



An Roinn Oideachais
agus Óige
Department of Education
and Youth

DEIS Strategy - Implementation Plan 2026-2028

A three-year implementation plan to
address educational disadvantage



Dream Empower Inspire Succeed

Gov.ie



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About this document

This document is the first three-year DEIS Implementation Plan, 2026-2028. It sets out the actions to be undertaken over the next three years, to realise the vision and achieve the ambitions of the DEIS Strategy to 2035 for its first period.

It is intended that over the lifetime of the strategy there will be three implementation plans with two further implementation plans, covering 2029-2031 and 2032-2034. 2035 will serve as a final review and redevelopment year.

Annual progress reports will be published to track the delivery of actions. A key action under the strategy is the development and implementation of a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework to track and measure the impact of the new DEIS Strategy.

Overall progress will be reviewed at the end of 2028, to inform the development of the 2029-2031 implementation plan.

This first implementation plan provides a set of actions to be achieved by the end of 2028. They are presented under the outcomes and objectives of the five pillars of the strategy, each reflecting the values and themes of the DEIS Strategy to 2035. The DEIS Strategy to 2035 is available on gov.ie.



Background – The DEIS Programme

DEIS stands for 'Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools'. 'Deis' is also the Irish word for opportunity. The aim of the DEIS Strategy to 2035 is to give children and young people the opportunity to dream, to be empowered through education, to be inspired and to succeed.

DEIS is the main Government policy for addressing concentrated educational disadvantage at school level. It provides a targeted range of supports to schools in the programme. Schools in the DEIS programme are not the only schools that support children and young people at risk of educational disadvantage. All schools receive universal supports aimed at providing an inclusive education system that promotes inclusion, equity and opportunity for all children and young people. These supports include free schoolbooks, free hot school meals (primary), wellbeing supports for students through the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), additional teaching hours under the English as an Additional Language (EAL) scheme, special education teacher (SET) and special needs assistants (SNA) allocations and advisory support from the Department's Inspectorate.

The DEIS programme targets additional resources where they are most needed, in schools with the highest concentration of children and young people experiencing educational disadvantage.





Our Vision for DEIS Strategy to 2035

The vision for the DEIS Strategy to 2035 is to address educational disadvantage in all schools so that every child and young person can dream without limits, is empowered to grow, is inspired to learn and is supported to succeed.

DREAM

Children and young people are encouraged to dream big and be ambitious, to realise a future filled with potential pathways of achievement and opportunity – whether that means completing school, achieving high grades, continuing into further and higher education, entering the world of work, or contributing to their community. Teachers, school leaders and the wider school community create a culture of high expectations and belief in what is possible. They show every child and young person that their dreams matter.

'I like a teacher that will help drive you and get the ambition you want'

From the Children and young people consultations

EMPOWER

Empowerment means giving children and young people the tools, confidence and encouragement to make choices, use their voices and take ownership of their learning. When children and young people feel empowered, they become active participants in shaping their own futures and in making a difference in their communities.

'There is a 'good atmosphere' in school where the staff are 'open and trusting' ... 'You can come from any background, and you will be welcomed, your voice will be heard, and your opinions will be validated'

From the Children and young people consultations

INSPIRE

Inspiring teachers, school leaders, parents and peers help children and young people stay motivated and engaged. They share stories of effort, resilience and success. They create exciting and relevant learning experiences, and build a sense of optimism, expectation and purpose that helps every child and young person aim higher.

'I want to do teaching, and English is my favourite subject. I just want to be an English teacher, just like my English teacher'

From the Children and young people consultations

SUCCEED

Success looks different for every child and young person. With the right support and encouragement, every child and young person can take pride in their progress and achievements – whether that's through academic attainment, mastering a new skill, overcoming a challenge, or achieving a personal goal. Every step forward, big or small, shows that with opportunity and support, every child and young person can succeed.

'If you are happier in school, you will probably do well because you will be more positive and you will do your work better.'

From the Children and young people consultations

What the DEIS Strategy to 2035 means

For Children and Young People

This strategy focuses on positive learning outcomes for all children and young people experiencing educational disadvantage, supporting them to break through barriers, surpass their own educational expectations and reach the highest levels of educational attainment. Children and young people:

- feel valued, respected and experience a sense of belonging.
- gain greater confidence in their learning and barriers to achievement are addressed.
- are supported to stay in education and succeed at key transitions.
- are supported to reach their potential.

For Schools

Through this strategy, the Department of Education and Youth will continue to support schools and those who work in them to address educational disadvantage and promote inclusion. The strategy moves to a more flexible model for DEIS, meaning that over time schools will get the resources that reflect their level of need at a particular time, to better reflect the ever-changing nature of our schools.

- Schools are inclusive, welcoming places where every child and young person is valued and supported.
- High-quality teaching, strong leadership and positive relationships are prioritised.
- Attendance, engagement, participation and progression are actively promoted.
- Schools are empowered to respond to needs within their own context.

