



SPECIAL SCHOOL RESOURCE CENTRES (SSRC)

FACTSHEET

1 WHAT IS A SPECIAL SCHOOL RESOURCE CENTRE?

In 2001, South Africa adopted an inclusive approach to education through Education White Paper 6. This policy outlines strategies to be implemented for the provision of support in education to accommodate a wide range of learning needs. In acknowledgement of the resources and expertise that exist in special schools, the policy envisaged that special schools be strengthened to function as resource centres offering system wide support to learners who require a high level of support.

A SSRC is first and foremost a special school providing specialised education to the enrolled learners. Special schools admit learners whose support needs can be accommodated under the school's area of specialisation. SSRCs will be linked to District Based Support Teams so that they can provide this specialised professional support in curriculum, assessment and instruction to designated full service and other neighbourhood schools. Learner enrolment should be reduced to enable SSRCs to fulfil their outreach function.

According to the Inclusive Education Policy, over time all special schools will be converted into special school resource centres (SSRC) and serve as centres of excellence.

2 PROFESSIONAL STAFF PROVISION OF SSRCs

- SSRCs should be adequately and appropriately staffed so that they are able to fulfil their role as a resource centre
- Professional staff should have high levels of expertise in the area of specialisation of the school
- It is important that SSRCs allocate sufficient time for professional staff to provide support to other learning institutions.

3 THE OUTREACH FUNCTION OF THE SSRC

There are three ways that support could be provided by the SSRC:

1 SUPPORT TO LEARNERS, FAMILY AND THE COMMUNITY

- Work collaboratively with community organisations and structures including organisations for persons with disabilities, parent organisations, NGOs, grandparents and caregivers in providing teaching and learning support
- Work with the community on advocacy and awareness-raising programmes aimed at changing attitudes towards people with disabilities and supporting the implementation of an inclusive education system



- Function as a multidisciplinary assessment and review centre offering assessment for learners
- Provide therapeutic support to learners with disabilities in ordinary schools
- Offer early intervention programmes which aim to minimize barriers to learning
- Offer family support services
- Serve as a training facility offering specialised information and skills for parents and the community.

Tips

- ▶ SSRCs need to be creative and develop various strategies to source experts in their own communities who can provide complementary skills to augment the support function of the resource centre.

2 SUPPORT THROUGH CURRICULUM AND CAPACITY BUILDING

- SSRCs can provide specialised curriculum planning and delivery support to teachers in ordinary schools
- Teacher training can be provided on a range of skills, depending on the school's expertise and training needs of the schools in the surrounding neighbourhood and community.

“ In addition to the guidelines for special schools, SSRCs should have expert knowledge and skills that are not available in other schools in the planning and delivery of the curriculum programmes that are offered in their school. This includes but is not limited to aligning their programme to the national curriculum, differentiating and adapting the curriculum so that learners enrolled in their schools are able to learn and develop. ”

Guidelines to ensure quality education and support in special schools and special school resource centres to support Inclusive Education, 2014

3 RESOURCE AND FACILITY SUPPORT

- Offer to store and maintain specialised equipment for learners with high support needs
- Serve as a general resource centre and provide resources such as LTSM (Learning & Teaching Support Material), ICT and access to technology services
- Function as a loan centre of specialised equipment for learners in ordinary public schools.

Note

The SSRC has a mandate to work with the community to support the mobilisation of children and youth who are outside the system and who have no access to schooling.

Since the inception of White Paper 6 in 2001, many special schools in South Africa have been converted to well-functioning resource centres. The outreach support provided to ordinary schools and parents has facilitated the successful inclusion of children with disabilities into their local neighbourhood schools.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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For more information about the *Teaching and Learning for Inclusive Education* project: vvoeb.be/southafrica

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