

**20<sup>th</sup> September 2018**

## **How Can I Apply for a Special Needs Assistant (SNA)?**

The role of an SNA is to support a child who has special educational needs who may struggle to take part in school activities with. These include toileting, for example, or because they have complex medical or behavioural needs. Additional needs can stem from significant medical, physical, sensory (hearing and visual), communication, and or learning needs.

In sum, an SNA's role is to provide non-teaching support for children with additional needs.

If you feel that your child may have such needs and that they would benefit from SNA support, the first step is to discuss this with their teacher so that a decision can be made on whether to apply to the NCSE for SNA support.

In an Irish study ([Daly and Ring \*et al\*, 2016](#)), it was found that SNAs are central to supporting the inclusion of autistic children across the school system. However the research also indicated that, in not all cases, was SNA support being appropriately provided as SNAs were engaging in teaching activities, which are the remit of the class teacher.

It is therefore crucial that you keep in touch with your child's teacher and their SNA with regular meetings throughout the school term to ensure that your child is getting as much support as they need.

Adapted from <https://asiam.ie/apply-special-needs-assistant-sna/> (Accessed 12<sup>th</sup> February 2019).

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