

FINNISH NATIONAL BOARD OF EDUCATION

Unofficial translation
Regulation valid only in Finnish and Swedish

**AMENDMENTS AND ADDITIONS TO
THE NATIONAL CORE CURRICULUM
FOR BASIC EDUCATION**

I. CURRICULUM

I.2 CONTENT OF THE CURRICULUM

The following details must be indicated in the basic education curriculum as required for provision of education:

- values and mission
- general educational and teaching objectives
- language programme
- lesson-hour distribution to be observed locally
- descriptions of operational culture, learning environment, and working approach
- any possible instructional emphases, language immersion, or foreign-language instruction
- possible integration of instruction
- implementation of cross-curricular themes
- educational objectives and contents in different subjects by year group or by study module for instruction of mixed groups
- instruction in optional subjects
- objectives for pupil behaviour
- cooperation with pre-primary education and other basic education
- cooperation with other parties involved
- support for learning and schooling and forms of support in accordance with guidelines specified in Chapters 4 and 5
- instruction of pupils from different language and cultural groups
- pupil assessment based on descriptions of good performance and criteria for final assessment
- principles of academic progress
- certificates and reports
- information strategy
- evaluation and continuous improvement of operations.

2. STARTING POINTS FOR PROVISION OF EDUCATION

2.3 PROVISION OF BASIC EDUCATION

According to the Basic Education Act, education must be provided according to pupils' and capabilities and so as to promote their healthy growth and development. Those providing education must cooperate with pupils' parents or other guardians and pupils participating in education are entitled to a safe learning environment.¹ The Act further states that pupils are entitled to curricular teaching, guidance counselling and sufficient support for learning and schooling on school days immediately when the need for support becomes apparent. Pupils are also entitled to free pupil welfare necessary for participation in education and social benefits and services for pupils as defined in the Act.²

According to the Constitution of Finland, no one shall, without an acceptable reason, be treated differently from other persons on the grounds of sex, age, origin, language, religion, conviction, opinion, health, disability or any other reason that concerns his or her self³. Finland has also committed to international agreements, programmes and declarations which require provision of education so as to guarantee learning for children and young people at a common school for all⁴.

The starting point for provision of education, guidance and support is attendance to a good and safe school day. Schoolwork should be organized so as to create the most favourable conditions possible for the pupil's well-being, development and learning. The school community should be safe, friendly and respectful in terms of atmosphere. Any risks to health or safety in the learning environment should be addressed immediately. Through its structure, contents and operating methods, a school day should create opportunities for peaceful schoolwork and in-depth exploration of topics, learning and doing together, as well as for experiencing the enjoyment and meaningfulness of learning.

Basic education promotes encouraging interaction, cooperation, joint responsibility and involvement. Special attention is given to pupils' opportunities to influence their personal and joint work and the operating environment. Involvement is used to support pupils' learning, well-being and growth as responsible human beings and members of society.

¹ Basic Education Act (628/1998; *perusopetuslaki*), section 3(2) (as amended by Act 477/2003), section 3(3), and section 29(1)

² Basic Education Act, section 30 (as amended by Act 642/2010), section 31, and section 31 a(1) (as amended by Act 477/2003)

³ The Constitution of Finland (731/1999; *Suomen perustuslaki*), section 6(2)

⁴ The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989, the Salamanca Statement of 1994, the Charter of Luxembourg of 1996, and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of 2006

A collaborative school that supports pupils appreciates the role of pupils, teachers, other members of the school community, and experts and family members in its operations. The school cooperates with pre-primary education and other forms of early childhood education and care, morning and afternoon activities, other schools providing basic education, educational institutions offering further studies, health care and social services, as well as other parties involved in supporting children's growth and development.

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF INSTRUCTION

3.4 TEACHING METHODS AND WORKING APPROACHES

Instruction is to be provided making use of diverse working approaches and teaching methods sensitive to pupils' abilities and suitable for different ages and various learning assignments and situations. These are used to support and guide the learning of the entire teaching group and each individual pupil. Methods and working approaches should be chosen so as to create situations for interactive learning and working together and individually allowing pupils to develop skills that are important in terms of learning and their own future. These include thinking and problem-solving, working and interaction, self-knowledge and responsibility, participation and influencing, as well as expression and manual skills. Work must diversely promote information and communication technology and online working skills. Methods and working approaches must also provide opportunities for the creative activity, experiences, and play characteristic of each age group.

Each teacher selects the working methods and plans the working approaches in interaction with pupils. Working approaches are chosen because they

- stimulate a desire to learn
- take the process and purposeful nature of learning into account
- take the starting points and objectives of different subjects and subject modules into account
- motivate the pupils to work purposefully
- further the formation of an organized knowledge structure, the learning of skills, and practice in those skills
- develop skills for acquiring, applying, and evaluating information
- support learning that occurs through interaction among the pupils
- promote social flexibility, an ability to function in constructive cooperation, and the assumption of responsibility for others
- develop capabilities for taking responsibility for one's own learning, for evaluating that learning, and for seeking feedback for purposes of reflecting on one's own actions
- assist the pupils in becoming conscious of their learning and their opportunities for affecting that learning
- develop the pupils' learning strategies and skills for applying them in new situations.

Differentiation of instruction is a primary means of taking the needs of the teaching group and the diversity of pupils into account, permeating through all instruction. Attention is given to learning styles and paces of work characteristic of different pupils, different abilities and interests, as well as emotional needs linked to self-esteem and motivation. Developmental differences and backgrounds between girls and boys and between individual pupils are taken into account. Differentiation is used to influence learning motivation. Differentiation of instruction makes it possible to provide pupils with suitable challenges and experiences of success and offer them opportunities to develop and learn according to their own strengths. In this respect, it is important to make use of the different skills and interests of pupils in the same teaching group.

Differentiation requires teachers to be familiar with the processes of growth and learning, to monitor the behaviour and atmosphere of the teaching group, and to assess learning. Cooperation between teachers and with parents or guardians, other staff members and different experts supports differentiation.

The three key dimensions of differentiation are related to variations in the extent and depth of studies and the progress rate in studies. Differentiation may focus on areas such as the teaching contents, teaching materials and methods applied, working approaches, the amount of school- and homework, and the amount of time available. The learning environment and working approaches may be modified by creating participation opportunities for pupils, offering choices, adjusting the use of space, grouping pupils flexibly, and making use of learning situations outside school, for example. Each pupil is guided to learn in the way that suits him or her best. Pupils' interests are taken into account in instruction by linking the knowledge and skills being learnt to experiences and activities that they find meaningful. Pupils may need different opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and skills and progress and they always benefit from individual feedback.

When instruction is implemented in combined classes or in combination with a pre-primary group, attention must also be paid to the age and developmental phase of the pupils and the objectives and distinctiveness of different year groups.

4. SUPPORT FOR LEARNING AND SCHOOLING

This chapter describes the key objectives and provision of support for learning and schooling and the structure of support. The levels of support for learning and schooling, i.e. *general, intensified and special support*, are detailed in Sections 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3, respectively. Chapter 5 outlines different forms of support and their uses at different support levels in more detail. As a whole, Chapters 4 and 5 form the basis for formulation of the local curriculum and practical implementation of support for learning and schooling.

Guiding principles for provision of support

The starting points for provision of teaching and support are the strengths and learning and development needs of both the teaching group and each individual pupil. Support for learning and schooling means solutions based on community spirit and the learning environment, as well as meeting pupils' individual needs. When planning instruction and support, it is imperative to bear in mind that support needs may vary from temporary to continuous, from minor to major, or from one to several forms of support.

Every pupil must be given an opportunity to succeed in learning, develop as a learner and grow and refine him- or herself as a person on his or her own terms. Diverse learners, different learning styles and starting points for learning as well as pupils' cultural backgrounds must be taken into account in schoolwork. Pupils should be encouraged to take initiative and responsibility, they should be offered challenges for development and also provided with guidance and support to promote success. Special attention must be focused on early identification of learning barriers and difficulties. It is necessary to recognize factors relating both to individual pupils and to the school and its operating environment.

Pupils participating in education are entitled to receive sufficient support for growth and learning immediately when the need for support becomes apparent⁵. The education provider must ensure that pupils' right to receive support can be implemented in practice by means such as defining the responsibilities and division of work related to determination of support needs and implementation of support measures. Early identification of support needs requires continuous assessment of pupils' needs and provision of support must be initiated at a sufficiently early stage. This will prevent aggravation and long-term effects of problems. Support needs may be assessed making use of the results of physical examinations and any other possible pupil evaluations⁶. Provision of the right support measures at the right time and level is key to safeguarding learning

⁵ Basic Education Act, section 30(1) (as amended by Act 642/2010)

⁶ Government Decree on Clinic Activities, School and Student Health Care, and Preventive Dental Care for Children and Young People (380/2009; *valtioneuvoston asetus neuvolatoiminnasta, koulu- ja opiskeluterveydenhuollosta sekä lasten ja nuorten ehkäisevästä suun terveydenhuollosta*), section 9 (hereinafter referred to as the Government Decree governing school and student health care)

and development. The support received by pupils must be flexible, planned with a long-term view in mind and must change in keeping with support needs. Different forms of support are used both individually and in combination to complement each other. Support will be provided as long as necessary and at the appropriate level.

The school management is responsible for decisions relating to provision and implementation of support and for taking these into account in all year groups and subjects. Pedagogical expertise and cooperation between teachers play an important role in identifying support needs and in planning and implementing support. Where necessary, support is planned and implemented as part of multidisciplinary pupil welfare work. Pupils and their parents or guardians must be provided with information about support measures and must be given an opportunity to express their views on provision of support. Each pupil is provided with support at his or her own school through various flexible arrangements, unless its provision inevitably requires the pupil to be transferred to another teaching group or school. Particular care is taken to ensure continuing support as a child moves from day care to pre-primary education and from pre-primary to basic education and as a pupil moves from basic education to the upper secondary level or changes schools during basic education.

Support in special circumstances

Pupils may need support in special circumstances, such as in connection with an illness or in difficult life circumstances. In such cases, instruction may be provided at hospitals and community homes, for example. The local authority in whose area a hospital is located is responsible for arranging teaching for a pupil who is a patient to the extent that his or her health and other circumstances allow⁷. Instruction for pupils placed in a community home is the responsibility of the school operating at the community home, provided that the community home is authorized to provide education. Each pupil's municipality of residence is obligated to pay municipality of residence compensation to cover children and young people at a hospital school and in community home education⁸. Responsibility for instruction for other children placed outside home rests with each pupil's municipality of residence⁹. With regard to pupils placed in care under the Child Welfare Act, the municipality of residence has a statutory obligation to pay municipality of residence compensation¹⁰.

