [ ] Swimming [ ] Art & Craft [ ] Picture Activities

5. Other Areas

   (i) Are any of the following included in your class programme? [ ] Swimming [ ] Dancing [ ] Singing [ ] Swimming [ ] Craft Activities

5. Special Schools and Special Classes (please tick [ ])

   (1) Does your school act as a resource to any special classes in your area? [ ] Yes [ ] No

   (2) Do you meet with teachers of special classes on a formal basis to discuss common interests? [ ] Yes [ ] No

   (3) Are you a member of the National Association of Teachers in Special Education? [ ] Yes [ ] No

   (4) Do you have adequate access to books and publications relating to Special Education? [ ] Yes [ ] No

   (5) Would you like an opportunity of interchanging with an ‘ordinary’ class teacher for a term? [ ] Yes [ ] No

   (6) What specific inservice training needs do you perceive? 

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Appendix IV: Research Instruments (1989) 517
APPENDIX IV.A : Questionnaire to Teachers in Special Schools:
1989 Survey [1st Draft] (continued)

SPECIAL SCHOOLS AND SPECIAL CLASSES (continued)

(7) What improvements or changes would you recommend to the present educational provision for the mildly mentally handicapped?

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR OBSERVATIONS

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION.
APPENDIX IV.B: Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools with Special Classes: 1989 Survey [1st Draft]

EDUCATIONAL PROVISION FOR THE MILDLY MENTALLY HANDICAPPED IN SPECIAL CLASSES AND SPECIAL SCHOOLS.

A

TEACHER DATA (please tick ✔)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>(2) Years Teaching</th>
<th>(3) Qualification</th>
<th>(4) Training College</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
<td>0 - 5</td>
<td>☐ M.T.</td>
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<td>☐</td>
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<td>6 - 10</td>
<td>☐ B.Ed.</td>
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<td>☐</td>
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<td>11 - 20</td>
<td>☐ Dip. in Sp Ed</td>
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<td>21 - 30</td>
<td>☐ H. Dip. in Ed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
<td>30 +</td>
<td>☐ Master's Degree</td>
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<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(5) No. of years in Special Education

(6) Do you have panel rights?

☐ Yes ☐ No

(7) Are you teaching in a special school/class by choice?

☐ Yes ☐ No

(8) Would you prefer to teach in an ordinary class/school?

☐ Yes ☐ No

(9) Have you attended any inservice courses?

☐ Yes ☐ No

(10) If you answered yes to Q. 9, how many courses have you attended in the last two years?

........................................

B

SCHOOL & CLASS DATA (please tick ✔)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>Type of School</th>
<th>(2) No. of classes</th>
<th>(3) No. of Teachers</th>
<th>(4) No. of pupils</th>
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<td>☐</td>
<td>Girls</td>
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<td>Mixed</td>
<td>☐</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(5) Age range of your class? _____ to _____ years.

(6) No. of special classes?

........................................

C

PERCEIVED ADEQUACY OF SCHOOL FACILITIES (please tick ✔ in appropriate column)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilities</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ventilation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power Points</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storage</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sink &amp; Water</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Display Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix IV: Research Instruments (1989) 519
**APPENDIX IV.B: Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools with Special Classes: 1989 Survey [1st Draft] (continued)**

### D

**ACCESS TO SCHOOL EQUIPMENT**

(1) Does your class have use of or adequate access to any of the following?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment or Materials for:</th>
<th>In Class</th>
<th>Access To</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Posters &amp; Charts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filmstrips</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slide Projector</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slides</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tape Recorder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Recorder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overhead Projector</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stencil Copier</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photocopy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) Costs of schoolbooks, copies, pencils, etc are met by:

- School
- Parents
- Other

(3) Is there an annual levy on parents?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please state amount: £______

---

### E

**PERCEIVED ADEQUACY OF MATERIALS & SUPPLIES**

(1) Do you have adequate materials to conduct the following activities in a satisfactory manner?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment or Materials for:</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art &amp; Craft</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Ed.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cookery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### F

**NON-TEACHING STAFF**

(1) Please indicate if any of the following are employed in your school:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff Category</th>
<th>Full-Time</th>
<th>Part-Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Aides</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Cretaker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary/Typist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support Staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remedial Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychologist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Worker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech Therapist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) If any of the following are not employed on a full-time basis within the school, please state to which agency or organisation they are attached:

- Psychologist: __________
- Social Worker: __________
- Speech Therapist: ________

(3) If you have little or no contact with a psychologist, social worker, or speech therapist, would you like increased availability of their services?

- Yes
- No
APPENDIX IV.B : Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools with Special Classes: 1989 Survey [1st Draft](continued)

(4) In what way do you or would you find the services of a psychologist useful to you as a class teacher?


G

PUPIL PLACEMENT & HOME SCHOOL LINKS  (please tick ✓)

(1) When a new pupil is enrolled in your class do you receive adequate background information? 
Yes ☐ No ☐

What improvements would you like to see in this area?

(2) Do you receive reports from the pupil's previous class/school? 
Yes ☐ No ☐

What improvements would you like to see in this area?

(3) Do you think pupils in your class are appropriately placed?
All ☐ Most ☐ Some ☐ Few ☐

(4) Does your school have: ☐ Telephone, ☐ Waiting area for parents ☐ Room for meeting parents

(5) Does your school have a programme of home/school liaison?
Yes ☐ No ☐

(6) Do you have an opportunity to meet parents prior to a pupil's enrolment?
Yes ☐ No ☐

(7) Does your school have an open day for parents?
Yes ☐ No ☐

(8) How often is a progress report sent to pupils' parents?
Once a year ☐ Once a term ☐ Once a month ☐ Once a week

(9) Does your school have an active Parents' Association?
Yes ☐ No ☐

(10) Would you like to see the appointment of a Home/School Liaison Officer?
Yes ☐ No ☐

H

PUPIL INTEGRATION  (please tick ✓)

(1) Do pupils in your class have contact with other classes in the school through any of the following:
Playground ☐ Sports or P.E. ☐ After school activities ☐ No contact

Clases with other classes:

(2) Do your pupils have organised contact with pupils in other schools?
Yes ☐ No ☐

(3) Have you ever taken a class on a visit to a special school?
Yes ☐ No ☐

(4) Is your classroom situated separately from the rest of the school?
Yes ☐ No ☐

I

CURRICULUM  (please tick ✓)

(1) The school curriculum is decided by:
Individual teacher ☐ Group of teachers ☐ Teachers & support staff

(2) Have you discussed any aspects of the curriculum with a visiting Dept. of Education Inspector?
Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, did you find this discussion beneficial?
Yes ☐ No ☐

Appendix IV: Research Instruments (1989) 521
Appendix IV: Research Instruments (1989)
APPENDIX IV.B : Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools with Special Classes: 1989 Survey [1st Draft](continued)

SPECIAL SCHOOLS AND SPECIAL CLASSES (continued)

(7) What improvements or changes would you recommend to the present educational provision for the mildly mentally handicapped?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR OBSERVATIONS

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION.
# APPENDIX IV.C: Questionnaire to Teachers in Special Schools: 1989 Survey [Revised]

**EDUCATIONAL PROVISION FOR THE MILDLY MENTALLY HANDICAPPED IN SPECIAL CLASSES AND SPECIAL SCHOOLS.**

## A

**TEACHER DATA (please tick ✓)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>Years Teaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>Qualification</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N.T.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B.Ed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dip. in Sp Ed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>H. Dip. in Ed.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Master's Degree</td>
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<tr>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>Training College</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>No. of years in Special Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>Do you have panel rights?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>Are you teaching in a special school/class by choice?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>Would you prefer to teach in an ordinary class/school?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(9)</td>
<td>Have you attended any in-service courses?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(10)</td>
<td>If you answered yes to Q. 9, how many courses have you attended in the last two years?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

## B

**SCHOOL & CLASS DATA (please tick ✓)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>Type of School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Girls</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>No. of classes in school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>No. of Teachers in school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>No. of pupils in your class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>Age range of your class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## C

**PERCEIVED ADEQUACY OF SCHOOL FACILITIES** (Please tick ✓ in appropriate column)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilities</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Facilities</td>
<td>Assembly Hall</td>
<td>Gymnasium</td>
<td>Toilet Facilities</td>
<td>Art/Craft Room</td>
<td>Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Facilities</td>
<td>Soft Play Area</td>
<td>Classroom Facilities</td>
<td>Heating</td>
<td>Space</td>
<td>Ventilation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Appendix IV: Research Instruments (1989) 524
APPENDIX IV.C: Questionnaire to Teachers in Special Schools: 1989 Survey (Revised) (continued)

### D. ACCESS TO SCHOOL EQUIPMENT

(please tick ☑)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment or materials for</th>
<th>In class</th>
<th>Across the school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Posters &amp; Charts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filmstrip</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slide Projector</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slides</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tape Recorder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Recorder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overhead Projector</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stencil Copier</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photocopier</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) Costs of schoolbooks, copies, pencils, etc. are met by:

- School [ ]
- Parents [ ]
- Other [ ]

(3) Is there an annual levy on parents?

- Yes [ ]
- No [ ]

If yes, please state amount: £

---

### E. PERCEIVED ADEQUACY OF MATERIALS & SUPPLIES

(please tick ☑ in appropriate column)

(1) Do you have adequate materials to conduct the following activities in a satisfactory manner?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment or materials for</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Insufficient</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts &amp; Craft</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cookery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

### F. NON-TEACHING STAFF

(please tick ☑)

(1) Please indicate if any of the following are employed in your school:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Staff</th>
<th>Full-Time</th>
<th>Part-Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom aide</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Carer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary/Typist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support Staff</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Specialist Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remedial Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychologist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Worker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech Therapist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) If any of the following are not employed on a full-time basis within the school, please state to which agency or organisation they are attached.

- Psychologist: ____________________________
- Social Worker: __________________________
- Speech Therapist: _______________________

(3) If you have little or no contact with these staff, would you like an increased availability of their services?

- Psychologist: YES [ ] NO [ ]
- Social Worker: YES [ ] NO [ ]
- Speech Therapist: YES [ ] NO [ ]
APPENDIX IV.C: Questionnaire to Teachers in Special Schools: 1989 Survey [Revised] (continued)

### Non-Teaching Staff (continued)

4. In what way do you or would you find the services of a psychologist useful to you as a class teacher?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>G</th>
<th>Pupil Placement &amp; Home School Links (please tick ✓)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) When a new pupil is enrolled in your class do you receive adequate background information?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Do you receive reports from the pupil's previous class/school?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Do you think pupils in your class are appropriately placed?</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Does your school have</td>
<td>Telephone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Does your school have a programme of home/school liaison?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Do you meet with parents prior to a pupil's enrolment?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) Does your school have an open day for parents?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) How often is a progress report sent to pupils' parents?</td>
<td>Once a year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9) Does your school have an active Parents' Association?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10) Would you like to see the appointment of a Home/School Liaison Officer?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>H</th>
<th>Pupil Integration (please tick ✓)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Do your pupils have contact with pupils in other special schools?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Do pupils in your class have contact with pupils in 'ordinary' schools through any of the following:</td>
<td>Playground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sports or P.E.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Do other schools use your school facilities?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I</th>
<th>Curriculum (please tick ✓)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) The school curriculum is decided by</td>
<td>Individual teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Have you discussed any aspects of the curriculum with a Visiting Dept. of Education Inspector?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes, did you find this discussion beneficial?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX IV.C : Questionnaire to Teachers in Special Schools: 1989 Survey [Revised] (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section/Question</th>
<th>Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3)</td>
<td>Would you like the Dept. of Education to introduce curriculum guidelines for the teaching of the mildly mentally handicapped?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4)</td>
<td>Do you find the 'New Curriculum' useful when planning your class programme?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) English (i)</td>
<td>Which of the following reading schemes do you follow?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read, Write &amp; Remember</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hopscotch</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Aid in English</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ginn 360</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over the Rainbow</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story Chest</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann &amp; Barry Series</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wide Range Reader</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Are you satisfied with the reading scheme in operation?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) What oral language scheme do you use?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Mathematics (i)</td>
<td>Which of the following mathematics scheme(s) do you follow?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your own scheme</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure it Out</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McDonagh Maths</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.R.A. Maths Kit</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Are you satisfied with the mathematics scheme in operation?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Education for Living (i)</td>
<td>Is there a set scheme of work for this subject?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Are any of the following topics covered with your class?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Skills</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housekeeping</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex Education</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hygiene</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diet &amp; Nutrition</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoking</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Aid</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hobbies</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Are any of the following topics covered with your class?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cookery</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savin</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civics</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Environmental Studies (i)</td>
<td>Are any of the following included in your class programme?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature Study</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardening</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature Walks</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Outings</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Are any of the following included in your class programme?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singing</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art &amp; Craft</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picture Activities</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craft Activities</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drama</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J SPECIAL SCHOOLS AND SPECIAL CLASSES (please tick)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) Does your school act as a resource to any special classes in your area?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Do you meet with teachers of special classes on a formal basis to discuss common interests?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Are you a member of the National Association of Teachers in Special Education?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Do you have adequate access to books and publications relating to Special Education?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Would you like an opportunity of interchanging with an 'ordinary' class teacher for a term</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) What specific inservice training needs do you perceive?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix IV: Research Instruments (1989) 527
APPENDIX IV.C : Questionnaire to Teachers in Special Schools:
1989 Survey [Revised](continued)

SPECIAL SCHOOLS AND SPECIAL CLASSES (continued)

(7) What improvements or changes would you recommend to the present educational provision for the mildly mentally handicapped?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR OBSERVATIONS

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION.
APPENDIX IV.D : Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools with Special Classes: 1989 Survey [Revised]

EDUCATIONAL PROVISION FOR THE MILDLY MENTALLY HANDICAPPED IN SPECIAL CLASSES AND SPECIAL SCHOOLS.

A

TEACHER DATA

(please tick □)

(1) [ ] Male (2) Years Teaching: (3) Qualification: (4) Training College: ________
     [ ] Female

     □ N.T. □ B.Ed. □ Dip. in Sp Ed □ H. Dip. in Ed. □ Master's Degree
     [ ] Other: ________

(5) No. of years in Special Education? ________

(6) Do you have panel rights?
     [ ] Yes □ No

(7) Are you teaching in a special school/class by choice?
     [ ] Yes □ No

(8) Would you prefer to teach in an ordinary class/school?
     [ ] Yes □ No

(9) Have you attended any in-service courses?
     [ ] Yes □ No

(10) If you answered yes to Q. 9, how many courses have you attended in the last two years?

B

SCHOOL & CLASS DATA

(please tick □)

(1) Type of School
     [ ] Boys □ Urban
     [ ] Girls □ Rural
     [ ] Mixed

(2) No. of classes in school?

(3) No. of Teachers in school?

(4) No. of pupils in your class?

(5) Age range of your class? ________ to ________ years.

(6) No. of special classes? __________

C

PERCEIVED ADEQUACY OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

(please tick □ in appropriate column)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilities</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School Facilities</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Gymnasium</td>
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<tr>
<td>Toilet Facilities</td>
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<td>Art/Craft Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Office</td>
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<td>Staffroom</td>
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<td>Swimming Pool</td>
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<td>Garden</td>
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<td>Hard Play Area</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>Facilities</th>
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<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Classroom Facilities</td>
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<td>Heating</td>
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<td>Space</td>
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<td>Ventilation</td>
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<td>Power Points</td>
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<td>Lighting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Furniture</td>
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<td>Storage</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sink &amp; water</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Display Area</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX IV.D: Questionnaires to Teachers in National Schools with Special Classes: 1989 Survey [Revised](continued)

### D. ACCESS TO SCHOOL EQUIPMENT

(please tick ☑)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment or Materials for:</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Very Poor</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Reading</td>
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<td>Language Work</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Art &amp; Craft</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Ed.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Countryside</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) Flats of schoolbooks, copies, pencils, pens are met by:
- School ☐
- Parents ☐
- Other ☐

(3) Is there an annual levy on parents?
- Yes ☐
- No ☐

If yes, please state amount: £ __________

### E. PERCEIVED ADEQUACY OF MATERIALS & SUPPLIES

(please tick ☑ in appropriate column)

(1) Do you have adequate materials to conduct the following activities in a satisfactory manner?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment or Materials for:</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Very Poor</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art &amp; Craft</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical Ed.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Class</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Countryside</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### F. NON-TEACHING STAFF

(please tick ☑)

(1) Please indicate if any of the following are employed in your school:

- School Staff
  - Classroom aide
  - School Caretaker
  - Secretary/Typist

- Support Staff
  - Specialist Teacher
  - Remedial Teacher
  - Psychologist
  - Social Worker
  - Speech Therapist

(2) If any of the following are not employed on a full-time basis within the school, please state to which agency or organisation they are attached:
- Social Worker
- Speech Therapist
- Psychologist

(3) If you have little or no contact with these staff, would you like an increased availability of their services:
- Yes ☐
- No ☐
## APPENDIX IV.D: Questionnaires to Teachers in National Schools with Special Classes: 1989 Survey [Revised](continued)

### NON-TEACHING STAFF (continued)

1. In what way do you or would you find the services of a psychologist useful to you as a class teacher?

### G

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When a new pupil is enrolled in your class do you receive adequate background information?</td>
<td>Yes, No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What improvements would you like to see in this area?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you receive reports from the pupil's previous class/school?</td>
<td>Yes, No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What improvements would you like to see in this area?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you think pupils in your class are appropriately placed?</td>
<td>All, Most, Some, Few</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does your school have: Telephone, Waiting area for parents, Room for meeting parents?</td>
<td>Yes, No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does your school have a programme of home/school liaison?</td>
<td>Yes, No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How often is a progress report sent to pupils' parents?</td>
<td>Once a year, Once a term, Once a month, Once a week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does your school have an active Parents' Association?</td>
<td>Yes, No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would you like to see the appointment of a Home/School Liaison Officer?</td>
<td>Yes, No, Sometimes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### H

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do pupils in your class have contact with other classes in the school through any of the following:</td>
<td>Yes, No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playground, Sports or P.E, After school activities, No contact, Classes with other classes:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do your pupils have organised contact with pupils in other schools?</td>
<td>Yes, No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you ever taken a class on a visit to a special school?</td>
<td>Yes, No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is your classroom situated separately from the rest of the school?</td>
<td>Yes, No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CURRICULUM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The school curriculum is decided by: Individual teacher, Group of teachers, Teachers &amp; support staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you discussed any aspects of the curriculum with a visiting Dept. of Education Inspector?</td>
<td>Yes, No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If yes, did you find this discussion beneficial?</td>
<td>Yes, No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX IV.D : Questionnaires to Teachers in National Schools with Special Classes: 1989 Survey [Revised] (continued)

**CURRICULUM** (continued)

(3) Would you like the Dept. of Education to introduce curriculum guidelines for the teaching of the mildly mentally handicapped?
   - Yes
   - No

(4) Do you find the ‘New Curriculum’ useful when planning your class programme?
   - Yes
   - No

(5) **English**
   - (i) Which of the following reading schemes do you follow?
     - Read, Write & Remember
     - First Aid in English
     - Over the Rainbow
     - Ann & Barry Series
     - Hopscotch
     - Ginn 360
     - Story Chest
     - Wide Range Reader
   - Other:

   - (ii) Are you satisfied with the reading scheme in operation?
   - Yes
   - No

(6) **Mathematics**
   - (i) Which of the following mathematics schemes do you use?
     - Your own scheme
     - Figur it Out
     - McDougall Maths
     - S.M.A. Maths Kit
     - Busy at Maths
     - Mosdoagh Maths
     - Mastery Maths
     - Other,

   - (ii) Are you satisfied with the mathematics scheme in operation?
   - Yes
   - No

(7) **Education for Living**
   - (i) Is there a set scheme of work for this subject?
   - Yes
   - No

   - (ii) Are any of the following topics covered with your class?
     - Social Skills
     - Hygiene
     - Safety
     - Housekeeping
     - Diet & Nutrition
     - First Aid
     - Sex Education
     - Smoking
     - Hobbies
     - Cooking
     - Civics

(8) **Environmental Studies**
   - (i) Are any of the following included in your class programme?
     - History
     - Geography
     - Gardening
     - Nature Study
     - Nature Walks
     - Class outings

(9) **Other Areas**
   - (i) Are any of the following included in your class programme?
     - Physical Education
     - Music
     - Singing
     - Art & Craft
     - Picture Activities
     - Swimming
     - Drama
     - Craft Activities
     - Computer
     - Drama
     - Television

**SPECIAL SCHOOLS AND SPECIAL CLASSES** (please tick)

(1) Is your class programme an integral part of the school programme?
   - Yes
   - No

(2) Do you meet with teachers from special schools on a formal basis to discuss common interests?
   - Yes
   - No

(3) Are you a member of the National Association of Teachers in Special Education?
   - Yes
   - No

(4) Do you have adequate access to books and publications relating to Special Education?
   - Yes
   - No

(5) Would you like an opportunity of interchanging with a teacher in a special school for a term?
   - Yes
   - No

(6) Would you like an opportunity if interchanging with an ordinary class teacher for a term?
   - Yes
   - No

(7) What specific in-service training needs do you perceive?

