

CHAPTER 4 – INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN EDUCATION

4.1 Background and Rationale

4.1.1 The NPE, 1986 and POA, 1992 gives the basic policy framework for education, emphasizing on correcting the existing inequalities, it stresses on reducing dropout rates, improving learning achievements and expanding access to students who have not had an easy opportunity to be a part of the general system. The NPE, 1986 envisaged some measures for integrating of children with physical and mental handicap with the general community as equal partners, preparing them for their normal growth and development and enabling them to face life with courage and confidence.

4.1.2 India has also been signatory to international declarations like the Salamanca Statement and framework for action on special needs education (1994) and Biwako Millennium Framework for Action (2002) and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006 that emphasize the need for fundamental educational policy shifts to enable general schools to include children with disabilities. The NCF-2005 recommends making the curriculum flexible and appropriate to accommodate the diversity of school children including those with disabilities in both cognitive and non-cognitive areas.

4.1.3 The Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Integrated Education for the Disabled Children was introduced in 1992 with a view to providing educational opportunities for children with disabilities in general schools, to facilitate their retention in the schools system. It provided for facilities to students with disabilities including expenses on books and stationery, expenses on uniforms, transport allowance, reader allowance, escort allowance, hostel accommodation and actual cost for equipments. The scheme also supported the appointment of special teachers, provision for resource rooms and removal of architectural barriers in schools.

4.1.4 The Centrally Sponsored Scheme of SSA of 2001 had set time-bound targets for the achievements of UEE. With “zero rejection” as its cornerstone, the programme provided support for the inclusion of children with disabilities in general schools at the elementary level. The SSA norms were further strengthened by the RTE Act, 2009 which talks about free and compulsory elementary education to children without any discrimination on the basis of caste, gender, disability etc.

4.1.5 While the RTE Act mandates inclusion of CWSN, some may be unable to attend school despite specific interventions designed for their education. The amendment of RTE Act (in August 2012) has included CWSN in the definition of disadvantaged groups. It includes children with severe - multiple disabilities with the right to opt for Home Based Education (HBE), thus creating an enabling environment for all children.

4.1.7 As SSA supported inclusion of children with special needs at the elementary education level, a need was felt for a scheme for the disabled children at secondary stage. The IEDSS scheme was, therefore implemented to enable all children and young persons with disabilities to have access to secondary education and to improve their enrolment, retention and achievement in the general education system. Under the scheme every school was proposed to be made disabled-friendly. The

Centrally Sponsored IEDSS Scheme aimed at enabling all students with disabilities completing eight years of elementary schooling an opportunity to complete four years of secondary schooling (classes IX to XII) in an inclusive and enabling environment and provided educational opportunities and facilities to students with disabilities in the general education system at the secondary level (classes IX to XII).

4.1.8 Samagra Shiksha aims to look at education of all children including CWSN in a continuum from pre-school to class XII. The scheme will cover all children with special needs with one or more disabilities as mentioned in the schedule of disabilities of the Right of the Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016¹⁵ studying in Government, Government-aided and local body schools.

4.1.9 The scheme stresses on working in convergence with all the line Departments/ Ministries and intends to provide relevant holistic support for effective and appropriate services for education of CWSN.

4.1.10 The objectives of the scheme are:

- To enable all children and young persons with disabilities to have access to inclusive education and improve their enrolment, retention and achievement in the general education system.
- Identification of children with disabilities at the school level and assessment of her/his educational needs.
- Provision of aids and appliance and assistive devices, to the children with special needs as per requirement.
- Removal of architectural barriers in schools so that students with disability have access to classrooms, laboratories, libraries and toilets in the school.
- Supplying appropriate teaching learning materials, medical facilities, vocational training support, guidance and counselling services and therapeutic services to children with special needs as per their requirement in convergence with line departments.
- General school teachers will be sensitized and trained to teach and involve children with special needs in the general classroom. For existing special educators, capacity building programmes will be undertaken.
- CWSN will have access to support services through special educators, establishment of resource rooms, vocational education, therapeutic services and counselling.

