

National Office

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DR: 924617

12 May 2015

Dear Latifa

Thank you for your email of 4 May 2015 about funding for mainstream schools to be accessible for students with special education needs.

The Boards of Trustees are responsible for making sure their school is accessible and all students are healthy and safe within the school environment. The Ministry of Education funds Boards to make property modifications for students with special education needs. Funding is provided on a case-by-case basis through the Special Education Grant (SEG) or the school's Operations Grant.

Before a student with special education needs is enrolled at a school, the Ministry's occupational and physical therapists visit the school to assess whether modifications are needed to cater for the student's individual needs, and if so, what they should be. The Ministry then funds the school to upgrade its existing facilities, based on the therapists' recommendations.

Once the student has begun attending the school, any further necessary property modifications are paid for by the Board, through the school's Five Year Agreement (5YA) for infrastructure and property planning. The amount of 5YA funding a school receives takes into account the support required by its students with special education needs. Schools are also expected to have contingency funding in place for this purpose.


As you may be aware, new schools are designed to be modern learning environments, breaking down the educational and physical barriers to learning. This means all new schools are fully accessible.

You can find further detail on property modification on the Ministry's website at: <http://www.minedu.govt.nz/NZEducation/EducationPolicies/Schools/PropertyToolBox/StateSchools/Funding/SpEdPropertyProvision.aspx>

Every school receives a SEG and they decide how to use it to support students. In addition to the SEG, the Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (ORS) provides funding for a small group of school students with the very highest needs for specialist support. There are a number of other resources available for students whose needs are not at a level that meets the criteria for the ORS. These resources include Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour, Resource Teachers: Literacy, Resource Teachers: Vision, Resource Teachers: Deaf, Speech-language therapy, Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy and Assistive Technology.

If you have further questions, or you are concerned about the accessibility provisions for a specific student, you can contact your local Ministry of Education special education office. Details are available here: <http://www.education.govt.nz/ministry-of-education/contact-us/district-office-contacts/>.

Yours sincerely



12 MAY 2015

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