---

Appendix IV: Research Instruments (1989) 532
APPENDIX IV.D: Questionnaires to Teachers in National Schools with Special Classes: 1989 Survey [Revised](continued)

SPECIAL SCHOOLS AND SPECIAL CLASSES (Continued)

(?) What improvements or changes would you recommend to the present educational provision for the mildly mentally handicapped?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OR OBSERVATIONS

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION.
Appendix V.A : Newspaper notice announcing postal disruption:
11th May 1989 to 5th June 1989 .............................................. 535

Appendix V.B : Notice displayed at the First National Conference of
Irish Association of Teachers in Special Education. St.
Patrick’s College of Education, Druncondra, Dublin 9
15th -17th June, 1989 ........................................................... 536

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Schools with Special Class(es) regarding 1989 postal
disruption ................................................................. 537
APPENDIX V.A. : Newspaper notice announcing postal disruption : 11th May 1989 to 5th June 1989

Irish Independent

23rd May 1989

DUBLIN MAILS DISRUPTION
Customer Information

An Post regrets that due to the continuing unofficial dispute which is disrupting mail in some areas of Dublin, customers should not post letters to addresses in the affected areas. These are Dublin Postal Districts 3 to 14, 16, 17 and 20. You can still post in these areas however and we continue to deliver mail to addresses everywhere else.

The Parcel Service is not generally affected by the dispute although deliveries within the affected areas may be subject to some delay.

Express Mail Service, the courier service of An Post, is operating normally and is not affected by the dispute. You can use Express Mail to deliver your urgent letters and parcels by ringing 426666 for a collection or you may post at the following post offices: G.R.O., Rathsallagh, Phibsboro, James' Street, South Anne Street and Andrew Street. Please ensure that you ask for the Express Mail Courier Service when posting.

For further information you should telephone Customer Service at (01) 728888 or (01) 726666.

st. augustine's school
OBELISK PARK, CARYSFORT AVENUE, BLACKROCK, CO. DUBLIN.
TELEPHONE: 881771/887533

THANK YOU

Sincere thanks to all Special Schools and Special Classes whose teachers recently returned questionnaires regarding educational provision in Special Schools and Special Classes. Your assistance was invaluable.

The recent postal dispute affected the overall response of the survey, so if you still have an unreturned questionnaire, it would be most welcome.

With many thanks

Paul Stevens
29th September 1989

Dear Principal

You may remember my writing to you last term and asking a number of your teachers to complete a questionnaire regarding the current level of educational provision in special schools and special classes.

The excellent response to the survey indicated the high level of interest among teachers and many were keen to highlight the many inadequacies of our present system.

Unfortunately the An Post dispute disrupted responses and I never received responses which a number of teachers had kindly completed and posted. I am still eager to gather the views of as many teachers as possible and I note that I did not receive questionnaires from your school. If you would not consider it an imposition, I would be grateful if you would pass on the enclosed materials to the teacher(s) concerned.

My apologies for troubling you yet again, but as you can understand, I wish to make the survey as complete as possible. All information received will be treated in strictest confidence.

With best wishes for the new school year

Many thanks

Yours sincerely

Paul Stevens
APPENDIX VI

CORRESPONDENCE FOR STUDY 2
(2004)

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Appendix VI: Correspondence for Study 2 (2004)

538
Re: Educational Provision for Pupils with Mild General Learning Disabilities.

Dear Principal,

Educational provision for pupils with special needs is a subject which has increasing importance for primary schools. In 1989, I conducted a nationwide survey of special classes and special schools, and I am now carrying out a follow-up study under the Education Department at Trinity College, Dublin. The purpose of the follow-up study is to establish levels of current provision and note any improvements or changes which have occurred in the fifteen year period 1989-2004.

My interest in the subject comes from my teaching background: firstly, as a teacher in a special school for nine years, subsequently as a Resource teacher, and latterly as a principal of a primary school with pupils with disabilities integrated into mainstream classes.

I hope to acquire much of my information through a questionnaire completed by teachers. I am sending questionnaires to 29 special schools, 255 special classes and 290 Resource teachers in April. In the meantime, I have selected your school for a pilot survey.

I can assure you that all returned questionnaires will be treated in the strictest confidence and no mention of individual schools or teachers will be made in the findings. I would be grateful if you give the enclosed questionnaire(s) to the special class teacher(s) in your school. A stamped addressed envelope has been included with each questionnaire so they can be returned by Friday 27th February 2004.

Should you have any queries in relation to the above, you may contact me on 086 - 6015110 or bearaschool@eircom.net. Looking forward to your co-operation and wishing you continued success in your work.

Yours sincerely

Paul Stevens
Principal
APPENDIX VI.

APPENDIX VI.B.: Initial Letter to Principals of Special Schools

[Pilot Study]

17th February, 2004

Re: Educational Provision for Pupils with
Mild General Learning Disabilities.

Dear Principal,

Educational provision for pupils with special needs is a subject which has increasing
importance for primary schools. In 1989, I conducted a nationwide survey of special
classes and special schools, and I am now carrying out a follow-up study under the
Education Department at Trinity College, Dublin. The purpose of the follow-up study
is to establish levels of current provision and note any improvements or changes
which have occurred in the fifteen year period 1989-2004.

My interest in the subject comes from my teaching background: firstly, as a teacher in
a special school for nine years, subsequently as a Resource teacher, and latterly as a
principal of a primary school with pupils with disabilities integrated into mainstream
classes.

I hope to acquire much of my information through a questionnaire completed by
teachers. I am sending questionnaires to 29 special schools, 255 special classes and
290 Resource teachers in April. In the meantime, I have selected your school for a
pilot survey.

I can assure you that all returned questionnaires will be treated in the strictest
confidence and no mention of individual schools or teachers will be made in the
findings. I would be grateful if you give the enclosed questionnaires to two teachers at
primary level in your special school. A stamped addressed envelope has been included
with each questionnaire so they can be returned by Friday 27th February 2004.

Should you have any queries in relation to the above, you may contact me on 086-
6015110 or bearaschool@eircom.net. Looking forward to your co-operation and wishing
you continued success in your work.

Yours sincerely

Paul Stevens
Principal

Scoil an Chroi Ró-Naofa

BAILE CHASLEÁIN BHÉARRA, CO. CHORCAÍ

SACRED HEART NATIONAL SCHOOL, CASTLETOWNBERE, CO. CORK ROLL NO.: 20004T

Telephone: 027-70788 • Fax: 027-71700 • Email: bearaschool@eircom.net
17th February, 2004

Re: Educational Provision for Pupils with
Mild General Learning Disabilities

Dear Principal,

Educational provision for pupils with special needs is a subject which has increasing importance for primary schools. In 1989, I conducted a nationwide survey of special classes and special schools, and I am now carrying out a follow-up study under the Education Department at Trinity College, Dublin. The purpose of the follow-up study is to establish levels of current provision and note any improvements or changes which have occurred in the fifteen year period 1989-2004.

My interest in the subject comes from my teaching background: firstly, as a teacher in a special school for nine years, subsequently as a Resource teacher, and latterly as a principal of a primary school with pupils with disabilities integrated into mainstream classes.

I hope to acquire much of my information through a questionnaire completed by teachers. I am sending questionnaires to 29 special schools, 255 special classes and 290 Resource teachers in April. In the meantime I have selected your school for a pilot survey.

I can assure you that all returned questionnaires will be treated in the strictest confidence and no mention of individual schools or teachers will be made in the findings. I have selected your school in the hope that you have a full-time or part-time Resource teacher. I would be grateful if you give the enclosed questionnaire to the Resource teacher. If your school does not employ a Resource teacher, please return the uncompleted questionnaire to me. A stamped addressed envelope has been included with each questionnaire so they can be returned by Friday 27th February 2004.

Should you have any queries in relation to the above, you may contact me on 086 - 6015110 or bearaschool@eircom.net. Looking forward to your co-operation and wishing you continued success in your work.

Yours sincerely

Paul Stevens
Principal
APPENDIX VI.D. : Letter to Principals of National Schools with Special Class(es) which participated in 1989 Study

Scoil an Chroi Ró-Naofa
BAILE CHAISLEÁIN BHÉARRA, CO. CHORCAI

20th April, 2004

Re: Educational Provision for Pupils with Mild General Learning Disabilities.

Dear Principal,

Educational provision for pupils with special needs is a subject which has increasing importance for primary schools. In 1989, I conducted a nationwide survey of special classes and special schools, and I am now carrying out a follow-up study under the Education Department at Trinity College, Dublin. The purpose of the follow-up study is to establish levels of current provision and note any improvements or changes which have occurred in the fifteen year period 1989-2004.

My interest in the subject comes from my teaching background: firstly, as a teacher in a special school for nine years, subsequently as a Resource teacher, and latterly as a principal of a primary school with pupils with disabilities integrated into mainstream classes.

I hope to acquire much of my information through a questionnaire completed by teachers. I realise how busy you are, and indeed how often you receive questionnaires but in an effort to make the report as complete as possible, I am sending questionnaires to 29 special schools, 255 special classes and 290 Resource teachers. The more responses I receive, the more accurate the final report will be, so I would really appreciate your co-operation.

I can assure you that all returned questionnaires will be treated in the strictest confidence and no mention of individual schools or teachers will be made in the findings. I would be grateful if you give the enclosed questionnaire(s) to the special class teacher(s) in your school. A stamped addressed envelope has been included with each questionnaire so they can be returned by Friday 30th April 2004.

As your school participated in the 1989 survey, I am enclosing a pamphlet outlining some preliminary findings on some of the aspects surveyed.

Should you have any queries in relation to the above, you may contact me on 086 - 6015110 or bearaschool@eircom.net. Looking forward to your co-operation and wishing you continued success in your work.

Yours sincerely

Paul Stevens
Principal
APPENDIX VI.

Letter to Principals of National Schools with Special Class(es) established since 1989 Study

20th April, 2004

Re: Educational Provision for Pupils with Mild General Learning Disabilities.

Dear Principal,

Educational provision for pupils with special needs is a subject which has increasing importance for primary schools. In 1989, I conducted a nationwide survey of special classes and special schools, and I am now carrying out a follow-up study under the Education Department at Trinity College, Dublin. The purpose of the follow-up study is to establish levels of current provision and note any improvements or changes which have occurred in the fifteen year period 1989-2004.

My interest in the subject comes from my teaching background: firstly, as a teacher in a special school for nine years, subsequently as a Resource teacher, and latterly as a principal of a primary school with pupils with disabilities integrated into mainstream classes.

I hope to acquire much of my information through a questionnaire completed by teachers. I realise how busy are, and indeed how often you receive questionnaires but in an effort to make the report as complete as possible, I am sending questionnaires to 29 special schools, 255 special classes and 290 Resource teachers. The more responses I receive, the more accurate the final report will be, so I would really appreciate your co-operation.

I can assure you that all returned questionnaires will be treated in the strictest confidence and no mention of individual schools or teachers will be made in the findings. I would be grateful if you give the enclosed questionnaire(s) to the special class teacher(s) in your school. A stamped addressed envelope has been included with each questionnaire so they can be returned by Friday 30th April 2004.

Should you have any queries in relation to the above, you may contact me on 086 - 6015110 or bearaschool@eircom.net. Looking forward to your co-operation and wishing you continued success in your work.

Yours sincerely

Paul Stevens
Principal

APPENDIX VI.

Scoil an Chroi Ro-Naofa
BAILE CHAILSEAIN BHEARRA, CO. CHORCAI

20th April, 2004

Re: Educational Provision for Pupils with Mild General Learning Disabilities.

Dear Principal,

Educational provision for pupils with special needs is a subject which has increasing importance for primary schools. In 1989, I conducted a nationwide survey of special classes and special schools, and I am now carrying out a follow-up study under the Education Department at Trinity College, Dublin. The purpose of the follow-up study is to establish levels of current provision and note any improvements or changes which have occurred in the fifteen year period 1989-2004.

My interest in the subject comes from my teaching background: firstly, as a teacher in a special school for nine years, subsequently as a Resource teacher, and latterly as a principal of a primary school with pupils with disabilities integrated into mainstream classes.

I hope to acquire much of my information through a questionnaire completed by teachers. I realise how busy are, and indeed how often you receive questionnaires but in an effort to make the report as complete as possible, I am sending questionnaires to 29 special schools, 255 special classes and 290 Resource teachers. The more responses I receive, the more accurate the final report will be, so I would really appreciate your co-operation.

I can assure you that all returned questionnaires will be treated in the strictest confidence and no mention of individual schools or teachers will be made in the findings. I would be grateful if you give the enclosed questionnaire(s) to the special class teacher(s) in your school. A stamped addressed envelope has been included with each questionnaire so they can be returned by Friday 30th April 2004.

Should you have any queries in relation to the above, you may contact me on 086 - 6015110 or bearaschool@eircom.net. Looking forward to your co-operation and wishing you continued success in your work.

Yours sincerely

Paul Stevens
Principal

Appendix VI: Correspondence for Study 2 (2004)
APPENDIX VI.F.: Letter to Principals of Special Schools

Scoil an Chroi Ro-Naofa
Baile Chaisleáin Bhéarra, Co. Chorcaí

Sacred Heart National School, Castletownbere, Co. Cork Roll No.: 20004
Telephone: 027-70788    Fax: 027-71700    Email: bearaschool@eircom.net

20th April, 2004

Re: Educational Provision for Pupils with
Mild General Learning Disabilities.

Dear Principal,

Educational provision for pupils with special needs is a subject which has increasing
importance for primary schools. In 1989, I conducted a nationwide survey of special
classes and special schools, and I am now carrying out a follow-up study under the
Education Department at Trinity College, Dublin. The purpose of the follow-up study
is to establish levels of current provision and note any improvements or changes
which have occurred in the fifteen year period 1989-2004.

My interest in the subject comes from my teaching background: firstly, as a teacher in
a special school for nine years, subsequently as a Resource teacher, and latterly as a
principal of a primary school with pupils with disabilities integrated into mainstream
classes.

I hope to acquire much of my information through a questionnaire completed by
teachers. I realise how busy you are, and indeed how often you receive questionnaires
but in an effort to make the report as complete as possible, I am sending
questionnaires to 29 special schools, 255 special classes and 290 Resource teachers.
The more responses I receive, the more accurate the final report will be, so I would
really appreciate your co-operation.

I can assure you that all returned questionnaires will be treated in the strictest
confidence and no mention of individual schools or teachers will be made in the
findings. I would be grateful if you give the enclosed questionnaires to two teachers at
primary level in your special school. A stamped addressed envelope has been included
with each questionnaire so they can be returned by Friday 30th April 2004.

As your school participated in the 1989 survey, I am enclosing a pamphlet outlining
some preliminary findings on some of the aspects surveyed.

Should you have any queries in relation to the above, you may contact me on 086 -
6015110 or bearaschool@eircom.net. Looking forward to your co-operation and wishing
you continued success in your work.

Yours sincerely

Paul Stevens
Principal
APPENDIX VI.G. : Letter to Principals of National Schools with Resource Teachers

Scoil an Chroi Ró-Naofá
BAILE CHASLEÁIN BHEARRA, CO. CHORCAI

SACRED HEART NATIONAL SCHOOL, CASTLETOWNRE, CO. CORK ROLL NO.: 20004T
Telephone: 027-70788 Fax: 027-71700 Email: bearaschool@eircom.net

20th April, 2004

Re: Educational Provision for Pupils with Mild General Learning Disabilities.

Dear Principal,

Educational provision for pupils with special needs is a subject which has increasing importance for primary schools. In 1989, I conducted a nationwide survey of special classes and special schools, and I am now carrying out a follow-up study under the Education Department at Trinity College, Dublin. The purpose of the follow-up study is to establish levels of current provision and note any improvements or changes which have occurred in the fifteen year period 1989-2004.

My interest in the subject comes from my teaching background: firstly, as a teacher in a special school for nine years, subsequently as a Resource teacher, and latterly as a principal of a primary school with pupils with disabilities integrated into mainstream classes.

I hope to acquire much of my information through a questionnaire completed by teachers. I realise how busy you are, and indeed how often you receive questionnaires but in an effort to make the report as complete as possible, I am sending questionnaires to 29 special schools, 255 special classes and 290 Resource teachers. The more responses I receive, the more accurate the final report will be, so I would really appreciate your co-operation.

I can assure you that all returned questionnaires will be treated in the strictest confidence and no mention of individual schools or teachers will be made in the findings. I have selected your school at random in the hope that you have a full-time or part-time Resource teacher. I would be grateful if you give the enclosed questionnaire to the Resource teacher. If your school does not employ a Resource teacher, please return the uncompleted questionnaire to me. A stamped addressed envelope has been included with each questionnaire so they can be returned by Friday 30th April 2004.

Should you have any queries in relation to the above, you may contact me on 086 - 6015110 or bearaschool@eircom.net. Looking forward to your co-operation and wishing you continued success in your work.

Yours sincerely

Paul Stevens
Principal

Appendix VI: Correspondence for Study 2 (2004)
3rd May 2004

Dear Principal,

You may remember receiving a letter and questionnaire(s) from me a number of weeks ago in connection with a survey I am conducting on educational provision for children with Mild General Learning Disabilities.

In order to ensure that the survey is comprehensive and accurately reflects the view of Special Class teachers in National Schools, I hope to receive as many completed questionnaires as possible. Although the response has been very good, I do not appear to have received all questionnaires yet, and I wonder if you could remind the Special Class teacher(s) to complete and post it if he/she has not yet done so.

If the questionnaire or lost or mislaid, I would be delighted to send a spare copy.

