



Information note SDF 02/2026

**To: The Management Authorities of Recognised Primary
Schools and Chief Executives of Education and Training
Boards (ETBs)**

**June 2026 Capitation Grant Payment to Recognised Primary
Schools in the Free Education Scheme**

1. Introduction

The purpose of this information note is to advise schools of the arrangements for the June 2026 capitation grant payment. This note contains important information about a change in the timing of the primary capitation grant payments, to support improved cash flow for schools.

2. Purpose of Capitation Grant

Capitation funding is intended to contribute to the day-to-day running costs of schools and consequently should be used to meet the cost of items such as heating, lighting, cleaning, insurance and general upkeep in schools.

Capitation funding provided for general running costs and ancillary funding provided for caretaking and secretarial services may be regarded as a common grant from which the Board of Management can allocate according to its own priorities. Please see [Circular 0040/2009](#) for more information.

The Ancillary Services grant is intended to cater for the cost of secretarial and caretaking services. Details regarding the ancillary services grant are outlined in a separate circular which is published on the Department's website. The regulations now in force for employing secretaries, as a result of the Fórsa/WRC agreement, can be found in [Circular 0036/2022](#).

Grant funding should be used for the purpose for which it is provided in accordance with DPER [Circular 13/2014](#).

3. Arrangements for June 2026 payment

Historically, June payments have included both the balancing payment due to schools for the current school year and payments reflecting budget increases for the following school year. Over time, the funding within the June payment for



the coming school year has become embedded in the funding. The Department is now working towards discontinuing the practice of making payments for the following school year, with the introduction of a September payment.

A payment instalment of the 2025/26 school year capitation grant was made in December 2025 to support schools with cashflow, with a further instalment issued in January 2026.

The June 2026 payment will be calculated based on the current school year's enrolments to determine the total annual grant entitlement. This amount will then be reduced by the value of the payments of December 2025 and January 2026.

The payment for the following school year that would have traditionally been made in June 2026 in respect of Budget 2026 increases will instead be issued as a separate payment in September 2026, aligning it with the appropriate school year.

The Department will continue its efforts to realign historically embedded budget increases—previously paid through June instalments—towards the September payment cycle.

The same arrangements have been applied to the enhanced rates of the capitation grant.

4. Arrangements for 2026/27

As part of Budget 2026 the following changes will be made to the primary capitation grant, for the 2026/27 school year:

- Increase of €50 on the mainstream rate, from €224 to €274.
- Special schools will receive the same rates of capitation for young people aged 12 and over, as for their peers in mainstream post-primary schools.
- Special schools with fewer than 60 pupils will receive capitation for a minimum of 60 pupils.
- An increase of €20 in capitation rates for Urban Band One DEIS primary schools and DEIS Plus primary schools to €294.

For the 2026/27 school year, there will be three payment instalments. The first payment instalment of capitation grant funding for 2026/27 will be paid in September 2026. This is a change from the normal timing of the first instalment which is usually paid in January.



- The amount to be paid in this instalment is equal to 4 months of the €50 increase in the rate, which is the difference between the old rate (€224) and the new rate (€274). This works out at €16.67 per pupil.
- For DEIS urban Band one and DEIS Plus primary schools, this instalment also includes four months of the €20 increase, which is €6.67 per pupil.
- For special schools, this instalment also includes four months' rate for students over 12 years of age, at the same rate as their peers in mainstream post-primary, which is €44.

The second instalment will be paid in January 2027. The third instalment (balancing payment) will be paid in June 2027 for the full 2026/2027 school year. This balancing payment will be amended to account for the discontinued practice of including a payment for the following school year.

An updated circular will be issued in September 2026 with the rates and the arrangements for the school year 2026/27.

5. Circulation and Queries

Please ensure that this information note is brought to the attention of the board of management and all relevant staff in the school.

Queries from schools in relation to this information note should be addressed to Schools Division Financial section at sdfinfo@education.gov.ie.

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25 June 2026