⁷ Basic Education Act, section 4(3)

⁸ Act on Central Government Transfers to Local Authority Basic Services (1704/2009; *laki kunnan peruspalvelujen valtionosuudesta*), section 41

⁹ Basic Education Act, section 4(1) (as amended by Act 1288/1999)

¹⁰ Act on Central Government Transfers to Local Authority Basic Services, section 41

Instead of its own school, a local authority may also assign a school in another municipality, a school maintained by a private association or foundation authorized to provide education, or a state-owned school as a pupil's neighbourhood school, based on an agreement.

If a pupil is enrolled in education organized by a private education provider or at a state-owned school that does not provide special support, the education provider must inform the relevant municipality of residence of any pupil with special educational needs. The pupil's municipality of residence decides on provision of special support and assigns the pupil to a school or some other suitable place providing special support.¹¹

Pupils are also entitled to all forms of support under the Basic Education Act and the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education in these cases as well. The body providing education assesses the need for support and decides on support in accordance with the above-mentioned legal norms.

4.1 GENERAL SUPPORT

Every pupil has a right to high-quality education as well as an opportunity to receive guidance and support for learning and schooling on all school days. All pupils' abilities and needs must be taken into account in schoolwork. Schools are to develop their procedures and operational culture so as to make it possible to make use of cooperation and learning together and to deal with the diversity of pupils as well as possible. Caring, concern and a good atmosphere in a school community promote pupils' development and support good learning.

Each teacher is responsible for taking the teaching group and the different abilities and needs of each of its pupils into account in instruction. Cooperation with parents and guardians, other teachers and staff members and different experts contributes to success in this respect. The teacher's task is to guide the group to function in such a way that its internal interaction promotes learning. The teacher guides pupils to recognize their own resources, learning-related strengths and development challenges. Special attention must be focused on pupils' learning abilities and their opportunity to assume responsibility for their own learning, setting objectives for it, and its planning, implementation and assessment. Pupils' self-esteem, study motivation and learning-to-learn skills are consolidated in all learning situations and subjects.

Teaching work also involves tasks relating to guidance, counselling and pupil welfare. Assessing support needs and offering the necessary support form an integral part of a teacher's work and all teaching situations. Support is constructed in cooperation between teachers and other experts, where required, and in interaction with pupils and their parents or guardians.

¹¹ Basic Education Act, section 17(5) (as amended by Act 642/2010)

Any support needs in terms of learning and schooling are met by differentiating instruction, through cooperation between teachers and by modifying teaching groups in a flexible manner. The role of these arrangements becomes pronounced in combined-class instruction. Schools may make use of remedial teaching, in particular, as well as learning plans, part-time special-needs education and assistants' contributions as means to meet the support needs of teaching groups or individual pupils even before transition to the intensified support stage.

It is also possible to influence pupils' well-being and learning motivation through morning and afternoon activities, provided that these are offered by the education provider concerned. Planning these to form part of the pupils' day also makes it possible to increase experiences of safety, security and community spirit.

4.2 INTENSIFIED SUPPORT

Pupils in need of regular support for their learning or schooling or in need of several forms of support at the same time must be provided with *intensified support* that is based on a pedagogical assessment in accordance with a learning plan prepared for them¹². Intensified support is provided when general support is not sufficient.

Intensified support is planned as a whole for each individual pupil. It is by nature more intense and persistent than general support. Intensified support is used to support the pupil's learning and schooling systematically and is designed to prevent problems from escalating, diversifying and accumulating.

It is possible to make use of all forms of support available in basic education during intensified support, with the exception of special-needs education provided on the basis of a decision on special support, which is described in section 5.1.3. Subject syllabi cannot be individualized at the intensified support stage. Conversely, a more prominent role is played by part-time special-needs education, individual guidance counselling and use of flexible teaching groups, as well as home-school cooperation. In addition, pupil welfare services play a more substantial role in promoting and maintaining pupils' well-being. Support must be organized according to each pupil's developmental phase and individual needs in terms of quality and quantity. It is important to ensure pupils' opportunities to gain experiences of success in learning and as group members and to support their positive perception of themselves and schoolwork.

During a period of intensified support, each pupil's learning and schooling must be monitored and assessed regularly. In the event that a pupil's situation changes, the learning plan will be revised to match his or her need for support.

¹² Basic Education Act, section 16 a(1) (as amended by Act 642/2010)

Pedagogical assessment for intensified support

Intensified support measures are initiated on the basis of a pedagogical assessment, which describes

- the status of the pupil's learning and schooling as a whole
- general support provided for the pupil and an assessment of its effects
- the pupil's learning abilities and special needs relating to learning and schooling
- an assessment of the types of pedagogical, learning environment, pupil welfare or other arrangements to be made in order to support the pupil.

The written pedagogical assessment is drawn up by the pupil's teacher or teachers together. Where necessary, and especially in cases concerning problems relating to the pupil's well-being and overall development, other experts will also get involved to help draw up the assessment. Cooperation with the pupil and his or her parents or guardians is important in terms of both determining needs and planning and successful implementation of support measures. Any learning plan already in place for the pupil as part of general support will be utilized when drawing up the pedagogical assessment. If the pupil has a rehabilitation plan, this may also be utilized with permission from the parents or guardians.

Initiating and organizing intensified support and, where necessary, the pupil's transition back to general support will be dealt with on the basis of the pedagogical assessment in a multidisciplinary pupil welfare team or in some other form of multidisciplinary pupil welfare work in accordance with provisions on dealing with the case of an individual pupil¹³. After this process, intensified support measures to be provided for the pupil will be recorded in the pupil's personal learning plan. Learning plans are discussed in more detail in Section 4.5.1.

4.3 SPECIAL SUPPORT

Special support is provided for pupils who cannot adequately achieve their growth, development or learning objectives through other support measures. Special support may be provided as part of either general or extended compulsory education. Special support consists of special-needs education based on a decision on special support and of other forms of support available in basic education¹⁴. The whole range of support measures available in basic education can be used.

The purpose of special support is to provide pupils with holistic and systematic support that enables them to complete their compulsory education and build a foundation for continuing their studies when they leave comprehensive school. Pupils' self-esteem and study motivation are

¹³ Basic Education Act, section 31 a(4) (as amended by Act 642/2010)

¹⁴ Basic Education Act, section 17(1) (as amended by Act 642/2010)

reinforced and they are encouraged to assume responsibility for their studies within the limits of their own abilities.

Provision of special support requires education providers to make a decision in writing, which will be revised at least after the second grade and prior to moving on to the seventh grade¹⁵. The decision is to be made in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act¹⁶. Any matters that are significant in terms of the pupil's legal protection and provision of instruction are determined in the decision on special support. The decision on special support must determine the pupil's primary teaching group, any possible interpretation and assistance services and other necessary services and, where necessary, divergent teaching arrangements for the pupil¹⁷. Individualization of a syllabus requires a decision on special support.

A decision on special support may be made prior to or during pre-primary or basic education without a prior pedagogical statement and provision of intensified support for learning, if a psychological or medical evaluation indicates that the pupil in question cannot otherwise be provided with education due to disability, illness, developmental delay or an emotional disorder, or for some other equivalent special reason¹⁸. If a decision on special support is made during basic education without providing intensified support, it must be based on a reassessment of the pupil's situation as a result of an accident or serious illness, for example.

Pedagogical statement for special support

Prior to making a decision on special support, the education provider must consult the pupil and his or her parents, guardians or legal representatives and prepare a pedagogical statement on the pupil¹⁹.

For the purposes of drawing up a pedagogical statement, a body, an official or an employee appointed by the education provider will obtain

- a statement on the pupil's progress with their learning from the teachers responsible for teaching the pupil
- a statement on the intensified support measures provided for the pupil and the pupil's overall situation prepared in multidisciplinary pupil welfare cooperation, such as by the pupil welfare team.

¹⁵ Basic Education Act, section 17(2) (as amended by Act 642/2010)

¹⁶ Administrative Procedure Act (434/2003; *hallintolaki*)

¹⁷ Basic Education Act, section 17(2) (as amended by Act 642/2010)

¹⁸ Basic Education Act, section 17(4) (as amended by Act 642/2010)

¹⁹ Basic Education Act, section 17(3) (as amended by Act 642/2010); Administrative Procedure Act, sections 34, 35, and 36

Based on the statements, the education provider makes an assessment of the pupil's special support needs. The combination of these two statements and the subsequent assessment is known as a 'pedagogical statement'.²⁰

A written pedagogical statement outlines

- the status of the pupil's learning and schooling as a whole
- intensified support provided for the pupil and an assessment of its effects
- the pupil's learning abilities and special needs relating to learning and schooling
- an assessment of the types of pedagogical, learning environment, pupil welfare or other arrangements to be made in order to support the pupil
- a justified assessment of whether the pupil needs an individualized syllabus in one or more subjects.

Support measures may include factors relating to teaching and counselling staff, pupil welfare services, assistants and other necessary services, teaching methods and working approaches, learning methods, as well as materials and equipment. In addition to the pedagogical statement, other statements, such as a psychological or medical statement or an equivalent social statement, must also be obtained, where necessary, in order to prepare a decision on special support. The pedagogical assessment previously drawn up for a pupil and the pupil's learning plan will be utilized when drawing up the pedagogical statement. If the pupil has a rehabilitation plan, this may also be utilized with permission from the parents or guardians.

The necessity of special support must be reviewed at the points required by law and whenever the pupil's support needs change. For this purpose, a new pedagogical statement will be prepared for the pupil. If the need for ongoing support is confirmed, a decision to continue special support will be taken. If the pupil is considered not to need further special support, a decision must be taken to terminate support measures. In the latter case, the pupil starts to receive intensified support.

4.4 SUPPORT FOR LEARNING AND SCHOOLING IN THE LOCAL CURRICULUM

This section specifies how support for learning and schooling is to be described as a whole in the local curriculum. Further provisions concerning formulation of the curriculum are included in Section 4.5 and in Chapter 5 that deal with individual plans and different forms of support, respectively. With regard to cooperation between home and school and pupil welfare services, the local curriculum must be drawn up in cooperation with the local health care and social services authorities²¹.

²⁰ Basic Education Act, section 17(3) (as amended by Act 642/2010)

²¹ Basic Education Act, section 15(2) (as amended by Act 477/2003)

The local curriculum describes support for learning and schooling, the structure and provision of support, general objectives and practical implementation of different forms of support. The curriculum specifies the ways in which cooperation with pupils and their parents or guardians relating to provision of support is to be carried out. The curriculum also describes cooperation among staff and cooperation with experts responsible for pupil welfare services and other necessary experts in terms of assessment of support needs, planning and provision of support and its practical implementation.

The curriculum determines the objectives, provision and operating methods of general support, cooperation with different parties and with pupils and their parents or guardians.