With many thanks for your assistance in this matter,

Yours sincerely,

Paul Stevens
Principal
APPENDIX VII. : 1st Reminder to Principals of Special Schools

3rd May 2004

Dear Principal,

You may remember receiving a letter and questionnaires from me a number of weeks ago in connection with a survey I am conducting on educational provision for children with Mild General Learning Disabilities.

In order to ensure that the survey is comprehensive and accurately reflects the view of teachers in Special Schools, I hope to receive as many completed questionnaires as possible. Although the response has been very good, I do not appear to have received all questionnaires yet, and I wonder if you could remind the two teachers to complete and post them if they have not yet done so.

If the questionnaire(s) or lost or mislaid, I would be delighted to send a spare copy.

With many thanks for your assistance in this matter,

Yours sincerely,

Paul Stevens
Principal
APPENDIX VI

APPENDIX VI.J.: 1st Reminder to Principals of National Schools with Resource Teachers

3rd May 2004

Dear Principal,

You may remember receiving a letter and questionnaire from me a number of weeks ago in connection with a survey I am conducting on educational provision for children with Mild General Learning Disabilities.

In order to ensure that the survey is comprehensive and accurately reflects the view of Resource teachers in National Schools, I hope to receive as many completed questionnaires as possible. Although the response has been very good, I do not appear to have received all questionnaires yet, and I wonder if you could remind the Resource teacher to complete and post it if he/she has not yet done so.

If the questionnaire or lost or mislaid, I would be delighted to send a spare copy.

With many thanks for your assistance in this matter,

Yours sincerely,

Paul Stevens
Principal
Dear Principal,

You may remember receiving a letter and questionnaire from me a number of weeks ago in connection with a survey I am conducting on educational provision for children with Mild General Learning Disabilities. The excellent response to the survey indicated the high level of interest among teachers and many of them were keen to highlight the inadequacies of the current system and the anxiety surrounding proposed changes.

In order to ensure that the survey is comprehensive and accurately reflects the view of all teachers in schools, I hope to receive as many completed questionnaires as possible. There are a small number of questionnaires outstanding and I do not appear to have received a completed questionnaire from your school, so I am sending additional questionnaire(s) with an S.A.E. If you have already posted your questionnaire, please ignore this letter and accept my apologies for writing again. I appreciate that the end of year is a busy time but your assistance in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Stevens
Principal
App. VI. Final Reminder to Principals of Special Schools and National Schools with Special Class(es) and Resource Teachers

6th June 2004

Dear Teacher,

You may remember receiving a letter and questionnaire from me a number of weeks ago in connection with a survey I am conducting on educational provision for children with Mild General Learning Disabilities.

The excellent response to the survey indicated the high level of interest among teachers and many of them were keen to highlight the inadequacies of the current system and the anxiety surrounding proposed changes.

I would like to thank all schools involved and I am grateful to individual teachers who took time to complete the questionnaires. Should there be any schools or teachers who still have an uncompleted questionnaire, I would be delighted if you would complete them and return them to me as soon as possible. Again, many thanks and wishing you all a restful and enjoyable summer holiday!

Yours sincerely,

Paul Stevens
Principal
APPENDIX VI.M.: Initial Letter to Teachers in Special Schools and National Schools and National Schools with Special Class(es) (Pilot Study)

Scoil an Chroí Ró-Naofa
BAILE CHAISLEÁIN BHÉARRA, CO. CORK

SACRED HEART NATIONAL SCHOOL, CASTLETOWNBERE, CO. CORK ROLL NO.: 20004T
Telephone: 027-70788    Fax: 027-71700    Email: bearaschool@eircom.net

17th February, 2004

Re: Educational Provision for Pupils with Mild General Learning Disabilities.

Dear Colleague,

Educational provision for pupils with special needs is a subject which has increasing importance for primary schools. In 1989, I conducted a nationwide survey of special classes and special schools, and I am now carrying out a follow-up study under the Education Department at Trinity College, Dublin. The purpose of the follow-up study is to establish levels of current provision and note any improvements or changes which have occurred in the fifteen year period 1989-2004.

My interest in the subject comes from my teaching background: firstly, as a teacher in a special school for nine years, subsequently as a Resource teacher, and latterly as a principal of a primary school with pupils with disabilities integrated into mainstream classes.

I hope to acquire much of my information through a questionnaire completed by 29 special schools, 255 special classes, and a sample of 290 resource teachers in April. I have selected your school for a pilot survey in order to assist with the design of the questionnaire. Most responses simply require a 'tick' in the appropriate box. I would greatly appreciate if you could answer the questionnaire as critically as you can and write any comments or suggestions you may have in the margins. I can assure you that all information will be treated in the strictest confidence. A stamped addressed envelope has been included with each questionnaire so they can be returned by Friday 27th February 2004.

Should you have any queries in relation to the questionnaire, you may contact me on 086 - 6015110 or bearaschool@eircom.net.

Yours sincerely

Paul Stevens
Principal
20th April, 2004

Re: Educational Provision for Pupils with Mild General Learning Disabilities.

Dear Colleague,

Educational provision for pupils with special needs is a subject which has increasing importance for primary schools. In 1989, I conducted a nationwide survey of special classes and special schools, and I am now carrying out a follow-up study under the Education Department at Trinity College, Dublin. The purpose of the follow-up study is to establish levels of current provision and note any improvements or changes which have occurred in the fifteen year period 1989-2004.

My interest in the subject comes from my teaching background: firstly, as a teacher in a special school for nine years, subsequently as a Resource teacher, and latterly as a principal of a primary school with pupils with disabilities integrated into mainstream classes.

I hope to acquire much of my information through a questionnaire completed by special school, special class, and resource teachers. I realise how busy you are, but would be most grateful if you could complete the attached questionnaire. Most responses simply require a ‘tick’ in the appropriate box. I can assure you that all information will be treated in the strictest confidence. A stamped addressed envelope has been included with each questionnaire so they can be returned by Friday 30th April 2004.

Should you have any queries in relation to the questionnaire, you may contact me on 086 - 6015110 or bearaschool@eircom.net.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Stevens
Principal
APPENDIX VI.

APPENDIX VI.O.: Final Reminder to Teachers in Special Schools and National Schools with Special Class(es) and Resource Teachers

6th June 2004

Dear Principal,

You may remember receiving a letter and questionnaire from me a number of weeks ago in connection with a survey I am conducting on educational provision for children with Mild General Learning Disabilities.

The excellent response to the survey indicated the high level of interest among teachers and many of them were keen to highlight the inadequacies of the current system and the anxiety surrounding proposed changes.

I would like to thank all schools involved and I am grateful to individual teachers who took time to complete the questionnaires. Should there be any schools or teachers who still have an uncompleted questionnaire, I would be delighted if you would complete them and return them to me as soon as possible. Again, many thanks and wishing you all a restful and enjoyable summer holiday!

Yours sincerely,

Paul Stevens
Principal
Appendix VII.A: Questionnaire to Teachers in Special Schools: 2004 Survey [1st Draft] ................................................. 556

Appendix VII.B: Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools with Special Classes: 2004 Survey [1st Draft] ..................... 566

Appendix VII.C: Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools with Resource Teachers: 2004 Survey [1st Draft] ................ 576

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Appendix VII.F: Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools with Resource Teachers: 2004 Survey [Revised] ............... 606
Educational Provision in Special Schools for Primary Level Pupils with Mild General Learning Disabilities

Pilot Questionnaire for Teachers

February 2004
NOTES FOR TEACHERS
(Special Schools)

(1) In completing this pilot questionnaire, please refer to pupils with Mild General Learning Disabilities only.

(2) The questionnaire has been designed so that you simply tick 'yes' or 'no' to most answers. Please feel free to elaborate on any answers if you wish. Please point out any errors or make any suggestions to improve questionnaire.

(3) All data collected will be treated in confidence. No individual school or teacher will be identified in the findings.

(4) You have been sent two copies of this questionnaire - one in A4 format and one in A5 format - please complete your preferred choice.

(5) If you are willing to discuss further the format and content of the questionnaire, please complete the following:

Name: ______________________

Telephone: ______________________

Convenient time to call: _________

(4) Thank you for taking the time and effort to assist with this questionnaire.
APPENDIX VII.A: Questionnaire to Teachers in Special Schools: 2004 Survey [1st Draft] (Page 1)

ACCESS TO SCHOOL EQUIPMENT

(1) Does your class have use of or adequate access to the equipment listed below?

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<thead>
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<th>EQUIPMENT</th>
<th>In Class</th>
<th>Access to</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Overhead Projector</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data Projector</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tape Recorder</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>CD Player</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) Costs of schoolbooks, stationary etc are met by: ____________________________

(3) Is there an annual levy on parents? [ ] Yes [ ] No

(4) If yes, please state annual amount: €________

PERCEIVED ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES

(1) Do you have adequate materials to conduct the following activities in a satisfactory manner?

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<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
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<tr>
<td>Music</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment &amp; Resources for:</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
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<tr>
<td>Computers</td>
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<td>S.P.H.E.</td>
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<td>Cookery</td>
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<td>Other:</td>
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</table>

(2) Do you feel that access to increased resources would improve provision for MGLD pupils in your school? [ ] Yes [ ] No
### TEACHER DATA (Please tick ✓)

1. **Male** □  
   **Female** □
2. **No. of Years Teaching**
3. **Trained:**
   - **Primary** □
   - **Secondary** □
   - **Montessori** □
   - **Untrained** □
4. **Trained in:**
   - **Ireland** □
   - **Overseas** □
5. **No. of Years in Special Education:**
6. **Qualification:**
   - **N.T.** □
   - **B.Ed** □
   - **B.A.** □
   - **Dip.Sp Ed.** □
   - **Dip in Remedial Ed.** □
   - **Masters** □
   - **Other:**
   □
7. **Panel Rights:**
   - **Main Panel** □
   - **Special Panel** □
   - **No Rights** □
8. **Teaching in Special education by choice:**
   - **Yes** □
   - **No** □
9. **Would you prefer to teach mainstream:**
   - **Yes** □
   - **No** □

### SCHOOL & CLASS DATA (Please tick ✓)

1. **Type of School**
   - **Urban** □
   - **Rural** □
   - **Co-Ed** □
   - **Disadvantaged** □
2. **No of Classes in school:**
3. **No of Teachers in school:**
4. **No. in your class:**
   - **Boys** □
   - **Girls** □
   - **Boys** □
   - **Girls** □
5. **Age range in your class:**
   □ to □ years.
APPENDIX VII.A: Questionnaire to Teachers in Special Schools:
2004 Survey [1st Draft] (Page 3)

ADEQUACY OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilities</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>Very Inadequate</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom</td>
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<td>Assembly Hall</td>
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<td>Toilet Facilities</td>
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<td>Soft Play Area</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

HOME SCHOOL LINKS

(1) Does your school have the following: ☐ Telephone ☐ e-mail ☐ Information Booklet ☐ Parents' Association ☐ Meeting Room

(2) Does your school have an ‘open day’ for parents? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(3) How frequently is a progress report sent to pupils’ parents?
☐ Annually ☐ Once a term ☐ Monthly ☐ Weekly ☐ Daily

(5) Would the MGLD pupils benefit the appointment of a Home School Liaison Co-ordinator? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(4) How frequently do you meet with pupils’ parents?
☐ Annually ☐ Once a term ☐ Monthly ☐ Weekly ☐ Daily

APPENDIX VII.A: Questionnaire to Teachers in Special Schools: 2004 Survey [1st Draft] (Page 4)

SUPPORT STAFF (Please tick ✓)

(1) Please indicate if any of the following are employed in your school:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL STAFF</th>
<th>Full Time</th>
<th>Part Time</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Assistant</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Caretaker</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Secretary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning Support Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>H.S.L.C. Teacher</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Specialist Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disadvantage Coordinator</td>
<td>Access</td>
<td>No Access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCIAL STAFF Access to</td>
<td>To</td>
<td>No Access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Worker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech Therapist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychologist</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(2) Please state agency or organisation to which your psychologist is attached:

- N.E.P.S.
- Other:________

Please rate your satisfaction in relation to the Psychological Service you receive:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency with which Psychologist visits</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Overall adequacy of Psychological Service

Availability of Psychologist to undertake assessments

Availability of Psychologist to undertake other interventions

Level of information available regarding individual pupils

(4) Are there pupils in your school awaiting assessment?  □ Yes □ No

(5) Are there pupils who are unable to enrol in your school because they have not been assessed?  □ Yes □ No

(6) Are there pupils who have availed of private assessment and are now enrolled in your school?  □ Yes □ No

(7) Any additional comments:

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX VII.A: Questionnaire to Teachers in Special Schools:
2004 Survey [1st Draft] (Page 5)

PUPIL PLACEMENT (Please tick ✓)

1. Do you meet with pupils' parents prior to enrolment?
   □ Yes □ No

2. When a new pupil is enrolled, do you receive adequate background information / reports?
   □ Yes □ No

3. Does your school have a policy on integration / inclusion? □ Yes □ No

4. Is there adequate local post-primary provision for pupils in your class?
   □ Yes □ No

5. Please rate the following statements in relation to your pupils:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Most</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Few</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All pupils (MGLD) that I teach are appropriately placed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupils that I teach have other difficulties in addition to MGLD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupils that I teach have behavioural / Emotional difficulties</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pupils I teach would be better placed in a special class in a national school</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Do you think that the Resource Teacher Model in National Schools has affected your enrolment?

INSERVICE TRAINING (Please tick ✓)

1. Have you attended inservice training in the last two years? □ Yes □ No

2. If so, in what areas did you receive training?

3. Course(s) organised by: □ D.E.S. □ I.N.T.O. □ Teachers' Centre
   □ College of Education □ Other: __________________________

4. What inservice training needs do you perceive:

__________________________________________

APPENDIX VII

APPENDIX VII.A : Questionnaire to Teachers in Special Schools:
2004 Survey [1st Draft] (Page 6)

CURRICULUM  (Please tick □)

(1) The curriculum is decided by: □ Individual Teacher □ Group of Teachers
□ Principal & Teachers □ Teachers & Support Staff

(2) Have you discussed the curriculum with DES Inspector? □ Yes □ No

(3) If yes, did you find this discussion beneficial? □ Yes □ No

(4) Do you use the 'New Curriculum' (1975) when planning your work? □ Yes □ No

(5) Do you use the 'Revised Primary School Curriculum' (1999) when planning your work? □ Yes □ No

(6) Do you use the 'NCCA Draft Guidelines for Teachers of Students with MGLD' (2002) when planning your work? □ Yes □ No

(7) If yes, how would you rate the NCCA guidelines in terms of usefulness?
□ Excellent □ Good □ Adequate □ Poor □ Very Poor

(8) Do you teach Irish to your pupils? □ Yes □ No

(9) Do you use an Individual Educational Plan (IEP)? □ Yes □ No

(10) Do you have adequate time for curriculum planning? □ Yes □ No

(11) Do you have adequate time for consultation with other teachers and support staff? □ Yes □ No

TEACHER SUPPORT  (Please tick ✓)

(1) Do you feel isolated as a special needs teacher? □ Yes □ No

(2) Do you find that any of the following are supportive to you in your work as a special needs teacher?

Your local teacher centre □ Yes □ No
Irish Association of Teachers in Special Education □ Yes □ No
Irish National Teachers' Organisation □ Yes □ No
Local support group in your area □ Yes □ No
Other: ____________________________________________

(3) Do you have adequate access to publications on special education? □ Yes □ No

Appendix VII: Research Instruments (2004) 563
INTEGRATION / INCLUSION (Please tick ☑)

(1) Does your school have a written policy on integration/inclusion?
[ ] Yes [ ] No

(2) Do pupils that you teach have contact with mainstream schools?
[ ] Yes [ ] No

(3) If yes, please list activities during contact takes place:

(4) What is total time per week / per term that contact occurs? ______________________

(5) Do your pupils have organised contact with pupils in other special schools?
[ ] Yes [ ] No

(6) Have you ever taken your class on a visit to a mainstream National school?
[ ] Yes [ ] No

(7) Do mainstream National schools use any of your school’s facilities?
[ ] Yes [ ] No

(8) Do you feel your pupils would benefit from being integrated into mainstream classes?
[ ] Yes [ ] No

(9) Is there pressure from parents of your pupils to increase the level of integration?
[ ] Yes [ ] No

(10) Are you satisfied with the current level of integration/inclusion for your pupils?
[ ] Yes [ ] No

(11) If no, please comment,

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX VII.A : Questionnaire to Teachers in Special Schools: 2004 Survey [1st Draft] (Page 8)

GENERAL REMARKS (Please tick ☑)

(1) How would you rate special educational provision for pupils with Mild General Learning Disabilities?

☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Adequate ☐ Poor ☐ Very Poor

(2) In relation to special educational provision, what are the three main priorities that you would like addressed?

(a) ____________________________________________

(b) ____________________________________________

(c) ____________________________________________

(3) It is envisaged that a new ‘weighted system’ to allocate special educational staff and resources to primary schools will be introduced next September. This will allocate teachers to schools based on their enrolment numbers rather than by the school’s application to the D.E.S.? How do you rate this proposal?

☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Adequate ☐ Poor ☐ Very poor

(4) Any other comments?________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

MANY THANKS AGAIN FOR COMPLETING QUESTIONNAIRE
Educational Provision in Primary Special Classes for Pupils with Mild General Learning Disabilities

Pilot Questionnaire for Teachers

February 2004
APPENDIX VII.B: Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools with Special Classes: 2004 Survey [1st Draft] (Notes for Teachers)

NOTES FOR TEACHERS
(Special Classes)

(1) In completing this pilot questionnaire, please refer to pupils with Mild General Learning Disabilities only.

(2) The questionnaire has been designed so that you simply tick 'yes' or 'no' to most answers. Please feel free to elaborate on any answers if you wish. Please point out any errors or make any suggestions to improve questionnaire.

(3) All data collected will be treated in confidence. No individual school or teacher will be identified in the findings.

(4) You have been sent two copies of this questionnaire - one in A4 format and one in A5 format - please complete your preferred choice.

