Definition of the target group(s)

In ordinary schools, according to the model of attention to diversity provided by the Spanish education system, the development of measures for meeting the educational needs takes into account the total number of students attending the school. These measures, depending on the level of support for students, can be ordinary and extraordinary measures. More information on Educational support and guidance [1].

In accordance with the 2006 Education Act, modified by the 2013 Act on the Improvement of the Quality of Education, students with a specific need of educational support show:

- special education needs related to physical, psychic or sensory disability, or serious conduct disorder
- high intellectual capacities
- needs resulting from a late entry into the education system
- specific learning difficulties
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Specific support measures

Specific support measures aim at responding to the specific needs of students and meeting the objectives of the educational stage.

The elaboration of pedagogical proposals by the educational institutions must consider the attention to diversity and the access of all students to mainstream education. Besides, methods that take account of the different learning speeds must be devised.

In addition, the education authorities regulate the measures for students with specific learning difficulties, students with difficulties to integrate themselves into the school environment, gifted students and disabled students. These measures include:

- curricular adaptations
- integration of subjects into areas
- flexible grouping
- group splitting
- offer of specific subjects
- personalised treatment and support programmes
- programmes to improve learning and performance.

In line with the guidelines established by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, regional education authorities prepare Plans on Attention to Diversity. Their purpose is to implement
education measures and actions allowing the maximum adaptation of the teaching-learning processes to the characteristics of all the students. These plans include both ordinary and extraordinary measures.

**Ordinary measures for the attention to diversity**

Ordinary measures have an impact on the general organisation of the school, such as:

- organisation of the groups of students
- strategies favoring universal accessibility and allowing active and full students' participation in learning (access to spaces, curriculum and resources, host activities, promotion of actions aimed at students' socialisation and diversity appreciation, organisation of support and supporting activities, absenteeism and early school dropout prevention)
- tutor and guidance action
- use of spaces
- coordination and teamwork between the different professionals and collaborators at school and in the classrooms
- participation of external stakeholders in social and educational actions
- guidance, training and family mediation actions which favour the involvement of the families into the school environment allowing them to take part in their children's education process and, if necessary, their integration in the social context.

These measures also include the prevention and detection of learning difficulties, among which the following stand out:

- implementation of reinforcement and support mechanisms
- individualised attention
- adaptation to the different learning speeds
- support in the classroom, group splitting and flexible grouping
- selection and implementation of different resources and methodological strategies
- non-meaningful curricular adaptations
- curricular material adaptation
- optional studies expected for compulsory secondary education. More information on Teaching and learning in general lower secondary education [2].

**Extraordinary measures for the attention to diversity**

Extraordinary measures are aimed at meeting the most specific educational needs of students, and they complement those with an ordinary nature. They are aimed at those students with more learning difficulties than others due to different reasons. That is why they need an education attention that is different to the ordinary one and the establishment of specific resources. The implementation of these measures requires a previous diagnose of the students educational needs, through the psycho-pedagogic evaluation carried out by the guidance specialised services. In addition, continuous monitoring is necessary for adapting the decisions taken and allowing the access of these students to the curriculum and the ordinary education to the greatest extent possible.

These extraordinary measures are only applied in compulsory education (students from 6-16 years old).

**Main extraordinary measures for treating diversity in compulsory education**

- meaningful curricular adaptations:
  - in order to adapt the ordinary curriculum to the most specific needs of students, the
essential aspects are modified: objectives, contents and evaluation criteria

- Basic vocational training:
  - the implementation of the Act on the Improvement of the Quality of Education in the 2014/15 academic year involved the establishment of the new basic vocational training cycles. In order to have access to them, students must be between 15 and 17 years of age and have completed the first cycle of compulsory secondary education or, exceptionally, the 2nd year of compulsory secondary education
  - More information on Organisation of vocational lower secondary education [3]

- programmes to improve learning and performance:
  - these programmes are primarily aimed at students with relevant learning difficulties for reasons other than lack of study or effort and are developed from the 2nd year of compulsory secondary education
  - they are aimed at students who have repeated at least a year at any stage, students who have completed the 1st year of compulsory secondary education but are not ready for progression to the 2nd year, or students who have completed the 2nd year but are not ready to progress to the 3rd year, as well as for those who have completed the 3rd year of compulsory secondary education but are not ready for progression to the 4th. In this case, they can take part in the programme to repeat the 3rd year on an exceptional basis
  - a specific methodology is used: content organisation, practical activities and, if appropriate, subjects that are different from the ones generally established. The aim is that students may take the 4th year through the ordinary procedure and obtain the Lower Compulsory Secondary Education Certificate
  - they can be organised in an integrated way, or through subjects different from the ones generally established, in at least three specific fields: linguistic and social, scientific and mathematical and foreign languages

- flexibilisation of the stay at the educational level and stage:
  - this measure is specific for each profile of the students with specific needs for educational support.

The ordinary and extraordinary measures previously described adapt to every target group as explained below:

**Students with special education needs associated to disability or serious conduct disorder**

The response given to these students consists of providing them with the necessary support for following their studies. In many cases these students require the adaptation of the curricular elements to their needs, as well as an easier access to the contents through technical assistance.

