Definition of the Target Group(s)

Special nursery schools are established for disabled children:

- with a moderate or severe intellectual disability;
- deaf;
- with hearing impairment;
- blind;
- with visual impairment;
- with a physical / motor disability, including aphasia;
- with autism, including Asperger’s syndrome; and
- with multiple disabilities.

Special schools are established for children and young people holding a special education certificate:

- disabled children and young people:
  - with a mild, moderate or severe intellectual disability;
  - deaf and with hearing impairment;
  - blind and with visual impairment;
  - with a physical / motor disability, including aphasia;
  - with autism, including Asperger’s syndrome;
  - with multiple disabilities; and
- socially maladjusted children and young people;
- children and young people at risk of social maladjustment.

Special nursery schools and schools may organise rehabilitation-and-education classes for children and young people with a profound intellectual disability.

Special education institutions may provide early development support to disabled children.

The school education system also includes the following types of special institutions:

- youth education centres: for socially maladjusted children and young people;
- youth social therapy centres: for children and young people at risk of social maladjustment;
- special school-and-education centres: for disabled children and young people;
- special educational centres: for disabled children and young people and those at risk of social maladjustment;
- rehabilitation-and-education centres:
  - for children and young people with a profound intellectual disability;
  - for children and young people with multiple disabilities which include an intellectual disability.
Admission requirements and choice of school

Admission to special nursery schools, schools or other special institutions is based on a certificate recommending special education or rehabilitation-and-education classes.

This requirement does not apply to:

- special nursery schools, pre-school education classes in special primary schools and special schools established within healthcare institutions and welfare institutions;

  (Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 24 August 2017 on the provision of education, and the conditions for, and forms of, special care-and-education activities in special nursery schools and schools operating within healthcare and welfare institutions; Journal of Law, item 1654 [1])

- young people under the age of 18 who are sent to a youth education centre as a corrective measure administered by a family court;

  (Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 27 December 2011 on the detailed arrangements for referral, admission, transfer, release and stay of juveniles in youth education centres: Journal of Law 296, item 1755).

Special education certificates, issued by assessment committees at public counselling and guidance centres, including public specialised centres, recommend the best forms of education for individual children.

The choice of the type of education (mainstream, integration or special) is, however, made by parents (legal guardians) who, pursuant to the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, have the exclusive right to make decisions relating to their child, unless a court of law has limited or deprived them of this right.

If the child’s parent (legal guardian) chooses a special nursery school, school or centre as the place where their child will receive special education, they should apply to the competent local government unit (LGU) to provide special education in a given type of institution within the school education system. The competent LGU is:

- a commune (gmina) (the lowest local-government level): for admission to a special nursery school;
- a district (powiat) (the local-government level above the commune): for admission to a special school, special school-and-education centre, special educational centre, youth social therapy centre, youth education centre or rehabilitation-and-education centre.
If the district covering the area where the child has their place of residence does not administer any special school or centre suitable for a given type of disability, including a given degree of intellectual disability, the head of the district refers the child to the nearest district administering such a school or institution. The head of the nearest district where such a school or institution is located may not refuse to admit the child if a place is available.

Parents may also choose for their children a special nursery school, special school or institution other than the one identified by the competent LGU, provided that children are admitted there. Consent from the relevant LGU responsible for special education is not required.

Children are provided with special education in:

- special nursery schools;
- special schools;
- youth social therapy centres;
- special school-and-education centres; and
- special educational centres

on the basis of:

- a special education certificate and
- a written request from their parents (legal guardians).

There are separate procedures for admission to youth education centres. They take only children/underage young people who have been referred to such a centre by a family court ruling as a corrective measure.

Such an institution is identified by the Centre for Education Development (Ośrodek Rozwoju Edukacji) through the Juvenile Referral System. The head of the competent district draws up and submits a request for the identification of a suitable institution to the Centre for Education Development via the Juvenile Referral System. The Centre for Education Development identifies an institution suitable for the juvenile concerned and notifies of this the family court and the institution concerned. The head of the district issues a referral for the juvenile concerned to the institution identified and forwards the referral to the receiving institution via an electronic system and by post. The head of the district notifies of the referral issued the parents or guardians, and the person responsible for foster care if the juvenile is in foster care. The juvenile becomes a pupil/student of a given institution on the date when the head of the institution receives the referral from the Centre for Education Development by post.

A special education certificate is not required for admission to a youth education centre. However, it should be provided during the stay of the pupil/student in the centre so that appropriate educational-and-therapeutic interventions may be identified on the basis of the assessment of his/her developmental and educational needs.


(Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 27 December 2011 on the detailed arrangements for referral, admission, transfer, release and stay of juveniles in youth education centres: Journal of Law 296, item 1755)

At the request of parents (legal guardians), rehabilitation centres take children and young people:

- with a profound intellectual disability who hold a certificate recommending rehabilitation-and-
education classes;
• with multiple disabilities including a mild, moderate or severe intellectual disability who hold a special education certificate.

The head of a special school or institution may decide to strike a pupil/student from the register in cases listed in its statutes. This is based on a decision made by the school’s/institution’s teaching council, following consultation with the pupil/student self-government. It does not apply to pupils/students in full-time compulsory education. In duly justified cases, at the school head’s request, pupils/students may be transferred to a different school by the head of the regional education authorities.

There are separate regulations for transfer of underage young people attending youth education centres.

A juvenile may be transferred to a different centre:

• in cases duly justified by the effectiveness of the social rehabilitation or therapy process;
• on the basis of an assessment of the reasons justifying the juvenile’s further stay in the centre, carried out by teachers, the class / group tutor and specialists working with the juvenile.

The school education system also includes special nursery schools and schools operating within healthcare and welfare institutions.

(Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 24 August 2017 on the provision of education, and the conditions for, and forms of, special care-and-education activities in special nursery schools and schools operating within healthcare and welfare institutions; Journal of Law, item 1654 [1])

(Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 8 March 2013 on the provision of education, and the conditions for, and forms of, special care-and-education activities in special nursery schools and schools operating within healthcare and welfare institutions; Journal of Law, item 380 [2])

Special nursery schools and schools operating within healthcare institutions provide children and young people with education and organise special care and education activities for them at the time agreed with the head of the institution or the head of the hospital ward, following recommendations from the medical doctor responsible for the treatment.

A child becomes a pupil of such a (nursery) school when he/she is admitted to a given healthcare institution.

Special nursery schools and schools operating in welfare institutions provide children and young people with education and organise special care and education activities for them at the time agreed with the head of the institution. In the case of nursery schools and schools in welfare homes, they also take into consideration recommendations from therapy-and-care committees referred to in the regulations based on Article 57 (8) of the Welfare Act.


(Regulation of the Minister of Labour and Social Policy of 23 August 2012 on welfare homes; Journal of Law 2018, item 734)
Age levels and grouping of pupils

Special schools follow the same stages of education as mainstream schools.

Like a mainstream primary school, a special single structure (8-year primary) school is divided into two stages of education:

- stage I covering grades I to III (early school education); and
- stage II covering grades IV to VIII.

Subsequently, pupils move on to post-primary schools:

- 4-year general secondary schools;
- 5-year technical secondary schools;
- 3-year stage I sectoral vocational schools;
- 3-year special schools preparing for employment;
- 2-year stage II sectoral vocational schools; and
- post-secondary schools, providing programmes of up to 2.5 years, for learners who have completed secondary education or secondary sectoral vocational education.

The school education system comprises old type upper secondary schools, including 3-year general and 4-year technical secondary schools, until these are phased out.


Three-year special schools preparing for employment, which lead to a certificate confirming preparation for work, are intended for students:

- with a moderate or severe intellectual disability; and
- with multiple disabilities.

Education in special schools is based on structured lessons conducted in classes.

In the case of students with a moderate or severe intellectual disability, the duration of classes and breaks should be adjusted to their abilities and needs.

Primary schools operating in particularly difficult demographic or geographic conditions may provide education in combined classes, including the grouping of preschool education classes for children taking compulsory one-year preparatory classes and classes taught in grade I.

Special primary schools operating within youth education centres and youth social therapy centres, and schools within youth detention centres, may combine some primary school classes.

One class may include pupils/students of different ages because entry into primary education may be deferred by a year or, in the case of disabled children, until the age of 9 (if necessary), and the duration of their education may be extended.

The duration of education may be extended:

- by one year at education stage I and by 2 years at education stage II in the primary school;
- by one year in a post-primary school.
Pupils/students with a moderate or severe intellectual disability are admitted to classes mainly based on their educational needs and psychological and physical abilities and, to a lesser extent, on their age and years of education.

The number of pupils/students in a special nursery school and a special class in a mainstream nursery school is as follows:

- up to 4 in a class for children with autism, including Asperger’s syndrome;
- up to 4 in a class for children with multiple disabilities;
- up to 8 in a class for deaf children and children with hearing impairment;
- up to 8 in a class for children with a moderate or severe intellectual disability;
- up to 10 in a class for blind children and children with vision impairment;
- up to 12 in a class for children with a physical/motor disability, including aphasia;
- up to 5 in a class for children with various types of disability.