(5) If you are willing to discuss further the format and content of the questionnaire, please complete the following:

Name: _______________________

Telephone: __________________

Convenient time to call: _______

(4) Thank you for taking the time and effort to assist with this questionnaire.
APPENDIX VII.B : Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools with Special Classes: 2004 Survey [1st Draft] (Page 1)

### TEACHER DATA

(Please tick \(\checkmark\))

1. [ ] Male
   [ ] Female
2. [ ] No. of Years Teaching
3. [ ] Trained in: Ireland
   [ ] Overseas
   [ ] Trained in: Overseas
4. [ ] No. of Years in Special Education:
5. [ ] No. of Years in Special Education:
6. [ ] Permanent
   [ ] Temporary
   [ ] Dip in Remedial Ed.
   [ ] Masters [ ] Other:
8. [ ] Panel Rights: Main Panel Special Panel No Rights
9. [ ] Teaching in Special education by choice [ ] Yes [ ] No
10. [ ] Would you prefer to teach mainstream? [ ] Yes [ ] No

### SCHOOL & CLASS DATA

(Please tick \(\checkmark\))

1. Type of School
   [ ] Urban
   [ ] Boys
2. No of Classes in school: ______
3. [ ] No of Teachers in school: ______
4. [ ] No. in your class: Boys ______
   [ ] Girls ______
   [ ] Co-Ed
5. [ ] Disadvantaged
6. No. of Special Classes ______
7. No. of Resource Teachers ______
8. Age range in your class: ______ to ______ years.
APPENDIX VII.B : Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools with Special Classes: 2004 Survey [1st Draft] (Page 2)

**ACCESS TO SCHOOL EQUIPMENT** (Please tick [ ]

(1) Does your class have use of or adequate access to the equipment listed below?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQUIPMENT</th>
<th>In Class</th>
<th>Access to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slide Projector</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Overhead Projector</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data Projector</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tape Recorder</td>
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<tr>
<td>CD Player</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQUIPMENT</th>
<th>In Class</th>
<th>Access to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
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<tr>
<td>Video Recorder</td>
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<td>DVD Player</td>
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<td>Computer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Photocopier</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(2) Costs of schoolbooks, stationary etc are met by: __________

(3) Is there an annual levy on parents? [ ] Yes [ ] No

(4) If yes, please state annual amount: €________

**PERCEIVED ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES** (Please tick [ ]

(1) Do you have adequate materials to conduct the following activities in a satisfactory manner?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment &amp; Resources for:</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>V. Inadequate</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
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<td>Language</td>
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<tr>
<th>Equipment &amp; Resources for:</th>
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<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>V. Inadequate</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
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<td>S.P.H.E.</td>
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<td>Cookery</td>
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<td>Other:</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(2) Do you feel that access to increased resources would improve provision for MGLD pupils in your school? [ ] Yes [ ] No
### ADEQUACY OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

(Please tick \[\checkmark\])

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilities</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>Inadequat</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
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<td>Classroom</td>
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<td>Assembly Hall</td>
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<td>Toilet Facilities</td>
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<td>Art/Craft Room</td>
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<td>Heating</td>
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<td>Lighting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Furniture</td>
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<td>Storage</td>
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<td>Sink &amp; Water</td>
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<tr>
<td>Display Area</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### HOME SCHOOL LINKS

(Please Tick [\checkmark])

1. Does your school have the following: [ ] Telephone [ ] e-mail
   - Information Booklet [ ] Parents' Association [ ] Meeting Room

2. Does your school have an 'open day' for parents? [ ] Yes [ ] No

3. How frequently is a progress report sent to pupils' parents?
   - Annually [ ] Once a term [ ] Monthly [ ] Weekly [ ] Daily

4. Would the MGLD pupils benefit the appointment of a Home School Liaison Co-ordinator? [ ] Yes [ ] No

5. How frequently do you meet with pupils' parents?
   - Annually [ ] Once a term [ ] Monthly [ ] Weekly [ ] Daily
APPENDIX VII.B : Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools with Special Classes: 2004 Survey [1st Draft] (Page 4)

**SUPPORT STAFF (Please tick [✓])**

(1) Please indicate if any of the following are employed in your school:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL STAFF</th>
<th>Full Time</th>
<th>Part Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Assistant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Caretaker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Secretary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Support Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.S.L.C. Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disadvantage Coordinator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) Please state agency or organisation to which your psychologist is attached:

- [ ] N.E.P.S.
- [ ] Other: ____________________________

(3) Please rate your satisfaction in relation to the Psychological Service you receive:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall adequacy of Psychological Service</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>Very Inadequate</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

(4) Are there pupils in your school awaiting assessment?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

(5) Are there pupils who are unable to enrol in your school because they have not been assessed?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

(6) Are there pupils who have availed of private assessment and are now enrolled in your school?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

(7) Any additional comments:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

APPENDIX VII.B : Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools with Special Classes: 2004 Survey [1st Draft] (Page 5)

PUPIL PLACEMENT (Please tick □)

(1) Do you meet with pupils’ parents prior to enrolment? □ Yes □ No

(2) When a new pupil is enrolled, do you receive adequate background information / reports? □ Yes □ No

(3) Does your school have a policy on integration / inclusion? □ Yes □ No

(4) Is there adequate local post-primary provision for pupils in your class? □ Yes □ No

(5) Please rate the following statements in relation to your pupils:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Most</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Few</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All pupils (MGLD) that I teach are appropriately placed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>The pupils I teach would be better placed in a special school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(6) Do you think that the Resource Teacher Model in National Schools has affected your enrolment? □ Yes □ No

(7) Do pupils in your class also attend a Resource Teacher? □ Yes □ No

INSERVICE TRAINING (Please tick □)

(1) Have you attended inservice training in the last two years? □ Yes □ No

(2) If so, in what areas did you receive training? _________________________

(3) Course(s) organised by: □ D.E.S. □ I.N.T.O. □ Teachers’ Centre
□ College of Education □ Other: __________________________________________

(4) What inservice training needs do you perceive:

______________________________
APPENDIX VII.B: Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools with Special Classes: 2004 Survey [1st Draft] (Page 6)

**CURRICULUM** (Please tick □)

1. The curriculum is decided by: □ Individual Teacher □ Group of Teachers □ Principal & Teachers □ Teachers & Support Staff

2. Have you discussed the curriculum with DES Inspector? □ Yes □ No

3. If yes, did you find this discussion beneficial? □ Yes □ No

4. Do you use the ‘New Curriculum’ (1975) when planning your work? □ Yes □ No

5. Do you use the ‘Revised Primary School Curriculum’ (1999) when planning your work? □ Yes □ No

6. Do you use the ‘NCCA Draft Guidelines for Teachers of Students with MGLD’ (2002) when planning your work? □ Yes □ No

7. If yes, how would you rate the NCCA guidelines in terms of usefulness? □ Excellent □ Good □ Adequate □ Poor □ Very Poor

8. Do you teach Irish to your pupils? □ Yes □ No

9. Do you use an Individual Educational Plan (IEP)? □ Yes □ No

10. Do you have adequate time for curriculum planning? □ Yes □ No

11. Do you have adequate time for consultation with other teachers and support staff? □ Yes □ No

**TEACHER SUPPORT** (Please tick □)

1. Do you feel isolated as a special needs teacher? □ Yes □ No

2. Do you find that any of the following are supportive to you in your work as a special needs teacher?
   - Your local teacher centre □ Yes □ No
   - Irish Association of Teachers in Special Education □ Yes □ No
   - Irish National Teachers’ Organisation □ Yes □ No
   - Local support group in your area □ Yes □ No
   - Other: ____________________________________________

3. Do you have adequate access to publications on special education? □ Yes □ No
INTEGRATION / INCLUSION (Please tick ☑)

(1) Does your school have a written policy on integration / inclusion?
[ ] Yes [ ] No

(2) Do pupils in your class have contact with mainstream pupils during the day?
[ ] Yes [ ] No

(3) Please list activities during which contact takes place:

(4) What is total time per day spent with mainstream pupils?

(5) Do your pupils have organised contact with pupils in other schools?
[ ] Yes [ ] No

(6) Have you ever taken your class on a visit to a special school?
[ ] Yes [ ] No

(7) Is your classroom located separately from the rest of the school?
[ ] Yes [ ] No

(8) Do you feel your pupils could benefit from increased integration in mainstream classes?
[ ] Yes [ ] No

(9) Is there pressure from parents of your pupils to increase the level of integration/inclusion into mainstream?
[ ] Yes [ ] No

(10) Are you satisfied with the current level of integration/inclusion for your pupils?
[ ] Yes [ ] No

(11) If no, please comment,

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX VII: Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools with Special Classes: 2004 Survey [1st Draft] (Page 8)

GENERAL REMARKS (Please tick ☑)

(1) How would you rate special educational provision for pupils with Mild General Learning Disabilities?

☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Adequate ☐ Poor ☐ Very Poor

(2) In relation to special educational provision, what are the three main priorities that you would like addressed?

(a) ________________________________

(b) ________________________________

(c) ________________________________

(3) It is envisaged that a new ‘weighted system’ to allocate special educational staff and resources to primary schools will be introduced next September. This will allocate teachers to schools based on their enrolment numbers rather than by the school’s application to the D.E.S.? How do you rate this proposal?

☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Adequate ☐ Poor ☐ Very poor

(4) Any other comments?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

MANY THANKS AGAIN FOR COMPLETING QUESTIONNAIRE
Educational Provision in National Schools for Pupils with Mild General Learning Disabilities

Pilot Questionnaire
For Resource Teachers

February 2004
NOTES FOR TEACHERS
(Resource Teachers)

(1) In completing this pilot questionnaire, please refer to pupils with Mild General Learning Disabilities only.

(2) The questionnaire has been designed so that you simply tick 'yes' or 'no' to most answers. Please feel free to elaborate on any answers if you wish. Please point out any errors or make any suggestions to improve questionnaire.

(3) All data collected will be treated in confidence. No individual school or teacher will be identified in the findings.

(4) You have been sent two copies of this questionnaire - one in A4 format and one in A5 format – please complete your preferred choice.

(5) If you are willing to discuss further the format and content of the questionnaire, please complete the following:

Name: ______________________

Telephone: __________________

Convenient time to call: ______

(4) Thank you for taking the time and effort to assist with this questionnaire.
### TEACHER DATA (Please tick ✓)

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>No. of Years Teaching</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>Trained:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>Trained in:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Overseas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training College:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Untrained</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>No. of Years in Special Education:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Temporary</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>(7)</td>
<td>Qualification:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dip in Remedial Ed.</td>
<td>Masters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>Panel Rights:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Main Panel</td>
<td>Special Panel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9)</td>
<td>Are you a Resource Teacher by choice?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10)</td>
<td>Would you prefer to teach mainstream?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SCHOOL & CLASS DATA (Please tick ✓)

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>Type of School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>No of Classes in school:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Boys</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>No of Teachers in school:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>No. in your class:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>Girls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Co-Ed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5)</td>
<td>No. of Resource Teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>Age range of MGLD pupils that you teach: <em>to</em> years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ACCESS TO SCHOOL EQUIPMENT

(1) Does your class have use of or adequate access to the equipment listed below?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQUIPMENT</th>
<th>In Class</th>
<th>Access to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slide Projector</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Overhead Projector</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Data Projector</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tape Recorder</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>CD Player</td>
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<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Video Recorder</td>
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<td>DVD Player</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Photocopier</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) Costs of schoolbooks, stationary etc are met by: __________________________

(3) Is there an annual levy on parents? □ Yes □ No

(4) If yes, please state annual amount: €________

PERCEIVED ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES

(1) Do you have adequate materials to conduct the following activities in a satisfactory manner?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment &amp; Resources for:</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
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<td>Language</td>
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<td>Mathematics</td>
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<td>Visual Arts</td>
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<td>Music</td>
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<td>P.E.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computers</td>
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<tr>
<td>S.P.H.E.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cookery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other: ____________________</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(2) Do you feel that access to increased resources would improve provision for MGLD pupils in your school? □ Yes □ No
### ADEQUACY OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

(Please tick \( \checkmark \))

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilities</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom</td>
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<td>Assembly Hall</td>
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<td>Toilet Facilities</td>
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<td>Art/Craft Room</td>
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<td>Computer Room</td>
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<td>Library</td>
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<td>Office</td>
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<td>Staffroom</td>
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<td>Playing Field</td>
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<td>Hard Play Area</td>
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<td>Soft Play Area</td>
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<td>Furniture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Storage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sink &amp; Water</td>
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<tr>
<td>Display Area</td>
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</table>

### HOME SCHOOL LINKS

(Please Tick \( \checkmark \))

1. Does your school have the following: □ Telephone □ e-mail
   □ Information Booklet □ Parents' Association □ Meeting Room
2. Does your school have an 'open day' for parents? □ Yes □ No
3. How frequently is a progress report sent to pupils' parents?
   □ Annually □ Once a term □ Monthly □ Weekly □ Daily
4. Would the MGLD pupils benefit the appointment of a Home School Liaison Co-ordinator? □ Yes □ No
5. How frequently do you meet with pupils' parents?
   □ Annually □ Once a term □ Monthly □ Weekly □ Daily
APPENDIX VII.C : Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools with Resource Teachers : 2004 Survey [1st Draft] (Page 4)

SUPPORT STAFF (Please tick √)

(1) Please indicate if any of the following are employed in your school:

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<td>Disadvantage Coordinator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

(2) Please state agency or organisation to which your psychologist is attached:

- N.E.P.S.
- Other:____________________

Please rate your satisfaction in relation to the Psychological Service you receive:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall adequacy of Psychological Service</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>V. Inadequate</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Frequency with which Psychologist visits:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Availability of Psychologist to undertake assessments</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>V. Inadequate</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Availability of Psychologist to undertake other interventions</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>V. Inadequate</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Level of information available regarding individual pupils:

(4) Are there pupils in your school awaiting assessment? [ ] Yes [ ] No

(5) Are there pupils who are unable to enrol in your school because they have not been assessed? [ ] Yes [ ] No

(6) Are there pupils who have availed of private assessment and are now enrolled in your school? [ ] Yes [ ] No

(7) Any additional comments:

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

APPENDIX VII.C : Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools with Resource Teachers : 2004 Survey [1st Draft] (Page 5)

PUPIL PLACEMENT  
(Please tick ✓)

(1) Do you meet with pupils' parents prior to enrolment?  

(2) When a new pupil is enrolled, do you receive adequate background information / reports?

(3) Does your school have a policy on integration / inclusion?

(4) Is there adequate local post-primary provision for pupils in your class?

(5) Please rate the following statements in relation to your pupils:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All</th>
<th>Most</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Few</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All pupils (MGLD) that I teach are appropriately placed.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupils that I teach have other difficulties in addition to MGLD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupils that I teach have behavioural / Emotional difficulties</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pupils I teach would be better placed in a special school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pupils I teach would be better placed in a special class.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(6) Do you teach any pupils from a special class for MGLD?

(7) Do you consider that the time allocation for MGLD pupils is adequate?

INSERVICE TRAINING  
(Please tick ✓)

(1) Have you attended inservice training in the last two years?  

(2) If so, in what areas did you receive training?

(3) Course(s) organised by:  

- D.E.S.  
- I.N.T.O.  
- Teachers' Centre  
- College of Education  
- Other: ________________

(4) What inservice training needs do you perceive:

________________________________________________________________________

Appendix VII: Research Instruments (2004) 582
APPENDIX VII.C : Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools with Resource Teachers : 2004 Survey [1st Draft] (Page 6)

### CURRICULUM (Please tick [ ])

1. The curriculum is decided by:  
   - [ ] Individual Teacher  
   - [ ] Group of Teachers  
   - [ ] Principal & Teachers  
   - [ ] Teachers & Support Staff

2. Have you discussed the curriculum with DES Inspector?  
   - [ ] Yes  
   - [ ] No

3. If yes, did you find this discussion beneficial?  
   - [ ] Yes  
   - [ ] No

4. Do you use the ‘New Curriculum’ (1975) when planning your work?  
   - [ ] Yes  
   - [ ] No

5. Do you use the ‘Revised Primary School Curriculum’ (1999) when planning your work?  
   - [ ] Yes  
   - [ ] No

6. Do you use the ‘NCCA Draft Guidelines for Teachers of Students with MGLD’ (2002) when planning your work?  
   - [ ] Yes  
   - [ ] No

7. If yes, how would you rate the NCCA guidelines in terms of usefulness?  
   - [ ] Excellent  
   - [ ] Good  
   - [ ] Adequate  
   - [ ] Poor  
   - [ ] Very Poor

8. Do you teach Irish to your pupils?  
   - [ ] Yes  
   - [ ] No

9. Do you use an Individual Educational Plan (IEP)?  
   - [ ] Yes  
   - [ ] No

10. Do you have adequate time for curriculum planning?  
    - [ ] Yes  
    - [ ] No

11. Do you have adequate time for consultation with other teachers and support staff?  
    - [ ] Yes  
    - [ ] No

### TEACHER SUPPORT (Please tick [✓ ])

1. Do you feel isolated as a special needs teacher?  
   - [ ] Yes  
   - [ ] No

2. Do you find that any of the following are supportive to you in your work as a special needs teacher?  
   - Your local teacher centre  
   - [ ] Yes  
   - [ ] No
   - Irish Association of Teachers in Special Education  
   - [ ] Yes  
   - [ ] No
   - Irish National Teachers’ Organisation  
   - [ ] Yes  
   - [ ] No
   - Local support group in your area  
   - [ ] Yes  
   - [ ] No
   - Other: ________________________________

3. Do you have adequate access to publications on special education?  
   - [ ] Yes  
   - [ ] No
APPENDIX VII.C : Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools with Resource Teachers : 2004 Survey [1st Draft] (Page 7)

INTEGRATION / INCLUSION (Please tick ☑)

(1) Does your school have a written policy on integration/inclusion? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(2) Do pupils that you take have contact with mainstream pupils for most of the day? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(3) Please list activities which are undertaken by pupils with Resource Teacher:

(4) What is total time per day per pupil spent with Resource Teacher?

(5) Do your pupils have organised contact with pupils in other schools? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(6) Have you ever taken your class on a visit to a special school? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(7) Is your classroom/resource room located separately from the rest of the school? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(8) Do you feel your pupils benefit from being integrated into mainstream classes? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(9) Is there pressure from parents of your pupils to increase the level of resource hours? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(10) Are you satisfied with the current level of integration/inclusion for your pupils? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(11) If no, please comment,

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________

APPENDIX VII.C: Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools with Resource Teachers: 2004 Survey [1st Draft] (Page 8)

GENERAL REMARKS (Please tick ☑)

(1) How would you rate special educational provision for pupils with Mild General Learning Disabilities?

☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Adequate ☐ Poor ☐ Very Poor

(2) In relation to special educational provision, what are the three main priorities that you would like addressed?

(a) 

(b) 

(c) 

(3) It is envisaged that a new 'weighted system' to allocate special educational staff and resources to primary schools will be introduced next September. This will allocate teachers to schools based on their enrolment numbers rather than by the school's application to the D.E.S.? How do you rate this proposal?

☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Adequate ☐ Poor ☐ Very poor

(4) Any other comments?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

MANY THANKS AGAIN FOR COMPLETING QUESTIONNAIRE
Educational Provision in Special Schools for Primary Level Pupils with Mild General Learning Disabilities

Questionnaire for Teachers

April 2004
NOTES FOR TEACHERS
(Special School Teachers)

(1) In completing the questionnaire, please refer to pupils with Mild General Learning Disabilities only.

(2) The questionnaire has been designed so that you simply tick 'yes' or 'no' to most answers. Please feel to elaborate on any answers if you wish.

(3) All data collected will be treated in confidence. No individual school or teacher will be identified in the findings.

