



# **NCSE**

## **Navigating Admissions to Special Classes**

**Midlands Hotel, Portlaoise**  
**1<sup>st</sup> February 2024**

**Dervla Mulligan, Regional Manager**  
**Anita Bray, SENO**

# FIRST

Information Sharing

# NEXT

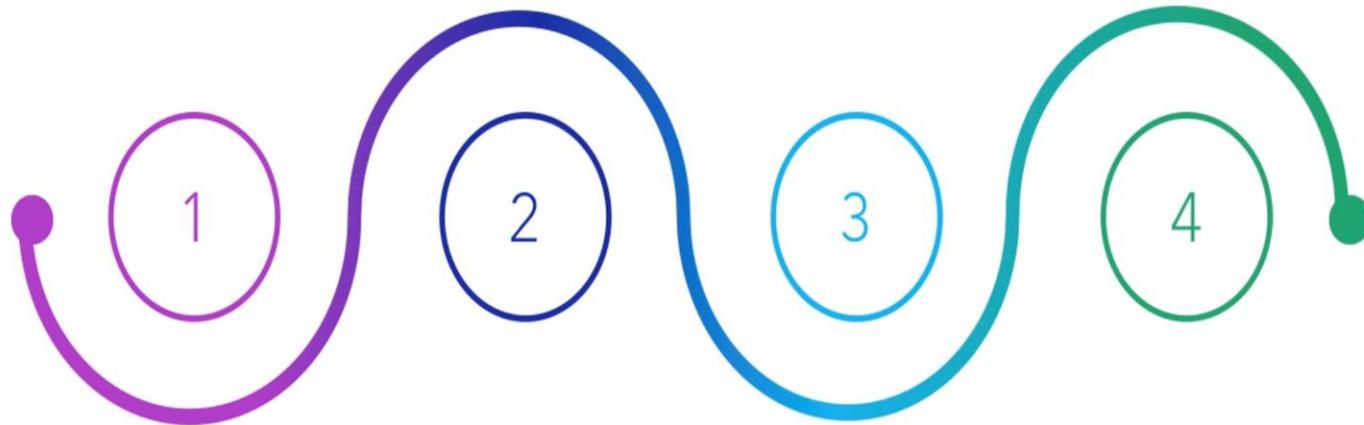
Q & A Session

# THEN

Individual Questions



# TODAY'S SESSION



How a special class is established

Which students are enrolled in Special Class

Considerations for a Special Class

Supports for Schools establishing a special class

# Establishing A Special Class

**Identify Need**

```
graph TD; A[Identify Need] --> B[Identify Accommodation]; B --> C[Expression of Interest]; C --> D[Sanction of Special Class]; D --> E[Resource and Support School];
```