The curriculum determines the objectives of intensified support, initiation of support and transition back to general support. The curriculum further determines the provision and operating methods of intensified support, cooperation, responsibilities and division of work among different parties and cooperation with pupils and their parents or guardians.

The curriculum determines the objectives of special support, the process of making a decision on special support, initiation of support and transition back to intensified support. The curriculum further determines the provision and operating methods of special support, cooperation, responsibilities and division of work among different parties, cooperation with pupils and their parents or guardians, and the procedure for consulting with pupils and their parents or guardians.

The parties responsible for making administrative decisions relating to pupils' support are determined in the education provider's standing order²².

4.5 INDIVIDUAL PLANS

4.5.1 LEARNING PLAN

A learning plan is a plan for a pupil's progress in learning and schooling and for teaching arrangements required for that purpose, as well as for the support needed by the pupil. It is a written pedagogical document based on the approved curriculum. It may be used as part of general support, where necessary, and it must be used during intensified support.²³

The aim of the learning plan is to guarantee good opportunities for pupils to make progress in their studies. The plan increases teachers' awareness of each pupil's situation, thus making it easier for each teacher to plan their own work and facilitating cooperation among teachers and with the

²² Local Government Act (365/1995; *kuntalaki*), Section 14

²³ Basic Education Act, section 16 a (as amended by Act 642/2010)

pupil's home. The learning plan also helps keep parents or guardians informed, so that they can support their children better. The plan also aims for pupils to learn gradually to assume more and more responsibility for their studies and adopt a more goal-oriented approach to their learning. The plan provides a basis for assessing the pupil's progress. However, the learning plan may not be used to individualize a subject syllabus, which requires a decision on special support.

A learning plan drawn up for the purposes of intensified support is based on information produced in the pedagogical assessment. This type of plan is drawn up by teachers working in cooperation with the pupil concerned and his or her parents or guardians. Where necessary, other experts may also be involved in this process. The pupil's involvement in planning increases as he or she moves to higher grades in basic education.

A learning plan drawn up for the purposes of intensified support must include the following details as required for arranging instruction and support measures for the pupil concerned:

- the pupil's learning abilities and special needs relating to learning and schooling
- objectives relating to the pupil's learning, work and interaction skills, and schooling
- the special emphases of study in different subjects
- pedagogical solutions, such as flexible group arrangements, team teaching, teaching methods, learning strategies, working approaches, communication methods, special aids, learning materials, and other support
- solutions relating to the physical, psychological or social learning environment, pupil welfare services, guidance and counselling, or other aspects
- a description of multidisciplinary cooperation and the responsibilities of the different parties involved
- implementation of cooperation with the pupil and parents or guardians; support provided by parents or guardians
- monitoring and assessment of progress, the pupil's opportunities to demonstrate his or her knowledge and skills in different ways, assessment methods and times, and the pupil's self-assessment
- individuals involved in preparing the plan.

Any learning plan already in place for the pupil as part of general support, as well as the pedagogical assessment and information collected as part of the assessment, will be utilized when drawing up the plan. If the pupil has a rehabilitation plan, this may also be utilized with permission from the parents or guardians. The learning plan of a first-grade pupil can be constructed on the basis of the child's pre-primary learning plan, if one has been formulated.

A learning plan does not describe the pupil's personal characteristics. Learning plans are not subject to appeal or any other mode of seeking reconsideration.

The curriculum may determine that a pupil may progress in different subjects according to his or her own personal study programme instead of a syllabus organized by year group²⁴. If such an administrative decision is made for an individual pupil, he or she must be provided with a learning plan. The plan must indicate the study modules included in the pupil's study programme and define their order of completion, timetable and any possible special objectives.

A pupil's education may be arranged by means of special teaching arrangements if the pupil is considered to have some degree of prior knowledge and skills corresponding to the basic education syllabus; if completion of the basic education syllabus would in some respect be unreasonable for the pupil in view of his or her circumstances and prior learning; or if it is justified for reasons relating to the pupil's health²⁵. An administrative decision must be taken to cover any special teaching arrangements and a learning plan is subsequently prepared for the pupil.

A pupil in grades 7–9 of basic education may be admitted to flexible basic education activities²⁶ and a learning plan must be subsequently prepared for the pupil. Where applicable, the learning plan includes the same sections as a learning plan drawn up during intensified support. In addition, the plan describes organization of flexible basic education for the pupil at school and in other learning environments.

The learning plan as part of general support

It is possible to draw up a learning plan for every pupil. Where applicable, this type of learning plan includes the same sections as a learning plan drawn up for intensified support. The objectives and support measures devised for an individual pupil will benefit the pupil's learning and growth. A learning plan may also be used to deepen and broaden a pupil's studies, when this is justified in terms of the pupil's potential.

The learning plan during intensified support

A pupil in need of regular support for his or her learning or schooling or in need of several forms of support at the same time must be provided with intensified support based on their own learning plan prepared. The support measures to be provided for the pupil are recorded in the learning plan.²⁷ A learning plan is always drawn up for a pupil receiving intensified support. The learning plan must, unless there is an evident obstacle to doing so, be drawn up in cooperation with the pupil and his or her parents or guardians and, where necessary, with any other legal

²⁴ Basic Education Decree (852/1998; *perusopetusasetus*), section 11(3)

²⁵ Basic Education Act, section 18(1).

²⁶ Basic Education Decree, section 9 b(1) (as amended by Government Decree 1768/2009)

²⁷ Basic Education Act, section 16 a (as amended by Act 642/2010)

representative of the pupil²⁸. During a period of intensified support, systematic planning of studies and support measures will support the pupil's learning, growth and development.

Special support

Pupils who have received a decision on special support are provided with an individual educational plan (IEP) in lieu of a learning plan.

Formulation of the local curriculum

The local curriculum determines how a learning plan is to be used as part of general support. The curriculum describes use of a learning plan relating to intensified support. The curriculum determines the preparation and monitoring of the learning plan, operating methods, cooperation, responsibilities and division of work among different parties, as well as procedures for cooperation with the pupil and his or her parents or guardians. The contents of learning plans are described separately for general and intensified support.

4.5.2 INDIVIDUAL EDUCATIONAL PLAN

In order to implement a decision on special support issued for a pupil, the pupil must be provided with an individual educational plan (IEP). The plan must indicate provision of education and other support in accordance with the decision on special support issued for the pupil.²⁹

An individual educational plan is a written pedagogical document based on the approved curriculum. The plan is drawn up by teachers working in cooperation with the pupil concerned and his or her parents or guardians, unless there is an evident obstacle to doing so. To the extent required, it is prepared in multidisciplinary cooperation.

The purpose of an individual educational plan is to provide persistent support for the pupil's individual learning and growth process. The plan is a target plan relating to the pupil's learning and schooling and covering educational contents, pedagogical methods and other necessary support measures.

An individual educational plan must include the following details as required for arranging instruction and support measures for the pupil concerned:

- the pupil's learning abilities and special needs relating to learning and schooling
- general objectives for the pupil's learning and schooling

²⁸ Basic Education Act, section 16 a(1) (as amended by Act 642/2010)

²⁹ Basic Education Act, section 17 a (as amended by Act 642/2010)

- the subjects and subject groups and optional studies on the pupil's programme and the numbers of weekly lessons per year in each of the subjects
- the special emphases of study in the subjects that the pupil studies according to general syllabi
- objectives relating to other areas of the pupil's development, such as socio-emotional or motor skills
- monitoring and assessment of progress, the pupil's opportunities to demonstrate his or her knowledge and skills in different ways, assessment methods and times, and the pupil's self-assessment
- pedagogical solutions, such as flexible group arrangements, team teaching, teaching methods, learning strategies, communication methods, special aids, learning materials, and other support
- solutions relating to the physical, psychological or social learning environment, pupil welfare services, guidance and counselling, or other aspects
- provision of interpretation and assistance services in accordance with the decision on special support, other teaching services and support and rehabilitation services, and the responsibilities of the different parties involved
- a description of how the pupil's instruction is provided in connection with other education and/or in a special-needs education group
- a description of how and in which classes a pupil primarily studying in a special-needs education group studies in a mainstream group
- a description of multidisciplinary cooperation and the responsibilities of the different parties involved
- a description of the pupil's school transport arrangements and responsibilities, and of supervision and guidance of the pupil waiting for transport
- the pupil's possible participation in morning and afternoon activities and a description of cooperation with the organizer
- implementation of cooperation with the pupil and parents or guardians; support provided by parents or guardians
- individuals involved in preparing the plan.

If a pupil studies one or more subjects in accordance with an individualized syllabus, the individual educational plan must include, in addition to the above-mentioned general points

- a list of the subjects that the pupil studies according to individualized syllabi and the objectives and core contents of these subjects
- monitoring and assessment of progress, the pupil's opportunities to demonstrate his or her knowledge and skills in different ways, assessment methods and times, and the pupil's self-assessment in those subjects that he or she studies according to individualized syllabi.

If a pupil studies according to activity areas, the individual educational plan must include, in addition to the above-mentioned general points

- a description of the pupil's individual objectives and core contents by activity area

- monitoring and assessment of progress, the pupil's opportunities to demonstrate his or her knowledge and skills in different ways, assessment methods and times, and the pupil's self-assessment by activity area.

The learning plan drawn up for the pupil as part of intensified support, as well as the pedagogical assessment and information collected as part of the assessment, will be utilized when drawing up the individual educational plan. If the pupil has a rehabilitation plan, this may also be utilized with permission from the parents or guardians.

The individual educational plan does not describe the pupil's personal characteristics. It is also possible to attach any individual permissions to transfer information given by the pupil's parents or guardians to the IEP document. Individual educational plans are not subject to appeal or any other mode of seeking reconsideration.

The plan must be revised as required, however, at least once per school year, to correspond to the pupil's needs³⁰. The individual educational plan is revised whenever the pupil's support needs or teaching objectives change. Experiences of the teaching arrangements, operating methods and support services applied may be recorded in the plan and this information may be utilized when assessing its implementation. If the pupil is transferred to intensified support, a learning plan will be prepared for him or her.

Formulation of the local curriculum

The curriculum determines the preparation and monitoring of the individual educational plan, operating methods, cooperation, responsibilities and division of work among different parties, as well as procedures for cooperation with the pupil and his or her parents or guardians.

³⁰ Basic Education Act, section 17 a (as amended by Act 642/2010)

5.1 SUPPORT RELATING TO TEACHING ARRANGEMENTS

5.1.1 REMEDIAL TEACHING

A pupil who has temporarily fallen behind or who otherwise needs short-term support with his or her studies is entitled to receive remedial teaching³¹. Remedial teaching is to be commenced as soon as learning difficulties are observed so as to prevent the pupil from permanently falling behind with his or her studies. Remedial teaching may also be used to prevent difficulties from occurring in the first place. Remedial teaching is to be provided as often and as broadly as is appropriate from the standpoint of the pupil's academic success. Remedial teaching may be provided at all levels of support.

