



An Chomhairle Náisiúnta
um Oideachas Speisialta
National Council
for Special Education

Guidelines for Setting Up and Organising Special Classes

for Boards of Management and Principals
of Primary and Post-Primary Schools



**The term 'parent' should be taken to refer to parents
and guardians of students.**

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National Council for Special Education

1-2 Mill Street

Trim

Co Meath

T: 01 6033200

www.ncse.ie

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Introduction

Students with special educational needs should, where possible, be educated in mainstream classes along with their peers, with additional supports provided as necessary.

Special classes¹ are resourced by the NCSE within a continuum of educational provision in mainstream primary and post-primary schools. Special classes enable students with more complex / severe special educational needs to be educated, in smaller groups, within their local mainstream schools. They offer a supportive learning environment to students who are **unable to access the curriculum in a mainstream class, even with support, for most or all of their school day.**

The student's placement in a special class should be regularly reviewed to ensure that a special class placement continues to be the most appropriate school placement.

These guidelines give information and guidance to schools on the setting up and organisation of NCSE-sanctioned special classes in mainstream primary and post-primary schools. They are based on principles of good practice and Boards of Management are requested to take due cognisance of them when setting up, staffing and organising special classes in their schools. These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the [NCSE Transition Guidelines](#).

Which students are enrolled in special classes?

Special classes are sanctioned in mainstream schools for students with complex / severe special educational needs arising from certain disabilities. A list of types of special classes is provided in Appendix 2. Enrolment in a special class should only be considered where there is clear evidence that the student requires the support of a special class because they are unable to access the curriculum in a mainstream class for most or all of the school day even with appropriate supports.

Some students, although academically able to access the curriculum in mainstream, may find the mainstream learning environment overwhelming which can lead to extreme sensory dysregulation, which cannot be ameliorated even with appropriate interventions in mainstream school. Or for example in the case of a Deaf student, it may be that they need intensive support, above what is available in a mainstream setting, in the acquisition and development of language.

The decision to enrol a student in a special class should take account of:

- The student's strengths, abilities and needs
- The student's experiences and outcomes to date (in pre-school or primary as appropriate)

¹ Schools are requested to use the term 'special class' in preference to the term 'unit' which has medical rather than educational connotations.

- The interventions that were or could be put in place to support the student's inclusion in mainstream education.

In order to access a special class a student must have a report (s) from a relevant professional or team of professionals (for example, psychologist, speech and language therapist, psychiatrist) which must fulfil the following Department of Education criteria:

- 1. The student has a disability (in line with the designation of the special class in question) and**
- 2. The student has complex or severe learning needs that require the support of a special class / school setting and the reasons why this is the case**

The professional report must meet the Department of Education (DoE) requirements for the particular disability in question. These requirements are detailed in DoE Circular SP/ED 02/05.

The NCSE will only resource special classes in line with the above DoE criteria.

Early Intervention Classes

Early Intervention classes are available for children aged 3-5 years who have a confirmed diagnosis of Autism in line with DSM IV, V, ICD-10 and ICD 11. A small number of early intervention classes are available for children who are deaf or hard of hearing and children with physical disabilities.

Early intervention classes follow the Junior/Senior Infants Day i.e. 4 hours 40 minutes each day.

Schools, in consultation with parents, may reduce the length of the school day for 3 year olds who are unable to manage a full day in the early intervention setting.

Early intervention classes are intended to provide early support for autistic children before they start school. Following early intervention children will attend a mainstream class unless there is professional recommendation that they require a special class.

Please note: A child's attendance in an early intervention class is not, and should not be taken as, an indication that the child will require access to a special class when they enrol in primary school.

In the case of an early intervention autism class, the professional report must state that the child has been diagnosed with Autism – the requirement for **the report state** that the child has complex or severe learning needs requiring the support of a special class setting is not necessary in this case.

The DoE policy is that all children enrolled in an early intervention autism class, funded by the DoE must have left the class and be enrolled in the primary school system, whether through placement in a mainstream class, in special class or in special school in the September prior to their sixth birthday.

Who decides whether a student is enrolled in a special class?

Parents make the final decision to enrol their child. In order to make an informed decision, parents require objective and comprehensive information on eligibility criteria and available options.

Decisions to enrol in a special class is made by consulting the student, the school leaders and teachers.

Decisions may also be guided by other professionals, such as

Visiting teacher

If the student is deaf or hard of hearing; or is blind or vision impaired, they may be linked with a visiting teacher who will be able to help parents to prepare their child for this transition.

