



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Oifig an Cheannaire Oibríochtaí,  
Na Seirbhísí Míchumais/An Rannán Cúram Sóisialta,  
31-33 Sráid Chaitríona, Luimneach.

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11<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Deputy Alan Kelly,  
Dail Eireann,  
Leinster House,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2.  
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Dear Deputy Kelly,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the following parliamentary questions, which were submitted to this department for response.

**PQ 42397/20**

*To ask the Minister for Health the last contact by date and medium by which the HSE was in contact with each school in County Tipperary with ASD units in tabular form.*

**PQ 42398/20**

*To ask the Minister for Health the breakdown by date of the last visit by HSE personnel to each school in County Tipperary with an ASD unit in tabular form.*

**HSE Response.**

The National Programme of Progressing Disability Services for Children and Young People (PDS) through the Children's Disability Network Teams (CDNT's) promotes the use of a Family Centred Practice Model (FCP) of service delivery, as one of the 12 core principles of PDS.

PDS has laid out a clear roadmap for a standardised and integrative disability service which responds to the needs of the child and family rather than based on a diagnosis. FCP recognises families as the experts on the needs of their child and family. This approach empowers children with disabilities and their families to participate in and lead the services they receive. A partnership or collaborative approach to service delivery is utilised with a move away from expert-led care and as such CDNT's do not directly support ASD Units within schools, rather they support the family with identified goals based on their priorities. This may or may not include support to the child's placement in an ASD Unit.

Records are kept on each individual child and family however there are no separate records of school visits. The only way to gather the information being sought would be to go through each individual child's file and identify each school visit which would involve a significant piece of work and additional resources.

All North Tipperary special classes are linked through regular meetings of the North Tipperary ASD Special Class Forum. This is a regular meeting (twice a year) initiated by North Tipperary Children's Services and involves the Principles and Staff of Schools with ASD classes, Special Educational

Needs Organisers (SENOs) from the National Council for Special education (NCSE) and members of the North Tipperary Early Intervention and School Age Children's Disability Teams.

ASD Forums are planned for South Tipperary under the new structure of Progressing Disability Services.

It should be noted that this year's meetings had to be deferred due to school closures and Covid restrictions. In addition, the North Tipperary Children's Services provides an estimation of numbers of children likely to require ASD classes in mainstream schools or in preschools and these statistics have been shared with SENOs at NCSE. This collaboration has led to the establishment of many of the ASD classes in North Tipperary.

Yours sincerely,



**Dr. Cathal Morgan,  
Head of Operations - Disability Services,  
Community Operations**