The number of pupils/students in a special school and a special class in a mainstream school at each stage of education should be between:

- up to 4 in a class for pupils/students with autism, including Asperger’s syndrome;
- up to 4 in a class for pupils/students with multiple disabilities which include a moderate or severe intellectual disability;
- up to 6 in a class for pupils/students with multiple disabilities, except for those with a moderate or severe intellectual disability;
- up to 8 in a class for deaf pupils/students and those with hearing impairment;
- up to 8 in a class for pupils/students with a moderate or severe intellectual disability;
- up to 10 in a class for blind pupils/students and those with vision impairment;
- up to 12 in a class for pupils/students with a physical/motor disability, including aphasia;
- up to 16 in a class for pupils/students with a mild intellectual disability;
- up to 5 in a class for pupils/students with various types of disability.

A class in a special school may have up to 16 socially maladjusted pupils/students or those at risk of social maladjustment.

Pupils/students are grouped into classes in a different way in nursery schools and schools within healthcare institutions and welfare institutions.

The number of pupils/students in a (nursery) school class within a healthcare institution is determined by the head of the (nursery) school, in agreement with the body managing the (nursery) school and taking into consideration specific psychological and physical needs of pupils/students, depending on their health condition.

Mixed/combined classes may be established where this is justified by a small number of pupils/students or conditions required for their treatment and therapy.

Special education-and-care activities in nursery schools, preschool education classes in primary schools and in schools operating within healthcare institutions are organised in:

- special educational groups;
- special after-class educational groups.

The number of pupils/students in an educational group is:
- up to 12 patients in bed;
- up to 16 walking patients;
- up to 8 patients with intellectual disorders or multiple dysfunctions.

Patients in bed include pupils/students who are bed-bound or should spend a large part of the day lying in bed due to their health condition or treatment methods applied. Where at least half of the educational group are patients in bed, the group as a whole is considered to be a group of patients in bed.

The number of pupils/students in a class of a special (nursery) school operating within a welfare institution is determined by the head of the (nursery) school, in agreement with the body managing the (nursery) school and taking into consideration specific psychological and physical needs of pupils/students, depending on their health condition or type of disability.

Mixed/combined classes may be established where this is justified by a small number of pupils/students. However, classes of different education stages in the primary school and classes of different types of schools should not be combined.

The number of pupils/students with a special education certificate who are in a (nursery) school class may not be higher than the maximum number determined for special classes for pupils/students with a specific type of disability.

Rehabilitation-and-education classes for children and young people with a profound intellectual disability may be conducted from the beginning of the school year in the calendar year when the child reaches 3 years of age till the end of the school year in the calendar year when the person reaches the age of 25.

Rehabilitation-and-education classes are conducted on an individual basis or in a group (as recommended in the certificate for the pupil/student).

Group activities are organised for teams of 2-4 participants.

**Curriculum, subjects**

The core curriculum for special nursery schools is the same as for preschool education in mainstream and integration nursery schools and alternative preschool education settings.

Special schools for disabled pupils/students (except pupils/students with a moderate or severe intellectual disability), and pupils/students who are socially maladjusted or at risk of social maladjustment follow the same core curriculum for general education, and schools providing vocational education also the same core curriculum for vocational education, as in the corresponding types of mainstream and integration schools. Therefore, pupils/students attend the same compulsory classes as their peers outside special education.

This does not apply to the following groups of pupils/students:

- pupils/students with mild intellectual disabilities attending lower secondary schools who are not required (but are entitled to) to learn a second modern language;
- pupils/students with hearing impairment, severe developmental dyslexia, aphasia, multiple disabilities or autism, including Asperger’s syndrome, who are not required to learn a second modern language until the end of a given stage of education; the decision is taken by the head of their school, based on an opinion/statement from a counselling and guidance centre
(including a specialised centre), a special education certificate or one recommending individualised teaching;

- pupils/students who do not take physical education, computer literacy or IT classes; the decision is taken by the head of their school, based on a certificate confirming their unfitness to participate in such classes, issued by a medical doctor; the exemption is valid for the duration specified in the certificate;

- students in schools providing vocational education who hold a driving licence and thus have been exempt from driving classes by their school head;

- pupils/students following individualised learning paths.

Similarly, special schools providing vocational education follow the same core curriculum for vocational education as the corresponding types of mainstream and integration schools.