**Identify Accommodation**

**Expression of Interest**

**Sanction of Special Class**

**Resource and Support  
School**

# Which students are enrolled in Special Classes?



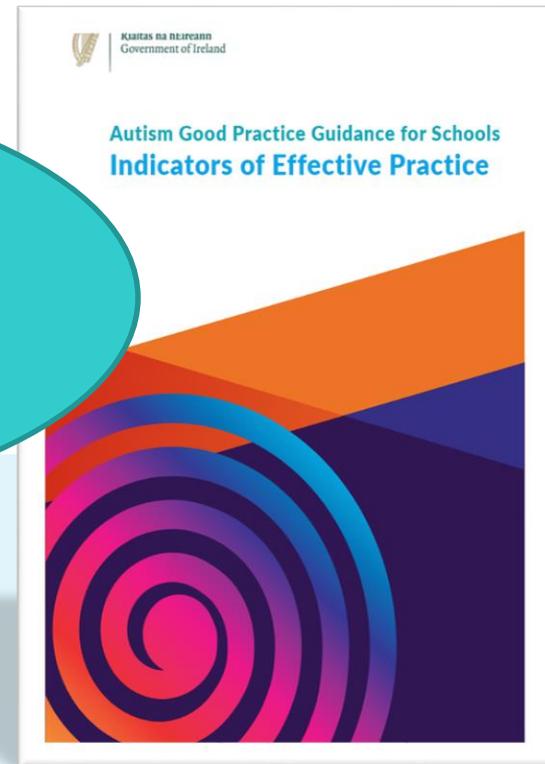
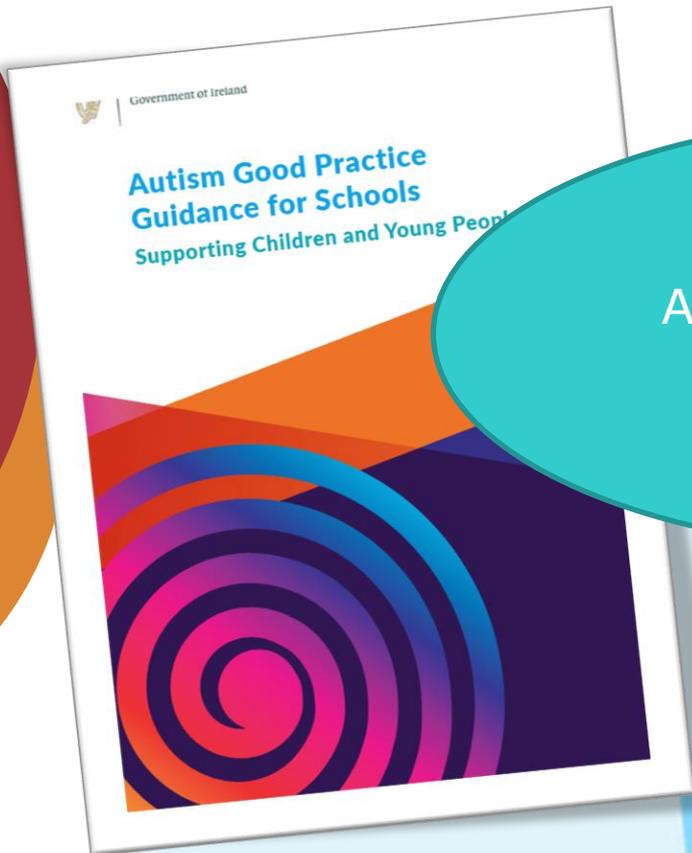
**Students with severe and /or complex educational needs arising from their diagnosis and who are unable to access a mainstream class setting.**

INSPIRED BY A PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENT WITH DISABILITIES