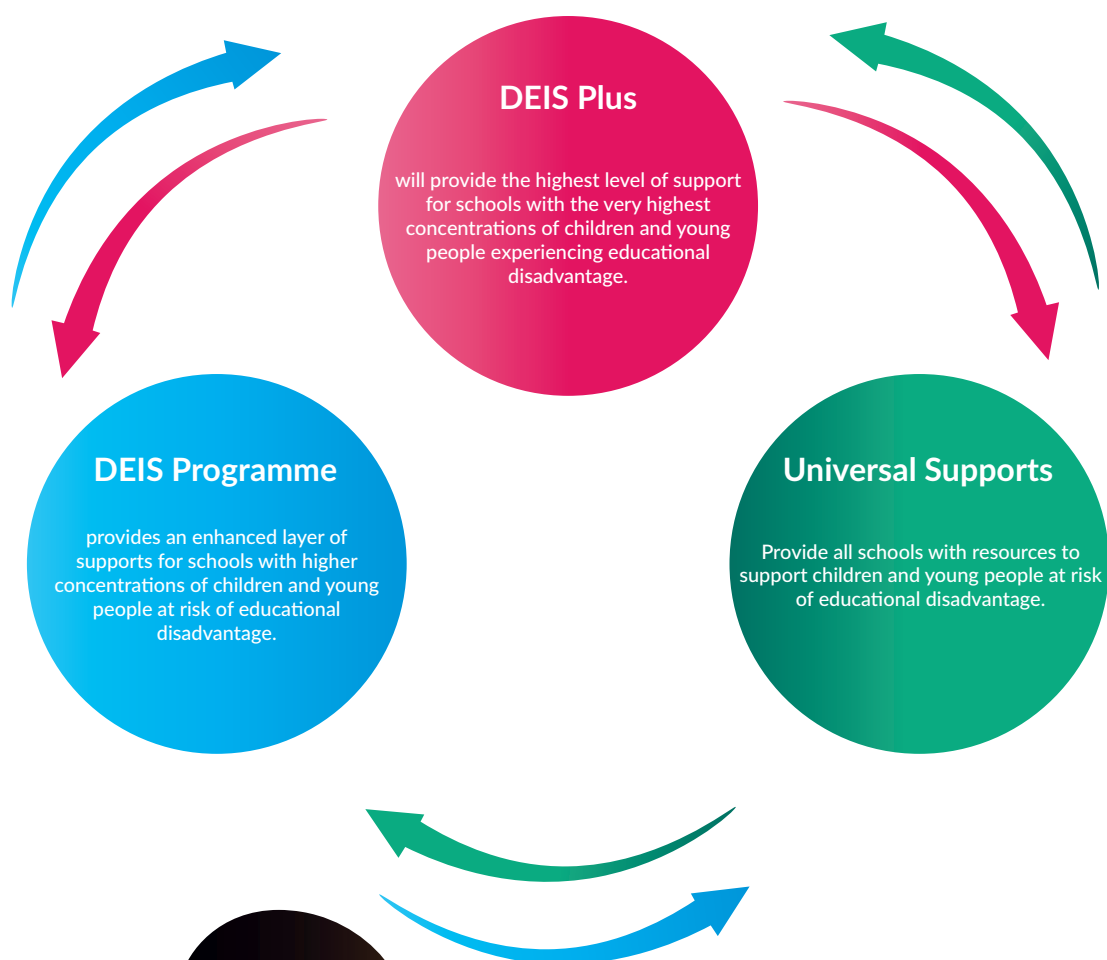
For Policy

This strategy recognises that education is the key to breaking the cycle of disadvantage, creating opportunities and ensuring security for the future. It introduces a long-term, whole-system approach to addressing educational disadvantage in all schools. As a result;

- Equity and inclusion are embedded across policy and practice.
- The Department of Education and Youth will coordinate across its own units and collaborate with other departments to deliver cohesive, coherent policies and supports to schools to address educational disadvantage.
- Policy decisions are informed by evidence, data and lived experience.
- Supports are flexible, targeted, coordinated and sustained over time.

What the DEIS Strategy to 2035 looks like

This vision for DEIS will be implemented at school-level through a continuum of support:



DEIS Values

The strategy, and this implementation plan are guided by a set of core values which will help direct decision making and prioritisation over the life of the strategy. Where there is a reference to 'we' or 'the department' it refers to the Department of Education and Youth, working in partnership with stakeholders.

Child and young person centred

Children and young people are at the heart of this strategy. Their voices have been central to its development and the department will continue to support and encourage their meaningful involvement in decision-making that impacts them. We will also hold and communicate high expectations for learning and success for all children and young people.