Like in mainstream nursery schools, schools and alternative preschool education settings, the education of children and young people in special nursery schools, schools and centres is based on individual educational-and-therapeutic programmes which take into account the recommendations made in special education certificates and are adapted to pupils’/students’ individual developmental and educational needs and psychological and physical abilities. The rules for developing such programmes and their contents are identical, regardless of the type of the institution that pupils/students attend.

**Rehabilitation classes** are conducted for disabled pupils attending special nursery schools, schools and classes.

The legislation does not set a minimum weekly number of hours for rehabilitation classes in special nursery schools. The number of hours should be adjusted to children’s individual needs.

The **minimum number of rehabilitation class hours** for disabled pupils/students attending special classes in individual types of schools is determined per class.

At the individual stages of education, the number of hours in special classes for disabled pupils, except for pupils with a moderate and severe intellectual disability, is:

- 12 hours for a class in the primary school;
- 12 hours for a class in the 4-year general secondary school;
- 8 hours for a class in the 5-year technical secondary school;
- 10 hours for a class in the stage I sectoral vocational school;
- 8 hours for a class in the stage II sectoral vocational school.

The **minimum number of rehabilitation class hours** in special primary schools for pupils with a moderate or severe intellectual disability is 10 hours for each primary school grade.

The **minimum number of rehabilitation class hours** in 3-year special schools preparing for employment for students with a moderate or severe intellectual disability and for students with multiple disabilities is 10 hours for each grade.

(Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 28 March 2017 on the outline timetables for public schools; Journal of Law, item 703)

The arrangements which were in place earlier still apply to students in the old type upper secondary schools which are now being phased out, pupils in grades II, III, V and VI of the primary school in the school year 2017/2018 and pupils in grades III and VI in the school year 2018/2019 (except for special
primary schools and special classes for pupils with a moderate or severe intellectual disability). In these cases, the minimum number of rehabilitation class hours for disabled pupils/students in special classes is:

- 1 150 hours in primary and lower secondary schools;
- 960 hours in basic vocational schools;
- 900 hours in general upper secondary schools and technical upper secondary schools.

The weekly number of hours in a school year for each grade in these types of schools is:

- 12 hours in primary and lower secondary schools;
- 10 hours in basic vocational schools and general upper secondary schools;
- 8 hours in technical upper secondary schools.

(Regulation of the Ministry of National Education of 7 February 2012 on the outline statutes of public nursery schools and schools: Journal of Law, item 204, as subsequently amended)

Socially maladjusted young people or those at risk of social maladjustment attending mainstream schools participate in social rehabilitation, social therapy and other therapeutic classes / activities. Such classes / activities aim to develop their life skills and facilitate their good functioning in family and social contexts.

Pupils/students with a moderate or severe intellectual disability follow a separate core curriculum for general education in primary schools and lower secondary schools (Annex 3 to the Regulation of the Minister of Education of 27 August 2012 on the core curriculum for preschool education and general education in individual types of schools: Journal of Law, item 977, as subsequently amended)

Education for pupils/students with a moderate or severe intellectual disability aims to:

- build their identity;
- develop their autonomy and a sense of dignity;
- prepare them to function in society and understand and respect social norms;
- provide them with the skills and knowledge which will enable them to enjoy freedom and human rights within their individual capacities and perceive themselves as independent individuals.

It is important to ensure that pupils/students:

- are able to communicate, verbally or non-verbally, with their environment to the fullest possible extent, using well-known communication methods (including alternative augmentative communication (ACC) methods);
- achieve maximum independence in fulfilling their basic existential needs;
- are as resourceful in daily life as possible given their individual level of fitness and abilities, and have a sense of dignity and self-determination;
- can participate in various forms of social life on an equal footing together with other members of a community, while being aware of, and respecting, generally accepted norms of co-existence, and keeping their individuality;
- understand, insofar as possible, social and natural phenomena in their environment;
- can acquire skills and learn to do activities which will be useful in their future adult life;
- have an accurate self-assessment, based on a sense of positive self-esteem and the ability to see their strengths and weaknesses.

At the primary education stage, there are separate classes for pupils with a moderate or severe
intellectual disability:

- educational classes:
  - personal and social functioning classes;
  - classes developing communication skills;
  - classes developing creativity;
  - physical education;
  - ethics;
- rehabilitation classes.

The weekly number of hours in the special primary school for pupils with a moderate or severe intellectual disability is:

- 187 hours for compulsory classes, including:
  - 46 hours for personal and social functioning classes;
  - 16 hours for classes developing communication skills;
  - 96 hours for classes developing creativity;
  - 29 hours for physical education classes;
- 5 hours left for the school head's discretion;
- 30 hours for rehabilitation classes.