Schoolwork should be planned so as to ensure that every pupil has an opportunity to participate in remedial teaching when the need arises. Remedial teaching is given either during lessons conforming to the pupil's schedule that are related to the pupil's support needs, or outside of those lessons. It may be provided as team teaching in the pupil's regular teaching group, in a small group, or completely individually. It is also possible to make use of various flexible group arrangements to implement remedial teaching during lessons.

Remedial teaching is a form of differentiation characterized by individualized tasks, individualized use of time, and guidance and counselling. Remedial teaching is to be provided making use of diverse methods and materials, which make it possible to identify new ways of approaching the topic being learnt.

The initiative to provide a pupil with remedial teaching primarily comes from a teacher. Every effort must be made to arrange remedial teaching in mutual understanding with the pupil concerned and his or her parents or guardians, who should be provided with information about the implementation methods of remedial teaching and its bearing on learning and schooling.

Remedial teaching during general support

Every teacher is responsible for monitoring pupils' learning and growth and any signs of support needs. Support needs may be caused by absences or temporary difficulties relating to learning or schooling.

Remedial teaching during intensified support

Prior to starting intensified support measures, the adequacy and impact of remedial teaching provided for a pupil during general support and the pupil's further need for remedial teaching should be assessed as part of the pedagogical assessment. The learning plan to be prepared when initiating intensified support should include the remedial teaching that the pupil needs, its

³¹ Basic Education Act, section 16(1) (as amended by Act 642/2010)

objectives and provision. Remedial teaching may also be used to meet temporary support needs due to absences, for example.

Remedial teaching during special support

Prior to making a decision on special support, the adequacy and impact of remedial teaching provided for a pupil during intensified support and the pupil's further need for remedial teaching should be assessed as part of preparing the pedagogical statement. At the beginning of special support, the remedial teaching that the pupil needs, its objectives and provision should be recorded in the individual educational plan. Remedial teaching may also be used to meet temporary support needs due to absences, for example.

Formulation of the local curriculum

The key objectives of remedial teaching, operating methods used to provide remedial teaching, cooperation, responsibilities and division of work between different parties involved, as well as procedures relating to cooperation with pupils and their parents or guardians are to be determined in the local curriculum.

5.1.2 PART-TIME SPECIAL-NEEDS EDUCATION

A pupil who has learning or schooling difficulties is entitled to special-needs education alongside other teaching³². Part-time special-needs education makes it possible to improve pupils' prerequisites for learning and to prevent problems relating to different areas of learning from worsening. Part-time special-needs education is provided for pupils with problems relating to linguistic or mathematical skills, learning difficulties in individual subjects, study or social skills, or in their schooling. Each education provider is required to ensure the availability of adequate competence in special pedagogy as required for part-time special-needs education.

Part-time special-needs education is provided through flexible arrangements as team teaching, in a small group or individually. The objectives and contents of part-time special-needs education are to be articulated with other instruction provided for the pupils concerned. Part-time special-needs education is planned and pupils' learning is assessed in cooperation between teachers. Part-time special-needs education may be provided at all levels of support.

Pupils and their parents or guardians are to be informed of implementation methods for special-needs education. Every effort must be made to arrange part-time special-needs education in mutual understanding with the pupils concerned and their parents or guardians. Parental support plays a key role in successful implementation of instruction. As required, those responsible for

³² Basic Education Act, section 16(2) (as amended by Act 642/2010)

pupil welfare services may also be consulted when planning provision of part-time special-needs education.

Part-time special-needs education as part of general support

Part-time special-needs education makes it possible to consolidate basic skills required for learning. The factors underlying individual pupils' learning difficulties must be assessed and pupils must be provided with part-time special-needs education when they need it.

Part-time special-needs education during intensified support

In general terms, part-time special-needs education plays an increasingly significant role as a form of support during intensified support. Prior to starting intensified support measures, the adequacy and impact of part-time special-needs education provided for a pupil during general support and the pupil's further need for part-time special-needs education should be assessed as part of the pedagogical assessment. The learning plan to be prepared when initiating intensified support should include the type of part-time special-needs education that the pupil needs, its objectives and provision.

Part-time special-needs education during special support

A pupil may also be provided with part-time special-needs support during intensified support regardless of whether he or she is studying in a mainstream or special group. The adequacy and impact of part-time special-needs education previously provided for the pupil and the need for further part-time special-needs education should be assessed as part of preparing the pedagogical statement. The types, objectives and provision of part-time special-needs education that the pupil needs are to be recorded in the individual educational plan.

Formulation of the local curriculum

The key objectives of part-time special-needs education, operating methods used to provide it, cooperation, responsibilities and division of work between different parties involved, as well as procedures relating to cooperation with pupils and their parents or guardians are to be determined in the local curriculum.

5.1.3 SPECIAL-NEEDS EDUCATION

Special support comprises special-needs education and any other support needed by individual pupils and provided under the Basic Education Act³³. Special-needs education is a key pedagogical area of special support and its purpose is to support pupils' learning. A pupil who has received a

³³ Basic Education Act, section 17(1) (as amended by Act 642/2010).

decision on special support is provided with education and other forms of support in accordance with the individual educational plan. The individual educational plan is a pedagogical document governing systematic implementation of the decision on special support. The plan determines aspects relating to provision of special-needs education, the key objectives and contents of instruction, as well as factors relating to the learning environment and learning methods, as instructed in Section 4.5.2 about drawing up individual educational plans.

Special-needs education may be provided in connection with regular mainstream education, whenever possible, considering the pupil's best interests and the prerequisites for arranging instruction, or fully or partially in a special class or some other suitable place. Special-needs education may deviate from subjects and the national distribution of lesson hours as specified in the decision on special support.³⁴ Teaching groups must be formed so as to ensure that all pupils will be able to achieve the objectives set in the curriculum³⁵. Further provisions on formation of teaching groups are issued in the Basic Education Decree³⁶.

Formulation of the local curriculum

Special-needs education is decided as part of making a decision on special support, which is detailed in Section 4.3 above. The curriculum determines the operating methods in provision of special-needs education, cooperation, responsibilities and division of work between different parties, as well as cooperation with pupils and their parents or guardians.

5.1.4 INDIVIDUALIZATION OF SUBJECT SYLLABI AND EXEMPTION FROM INSTRUCTION

Education is to be provided with due consideration for pupils' abilities and it may be based on syllabi of different scopes³⁷. The primary objective is to support pupils' studies by means of general and intensified support in such a way that they are able to achieve the objectives of all subjects in keeping with the general syllabi. Pupils' studies may be supported by means such as differentiation by focusing on the core contents of a specific subject. If an individual pupil is not able to achieve even the objectives of core contents to an acceptable standard despite support, it is possible to individualize one or more subject syllabi. Language and cultural background, absences, lack of motivation or inadequate learning techniques cannot as such constitute a reason for individualizing a syllabus; instead, pupils must be supported in these issues in other suitable ways. The pupils

³⁴ Basic Education Act, section 17(1) and (2) (as amended by Act 642/2010)

³⁵ Basic Education Act, section 30(2).

³⁶ Basic Education Decree, section 2 (as amended by Government Decree 893/2010)

³⁷ Basic Education Act, section 3(2) (as amended by Act 477/2003) and section 11(1) (as amended by Act 453/2001).

concerned and their parents or guardians must be informed of the possible effects of individualized syllabi on further studies.

Individualization of a subject syllabus means defining the target level set for a pupil's learning according to his or her own abilities. Nevertheless, the objectives must be sufficiently challenging for the pupil.

Individualization of a syllabus is determined in a decision on special support. No syllabi may be individualized without a decision on special support. Prior to making a decision on special support, a pedagogical statement is prepared for the pupil concerned, including an assessment of the pupil's needs for special support. If the pedagogical statement concludes that the pupil is unable to achieve the objectives of a subject in accordance with the general subject syllabus to an acceptable standard, the syllabus will be individualized. Each subject is assessed separately in terms of whether the pupil is able to study the subject in accordance with the general syllabus or whether the syllabus should be individualized. If it is subsequently necessary to increase or decrease the number of individualized subjects, a new pedagogical statement will be prepared and a new decision on special support will be drawn up based on the new statement.

The objectives and core contents of the subjects that the pupil studies according to individualized syllabi and the procedures for monitoring the pupil's progress are described in the pupil's individual educational plan (IEP). The above-mentioned IEP contents are prepared by the teacher responsible for teaching the subjects concerned or, if there are several teachers, jointly by the teachers. The objectives and contents of an individualized subject are derived from the general objectives and contents of the subject determined for the pupil's year group, which often also involves applying objectives and contents for lower grades. In addition, the pupil's studies may be supported using suitable learning materials, equipment and methods as well as through pedagogical arrangements.

If a pupil studies in accordance with individualized syllabi, the numerical grades and verbal assessments for the subjects concerned are marked with an asterisk (*) both in assessments conducted during the course of studies and in the final assessment. The "Further information" section of reports and certificates is to include a reference to the fact that the pupil has studied the subjects marked with asterisks in accordance with individualized syllabi.

Individualization of a syllabus is the primary solution, being preferable to exempting the pupil from completing the syllabus. Exceptionally pressing reasons are required in order to exempt a pupil from studying a syllabus. Such exemption is subject to an administrative decision referred to in section 18 of the Basic Education Act. A pupil who has been exempted from studying a subject, except temporarily, must be provided either with other instruction or some guided activity³⁸. Exemption of pupils falling within extended compulsory education is described in Section 5.1.5.

³⁸ Basic Education Decree, section 5(1)

Formulation of the local curriculum

The curriculum determines procedures relating to individualization of syllabi as part of preparing a pedagogical statement, making a decision on special support and drawing up an independent educational plan.

5.1.5 EXTENDED COMPULSORY EDUCATION

If, owing to a child's disability or illness, the objectives set for basic education cannot evidently be achieved in nine years, compulsory education will begin one year earlier than provided and be 11 years in duration³⁹. The duration of pre-primary education provided for pupils falling within extended compulsory education may be one or two years⁴⁰. The purpose is to consolidate these pupils' abilities to help them cope with their studies in basic education as well as possible.

Extended compulsory education is intended for children with severe disabilities, including those with visual and hearing impairments as well as those with other severe physical or intellectual disabilities or developmental delays. A serious illness may also be a reason for extended compulsory education.⁴¹ As a general rule, a decision on extended compulsory education is made before commencement of compulsory education. In such cases, a decision on special support is also made for the child concerned. Children have the right to pre-primary education during the year preceding the beginning of compulsory schooling.⁴² For children within extended education, this right commences at the start of September in the year of their fifth birthday. A decision on extension of compulsory education needs to be made before commencement of pre-primary education in order for this right to become valid.