Health professionals

Health professionals involved with your child, for example HSE:

- speech and language therapists
- occupational therapists
- psychologists
- physiotherapists

Special Educational Needs Organisers (SENOs)

Schools and parents can consult with the NCSE SENO prior to the enrolment of a student in a special class. Parents will be supported in making the appropriate and inclusive decision on school placement for their child in line with the EPSEN Act.

Schools must obtain parents' written consent before enrolling a student in a special class.

In some cases the decision may be relatively straightforward as the student's needs are very complex. In other cases, the decision is made following a period of assessment, intervention and review, conducted by teachers, in conjunction, as appropriate, with psychologists from the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) and other external professionals. Parents and students should be actively involved in this process.

How long do students remain in a special class?

As learning needs may change over time, a student's enrolment in a special class should be kept under continual review by the school. At a minimum, a review should take place once a year and include a careful examination of the student's progress in achieving their learning targets.

The review should consider:

- Student's views and those of parents, teachers and other relevant professionals
- The suitability of the special class placement
- Whether the student's needs might be best addressed in a mainstream setting or whether a different setting is required (e.g. special school setting).

Following a decision that the special class is no longer the most appropriate placement, a student may move to:

- a mainstream class in the same school or
- a mainstream class in a school more local to the student's home or
- a different category of special class or²
- a special school.

Where the change involves a move to a different school, parents should apply to enrol their child in the new school and the student should remain in the existing special class until the new placement is organised.

The school must also notify the SENO, by completing [NCSE Form 5](#), when a student has left a special class, either to return to mainstream or to enrol in another school, as this creates a vacancy in a special class that can be utilised for another student who may need it.

A student's enrolment in a special class should be kept under continual review by the school.

The rules for the maximum period that a student can be educated in a special class are generally the same as those for mainstream primary and post-primary classes. Primary education consists of an eight year cycle: junior infants, senior infants, and first to sixth classes. Students move to the next class at the end of each school year and normally transfer to post-primary education at the age of twelve. Post-primary education generally consists of a six year cycle, with three years spent in Junior Cycle and three years in Senior Cycle. This includes transition year which is not offered by all schools.

There are two exceptions to this general rule, i.e. special classes for students with specific learning disability and students with specific speech and language disorders. In these cases, students return to their local school after a period of two years spent in these classes.

² Must meet requirements for designation of special class or special school with a relevant professional recommendation for same.

How does a special class get established?

Schools may express an interest to the NCSE to open a special class where a need has been identified in their area i.e. a number of students have professional report documenting complex or severe educational needs and who require the support of a special class. Special classes for Autism are established irrespective of cognitive ability.

SENOs may also approach a school directly where they are aware that a special class is, or will be required in the near future. SENOs consult with other educational partners (eg. NEPS and Inspectorate) when planning to set up a special class. SENOs consult with the DoE School Planning and Building Section where special classes are being incorporated into a new building.

Before approaching a particular school to request the establishment of a special class, SENOs take into account

- both present and future potential need within the area and must be satisfied that the class is sustainable and appropriately located. The DoE has issued retention rates which guide SENOs in determining sustainability – see Appendix 2 for DoE Retention Ratios for Special Classes.
- mixed gender schools, vertical primary schools and gaelscoileanna
- opportunities for inclusion

In addition, the SENO will consider:

- the school's accommodation and accessibility;
- the number of special classes, if any, already in the school

In certain circumstances, the SENO may sanction a class before there are sufficient students to create a full class. This is done on the basis that the extra places will be filled as soon as students in need of such placements have been identified by the NCSE.

The final decision to open a special class rests with the school's Board of management. However, the overriding consideration must be to respond to the needs of students with special educational needs who, had they not additional needs, would ordinarily attend a school in their local community. The Education (Provision in Respect of Children with Special Educational Needs) Act 2022 requires the admission statement of a school to include a statement that the school shall co-operate with the NCSE relating to the provision of education to children with special educational needs, in particular by the provision and operation of a special class or classes when requested to do so by the Council.

What are the steps involved in setting up the class?

Step 1: School/SENO considers establishment

Step 2: School returns NCSE Request for Establishment of Special Class Form

Step 3: Class is sanctioned with particular designation

Step 4: Parents/School enrol students

Step 5: School plans for the opening of the class

Step 1: School/SENO considers establishment

In reaching a decision to set up a special class, the school, in consultation with SENOs and other professionals, considers:

- the number of students, with relevant professional reports meeting the DoE criteria, likely to enrol;
- the current enrolment in any existing special classes in line with these guidelines, giving full consideration to offering students opportunities for full inclusion in a mainstream setting where appropriate;
- whether there is sufficient accommodation, a need to procure a temporary or permanent building or to have existing rooms re-furbished. Will planning permission be required?