© 2002 MICHAEL F. GIANGRECO. ILLUSTRATION BY KEVIN RUELLE  
PEYTRAL PUBLICATIONS, INC. 952-949-8707 WWW.PEYTRAL.COM

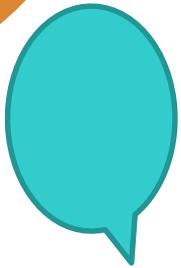
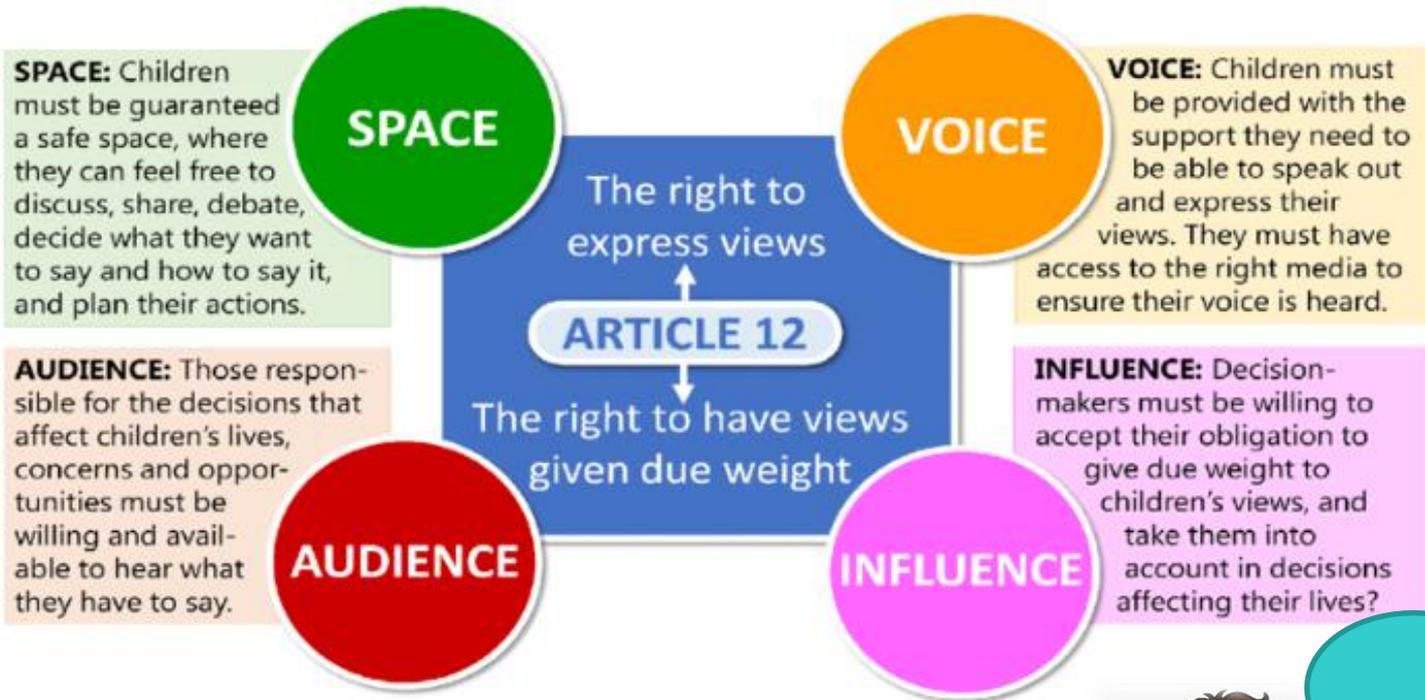
**CLEARING A PATH  
FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES  
CLEARS THE PATH FOR EVERYONE!**



# Autism Good Practice Guidance



# Student Voice



**The Lundy Model, 2007**



# What are Severe and/or Complex Learning Needs?

Where professional reports outline the following:

- Diagnosis of a disability

**AND**

- A demonstration of the understanding of complexity of the child's overall level of need

**AND**

- Given the severity or complexity of the child's needs, a professional recommendation as to what educational placement type would be most appropriate to best meet the child's needs, along with the **supporting rationale** for same.

# Who is Eligible to Enrol in a Special Autism Class?



Diagnosis of  
Autism confirmed  
DSM IV/V or ICD  
10 Criteria



**Evidence of complex  
/ severe educational  
needs contained  
within professional  
reports**



Recommendation for  
special class  
placement and clear  
rationale why  
contained in  
professional report(s)



For all Autistic students  
who have complex /  
severe educational  
needs irrespective of  
cognitive ability

# Special Autism Classes – Complex Learning Needs?

- Not just Autism
- Children who require access to additional specialist support

Mental health and sensory impairments

Evidence of behaviours of concern or dysregulation which cannot be ameliorated with M/S Supports

Daily life and adaptive functioning presents extreme challenges

Intellectual Disability

# What are not Severe and/or Complex Learning Needs?

**Placement  
in a special  
class due  
to  
diagnosis  
alone**

**Requirement  
for an  
exemption  
from Irish**

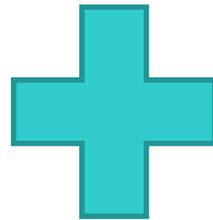
**Placement in  
a special  
class as  
limited  
supports in  
mainstream**

**Placement  
in a special  
class due to  
attention  
difficulties**

**Anxiety  
without  
clear  
evidence-  
based  
information**

**“would  
benefit from  
/ is eligible  
for a special  
class”**

# Matching the Need to Accommodation Capacity



# Expression of Interest to Establish a Special Class



*Working to deliver a better special education service  
Ag saothrú chun uas-seirbhís a sholáthar san oideachas speisialta*