Collaborative

The DEIS strategy has been developed through a collaborative process and will be implemented and evaluated in collaboration with children and young people, school leaders and teachers, education partners, support agencies, advocacy bodies for children and young people, academics and officials across the department and other government departments.

Equitable and accessible

The DEIS strategy recognises education as a human right and promotes equity in all schools, focusing particularly on supporting children and young people experiencing educational disadvantage, those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, children and young people experiencing homelessness, and those from Traveller, Roma and migrant communities.

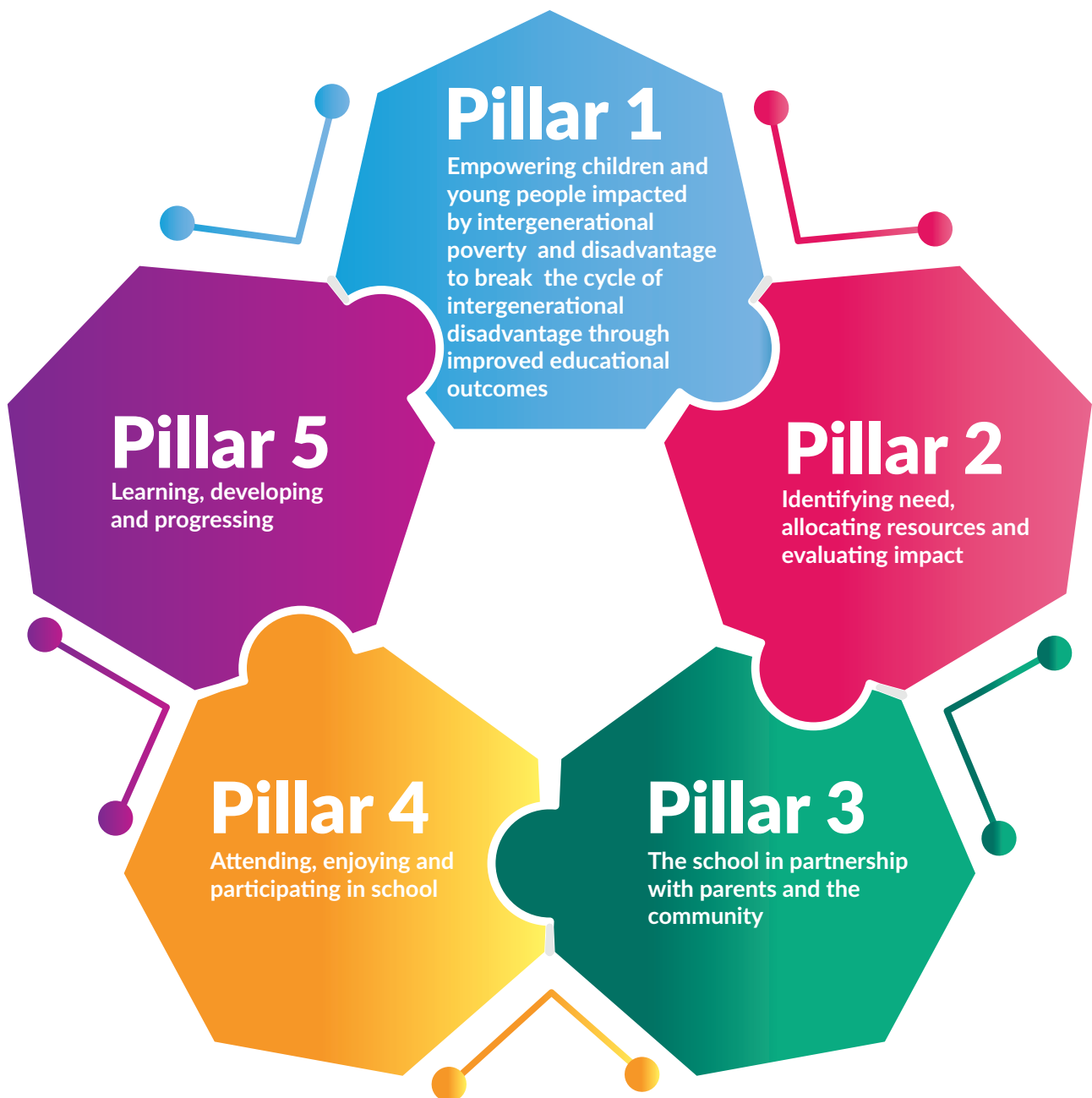
Positive outcomes

Education is the key to breaking cycles of disadvantage. Through the delivery of the strategy, we commit to improving educational outcomes and experiences for children and young people at risk of educational disadvantage to give them the opportunity to achieve their full potential. In order to do this we will support our schools to use a wide range of evidence and data to ensure the actions they take lead to meaningful improvements for children and young people.

Accountable

The Department of Education and Youth is responsible for advancing the implementation of the strategy. The department commits to the development, review and evaluation of this strategy. A monitoring and evaluation framework will be developed with the ESRI to track progress.

