



An Chomhairle Náisiúnta  
um Oideachas Speisialta  
National Council  
for Special Education

## Update on the Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) Redeployment Scheme

In April 2025 Minister for Education and Youth, Helen McEntee TD, and Minister of State with responsibility for Special Education and Inclusion, Michael Moynihan TD, announced that work to establish a [Special Needs Assistants \(SNAs\) Redeployment Scheme](#) had started. This significant initiative is now at an advanced stage.

Acknowledged as a significant undertaking and aligned with work on the first SNA Workforce Development Plan, the SNA Redeployment Scheme will be operated by the National Council for Special Education (NCSE), who are responsible for managing the allocation of Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) to schools and for ensuring SNA resources are allocated to the children with the greatest level of need. The NCSE will be supported by the SNA Workforce Development Unit and relevant units within the Department of Education and Youth.

SNAs play an important role in the successful inclusion of students with significant primary care needs in schools. This scheme will mean for the first time, SNAs in schools where their roles may no longer be needed due to reasons such as fewer students, lower care needs, or demographic changes, can now be redeployed to schools that need more SNA support or have vacant SNA positions, as identified by the NCSE.

Implementation of the SNA Redeployment scheme will start during the 2025/26 school year shaped by feedback from a broad range of stakeholders. It is important to note that SNAs in surplus posts identified through the NCSE's SNA Review process will remain in the relevant school for the rest of the academic year. Subject to identification of a suitable vacancy and assuming no change to SNA allocations in the meantime, they will subsequently be redeployed to a new post in September 2026. The scheme will remain under review and provisions may be modified in future years in response to feedback.

Updates and final details of the SNA Redeployment Scheme, including a comprehensive circular and guidelines, will be published on the NCSE website and the SNA Information Hub on [www.gov.ie](http://www.gov.ie) as work progresses.

The NCSE will also provide support to schools and SNAs by hosting webinars to provide further clarity on the operation of the SNA Redeployment Scheme. Schools and SNAs are encouraged to raise any issues/queries with their staff representatives and management bodies so that the Department and



the NCSE can address these together during regular consultations, both in the lead up to the Scheme's launch and throughout its implementation during the 2025/26 school year.

The NCSE will maintain records of schools with an increase or decrease in SNA allocations as well as vacancies arising from the 2025/26 review process.<sup>1</sup> Where reviews result in a potential change to a school's allocation, these will be considered as part of the SNA redeployment process for the 2025/26 school year. This approach will allow for the SNAs involved to continue supporting the school until the SNA Redeployment Scheme is fully operational. Schools and SNAs impacted by changes in their allocation will be contacted by the NCSE and will be guided through the required steps.

The Supplementary Assignment Arrangement (SAA) remains in operation for the 2025/26 school year, as outlined in Department of Education and Youth [Circular 0043/2025](#). This well-established mechanism has been developed over the last decade and supports experienced SNAs in continuing employment when their current post is affected by a revised school allocation. It is appropriate that the SAA remains in place during this transitional phase to ensure SNAs continue to benefit from its provisions at appropriate points throughout the operation of the SNA Redeployment Scheme. Further details on how the SNA Redeployment Scheme and the SAA will operate in tandem will be provided in the forthcoming SNA Redeployment circular.

This important policy initiative aims to ensure that competent, knowledgeable, and experienced SNAs are retained in our schools, building capacity in the workforce and enhancing the service provided to students and schools.

The SNA Redeployment Scheme will operate alongside ongoing work on the first SNA Workforce Development Plan, which supports the objective of an enhanced SNA service that delivers the best outcome for children with significant care needs in our schools.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://ncse.ie/special-needs-assistants>