(4) Thank you for taking the time and effort to complete this questionnaire.
APPENDIX VII.D: Questionnaire to Teachers in Special Schools: 2004 Survey [Revised] (Page 1)

A TEACHER DATA (Please tick ☑)

(1) ☐ Male ☐ Female

(2) No. of Years Teaching:

(3) Trained:

☐ Primary

Secondary

Montessori

(4) Trained: ☐ In Ireland ☐ Overseas

Training College: ☐ Untrained

(5) No. of Years in Special Education:

(6) ☐ Permanent ☐ Temporary

(7) Qualification:


☐ Dip in Remedial Ed. ☐ Masters ☐ Other:

(8) Panel Rights: ☐ Main Panel ☐ Special Panel ☐ No Rights

(9) Teaching in special education by choice? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(10) Would you prefer to teach mainstream? ☐ Yes ☐ No

B SCHOOL & CLASS DATA (Please tick ☑)

(1) Type of School

☐ Urban ☐ Boy's

☐ Rural ☐ Girls

☐ Co-Ed

Designated Disadvantaged

(2) No of Classes in school: ______

(3) No of Teachers in school: ______

(4) No. in your class? Boys ______ Girls ______

(7) Age range of MGLD pupils that you teach: ______ to ______ years.
### C ACCESS TO SCHOOL EQUIPMENT

(1) Does your class have use of or adequate access to the equipment listed below?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQUIPMENT</th>
<th>In Class</th>
<th>Access to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slide Projector</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overhead Projector</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Projector</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tape Recorder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD Player</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQUIPMENT</th>
<th>In Class</th>
<th>Access to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Recorder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVD Player</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photocopier</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) Costs of schoolbooks, stationary etc are met by: ____________________________

(3) Is there an annual levy on parents? □ Yes □ No

(4) If yes, please state annual amount: €________

### D PERCEIVED ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES

(1) Do you have adequate materials to conduct the following activities in a satisfactory manner?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment &amp; Resources for:</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>V. Inadequate</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment &amp; Resources for:</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>V. Inadequate</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P.E.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computers</td>
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<tr>
<td>S.P.H.E.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cookery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(2) Do you feel that access to increased resources would improve provision for MGLD pupils in your school? □ Yes □ No
APPENDIX VII.D : Questionnaire to Teachers in Special Schools: 2004
Survey [Revised] (Page 3)

E  ADEQUACY OF SCHOOL FACILITIES  (Please tick ☑)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilities</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Assembly Hall</td>
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<tr>
<td>Toilet Facilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Art/Craft Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staffroom</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Playing Field</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hard Play Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soft Play Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heating</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Space</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ventilation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Power Points</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Internet Access</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Light</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storage</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sink &amp; Water</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Display Area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F  HOME SCHOOL LINKS  (Please Tick ☑)

(1) Does your school have the following: ☐ e-mail
    ☐ Information Booklet ☐ Parents' Association ☐ Meeting Room

(2) Does your school have an ‘open day’ for parents? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(3) How frequently is a progress report sent to pupils’ parents?
    ☐ Annually ☐ Once a term ☐ Monthly ☐ Weekly ☐ Daily

(5) Would the MGLD pupils benefit the appointment of A Home School Liaison Co-ordinator? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(4) How frequently do you meet with pupils’ parents?
    ☐ Annually ☐ Once a term ☐ Monthly ☐ Weekly ☐ Daily

G SUPPORT STAFF (Please tick ☑)

(1) Please indicate if any of the following are employed in your school: (Please indicate no. if more than one)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL STAFF</th>
<th>Full Time</th>
<th>Part Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Assistant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Caretaker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Secretary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Support Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.S.L.C. Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disadvantage Coordinator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUPPORT STAFF</th>
<th>Access to</th>
<th>No Access</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Worker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech Therapist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychologist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) Please state agency or organisation to which your psychologist is attached:

☐ N.E.P.S. ☐ Other:

(3) Please rate:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Provided</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Over-all adequacy of Psychological Service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency with which Psychologist visits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of Psychologist to undertake assessments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of Psychologist to undertake other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interventions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of information available regarding individual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pupils</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(4) Are there pupils in your school awaiting assessment? Yes ☐ No ☐

(5) Are there pupils who are unable to enrol in your school because they have not been assessed? Yes ☐ No ☐

(6) Are there pupils who have availed of private assessment and are now enrolled in your school? Yes ☐ No ☐

(7) Any additional comments:

___________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________

APPENDIX VII.D : Questionnaire to Teachers in Special Schools: 2004 Survey [Revised] (Page 5)

H PUPIL PLACEMENT (Please tick ☑)

(1) Do you meet with pupils' parents prior to enrolment? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(2) When a new pupil is enrolled, do you receive adequate background information / reports? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(3) Is there adequate local post-primary provision for pupils in your class? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(4) Please rate the following statements in relation to your pupils:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All</th>
<th>Most</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Few</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All pupils (MGLD) that I teach are appropriately placed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupils that I teach have other difficulties in addition to MGLD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupils that I teach have behavioural / Emotional difficulties</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pupils I teach would be better placed in a special class in a national school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pupils I teach would be better placed in a mainstream class in a National school with a Resource Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(5) Do you think that the Resource Teacher model in national schools has affected your enrolment? ☐ Yes ☐ No

I INSERVICE TRAINING (Please tick ☑)

(1) Have you attended inservice training in the last two years? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(2) If so, in what areas did you receive training? ________________________________

(3) Course(s) organised by: ☐ D.E.S. ☐ I.N.T.O. ☐ Teachers' Centre
☐ College of Education ☐ University ☐ Other: ________________________________

(4) What inservice training needs should be addressed: ________________________________
APPENDIX VII: Questionnaire to Teachers in Special Schools: 2004 Survey [Revised] (Page 6)

J CURRICULUM (Please tick [ ])

(1) The curriculum is decided by:  [ ] Individual Teacher  [ ] Group of Teachers
    [ ] Principal & Teachers  [ ] Teachers & Support Staff  [ ] Other

(2) Have you discussed the curriculum with DES Inspector?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

(3) If yes, did you find this discussion beneficial?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

(4) Do you use the ‘New Curriculum’ [1971] when planning your work?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

(5) Do you use the ‘Revised Primary School Curriculum’[1999] when planning your work?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

(6) Do you use the ‘NCCA Draft Guidelines for Teachers of Students with MGLD’ [2002] when planning your work?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

(7) If yes, how would you rate the NCCA guidelines in terms of usefulness?
    [ ] Excellent  [ ] Good  [ ] Adequate  [ ] Poor  [ ] Very Poor

(8) Do you teach Irish to your MGLD pupils?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

(9) Do you use an Individual Educational Plan (IEP)?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

(10) Do you have adequate time for curriculum planning?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

(11) Do you have adequate time for consultation with class teachers and support staff?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

K TEACHER SUPPORT (Please tick [ ])

(1) Do you feel isolated as a special needs teacher?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

(2) Do you find that any of the following are supportive to you in your work as a special needs teacher?

    Your local teacher centre  [ ] Yes  [ ] No
    Irish Association of Teachers in Special Education  [ ] Yes  [ ] No
    Irish National Teachers’ Organisation  [ ] Yes  [ ] No
    Local support group in your area  [ ] Yes  [ ] No

    Other: __________________________

(3) Do have adequate access to publications on special education?  [ ] Yes  [ ] No
APPENDIX VII.D : Questionnaire to Teachers in Special Schools: 2004
Survey [Revised] (Page 7)

**INTEGRATION / INCLUSION (Please tick ✓) **

(1) Does your school have a written policy on integration/inclusion?
   □ Yes □ No

(2) Do pupils that you teach have contact with mainstream schools?
   □ Yes □ No

(3) If yes, please list activities during contact takes place:

   (4) What is total time per week / per term that contact occurs?

   (5) Do your pupils have organised contact with pupils in other special schools?
   □ Yes □ No

   (6) Have you ever taken your class on a visit to a mainstream National school?
   □ Yes □ No

   (7) Do mainstream National schools use any of your school's facilities?
   □ Yes □ No

   (8) Do you feel your pupils would benefit from being integrated into mainstream classes?
   □ Yes □ No

   (9) Is there pressure from parents of your pupils to increase the level of integration?
   □ Yes □ No

   (10) Are you satisfied with the current level of integration/inclusion for your pupils?
   □ Yes □ No

(11) If no, please comment,

   ___________________________________________________________

   ___________________________________________________________

   ___________________________________________________________

   594
**M GENERAL REMARKS** (Please tick ☑)

(1) How would you rate the current model of special educational provision for pupils with Mild General Learning Disabilities?

☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Adequate ☐ Poor ☐ Very Poor

(2) In relation to special educational provision in Ireland, what are the three main priorities that you would like addressed?

(a) 

(b) 

(c) 

(3) It is proposed that a new “weighted” system will be introduced this September. This will allocate resources and staff to MGLD pupils based on school size. How do you rate this proposal?

☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Adequate ☐ Poor ☐ No opinion

(4) Do you think that MGLD pupils should continue to have psychological assessment?

☐ Yes ☐ No

(5) Any other comments?

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

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Educational Provision in Primary Special Classes for Pupils with Mild General Learning Disabilities

Questionnaire for Teachers

April 2004
NOTES FOR TEACHERS
(Special Class Teachers)

(1) In completing the questionnaire, please refer to pupils with Mild General Learning Disabilities only.

(2) The questionnaire has been designed so that you simply tick 'yes' or 'no' to most answers. Please feel to elaborate on any answers if you wish.

(3) All data collected will be treated in confidence. No individual school or teacher will be identified in the findings.

(4) Thank you for taking the time and effort to complete this questionnaire.
APPENDIX VII.E: Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools With Special Classes: 2004 Survey [Revised] (Page 1)

A TEACHER DATA (Please tick ☑)

(1) ☐ Male (2) No. of Years Teaching ☐ Male
☐ Female ☐ No. of Years Training College: 

(4) Trained: ☐ In Ireland ☐ Overseas 
☐ Female ☐ Primary ☐ Montessori

(5) No. of Years in Special Education:

☐ Untrained ✑ Untrained

☐ Dip in Remedial Ed. ☐ Masters ☐ Other: ______

(8) Panel Rights: ☐ Main Panel ☐ Special Panel ☐ No Rights

(9) Teaching in special education by choice? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(10) Would you prefer to teach mainstream? ☐ Yes ☐ No

B SCHOOL & CLASS DATA (Please tick ☑)

(1) Type of School ☐ Urban ☐ Boys ☐ Urban ☐ Boys
☐ Rural ☐ Girls ☐ Co-Ed

(4) No. in your caseload? ☐ Boys ☐ Girls 

☐ Designated Disadvantaged ☐ No. of Special Classes ______

(5) No. of Resource Teachers ______

(7) Age range in your class: _____ to _____ years.
APPENDIX VII.E: Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools
With Special Classes: 2004 Survey [Revised] (Page 2)

C ACCESS TO SCHOOL EQUIPMENT (Please tick ✔)

(1) Does your class have use of or adequate access to the equipment listed below?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQUIPMENT</th>
<th>In Class</th>
<th>Access to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slide Projector</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Overhead Projector</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Data Projector</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tape Recorder</td>
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<tr>
<td>CD Player</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQUIPMENT</th>
<th>In Class</th>
<th>Access to</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Recorder</td>
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<tr>
<td>DVD Player</td>
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<td>Computer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Photocopier</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) Costs of schoolbooks, stationary etc are met by:____________________

(3) Is there an annual levy on parents?   ✔ Yes  ❌ No

(4) If yes, please state annual amount: €________

D PERCEIVED ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES (Please tick ✔)

(1) Do you have adequate materials to conduct the following activities in a satisfactory manner?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment &amp; Resources for:</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>V. Inadequate</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
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<td>Language</td>
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<td>Mathematics</td>
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<td>Visual Arts</td>
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<td>Music</td>
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<table>
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<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>V. Inadequate</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
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<td>Computers</td>
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<td>S.P.H.E.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cookery</td>
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<td>Other:</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(2) Do you feel that access to increased resources would improve provision for MGLD pupils in your school?   ✔ Yes   ❌ No

### E  ADEQUACY OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilities</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom</td>
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<td>Assembly Hall</td>
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<td>Toilet Facilities</td>
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<td>Art/Craft Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>Computer Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staffroom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Playing Field</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hard Play Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soft Play Area</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### F  HOME SCHOOL LINKS

1. Does your school have the following:  
   - ☐ e-mail
   - ☐ Information Booklet  
   - ☐ Parents’ Association  
   - ☐ Meeting Room

2. Does your school have an ‘open day’ for parents?  
   - ☐ Yes  
   - ☐ No

3. How frequently is a progress report sent to pupils’ parents?  
   - ☐ Annually  
   - ☐ Once a term  
   - ☐ Monthly  
   - ☐ Weekly  
   - ☐ Daily

4. Would the MGLD pupils benefit the appointment of A Home School Liaison Co-ordinator?  
   - ☐ Yes  
   - ☐ No

5. How frequently do you meet with pupils’ parents?  
   - ☐ Annually  
   - ☐ Once a term  
   - ☐ Monthly  
   - ☐ Weekly  
   - ☐ Daily
APPENDIX VII.E: Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools
With Special Classes: 2004 Survey [Revised] (Page 4)

G  SUPPORT STAFF (Please tick ☑)

(1) Please indicate if any of the following are employed in your school: (Please indicate no. if more than one)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL STAFF</th>
<th>Full Time</th>
<th>Part Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Assistant</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Caretaker</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Secretary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning Support Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>H.S.L.C. Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Specialist Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disadvantage Coordinator</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) Please state agency or organisation to which your psychologist is attached:

- □ N.E.P.S.
- □ Other:

(3) Please rate:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please rate your satisfaction in relation to the Psychological Service you receive</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>Very Inadequate</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall adequacy of Psychological Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frequency with which Psychologist visits</td>
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<tr>
<td>Availability of Psychologist to undertake assessments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Availability of Psychologist to undertake other interventions</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Level of information available regarding individual pupils</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

(4) Are there pupils in your school awaiting assessment?  □ Yes  □ No

(5) Are there pupils who are unable to enrol in your class because they have not been assessed?  □ Yes  □ No

(6) Are there pupils who have availed of private assessment and are now in enrolled in your class?  □ Yes  □ No

(7) Are there pupils who have been assessed and are awaiting DES sanction to enrol in special class?  □ Yes  □ No

(8) Any additional comments:

__________________________________________
__________________________________________

APPENDIX VII.E : Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools With Special Classes: 2004 Survey [Revised] (Page 5)

H PUPIL PLACEMENT (Please tick ☑)

1. Do you meet with pupils’ parents prior to enrolment? ☐ Yes ☐ No
2. When a new pupil is enrolled, do you receive adequate background information/reports? ☐ Yes ☐ No
3. Is there adequate local post-primary provision for pupils in your class? ☐ Yes ☐ No
4. Please rate the following statements in relation to your pupils:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>Most</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Few</th>
<th>None</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All pupils (MGLD) that I teach are appropriately placed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pupils that I teach have other difficulties in addition to MGLD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pupils that I teach have behavioural/Emotional difficulties</td>
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<tr>
<td>The pupils I teach would be better placed in a special school.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The pupils I teach would be better placed in mainstream class receiving Resource hours.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

5. Do you think that the Resource Teacher model in national schools has affected your enrolment? ☐ Yes ☐ No
6. Do pupils in your class also attend the Resource Teacher? ☐ Yes ☐ No

I INSERVICE TRAINING (Please tick ☑)

1. Have you attended inservice training in the last two years? ☐ Yes ☐ No
2. If so, in what areas did you receive training? ___________________________
3. Course(s) organised by: ☐ D.E.S. ☐ I.N.T.O. ☐ Teachers’ Centre
   ☐ College of Education ☐ University ☐ Other: ___________________________
4. What inservice training needs should be addressed: ________________________
APPENDIX VII.E : Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools With Special Classes: 2004 Survey [Revised] (Page 6)

### J CURRICULUM (Please tick ☐)

1. The curriculum is decided by:  
   - ☐ Individual Teacher  ☐ Group of Teachers  
   - ☐ Principal & Teachers  ☐ Teachers & Support Staff

2. Have you discussed the curriculum with DES Inspector?  
   - ☐ Yes  ☐ No

3. If yes, did you find this discussion beneficial?  
   - ☐ Yes  ☐ No

4. Do you use the 'New Curriculum' (1971) when planning your work?  
   - ☐ Yes  ☐ No

5. Do you use the 'Revised Primary School Curriculum' (1999) when planning your work?  
   - ☐ Yes  ☐ No

6. Do you use the 'NCCA Draft Guidelines for Teachers of Students with MILD' (2002) when planning your work?  
   - ☐ Yes  ☐ No

7. If yes, how would you rate the NCCA guidelines in terms of usefulness?  
   - ☐ Excellent  ☐ Good  ☐ Adequate  ☐ Poor  ☐ Very Poor

8. Do you teach Irish to your pupils?  
   - ☐ Yes  ☐ No

9. Do you use an Individual Educational Plan (IEP)?  
   - ☐ Yes  ☐ No

10. Do you have adequate time for curriculum planning?  
    - ☐ Yes  ☐ No

11. Do you have adequate time for consultation with class teachers and support staff?  
    - ☐ Yes  ☐ No

### K TEACHER SUPPORT (Please tick ☐)

1. Do you feel isolated as a special needs teacher?  
   - ☐ Yes  ☐ No

2. Do you find that any of the following are supportive to you in your work as a special needs teacher?  
   - ☐ Yes  ☐ No
   - Your local teacher centre
   - Irish Association of Teachers in Special Education
   - Irish National Teachers' Organisation
   - Local support group in your area
   - Other: ________________________________

3. Do you have adequate access to publications on special education?  
   - ☐ Yes  ☐ No
APPENDIX VII: Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools
With Special Classes: 2004 Survey [Revised] (Page 7)

INTEGRATION / INCLUSION (Please tick ☑)

(1) Does your school have a written policy on integration / inclusion? □ Yes □ No

(2) Do pupils in your class have contact with mainstream pupils during the day? □ Yes □ No

(3) Please list activities during which contact takes place:

(4) What is total time per day spent with mainstream pupils? _________

(5) Do your pupils have organised contact with pupils in other schools? □ Yes □ No

(6) Have you ever taken your class on a visit to a special school? □ Yes □ No

(7) Is your classroom located separately from the rest of the school? □ Yes □ No

(8) Do you feel your pupils could benefit from increased integration in mainstream classes? □ Yes □ No

(9) Is there pressure from parents of your pupils to increase the level of integration/inclusion into mainstream? □ Yes □ No

(10) Are you satisfied with the current level of integration/inclusion for your pupils? □ Yes □ No

(11) If not, please comment,

--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
**GENERAL REMARKS** (Please tick [ ])

(1) How would you rate the current model of special educational provision for pupils with Mild General Learning Disabilities?

- Excellent
- Good
- Adequate
- Poor
- Very Poor

(2) In relation to special educational provision in Ireland, what are the three main priorities that you would like addressed?

(a) 

(b) 

(c) 

(3) It is proposed that a new “weighted” system will be introduced this September. This will allocate resources and staff to MGLD pupils based on school size. How do you rate this proposal?

- Excellent
- Good
- Adequate
- Poor
- No opinion

(4) Do you think that MGLD pupils should continue to have psychological assessment?

- Yes
- No

(5) Any other comments?

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

MANY THANKS AGAIN FOR COMPLETING QUESTIONNAIRE
Educational Provision in National Schools for Pupils with Mild General Learning Disabilities

Questionnaire for Resource Teachers

April 2004
NOTES FOR TEACHERS
(Resource Teachers)

(1) In completing the questionnaire, please refer to pupils with Mild General Learning Disabilities only.

(2) The questionnaire has been designed so that you simply tick 'yes' or 'no' to most answers. Please feel to elaborate on any answers if you wish.

(3) All data collected will be treated in confidence. No individual school or teacher will be identified in the findings.