School:  
Roll number:  
Date:

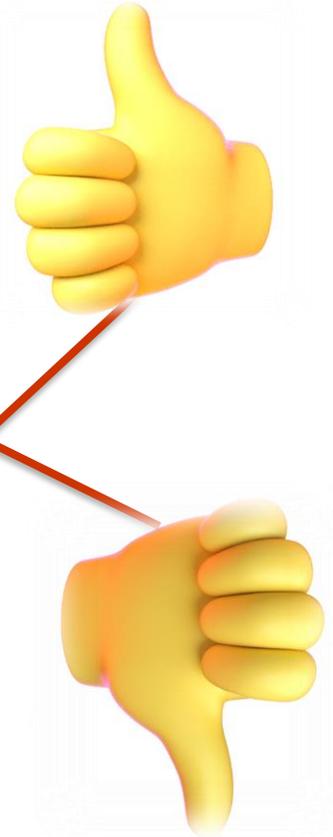
## **Expression of Interest to establish a Special Class for Autistic Students with Complex / Severe Educational Needs**

Dear Principal,

The National Council for Special Education (NCSE) continually seeks to ensure that students with special educational needs (SEN) have access to a continuum of educational provision in their local area. The NCSE has identified a number of students in your locality who require special class placement. I am writing to request that your school's Board of Management consider the establishment of a special class in your [school](#).

The following information may be helpful in your discussions. I would appreciate if you could inform me of the outcome of the BOM's considerations on the attached form (by date / or at your earliest convenience).

The class when established is to meet the needs of students with complex / severe educational needs



# Site Visit



An Chomhairle Náisiúnta um Oideachas Speisialta  
National Council for Special Education

Working to deliver a better special education service  
Ag saothrú chun uas-seirbhís a sholáthar san oideachas speisialta

## Record of site visits to schools by NCSE in relation to the potential to develop special class provision.

Site visits may be planned on the basis of a combination of information provided by: the school, the Patron, the DoE, e.g. records of falling staff/student numbers/vacant classrooms, the SENO, (based on local knowledge).

School			
SRN		Date of visit	
SENO / Team Manager			
School representative(s) Name and position		Principal BOM member  Chairperson of BOM	

### Information provided by DoE/School on staffing and classroom use

Information from DoE	Information Provided on Site Visit	Additional Information
No. class teachers		
No. rooms used as classrooms		



## OTHER SCHOOLS



# Sanction Letter



*Working to deliver a better special education service*  
*Ag saothrú chun uas-seirbhís a sholáthar san oideachas speisialta*

School:  
Roll number:  
Date:

## **Sanction of a Special Class for Autistic Students (Post-Primary)**

Dear Principal,

I wish to confirm that a special class has now been sanctioned for your school in line with Department of Education (DoE) criteria. The sanctioned class is intended to meet the needs of students with detailed evidence of complex / severe educational needs and a professional recommendation including a clear rationale as to why the student must attend such a placement. The class is for students who meet this criteria irrespective of



# Acknowledgement of Response



Working to deliver a better special education service  
Ag saothrú chun uas-seirbhís a sholáthar san oideachas speisialta

Principal

School:

Address:

Roll number:

Date:

## **Acknowledgement of Expression of Interest to Establish a Special Class for Autistic Students with Complex / Severe Educational Needs**

Dear Principal,

On behalf of the NCSE, I wish to thank you for your positive response to the NCSE, and for your expression of interest to establish a special class in your school for Autistic students with complex / severe educational needs.

