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Entering into a specialist education agreement

Specialist Education Agreement

Outside of regular or legal school age

A specialist education agreement is a formal agreement between the Ministry of Education and the parents/ guardians of a child or young person.

It allows a child or young person to receive learning support (special education services), enrol at a specialist school (day or residential), have a regional health school as the base school or continue to be enrolled at a primary, intermediate or secondary school beyond the legal age. The principal of the intended school is also expected to sign the agreement.

Privacy

The personal information on this form is being collected for the purposes of assessing your application and for research and reporting purposes.

The information collected may be used or disclosed by the Ministry of Education only for these purposes.

The information will be used and held by the Ministry of Education under the Privacy Act 1993 (and, where applicable, the Health Information Privacy Code 1994) and you have the right to see the information and to ask us to correct it.

Applying for a Specialist Education Agreement

If you are considering making a specialist education request, please contact your local Ministry office who will assist you with the process.

You can find details for your local office on our Ministry website: [www.education.govt.nz/ministry-of-education/regional-ministry-contacts/](http://www.education.govt.nz/ministry-of-education/regional-ministry-contacts/)

Completed forms

When this form has been completed and signed by the required parties, please send it to your local Ministry office.

1. Email address: [learning.supportmailbox@education.govt.nz](mailto:learning.supportmailbox@education.govt.nz)
2. Postal address - find your local office address at: [www.education.govt.nz/ministry-of-education/regional-ministry-contacts/](http://www.education.govt.nz/ministry-of-education/regional-ministry-contacts/)

Continue to page 2 to begin form completion.

Please note guidance on entering into a specialist education agreement and Specialised School Transport Assistance (SESTA) is below the application form.



Application details, contacts and declaration

To be completed by parent / caregiver

Application for Specialist Education Agreement

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Application type: Outside of regular or legal school age

Student details

Legal name/given names Preferred name

Surname

NSN number ORS number (if applicable)

Date of birth DD/MM/YYYY Gender:

Female Male Gender diverse

Ethnicity

Māori IWI affiliations

Pacific Peoples Please specify

NZ European Other European Asian

African

Middle Eastern Latin American

Other Please specify

Student's primary home address

Address (Unit and/or house number and street name)

Suburb

City or town Postcode



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Parent / caregiver details

Legal name/given name Surname

Relationship to student

Home phone Mobile phone number

Email address Preferred method of contact

Phone Email Post

School details

Special school name School ID number

School satellite (if other than base specialist school)

School address

City or town Postcode

Contact persons name Contact phone number

Email address

Current school or early childhood provider name

Ministry of Education contact person

Name of Ministry of Education contact person

Email address Contact phone number

Proposed duration of the agreement

Enrolment date DD/MM/YYYY

End date (if agreed) DD/MM/YYYY OR Review date (if agreed) DD/MM/YYYY

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Parent / caregiver consent

Enter parent/caregiver name here

1. I have had the following options for enrolment of my child explained to me:
   * Regular state schools in my local area
   * Regular state schools who are specialist service providers (if available)
   * Regular school units (if available)
   * Specialist schools - base or satellite options
2. I understand the options and will enrol my child in

Enter school name here

1. This is the closest school. If it is not (e.g. passing another specialist school or units that may be a good option) fill in the rationale under the additional information section.
2. I have had the specialist education agreement process explained to me and I have read the factsheet for parents.
3. I have had the specialist education agreement review process explained to me.
4. I understand that a specialist education agreement is not an entitlement to school transport assistance (SESTA), and I have read the SESTA factsheet for parents.

The options were explained to me by Date DD/MM/YYYY

Full name of parent/legal caregiver Date DD/MM/YYYY

Signature of parent/legal caregiver

Declarations

I confirm that the information in this form is true and accurate.

Signature of parent/legal caregiver

Type name in full Date DD/MM/YYYY

Signature of Principal

Type name in full Date DD/MM/YYYY

Signature of Ministry delegation holder

Type name in full Date DD/MM/YYYY

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Additional information

**This box expands when typed into.**

Provide a brief summary of why this is the most appropriate education setting.

Entering into a specialist education agreement

Guidance for parents and caregivers

Entering into a specialist education agreement

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A specialist education agreement is a formal agreement between the Ministry and the parent or guardian of the child. A specialist education agreement was previously known as a section 9 agreement.

A specialist education agreement is for:

* students to be enrolled in a specialist school (day, residential and sensory)
* students to have a regional health school as their base school
* students who are under 5 or over 14 and whose exceptional needs mean that a primary school is the best place for their education
* students who are over 19 and whose exceptional needs mean that a secondary school is the best place for their education.