There is a separate core curriculum for 3-year special schools preparing for employment, intended for students with a moderate or severe intellectual disability and for students with multiple disabilities.

The weekly number of hours in special schools preparing for employment during a three-year period is:

- 101 hours, including:
  - 17 hours for personal and social functioning classes;
  - 6 hours for classes developing communication skills;
  - 12 hours for classes developing creativity;
  - 57 hours for the preparation/training for employment;
  - 9 hours for physical education classes.
- 30 hours for rehabilitation classes.

The weekly number of hours:

- for compulsory classes for students in individual grades:
  - 19 in grade I;
  - 20 in grade II;
  - 20 in grade III;
  - 24 in grade IV;
  - 25 in grade V;
  - 25 in grade VI;
  - 27 in grade VII;
  - 27 in grade VIII;
- for rehabilitation classes in each school year: 10 hours per grade;
- for lessons left to the school head's discretion: 5 hours.

The number of hours for religion or ethics, family education, and ethnic / minority / regional language and the history and culture of an ethnic minority or the regional language community is set in the regulations on specific types of classes.
Students of post-primary schools providing vocational education who are enrolled in a school operating within a healthcare or welfare institution may follow curricula based on the core curriculum for general education in a post-primary school other than the one they attended before admission to the healthcare or welfare institution, and an outline timetable for a post-primary school other than the one they attended before admission to the institution.

Additionally, students should take compulsory theoretical vocational education classes and practical vocational training classes which are included in the curriculum for a given grade in the school which they attended before admission to the healthcare or welfare institution.

Arrangements for students to take additionally such compulsory theoretical and practical vocational training classes are laid down by the head of the post-primary school providing vocational educational which they attended before admission to a healthcare or welfare institution.

Special nursery schools, schools and centres may organise rehabilitation-and-education classes for children and young people with a profound intellectual disability.

Classes are conducted on an individual basis or in a group and are always based on an individual timetable.

(Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 23 April 2013 on the conditions and organisational arrangements for rehabilitation-and-education classes for children and young people with a profound intellectual disability: Journal of Law, item 529).

Rehabilitation-and-education classes aim to:

- support children and young people with a profound intellectual disability;
- develop their interest in the environment;
- develop, in as far as their abilities allow it, their independence of other people in everyday life.

In particular, such classes focus on:

- learning to make contact with others in a way suited to participants’ needs and abilities;
- shaping the way of communication with the environment at a level suited to individual abilities of participants;
- kinesiotherapy and psychomotor education developing gross and fine motor skills; developing body and spatial orientation;
- preparing participants to gain optimal independence in everyday life;
- developing participants’ interest in the environment, multi-sensory cognition of the environment; learning to understand its changes; developing skills necessary to function in the environment;
- developing the ability to co-exist in a group;
- learning to take intentional action suited to the age, abilities and interests of participants and their level of activity.

Teachers conducting classes, in cooperation with psychologists and, where necessary, with other specialists working with children and young people, develop individualised programmes based on an assessment / diagnosis and recommendations made in a certificate recommending rehabilitation-and-education classes, and observation of participants.
Teaching Methods and Materials

Special schools apply the same teaching and learning methods as mainstream schools, but particular emphasis is placed on individualised instruction for each pupil/student. While teachers are free to choose specific methods and forms of work and educational resources, they are obliged to take into account the specificity of the pupil’s/student’s functioning, resulting from his/her disability, social maladjustment or a risk of social maladjustment.

The specificity of educating pupils/students with a moderate or severe intellectual disability consists in cross-circular and integrated teaching and education, which is based on the multi-sensory cognition of the environment throughout the process of education.

Even little progress made by pupils/students with a moderate or severe intellectual disability should be positively reinforced, whereas the lack of progress is not negatively assessed. It is also advisable to establish contact with pupils’/students’ families, involve them in rehabilitation classes/activities conducted on school premises; if possible, parents should continue some elements of such activities at home. It is necessary to organise rehabilitation classes/activities in the school in a way which prepares the local community to receive, accept and support pupils/students. Parents’ (legal guardians’) participation in consultations on pupils’/students’ progress and difficulties is very desirable; the school should support their work with pupils/students, while taking into consideration the specificity of a family, its values and traditions.

Teachers are free to choose a curriculum.