We have given your response due consideration and explored the need in your area for



# Considerations



Enrolment Policy



Catchment Area



Type of Special Class



Parental Expectations



Inclusion

# Parents

PARENTAL  
CHOICE



PARENTAL  
CONSENT

Parent

School

NCSE  
Regional  
Support

Other  
Professionals



# NCSE Parental Consent Form - Planning

## Consent Form For Provision of Information to the NCSE for Special School/Special Class Planning

- The NCSE is required to keep and maintain these records for the purposes of identifying persons accessing additional resources and planning the provision of special educational and support services
- Full details of the NCSE's data protection policy (GDPR) setting out how we will use your personal data as well as information regarding your rights as a data subject are available at <http://ncse.ie/ncse-data-protection>
- The form should be completed and signed by the parent/guardian to confirm that they are aware that the data provided will be recorded and, where provided, professional report(s) will be retained in line with *NCSE Records Management Policy and Procedures*, July 2022

### Student details

Name of Student				
		M	F	Other
Date of Birth				
Address				

**JUST ARRIVED**

# Notification of Enrolment

NCSE Form 7

**ncse**  
An Chomhairle Náisiúnta um Oideachas Speisialta  
National Council for Special Education

Date Received: SENO use only

**Notification to NCSE of Enrolment in Special School/Special Class**  
(Please refer to Department of Education Criteria. Please see Appendix 1).

- This form is to be used by a school to notify the NCSE when they have offered enrolment to a student in a special school/special class in line with the school's admissions criteria
- The resourcing of a special class by the NCSE is dependent on the student meeting the Department of Education criteria for placement in the special school/special class
- This form should be completed by the school Principal, in consultation with parents/guardians, with their consent to share professional information with the NCSE
- The school Principal and parents/guardians are required to sign and date this form
- Please send the form and professional reports to the local SENO by email
- Please ensure both the form and professional reports are password protected
- The role of the SENO is to verify that the professional reports and school information meet the Department of Education criteria for special school/special class placement
- Please ensure that **all sections of the form are completed in full** and that the SENO and that the relevant professional reports are attached

A. STUDENT INFORMATION

Name of student			M	F
Home Address			Eircode	
PPSN		Date of Birth		

**REVISED**

4 pages

Reflect on  
Enrolment

DoE  
Criteria  
Attached

# New and Revised NCSE Letters



Working to deliver a better special education service  
Ag saothrú chun uas-seirbhís a sholáthar san oideachas speisialta

## MEETS CRITERIA

School Name

School Address

School Roll Number

Date:

**JUST ARRIVED**

Dear Principal,

The NCSE confirms the receipt of the *Notification of Enrolment* form in respect to (*pupil*). This pupil meets the Department of Education criteria for enrolment in the special class for pupils with (*the class's designated disability*). We have recorded this pupil on the NCSE database as enrolled in the special class.

As learning needs may change over time, a student's enrolment in a special class



Working to deliver a better special education service  
Ag saothrú chun uas-seirbhís a sholáthar san oideachas speisialta