The difference between specialist education agreement and the Ongoing

Resourcing Scheme ( ORS)

The Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (ORS) is one form of agreement under section 37 of the Education and Training Act 2020. If a student has ORS, they still need a specialist education agreement. If a student is not part of ORS, parents can still apply for a specialist education agreement. To be successful, an application needs to be supported by the school and the Ministry.

If a specialist education agreement is reached, then Ministry staff will enter the enrolment into the ENROL system.

For students starting school before they are age five

The Ministry will agree to this only in special circumstances. It must be proven that it's in the child's best educational interests.

For students staying at school longer

Sometimes the parents, the school and the Ministry agree that it would benefit a student's education if they stay longer at their regular school. A specialist education agreement is needed to allow them to stay in a primary school beyond the year they turn 14 or in a secondary school beyond the year they turn 19.

For students enrolling in specialist schools

Before a student is enrolled in a specialist school, a conversation with the Ministry, the parents and the school takes place. After this, a decision is jointly made about whether to apply for a specialist education agreement.

Things to think about when entering into a specialist education agreement:

* what's best for the student's education
* any health and safety issues
* what kind of specialist teaching the student needs
* what therapy the students need
* the location of the child's home and the location of the school
* the transport options to and from school - school transport (SESTA) needs to be applied for separately
* whether the school has capacity to meet this student's needs
* the length of the enrolment and the date the agreement ends or is reviewed.

If a specialist education agreement is declined

Where an application is declined, parents can ask for it to be reconsidered.

Firstly, parents should tell their local Ministry Manager Learning Support that they want the decision reconsidered.

Information is available on the Ministry's website:

[www.education.govt.nz/school/student-support/special-education/entering-into-a-section-9-agreement-](http://www.education.govt.nz/school/student-support/special-education/entering-into-a-section-9-agreement-) for-special-education-services/

When a student with a specialist education agreement leaves the school

When a student leaves their specialist school or class, the specialist education agreement ends. A new agreement is needed each time a student wants to enrol at another specialist school or class.

Specialised School Transport Assistance (SESTA)

Guidance for parents and caregivers

School Transport Assistance

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Once your child gets to school age, if they need help getting to and from school safely they may be able to get School Transport Assistance (SESTA). The help they get is based on their needs and the nearest school that can meet their needs.

A specialist education agreement doesn' t mean you automatically receive SESTA. You will need to apply for this separately.

To apply for SESTA visit our website [www.parents.education.govt.nz/transport-assistance](http://www.parents.education.govt.nz/transport-assistance) or talk to someone to get you started.

You can email [school.transport@education.govt.nz](mailto:school.transport@education.govt.nz) or you can phone 0800 28 72 72.

What is covered by SESTA?

SESTA covers the transport between home and their state or state-integrated school or kura, and potentially between school or kura and a respite care facility. You may also get help if your child needs special equipment to help them travel safely.

Can my child get SESTA?

Your child may be able to get SESTA if they are:

* 5 to 21 years old and meet the mobility criteria or safety criteria
* enrolled at a state, or state-integrated school or kura if that school or kura is the closest
* go to the nearest school, kura or educational setting that meets their learning support needs.

Mobility criteria is defined as: physical or medical needs prevent your child travelling independently to and from school or kura, or using public transport or a school bus. It may be that your child uses a wheelchair or other specialised equipment.

Safety criteria is defined as: there's a significant risk of harm or danger to your child, or to others, during the journey to and from school or kura. Your child may have an intellectual disability or a medical condition.

If your child can use a school bus service this option will be offered first. If not, then the Ministry's learning support team will look into alternatives, taking into account your child's learning support needs, the school or kura they go to, and the number of places on existing transport routes.

What is not covered by SESTA

SESTA may not cover the whole journey or the full transport costs. If you decide to enrol your child at a school or kura that is not the nearest one that meets their needs, your conveyance allowance will only cover the journey to the nearest one.

SESTA doesn't cover transport for your child to or from medical appointments, therapy sessions, counselling etc. SESTA won't be given to your child if their transport costs are being covered by ACC, or if they're at a boarding or residential school.

Talk to the School Transport team for more information about whether your child can get SESTA by calling 0800 28 72 72.

How long will my child receive SESTA

Your child will get SESTA until they are 21 unless there is a specified end date, or their needs or circumstance change. If things do change, you'll have to fill out a new application. Your child's needs will then be reassessed to see whether they are still entitled to SESTA.

Complaints process

If you have concerns about the service or level of assistance your child is receiving, talk to your child's school or kura or directly to the transport provider. If you still feel that things have not been resolved, contact the service agent.

If you still have concerns after that, you can email the Ministry on [school.transport@education.govt.nz](mailto:school.transport@education.govt.nz) or 0800 28 72 72