¹⁵ <http://www.disabilityaffairs.gov.in/upload/uploadfiles/files/RPWD%20ACT%202016.pdf>

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THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, 2016
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EDUCATION

16. The appropriate Government and the local authorities shall endeavour that all educational institutions funded or recognised by them provide inclusive education to the children with disabilities and towards that end shall—

- (i) admit them without discrimination and provide education and opportunities for sports and recreation activities equally with others;
- (ii) make building, campus and various facilities accessible;
- (iii) provide reasonable accommodation according to the individual's requirements;
- (iv) provide necessary support individualised or otherwise in environments that maximise academic and social development consistent with the goal of full inclusion;
- (v) ensure that the education to persons who are blind or deaf or both is imparted in the most appropriate languages and modes and means of communication;
- (vi) detect specific learning disabilities in children at the earliest and take suitable pedagogical and other measures to overcome them;
- (vii) monitor participation, progress in terms of attainment levels and completion of education in respect of every student with disability;
- (viii) provide transportation facilities to the children with disabilities and also the attendant of the children with disabilities having high support needs.

17. The appropriate Government and the local authorities shall take the following measures for the purpose of section 16, namely:—

- (a) to conduct survey of school going children in every five years for identifying children with disabilities, ascertaining their special needs and the extent to which these are being met: Provided that the first survey shall be conducted within a period of two years from the date of commencement of this Act;
- (b) to establish adequate number of teacher training institutions;
- (c) to train and employ teachers, including teachers with disability who are qualified in sign language and Braille and also teachers who are trained in teaching children with intellectual disability;
- (d) to train professionals and staff to support inclusive education at all levels of school education.
- (e) to establish adequate number of resource centres to support educational institutions at all levels of school education;
- (f) to promote the use of appropriate augmentative and alternative modes including means and formats of communication, Braille and sign language to supplement the use of one's own speech to fulfill the daily communication needs of persons with speech, communication or language disabilities and enables them to participate and contribute to their community and society;
- (g) to provide books, other learning materials and appropriate assistive devices to students with benchmark disabilities free of cost up to the age of eighteen years;
- (h) to provide scholarships in appropriate cases to students with benchmark disability;
- (i) to make suitable modifications in the curriculum and examination system to meet the needs of students with disabilities such as extra time for completion of examination paper, facility of scribe or amanuensis, exemption from second and third language courses;
- (j) to promote research to improve learning; and
- (k) any other measures, as may be required.

4.2 Target Group

4.2.1 The scheme will cover all children from pre-school to senior secondary stage studying in Government, local body and Government-aided schools, with one or more disabilities as defined under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (2016) namely:

1. Blindness
2. Low-vision
3. Leprosy Cured persons
4. Hearing Impairment (deaf and hard of hearing)
5. Locomotor Disability
6. Dwarfism
7. Intellectual Disability
8. Mental Illness
9. Autism Spectrum Disorder
10. Cerebral Palsy
11. Muscular Dystrophy
12. Chronic Neurological conditions
13. Specific Learning Disabilities
14. Multiple Sclerosis
15. Speech and Language disability
16. Thalassemia
17. Hemophilia
18. Sickle Cell disease
19. Multiple Disabilities including deaf blindness
20. Acid Attack victim
21. Parkinson's disease

4.2.2 Girls with disabilities will receive special focus and efforts would be made under the scheme to help them gain access to schools, as also to provide motivation and guidance for developing their potential.

4.2.3 All the enrolled CWSN will be covered through UDISE/SDMIS and will eventually be linked with Aadhaar, ultimately facilitating the State/UT to track CWSN of both systems i.e. those that are in school and those with Home based. The UDISE will have the relevant details of children. Further an extensive database will be developed which will cover all the particulars of children including the type of disability, degree of severity, medical needs, emergency contacts and all other relevant details that will help the School management to cater to the needs of the CWSN.

4.3 Components of the Scheme

The Scheme will include assistance for two kinds of components:

4.3.1 Student oriented component

The student oriented component may be utilized for specified items like:-

- (i) Identification and assessment of children with disabilities.

