The data from the Seventh National Education Report “Education in Germany 2018” (Bildung in Deutschland 2018), which focuses on the effects and benefits of education, show that in the same age group the share of children until school entry in receipt of an integration allowance (Eingliederungshilfe) for day-care for children due to an (incipient) physical, mental or psychological disability is 2.5 per cent in 2017. The vast majority of these children attend an establishment with an inclusive care concept.

Cooperation between special education institutions and mainstream schools exists independently of more recent attempts at inclusive teaching. When a pupil is transferred from one type of school to another the teachers and head teachers of the schools concerned work together. It is always possible for pupils to return to mainstream schools. In the majority of the Länder, the education authority makes the decision on whether to transfer a pupil following a request from the special education institution or from the parents or legal guardians. Through the implementation of the UN Disability Convention, the Länder have created the prerequisites for teaching pupils with special educational needs in mainstream schools with the same learning objectives as other pupils, and in some cases with different learning objectives. Schools for children and young people with the support priority speech or emotional and social development are designed as transitional schools; their objective is to remedy impairments in speech and behavioural problems sufficiently that pupils can attend a mainstream school. In addition, the Länder are developing different forms of access to the mainstream school system or joint teaching also for pupils who are taught according to different learning objectives.

Within the framework of inclusive education, recently, diverse forms of institutional and educational cooperation between mainstream schools and special education institutions have developed.

**Definition of the target group(s)**

It can be presumed that children or young people have special educational needs if their opportunities for education, development and learning are limited in such a way that they cannot be sufficiently promoted within the scope of instruction at mainstream schools without additionally receiving special educational assistance. In this regard, therapeutic and social aid provided by other external institutions may be required as well.

Special educational needs are to be determined in relation to the tasks, the requirements and the support measures the respective school can provide. Furthermore, a determination of the special educational needs of the child must take into account the environment of the child, including the school as well as the pupil’s personal abilities, interests and expectations for the future.

The procedure of determining special educational needs comprises establishing the individual need for support as well as deciding on the course of education and in some Länder also the place of
support. The responsibility for the procedure lies in most cases with the school supervisory authorities: Either the authorities themselves have the competence for special educational needs as well as sufficient experience in the field of educational support for children and young people with special educational needs, or they consult experts in the field of special educational support. Access to mainstream schools is also possible in some cases without a formal procedure.

The procedure of determining special educational needs may be applied for by the parents or legal guardians of the pupil, by the pupil provided he is aged 18 or above, by the school or, if applicable, by other competent services, and is to take into account the competences of the persons who participate or are to participate in the measures of support and instruction in a suitable manner.

**Specific support measures**

**Inclusive education for pupils with special educational needs**

Children and young people with special educational needs can attend mainstream schools. Special education teachers are deployed at special education institutions and at mainstream schools that meet special educational needs, e.g. by providing mobile assistance and advice and cooperative instruction with another teacher. Apart from the external environment, this also requires qualified special education teachers, individualised forms of planning, carrying out and monitoring the teaching process and coordinated cooperation between the teaching and specialist staff involved. Special educational support is provided, as a rule, during joint class lessons.

**Special educational support in the form of cooperative measures**

Many special education institutions and mainstream schools have developed close educational cooperation. Cooperative or inclusive forms of organisation can greatly benefit both lessons and the general life of the school. Also, this trend expands the opportunities for changing between school types and educational courses, increases the proportion of joint lessons and encourages the transfer of pupils from special education institutions to mainstream schools.

---

**Source URL:**