

NZSL@School Access Funding - FAQs

The following frequently asked questions may be useful to you and your school support team as you submit your application for Access Funding from NZSL@School.

1) What is NZSL@School Access Funding?

‘Access Funding’ (meaning funding to provide access to learning for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students) covers the additional hours of Communication/Education Support Worker (C/ESW) time that students need over-and-above their ORS-funded Teacher Aide hours. In most cases, Access Funding allows NZSL@School students to have the support of a C/ESW for 25hrs per week. Access Funds can also be used to contract an Educational Interpreter (EI) to support a student.

2) How does your school apply for Access Funding from NZSL@School?

You can apply for Access Funding by using the digital application form on our website. Submissions are managed by the Senior Administrator for NZSL from Ko Taku Reo (reachable via nzslschool@kotakureo.school.nz). Each application is reviewed by one of our NZSL@School Co-Leads who may contact you for further information or to discuss some specific details. Your application will then be discussed at a committee meeting, and you will receive a formal letter advising of its outcome.

If your application is successful, this letter will outline the exact funding that you will receive for your student and give you instructions on our invoicing procedure. If you are applying for NZSL Tutor support, your letter will provide you with instructions on how to contact your regional Tutor Co-Lead.

This process can take up to 3-4 weeks to complete.

3) Who should submit the NZSL@School application form?

The responsibility of the submission is that of the school the student is enrolled in. The school may be better supported in completing the application by other professionals working with the student, such as AODCs (Advisors on Deaf Children) or Ko Taku Reo RTDs (Resource Teachers of the Deaf). For new applications we recommend that consultation with appropriate family/whānau is also done prior to your submission. This will help you to make a more fully informed application.



4) Once approved, does my school need to reapply for NZSL@School Access Funding?

Access Funding applications must be renewed every year. You can apply for Access Funding at any time (for example when a new entrant begins or if a Deaf or HoH student moves to your school mid-year), but all NZSL@School resourcing must be reviewed and reapproved annually. We begin the process of confirming Access Funding for the following school year in September. This ensures that schools are informed of their funding for the following year with time to confirm any required staffing.

On page 1 of the digital application form, you will be asked to choose if you are submitting your application for a student for the first time, or if you are reapplying to continue receiving this resource. The form will then populate accordingly depending on the level of detail we require.

5) Do I need to know my student's ORS status before submitting an application?

Yes, you will need to know the ORS (Ongoing Resourcing Scheme) status of your student before completing the application. Please be advised that Ko Taku Reo does not hold this data on file. This information is important later in the application as you will need to know the exact number of Teacher Aide hours of support your school is receiving for your student.

For new applications where the student has not yet started school, it is important to know their start date before submitting this application. In these instances where an ORS application is underway, but not yet finalised, you may still apply, please just indicate this in the form.

6) One question in the digital application form refers to receptive and expressive language, what does this mean?

New applications for Access Funding ask you to indicate what language your student uses at school. This is either receptive or expressive language. Receptive language is the understanding of information provided in a variety of ways such as sounds and words; movement and gestures; and signs and symbols. Expressive language is our ability to communicate our thoughts and feelings through words, gestures, signs, and/or symbols.



*7) What is the difference between In Class support and Out of Class support?
What sort of Out of Class activities are covered?*

In Class support refers to the normal, timetabled hours that a student is in the classroom. Out of Class refers to irregular and extra-curricular activities such as Kapa Haka, school camps, special school assemblies and prizegivings which take place outside of the normal school day hours.

Please note that once approved, funding for Out of Class hours is distributed in even amounts across the school year (the total funds are distributed to your school over four equal amounts each term regardless of when the Out of Class event takes place). Approved funding for school camps consists of four additional hours per day (3pm to 7pm) for each day of the camp. Please note we are unable to fund any activities that are not part of the school's educational and cultural program.

8) What is the difference in roles between a Teacher Aide and a Communication/Education Support Worker? And why does this matter?

The Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (ORS) funding is allocated to students so they can access the support of a Teacher Aide. The role of Teacher Aide does not require the ability to use NZSL. Students who meet the criteria to receive NZSL@school resourcing require specialist communication support through NZSL. The term Communication/Education Support Worker (C/ESW) was created to describe this specialist role and a job description for the C/ESW will be included with your funding agreement letter.

9) In Out of Class situations, when is an EI a more appropriate choice to support the student than a C/ESW?

An Educational Interpreter (EI) is appropriate in Out of Class situations where the content of the information presented is of a high level and is also being presented at a much faster pace. Examples of this might be when a guest speaker is invited to the school or for events such as prizegiving or school assembly. At times such as this it is important to balance the needs of the student with the needs of the C/ESW. If the C/ESW is not comfortable supporting the student, then NZSL@School is happy to provide funding for an EI.

We recommend you also source and make contact with your local EIs to ascertain interest, availability and hourly rate before completing your application.

10) When would we request an Educational Interpreter instead of a C/ESW for In Class support?

In some instances the learning needs of the student will no longer be met by the C/ESW resource. In cases such as this a contracted EI will better support the student to access their learning (when access to the curriculum becomes the primary need of the student). Usually, this situation will apply to secondary school students.



11) What is the benefit of requesting the support of an NZSL tutor?

The NZSL tutor provides instruction on learning and using NZSL for the student, their classmates, the C/ESW, family/whanau and class teachers.

12) Why does the application form ask us to name other team members involved with the completion of the form?

The funding agreement for approved applications is between Ko Taku Reo and your school. However, you can request that other colleagues, associates or professionals working with the student are informed of the outcome of your application. It is your school's responsibility to inform the student's family/whānau of the result of the application.

13) Can partially completed applications be submitted?

All applications must be completed in full, with the exception of those awaiting ORS confirmation (see question 5).

14) What is Supplementary Access Funding?

The funding rate for ORS T/A hours is often inadequate to cover the actual hourly salary rate of the C/ESW's. For example, the ORS hourly rate that your school receives may be \$23, but the actual hourly rate of the C/ESW may be \$30. In previous years, schools have had to cover this shortfall for the ORS hours. NZSL@School Access Funding is paid at the actual hourly rate.

From 2023 onward, NZSL@School will cover the shortfall between the ORS funding and the actual hourly rate of the C/ESW for the ORS hours. This extra funding will be named Supplementary Access Funding.

The example below shows what this might look like for a C/ESW employed for 25 hours per week whose rate is \$30 per hour:

	No. of hours p/wk	Rate paid to school p/hr	Shortfall per/hr	Access Funding p/wk	Supplementary Access Funding p/wk	Total funding p/wk
ORS T/A hrs	10	\$23	\$7		\$70	\$70
NZSL@ School hrs	15	\$30	\$0	\$450		\$450
Total	25					\$520