## DOES NOT MEET CRITERIA

School Name

School Address

School Roll Number

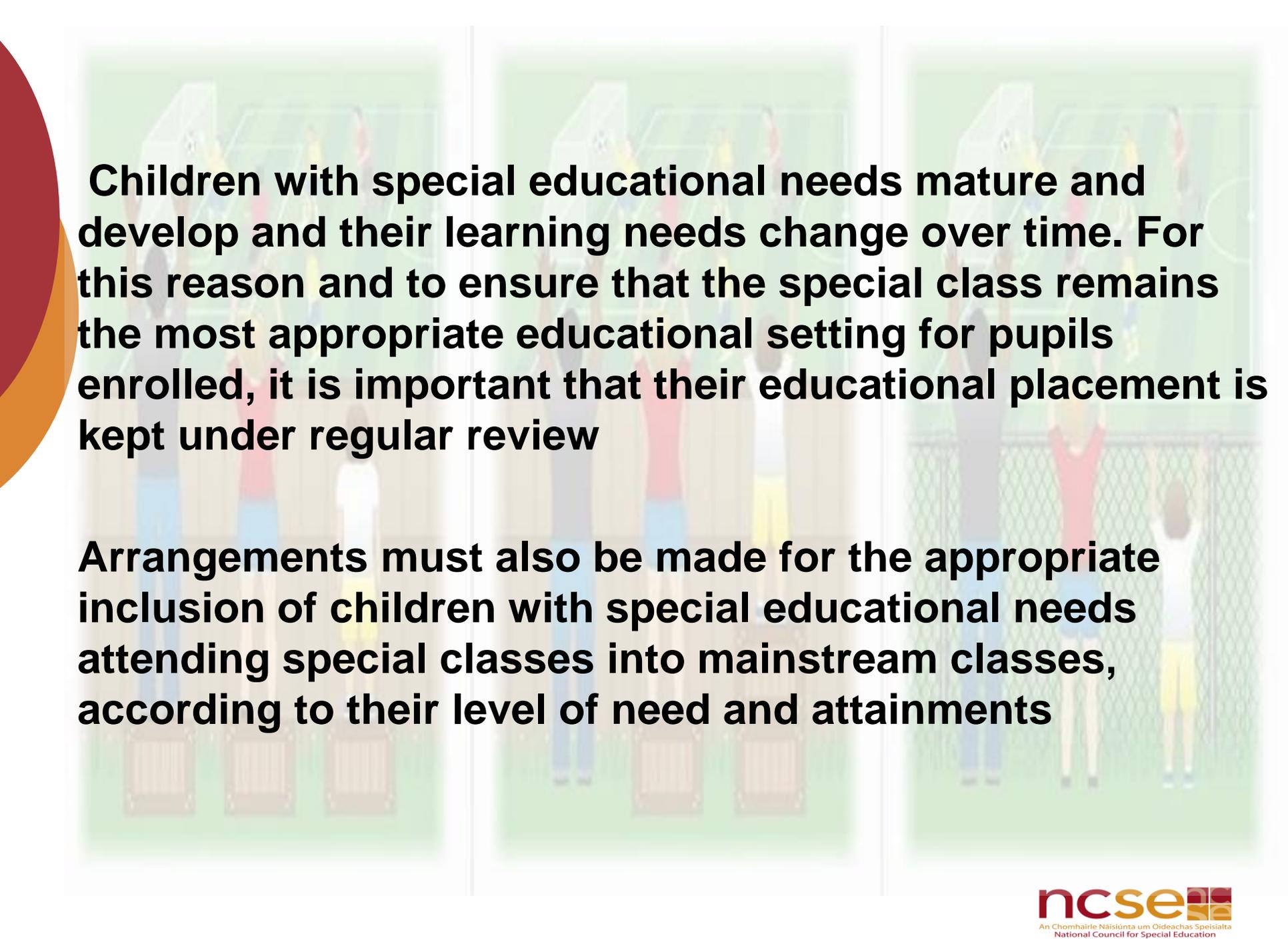
Date:

**REVISED**

Dear Principal,

I confirm receipt of the *Notification to the NCSE of Enrolment* on behalf of [*student name*] informing of your decision to enrol [*student name*] in the [*name of class*] special class. The professional report(s) furnished in support of this enrolment do not indicate that [*student name*] currently meets the Department of Education criteria for placement in the special class and therefore will not be recorded as such by the NCSE.

I refer you to the Department of Education criteria for enrolment into a special class (Please see appendix 1 of NCSE Notification of Enrolment Form). The evidence presented in the Notification of Enrolment form and supporting documentation does not meet this criteria. Accordingly the NCSE will not be in a position to resource this student in a special class.

The background of the slide features a blurred image of children playing basketball on an outdoor court. The children are wearing colorful clothing, and the scene is set against a green background. A large red and orange circular graphic is positioned on the left side of the slide.

**Children with special educational needs mature and develop and their learning needs change over time. For this reason and to ensure that the special class remains the most appropriate educational setting for pupils enrolled, it is important that their educational placement is kept under regular review**

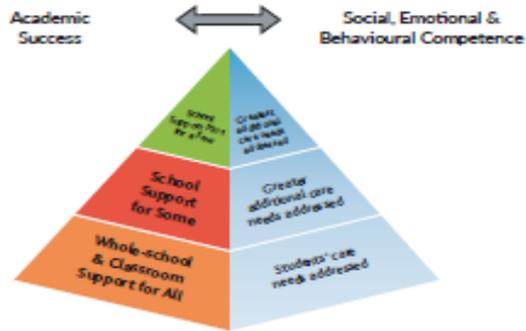
**Arrangements must also be made for the appropriate inclusion of children with special educational needs attending special classes into mainstream classes, according to their level of need and attainments**

# Review

## Resource 1: Student Support File – Incorporating Additional Care Support Targets

INSERT SCHOOL LOGO HERE

STUDENT SUPPORT FILE	
Name of Student	
Date of Birth	
School	
Date File Opened	
Date File Closed	



### A Continuum of Support

Developing a student support plan is the outcome of a problem-solving process, involving school staff, parent(s)/guardian(s) and the student. We start by identifying concerns, we gather information, we put together a plan and we review it.