Guiding a child to support services at a sufficiently early stage requires cooperation between different administrative sectors. Parents or guardians of children are to be informed of the different alternatives available in extended compulsory education and the effects of this option. Parents or guardians decide whether their child will participate in pre-primary education prior to compulsory education. The duration of pre-primary education and commencement of basic education should be planned on the basis of the child's progress, support needs and overall circumstances.

³⁹ Basic Education Act, section 25(2).

⁴⁰ Basic Education Act, section 9(2)

⁴¹ Government Proposal to Parliament for legislation governing education (86/1997)

⁴² Basic Education Act, section 17(4) (as amended by Act 642/2010) and section 26 a(1) (as amended by Act 1288/1999)

Instruction for pupils within extended compulsory education may be provided in the following alternative ways:

- A child may start pre-primary education preceding compulsory education in the year of their fifth birthday, continue in pre-primary education as part of compulsory education for another year and then start basic education.
- A child may start pre-primary education as part of extended compulsory education in the year of their sixth birthday, participate in pre-primary education for one year and then start basic education.
- A child may start pre-primary education as part of extended compulsory education in the year of their sixth birthday and then participate in pre-primary education for two years. This means that the child will start basic education one year later than enacted, i.e. in the year of their eighth birthday⁴³. Starting basic education at a later date is subject to a separate administrative decision.

Each child within extended compulsory education and receiving special support is to be provided with an individual educational plan at the beginning of pre-primary education. Instruction for pupils within extended compulsory education may, if needed, be arranged so that neither the second national language nor a foreign language is taught as a core subject, while subjects may be combined into study modules and divided into smaller units as specified in the local curriculum⁴⁴.

If a pupil no longer falls within extended compulsory education, a decision on termination of extended compulsory education must be made, in which case the pupil will be transferred into general compulsory education.

Formulation of the local curriculum

The curriculum determines provision of instruction for pupils within extended compulsory education, operating methods, cooperation with pre-primary education and other forms of early childhood education and care, other cooperation and the responsibilities of and division of work between different parties, cooperation with pupils and their parents or guardians, and the procedure for consulting with pupils and their parents or guardians. The curriculum also specifies how subjects may possibly be combined into subject modules or divided into smaller units.

⁴³ Basic Education Act, section 27

⁴⁴ Government Decree on the General National Objectives and Distribution of Lesson Hours in Basic Education Referred to in the Basic Education Act (1435/2001; *valtioneuvoston asetus perusopetuslaissa tarkoitettun opetuksen valtakunnallisista tavoitteista ja perusopetuksen tuntijaosta*), section 9(2) (hereinafter referred to as the Decree on Distribution of Lesson Hours)

5.1.6 STUDYING ACCORDING TO ACTIVITY AREAS

Instruction for pupils with the most severe developmental disabilities may be provided as activity areas, instead of being divided into subjects⁴⁵. It may also be justified to provide instruction for pupils with other disabilities or serious illnesses by activity area for reasons relating to the health of such pupils⁴⁶. Provision of instruction by activity area instead of by subject is to be specified in a decision on special support⁴⁷. The activity areas included in the curriculum are motor skills, language and communication, social skills, skills in activities of daily living, and cognitive skills.

Provision of instruction is based on definition of overall objectives, promotion of interaction in the pupil group, and development of an effective and motivating learning environment. Instruction is planned on the basis of pupils' individual strengths with a view to tapping their full potential. Different functions of the school day are utilized in learning. The individual educational plan drawn up for each pupil studying in accordance with activity areas describes the objectives and core contents of each activity area, as well as monitoring and assessment of progress. The objectives are set individually in such a way that they are achievable and meaningful for the pupil concerned. Activity areas may include objectives and contents of an individual subject, if the pupil has strengths in a specific subject. The contents of different activity areas may be combined when implementing instruction. Instruction provided by activity area always involves rehabilitative and therapeutic elements as well. Planning and implementation of instruction requires cooperation between the pupil's teachers, other staff and different experts.

In instruction provided by activity area, assessment is also carried out by activity area. Assessments are always verbal. If an activity area includes objectives and contents of an individual subject, this may be described as part of the verbal assessment or in an attachment to the certificate.

In the learning of motor skills, the aim is to strengthen pupils' perception of their own body, to promote development of gross and fine motor skills and to provide diverse opportunities to practise these skills in various everyday situations. Instruction in motor skills is to include sub-areas relating to the planning and guidance of motor functions, balance, coordination, rhythm, endurance, and the development of muscular strength.

The starting point for learning communication skills is establishing contact with each pupil and, based on this, practice in understanding and producing communication. The aim is for pupils to interact with their environment, become understood while also understanding adults as well as other pupils in their group. Pupils are to be guaranteed an opportunity to use ways of

⁴⁵ Decree on Distribution of Lesson Hours, section 9(3)

⁴⁶ Basic Education Act, section 18(1).

⁴⁷ Basic Education Act, section 17(2) (as amended by Act 642/2010)

communicating that are characteristic of themselves. Pupils must be able to make use of alternative communication methods. Instruction in language and communication includes sub-areas geared towards developing linguistic awareness, expression, vocabulary and the store of concepts, thinking, and the recognition and use of symbols, letters, words, and signs, including those used in sign language. Pupils practise communication skills in different situations during the school day.

In the learning of social skills, the aim is development of pupils' interaction skills. Instruction should include sub-areas to support functioning in social environments and practising interaction and emotional skills. Pupils' self-knowledge and learning motivation are supported by creating conditions for experiences of success and strengthening a positive atmosphere of social learning.

In the learning of cognitive skills, the aim is for pupils to become active and learn to use their senses to perceive the surrounding reality. Instruction should support development of processes related to learning, remembering and thinking. Cognitive skills should include sub-areas promoting sensory stimulation and practice, and learning about making choices and decisions, classification, problem-solving and the cause-and-effect relationship. The contents of different subjects may also provide material for learning cognitive skills.

The objective in learning daily living skills is to increase pupils' active participation in the functions of the living environment and to further their independence and initiative. Instruction should include sub-areas dealing with health and safety, everyday life skills, residential living and moving about in the environment, as well as spending free time. Practising daily living skills creates opportunities for developing and rehearsing motor skills, language and communication, and social and cognitive skills. These, in turn, strengthen mastery of daily skills.

Formulation of the local curriculum

The local curriculum determines the general objectives of instruction arranged by activity area and objectives relating to specific activity areas and describes more specific objectives, contents and methods for each sub-area.

5.2 GUIDANCE COUNSELLING AND OTHER SUPPORT

5.2.1 COOPERATION BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL

Education providers are required to cooperate with pupils' parents/guardians⁴⁸. Instruction and education must be provided in cooperation with homes and parents and guardians, so that each pupil receives instruction, guidance and support according to his or her own needs and developmental level⁴⁹. Pupils live within the sphere of influence of home and school simultaneously.

⁴⁸ Basic Education Act, section 3(3)

⁴⁹ Decree on Distribution of Lesson Hours, section 4(1)

This requires that these two educational communities cooperate and interact to support pupils' healthy growth and good learning in a holistic way. Interaction with home adds to the teacher's knowledge of pupils and helps the teacher plan and implement instruction.

Parents and other guardians have primary responsibility for bringing up their children and for ensuring that pupils complete their compulsory education⁵⁰. The school supports the home's educational tasks and takes responsibility for the pupil's education and instruction as a member of the school community⁵¹. The objective is to advance children's and young people's conditions for learning, their feelings of safety and security, and the entire school community's well-being.

It is important to provide parents and guardians with opportunities to participate in setting objectives for and planning and evaluating the school's educational work in cooperation with teachers and pupils. The school must cooperate with parents or guardians so that they can, for their part, support their children's purposeful learning and schooling. Cooperation between home and school is implemented at both the communal and individual level.

Responsibility for development of home-school cooperation rests with each education provider. Cooperation requires initiative and active involvement from school staff and discussions and provision of information about the rights and responsibilities of parents and guardians, teachers and pupils. The starting point for cooperation is mutual respect between different parties. The diversity, individual needs and linguistic and cultural backgrounds of families are to be taken into account in home-school cooperation.

Parents and guardians need to be provided with information about the curriculum, provision of education, assessment of studies, pupils' support needs and possibilities for receiving support, and about their own opportunities to participate in home-school cooperation and in promotion of the well-being and safety of the school community. Pupils' absences are monitored as part of home-school cooperation. Pupils' parents or guardians must be notified of unauthorized absences.⁵² The school must inform parents and guardians of the activities of pupil welfare services⁵³ and of the school community's operating models and communication practices in various problem, accident and crisis situations.

⁵⁰ Basic Education Act, section 26(2) (as amended by Act 477/2003); Child Welfare Act (417/2007; *lastensuojelulaki*) section 2(1)

⁵¹ Basic Education Act, section 3(2) (as amended by Act 477/2003); Decree on Distribution of Lesson Hours, sections 2, 3 and 4; Child Welfare Act, section 2(2)

⁵² Basic Education Act, section 26(2) (as amended by Act 477/2003)

⁵³ Basic Education Act, sections 31 a(3) (as amended by Act 642/2010), 3(3) and 26(2); Government Decree governing school and student health care, sections 4(2), 9 and 13; Child Welfare Act, sections 9 and 12

When dealing with a matter involving support for an individual pupil, the pupil's parents or guardians must be informed of issues relating to processing of, access to, disclosure and secrecy of data concerning the pupil. It is necessary to go through various issues with parents or guardians, such as the meaning of a legal guardian's specific written consent in dealing with a matter concerning the pupil and the role of cooperation in support of the pupil's growth, development and learning.⁵⁴

Cooperation established during pre-primary education is continued during the first school years, while also creating a foundation for interaction among parents and guardians. Different forms of cooperation in support of home-school dialogue should be developed throughout basic education, and especially when the pupil moves from one stage of schooling to the next, and in other transitional phases. Information and communication technology should be used to improve and diversify the flow of information and contacts between home and school. Cooperation should be organized so as to make it possible to support pupils' schooling and well-being with the aid of pupil welfare services and the multidisciplinary cooperation network. At the final stage of basic education, the parents or guardians must be given information about and an opportunity to discuss the questions and possible problems associated with the pupil's further education with the pupil's guidance counsellor and various pupil welfare experts.⁵⁵

Formulation of the local curriculum

The section of the curriculum concerning cooperation between home and school will be drawn up in cooperation with the authorities dealing with implementation of local health care and social services⁵⁶. This also entails taking participation of other key parties in terms of education and the fluent flow of information into account.