The school should discuss any matters of concern with the SENO and other relevant professionals.

Discussions in relation to the establishment of a special class need to take place well in advance of the start of the following school year (ideally concluded by January).

Step 2: School returns NCSE Request for Establishment of Special Class Form

The Board of Management returns the NCSE Request for Establishment of Special Class form to the SENO. This request form must be signed by the Chairperson of the Board of Management.

On receipt of this form, the SENO will contact the school and discuss any concerns and provide information and support on the establishment of a special class.

If there is no identified demand for special class in the school's locality at that time, the SENO will respond to the school in writing.

Where the need for a special class is confirmed by the NCSE, the SENO will issue a sanction letter to the school to establish a special class for a particular disability category.

Step 3: Class is sanctioned with particular designation

This letter of sanction enables schools to apply to the DoE for relevant accommodation and grants as per Appendix 1.

Teacher and SNA allocations are sanctioned as part of the overall school's allocation for special educational needs, and are issued in May of each year for the following academic year.

Upon receipt of the sanction letter schools should amend their school enrolment policy to provide for the enrolment of students to the special class(es). School should then publish their admissions notice on their website as per the Education (Admissions to Schools) Act, 2018.

SENOs inform the Health Service Executive (HSE) that a special class is sanctioned so that the class can be included in HSE planning. The provision of therapeutic services is the responsibility of the HSE. SENOs can provide schools with local HSE contact details.

Step 4: Parents/School enrol students

Relevant parents are informed by the SENO and school of the location of special classes that have places available. Parents should also be informed that enrolment of their child will be subject to the particular school's enrolment policies.

Parents then contact and apply to the school with a view to enrolling their child in the special class, should they wish to do so.

The SENO can advise principals of any professional reports that may be required to ensure the students can be enrolled in the special class.

The school gathers the necessary professional reports from parents as soon as possible.

The school returns a [Notification of Enrolment Form](#) to the NCSE, along with relevant professional reports.

The SENO will advise the school if the professional reports submitted do not meet the DoE criteria for special class placement.

Step 5: School plans for the opening of the class

1. Time frame

Indicative time-frame for opening of the class is agreed with SENO. Classes generally open at the start of a school year. Classes are opened based on NCSE identified need.

2. Notifications and applications

Special Transport Scheme:

For students to be eligible for school transport they must be attending the nearest recognised special school or special class that is or can be resourced to meet the student's special educational needs.

An electronic version of the DoE NCSE transport application form (Form 2) is available on the NCSE website [NCSE Application Form 2](#).

Schools should ensure that an application form for school transport for each eligible student is complete and signed by school principal, signed by parents and then forwarded to the SENO, along with professional report(s), prior to, or at the time of, first enrolment.

The SENO completes the report section, confirming that the student meets the criteria for special class or special school placement and forwards the completed application form to the School Transport section of the Department of Education.

The decision in relation to school transport and transport arrangements rest with DoE and Bus Éireann. Further information is available on DoE website – see Appendix 1: Useful links for schools.

Eligible students who are enrolled in an autism class in a mainstream school and who subsequently fully attend mainstream in that school will retain their transport for the duration of their education in this school. Should these students transfer to a different school, a new transport application will be required.

Assistive Technology:

As per DoE Circular 0010/2013, schools can apply for a grant to purchase specialist equipment, where this is essential and will be used throughout the school day, for students with a diagnosis of:

- a serious physical disability and/or
- a sensory or communicative disability

For students who are deaf or hard of hearing or students who are blind or vision impaired, the NCSE Visiting Teacher can make recommendations in relation to specific assistive technology e.g, soundfield systems, FM systems, braille embossers, distance cameras etc

All other applications for assistive technology should be made to the Special Educational Needs Organiser (SENO) with responsibility for the school.

The role of the SENO is to apply DoE eligibility criteria and make a recommendation based on information outlined in the professional report and information provided by the school.

Contact details are available in Appendix 1: Useful Links for Schools.

Specialised furniture/equipment grant:

Schools should make a request in writing for specialised furniture/equipment where this is required for a particular student. The request, along with a report from an occupational therapist, should be submitted to gov.ie – [Special Education Furniture and Equipment Grants \(www.gov.ie\)](http://gov.ie)

Contact details are available in Appendix 1: Useful Links for Schools.