- (ii) Provision of aids and appliances, medical services, diagnostic services etc.
- (iii) Access to and development of teaching learning material as per requirement etc.
- (iv) Provision of facilities like transport/escort facilities for children with severe disabilities, hostel facilities, scholarship, assistive devices, support staff (readers, amanuensis) etc.
- (v) Provision of large print text book, Braille books and uniform allowance.
- (vi) Stipend for Girl Students @ Rs. 200 per month for 10 months to encourage their participation in the school system for all girls with disabilities studying in Classes-I to XII.
- (vii) The use of ICT to increase access to a vast amount of information not otherwise available.
- (viii) Awareness and motivation camps for increasing enrolment and retention.
- (ix) Provision of Home Based Education for children with severe multiple disabilities with a view to mainstream them in the general education system.

4.3.2 Resource support

For providing resource support to CWSN, the existing human resource appointed under SSA and RMSA will be rationalized and the remaining vacancies may be filled through fresh appointment as per the norms provided at **Annexure-III**. All special educators should be registered with Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI). These educators should mandatorily be available for all CWSN including the children with high support needs as well. The educators may be posted at the block or cluster level or as per the requirement and can operate in an itinerant mode, covering a group of schools where children with special needs are enrolled so that each child with special need is adequately covered.

4.4 Key areas of the Inclusive Education Component

Education for CWSN involves multiple aspects above and beyond the financial support. Many areas have to be looked upon manifestly that will ensure proper implementation and effective inclusion. The highlights of the components are discussed below.



4.5 Education of teachers and other stakeholders

Intensive teacher education programme will be undertaken to sensitize and build capacity of the regular teachers and resource teachers on meeting learning needs of all teachers to provide quality education to CWSN and improve their learning outcomes. This teacher education programme will be recurrent at block/cluster levels and integrated with the on-going in-service teacher education/training schedules in DIETs and other Institutions. Teacher education modules at SCERT, DIET and BRC level should include suitable components on education of children with special needs. Training of educational administrators including headmasters, all other staff & relevant personnel of school education should be regularly organized. Special focus should be given on mechanisms for safety and security of children with special needs.

4.6 Curricular access

The curriculum must be inclusive as envisioned in NCF-2005. It should ensure that the same curriculum be followed for children with and without special needs, but with adaptations/modifications if required in learning content, teaching learning processes, teaching learning materials/aids and in evaluation, etc. Provision will be made to provide text books and curriculum in accessible formats to CWSN.

Exam reforms need to be made by Central and State Boards for conducting exams of CWSN. Guidelines issued in this regard by the Department of Disability Affairs are enclosed at **Annexure-IV**. The modifications may be made disability specific, (for example, oral exam for children with specific learning disability, extra time for children with visual impairment, low vision and cerebral palsy etc). A regular audit of existing textbooks from CWSN lens will be a priority for an apt curriculum.

4.7 Individualized Educational Plan (IEP)

IEP will be undertaken in context of the RPwD Act, as “Individualized Support” (as mentioned in Chapter 3 of RPwD Act, 2016). Its implementation will be monitored from time to time. The Individualized Support should review the effectiveness of various strategies and support services used by children with special needs periodically, after developing indicators.

4.8 Building synergy with special schools

4.8.1 In case of non-availability of resources required for education of children with special needs and training of teachers teaching CWSN, assistance from special schools may be taken. These special schools can work as resource centers for providing resources like development of curricular materials and TLMs, providing support services to CWSN and training of teachers etc.

4.8.2 In some cases, special schools can also impart special training to CWSN for facilitating age appropriate placement in the classroom for a specified period of time. NGOs working on education of children with chronic health impairments like leukemia, heart diseases and cancer etc, may also provide resource support for pertinent care and health related needs and capacity building of teachers.