The objectives, operating methods and responsibilities of home-school cooperation, and the division of work between different parties are to be determined in the local curriculum. When determining operating methods, cooperation between home and school is to be considered at the level of the whole school community, at a class level and in terms of individual pupils. The curriculum should also describe the principles relating to parents' and guardians' involvement and provision of information for parents and guardians, pupils' contribution to cooperation and procedures relating to monitoring absences and notification about unauthorized absences. The curriculum must further include procedures relating to monitoring and evaluating implementation of cooperation as well as a description of procedures in problem and disciplinary situations relating to cooperation.

⁵⁴ Basic Education Act, sections 31 a(3) and (4), 40, 41(4) (as amended by Act 642/2010) and 41(1), (2) and (3)

⁵⁵ Government Decree governing school and student health care, section 15 (3) and (4)

⁵⁶ Basic Education Act, section 15(2) (as amended by Act 477/2003)

5.2.2 PROVISION OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

In addition to instruction, every pupil is entitled to receive guidance and counselling⁵⁷. The purpose of guidance and counselling activities is to support pupils' success at different stages of basic education, to strengthen their learning skills and self-direction, and to develop their abilities to make choices concerning their studies during and after basic education. As pupils' studies progress, learning about the world of work and planning future choices will play an increasingly significant role. Guidance and counselling also consolidate pupils' cooperation skills and their ability to function in various groups and assume responsibility for their own and common work. Guidance and counselling contribute to preventing pupils' exclusion and promoting equality. The purpose of educational and vocational guidance and its general objectives and specific objectives for grades 1–2, 3–6 and 7–9 are specified in section 7.21.

Guidance and counselling activities are to constitute a continuum lasting the duration of basic education, taking into account the abilities provided by pre-primary education and guiding pupils towards upper secondary studies. Provision of guidance and counselling is the responsibility of teachers and the guidance counsellor, as well as other staff members, who cooperate throughout basic education and at different transition points.

The key forms of introducing pupils to the world of work include classroom visits by representatives of the world of work and different areas of society, visits to workplaces, various cooperation projects, the use of informational materials from different sectors in teaching, and introduction-to-working-life or work-based learning periods. Instruction in different subjects and subject modules must include elements that connect the knowledge and skills provided by the studies to the demands and possibilities of the world of work.

Pupils and their parents or guardians are to have the chance to receive information on the working approaches of basic education and possibilities for choice and their relevance to the pupils' studies and future. It is important to provide parents or guardians with the opportunity to discuss issues related to their children's studies and choices with school representatives as required.

Guidance and counselling as part of general support

It is the task of every teacher to guide pupils in schooling and studying different subjects in accordance with the above-mentioned objectives, thus preventing the emergence of study-related problems. It is also every teacher's task to support pupils' personal growth, development and involvement. Guidance and counselling are related to all teaching situations, subjects and

⁵⁷ Basic Education Act, section 30(1) (as amended by Act 642/2010)

assessment feedback provided for pupils. Diverse feedback is to be utilized systematically for encouraging and guiding pupils.

Guidance and counselling during intensified support

The perspective of guidance and counselling will be taken into account when assessing a pupil's need for intensified support. Prior to starting intensified support measures, the adequacy of guidance and counselling provided for a pupil during general support and its allocation according to the pupil's needs should be assessed as part of the pedagogical assessment. The learning plan to be prepared when initiating intensified support should also include any objectives and measures relating to the pupil's guidance and counselling, where required. Attention is to be focused on any possible support needs that may emerge in the pupil's learning habits and skills or cooperation situations, as well as on operating methods and study contents that strengthen skills and increase learning motivation. Guidance and counselling are used to consolidate the self-esteem of pupils in need of support and their understanding of the significance to their own future of studying.

Guidance and counselling during special support

Prior to making a decision on special support, the adequacy and impact of guidance and counselling provided for a pupil during intensified support and the pupil's further needs for individual and group guidance and counselling should be assessed as part of preparing the pedagogical statement. The individual educational plan to be prepared for the pupil after making a decision on special support should also include any objectives and measures relating to guidance and counselling. Guidance and counselling are used to further consolidate the pupil's learning and cooperation skills, as well as self-esteem, learning motivation and knowledge of working life. In terms of guidance and counselling at the final stage of basic education, it is important to introduce further study opportunities suitable for the pupil and determine the continuance of support needed by the pupil. Planning support through guidance and counselling involves close cooperation with the pupil and his or her parents or guardians, while also making use of the expertise of staff responsible for pupil welfare services and any other staff members who may be assisting the pupil.

Formulation of the local curriculum

The objectives and operating methods of guidance and counselling activities and cooperation, responsibilities and division of work among different parties are to be determined in the local curriculum. In addition, it describes how cooperation with different schools and educational institutions, the local world of work and business and other key parties in terms of guidance and counselling is to be implemented. The curriculum further describes the objectives, operating methods and assessment of introduction to working life and, in particular, those of the introduction-to-working-life period. In addition, the curriculum must indicate how pupils and their parents and guardians receive information about matters relating to educational and vocational guidance and in which ways the school cooperates with parents and guardians in issues related to guidance and counselling.

5.2.3 PROVISION OF INTERPRETATION AND ASSISTANCE SERVICES

Disabled pupils or pupils with special educational needs are entitled to access to the interpretation and assistance services specified in the Basic Education Act that they need in order to participate in education free of charge⁵⁸. The purpose of interpretation and assistance services is to provide pupils with the basic prerequisites for learning and schooling and as accessible a learning environment as possible.

A pupil may need interpretation services due to conditions such as a hearing impairment or a special linguistic difficulty. He or she may also need to use augmentative and alternative communication methods, such as various symbol systems, due to deficient communication skills. Opportunities for linguistic interaction and support on every school day will promote the pupil's development, social growth and involvement in the school community. The aim is that both other pupils and the adults working with the pupil are familiar with the pupil's way of communicating. Developing the pupil's own communication skills enables interaction with others on an equal footing. Language is a key medium for learning and linguistic development has a bearing on development of thinking and emotions and on formation of the pupil's own identity.

Those working with the pupil should cooperate in planning communication support in different learning situations, making use of various experts as required. In addition, other support measures should also be planned, such as the pupil's placement in the classroom, individual learning and teaching materials and any special aids that the pupil may require. The individual assisting the pupil with interpretation may support one or more pupils at the same time in learning situations. The teacher may also support pupils with communication by means of signs or other symbols.

The support provided by an assistant should promote pupils' independent coping and their own initiative, as well as positive development of self-esteem. The objective of assistance services is to support individual pupils to enable them to assume more and more personal responsibility for their own learning and schooling.

An assistant may provide support for an individual pupil or for the entire teaching group. Individual support may be on a part- or full-time basis. A teacher's task is to plan, teach and assess the learning and work both of individual pupils and of the group as a whole. The assistant supports the pupil in performing tasks relating to learning and schooling and to rehabilitation aiming to support learning in accordance with instructions from the teacher or therapists and participates in planning support, where required. The assistant guides the pupil in everyday school situations.

The education provider decides on provision of interpretation and assistance services. A pupil's need for interpretation and assistance services, their scope and types are to be assessed in

⁵⁸ Basic Education Act, section 31(1) (as amended by Act 477/2003)

cooperation between the pupil's teachers and pupil welfare staff, making use of information provided by the pupil's parents or guardians and any possible statements by experts from outside the school.

Interpretation and assistance as part of general support

A pupil may need interpretation or assistance services without requiring any other type of support. The need for assistance services, in particular, may also be short-term.

Adequate interpretation services provided at the right time and access to augmentative and alternative communication devices will support the pupil's learning and prevent the emergence and exacerbation of learning difficulties. Support provided by an assistant will improve conditions for learning and schooling for an individual pupil or for the entire teaching group. In some cases, it may completely prevent the need for intensified or special support.

Interpretation and assistance during intensified support

Prior to starting intensified support measures, a pupil's needs for interpretation and assistance services should be assessed as part of the pedagogical assessment. If the pupil has received interpretation and assistance services during general support, their adequacy and impact will also be assessed. The learning plan to be prepared when initiating intensified support should include the interpretation and assistance services that the pupil needs, their objectives, provision and monitoring. The need for interpretation and assistance services may increase or the forms of support provided may require reassessment during intensified support. Any possible changes will be recorded in the learning plan.

Interpretation and assistance during special support

The adequacy and impact of the interpretation and assistance services provided for the pupil during intensified support and further needs for such services are assessed as part of preparing the pedagogical statement. The pupil's interpretation and assistance services are specified in the decision on special support. When the decision on special support has been made, an individual educational plan will be drawn up for the pupil, describing the support services to be provided for the pupil and people involved in provision of support services, their responsibilities, and monitoring of implementation of these services. The scope and quality of interpretation and assistance is to be defined individually together with other support measures. During special support, pupils often require individually targeted support services.

Formulation of the local curriculum

The objectives, operating methods and administrative practices of interpretation and assistance services, as well as cooperation, responsibilities and division of work among different parties are to be determined in the local curriculum.

5.2.4. OTHER ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF BASIC EDUCATION

Library, club and other activities closely related to education may be arranged in conjunction with basic education⁵⁹. Each education provider decides on the organization and extent of these activities. The above-mentioned activities may be used as part of pupils' systematic support as required.

School club activities

School club activities are goal-oriented activities defined in the school's annual plan⁶⁰, which support pupils' physical, psychological and social growth and development. The activities increase pupils' involvement, promote ethical growth and nurture community spirit. Diverse school club activities provide pupils with opportunities to experience a feeling of being successful and capable. Club activities contribute to reinforcing the partnership and cooperation between home and school relating to education.

Club activities contribute to arousing interest in various pastimes. The purpose is to develop pupils' skills in creative activities and thinking, encourage self-motivation and increase healthy lifestyles and exercise. Club activities should provide diverse activities appreciative of the pupil and opportunities for positive interaction with adults and peers that enriches development.

Club activities may bolster pupils' learning motivation and support their well-being as a whole. Club work provides opportunities to apply and expand what has been learnt in class. Participation in club activities may also be designed to form part of intensified or special support. The voluntary nature of club activities must be retained.

Club activities provide teachers with a chance to become more familiar with their pupils' different sides, which contributes to enhancing teachers' capabilities to take pupils' strengths and needs into account in their teaching work.

School club activities may also be organized to supplement morning and afternoon activities. Morning and afternoon activities are organized in accordance with a local curriculum drawn up on the basis of the National Core Curriculum for Morning and Afternoon Activities.

⁵⁹ Basic Education Act, section 47

⁶⁰ Basic Education Decree, section 9

Formulation of the local curriculum

The objectives and operating methods of other activities in support of basic education, cooperation, responsibilities and division of work among different parties, and provision of information about the activities are to be recorded in the local curriculum.