(4) Thank you for taking the time and effort to complete this questionnaire.
APPENDIX VII.F: Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools with Resource Teachers: 2004 Survey [Revised] (Page 1)

A \textbf{TEACHER DATA} (Please tick □)

(1) □ Male □ Female
(2) No. of Years Teaching
(3) Trained:
□ Primary □ Secondary □ Montessori
(4) Trained: □ In Ireland □ Overseas
(5) No. of Years in Special Education:
□ Permanent □ Temporary
(6) □ Untrained
□ Dip in Remedial Ed. □ Masters □ Other:
(8) Panel Rights: □ Main Panel □ Special Panel □ No Rights
(9) Are you a Resource Teacher by choice? □ Yes □ No
(10) Would you prefer to teach mainstream? □ Yes □ No

B \textbf{SCHOOL & CLASS DATA} (Please tick □)

(1) Type of School
□ Urban □ Boys □ Rural □ Girls □ Co-Ed
□ Designated Disadvantaged
(2) No of Classes in school:
(3) No of Teachers in school:
(4) No. in your caseload?: Boys Girls
(5) No. of Special Classes
(6) No. of Resource Teachers
(7) Age range of MGLD pupils that you teach: ____ to ____ years.
(8) With how many other schools is Resource post shared?______

APPENDIX VII.F: Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools with Resource Teachers: 2004 Survey [Revised] (Page 2)

C ACCESS TO SCHOOL EQUIPMENT (Please tick ☑)

(1) Does your class have use of or adequate access to the equipment listed below?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQUIPMENT</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
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<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>

(2) Costs of schoolbooks, stationary etc are met by: _______________________

(3) Is there an annual levy on parents? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(4) If yes, please state annual amount: €________

D PERCEIVED ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES

(Please tick ☑)

(1) Do you have adequate materials to conduct the following activities in a satisfactory manner?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equipment &amp; Resources for:</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
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<table>
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<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>Very Inadequate</th>
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<td>Computers</td>
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<td>S.P.H.E.</td>
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<td>Cookery</td>
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<td>Other:</td>
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</table>

(2) Do you feel that access to increased resources would improve provision for MGLD pupils in your school? ☐ Yes ☐ No
### E Adequacy of School Facilities

(Please tick [ ])

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilities</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>Very Inadequate</th>
<th>Not Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom</td>
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<td>Assembly Hall</td>
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<td>Toilet Facilities</td>
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<td>Art/Craft Room</td>
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<td>Computer Room</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library</td>
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<td>Office</td>
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<td>Staffroom</td>
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<tr>
<td>Playing Field</td>
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<td>Hard Play Area</td>
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<td>Heating</td>
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<td>Space</td>
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<td>Ventilation</td>
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<td>Power Points</td>
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<td>Furniture</td>
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<td>Storage</td>
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<td>Sink &amp; Water</td>
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<td>Display Area</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### F Home School Links

(Please Tick [ ])

1. Does your school have the following:   □ e-mail
   □ Information Booklet □ Parents' Association □ Meeting Room

2. Does your school have an 'open day' for parents?   □ Yes □ No

3. How frequently is a progress report sent to pupils' parents?
   □ Annually □ Once a term □ Monthly □ Weekly □ Daily

4. Would the MGLD pupils benefit from the appointment of a Home School Liaison Co-ordinator?   □ Yes □ No

5. How frequently do you meet with pupils' parents?
   □ Annually □ Once a term □ Monthly □ Weekly □ Daily
APPENDIX VII.F: Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools with Resource Teachers: 2004 Survey [Revised] (Page 4)

G SUPPORT STAFF (Please tick ☑)

(1) Please indicate if any of the following are employed in your school: (Please indicate no. if more than one)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL STAFF</th>
<th>Full Time</th>
<th>Part Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Assistant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>School Caretaker</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Secretary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learning Support Teacher</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>H.S.L.C. Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Specialist Teacher</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Disadvantage Coordinator</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2) Please state agency or organisation to which your psychologist is attached:

☐ N.E.P.S. ☐ Other:

(3) Please rate:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall adequacy of Psychological Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency with which Psychologist visits</th>
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</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Availability of Psychologist to undertake assessments</th>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Availability of Psychologist to undertake other interventions</th>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Level of information available regarding individual pupils</th>
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</table>

SUPPORT STAFF

<table>
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<tr>
<th>SUPPORT STAFF</th>
<th>Access to</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Worker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Speech Therapist</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychologist</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Other:</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(4) Are there pupils in your school awaiting assessment? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(5) Are there pupils who are unable to avail of resource hours because they have not been assessed? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(6) Are there pupils who have availed of private assessment and are now in receipt of resource hours? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(7) Are there pupils who have been assessed and are awaiting DES sanction to attend Resource teacher? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(8) Any additional comments:

__________________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX VII.F: Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools with Resource Teachers: 2004 Survey [Revised] (Page 5)

**APPENDIX VII.H: PUPIL PLACEMENT** (Please tick ☑)

1. Do you meet with pupils' parents prior to enrolment? ☐ Yes ☐ No
2. When a new pupil is enrolled, do you receive adequate background information / reports? ☐ Yes ☐ No
3. Is there adequate local post-primary provision for pupils in your class? ☐ Yes ☐ No
4. Please rate the following statements in relation to your pupils:
   - All pupils (MGLD) that I teach are appropriately placed
   - Pupils that I teach have other difficulties in addition to MGLD
   - Pupils that I teach have behavioural / Emotional difficulties
   - The pupils I teach would be better placed in a special school.
   - The pupils I teach would be better placed in a special class.

5. Do you teach any pupils from a special class for MGLD? ☐ Yes ☐ No
6. Do you consider that the time allocation for MGLD pupils is adequate? ☐ Yes ☐ No
7. Do you work in mainstream classes with pupils? ☐ Yes ☐ No

**APPENDIX VII.I: INSERVICE TRAINING** (Please tick ☑)

1. Have you attended inservice training in the last two years? ☐ Yes ☐ No
2. If so, in what areas did you receive training?

3. Course(s) organised by:
   - ☐ D.E.S. ☐ I.N.T.O. ☐ Teachers' Centre
   - ☐ College of Education ☐ University ☐ Other:

4. What inservice training needs should be addressed:
APPENDIX VII

APPENDIX VII.F : Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools with Resource Teachers: 2004 Survey [Revised] (Page 6)

J CURRICULUM  (Please tick ☒)

(1) The curriculum is decided by: ☐ Individual Teacher ☐ Group of Teachers ☐ Principal & Teachers ☐ Teachers & Support Staff ☐ Other
(2) Have you discussed the curriculum with DES Inspector? ☐ Yes ☐ No
(3) If yes, did you find this discussion beneficial? ☐ Yes ☐ No
(4) Do you use the 'New Curriculum' (1971) when planning your work? ☐ Yes ☐ No
(5) Do you use the 'Revised Primary School Curriculum' (1999) when planning your work? ☐ Yes ☐ No
(6) Do you use the 'NCCA Draft Guidelines for Teachers of Students with MGLD' (2002) when planning your work? ☐ Yes ☐ No
(7) If yes, how would you rate the NCCA guidelines in terms of usefulness?
☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Adequate ☐ Poor ☐ Very Poor
(8) Do you teach Irish to your MGLD pupils? ☐ Yes ☐ No
(9) Do you use an Individual Educational Plan (IEP)? ☐ Yes ☐ No
(10) Do you have adequate time for curriculum planning? ☐ Yes ☐ No
(11) Do you have adequate time for consultation with class teachers and support staff? ☐ Yes ☐ No
(12) Is the resource programme curriculum an integrated part of the school curriculum? ☐ Yes ☐ No

K TEACHER SUPPORT  (Please tick ☒)

(1) Do you feel isolated as a special needs teacher? ☐ Yes ☐ No
(2) Do you find that any of the following are supportive to you in your work as a special needs teacher?

Your local teacher centre ☐ Yes ☐ No
Irish Association of Teachers in Special Education ☐ Yes ☐ No
Irish National Teachers' Organisation ☐ Yes ☐ No
Local support group in your area ☐ Yes ☐ No
Other: ________________________________

(3) Do you have adequate access to publications on special education? ☐ Yes ☐ No
APPENDIX VII.F: Questionnaire to Teachers in National Schools with Resource Teachers: 2004 Survey [Revised] (Page 7)

INTEGRATION / INCLUSION (Please tick ☐)

1. Does your school have a written policy on integration/inclusion? ☐ Yes ☐ No

2. Do pupils that you take have contact with mainstream pupils for most of the day? ☐ Yes ☐ No

3. Please list activities which are undertaken by pupils with Resource Teacher:

4. What is the total time per day per pupil spent with Resource Teacher? ____________________

5. Do your pupils have organised contact with pupils in other schools? ☐ Yes ☐ No

6. Have you ever taken your pupils on a visit to a special school? ☐ Yes ☐ No

7. Is your classroom/resource room located separately from the rest of the school? ☐ Yes ☐ No

8. Do you feel your pupils benefit from being integrated into mainstream classes? ☐ Yes ☐ No

9. Is there pressure from parents of your pupils to increase resource hours? ☐ Yes ☐ No

10. Are you satisfied with the current level of integration/inclusion for your pupils? ☐ Yes ☐ No

11. If no, please comment, __________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

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________________________________________

M  GENERAL REMARKS (Please tick ☑ )

(1) How would you rate the current model of special educational provision for pupils with Mild General Learning Disabilities?

☐ Excellent  ☐ Good  ☐ Adequate  ☐ Poor  ☐ Very Poor

(2) In relation to special educational provision in Ireland, what are the three main priorities that you would like addressed?

(a) __________________________________________________________

(b) __________________________________________________________

(c) __________________________________________________________

(3) It is proposed that a new “weighted” system will be introduced this September. This will allocate resources and staff to MGLD pupils based on school size. How do you rate this proposal?

☐ Excellent  ☐ Good  ☐ Adequate  ☐ Poor  ☐ No opinion

(4) Do you think that MGLD pupils should continue to have psychological assessment?  ☐ Yes  ☐ No

(5) Any other comments? _______________________________________

___________________________________________________________

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MANY THANKS AGAIN FOR COMPLETING QUESTIONNAIRE
APPENDIX VIII

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS (1989)

Appendix VIII.A: Summary of Findings (1989) sent to Schools and Classes participating in both 1989 and 2004 Studies............................................................................. 617
Appendix VIII.A. : Summary of Findings (1989) sent to Schools and Classes participating in both 1989 and 2004 Studies. (Cover)

1989 Survey of Educational Provision in Special Schools & Special Classes

Some Preliminary Findings

Paul J. Stevens

1989 Survey of Special Schools & Special Classes
Some Preliminary Findings

Paul J. Stevens

Introduction
In recent years there has been increasing interest in the concept of 'integration' for special needs children and its application to the existing Irish educational system. There have been some innovative schemes: The Bandon Area Special Classes (B.A.S.C.), the Dublin Integration Project and the state supported 'Helios' E.C. Project on Integration. However, these schemes are not at all representative of the general trend in Ireland where integrated education is provided through a special class in the local National School. Since the early 1970's the special class has been described as an effective educational model giving opportunities for children to integrate.

However, the special class has been sharply criticised and it is argued that the establishment of this type of provision was based on financial considerations rather than sound educational philosophy. Moreover, despite being in operation for nearly twenty years, no effort has been made to scientifically evaluate or examine the effectiveness of the special class as a model of special educational provision.

A number of minor studies have highlighted the inadequate funding, resources, and support services available to the special class. However, these studies are confined to limited samples or specific geographical areas.

This Survey
It was decided to examine the current model of special education on two levels:

a) to document current levels of educational provision in special schools and special classes.

b) to gather data on levels of reading, mathematics and self-concept in special schools and classes.

This paper is concerned with some results derived from part (a) above.

In 1989, a postal questionnaire was devised, piloted and then sent to special classes and special schools catering for those children classified as having general learning difficulties. Two questionnaires were sent to each of the thirty one special schools and 157 questionnaires to the 157 special classes listed by the Department of Education. The subsequent response indicated that twenty one of these classes had been terminated. 82.4% of special classes and 75.8% of special schools responded giving an average rate of 79.1%. This was considered sufficiently high to make valid statistical analysis of the results.
Appendix VIII.A. Summary of Findings (1989) sent to Schools and Classes participating in both 1989 and 2004 Studies. (Page 2)

Information received was divided into eleven categories: profile of special classes and schools, facilities, resources, teaching body, inservice and preservice training, ancillary school staff, support services, referral and assessment, curriculum, levels of integration and home/school liaison. It is hoped that this data will provide a comprehensive review of special educational provision in Ireland.

Only a small proportion of the emerging data may be presented in a limited paper of this length. Three areas have been selected for discussion:

(a) Profile of special classes and classes in special schools.
(b) Levels of integration.
(c) Support services.

(a) Profile of special classes and classes in special schools

(i) Number of special classes in schools

The 1965 Commission of Inquiry on Mental Handicap\(^{15}\) is the most recent review of special education in Ireland. The report strongly recommended that where special classes were to be established, a National school should have two special classes to cater for younger and older pupils separately. However, as Figure 1 illustrates 68% of schools had only one special class with only 32% of National Schools having two or more special classes.

![Figure 1: Number of Special Classes in School](image)

This situation must surely complicate provision and result in an unacceptable age range within special classes. Children staying in the same special class for a number of years may well be assigned to the same teacher for that period. For the child there may be little feeling of progression, while the teacher may well experience isolation within the school staff.

(ii) Age range

Undoubtedly the question of large age range within the special class must have implications for the education of the child. The Report of the Commission of Inquiry on Mental Handicap argued that such a situation would cause disadvantage while the much quoted Warnock Report contends that it would result in:

"...consequent restriction in their (the children) opportunities for progression in their education."

Age range is taken to mean the difference between the youngest and oldest pupil in each particular class. The findings of this study note significant differences between the age ranges in special classes and classes in special schools. As expected the mean range for classes in special schools was just 2.75 years (comparable to ranges in mainstream primary school classes) while the mean age range for special classes was much higher at 5 years.

These figures are averages. For example, two National Schools had special classes with pupils aged 18 years, and thirteen primary special classes had pupils aged 15 years. Such findings not only highlight the inadequate second level provision for students with special needs, but must surely indicate a relatively negative experience for the special pupil whose self-esteem teachers are striving to enhance.

Such age ranges in special classes must have other negative influences. Travers notes that special class pupils can be with one teacher for up to seven years. Does this not lull the pupil into a false sense of security? There must surely be implications in terms of the pupils' social development. A six year old would not have social interests similar to that of a thirteen year old.

The recommendation made by the Commission in 1965 has not been followed. The 67.8% of National Schools with only one special class are forced to make provision for a wide range and therefore such provision is complicated. This situation can only be solved by increasing the number of special classes to two in all National Schools that make such provision.

(iii) Class Size

The teacher/pupil ratio has not been adjusted in twenty five years. The recommended ratio issued by the Department of Education is 1 teacher to 16/17 pupils. It is generally acknowledged that the population in mainstreamed National Schools has changed significantly. Similarly the population of special education has changed. A recent report by the I.N.T.O. mentions this and calls for a reduction in class size as special schools are now catering for a "higher percentage of children with emotional or behaviour problems."

There have been ongoing discussions between the Department of Education and various Interested bodies but to date, no changes have occurred.
Appendix VII.A. : Summary of Findings (1989) sent to Schools and Classes participating in both 1989 and 2004 Studies. (Page 4)

The findings of this survey show that current class sizes are below the official recommendations. Special classes reported a mean size of 11.4 pupils while the mean class size for special schools was 14.3 pupils.

While such figures may appear encouraging, the class sizes are spread unevenly: e.g. one special class reported having only 4 pupils while one class in a special school had 19 pupils.

The figure of 14.3 for classes in special schools shows slight improvement on previous findings of 1:16.3\textsuperscript{14}. The figure of 11.4 for special classes corresponds closely to the ratios reported in other surveys: 1:11.6\textsuperscript{17}, 1:11.7\textsuperscript{17}, 1:12\textsuperscript{12}.

\textit{(ii) Location of special class}

According to Warnock\textsuperscript{11} the most basic level of integration is 'locational' integration where the pupil with special needs shares the same location as his mainstreamed peers. One would expect that at this stage the special class would be located beside the mainstreamed class in the primary school. However, Figure 2 illustrates that a surprising 16.4% of special classes are located separate from the mainstream school.

Mainly housed in prefabs, these special classes are subjected to an unnecessary form of isolation and are being highlighted as being different. Surely this unacceptable form of segregation could be reversed by simply interchanging and locating a mainstream class in this separate location?
Appendix VIII.A. : Summary of Findings (1989) sent to Schools and Classes participating in both 1989 and 2004 Studies. (Page 5)

(b) Levels of Integration

Although a special class is put forward as an educational model through which children with special needs may be integrated, there is no data available detailing what levels of contact exist between the mainstreamed class and the special class.

The questionnaire indicated that the level of actual organised contact is very low. Figure 3 illustrates that the majority of contact (96.4%) occurs in the playground as one might expect. However, this figure simply reports the number of special classes which share playgrounds simultaneously, and does not necessarily imply that all special class pupils mix or play with pupils from mainstreamed classes.

Figure 3

LEVEL OF ORGANISED CONTACT BETWEEN SPECIAL CLASS PUPILS AND PUPILS FROM MAINSTREAMED CLASSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact Type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Playground</td>
<td>96.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.E. or Sports Activities</td>
<td>69.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After School Activities</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared Classes</td>
<td>60.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

69.6% of special classes had contact with mainstreamed classes through physical education or sports activities, while 35.7% had contact during after school activities. Closer analysis of this 35.7% indicated that all these special classes were single sex boys schools and the after school activity usually referred to football.

An encouraging 60.7% of special classes indicated that they had organised contact through shared classes. On the face of it, this would appear to be a reasonably high level of contact between special and mainstream classes. However, when asked to list specifically which classes were shared, a rather different picture emerges (Figure 4). At a glance it can be seen that the level of contact is actually very low.
Appendix VIII.A. Summary of Findings (1989) sent to Schools and Classes participating in both 1989 and 2004 Studies. (Page 6)

The areas in which greatest contact occurs appear to be religion and music. Organised contact in the remaining elements of the curriculum is exceptionally low. There are definite areas in which positive contact could be arranged with minimum effort and maximum benefit. Art (3.6%), cookery (1.8%), environmental studies (0.9%) and computers (0.9%) appear to be taught in special classes without reference to mainstream classes. Yet it is regularly argued that these are areas of the curriculum in which the learning disabled pupil can compete equally with his non special class peers.

In general then, it appears that the level of integration provided by the special class is limited. The social contact in playgrounds is unmeasured and the level of organised contact is meagre suggesting that the majority of special classes are operating as isolated, segregated units within the National School. Can it be argued that such practice results in effective integration? If the special class is to be seriously considered as a valid model, then a more structured liaison must take place between the mainstreamed and special classes.

(c) Level of Support Service

The N.A.B.M.S.S.,14 the N.R.B.,15 N.A.M.H.I.16 and the I.N.T.O.17 all stress that adequate ancillary staffing and support services are the key point in establishing acceptable levels of special educational provision. For the purpose of this paper, the term support services is limited to mean classroom aide, psychologist, social work, and speech therapy services.

Traditionally, due to the structure of special education services, special schools were always better served with support services18 primarily due to the concentration of provision on one campus and such schools were often in receipt of additional funding from voluntary and religious organisations. The survey therefore did not aim to compare provision to special schools and special classes, but to examine what improvements or deterioration had occurred within both forms separately.

(i) Classroom Aide

The provision of classroom aides was first introduced in the 1979/80 school year. Initially seventy nine full time posts were sanctioned but the Public Service embargo on recruitment since 1985 has meant that vacant posts have not been filled. This has resulted in undue difficulties in special schools. However the introduction of the Social Employment Scheme (S.E.S.) in 1985 has meant that National and special schools can recruit staff from the National Manpower Services Register.

