

Wes-Kaap Onderwysdepartement  
Western Cape Education Department  
iSebe leMfundo leNtshona Koloni

Navrae  
Enquiries **Dr M J Theron**  
iMibuzo

Verwysing  
Reference **L15/107/1**  
Ubheliso

Telefoon  
Telephone **403-6050/1**  
iMfonomfono

TO:

HEADS OF SUPPORT CENTRES,  
AREA AND CIRCUIT MANAGERS,  
SUBJECT ADVISORS, HEADS OF  
ALL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Kantoor van die  
Office of the  
i-Ofisi ye

Head: Education

Privaatsak  
Private Bag

9114

Dorp/Stad  
Town/City  
iDolophi/iSixeko

CAPE TOWN

Poskode/Postal Code  
iKhodi lePosi

8000

Faks  
Fax **419-5967**

Datum/Date  
Umhla

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**CIRCULAR NO. 0106/96 : REFERRAL PROCEDURES FOR PUPILS TO CENTRES FOR THE SEVERELY MENTALLY DISABLED**

The following procedures should be strictly adhered to when referring a learner to a centre/school for the severely mentally disabled:

1. Learners identified for possible referral to training centres/schools are first identified in mainstream classrooms by their teachers, by their parents who consult with their medical practitioners, by pre-school teachers, etc.
2. A learner is recommended for assessment by his/her class teacher. The principal of the school then requests the school psychologist to do the assessment.
3. The report of the school psychologist's findings are forwarded to the adviser at Head Office responsible for the centres/schools for the severely mentally disabled for his/her recommendation and possible referral. This assessment can fall into the following 3 categories:
  - 3.1. Learners with an IQ result of below 30 are the responsibility of the Department of Health.
  - 3.2 Learners with IQ's of between 30 and 50 are recommended for placement at SMH school/training centres by the ELSEN adviser.
  - 3.3 Learners with IQ's of 50 or higher, but who are mildly mentally retarded, are referred to adaptation or special classes in order to reach their maximum

learning potential.

4. Because this is such a major decision regarding a learner's future, the learner is referred to a centre/school for a probationary period of six months to a year. During this period the suitability of the pupil to the training centre/school programme, is finally decided so as to ensure appropriate placement. The learner is only on a temporary register at the centre during this period.
5. The next step occurs when the adviser concerned visits the centre/school to approve the placement of the learners on a permanent admissions register.
6. Only learners up to the age of 18 years may be accommodated at these centres/schools. Special permission from the Western Cape Education Department must be obtained to retain learners over the age of 18 on the programme.
7. Learners should not be indiscriminately referred to training centres/schools as there could be underlying causes such as milieu constraints for their lack of progress at school. They should be given adequate opportunity at mainstream schools to prove that they really can or cannot cope with the workload. They should not be referred to a centre after only one unsuccessful year.
8. Kindly bring the contents of this circular to the attention of all staff members.
9. Your co-operation in the above-mentioned matter will be highly appreciated.



† HEAD: EDUCATION