



Child with disability or additional needs starting primary school

 nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/primary-and-high-school/starting-primary-school/starting-primary-school-disability-or-additional-needs

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If you have a child starting primary school with disability or additional needs

What you need to know when finding and enrolling a child with disability in a NSW public primary school, including timelines and available support.

 [Listen](#)

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Not sure when to enrol?

The [timeline to enrolment tool](#) can help you know when to start the conversation about inclusive learning with your school or local education unit.

Find a school

Starting primary school can be a big transition. If you have a child with disability or additional needs, you'll want to make sure that the school you choose is able to provide the support your child needs.

It's important to begin conversations with the school in advance, especially where adjustments are required.

Most public primary schools in NSW provide a range of enrolment and support options for children with disability or additional learning needs.

Students with or without a confirmed [diagnosis of disability](#) can be enrolled in different types of classes, subject to any placement panel assessments, including:

- mainstream classes through personalised planning and adjustments
- support classes in regular schools, which offer a specialised setting of fewer students who require similar adjustments
- schools for special purposes (SSPs), which provide intensive levels of support for eligible students in a specialised setting.

To find out what options are available in your child's local school:

- ideally, make an appointment with the school's principal to discuss your child's needs **2 years before** they start kindergarten
- if your child is **already 5 years old**, contact your local school or the NSW Educational Services Team on [131 536](#) to discuss the options and services available.

The Raising Children website, which is supported by the Department of Social Services, has information on [children with disability and their schooling](#), including:

- what to consider when choosing a school
- support options for children with disability.

[Learn more about educational support options in primary school](#) at the NSW Department of Education.

Enrol in a school

Is your child under four?

If your child is less than 4 years old, contact the Local School Services team on [131 536](#) for more information about transitioning your child to the most appropriate school.

For a child with disability or additional learning and support needs, parents or carers should meet with their local school principal up to 2 years before starting kindergarten to discuss and assess:

- any reports from medical experts, therapists or other health care agencies
- details of any assistive equipment and devices used or required for day to day activities
- potential changes to school property, such as bathrooms or stairs, to meet the child's specific support needs
- the school's resources and procedures to address specific student health issues like asthma, anaphylaxis, epilepsy or ADHD.

You can find useful information on the Raising Children website about [planning and working with your school during the enrolment process](#).

[Find out more about enrolling students with disability](#) or additional learning needs at the NSW Department of Education.

What to expect once school starts

Many people, not only parents, can contribute to supporting students with disability and additional learning needs.

This collaborative, personalised approach using a range of teaching and learning professionals can help ensure every student receives a dignified education.

If you have concerns about your child's development or progress at school, it's important to discuss these as soon as practical with the relevant people, including:

- the school principal, teacher or counsellor
- your family doctor or child's paediatrician.

There are also interpreter services and Aboriginal education assistants available to parents and carers.

The Raising Children website has tips on [how to help your child settle into school](#).

[Find out more about personalised support options for students with disability](#) or additional learning needs at the NSW Department of Education.