5.3 FLEXIBLE BASIC EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

According to the Basic Education Act, a local authority may organize flexible basic education activities provided as part of grades 7–9 of basic education to the extent decided by the local authority⁶¹.

The objective of flexible basic education activities is to reduce dropping out of basic education and to prevent exclusion. Flexible basic education activities refer to instruction and support for learning and growth provided in accordance with the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education. Instruction is provided in small groups at school, at workplaces and in other learning environments, making use of multidisciplinary cooperation and support and counselling services.⁶²

Flexible basic education activities are intended for those pupils in grades 7–9 with issues relating to underachievement and school motivation and for those who appear to be at risk of exclusion from further education and employment. In exceptional cases, a pupil receiving special support may also be admitted, if the pupil is capable of following the curriculum used in flexible basic education activities and if the arrangement can be considered to serve the pupil's best interests overall.⁶³

Admission to the activities is based on an application submitted by a pupil or his or her parents or guardians. The education provider decides on the criteria for pupil admission and on the admission procedure. When admitting pupils to the activities, they must be subject to equal admission criteria.⁶⁴

Flexible basic education activities, hereinafter referred to as 'flexible basic education', aim to reinforce pupils' study motivation and life skills in a holistic manner. In addition to completing the basic education syllabus, the objective is to support pupils in their transition to upper secondary level and to provide capabilities for coping with studies. Special attention is focused on working approaches that consolidate the common educational work of parents and guardians and everyone working within flexible basic education.

⁶¹ Basic Education Act, section 5 (as amended by Act 1707/2009)

⁶² Basic Education Decree, section 9 a (as amended by Government Decree 1768/2009)

⁶³ Basic Education Decree, section 9 b (as amended by Government Decree 1768/2009)

⁶⁴ Basic Education Decree, section 9 b(2) (as amended by Government Decree 1768/2009)

The activities are to be carried out in compliance with the general statutes governing basic education and the objectives and contents of the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education. The school's operational culture, operating methods and teaching methods are developed to meet the individual needs of pupils admitted to flexible basic education. In particular, attention must be paid to cooperation, pupil welfare services and guidance and counselling that nurture pupils' well-being and safety. Instruction is provided as direct contact teaching at school and, to some extent, as supervised studies at workplaces and in other learning environments. The objectives set for pupils, learning environments and support measures are to be planned and implemented so as to correspond to the objectives of basic education. Flexible basic education emphasizes action-based and work-oriented study methods.

The activities highlight multidisciplinary cooperation and cooperation between different administrative sectors and organizations, which may involve parties such as vocational institutions and general upper secondary schools, liberal adult education institutions and youth workshops. It is possible to set up a steering group to plan and organize activities.

Pupil admissions are based on an administrative decision, which is prepared in multidisciplinary pupil welfare work. Each pupil in flexible basic education is provided with a learning plan or the existing learning plan is revised for this purpose. The plan describes organization of flexible basic education for the pupil at school and in other learning environments, multidisciplinary cooperation, the support and counselling services required and monitoring of the activities. Pupils in flexible basic education may receive the general or intensified support that they need. If a pupil has been granted a decision on provision of special support, implementation of flexible basic education is to be described correspondingly in the individual educational plan. In the event that flexible basic education activities are terminated for an individual pupil before completion of basic education, this requires an administrative decision.

Flexible basic education is implemented in small groups, which generally requires setting up a specific teaching group. Instruction may also be provided partially or fully integrated with another group.

Learning in other learning environments, such as workplaces, forms an integral part of flexible basic education. It is designed to match the objectives and contents of the curriculum. Studies should include a sufficient amount of interactive instruction provided by a teacher during teaching periods implemented in other learning environments as well. Pupils are given learning assignments for these periods according to curricular objectives. Performance and learning assignments are assessed as part of pupil assessment. The school needs to produce a written agreement on the responsibilities of teachers or individuals supervising studies outside the school and how the work is to be divided between them. Teaching periods to be implemented in other learning environments will be planned in understanding with pupils and their parents or guardians. Pupils are also entitled to receive the guidance and counselling and support for learning and schooling that they need during these periods. The education provider is responsible for ensuring that all

learning environments have attended to occupational safety and prepared for accidents. The education provider must orient individuals working within flexible basic education, including those outside school, into statutes relating to data security and secrecy.

Multidisciplinary provision of instruction requires that, in addition to the teacher, activities involve one or more individuals with expertise in supporting young people's social growth, cooperation with families and other support and counselling work, appointed by the education provider.

Formulation of the local curriculum

The key objectives, provision and operating methods of flexible basic education activities, as well as cooperation, responsibilities and division of work among different parties are to be determined in the local curriculum. The curriculum must include the pupil admission criteria for flexible basic education activities and a description of admission procedures.

5.4 PUPIL WELFARE AND PROMOTION OF SAFETY AND SECURITY

5.4.1 PUPIL WELFARE

Pupil welfare refers to promotion and maintenance of each pupil's good learning, good psychological and physical health and social well-being as well as activities geared towards improving the prerequisites for these. Pupil welfare comprises pupil welfare in accordance with the curriculum approved by the education provider and pupil welfare services, which include school health services as referred to in the Primary Health Care Act and support for schooling as referred to in the Child Welfare Act.⁶⁵

Pupil welfare concerns everyone working in the school community as well as the authorities responsible for pupil welfare services. It is implemented in cooperation with pupils and their parents or guardians.⁶⁶ Pupil welfare consists of both communal and individual support. Pupil welfare promotes the learning and balanced growth and development of children and young people.

The purpose of pupil welfare is to develop a learning environment that supports well-being and to reinforce the school's collaborative operating method as part of the school community's operational culture. Community spirit is nurtured by promoting the involvement of pupils and their parents or guardians in development of well-being in the school community. Pupil welfare

⁶⁵ Basic Education Act, section 31 a(1) (as amended by Act 477/2003) and (2) (as amended by Act 642/2010); Primary Health Care Act (66/1972; *kansanterveyslaki*), section 14(1)(5) (as amended by Act 626/2007); Child Welfare Act, section 9

⁶⁶ Basic Education Act, section 31 a(3)

fosters positive interaction and an atmosphere of mutual concern, while also addressing problems as required. The aim is to create a safe and healthy learning and growth environment, to safeguard mental health and prevent exclusion, and to promote well-being in the school community.

Pupil welfare involves developing, monitoring and assessing the well-being of the entire school community and individual classes and groups and ensuring that pupils' individual needs relating to growth, development and health are taken into account as part of the school's daily routines.⁶⁷

Pupil welfare aims to prevent, identify, ameliorate and eliminate barriers to growth and learning, learning difficulties and other problems at the earliest possible stage. Special attention must be focused on safeguarding pupils' mental health. Preventive child welfare and annual health checks as part of health promotion alongside health advice as necessary reinforce prevention of problems, their early identification and provision of support. Planning and implementation of extensive health checks as part of school health care require multidisciplinary cooperation within pupil welfare.⁶⁸ The purpose of pupil welfare is to monitor each pupil's holistic well-being and, where necessary, support the pupil and intervene in changes in well-being in cooperation with the pupil's parents or guardians.

Cooperation within pupil welfare involves agreeing on procedures for implementing preventive child welfare work and special support as part of school health services. Cooperation and operating guidelines must take account of any possible endangerment of a pupil's development due to risks in the growth environment and the duty to notify specified in the Child Welfare Act in order to investigate the need for child welfare.⁶⁹

The guiding principles of pupil welfare work are confidentiality, respect for individual pupils and their parents and guardians, as well as support for their involvement. It is imperative to guarantee that the views of pupils and their parents or guardians are heard in the work. The school must inform pupils and their parents or guardians of pupil welfare work and its procedures. Parents and guardians must be provided with information on how pupil welfare matters concerning individual pupils are instituted and prepared.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Basic Education Act, sections 3(2) (as amended by Act 477/2003); Government Decree governing school and student health care, sections 12, 13 and 15; Child Welfare Act, section 9

⁶⁸ Basic Education Act, sections 16, 16 a, 17 and 17 a (as amended by Act 642/2010); Child Welfare Act, sections 3, 3 a (as amended by Act 88/2010); 8, 9 and 12; Government Decree governing school and student health care, sections 4, 7 (2) and (3) 8, 9 (1) and (2) 13, 14 and 15 (3)

⁶⁹ Child Welfare Act, section 25(1); Government Decree governing school and student health care, sections 13 and 18

⁷⁰ Basic Education Act, section 31 a(3) and (4) (as amended by Act 642/2010)

Pupil welfare is coordinated and developed in multidisciplinary pupil welfare cooperation, such as in a pupil welfare team. The general principles and structures of cooperation, organization of practical activities, division of work and responsibilities are to be agreed in cooperation with the authorities dealing with implementation of local health care and social services⁷¹. In addition, cooperation with other authorities, such as the police and fire and rescue services or other partners in issues relating to health and safety, is also taken into account when organizing cooperation.

The principles and procedures relating to both community-level promotion of health and well-being and supporting individual pupils and dealing with their matters are to be separately agreed when planning pupil welfare work. Activities promoting overall health and well-being in the school community may be developed through multidisciplinary cooperation. In this respect, different parties may participate in pupil welfare cooperation notwithstanding secrecy, unlike with matters concerning individual pupils⁷², the processing of which is described in Section 5.4.3.

School meals

A pupil attending basic education must be provided with a balanced and appropriately organized and supervised meal on every school day⁷³. The lunch break is important for pupils. School meals support pupils' healthy growth and development. The health-related and social role of school meals, the objectives of nutritional education and learning of manners as well as the recreational aspect of lunch breaks will be taken into account when arranging school meals and any snacks that may be offered during the school day. Pupils will be provided with the opportunity to participate in planning and implementing school meals, which fosters involvement and community spirit.

Organization of school meals requires cooperation between the school and personnel responsible for meals. Support needs and monitoring concerning pupils' individual nutritional and health issues or treatment of an illness are to be agreed in cooperation between the pupils concerned, their parents or guardians and school health care staff.⁷⁴

⁷¹ Basic Education Act, section 15(2) (as amended by Act 477/2003)

⁷² Basic Education Act, section 31 a(3) (as amended by Act 642/2010)

⁷³ Basic Education Act, section 31(2)

⁷⁴ Basic Education Act, sections 3(2) (as amended by Act 477/2003) and 31 a(1) (as amended by Act 642/2010); Government Decree governing school and student health care, section 13

5.4.2 PROMOTION OF SAFETY AND SECURITY

Pupils are entitled to a safe learning environment⁷⁵. This comprises physical, mental and social safety and security. The starting point for provision of education is safeguarding the safety of pupils and school staff in all situations. Promotion of safety in the learning environment is part of the school community's operational culture, which needs to be taken into account in all school activities.

