



SPECIAL NEEDS ASSISTANT JOB DESCRIPTION

Working Relationships:

- Principal and school management team.
- Members of the teaching staff
- Other members of the support staff
- ETB Administrative Head Office
- Students
- Parents
- External Support Agencies

Primary Function:

The SNA provides the necessary non-teaching services to pupils with assessed educational needs. The SNA acts in a care and support role that is non-teaching in nature and works under the guidance and supervision of the Principal and class teacher. The SNA's primary function is to ensure the care and support needs of the students are met on a daily basis.

Key Tasks (Circular 12/05 and 30/2014):

The duties involve tasks of a non-teaching nature such as:

1. Preparation and tidying up of classrooms.
2. Assisting pupils to board and alight from school buses. Where necessary travel as escort during school hours on school buses may be required.
3. Special assistance as necessary for pupils with particular difficulties e.g. helping special needs pupils with typing or writing or computers or other use of equipment.
4. Assistance with clothing, feeding, toileting and general hygiene and being mindful of health and safety needs of the pupil.
5. Assisting on out-of-school visits, walks, examinations and similar activities.
6. Assisting the teachers in the supervision of pupils during assembly, recreation and dispersal from the classroom for one reason or another.
7. Accompanying individuals or small groups who may have to be withdrawn temporarily from the classroom for one reason or another.
8. General assistance to the class teachers, under the direction of the Principal, with duties of a non-teaching nature. (Special needs assistants may not act as either substitute or temporary teachers. In no circumstances may they be left in sole charge of a class or group of children).
9. Participation with school development planning, where appropriate, and co-operation with any such changes with policies and practices arising from the school development process.



10. Engagement with parents of special needs pupils in both formal and informal structures as required and directed by school management.

11. Other duties appropriate to the grade as may be determined by the needs of the pupils and the school from time to time. Special Needs Assistants may be re-assigned to other work appropriate to the grade when special needs pupils are absent or when particular urgent work demands arise.

Remuneration:

The remuneration offered is the SNA scale as determined by the Department of Education & Skills.

Person Specification/Profile:

Essential Requirements:

- Good communication and interpersonal skills.
- The ability to build good relationships with pupils and colleagues/adults.
- Excellent organisational and planning skills.
- A passion for working with children and the ability to manage groups of pupils.
- Ability to manage difficult behaviour effectively.
- Flexibility and creativity.
- Ability to work as part of a team.
- Good record-keeping and report-writing skills, with ICT skills an advantage.
- Shows discretion in sensitive situations.
- The minimum standard of education for appointment to the post of SNA is FETAC Level 3 major qualification on the National Framework of Qualifications, OR a minimum of three grade Ds in the Junior Certificate, OR Equivalent. [Circular 0021/2011]

SNA Competency

SNAs require specific knowledge and a high level of competence in the areas of:

1. Communication and Interpersonal Skills

- Is an excellent communicator who is able to motivate, encourage and instil confidence.
- Has the ability to quickly build rapport.
- Is respectful and displays high emotional intelligence.
- Is resilient, has patience and energy to persevere. Maintains composure in stressful situations.

2. Teamwork, Cooperation and Flexibility

- Creates team spirit, develops good working relations with others (SNAs, teachers and school management team).
- Co-operates with others, shares useful and relevant information and experience.



- Is flexible in approach, adaptable in working style, and open to change.
- Is punctual - shows up to work on time, and follows instructions, policies and procedures.
- Is able to work alongside and take direction from colleagues in a busy environment.

3. Planning and Organising

- Plans ahead and organise work in an effective manner.
- Manages own time and priorities and re-prioritise where necessary.
- Takes follow up actions with required.
- Monitor work activity against plan and take remedial action when necessary.
- Keeps accurate and detailed records of student's needs and progress.

4. Commitment to Learning/Professional Development

- Evaluates own behaviour regularly with a view to continuous learning and development.
- Is open and responsive to constructive feedback regarding their work.
- Shows willingness to learn and seeks appropriate support, advice and guidance.
- Takes initiative to seek out training and development opportunities.
- Attends and/or actively participates in seminars and conferences, or any other training which may be beneficial to their role.