4.9 **Research and Development**

The Integrated Scheme will encourage research and development activities in all areas of education of children with special needs including action research, researches to improve learning of CWSN, especially focusing on children with high support needs (Thalassemia, Hemophilia, Sickle Cell disease and Chronic neurological conditions etc), eventually leading to concrete learning outcomes. For this, convergence with different Ministries like Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, MoWCD, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs, private organizations with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funds etc.

4.10 **Social Access to CWSN**

Ensuring social access to CWSN is a greater challenge as compared to providing physical access as it requires an in-depth understanding of the various educational needs of CWSN. A very important dimension of social access is discrimination. CWSN are subjected to many forms of discrimination. Teachers and peers have a very important role to play in this context. Social access could include the following:

- i. Parental training
- ii. Peer sensitization
- iii. Awareness building of different stakeholders across all levels
- iv. Special emphasis will be given to education of girls with disability

4.11 **Monitoring & Evaluation:**

On-going monitoring and evaluation should be carried out to refine the programme from time to time. For this, appropriate monitoring mechanisms and tools are to be devised at every level and field tested at regular intervals.

ANNEXURE-III

GUIDELINES FOR APPOINTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATORS

- 1. Minimum Educational Qualifications for becoming an Educator for Classes preschool-V (Pre School to Primary Stage)**
 - (a) Classes I-V: Senior Secondary (or its equivalent) with at least 50% marks and 2-year Diploma in Education (Special Education).
 - (b) Pass in the Teacher Eligibility Test (TET), to be conducted by the appropriate Government in accordance with the Guidelines framed by the NCTE for the purpose.

- 2. Minimum Qualifications for becoming an Educator for Classes VI-VIII (Elementary stage)**
 - (a) Graduation with at least 50% marks and 1-year B.Ed. (Special Education)¹⁶

Or

Graduation with at least 50% marks and 2- year B. Ed. (Special Education)¹⁷
 - (b) Pass in Teacher Eligibility Test (TET), to be conducted by the appropriate Government in accordance with the Guidelines framed by the NCTE for the purpose.

- 3. Minimum Qualifications for becoming an Educator for Classes IX-XII: (Secondary stage)**
 - All Special Educators must be registered with the Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI).
 - Educators with Qualifications in single disability area will be encouraged to specialize in other disability areas to take care of a wide range of diversities in a general school.
 - Relaxation up to 5% in the qualifying marks in the minimum Educational Qualification for eligibility shall be allowed to the candidates belonging to reserved categories, such as SC/ST/OBC/Differently abled.
 - Training to be undergone: A person with D. Ed. (Special Education) or B. Ed. (Special Education) qualification shall undergo, after appointment an NCTE recognized 6-month Special Programme in Elementary Education.

¹⁶ For candidates who have graduated in B. Ed. (Special Education) in/before 2015-16 i.e. the 1 year course.

¹⁷ For candidates who have graduated in B. Ed. (Special Education) after 2015-16 i.e. the 2 years course (in regular or distance mode).

**GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING WRITTEN EXAMINATION FOR PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES**

F.No. 16-110/2003-DD.III
Government of India
Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment
Department of Disability Affairs

Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi
Dated: 26th February, 2013

Office Memorandum

Subject: Guidelines for conducting written examination for Persons with Disabilities.

The undersigned is directed to say that Chief Commissioner of Persons with Disabilities (CCPD) in its order dated 23.11.2012 in case No. 3929/2007 (in the matter of Shri Gopal Sisodia, Indian Association of the Blind Vs. State Bank of India & Others) and in case No.65/1011/12-13 (in the matter of Score Foundation Vs. Department of Disability Affairs) had directed this Ministry to circulate guidelines for the purpose of conducting written examination for persons with disabilities for compliance by all concerned. In compliance of the above order, this Ministry hereby lays down the following uniform and comprehensive guidelines for conducting examination for the persons with disabilities as recommended by CCPD:-

- I. There should be a uniform and comprehensive policy across the country for persons with disabilities for written examination taking into account improvement in technology and new avenues opened to the persons with disabilities providing a level playing field. Policy should also have flexibility to accommodate the specific needs on case-to-case basis.
- II. There is no need for fixing separate criteria for regular and competitive examinations.
- III. The facility of Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant should be allowed to any person who has disability of 40% or more if so desired by the person.
- IV. The candidate should have the discretion of opting for his own scribe/reader/lab assistant or request the Examination Body for the same. The examining body may also identify the scribe/ reader/lab assistant to make panels at the District/Division/ State level as per the requirements of the examination. In such instances the candidates should be allowed to meet the scribe a day before the examination so that the candidates get a chance to check and verify whether the scribe is suitable or not.