## SUPPORT PLAN\*

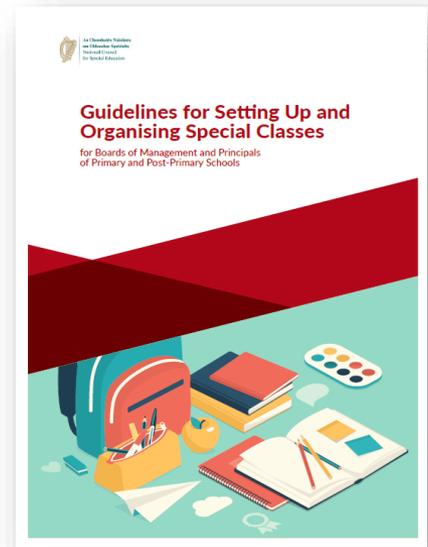
Classroom Support (support for ALL)  
School Support (support for SOME)  
School Support Plus (support for a FEW)

To be completed by the teacher(s).

For help, see SEN: A Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers: BESD: A Continuum of Support - Guidelines for Teachers pp.71-74; A Continuum of Support for Post-Primary Schools, Resource Pack for Teachers, pp. 51, 53, 54, 57.

Student's name	Age
Lead teacher	Class/year
Start date of plan	
Review date of plan	
Student's strengths and interests	
Priority concerns	
Possible reasons for concerns	
Targets for the student	
Strategies to help the student achieve the targets	
Staff involved and resources needed	
Signature of parent(s)/ guardian(s)	
Signature of teacher	

# Supports for Special Classes



Staff- Teacher, SNA  
and Escorts



Grants- Enhanced  
Capitation and Set  
Up



Professional  
Development- NCSE



Additional Supports  
- NEPS

# Resourcing the class – Teacher SNA

Teaching Support



## Appendix 2:

### DES Policy: Staffing & Retention Ratios

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/ASD	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

SNA Support

# Allocating 'above SERC' SNA allocation to a Special Class

- Automatic allocation of SNA support to a special class – DoE policy – SERC (Report of the Special Education Review Committee 1993)
- Circumstances may arise where this allocation is not sufficient
- SENO can review allocation of SNA support to the special class if there is a professional report and documented school-based evidence that the level of care needs are beyond what would be expected in a special class

# NCSE Teacher Professional Development - Seminars



TPL Seminar Calendar

Click to view our seminar calendar and to book your place on one of our seminars.

# TPL Funding

Home

About Us

Parents

School Leaders

Teachers

Research

Policy Advice

Publications

## TPL Funding



Teachers can apply to the NCSE for funding to attend approved teacher professional development courses. Currently the core courses available are:

- Picture Exchange Communication System(PECS)
- Braille
- Lámh – whole staff training
- Irish Sign Language(ISL)

Post-Graduate Courses with a Special Educational Needs background will also be considered subject to certain conditions and budget constraints. Other relevant courses that principals consider worthy will also be considered subject to approval.

To submit an application for TPL Funding, access the NCSE School Support Portal below and create a new support ticket. Select "CPD Funding" from the "Type" menu.



Click here to log into the School Support portal to create a new 'TPL Funding' ticket.

[Apply here](#)

# Teacher Professional Development – In School Support



Working to deliver a better  
special education service



Home About Us Parents School Leaders Teachers Research Policy Advice Publications

**In School Support**

Listen

In-School Support forms part of a suite of Teacher Professional Learning (TPL) provided by the NCSE. Schools may apply directly to the NCSE for in-school support for whole staff, group and individual teachers.

