

Information for Families About Preschool Special Class in an Integrated Setting (SCIS) Classes in DOE District Schools and Pre-K Centers

What is SCIS?

SCIS classes, sometimes called pre-K integrated co-teaching (ICT) classes, include preschool children with and without Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). There are two teachers in a SCIS class, one general education teacher and one special education teacher. The teachers work together to support all of the students in the class. There are also two classroom paraprofessionals in a SCIS class.

Is the curriculum different in a SCIS class?

SCIS classes follow grade-level curriculum, which includes the New York State Pre-Kindergarten Foundation for the Common Core. There is no difference between the content or curriculum being taught in a SCIS class and a general education class. The rigor of the instruction is also the same in a SCIS class.

What are the benefits of a SCIS class?

For all students	For students with IEPs	For students without IEPs
Inclusiveness: Research shows that students with and without IEPs benefit from being educated in inclusive settings both socially and academically.	Students with IEPs must by law be educated alongside their nondisabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate, but we don't just do this to comply with the law. A SCIS class enables students with IEPs to be fully included with their peers rather than being segregated, which we know can sometimes result in lower self-esteem and lower expectations.	Students without IEPs benefit from having a diverse group of peers with whom to interact, mirroring diversity in the community. All students have different strengths and learn from each other in an inclusive setting.
Two Teachers: Having two teachers in the class can help enable the teachers to work more closely with all students, particularly in small groups and individually. This includes both enrichment or extension activities and targeted support as needed.	Students with IEPs receive specially designed instruction (SDI) in order to meet their individualized academic goals. SDI is how special education professionals adapt the delivery (the way material is taught), the methodology (approach to teaching), and/or the content in order to meet the unique needs of each student and ensure access to the general curriculum.	Students without IEPs benefit from a smaller teacher to student ratio. Also, since one of the teachers is trained in special education and one is a general education teacher, students without IEPs benefit from the specialized skills and strategies that each teacher brings to the instruction, including when students require more challenging, above grade-level activities.
Enriched Learning Experiences: Often, all students reap the benefits of availability of additional supports and services.	Students with IEPs receive all services recommended on their IEPs. Teachers work together to ensure that students have full access to the curriculum, including designing lessons so that all students can access them, and so that students can show what they have learned in different ways.	Students who do not have IEPs also benefit from having lessons designed with access in mind. For example, if the teacher uses a variety of materials, including those that are different sizes, textures, and shapes, it may help many students, not just the students who require this per their IEP. Also, if related service providers (e.g., occupational therapists) are working with some students in the classroom, students without IEPs can also benefit because the classroom teacher can use some of the same techniques for students with similar challenges.

Are there any rules about who can be in a SCIS class?

As with most classes, SCIS classes should include students with a diverse range of skills including students above grade level. SCIS classes are available for children who are 3 and 4 years old. Children with IEPs must have an IEP that recommends SCIS as the program recommendation.

Every SCIS class is approved to operate a specific student-teacher-paraprofessional classroom ratio. In DOE district schools and pre-K centers, SCIS classes are approved to operate classes of 18 students with up to six or eight students with IEPs.

Who should I ask if I have additional questions?

If you have additional questions, start with the staff at your child's school. This may include your child's teacher, program director, or principal. If you still have questions, you may email specialeducation@schools.nyc.gov.