This survey reports that 59% of special school classes had a classroom aide as compared with 42% in 1981 indicating an increase of 17%.

Similarly an increase of 5% is noted for special classes over a shorter period of time - 9% in this survey as compared with 4% in 1986. Special class teachers appear less interested in availing of the services of a classroom aide. In N.A.B.M.S.S. 56% of special class teachers said they did not require a classroom aide while 35% held a similar view in 1987.

Despite such views and the Government embargo on recruitment, the survey would indicate an increased availability of services.

(ii) Psychological services

Some special schools (primarily those managed by religious orders and voluntary bodies) are provided with the services of a part-time or full-time psychologist from their mental handicap services. Other special schools are in receipt of services from local Child & Family Clinics and such provision varies dramatically from school to school. Previous research is limited. The N.A.B.M.S.S. reports that 74% of special schools had access to regular psychological services while Curtin & Tuile quote a figure of 70%. This survey reveals a lower figure of 56% having regular access to such services.

Special classes would always have reported a more limited degree of accessibility. The following percentages indicate the number of special classes who had access to an adequate psychological service - 57%, 53%, 42%, 39%. This survey reveals an even lower level of contact - 13% of special classes having regular contact with a psychologist. The emerging trend is that there appears to be less contact with a psychological service in recent years. This service is fragmented and uncoordinated. This in no way reflects on the work of psychologists, but simply emphasises the need for an established, organised school-based educational psychological service to all primary and special schools.

Teachers were asked to indicate how they would find the services of a psychologist useful. Figure 5 presents significant differences in the perception of the role of the psychologist. Special class teachers placed greatest emphasis on the assessment skills of the psychologist while special school teachers considered a wider range of skills including behaviour modification, counselling, work with parents etc. This may be for two reasons. Special school teachers have more contact with psychologists and therefore may have a better understanding of the wide variety of skills which psychologists have to offer.

Secondly, special class teachers have reported particular difficulties in having children assessed, and they may view assessment as an urgent priority.

(iii) Social work services

The role of the social worker as outlined by the Department of Health and Committee on Social Work directed that they must give "their provision of services for deprived children the highest priority". They are therefore involved with children in mainstream and special education. Their role in home/school liaison as suggested by Warnock and McKenna would not appear possible due to high case loads and is being replaced by the appointment of home/school liaison teachers as in the new pilot scheme in Dublin.

No precise figures are recorded for special class and special school contact with social workers. This survey reports that 44% of special schools and 6% of special class students have regular social work contact.

(iv) Speech therapy services

Irish studies have estimated that 3% of the child population has a speech disorder. A recent survey reports that 87.3% of children classed as having general learning difficulties have a communication disorder. In 1979 there were seventy speech therapists employed in Ireland. By 1989 this had risen to 250.

In 1978, the N.A.B.M.S.S. reported that 58% of special schools had access to speech therapy. This survey reports a similar figure of 52% for special schools. Only 14% of special classes had access to speech therapy services. This survey reports an identical figure of 14%. Clearly therefore, there has been no significant improvement in the level of speech therapy services to both models of provision.

All teachers indicated their dissatisfaction with present services and the vast majority indicated that an improvement in such services was urgently required.

Summary

In examining just three aspects of special educational provision, it appears that there is still a great disparity between special school and special class provision. Traditionally, the special school has been favoured because of the level of services available. Yet the special classes are still underserviced. The levels of integration offered by the special class are minimal and its structure in terms of location, age range etc. still seems disadvantaged. If the special class is to be considered as an effective integrated model, these shortcomings must be reversed and the performance of pupils in both models measured scientifically.

References

Appendix VIII.A. Summary of Findings (1989) sent to Schools and Classes participating in both 1989 and 2004 Studies. (Page 10)

APPENDIX IX

DES OFFICIAL CIRCULARS

Appendix IX.A: Hard-copy of Circulars...............................................629
Appendix IX.B: Relevant Circulars on DES Website...............................638
Appendix IX.A: Hard-copy of Circulars

**Circular 23/77:** 1977. Department of Education. *Circular 23/77 to Managerial Authorities of National Schools: Criteria for the Admission of Pupils to Special Classes in National Schools.* Dublin: Department of Education. 630

**Circular 24/82:** 1982. Department of Education. *Circular 24/82 Standards of Accommodation and Amenities in National Schools.* Dublin: Department of Education. 632
Circular to Managerial Authorities and Principal Teachers of National Schools.

Criteria for the Admission of Pupils to Special Classes in National Schools.

1. Rule 27 of the Rules for National Schools lays down that special classes for partially deaf, partially sighted or backward children may be established in National Schools, subject to such conditions as the Minister for Education may from time to time prescribe.

2. Before any child is referred to a special class, the Director of Community Care (Medical Officer of Health) should be contacted, so as to ensure that any relevant information which he may have about the child is made available to the school authorities. Such information must, of course, be treated in strict confidence.

3. A child proposed for enrolment in a special class should have a medical, social and psychological assessment in order to ascertain whether there are any physical, environmental or intellectual factors which may be contributing to his educational problems. These assessments are normal provided by arrangement with the appropriate Health Board and with the consent of the parents. Parents may arrange to have their children assessed privately, if they so wish. If it is not possible to provide the medical and social assessments before enrolment, they should be provided as soon as possible thereafter. It is essential, however, that the psychological report be available before the child is enrolled and that this report be acted upon in accordance with paragraph 7 hereunder.

4. Children who are considered after assessment to be mildly mentally handicapped as defined in the Report of the Commission of Inquiry on Mental Handicap, 1965, would, generally speaking, be suitably placed in special classes. The Commission defined mildly handicapped persons as follows:

"Mildly handicapped persons are persons whose mental handicap, though not amounting to severe or moderate handicap, is such that, as children, they appear to be permanently incapable of benefiting adequately from the instruction in the ordinary school curriculum; as adults some may require supervision and support for their own protection or that of others. Suitable treatment and education will increase the proportion who will achieve social adaptation and personal independence in later life. In so far as an intelligence quotient can be..."
regulated as a measure of mild mental handicap, the persons concerned would generally have intelligence quotients from 50 to 70."

5. Certain children in the borderline category between mild mental handicap and dull normal ability would benefit from placement in a special class on account of a special learning problem such as:

(a) mild emotional disturbance associated with persistent failure in the ordinary class (disruptive behaviour on its own, however, would not constitute grounds for special class placement);
(b) immature social behaviour;
(c) poor level of language development in relation to overall intellectual level.

6. Decisions on placement in special classes for reasons such as those outlined in paragraph 5 above should normally be based on the result of objective testing by means of psychometric instruments and should take into account the extent to which the pupil is making progress in his present learning environment. In general, placement in a special class should be looked upon as serious educational intervention and should be regularly reviewed by the principal and the special class teacher. The child should be re-assessed if there is a doubt concerning the suitability of his placement.

7. Reports on prospective enrolments in special classes should be forwarded to the appropriate District Inspector of Schools who, following discussion with the principal teacher, class teacher, special class teacher and remedial teacher (if one is employed in the school) will advise the principal teacher regarding placement. Before a final decision is made it may be necessary to consult the Inspector dealing with special education for the area and/or the Department's psychological service. It is essential, of course, that the parents' consent be obtained before a child is placed in a special class.

8. A pupil who is at present enrolled in a special class but for whom a psychological and other reports are not available should not be removed from that class without consultation with the District Inspector and parents.

D. 6 LAOGHAIRE,
Rúnaf.

An Roinn Oideachais - Brainse an Bhunoideachais

Imlitir chuig Cathaoirliigh Bhord Bainistíochta Scoileanna Náisiúnta

Is mian leis an Aire Oideachais aire Cathaoirliigh Bhord Bainistíochta Scoileanna Náisiúnta a chiriú ar an mheamram iniota a leagann amach go hachomóir na caighdeáin i leith coiríochta, taitneamhachtá agus cothabhála a bhaineann le Scoileanna Náisiúnta.

L 6 Laidhin
Rúnaí

Bealtaine, 1982.

An Roinn Oideachais,
Brainse an Bhunoideachais,
Sráid Mhaolbhríde,
Baile Átha Cliath 1.

Department of Education - Primary Education Branch
Circular to Chairman of Boards of Management of National Schools

The Minister for Education wishes to direct the attention of Chairman of Boards of Management of National Schools to the terms of the enclosed memorandum which sets out briefly standards of accommodation, amenities and maintenance relating to National Schools.

I 6 Laidhin

Rúnaí

May, 1982.

Department of Education,
Primary Education Branch,
Marlborough Street,
Dublin, 1.
SCHOOL STANDARDS

This memorandum sets out briefly, for the guidance of Chairmen of National Schools, the standards of accommodation, amenities and maintenance relating to National Schools.

The Sections relating to accommodation apply to new schools. Existing schools should be brought up to the stated standards where feasible, as soon as possible.

As part of their training for citizenship, pupils should be taught the importance of tidiness and cleanliness, the care of the school environment and the necessity for energy conservation.

HEATING:

A heating system must be capable of maintaining temperatures as follows:-

Classrooms 20°C (68°F), Corridors 16°C, Toilets and cloakrooms 17°C.

A minimum acceptable standard temperature of 16°C should be maintained throughout the school from time of assembly to time of dismissal.

LIGHTING:

General Lighting standards should be:-

Classrooms and other teaching areas 200 lux.

Corridors, cloakrooms and toilets 150 lux.

These standards could be maintained by use of twin 5' x 65W Fluorescent tubes in classrooms etc., and by the use of single 4' x 43W Fluorescent tubes in other areas.
HYGIENE:

(i) There should be a constantly available supply of water, soap, medically approved hand-drying facilities and toilet paper. There should be a hot water supply in the staff toilet areas and in the staff-room.

(ii) There should be an adequate supply of drinking water available.

(iii) Litter bins should be provided in each classroom, cloakroom and at least one bin in, or convenient to, the play area.

(iv) Classroom bins should be emptied daily.

(v) In the female section, particularly for the older girls, provision for the disposal of sanitary towels is essential.

Similar, but separate, facilities of the type outlined at (v) above should be available for the female staff.

SANITATION:

(i) Pupils' Toilet Facilities:--

Two W.C.s and two Wash-Hand Basins should be provided for each class unit. Up to four W.C.s, one of which should be suitable for use by physically handicapped persons, and four wash-hand basins, may be provided in association with the C.R. room. Access should be available to adequate toilet facilities during recreation periods.

(ii) Staff Toilet Facilities should be provided as follows:--

In a 3-5 unit school, 1 W.C. and 1 wash hand basin.

In a 6-11 unit school, 2 W.C.s and 2 wash hand basins.
CLEANING:

(i) The Board of Management should ensure that the school is cleaned regularly.

(ii) Appropriate cleaning equipment and cleaning requisites should be available for use in the cleaning.

(iii) All floors and staircases should be swept daily. Non-carpeted floor surfaces should be washed and/or polished weekly. Mats should be provided inside the school doors.

(iv) The school should be dusted daily. The dusting should include desks, worktops, windowsills, skirtingboards and balustrades.

(v) Walls, ceilings, lights, curtains and/or blinds should be brushed down with a soft brush, or vacuum cleaned, at least once a term.

(vi) Toilets, wash hand basins and toilet areas should be washed and disinfected daily.

(vii) Windows should be cleaned at least once a term.

(viii) All internal gloss painted surfaces should be washed with a good quality soap, and water before the commencement of each school year.

VENTILATION:

Each classroom should be adequately ventilated.

Windows should be kept in good working order.

PREMISES, GROUNDS AND MISCELLANEOUS FACILITIES:

Cognizance should be taken of the development of children in the design and construction of school buildings and in the design and installation of school furniture and fittings.
(i) Buildings should be sound in structure. All floors, steps, stairs, corridors and gangways should be of sound construction and properly maintained. Substantial handrails should be provided on every staircase; an open side should be guarded by a lower rail or other effective means.

(ii) Each ordinary classroom in new schools should have a minimum area of 55.76 sq.m. (600 sq.ft.) per class unit.

(iii) Paved play areas should be provided where possible at a minimum ratio of 10 sq.m. (120 sq.yds.) per class unit.

(iv) School grounds should be enclosed, properly developed, and maintained.

(v) Buildings should be accessible to handicapped pupils.

(vi) Suitable and secure storage facilities (either store rooms or lockable steel presses) should be provided for educational apparatus and equipment and teaching and administrative materials.

(vii) Additional accommodation should be provided for a resource library, medical examination and general purposes.

(viii) There should be adequate provision for using audio-visual aids.

(ix) There should be at least two power points per classroom.

(x) All external doors leading directly into the school, and all similar doors of stores should be made pest proof. Pest proofing of ducts and pipe/wall joints may also be necessary.

(xi) Exits for use in case of fire should be clearly marked and teachers and pupils should be made familiar with the fire escape arrangements (see Circular 7/81). Furniture should not be placed in front of the exits at any time.
STAFF FACILITIES:

(i) A separate staff room with a power point should be provided.

(ii) The room should have a table, chairs and adequate shelving and storage facilities.

(iii) Cloakroom facilities should be provided.

(iv) Adequate car parking facilities should be available.

MAINTENANCE:

(i) Running repairs (e.g., renewal of sash cords or broken panes of glass) should be attended to without delay.

(ii) Drains should be rodded at the end of each term and where there is a septic tank, it should be inspected annually and cleaned of sludge, if necessary.

(iii) Central heating boilers should be serviced regularly. It would be advisable to have this done on an annual contract basis.

(iv) Internal decoration should be carried out approximately every eight years. External painting of new buildings should be carried out 18 to 24 months after completion and thereafter approximately every four years. Surfaces to be painted should include gates and railings.
Appendix IX.B : Relevant Circulars on DES Website

Circular 24/91
http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobservlet/24_91.doc [08.09.2006]

Circular 22/92
http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobservlet/sp22_92.doc [08.09.2006]

Circular 9/99

Circular 01/03
http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobservlet/pc01_03.doc [08.09.2006]

Circular 16/03
2003. Department of Education and Science – Teacher Education Section. *Circular 16/03 To the Authorities of Primary and Post-Primary Schools: Post-Graduate Programme of Training in Special Educational Needs (SEN) for Teachers working with pupils with Special Educational Needs in Special Schools, Special Classes, or as Resource Teachers in Mainstream Primary and Post-Primary Schools and Other Educational Services.* Dublin: Department of Education and Science.
http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobservlet/pc16_03.doc [08.09.2006]
Circular 22/03
http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobservlet/SP22_03.doc [08.09.2006]

Circular SP ED 24/03
http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobservlet/SP24_03.doc?language=EN [08.09.2006]

Circular SP.ED 01/05
http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobservlet/sp01_05.doc?language=EN [08.09.2006]

Circular SP.ED 02/05
http://www.education.ie/servlet/blobservlet/sp02_05.doc?language=EN [08.09.2006]
APPENDIX X

QUALITATIVE DATA

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Appendix X.B : Qualitative Data Tables ................................................ 642
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<tr>
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<th>Table No.</th>
<th>Special School 1989</th>
<th>Special School 1989</th>
<th>Special School 2004</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
<th>Resource Teacher 2004</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Source of funding for books &amp; stationary</td>
<td>Table X.2</td>
<td>D.2</td>
<td>D.2</td>
<td>C.2</td>
<td>C.2</td>
<td>C.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual parental contribution to Special Classes &amp; Special Schools (1989)</td>
<td>Table X.3</td>
<td>D.3</td>
<td>D.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual parental contribution to Special Schools and National Schools with Special Classes &amp; Resource Teachers (2004)</td>
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<td>C.4</td>
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<td>C.4</td>
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<td>Agencies providing Psychological Service to Special Schools &amp; Special Classes (1989)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agencies providing Psychological Service (other than NEPS) to Special Schools &amp; National Schools with Special Classes &amp; Resource Teachers (2004)</td>
<td>Table X.6</td>
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<td>G.2</td>
<td>G.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Respondents' additional comments regarding support staff</td>
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<td>G.7</td>
<td>G.8</td>
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<td>Inservice Education Courses attended by respondents within a two year period (2004)</td>
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<td>L.2</td>
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<td>Respondents' perceived Inservice Education needs</td>
<td>Table X.9</td>
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<td>J.7</td>
<td>L.4</td>
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<td>Activities undertaken by pupils attending Resource Teachers</td>
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<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>L.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time per day spent by pupils attending Resource Teachers</td>
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<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
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<td>L.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Special School / National School joint activities</td>
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<td>Time per term during which Special Schools engage in activities with National Schools</td>
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<td>Special Class / mainstream class joint activities</td>
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<td>Special Class / mainstream class joint curricular activities</td>
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<td>Time per day which Special Class pupils spend with mainstream class Pupils</td>
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<tr>
<td>Respondents' suggested priorities in Special Education</td>
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### Table X.2: Sources of Funding for Books and Stationary

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Special School 1989 (n=46)</th>
<th>Special School 2004 (n=45)</th>
<th>Special Class 1989 (n=108)</th>
<th>Special Class 2004 (n=151)</th>
<th>Resource Teacher 2004 (n=189)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Questionnaire Item</td>
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<td>D.2</td>
<td>C.2</td>
<td>C.2</td>
<td>C.2</td>
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<td>n %</td>
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<td>45 91.8</td>
<td>108 96.4</td>
<td>151 85.3</td>
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<td>Response Rate</td>
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<td>17 15.7</td>
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<td>School</td>
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<td>2 4.4</td>
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<td>Parents</td>
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<td>Other Sources</td>
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<td>0 0.0</td>
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<td>108 100</td>
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### Table X.3: Annual Parental Contribution to Special Schools & Special Classes (1989)

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<tr>
<th>Amount of annual contribution (IR£)</th>
<th>Special School 1989 (n=47)</th>
<th>Special Class 1989 (n=112)</th>
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<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
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<tr>
<td>Response Rate</td>
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<td>24 21.4</td>
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<td>IR£ 0 – 15</td>
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<td>11 45.8</td>
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<td>IR£ 6 – 10</td>
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<td>IR£ 11 – 15</td>
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<td>4 16.7</td>
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<td>IR£ 31 – 40</td>
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<td>Mean annual contribution</td>
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Appendix X: Qualitative Data

643
### Table X.4: Annual Parental Contribution to Special Schools, and to National Schools with Special Classes & Resource Teachers (2004)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount of annual contribution (€)</th>
<th>Special School 2004 (n=36)</th>
<th>Special Class 2004 (n=77)</th>
<th>Resource Teacher 2004 (n=93)</th>
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<td>No. of Respondents</td>
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<td>n %</td>
<td>n %</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36 73.5</td>
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<td>93 45.8</td>
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<td>€ 0 – 9</td>
<td>6 16.7</td>
<td>1 1.3</td>
<td>3 3.2</td>
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<td>€ 10 – 19</td>
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<td>2 5.6</td>
<td>20 26.0</td>
<td>9 9.7</td>
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<td>€ 40 – 49</td>
<td>5 13.9</td>
<td>9 11.7</td>
<td>9 9.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>€ 50 – 59</td>
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<td>10 13.0</td>
<td>21 22.6</td>
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<td>€ 60 – 69</td>
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<td>€ 80 – 89</td>
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<td>€ 90 – 99</td>
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<td>€ 100 +</td>
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## Table X.5: Agencies providing Psychological Services to Special Schools and Special Classes (1989)