DEIS Pillars and Strategic Outcomes



Pillar 1



Empowering children and young people impacted by intergenerational poverty and disadvantage to break the cycle of intergenerational disadvantage through improved educational outcomes

Outcomes

Children and young people who are impacted by intergenerational poverty and disadvantage are empowered to succeed in school and progress into meaningful career paths, initiating positive impacts for future generations.

Strategic objective 1.1 Implement the DEIS Plus scheme to support schools with the highest concentrations of children and young people impacted by intergenerational poverty and disadvantage.

	Action	Lead Department	Support Dept(s)	Timeline – action to be completed by
1.1.1	Develop and publish a new DEIS Plus scheme and implementation plan (2026 – 2028).	DEY	DCDE, DH, DJHAM, DFHERIS, DSP, DRCDG	2026
1.1.2	Implement the new DEIS Plus scheme.	DEY	DCDE, DH, DJHAM, DFHERIS, DSP, DRCDG	2028
1.1.3	Carry out ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the DEIS plus scheme and publish annual reports.	DEY	DCDE, DH, DJHAM, DFHERIS, DSP, DRCDG, ERC	2028

Strategic objective 1.2 Support children and young people who are impacted by acute disadvantage in all schools.

	Action	Lead Department	Support Dept(s)	Timeline - action to be completed by
1.2.1	Extend the Home-School Community Liaison (HSCL) scheme to additional schools, including those not in the DEIS programme, to support engagement with the families of children and young people at risk of educational disadvantage.	DEY		2027
1.2.2	Increase whole-school guidance hours to strengthen the social, personal, educational and career development of students, enabling earlier intervention and supporting equitable outcomes for guidance-related decisions.	DEY		2028
1.2.3	Monitor the role of the School Completion Programme (SCP) to inform future plans on how best to develop and strengthen delivery of SCP supports for children and young people at risk of educational disadvantage and early school leaving.	DEY		2027
1.2.4	Publish the Traveller and Roma Education Strategy Implementation Plan 2026-2028, taking into consideration the vision and aims of the new DEIS Strategy to 2035.	DEY	DCDE, DFHERIS	2026
1.2.5	Implement the Traveller and Roma Education Strategy to enhance educational supports for Traveller and Roma children and young people.	DEY	DCDE, DFHERIS	2028

	Action	Lead Department	Support Dept(s)	Timeline – action to be completed by
1.2.6	Evaluate the TRES Community Link Workers project to strengthen and refine the role, and to inform future plans to extend the project to support children and young people at risk of educational disadvantage to attend, participate and progress in education.	DEY	DCDE	2027
1.2.7	Continue and expand the Summer Holiday Meals Pilot Programme in 2026 which provides UBU Your Place Your Space youth services with a hot meal during the post-primary school holidays. Evaluate the programme and determine a plan for future roll-out.	DEY		2026
1.2.8	Improve uptake in Early Childhood Care and Education programmes and other forms of pre-school, including Equal Start, by children at risk of educational disadvantage, including Traveller and Roma children.	DCDE	DEY	2028
1.2.9	Support the transition of all children at risk of educational disadvantage from early learning and care into primary school, in line with the National Transitions Policy.	DEY, DCDE		2028



Pillar 2

Identifying need, allocating resources and evaluating impact

Outcome

The development of policy and the resourcing of schools to address educational disadvantage are informed, monitored and evaluated using the most relevant, accurate data available.

Strategic objective 2.1 Continue to enhance the accuracy and relevance of the data used to inform policy, including the targeted resourcing of schools, to tackle educational disadvantage.

	Action	Lead Department	Support Dept(s)	Timeline – action to be completed by
2.1.1	Update the refined DEIS identification model to include the most up-to-date data to inform the inclusion of schools in the DEIS Plus scheme.	DEY	DCDE, DHLGH, DJHAM, Pobal, CSO	2026
2.1.2	Progress a spotlight project with Central Statistics Office (CSO), using national census data and administrative data from government departments to examine the validity of the refined DEIS identification model, assess administrative data sources that may enhance the model, and to identify the number and proportion of children and young people at risk of educational disadvantage being supported within the DEIS programme.	CSO	DEY, DT, other departments over time	2026
2.1.3	Examine the potential to develop a national level dataset that will further enhance the information available to inform policy to tackle child poverty, including educational disadvantage.	CSO	DEY, DT, other relevant departments	2027

Strategic objective 2.2 Develop an agile resource allocation model to support children and young people at risk of educational disadvantage in all primary and post-primary schools.