3. Employment of Staff:

Boards of management are responsible for the appointment and employment of staff for the special class. This includes teachers, SNAs and bus escorts, where sanctioned.

On appointment, schools are responsible for organising payment of teachers and SNAs through the DoE centralised pay-roll systems. The school should also inform this section when a special class is closed.

Teaching posts in special classes can be filled internally by the deployment of an existing permanent/CID post holder in the school. Otherwise they should be filled from the appropriate panel (primary) and as per recruitment procedures (post-primary), in accordance with DoE circulars. Teachers who have the most experience in special educational needs should be directed by Principals to teach in the special class. DoE circulars on school staffing are available on the [DoE website](http://gov.ie).

4. Staff Development and ongoing supports:

Students in special classes require experienced teachers with appropriate qualifications and, wherever possible, a background in working with students with special educational needs. The NCSE provides a comprehensive programme of [Teacher Professional Learning \(TPL\) seminars](http://gov.ie) each school year covering a variety of special educational needs topics.

Schools should also endeavour to assign experienced SNAs to the special class. The national SNA training programme – [Level 6 Diploma in inclusive School Support](http://gov.ie), is available to all SNAs working in the Irish Education System.

Schools planning to open special class provision should be proactive in meeting the TPL needs of their special class teachers, in addition to developing and reviewing their whole school policies in relation to the education and inclusion of students with special educational needs.

The National Council for Special Education delivers a range of professional development initiatives and support for teachers working with students with special educational needs in special classes. Schools should contact the NCSE through the [NCSE portal](http://gov.ie) as soon as they receive their letter of sanction in order to plan for professional development. The NCSE Visiting Teacher service are also available to schools for advice and professional development.

The NCSE offers a comprehensive package of supports for schools opening their first class for autistic students. The NCSE have produced a leaflet for school leaders outlining various supports and can be accessed on the following QR code:



The package of supports available to schools establishing their first special class for autistic students are:

- Principals' seminar for schools establishing a new Autism class and a Principals' seminar for schools with established classes
- an invitation to the special class teacher to a 4-day Introduction to Autism seminar on commencement of the special class in September
- assignment of an advisor with a specialist knowledge in Autism to support the school and class teacher an opportunity for the school to apply for an Exceptional Closure Day during which the schools assigned advisor will discuss autism awareness with all school staff.

The Middletown Centre for Autism also offers training in the area of Autism for both professionals and parents. A detailed list of available training and supports is available on the [Middletown Centre for Autism website](#).

See Appendix 1: Useful Links for Schools.

5. Environment

Where modifications are necessary to the school environment, schools should contact the School Capital Appraisal Section of the [DoE Planning and Building Unit](#), as soon as possible, to discuss the school's requirements (which can sometimes involve refurbishment of existing accommodation or the temporary use of modular accommodation). Building and/or planning permission can take considerable time to put in place.

The NCSE work collaboratively with the Planning and Building Section to plan for special class provision.

How are special classes resourced?

Special classes are resourced to cater for students with special educational needs, who because of complexity of educational need, require to spend most or all of their week in a special class.

1. Teachers

Special classes are generally resourced on the basis of student-teacher ratios specified for their designated disability category. Student-teacher ratios for each disability category are outlined in Appendix 2.

Students in special classes who meet the DoE criteria are counted twice for teacher allocation purposes: they are counted in determining teacher allocation to the special class and separately in determining the overall mainstream teacher allocation for a school. This is intended to support their inclusion in mainstream classes, as appropriate.

2. Care supports

Special classes are staffed with SNA support in line with Department of Education policy (Appendix 2). Circumstances may arise where this level of support is not sufficient to meet the significant primary care needs of an enrolled student(s). Such student(s) will have professional report(s) documenting evidence of significant primary care needs above what the school can reasonably be expected to provide within the prescribed baseline ratio. In such circumstances, the school may apply to the NCSE for access to additional care supports, clearly outlining the reason why the additional support is necessary.

3. Grants

Enhanced capitation grant:

Primary schools receive the mainstream capitation rate and an enhanced capitation grant for each student enrolled in special classes, in accordance with specific disability categories.

Post-primary schools also receive the mainstream capitation rate and enhanced funding.

Further information is available on the relevant DoE link, see Appendix 1.

Special class start-up grant:

A grant is available to cover the cost of furniture and general equipment. Further information is provided on the DoE link, Appendix 1.