Teachers may:

- develop a curriculum individually or jointly with other teachers;
- choose one from a set of curricula developed by other author(s), e.g. from among those available on the market;
- present a curriculum developed by other author(s) and modified by themselves, together with a justification for the changes proposed.

The curriculum proposed by the teacher should be adapted to the needs and abilities of the pupils/students concerned.

School curricula for general education, training for a specific occupation and general vocational training are approved for use at school by the school head at the request of the teacher(s) concerned and after consultation with the school’s teaching council.

Teachers may decide to follow a curriculum using textbooks, educational resources or exercise materials. They may also decide to teach without textbooks, educational resources or exercise materials.

When choosing textbooks, educational resources and exercise materials for disabled pupils/students in special education, teams of teachers in grades I to III of the primary school and teams of teachers teaching individual subjects in grades IV to VIII of the primary school and in post-primary schools take into consideration the educational needs and psychological and physical abilities of their pupils.

Teams may propose to the school head more than one textbook or educational resource for:

- disabled pupils/students in special education; and
- disabled pupils/students taking classes which are necessary to maintain their sense of national,
Primary school pupils are entitled to receive free textbooks, educational resources and exercise materials, as are students in lower secondary schools until this type of school is phased out.

Schools receive targeted / specific-purpose State-budget subsidies to provide primary school pupils with free textbooks, educational resources and exercise materials. The amount of such subsidies may be increased for disabled pupils. The value of the index increasing a subsidy is set in the regulations of the minister responsible for school education.

(Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 20 March 2018 on the level of indices increasing amounts of specific-purpose subsidies for providing primary schools with textbooks, educational resources and exercise materials for disabled pupils: Journal of Law, item 611).

(Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 20 March 2018 on the level of indices increasing amounts of specific-purpose subsidies for providing schools with textbooks, educational resources and exercise materials for disabled students in 2018 and 2019: Journal of Law, item 615).

Textbooks, educational resources materials and exercise materials, and supplementary books adapted to educational needs and psychological and physical abilities of disabled pupils are co-funded by the State budget.

This is done by:

- granting a targeted / specific-purpose subsidy;
- awarding a contract for the development, production and distribution of textbooks, educational resources and exercise materials or supplementary books, or their parts.

When commissioned by the minister responsible for school education, textbooks, educational resources and supplementary books adapted to the needs of disabled pupils (in the Braille alphabet for blind pupils, with large print for pupils with visual impairment, and in the Polish sign language for pupils with learning and communication difficulties) are available for free download from an IT system.

**Progression of Pupils**

The rules for the assessment and promotion of pupils/students in special education are the same as in mainstream and integration schools.

Pupils/students undergo assessment throughout the school year. The following elements are assessed:

- learning achievements;
- behaviour/conduct (except in post-secondary schools where it is not assessed).

The assessment of learning achievements identifies the level of, and progress in, the acquisition of knowledge and skills in relation to:

- requirements set out in the core curriculum for general education or learning outcomes set out in the core curriculum for vocational education;
- educational requirements specified in curricula followed by schools;
- for additional classes: educational requirements specified in curricula followed by schools.
When assessing conduct, class tutors, teachers and pupils/students look at the extent to which a pupil/student respects:

- rules of social conduct;
- ethical norms;
- duties specified in the statutes of a given school.

The assessment of learning achievements and conduct is part of internal assessment within the school which is aimed at:

- informing pupils/students about the level of their learning achievements and behaviour and about progress they have made in this respect;
- supporting pupils/students in learning by informing them on where they have performed well and how they should continue to learn;
- giving advice on how pupils/students could independently plan their development;
- motivating pupils/students to make further progress in learning and behaviour;
- providing parents and teachers with information on pupils’/students’ progress and problems in learning and behaviour, and their special aptitudes or talents;
- enabling teachers to improve the organisation and methods of their work.

Internal assessment includes:

- setting educational requirements which should be met by pupils/students to receive individual mid-year and end-of-year marks or, in a post-secondary school, end-of-semester marks and marks for compulsory and additional classes / subjects and classes in an ethnic / national minority language or the regional language and ethnic / national minority history and culture for minority students;
- defining criteria for the assessment of behaviour;
- giving end-of-year or, in a post-secondary school, end-of-semester marks and marks for compulsory and additional classes / subjects and classes in an ethnic / national minority language or the regional language and in the ethnic / national minority history and culture for national or ethnic minority students;
- defining conditions for, and ways of, providing parents with information about pupils’/students’ progress and problems in learning and behaviour, and their special aptitudes or talents.