	Action	Lead Department	Support Dept(s)	Timeline - action to be completed by
2.2.1	Align the allocation of DEIS resources to the refined DEIS identification model and most up-to-date data.	DEY		2028
2.2.2	Develop a new DEIS resource allocation model that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supports schools with the highest concentrations of children and young people at risk of educational disadvantage • supports children and young people at risk of educational disadvantage in all schools • is dynamic and has the potential to adjust to changes in a school's levels of need including amalgamations • uses objective data to equitably allocate resources to schools. 	DEY		2027
2.2.3	Conduct an impact assessment on any potential changes to the allocation of resources to schools, ensuring that no child or young person is negatively impacted.	DEY		2027

Strategic objective 2.3 Develop, publish and implement a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

	Action	Lead Department	Support Dept(s)	Timeline – action to be completed by
2.3.1	Establish baseline data against which to measure the progress on tackling educational disadvantage.	DEY	DCDE, DFHERIS, DSP, DH	2026
2.3.2	Conduct evaluations, in line with the Inspectorate’s inspection policy, of specified aspects of the DEIS programme through the annual inspection plan. Communicate and disseminate indicators of best practice arising from these inspections with all schools in the DEIS programme.	DEY		2026
2.3.3	Publish the DEIS Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.	DEY	DCDE	2026
2.3.4	Commence implementation of the DEIS Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.	DEY		2027
2.3.5	Use the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework to incorporate a more flexible approach to addressing educational disadvantage. Explore whether the DEIS themes, pillars and actions, as well as the language used to describe the supports, remain appropriate or whether alternatives should be considered.	DEY		2028
2.3.6	Encourage and support schools to plan for the effective deployment of the additional resources they receive under the DEIS programme.	DEY		2028
2.3.7	Support schools to better use data to monitor the effectiveness of the actions they take to improve the outcomes and experiences of the children and young people in their school.	DEY		2028



Pillar 3

The school in partnership with parents and the community

Outcome

Stronger partnerships between schools, families and communities which support more inclusive opportunities for children and young people, reduce barriers to participation, and improve access to coordinated, integrated services.

Strategic Objective 3.1 Strengthen partnerships between schools, families and communities

	Action	Lead Department	Support Dept(s)	Timeline – action to be completed by
3.1.1	Develop a future vision for the HSCL scheme, to include a review of the allocation model for HSCL coordinator posts and a review of Circular 0016/2019.	DEY	DCDE	2028
3.1.2	Evaluate initiatives in Dublin's North East Inner City (NEIC) that aim to promote greater working in partnership with community and youth services and consider the potential to extend similar initiatives to other areas.	DEY	DH, DCDE	2028
3.1.3	Progress the Charter Bill through the Houses of the Oireachtas and publish Charter Guidelines, including complaints procedures for students and parents.	DEY		2027
3.1.4	Strengthen the participation of children and young people in decision making at school level, including through student councils.	DEY		2028

	Action	Lead Department	Support Dept(s)	Timeline – action to be completed by
3.1.5	Provide support to the National Parents Council to develop parents' associations in schools and the Partnership Schools Ireland Programme.	DEY		2028
3.1.6	Continued development and implementation of evidence-based and culturally competent universal and targeted parenting programmes to support parents in the home and the community.	DH, DCDE		2028
3.1.7	Develop opportunities for greater communication, awareness and cooperation between youth services, including Irish language services and schools in their areas.	DEY		2028
3.1.8	Develop a strategic plan for Youth Work and Youth Services in the North East Inner City (NEIC).	DEY		2026
3.1.9	Continue the roll-out of UBU services and promote stronger links between UBUs and post-primary schools in the DEIS programme.	DEY		2027
3.1.10	Support the establishment of Irish language youth clubs and after-school activities in areas where these are not currently available.	DEY		2028
3.1.11	Engage with the Children's and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSCs), Local Community Development Committees (LCDCs) and Community Safety Partnerships/Youth Diversion Projects to promote greater partnership with schools at a local level.	DCDE, DEY, DJHAM, DRCDG		2028

	Action	Lead Department	Support Dept(s)	Timeline – action to be completed by
3.1.12	Further promote the use of school buildings and facilities to community, early childhood and school-aged childcare and youth services outside of school hours, including use for Irish language provision.	DEY	DRCDG, DCDE, DH, DSP, DJHAM	2028
3.1.13	Work in partnership with the LGMA and the Public Library Service to strengthen strategic linkages between libraries and schools. This collaboration will underpin the provision of services that support children and young people in the community, particularly those experiencing educational disadvantage.	DEY DRCDG	LGMA	2028
3.1.14	Engage with Webwise to further promote and develop up-to-date digital media literacy advice and resources for parents/guardians, as well as developing a specific webinar to support HSCLs on digital media literacy and online safety.	DEY		2028

Strategic Objective 3.2 Continue to support schools and progress a reduction in the cost of education