Other Grants:

Specialised furniture/equipment grant:

Available for individual students who require specialised furniture/equipment.

Loose furniture and equipment

Once-off grant: Equipment is available for a multi-sensory room where this is included in the overall schedule of accommodation.

ICT – A grant is available per new primary classroom.

Minor works grant: Funding is made available to all primary schools on the basis of students attending a special class in a mainstream school.

Your local SENO can provide advice and information on setting up a special class. Contact details are available on the NCSE website at: www.ncse.ie

In what circumstances are special classes inactive?

Special classes remain open based on need of identified students. Any changes must be undertaken in consultation and agreement with the NCSE.

Both Boards of Management and the NCSE should review the ongoing sustainability of special classes on a regular basis.

A special class should become inactive when:

- the numbers of students in the special class fall below the DoE retention rates
- no further local students have been identified as requiring access to the class
- the educational needs of any remaining students can be met in an alternative setting

Some classes can be re-designated to a different disability category in line with changing needs within the local area.

Discussions in relation to the viability of a special class need to take place well in advance of the start of the following school year (ideally concluded by January). As students with special educational needs can find transitions difficult, they and their parents/schools need time to prepare for the change and put plans in place to ensure a successful transition.

Good Practice Points

Special classes have been a feature of Irish schools for many years and good practice has developed over this time. The following good practice points for schools are based on findings of several national and international studies.

The School Plan

The school's policies and approaches to special classes are fully integrated into the overall school plan and address:

- the roles and responsibilities of all staff members in promoting inclusion
- the admission of students into special classes
- how students in special classes are meaningfully included in mainstream classes and school activities to the greatest possible extent
- how mainstream students and teachers engage with the special class
- how an individualised approach to assessment, planning, teaching and record-keeping is implemented in line with NEPS Continuum of Support
- how parental involvement in their child's education is promoted
- how transitions are supported and managed
- how staff training needs are identified and addressed
- how school policies (e.g. promoting positive behaviour and managing behaviours of concerns) apply to special class provision, including how such plans are differentiated to meet the needs of students in these classes.

Further support and information is available to schools on the [NCSE website](#) and the [Autism Good Practice Guidelines for Schools](#).

Admissions Policy

Boards of Management give careful consideration to developing the admissions policy for special classes, particularly where the school is over-subscribed. Aspects addressed include:

- Catchment area as students in need of a special class may come from a wider catchment area than the school's general catchment area
- Category of disability for which the class is sanctioned
- Assignment of places where the special class is over-subscribed³.

3 Note: Schools may not hold a place in a special class for a child in an early intervention class who is due to enrol the following year.

- Assignment of places in mainstream classes. As students in special classes are counted both on the mainstream and special class roll, it is good practice for schools to assign a place in a mainstream class to a student in a special class. This enables the student to access the mainstream place (including optional subjects in post-primary schools) to the greatest extent possible, in accordance with their ability to participate.

Curriculum

Students in special classes are given the opportunity to access the full range of curricular areas, in line with their abilities, either through differentiated teaching in special or mainstream classes.

Appropriate certification options are in place for students in special classes.

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment and the JCT have produced useful guidelines for teachers of students with general learning disabilities in post-primary schools (see Appendix 1: Useful Links for Schools).

Individualised Planning

Students in special classes should have a detailed student support plan setting out clear goals and strategies to meet their diverse needs in line with the NEPS Continuum of Support Guidelines.

Student Support plans are based on a detailed school-based and professional assessments, along with parent and/or student contribution.

Support plans are written by the special class teacher in consultation with other school staff, as appropriate. Support plans address students' needs in some or all of the following areas:

- Learning
- Social and communication
- Emotion and regulation
- Behaviour
- Life skills, including independence
- Care
- Adaptation of physical environment

Student Support Plans may also include key independence and communication targets designed to facilitate students' inclusion in mainstream classes to the greatest possible extent, and/or full inclusion to mainstream placement, where feasible. All students, including those with special educational needs, mature and develop at different rates and their learning needs change over time. To ensure that students are in the most appropriate educational setting, it is important that

their educational placement is kept under regular review. Once the student has fully transitioned to a mainstream placement they should no longer be recorded on the roll of a special class. Arrangements may be considered for the appropriate inclusion of students attending special classes in mainstream classes.

Appointment of Teaching Staff

The appointment of teaching staff to a special class is to meet the complex / severe educational needs of students attending a special class.

It should be recognised that students in special classes have complex learning needs and where possible, schools should appoint teachers with knowledge and experience in working with students with special educational needs.