**Measures for students with special educational needs related to disability or severe conduct disorder:**

- meaningful curricular adaptations:
  - in order to adapt the ordinary curriculum to the students' needs, the essential aspects are modified: objectives, contents and evaluation criteria
  - support teachers in the educational institutions, School teachers with the specialities of Therapeutic Pedagogy or Hearing and Speech, strengthen the work of the teachers in charge. You can read more about these teachers and education staff [4] on the articles about teaching staff referring Early childhood, Primary and Secondary Education.

- adaptations for access to the curriculum:
  - it allows personal and material changes or resources forecasts, so that those students with some access difficulties will be able to study the ordinary curriculum. They are based on technical assistance, alternative communication systems or the removal of
architectural obstacles

- special education classrooms within mainstream education:
  - they are group programmes aimed at students with serious physical, psychological or sensory disabilities, or serious personality or conduct disorders. The very significant adaptations required are implemented in a specific classroom within the ordinary school, and are compatible with their participation in some ordinary school activities, which favour their social adaptation and integration

- reduction in the number of students per classroom:
  - when there are students with special education needs in a classroom, the number of students in the said classroom is reduced

- support by specialised teachers:
  - this support is possible inside and outside the classroom, individually or in small groups, depending on the students' needs and on the curricular adaptation made

- relaxation of the required stay at the educational level and stage:
  - the schooling of students with special educational needs can be extended for another year. If this repetition takes place in the 3rd or 4th year, the age limit will be increased by one year. On an exceptional basis, students will be able to repeat the 4th year for a second time, provided they did not repeat the previous years of the stage. When repetition takes place, the curricular conditions will be adapted to the students’ needs and will aim at overcoming the difficulties identified. This measure will be accompanied by a specific personalised plan aimed at overcoming the difficulties identified the previous year.

Gifted students

Educational administrations are in charge of:

- adopting the necessary measures to early identify and assess gifted students
- adopting action plans and curriculum improvement programmes that meet those needs, so that students can develop their full potential.

The schooling of gifted students can become more flexible by teaching contents and including skills of upper courses, as well as by increasing the contents and skills of the corresponding academic year, among other measures.

The learning speed and style of both gifted students and students that are particularly motivated to learn will be taken into consideration.

Students of late entry into the education system

The schooling of students entering late the education system is made in response to their circumstances:

- knowledge
- age
- educational background.

Care measures for late entrants to the education system:

- specific attention to students with major deficiencies in the official language:
  - it will be carried out simultaneously with their schooling in the ordinary groups
- schooling in a lower grade:
  - in the case of a gap of more than two years in their level of curricular competence, adopting the necessary reinforcement measures to facilitate their school integration and
the bridging of the curricular gap, taking into account that once the gap is overcome, students will be placed in the year corresponding to their actual age.

The education authorities are responsible for supporting the entry into the education system of the students that come from other countries or who are incorporated late in the Spanish education system for any other reason. Plans and programmes are designed and measures are developed which must ensure the schooling of these students.

**Programmes and plans** include:

- **hosting programmes and plans:**
  - aimed both at students of foreign origin and all those who join the education system at a later stage.
  - they include measures to prepare the school for the arrival of new students, such as the inclusion of the values of intercultural education in the school development plan, teacher training, the adaptation of the school resources or the elaboration of information documents in multiple languages.

- **programmes and plans for teaching the language of the host society.** It includes two distinct types of measures:
  - language classrooms (ATAL), which aim to provide students with the necessary linguistic competence to enter the mainstream classroom. Their stay in such classroom is flexible and it is aimed at meeting their needs, but does not require the student to attend just this class during the whole school day.
  - linguistic and curricular reinforcement actions, which facilitate the necessary contents in order for students to study in all areas or subjects of the course with fewer difficulties.

- **programmes for teaching the language and culture of the country of origin(ELCO).**
  - these programmes are targeted to students from other countries so that they can continue studying their native language, while learning the host language. It is sometimes done in collaboration with the country of origin and with public non-profit organizations.
  - the courses are usually developed outside school hours, although in some Autonomous Communities initiatives are being considered for including these contents in the curriculum.
  - some communities encourage all students, not just immigrants, to attend them.

As for the **measures**, the main ones are:

- **information in several languages** on the Spanish education system, aimed at both students and families. They are also informed about their rights, duties and opportunities, not only relating to education but also to other resources that could be of use.

- **support services for intercultural mediation, and translating and interpreting services.** These are often external services. Their functioning and scope depend on regional and local resources, and on the needs of schools.

- **measures supporting the teaching function**, through the inclusion of other professional profiles as a support inside and/or outside the classroom, specific training and resources related to interculturality and work with foreign students.

- **making the stay at the educational level and stage more flexible.** Students of late entry into the education system and those who present a gap of more than 2 years in their level of curricular competence may be enrolled in a course prior to the one which would correspond to them by age.

- **reduction of groups' size in the classroom.**
**Student with specific learning difficulties**

The schooling of students with specific learning difficulties is based on the principles of normalisation and inclusion with the aim of ensuring non-discrimination and effective equality in access to and continuance in the education system.

The education authorities will establish the principles that must guide the identification, assessment and intervention of the educational needs of these students, adopting the necessary measures so that they are carried out at the earliest possible opportunity.

**Source URL:**
https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/special-education-needs-provision-within-mainstream-education-70_pt-pt

**Links**