	Action	Lead Department	Support Dept(s)	Timeline – action to be completed by
3.2.1	Review Circular 32/2017 which sets out the measures to be adopted by schools to reduce the cost of school uniforms and other costs for parents.	DEY		2026
3.2.2	Increase capitation funding to schools of all types to ensure that schools can meet the elevated day-to-day running costs and reduce the financial burden on families, as part of the annual estimates process. Increase capitation to primary urban band one schools in the DEIS Programme by €20.	DEY		2026
3.2.3	Continue to provide free schoolbooks to all recognised primary, special and post-primary schools in the Free Education Scheme.	DEY		2028
3.2.4	Support the Department of Social Protection on the expansion and improvement of the free hot school meals programme.	DSP	DEY	2028
3.2.5	Provide free period products in schools in the free education scheme to ensure no student is disadvantaged in their education due to period poverty.	DEY	DH	2028

Strategic Objective 3.3 Improve collaboration between government departments and agencies and better integration of services to address educational disadvantage

	Action	Lead Department	Support Dept(s)	Timeline – action to be completed by
3.3.1	Actively engage with other Departments across Government through the Interdepartmental Group on Addressing Educational Disadvantage to identify and progress collaborative projects and initiatives to support children and young people at risk of educational disadvantage.	DEY	DRCDG, DCDE, DH, DSP, DJHAM, DFHERIS, DT	2028
3.3.2	Ensure that relevant information is shared between the Interdepartmental Group on Addressing Educational Disadvantage and the engagement and steering structures to be established under the Opportunities for Youth strategy.	DEY		2028
3.3.3	Under Healthy Ireland and Healthy Communities programmes, work with the Department of Health and the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, to support improved health and wellbeing outcomes for children and young people at risk of educational disadvantage, and their families, by identifying and progressing collaborative community-based projects and initiatives that link healthy eating to food provenance by engaging in horticulture, cooking fresh produce and visiting farms.	DEY, DH	DCDE	2028

	Action	Lead Department	Support Dept(s)	Timeline – action to be completed by
3.3.4	Work with the Department of Health to develop and implement initiatives to support increased access to services and promote increased health and wellbeing outcomes for children and young people.	DEY, DH	DCDE	2028
3.3.5	Work with sporting organisations to encourage opportunities for greater promotion of sport and activity in schools in the DEIS programme and the DEIS Plus scheme	DEY	DCCS	2028
3.3.6	Support the Active School Flag initiative in promoting and attracting DEIS schools to the new post-primary programme.	DEY		2028





Pillar 4

Attending, enjoying and participating in school

Outcome

School attendance improves among children and young people at risk of educational disadvantage across all schools, driven by inclusive, high-quality learning environments that foster enjoyment, belonging, wellbeing, social development and academic achievement for every child and young person.

Strategic Objective 4.1 Increase school attendance levels of children and young people in all schools, but in particular, for children and young people at risk of educational disadvantage.

	Action	Lead Department	Support Dept(s)	Timeline – action to be completed by
4.1.1	Implement a national attendance campaign in partnership with TESS.	DEY		2026
4.1.2	Develop Anseo to strengthen schools' capacity for targeted attendance interventions, taking the many risk factors for non-attendance into consideration.	DEY		2026
4.1.3	Enhance the department's access to data on attendance and absenteeism.	DEY		2027
4.1.4	Strengthen linkages between the three TESS support strands, the SCP, the Education Welfare Service, the HSCL Scheme, and youth services so that the range of young people's support needs during school days, outside of school hours, school holidays and weekends can be best planned for and met.	DEY		2028

	Action	Lead Department	Support Dept(s)	Timeline – action to be completed by
4.1.5	Create and implement a shared service employment framework for SCP staff to strengthen governance and ensure sustainable employment practices. This will support the vision to improve the education experience and outcomes for children and young people at risk of early school leaving and educational disadvantage.	DEY		2026
4.1.6	Promote and support greater participation in the DEIS summer programme and support transitions from ECCE to school through summer programmes.	DEY	DCDE	2027
4.1.7	Work with schools in the DEIS programme to link their attendance strategies to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • school climate and environment • the extent to which children and young people feel welcome and included in their school • the extent to which children and young people find classroom experiences engaging, interesting, relevant and experience success in their learning • the quality of the links between home and school. 	DEY, DCDE		2028
4.1.8	Provide daily transport to and from school. School Transport is currently provided to over 180,000 children and young people daily.	DEY		2028
4.1.9	Continue to liaise with Tusla educational welfare officers (EWOs) in relation to pupils who are not attending school due to their home situations or where the lack of transport is a barrier for children to attend school. DEY will assess all options available in an effort to provide transport to the pupils where possible.	DEY		2028

	Action	Lead Department	Support Dept(s)	Timeline – action to be completed by
4.1.10	Continue to provide Gaeltacht scholarships to students attending post-primary schools participating in the DEIS Programme and increase awareness of and encourage student access to these scholarships.	DRCDG	DEY	2028
4.1.11	Work with the Department of Children, Disability and Equality under the aegis of the statutory Children First Interdepartmental Committee to strengthen child safeguarding frameworks for schools, with a particular focus on school attendance and engagement	DCDE, DEY		2028

Strategic Objective 4.2 Support school leaders, teachers, and school staff to inspire children and young people at risk of educational disadvantage, to set high expectations for their future and to achieve success through education.