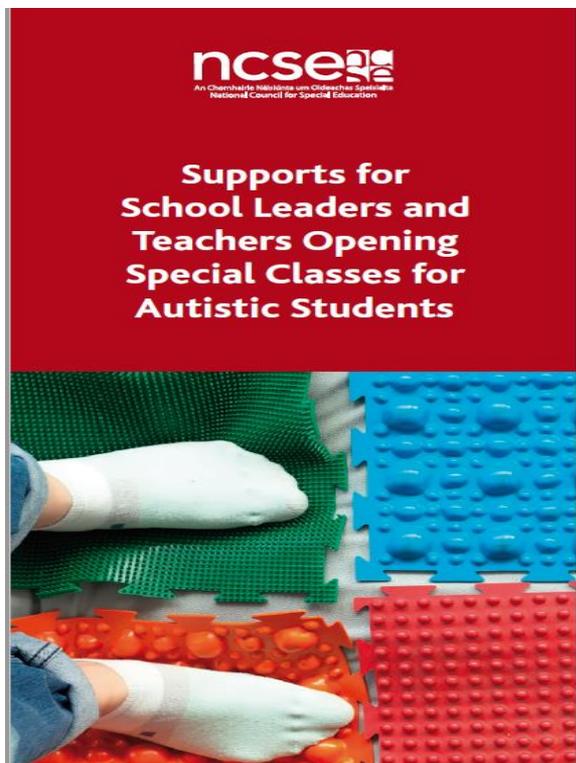
To submit an application for in school support, login to the NCSE School Support Portal.

- Teacher Professional Learning >
- Teacher Resources >
- NCSE School Portal > **In School Support**
- TPL Seminar Calendar
- Video Resources
- Book Borrowing
- TPL Funding
- Exceptional Review of SNA Mainstream Allocation
- PLC Sustained Support (Special Schools)
- SET Exceptional Review for Mainstream Classrooms
- SNA Appeal

Click here to log into the School Support portal to create a new 'School Support' ticket.

**[schoolsupport@ncse.ie](mailto:schoolsupport@ncse.ie)**

# Autism Supports for Special Classes



# NCSE Padlet For Schools



Cathy NCSE + 2 • 3h

## NCSE Supports Schools with Special Classes for Autistic Students

### NCSE Guidelines



© 2024 (Revised)



#### Guidelines for Setting Up and Organising Special Classes

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

PDF

NCSE-Establishing and Organising Special Classes Guidelines for Schools and BOMs 2024-ENG

### NCSE Applications and Forms



NCSE Form 7



Date Received: SEND use only

- Notification to NCSE of Enrolment in Special School/Special Class**  
(Please refer to Department of Education Criteria. Please see Appendix 1.)
- This form is to be used by a school to notify the NCSE when they have offered enrolment to a student in a special school/special class in line with the school's admissions criteria.
  - The NCSE researching of a special school or special class is dependent on the student meeting the Department of Education criteria for such placement.
  - The role of the SEND is to verify that the professional reports and school information meet the Department of Education criteria for special school/special class placement. The SEND does not enrol children in a special school or special class. Enrolment in a special school or special class is a decision for school management.
  - This form should be completed by the school Principal in consultation with parents/guardians with parental consent to share professional information with the NCSE.
  - The school Principal and parents/guardians are required to sign and date this form.
  - Please send the form and professional reports to the local SEND Card if sending by email, ensure both the form and professional reports are password protected.
  - Please ensure that all sections of the form are completed in full prior to submitting to the SEND and that the relevant professional reports are attached.

DOC

Form 7 Notification of Enrolment to Special School Special Class

### School Transport

### Good Practice Guidance



Riadas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

#### Autism Good Practice Guidance for Schools Supporting Children and Young People

PDF

Autism Good Practice Guidance for Schools

### TPL Seminars



Planning for Autistic Students (Post Primary),  
22nd February 2024, Laois  
Education Centre



# Questions

It's time to Answer Questions.



