

The PPT and special needs education

If your child does not gain sufficient benefit from a standard education, he or she may have the right to special needs education.

Special education can, for example, mean that the pupil works in accordance with different educational learning goals than other pupils, or that a teacher or assistant monitors and assists the pupil in the classroom, or that the pupil is provided with specially adapted equipment. Special education must be adapted to meet your child's needs, and can be delivered as a part of the whole class, in groups or individually.

If either you or the school is concerned that your child is not gaining sufficient benefit from teaching, the school is required to adapt the situation to suit your child's needs. If such measures are insufficient, the school and the Educational and Psychological Counselling Service (PPT) must assess and advise on what your child needs.

The PPT is a public service that makes an expert assessment (in Norwegian: sakkyndig vurdering), in the form of a document that shows whether the pupil needs special education. The school must decide whether the pupil is entitled to special education or not, and what the special education should be. You can always appeal against the decision.

What is the PPT?

PPT gives advice to kindergartens and schools on adaptations for children, young people and adults with special needs. The PPT may engage in interdisciplinary collaboration at the local level, for example with the health service or the Norwegian Child Welfare Services (in Norwegian: barneverntjenesten), and at national level, for example with the national service for special needs education (in Norwegian: Statped). The PPT is bound by confidentiality.

What can you expect from the school?

The school must

- ensure that the pupil's best interests are safeguarded
- involve and consult you prior to taking decisions that affect your child
- conduct interviews with the pupil and parents and carry out necessary assessments of the pupil
- request that the PPT provides an expert assessment if you request this, and if the school is of the opinion that the pupil is in need of special education
- adopt an individual decision that states whether or not the pupil is in need of special education and if so, what form this will take

- prepare an individual subject curriculum (in Norwegian: IOP)
- provide the pupil with the special needs education as described in the individual decision and the IOP, ideally as part of the whole class
- prepare an annual written report on the special education and the pupil's progress and development
- ensure that you and your child are provided with guidance on what assessment with and without grades in secondary school entails, before you make a decision

What can you do?

As a parent, you

- can demand that the school looks into whether your child is in need of special education
- can discuss your concern with the PPT and the school prior to referral
- must be involved and give your consent before the school requests that the PPT assesses your child
- must be involved and give your consent before the school decides your child is to receive special education
- must receive an annual written report on the special education your child is receiving and an assessment of the progress and development of your child
- can lodge an appeal if your child is not provided with special education
- can appeal the content, implementation or organisation of the special education
- can decide if your child should have exemption from assessment with grades in secondary school in those subjects where he or she receives special education