

Preschool special-needs education

What is preschool special-needs education?

Preschool special-needs education supports children of preschool age with developmental problems and/or disabilities through suitable special-needs measures and serves to provide support and advice to parents and other people who are close to the child within the challenging scope of raising the child. Preschool special-needs education encompasses the area of detection, diagnosis, encouragement and advice.

What type of child requires preschool special-needs education?

Preschool special-needs education is aimed at all children of preschool age who experience considerable risks, problems or disabilities in terms of their motor-related, emotional, social, speech and/or mental development. Special-needs diagnosis helps to assess whether preschool special-needs education is appropriate. It serves as a basis for giving the child carefully considered support and advising the parents.

What are the working practices in preschool special-needs education?

Holistic support is to the forefront. The areas of support comprise behaviour, speech, movement, perception, identifying connections, contact with others, independence and emotions. With the aid of selected playing materials and everyday objects, the child is given support tailored towards his level of development. Work with the child generally takes place in the familiar surroundings of his home, although occasionally it is also done at the offices of the Special-Needs Service on a one-to-one basis or in groups.

The preschool teacher supports the parents in raising and encouraging the development of their child and discusses questions which arise from the child's behaviour or development issues.

In order to ensure that sensible goals are set and that the child is encouraged, it is important to liaise with the parents as well as with other professionals who are involved (such as the kindergarten teacher, educational psychologist, therapist or GP).

In order early on to identify and support children who exhibit special needs, work needs to be done with the general public.

How long may a child benefit from preschool special-needs support?

The duration of the support depends on the child's level of development and the parents' needs. It can take from a few months to several years and finishes, at the latest, when the child starts school. Preschool special-needs education takes place regularly (about one session a week) and is done with the consent of the parents.

Who can register a child for a special-needs assessment?

A child can be registered by his parents or by professionals with the consent of the parents. A child can be registered at any time from birth through to the end of his first year at kindergarten.

Who pays for preschool special-needs education?

The costs of assessment and support are paid for by invalidity insurance and by the Canton authorities.