	Action	Lead Department	Support Dept(s)	Timeline – action to be completed by
4.2.1	Encourage teachers and members of the school community to participate in targeted cultural awareness and anti-bias training, with a particular focus on improving representation of Traveller and Roma in our schools and curriculum. Encourage all educators and professionals working with children to engage in continuous professional development in cultural humility and culturally responsive practice with a particular focus on improving representation of Traveller, Roma and other minority groups in our schools and curriculum.	DEY		2028

	Action	Lead Department	Support Dept(s)	Timeline – action to be completed by
4.2.2	Promote the use of the EPIC Take Care school resources by teachers and members of the school community to support children and young people who are or have been in care, throughout their education.	DEY	DCDE	2028
4.2.3	Promote a Community of Practice approach to encourage shared learning and peer exchange on successful initiatives that tackle educational disadvantage.	DEY		2028
4.2.4	Support Oide, NCSE and NEPS to promote and provide a range of professional learning for teachers and school leaders.	DEY		2028
4.2.5	Develop and promote access routes for young people from diverse backgrounds to become teachers.	DEY	DFHERIS	2028
4.2.6	Develop initiatives to support the retention of teachers in schools with a high concentration of children at risk of educational disadvantage.	DEY		2028
4.2.7	Progress the reduction of the threshold for leadership posts in DEIS schools.	DEY		2026
4.2.8	Publish and implement the new Intercultural Guidelines.	DEY		2026
4.2.9	Provide up-to-date training for post-primary teachers to support the updated Digital Media Literacy Short Course at Junior Cycle including DEIS schools.	DEY		2028
4.2.10	Work with Oide TIE to implement AI supports for teachers and schools within the DEIS programme.	DEY		2028

Strategic Objective 4.3 Support the mental health and wellbeing needs of children and young people at risk of educational disadvantage.

	Action	Lead Department	Support Dept(s)	Timeline – action to be completed by
4.3.1	Review the findings of the External Evaluation of Strand 1 and Strand 2 of the Counselling in Primary Schools Pilot and consider the results to inform future policy.	DEY		2027
4.3.2	Review the department's Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice.	DEY		2027
4.3.3	Evaluate the DEIS Plus mental health and wellbeing initiative to inform future policy.	DEY		2028
4.3.4	Progress the rollout of the NEART programme.	DEY		2026
4.3.5	Develop and implement a work programme to progress actions on enhancing children and young people's social and emotional development under Pathways to Wellbeing National Mental Health Promotion Plan 2024-2030 and ensure social and emotional supports are age-appropriate and are tailored to meet the support needs of children and young people experiencing educational disadvantage in the context of universal provision.	DH	DEY, DCDE	2028



Pillar 5

Learning, developing and progressing

Outcome

Children and young people at risk of educational disadvantage have access to high-quality, inclusive learning. They receive targeted support to improve outcomes in a range of subject areas and are empowered to progress and achieve success at every stage of their education

Strategic Objective 5.1 Improve the educational outcomes in literacy, numeracy and digital literacy for children and young people at risk of educational disadvantage.

	Action	Lead Dept(s) and Unit	Support Dept(s)	Timeline – action to be completed by
5.1.1	Support schools in the DEIS programme to provide high-quality learning and teaching that is inclusive, student-centred, informed and evidence based, and that supports young people to participate and make progress in all areas of their learning and development.	DEY		2028
5.1.2	Oversee implementation of the Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy, with particular focus on actions that support children and young people at risk of educational disadvantage.	DEY, DCDE		2028
5.1.3	Explore professional learning opportunities to support school leadership teams to enhance effective use of their literacy and numeracy data to identify trends, inform teaching and monitor learner outcomes.	DEY		2028

	Action	Lead Dept(s) and Unit	Support Dept(s)	Timeline – action to be completed by
5.1.4	Strengthen family engagement in literacy and numeracy learning, recognising the role of families and communities in supporting learning beyond the classroom.	DEY		2028
5.1.5	Conduct an evaluation of the existing literacy and numeracy intervention programmes currently in use by schools in the DEIS programme.	DEY		2028
5.1.6	Support the learning of Irish by children and young people at risk of educational disadvantage.	DEY		2028
5.1.7	Participate in large-scale national and international assessments, using the data to track progress, identify emerging challenges, and inform targeted interventions.	DEY		2028

Strategic Objective 5.2 Continue to incorporate the perspectives and lived experiences of children and young people at risk of educational disadvantage in the development and implementation of policy.