- V. Criteria like educational qualification, marks scored, age or other such restrictions for the scribe/reader/lab assistant should not be fixed. Instead, the invigilation system should be strengthened, so that the candidates using scribe/reader/lab assistant do not indulge in mal-practices like copying and cheating during the examination.
- VI. There should also be flexibility in accommodating any change in scribe/reader/lab assistant in case of emergency. The candidates should also be allowed to take more than one scribe/reader for writing different papers especially for languages.
- VII. Persons with disabilities should be given the option of choosing the mode for taking the examinations i.e. in Braille or in the computer or in large print or even by recording the answers as the examining bodies can easily make use of technology to convert question paper in large prints, e-text, or Braille and can also convert Braille text in English or regional languages.
- VIII. The candidates should be allowed to check the computer system one day in advance so that the problems, if any in the software/system could be rectified.
- IX. The procedure of availing the facility of scribe should be simplified and the necessary details should be recorded at the time of filling up of the forms. Thereafter, the examining body should ensure availability of question papers in the format opted by the candidate as well as suitable seating arrangement for giving examination.
- X. The disability certificate issued by the competent medical authority at any place should be accepted across the country.
- XI. The word “extra time or additional time” that is being currently used should be changed to “compensatory time” and the same should not be less than 20 minutes per hour of examination for persons who are making use of scribe/reader/lab assistant. All the candidates with disability not availing the facility of scribe may be allowed additional time of minimum of one hour for examination of 3 hours duration which could further be increased on case to case basis.
- XII. The candidates should be allowed to use assistive devices like talking calculator (in cases where calculators are allowed for giving exams), tailor frame, Braille slate, abacus, geometry kit, Braille measuring tape and augmentative communication devices like communication chart and electronic devices.
- XIII. Proper seating arrangement (preferably on the ground floor) should be made prior to the commencement of examination to avoid confusion or

distraction during the day of the exam. The time of giving the question papers should be marked accurately and timely supply of supplementary papers should be ensured.

- XIV. The examining body should also provide reading material in Braille or E-Text or on computers having suitable screen reading softwares for open book examination. Similarly online examination should be in accessible format i.e. websites, question papers and all other study material should be accessible as per the international standards laid down in this regard.
- XV. Alternative objective questions in lieu of descriptive questions should be provided for Hearing-Impaired persons, in addition to the existing policy of giving alternative questions in lieu of questions requiring visual inputs, for persons with Visual Impairment.

2. It is requested to ensure that the above guidelines are scrupulously followed while conducting examination for persons with disabilities. All the recruitment agencies, Academics/Examination Bodies etc. under your administrative control may be advised appropriately to ensure compliance of implementing these guidelines. Action taken in this regard may be intimated to this office.

3. The above guidelines are issued with the approval of Hon'ble Minister (Social Justice & Empowerment).

Yours faithfully,

Sd/-

(Jagdish Kumar)

Deputy Secretary to the Govt. of India

To

1. Secretary of all Ministries/Department.
2. Secretary, UPSC, Shahjahan Road, New Delhi.
3. Chairman, SSC, Block No.12, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003.
4. Chairman, University Grants Commission with a request to issue necessary instructions to all universities including Deemed Universities for compliance.
5. All National Institutes and RCI under administrative control of Department of Disability Affairs, Ministry of SJ&E, New Delhi

Copy to : CCPD, Sarojini Bhawan, Bhagwan Dass Road, New Delhi with reference to order dated 23.11.2012 in case No. 3929/2007 and in case No.65/1041/12-13.