



Inclusive Education in Post-Primary Schools

The NCSE (2011) described inclusion as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of learners. It involves removing barriers so that each learner will be enabled to achieve the maximum benefit from his/her schooling.

In line with inclusive principles, schools are advised to include students meaningfully in mainstream mixed-ability class groupings. This helps ensure high expectations and enables students with special educational needs to learn alongside their peers. Mixed-ability teaching has beneficial effects for all students and helps promote social and personal development.

The Department acknowledges the very significant progress made by schools in developing inclusive practices and provision whereby the vast majority of students with special educational needs now attend mainstream schools. It also recognises that a small minority of students with significant and enduring needs may require a more specialist setting (for example, special class or special school placement).

A whole-school approach to special educational needs provision should reflect the Department's commitment to the inclusion of students with special educational needs in mainstream schools. Schools with strong inclusive cultures are characterised by:

- A positive ethos and learning environment whereby all students, including those with special educational needs, feel welcome and experience a sense of community and belonging
- An emphasis on promoting students' participation and active engagement in their learning and in the life of the school
- A commitment to developing students' academic, social, emotional and independent living skills
- A focus on high aspirations and on improving outcomes for all students

The following resources are available to schools to help them to identify and enhance inclusive education practice:

[Inclusive Education Framework](#)

[Inclusion of Students with Special Educational Needs: A Checklist](#)

[Universal Design for Learning](#)

The NCSE Support Service offers training for teachers that directly relates to promoting inclusive practices in post-primary schools and support and training for a range of prevention and early intervention programmes and approaches that aim to promote positive behaviour and learning throughout the school by focusing on developing skills, attitudes and knowledge in the following areas:

- Behaviour for Learning
- Social and Emotional Literacy
- Literacy, Numeracy, Language and Learning
- Wellbeing

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<https://www.sess.ie/special-education-teacher-allocation/post-primary/inclusive-education-post-primary-schools>