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<th>Agency</th>
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<th>Special Class 1989 (n=91)</th>
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<td>F.2</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n %</td>
<td>n %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Rate</td>
<td></td>
<td>45 95.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Health Board</td>
<td>24 63.2</td>
<td>42 51.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mater Clinic, Dublin</td>
<td>1 2.6</td>
<td>16 19.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temple St Clinic, Dublin</td>
<td>1 2.6</td>
<td>6 7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Education</td>
<td>1 2.6</td>
<td>1 1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brothers of Charity Services</td>
<td>7 18.4</td>
<td>8 9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Care</td>
<td>2 5.3</td>
<td>1 1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewart’s Hospital, Dublin</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>4 4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Remedial Clinic, Dublin</td>
<td>1 2.6</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Rehabilitation Board (NRB)</td>
<td>3 7.9</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Michael’s House, Dublin</td>
<td>2 5.3</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COPE Foundation, Cork</td>
<td>1 2.6</td>
<td>1 1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Lady’s Hospital, Crumlin</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>1 1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitaller Order of St John of God</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>7 8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sisters of Charity Services</td>
<td>2 5.3</td>
<td>4 4.9</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### Table X.6: Agencies providing Psychological Service (other than NEPS) to Special Schools and National Schools with Special Classes and Resource Teachers (2004)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Special School 2004 (n=16)</th>
<th>Special Class 2004 (n=21)</th>
<th>Resource Teacher 2004 (n=12)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire Item G.2</td>
<td>n %</td>
<td>n %</td>
<td>n %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Rate</td>
<td>16 32.7</td>
<td>21 11.9</td>
<td>12 5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Health Board</td>
<td>4 25.0</td>
<td>2 9.5</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mater Clinic, Dublin</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temple St Clinic, Dublin</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Education</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brothers of Charity Services</td>
<td>2 12.5</td>
<td>2 9.5</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Care</td>
<td>1 6.3</td>
<td>3 0.0</td>
<td>1 8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewart’s Hospital, Dublin</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Remedial Clinic (CRC)</td>
<td>1 6.3</td>
<td>3 14.3</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Rehabilitation Board (NRB)</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Michael’s House, Dublin</td>
<td>2 12.5</td>
<td>2 9.5</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COPE Foundation, Cork</td>
<td>1 6.3</td>
<td>2 9.5</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Our Lady’s Hospital, Crumlin</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitaller Order of St John of God</td>
<td>3 18.8</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sisters of Charity Services</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>2 9.5</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moore Abbey, Co Kildare</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>2 9.5</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Assessment</td>
<td>2 12.5</td>
<td>4 19.0</td>
<td>11 91.7</td>
</tr>
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</table>
## APPENDIX X.B: QUALITATIVE DATA TABLES (6)

### Table X.7: Respondents' Additional Comments regarding Support Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents' Comments</th>
<th>Special School 2004 (n=39)</th>
<th>Special Class 2004 (n=122)</th>
<th>Resource Teacher 2004 (n=140)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>G.7</td>
<td>G.8</td>
<td>G.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Questionnaire Item</strong></td>
<td><strong>n</strong></td>
<td><strong>%</strong></td>
<td><strong>n</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Response Rate</strong></td>
<td>39</td>
<td>79.6</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Psychological Service to Schools</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General comments regarding the establishment of a comprehensive Psychological Service to Schools</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>61.5</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative comments regarding the current NEPS Psychological Service to Schools</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>79.5</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive comments regarding the current NEPS Psychological Service to Schools</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative comments regarding the current NEPS Psychological Service to Schools</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative comments regarding lack of feedback to teachers by psychologists</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative comments regarding the small number of psychological assessments undertaken by NEPS annually</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative comments regarding the inability to access resources due to the lack of psychological assessments</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>74.3</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative comments regarding NEP's Scheme for Commissioning Private Psychological Assessments</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative comments regarding the inequality of some pupils undergoing private psychological assessment.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative comments regarding the lack of psychological input to assist with challenging behaviour</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative comments regarding the lack of educational recommendations for pupils in psychological reports</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative comments regarding absence of teacher input into private assessments</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative comments regarding time taken by DES to sanction resources once psychological report has been received</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>56.4</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative comments regarding the inadequacy of time available to consult with psychologists</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>44</td>
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</table>

Appendix X: Qualitative Data

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### Table X.7: Respondents' Additional Comments regarding Support Staff (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents' Comments</th>
<th>Special School 2004 (n=39)</th>
<th>Special Class 2004 (n=122)</th>
<th>Resource Teacher 2004 (n=140)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire Item</td>
<td>G.7</td>
<td>G.8</td>
<td>G.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Rate</td>
<td>n 79.6</td>
<td>n 68.9</td>
<td>n 68.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Work Service to Schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative general comments regarding the inadequacy of social work services to schools</td>
<td>12 30.7</td>
<td>21 17.2</td>
<td>12 8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative comments regarding the inadequacy of time available to consult with social workers</td>
<td>3 7.6</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>4 2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative comments regarding the lack of information available to teachers from social workers</td>
<td>14 35.8</td>
<td>3 2.4</td>
<td>5 3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech &amp; Language Therapy Service to Schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative general comments regarding the inadequacy of speech &amp; language therapy services to schools</td>
<td>23 58.9</td>
<td>41 33.6</td>
<td>12 8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative comments regarding the delay in pupils accessing speech and language assessments</td>
<td>12 30.7</td>
<td>14 11.4</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative comments regarding the unavailability of speech &amp; language therapy reports to teachers</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>5 4.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative comments regarding the unavailability of speech &amp; language programmes for teachers</td>
<td>5 12.8</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>1 0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative comments regarding the inadequacy of time available to consult with SLTs</td>
<td>7 17.9</td>
<td>2 1.6</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative comments regarding the unwillingness of special needs assistants to implement speech &amp; language programmes</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>3 2.4</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Paramedical Services to Schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative general comments regarding the inadequacy of occupational therapy services to schools</td>
<td>5 12.8</td>
<td>2 1.6</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative general comments regarding the inadequacy of physiotherapy services to school</td>
<td>12 30.7</td>
<td>14 11.4</td>
<td>3 2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative comments regarding the unwillingness of special needs assistants to implement physiotherapy programmes</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>4 3.2</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
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</table>
## APPENDIX X.B: QUALITATIVE DATA TABLES (8)

Table X.7: Respondents' Additional Comments regarding Support Staff (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents' Comments</th>
<th>Special School 2004 (n=39)</th>
<th>Special Class 2004 (n=122)</th>
<th>Resource Teacher 2004 (n=140)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Questionnaire Item</strong></td>
<td>G.7</td>
<td>G.8</td>
<td>G.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>n %</strong></td>
<td>n %</td>
<td>n %</td>
<td>n %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Response Rate</strong></td>
<td>39 79.6</td>
<td>122 68.9</td>
<td>141 68.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### School Staff

- **Negative comments regarding the restrictive nature of the job description of special needs assistants (SNA) as prescribed by DES**
  - 7 17.9
  - 8 6.5
  - 0 0.0

- **Comments concerning the need for guidance for teachers regarding the management of SNAs**
  - 11 28.2
  - 14 11.4
  - 0 0.0

- **Comments regarding the difficulties arising where a SNA is assigned to one pupil only**
  - 9 23.0
  - 21 7.2
  - 0 0.0

- **Comments highlighted the lack of secretarial support for special education teachers (SETs)**
  - 1 2.5
  - 15 12.2
  - 7 5.0

- **Comments requesting an increase in the number of Home School Liaison Co-ordinators (HSLC)**
  - 0 0.0
  - 26 21.3
  - 31 22.1

- **Comments requesting an increase in the number of specialist teachers employed**
  - 6 15.3
  - 3 2.4
  - 0 0.0

- **Negative comments regarding difficulties arising from the appointment of temporary staff**
  - 3 7.6
  - 5 4.0
  - 14 10.0

### Other Issues

- **Comments regarding the advantages of a multi-disciplinary approach by paramedical services**
  - 2 5.1
  - 13 10.6
  - 3 2.1

- **Comments suggesting a more co-ordination approach by various agencies involved: school, parents, DES, NCSE, and NEPS**
  - 3 7.6
  - 14 11.4
  - 16 11.4

Appendix X: Qualitative Data

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## APPENDIX X: QUALITATIVE DATA TABLES (9)

**Table X.8**: Inservice Education Courses attended by Respondents within a Two Year Period (2004)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents’ Comments</th>
<th>Special School 2004 (n=31)</th>
<th>Special Class 2004 (n=116)</th>
<th>Resource Teacher 2004 (n=138)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire Item</td>
<td>I.2</td>
<td>I.2</td>
<td>I.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n %</td>
<td>n %</td>
<td>n %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Rate</td>
<td>31 63.2</td>
<td>116 65.5</td>
<td>138 67.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Curricular Areas</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation of Revised Curriculum</td>
<td>26 83.8</td>
<td>84 72.4</td>
<td>109 78.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social, Personal, &amp; Health Education (SPHE)</td>
<td>4 12.9</td>
<td>12 10.3</td>
<td>22 15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>6 19.3</td>
<td>4 3.4</td>
<td>21 15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music Education</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>1 0.8</td>
<td>1 0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information &amp; Communication Technology (ICT)</td>
<td>3 9.6</td>
<td>16 13.7</td>
<td>14 10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Specific Topics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADHD</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>5 4.3</td>
<td>9 6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autism</td>
<td>15 48.3</td>
<td>14 12.0</td>
<td>22 15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cerebral Palsy</td>
<td>1 3.2</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downs Syndrome</td>
<td>3 9.6</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyslexia</td>
<td>4 12.9</td>
<td>14 12.0</td>
<td>33 23.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyspraxia</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>3 2.5</td>
<td>5 3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties</td>
<td>14 45.1</td>
<td>5 4.3</td>
<td>14 10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Learning Disabilities</td>
<td>14 45.1</td>
<td>21 18.1</td>
<td>33 23.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Inservice Attended</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addressing Challenging Behaviour</td>
<td>18 58.0</td>
<td>3 2.5</td>
<td>12 8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment &amp; Testing</td>
<td>4 12.9</td>
<td>8 6.8</td>
<td>16 11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Education Plans (IEPs)</td>
<td>5 16.1</td>
<td>12 10.3</td>
<td>39 28.2</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### Table X.9: Respondents’ perceived Inservice Education Needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents’ Comments</th>
<th>Special School 1989 (n=20)</th>
<th>Special School 2004 (n=19)</th>
<th>Special Class 1989 (n=51)</th>
<th>Special Class 2004 (n=76)</th>
<th>Resource Teacher 2004 (n=101)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Questionnaire Item</strong></td>
<td>J.6</td>
<td>J.7</td>
<td>I.4</td>
<td>I.4</td>
<td>I.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>49.7</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Types of Courses</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses specifically addressing special educational needs (SEN)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>57.8</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses addressing specific disabilities and topics</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15.0</td>
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<td>0.0</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Courses specifically for mainstream class teachers in National Schools</td>
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<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>Courses to be made more accessible to teachers in rural schools</td>
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<td>10.0</td>
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<td>5.2</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of distance learning courses</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Curricular Areas</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum: Core Subjects</td>
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<td>0.0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language</td>
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<td>0.0</td>
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<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information &amp; Communication Technology (ICT)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social, Personal, &amp; Health Education (SPHE)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Issues</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addressing Challenging Behaviour</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>63.1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment &amp; Testing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Education Plans (IEPs)</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Availability of in-school training</td>
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<td>10.5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courses should be funded by DES</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX X.B: QUALITATIVE DATA TABLES (11)

Table X.10: Activities undertaken by Pupils attending Resource Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Resource Teacher 2004 (n=151)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire Item</td>
<td>L.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Rate</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeracy</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPHE</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX X

APPENDIX X.B: QUALITATIVE DATA TABLES (12)

Table X.11: Time spent per day by Pupils attending Resource Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minutes</th>
<th>Resource Teacher 2004 (n=159)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire Item</td>
<td>L.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Rate</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 – 29</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 – 59</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 – 89</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90 – 119</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120 – 149</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>150 – 179</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>180 – 209</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Time per class</td>
<td>50.6 minutes</td>
</tr>
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</table>
**APPENDIX X.B: QUALITATIVE DATA TABLES (13)**

Table X.12: Special School / National School Joint Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Special School 1989 (n=20)</th>
<th>Special School 2004 (n=19)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire Item</td>
<td>H.3</td>
<td>L.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>38.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Rate</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sporting activities</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After School activities</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table X.13: Time per term during which Special Schools engage in Activities with National Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Special Schools 2004 (n=15)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire Item</td>
<td>L.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Rate</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/3 times per week</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a fortnight</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a month</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than monthly</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20.0</td>
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Table X.14: Special Class / Mainstream Class joint Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Special Class 1989 (n=112)</th>
<th>Special Class 2004 (n=117)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaire Item</td>
<td>H.3</td>
<td>L.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n   %</td>
<td>n   %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Rate</td>
<td>112 100.0</td>
<td>117 66.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sporting activities</td>
<td>78 69.6</td>
<td>55 47.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After School activities</td>
<td>40 35.7</td>
<td>31 26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playground</td>
<td>108 96.4</td>
<td>111 94.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class-based activities</td>
<td>68 60.7</td>
<td>79 67.5</td>
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### Table X.15: Special Class / Mainstream Class joint Curricular Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Special Class 2004</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n=117)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Questionnaire Item</td>
<td>L.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Rate</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>66.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core Subjects (English, Irish, Maths)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>59</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>46</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religious Education</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>46.1</td>
</tr>
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<td>Music</td>
<td>51</td>
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<td></td>
<td>43.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drama</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>17.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social, Personal, &amp; Health Education (SPHE)</td>
<td>44</td>
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# Table X.16: Time per day which Special Class Pupils spend with Mainstream Class Pupils

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Minutes</th>
<th>Special Classes 2004 (n=116)</th>
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<td>Questionnaire Item</td>
<td>L.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Response Rate</td>
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<tr>
<td>0 – 29</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>30 - 59</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 - 89</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90 – 119</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120 - 149</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>150 – 179</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>180 -209</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>210 +</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Time per day</td>
<td>117 minutes</td>
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### APPENDIX X.B: QUALITATIVE DATA TABLES (17)

Table X.17: Respondents’ Suggested Priorities in Special Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents’ Comments</th>
<th>Special School 1989 (n=24)</th>
<th>Special School 2004 (n=18)</th>
<th>Special Class 1989 (n=63)</th>
<th>Special Class 2004 (n=94)</th>
<th>Resource Teacher 2004 (n=117)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Questionnaire Item</strong></td>
<td>J.7</td>
<td>J.8</td>
<td>M.2</td>
<td>M.2</td>
<td>M.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Response Rate</strong></td>
<td>24 51.1</td>
<td>18 36.7</td>
<td>63 56.3</td>
<td>94 53.1</td>
<td>117 57.6</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>General Special Education Issues</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The need for a cohesive national strategy for special educational needs</td>
<td>10 41.7</td>
<td>11 61.1</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>36 38.3</td>
<td>26 22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The need for research into special educational provision</td>
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<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>1 1.6</td>
<td>6 6.4</td>
<td>4 3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The need to reduce class size in special schools, special classes and mainstream classes</td>
<td>14 58.3</td>
<td>12 66.7</td>
<td>41 65.0</td>
<td>63 67.0</td>
<td>79 67.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate administrative structure for Special education Section within the DES</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>4 22.2</td>
<td>10 15.9</td>
<td>15 16.0</td>
<td>5 4.3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Funding &amp; Resources</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The need for an adequately funded special education service</td>
<td>10 41.7</td>
<td>9 50.0</td>
<td>44 69.8</td>
<td>51 54.3</td>
<td>73 62.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The need for adequate school premises and facilities</td>
<td>5 20.8</td>
<td>4 22.2</td>
<td>26 41.3</td>
<td>44 46.8</td>
<td>62 53.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The need for adequate teaching and educational resources</td>
<td>5 20.8</td>
<td>6 33.3</td>
<td>21 33.3</td>
<td>30 31.9</td>
<td>25 21.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The need for adequate ICT resources for special needs pupils</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>1 5.5</td>
<td>2 3.2</td>
<td>11 11.7</td>
<td>17 14.5</td>
</tr>
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<td>The need to address the inequality between funding for special class pupils and resource pupils</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>15 12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The need for DES grants to be paid directly to teachers</td>
<td>1 4.2</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>4 6.4</td>
<td>11 11.7</td>
<td>8 6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher Training</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The need for comprehensive preservice training for teachers</td>
<td>4 16.7</td>
<td>3 16.7</td>
<td>0 0.0</td>
<td>11 11.7</td>
<td>21 17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The need for an adequate system of inservice training for teachers</td>
<td>12 50.0</td>
<td>11 61.6</td>
<td>1 1.6</td>
<td>51 54.3</td>
<td>45 38.5</td>
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</table>
### Teacher Training (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Yes</th>
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<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The need for inservice training for mainstream class teachers</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The need for inservice training to be provided locally</td>
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<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
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<td>5.3</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>11.1</td>
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### Schools’ Psychological Service

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
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<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
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<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The need for a comprehensive Schools’ Psychological Service</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>88.8</td>
<td>40.0</td>
<td>63.4</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>85.1</td>
<td>96.0</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The need for equitable system for pupils to access psychological assessment</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>49.0</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The need for allocated time for teachers to consult with psychologists</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The need for psychologists to provide behaviour modification programmes</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The need to reduce waiting lists for psychological assessment in order to access DES resources</td>
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<td>20.8</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>66.6</td>
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<td>77.6</td>
<td>91.0</td>
<td>77.7</td>
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### Other Support Services

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<th>No</th>
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<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The need for adequate social work service to schools</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>38.0</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>46.8</td>
<td>51.0</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The need for adequate occupational therapy service to schools</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The need for adequate speech and language therapy service to schools</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>54.1</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>77.7</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>53.0</td>
<td>56.3</td>
<td>61.0</td>
<td>52.1</td>
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<td>The need for SNAs to be attached to each special class and each class in a special school</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
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<td>23.4</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>26.4</td>
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<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>5.9</td>
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### Special School Issues

<table>
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<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The need to address challenging behaviour in special schools</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
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<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
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<tr>
<td>The need to recategorise Special Schools for MMH to reflect changing populations</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
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<tr>
<td>The creation of opportunities whereby special schools can act as resource centres to mainstream primary schools</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
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### Special Class Issues

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The need for an adequate network of post primary classes</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>43.6</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
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Appendix X: Qualitative Data
## Special Class Issues (continued)

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<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>31.7</th>
<th>42</th>
<th>44.6</th>
<th>---</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The need to increase integrated opportunities with mainstream classes</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>44.6</td>
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## Resource Teacher Issues

<table>
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<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>36</th>
<th>30.7</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The need to address the time wasted travelling between schools</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The lack of understanding among mainstream class teachers of the role of Resource teacher</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The need to address the issue of pupils with behaviour difficulties only being sent to Resource teachers</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The need for more experienced teachers to be placed in resource teacher posts</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>20.5</td>
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## Post Primary Provision

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<th>5</th>
<th>5.3</th>
<th>0</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>The need to establish post primary classes for MMH pupils</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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## Curricular Issues

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## Other Issues

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