	Action	Lead Dept(s) and Unit	Support Dept(s)	Timeline – action to be completed by
5.2.1	Support the enactment of the redeveloped Primary School Curriculum in primary schools in the DEIS programme through a phased approach to allow schools to adapt at a manageable pace, giving teachers the opportunity to familiarise themselves with new teaching methods, pedagogical principles, and curriculum content.	DEY		2028

	Action	Lead Dept(s) and Unit	Support Dept(s)	Timeline – action to be completed by
5.2.2	Develop assessment guidance and a range of materials to enhance progression across the redeveloped Primary School Curriculum and support every child to make progress in their learning.	DEY		2028
5.2.3	Include the perspectives and contexts of children and young people at risk of educational disadvantage, and their parents/guardians, in the development and review of subject specifications at primary, junior cycle and senior cycle levels.	DEY		2028
5.2.4	Include the perspectives and contexts of young people at risk of educational disadvantage, and their parents/guardians, in the development of proposals to diversify pathways through senior cycle.	DEY		2028
5.2.5	Support increased participation in the Transition Year Programme by students at risk of educational disadvantage including through targeted measures such as the provision of additional teaching allocations to schools in line with the Senior Cycle Redevelopment Implementation Support Measures package.	DEY		2027

Strategic Objective 5.3 Increase collaboration with further and higher education institutions and industry to provide children and young people at risk of educational disadvantage with equal access to pathways that enable them to progress, achieve and gain the skills for a brighter future.

	Action	Lead Dept(s) and Unit	Support Dept(s)	Timeline - action to be completed by
5.3.1	Review and publish updated Guidelines for STEM School-Business/Industry Partnership to support schools and promote access to work placement and enrichment programmes.	DEY		2027
5.3.2	Explore potential partnerships with business and industry for enhanced engagement with schools in DEIS and DEIS Plus programmes and develop a plan to grow activity in this area.	DEY	DETE	2027
5.3.3	Monitor the participation of learners from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds in FET and engage SOLAS, the ETBs, and ETBI on work to improve access where gaps are identified.	DFHERIS (FET unit)	DEY	2028
5.3.4	Strengthen collaboration between whole-school guidance teams, HSCL, SCP, access officers and industry partners to support learners at risk of educational disadvantage in progressing effectively and transitioning successfully to life beyond post-primary school.	DEY	DETE, DFHERIS	2028
5.3.5	Implement a range of actions from the review of Out-of-School Education Provision to ensure children and young people who become disengaged from mainstream school can continue in education.	DEY	DFHERIS	2027

	Action	Lead Dept(s) and Unit	Support Dept(s)	Timeline – action to be completed by
5.3.6	Support students and staff of schools in the DEIS programme to access European opportunities that support internationalisation, interculturalism and long-term institutional development via the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps (ESC) programmes, making learning mobility a realistic possibility in the Irish education system.	DFHERIS	DEY	2028



Glossary of Abbreviations and Terms

Acronyms

AI	Artificial Intelligence
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DCDE	Department of Children, Disability and Equality
DEIS	Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools
DEY	Department of Education and Youth
DETE	Department of Enterprise, Tourism and Employment
DFHERIS	Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science
DH	Department of Health
DHLGH	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
DJHAM	Department of Justice, Home Affairs and Migration
DRCDG	Department of Rural and Community Development and the Gaeltacht
DSP	Department of Social Protection
DT	Department of Transport
EAL	English as an additional language
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education Programme
EPIC	Empowering People in Care
ERC	Educational Research Centre
ESC	European Solidarity Corps
ETB	Education and training board
ETBI	Education and training boards Ireland
EWO	Education welfare officer
FET	Further education and training
HSCL	Home School Community Liaison
LGMA	Local Government and Management Agency
NCSE	National Council for Special Education
NEIC	North East Inner City Initiative
NEPS	National Educational Psychological Service
SCP	School Completion Programme
STEM	Science, technology, engineering and mathematics
TESS	Tusla Educational Support Services
TIE	Technology in Education
TRES	Traveller and Roma Education Strategy

Terms

Anseo	An evidence-based framework to help schools analyse and respond to attendance data.
EPIC Take Care	A resource deployed by EPIC to help schools better understand and support children and young people in care.
Erasmus+ A	European programme for education, training, youth, and sport that empowers individuals and organisations to grow and connect across Europe and beyond.
NEART	The national programme for mental health and wellbeing resources and training for post-primary schools that will be delivered by Jigsaw.
Oide	A support service for teachers and school leaders, funded by the Department of Education and Youth.
SOLAS	A state agency that oversees the building of a world class Further Education and Training sector in Ireland, developing skills to fuel Ireland's future.
UBU	Your Place Your Space scheme - provides funding to youth services that support young people to develop the personal and social skills required to improve their life chances.