In grades I to III of the primary school:

- coursework marks for compulsory and additional classes / subjects and classes in an ethnic / national minority language or the regional language and their own history and culture for national or ethnic or regional-language minority pupils/students are given in accordance with methods set out in the school statutes;
- mid-year and end-of-year marks for compulsory and additional classes / subjects and classes in an ethnic / national minority language or the regional language and their own history and culture for ethnic / national or regional-language minority pupils/students, and mid-year and end-of-year marks for conduct are descriptive.

Starting from grade IV of the primary school, mid-year marks for conduct and coursework and mid-year marks for:

- compulsory classes,
- additional classes, and
- classes in an ethnic or minority language or the regional language and ethnic / minority /
regional-language community history and culture

are given in accordance with methods set out in the school statutes.

End-of-year or, in post-secondary schools, end-of-term marks for classes are determined according to the following six-level grading scale:

- 6: excellent
- 5: very good
- 4: good
- 3: satisfactory
- 2: admissible
- 1: fail

The end-of-year mark for conduct is determined in line with a four-level grading scale: excellent, good, acceptable and inadmissible.

Starting from grade IV of the primary school:

- coursework marks (given as part of on-going assessment);
- mid-year and end-of-year marks for compulsory and additional classes and classes in an ethnic / national minority language or the regional language and ethnic / minority / regional-language community history and culture for ethnic or national minority pupils and those belonging to the community speaking the regional language; and
- mid-year and end-of-year marks for conduct

may be descriptive if this is provided for in the school statutes.

In such cases, end-of-year marks for classes and conduct are determined according to a grading scale.

At the beginning of each school year, teachers inform pupils/students in primary, secondary and post-secondary schools, and their parents about:

- educational requirements, based on the curriculum, which should be fulfilled to receive individual mid-year and end-of-year marks, or end-of-term marks in post-secondary schools;
- methods of assessing pupils'/students' learning achievements;
- conditions and rules for obtaining marks higher than expected in end-of-year assessments or, in post-secondary schools, end-of-term assessments.

At the beginning of each school year, class tutors inform pupils/students and their parents about:

- conditions and methods, and criteria for assessing conduct;
- conditions and rules for obtaining marks higher than expected in end-of-year conduct assessments.

Detailed conditions and methods of school assessment are laid down in the school statutes.

Where disorders and other developmental dysfunctions have been diagnosed, the assessment of the pupil’s/student’s conduct should take into consideration their impact on his/her conduct. This is based on:

- a special education certificate; or
• a certificate recommending individualised learning; or
• a statement/opinion issued by a counselling and guidance centre, including a specialised centre.

If mid-year assessments or, in a post-secondary school, end-of-term assessments show that the pupil’s/student’s learning achievements will prevent or hinder them from continuing education in a higher grade or in a higher term/semester in post-secondary schools, schools should enable them to fill in gaps / eliminate shortcomings.

Teachers are obliged to adapt educational requirements to pupils’/students’ individual developmental and educational needs and psychological and physical abilities, following the same principles as in mainstream and integration schools.

Progress made by pupils in special education is subject to periodic assessment according to the same rules as in mainstream and integration nursery schools, schools and alternative preschool education settings.

In the case of pupils/students with a moderate or severe intellectual disability, descriptive assessment is used at all levels of education. Given the specific nature of education and the individual pace and scope of learning in each case, achievements in individual areas of pedagogic and rehabilitation intervention are planned on an individual basis. Since multifaceted specialist assessments of pupil/student performance/functioning are carried out on a periodic basis by teachers and specialists, it is possible to modify individual educational-and-therapeutic programmes and adjust expected achievements to pupils’/students’ abilities.

Descriptive marks are used also in assessing progress made by pupils/students with multiple disabilities who attend 3-year schools preparing for employment.

Pupils/students who are disabled, socially maladjusted or at risk of social maladjustment and who attend special schools and those who have finished them take external examinations:

• the eighth-grader exam at the end of primary education;
• the maturity exam;
• exams confirming vocational qualifications.

An external exam is also conducted at the end of the lower secondary school until this type of school is phased out.

External exams are conducted according to the same rules as those for mainstream, integration and special school students and leavers.

The rules for promotion and assessment of disabled students with normal intellectual capacity and those with a mild intellectual disability are the same as for non-disabled pupils/students.

Pupils/students are promoted to a higher grade if they have received, in accordance with specific criteria, positive marks for all compulsory subjects and classes, except subjects and classes from which they have been exempted. The decision to promote pupils/students to a higher grade is taken by the school’s teaching council. Pupils/students who have not been promoted to a higher grade, or to a higher term/semester in a post-secondary school, repeat a given year or term/semester.