The number of teachers involved with special classes should be kept to the minimum necessary to ensure students have access to a broad and relevant curriculum and a consistent level of support.

In post-primary schools, principals balance students' need for continuity in teaching staff and approaches with students' need to have access to specialist teachers.

Staff Development

The school should encourage special class teachers to engage in appropriate learning opportunities to ensure they have the knowledge, skills and competencies necessary to be a special class teacher. Schools also build up the capacity of mainstream teachers in the area of special educational needs.

It may be helpful for teachers to visit other special classes to see first-hand how these classes operate. SENOs may be in a position to share contact details for neighbouring schools with similar special classes, so that visits with these schools can be arranged.

Schools must ensure that special needs assistants have received the training necessary to carry out tasks allocated to them.

Transition

The school carefully plans and supports the transition of students at key stages of their education.

The NCSE has published [Transitional Guidelines](#) for Parents, Students and Schools to assist the process of transition for students with special educational needs.

Accommodation

Schools should ensure that, where possible, the special classroom is centrally located in the school with sufficient space to accommodate work stations, wheelchairs and other specialised furniture and equipment, as required. The physical location of the classroom should facilitate inclusion, which reduces segregation of students and isolation of teaching staff.

Appendix 1: Useful Links for Schools

Grants, Supports and Schemes

Assistive Technology	DES circular on assistive technology is available on the DES website at: Department of Education Circular 10/2013 Application forms are available on the NCSE website at: http://ncse.ie Contact details for Visiting Teacher Support are available at: https://ncse.ie/visiting-teacher-support
Capitation rates and Information Note on Staffing, Supports and Grants for Autism classes	https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/07bda-new-asd-classes-staffing-supports-and-grants-information/
Summer Programme	Department of Education Summer Programme
Planning and Building Unit	https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation-information/e2ce92-planning-and-building-unit/
Special Needs Assistant (SNA) scheme	Department of Education Circular 30/2014 https://www.ucd.ie/education/study/specialneedsassistants/
Special Needs Furniture	https://www.gov.ie/en/service/bdb908-special-education-furniture-equipment/
Transport Scheme	Department of Education School Transport Scheme
FAQ Establishing a special class for Autism	https://ncse.ie/special-classes-2
Autism Good Practice Guidance for Schools	gov.ie - Autism Good Practice Guidance for Schools – Supporting Children and Young People (www.gov.ie)
TUSLA TESS information for schools	https://www.tusla.ie/tess/information-for-schools/

Services and Agencies

Middletown Centre for Autism	https://www.middletownautism.com
National Council for Special Education (NCSE)	www.ncse.ie
NCSE Portal	https://ncse.ie/school-support-portal
National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)	http://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Services/National-Educational-Psychological-Service-NEPS-/NEPS-Home-Page.html
Oide (Supporting the learning of School Leaders and Teachers)	https://oide.ie/
Special Educational Needs Organisers (SENOs)	https://ncse.ie/regional-services-contact-list

Useful Documents for Schools with Special Classes

Óide and NCCA	<p>Level 2 Learning Programmes for new Junior Cycle https://www.jct.ie/l2lp/l2lp</p> <p>Guidelines for Teachers of Students with General learning Disabilities https://ncca.ie/en/resources/sen_introduction/</p>
NCSE Research Reports and Policy Advice	https://ncse.ie/policy-advice
NCSE Information for Parents/ Schools	https://ncse.ie/for-parents-2

Appendix 2: DoE Policy: Staffing and Retention Ratios, and Capitation Grant

Category	PTR Primary	PTR Post-Prim	Class: SNA Ratio	Enrolment Retention Level
Visual impairment	8:1	8:1.5	4:1	5
Hearing	7:1	7:1.5	4:1	5
Mild General Learning Disability	11:1	11:1.5	4:1	9
Moderate General Learning Disability	8:1	8:1.5	2:1	6
Severe/Profound Learning Disability	6:1	6:1.5	2:1	SENO*
Emotional/Behavioural Disturbance	8:1	8:1.5	4:1	6
Severe Emotional/Behavioural Disturbance	6:1	6:1.5	1:1	3
Autism	6:1	6:1.5	1:2	SENO*
Physical Disability	10:1	N/A	1:1	8
Multiple Disabilities	6:1	6:1.5	1:1	4
Specific Learning Disability	9:1	N/A	N/A	5
Specific Speech and Language Disorder	7:1	N/A	3:1	5

* Determined by SENO in line with DoE policy



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