Definition of target group(s)


The Education Act [2] states that deaf and hearing impaired children and young people have the right to receive education in and about Sign Language. As a consequence of the Norwegian model for inclusion deaf and hearing impaired children are mainly in ordinary kindergartens/schools and a wide spectre of different programs are scattered all around the country. These programmes will differ from one year to another in relation to the numbers of and the current need of the deaf and hearing impaired. When hearing impaired get their education in ordinary settings they are also mostly supplied with microphones for teacher, microphones for the hearing students, and in many schools/classes also a sound amplifier.

There are five national resource centres for special education - one in each region. One of them is private owned, but grant-aided. They have special schools which cater for mostly local pupils living at home and some boarding pupils from the region. In addition, part-time pupils attend courses in sign language for a period.

There is one private owned high school for the deaf were all teaching is done in sign language.

Døves Media ("Deaf Media") is a private grant-aided firm which produces weekly TV-programmes for Deaf and hearing impaired persons.

For blind and visually impaired children, separate special schools do not exist any more. The two National Resource Centres in this sector assist in setting up adapted education in ordinary schools, produce teaching materials and give courses to pupils and teachers in their region. This is also the case for the Resource Centres for deaf and blind children.

National hospitals/rehabilitation centers can have their own schools for children/young people in the institution. E.g. the two separate special schools attached to national hospitals/centres for children with asthma and allergy, are located near Oslo and in the mountains in western Norway.

Admission requirements and choice of school

Local health centres and schools co-operate with the local Pedagogical Psychological Service (PPS).

The separate special schools for deaf and hearing impaired children offer education to children that have Norwegian sign language (NTS) as their first language. The Education Act [2] 2.6 gives these pupils a right to education in, and using, sign language. The schools also offer special education according to section 5.1. to pupils that have Norwegian as their first language and need to learn sign
language or use sign language as a second language e.g. in communication when more than two people participate.

**Age levels and grouping of pupils**

Separate special education is adapted to the individual pupil’s needs and according to individual teaching plans.

**Curriculum, subjects**

In The Framework Plan for the Content and Tasks of Kindergartens it is stated that kindergartens must offer all children a rich, varied, stimulating and challenging pedagogical environment, regardless of their age, gender, level of function and social and cultural background. This means that the care and activities provided must be adapted to each individual child and to the relevant group of children.

Pupils in need of special education are entitled to the same amount (hours) of teaching as other pupils in the elementary and secondary school system. They are also entitled to special programmes designed to develop their abilities. Curriculum, subjects and hours may be changed to suit individual needs.

From 1997 there are special curricula for deaf pupils, based on the principle that sign language is the first language. There are four special curricula for deaf pupils: sign language, Norwegian as a second language, English, eurhythmics and drama.

**Organisation of the school year**

Full-time pupils (local or boarding) in separate special schools follow the ordinary school year. Some special schools have part-time pupils for courses lasting from 2 to 12 weeks.

The education offered by schools attached to a social and/or medical institution is limited to the time the children stay in the institution. In the psychiatric service for children and young people, the average length of stay in an institution is one year. The aim is to integrate the children/young people in their home community as quickly as possible.

**Teaching methods and materials**

Teachers in separate special schools develop and produce educational tools, e.g. in sign language for deaf pupils. Such development and production is also done by the National Support System for Special Education for adapted teaching of pupils in ordinary schools. In addition the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training (UDIR) administrates a grant scheme enabling publishers to produce necessary teaching aid for special education needs. The grant scheme is administrated through a yearly advertisement to which publishers are invited to apply.

ICT-assisted teaching is important for disabled children. Pupils receive systematic education in using ICT in school subjects. ICT based tools are important for the disabled in their communication with society. Some special schools and National Resource Centres have Internet shops for educational tools offered as CD-ROM, video, DVD, in print or Braille.

Developing the pupils’ social competence is also important for separate special schools. The schools arrange afternoon activities for the pupils in co-operation with the parents. A minority of boarding pupils go home only on weekends. For them the school offers care, training for independence and
social development in close co-operation with the parents.

**Progression of pupils**

If the normal course of education has not been followed, the individually adapted curriculum and its objectives form the basis for formal as well as diagnostic evaluation of the pupil.

**Certification**

The pupil generally receives a certificate/diploma stating the content of the courses he/she has taken and teaching methods used. The teacher's assessment of the pupil's achievement and progress in skills and knowledge are stated in the certificate/diploma.

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