Primary school pupils, including those in young offender institutions or youth detention centres, who:

• hold a special education certificate;
• follow curricula with at least a one-year delay;
• obtain grades classified as positive under the school assessment system for all compulsory classes and classes in an ethnic/national minority language or the regional language;
• are considered capable of studying curricular contents covering two years within one school year;

may be promoted to a higher grade during the school year.

Pupils/students holding a special education certificate because of their moderate or severe intellectual disability are promoted to a higher grade and finish the school based on a decision of the school’s teaching council. In its decisions, the council takes account of recommendations made in an individual educational-and-therapeutic programme.

**Extending the duration of education**

Disabled pupils/students in all types of schools and pupils/students in schools within young offender institutions and youth detention centres may have the *period of education extended* by one year at each stage of education, with a proportional increase in the number of compulsory class classes.

A decisions to extend the period of education is made by:

• for disabled pupils/students: the school’s teaching council upon approval from the team of teachers and specialists working with the pupil/student and with his/her parents’ consent;
• for pupils/students in young offender institutions or youth detention centres: the school head after consultation with the school’s teaching council.

Such decisions are made not later than:

• in the primary school: by the end of February in a given school year, for grades III and VIII respectively;
• in post-primary schools: by the end of February in the final year of education.

**Shortening the duration of education**

• This option is available to students who are socially maladjusted or at risk of social maladjustment and attend stage I sectoral vocational schools operating within:
  ◦ youth educational centres,
  ◦ youth social therapy centres,
  ◦ young offender institutions or
  ◦ youth detention centres.
• The *period of education* may be reduced to two years on condition that individual compulsory subjects/classes are taught at least for the minimum number of hours set for a three-year education cycle.

Decisions to shorten the period of education for students in stage I sectoral vocational schools who are socially maladjusted or at risk of social maladjustment are made by:

• in youth educational centres or youth social therapy centres: the school’s teaching council upon approval from the team of teachers, class tutors and specialists working with the student;
• in young offender institutions or youth detention centres: the school head upon consultation with the school’s teaching council.
Progress made by children and young people with a profound intellectual disability

Progress made by children and young people with a profound intellectual disability who attend rehabilitation-and-education classes/activities is subject to periodic assessment, regardless of the type of educational institution organising such classes.

Each pupil/student attending such classes/activities has a separate observation sheet where teachers record information about:

- changes in gross motor skills (posture, locomotion and motor coordination);
- changes in fine motor skills (coordination of arm movements, visual-motor coordination, manipulation);
- activity initiated independently by the pupil/student (non-directed activity);
- focusing attention during spontaneous activity (when playing and performing tasks), including the attention span;
- collaboration in various situations, including its duration;
- learning new skills (rate, permanency, degree of difficulty);
- dominant mood and emotions;
- readiness for contact (kinds and directions of contacts);
- self-service skills;
- participation in cleaning activities;
- problem behaviour (description of problem behaviour and situations where it occurs, teacher’s response to problem behaviour, changes in behaviour);
- ways of communicating;
- other significant behaviours.

At least twice in a school year, teachers conducting classes undertake a periodic assessment of the pupils'/students' functioning/performance, which is based on class documentation, including an individualised learning programme. Where necessary, they modify the individualised learning programme.

Certification

All pupils/students who finish a special school, except those with a moderate or severe intellectual disability, receive the same school certificates as their peers in mainstream and integration schools.

End-of-year and school-leaving certificates for pupils with a moderate or severe disability, regardless of the type of school they attend, are issued on a special form and include descriptive assessment / marks.

School leaving certificates issued between 2000/2001 and 2011/2012 contain the following annotation on the back page: 'The pupil/student has followed a curriculum adapted to his/her individual abilities and needs, as recommended in a statement from the assessment committee at...' (name of the counselling and guidance centre where the committee issuing the special education certificate is based). At the written request of parents or an adult school leaver, such a certificate may be exchanged for one without such an annotation. If it is not possible to exchange the certificate, a duplicate containing no such annotation is issued.

Primary school pupils who have completed classes preparing for work are awarded certificates with the following annotation: 'has followed a 'preparation for work' curriculum based on the core curriculum for vocational education in the occupation of...'.


(Regulation of the Minister of National Education of 26 April 2018 on state certificates and diplomas and other school documents; Journal of Law, items 939 and 2011).

Due to their specific functioning, pupils/students attending rehabilitation-and-education classes are not assessed and promoted, nor do they obtain certificates.

**Source URL:**

**Links**