Pupil welfare also aims to help maintain functional capacity in situations threatening physical and psychological safety. Psychosocial support required by individual pupils and the entire community will be ensured in various problem, accident and crisis situations as well as in aftercare as required by these.

For the purposes of ensuring unhindered learning and the safety and satisfaction of the school community, every school must have school rules or other regulations applied within the school to promote internal order.⁷⁶ In addition, it is imperative to draw up a plan, in connection with curriculum design, for safeguarding pupils against violence, bullying and harassment, to execute the plan and to supervise adherence to it and its implementation.⁷⁷

Prevention of and intervention in violence, bullying and harassment is assigned to everyone working within the school community⁷⁸. Violence, bullying or harassment may be direct or indirect verbal or physical use of force or social manipulation, which violates a person's physical, mental or social integrity. The perpetrator may be a pupil, an adult working in the school or a person from outside the school community.

Bullying means systematic, intentional and repeated verbal or physical negative action targeted at the same individual or group. An imbalance of power between the bully and the bullied is characteristic of bullying. It is also common for bullying to take place in a group. Harassment may manifest itself as inappropriate treatment and language, which may involve gender-related insinuating facial expressions, gestures or double entendres, or unwanted physical contact. In addition to bullying and harassment, other undesirable or aggressive and violent forms of behaviour may also occur within a school community. Violence refers to threats or acts of intentional use of physical force or power targeted at oneself, another individual, a group or a community. It may result in injury, mental handicap or developmental difficulty. All such cases must be addressed.

⁷⁵ Basic Education Act, section 29(1)

⁷⁶ Basic Education Act, section 29(3) and (4)

⁷⁷ Basic Education Act, section 29 (2), (3) and (4)

⁷⁸ Basic Education Act, section 29; Government Decree governing school and student health care, sections 12 and 15 (4)

Pupils, their parents or guardians and school staff must also be informed of the various manifestations and prevention of violence, bullying and harassment, the school community's ways of dealing with such situations and the regulations applied in the school.

Physical safety and security is promoted by attending to relevant factors relating to the school building, teaching facilities, teaching equipment, provision of instruction, teaching situations and breaks, as well as instruction carried out outside the school community. The education provider must ensure that workplaces where introduction-to-working-life periods are organized are safe and that each pupil's learning environment during an introduction-to-working-life period is safe for the pupil.⁷⁹ Promotion of safety and security in the school community also includes factors relating to school transport, accident prevention and information security.

Supervision and guided activities during periods spent waiting for school transport and safety during transport are to be ensured by agreeing on joint procedures⁸⁰. Pupils and their parents or guardians are to be provided with information about these and about transport arrangements.

National policies and guidelines for accident prevention and cooperation required by these actions should be taken into account in guidelines relating to accident prevention. Procedures relating to accident prevention, first aid, referral for treatment and incident monitoring should be agreed through pupil welfare cooperation and made known to pupils and their parents or guardians.

Promotion of safety and prevention of situations involving safety risks are to comply with legislation governing safety, safety guidelines drawn up for instruction in different subjects and other local safety-related policies. These guidelines should be coordinated in the local curriculum.

Safety in the school community is also governed by the Occupational Safety and Health Act and the occupational safety and health policy according to the Act⁸¹. Other provisions governing safety include the up-to-date rescue plan required by the Rescue Act and Decree⁸². Information about the rescue plan must be provided to the entire school staff as required.

The education provider is responsible for ensuring that all schools have operating guidelines concerning safety and security. The healthiness and safety of the school community and

⁷⁹ Basic Education Act, section 29(1); Occupational Safety and Health Act (738/2002; *työturvallisuuslaki*), sections 9 and 10; Health Protection Act (763/1994; *terveydensuojelulaki*), sections 26 and 27

⁸⁰ Basic Education Act, sections 32(1) (as amended by Act 1039/2009), 32 (4) and 34 a(1) (as amended by Act 1288/1999); Government Decree governing school and student health care, section 12

⁸¹ Occupational Safety and Health Act, sections 8, 9 and 10

⁸² Rescue Act (468/2003; *pelastuslaki*), section 9(3); Government Decree on Rescue Services (787/2003; *valtioneuvoston asetus pelastustoimesta*), sections 9 and 10

implementation of guidelines are to be monitored and assessed systematically in cooperation with school health care and other authorities as required.⁸³ Local cooperation with different parties within the local education authority and other authorities supports purposeful action in situations involving safety risks and in their prevention⁸⁴.

5.4.3 PROCESSING OF PERSONAL DATA, SECRECY AND DISCLOSURE OF DATA

The starting point for processing personal data is confidentiality and cooperation with pupils and their parents or guardians.

When a matter concerning an individual pupil is processed in pupil welfare work, it may only be processed by those individuals directly involved in provision of instruction and pupil welfare for the pupil⁸⁵. These individuals may include the principal or head teacher, the class tutor or the pupil's teacher, a school public health nurse, a special needs teacher, a special needs assistant working with the pupil, a school psychologist, a school social worker and, in upper grades, a guidance counsellor and, where necessary, a school physician and a social worker from child welfare services⁸⁶. Decisions on those involved in processing the matter will be made separately on the basis of each matter and topic to be discussed. With written consent from the pupil's parents or guardians or some other legal representative, or as separately provided by law, other necessary parties may also participate in processing a matter concerning the pupil⁸⁷.

When processing a matter concerning an individual pupil in pupil welfare work, the initiator of the matter, the topic, any further actions decided and their justifications and the parties involved in processing will be documented, complete with details of what information has been disclosed about the pupil and to whom. Responsibility for processing personal data rests with the education provider as a personal data file controller.⁸⁸

⁸³ Basic Education Act, section 29(2) (as amended by Act 477/2003); Government Decree governing school and student health care, section 12; Occupational Safety and Health Act, sections 9 and 10

⁸⁴ Basic Education Act, sections 29 and 32; Rescue Act, section 9(3); Government Decree on Rescue Services, sections 9 (1) and 10; Police Act (493/1995; *poliisilaki*), sections 1(1) and 1(2) (as amended by Act 21/2001); Occupational Safety and Health Act, section 8

⁸⁵ Basic Education Act, section 31 a(3) (as amended by Act 642/2010)

⁸⁶ Parliamentary Education and Culture Committee Report 4/2010

⁸⁷ Basic Education Act, section 31 a(3) (as amended by Act 642/2010)

⁸⁸ Basic Education Act, section 31 a(4) (as amended by Act 642/2010)

Pupil welfare work involves processing several types of data concerning individual pupils and their families which are to be kept confidential under law⁸⁹. Secrecy refers to keeping a document confidential and prohibition against disclosure of information orally, i.e. non-disclosure obligation, and prohibition against the use of confidential information for personal benefit or for the detriment of another.

Confidential information includes information on the personal circumstances of pupils and their families, such as lifestyle, interests, family life, political convictions, privately expressed views and participation in voluntary associations, as well as information on their financial status, state of health and disability.

Confidential information also covers information about provision of intensified and special support, exemption from instruction, as well as related documents and data included in such documents. Furthermore, documents on pupil welfare and information included in such documents, information on a psychological test or aptitude test on a pupil and pupils' test results must also be kept confidential. Certificates and reports awarded to pupils are public, with the exception of a verbal assessment of a pupil's personal characteristics included on certification in exceptional cases, which must be kept confidential.⁹⁰

Individuals bound by professional secrecy include the principal, teachers, student teachers, special needs assistants, representatives of school health care, school social workers, school psychologists and members of bodies responsible for provision of education⁹¹. Furthermore, no other individuals employed by the education provider may disclose any confidential information obtained by them to third parties, or hand over any documents containing confidential information.

Notwithstanding the secrecy provisions, those participating in pupil welfare work are entitled to receive information that is indispensable for the appropriate provision of a pupil's instruction from each other and hand such information over to each other and to a pupil's teacher and to the authorities responsible for education and activities under the Basic Education Act⁹².

An individual disclosing information needs to consider issues such as whether the information is of such nature that it is indispensable in order to ensure the safety of the pupil concerned or other pupils. Information to be disclosed may concern, among other things, a pupil's illness that needs to be taken into account in teaching situations. Even though an aforementioned statutory reason for

⁸⁹ Basic Education Act, section 40 (as amended by Act 642/2010) ; Act on the Openness of Government Activities (621/1999; *laki viranomaisten toiminnan julkisuudesta*), section 24(1)(30)

⁹⁰ Act on the Openness of Government Activities, section 24(1)(25), (29) and (30)

⁹¹ Basic Education Act, section 40(1) (as amended by Act 642/2010)

⁹² Basic Education Act, section 40(2) (as amended by Act 642/2010)

disclosure of information exists, it is always advisable to aim to obtain first and foremost consent from a parent or guardian for disclosure of confidential information in order to build and safeguard cooperation and trust.

With the detailed written consent of a parent or guardian, confidential information indispensable in terms of provision of education may also be requested from other parties⁹³. Notwithstanding the secrecy provisions, the education provider is entitled to obtain information indispensable for provision of a pupil's education free of charge from health care and social services authorities, other providers of social services or health care services and health care professionals⁹⁴.

If a pupil is transferred to education or morning or afternoon activities provided under the Basic Education Act by another education provider, the previous education provider must, notwithstanding the secrecy provisions, submit the information indispensable for provision of the pupil's education to the new education provider without delay. The new education provider is also entitled to receive equivalent information upon request.⁹⁵ No confidential information may be submitted without a parent's or guardian's consent when a pupil is transferred to education other than that provided under the Basic Education Act, such as general upper secondary education or vocational education and training.

5.4.4 PROMOTION OF PUPIL WELFARE, SAFETY AND SECURITY IN THE LOCAL CURRICULUM

With regard to cooperation between home and school and pupil welfare services, the local curriculum must be drawn up in cooperation with the local health care and social services authorities⁹⁶. Where necessary, drawing up the curriculum may also involve cooperation with other authorities and partners. Municipal and other policies concerning the safety and well-being of children and young people are to be taken into account when drawing up the curriculum.

The local curriculum must describe organization of cooperation in pupil welfare and its structure, objectives and operating methods. The section concerning pupil welfare describes communal and individual support and cooperation. In this context, pupils' age and support needs should be taken into account in situations that may put their healthy growth and development at risk. The curriculum must include procedures concerning prevention of problems and child protection to promote safety and well-being and a description of action to be taken in the school community in

⁹³ Basic Education Act, section 40(3) (as amended by Act 642/2010)

⁹⁴ Basic Education Act, section 41(4) (as amended by Act 642/2010)

⁹⁵ Basic Education Act, section 40(4) (as amended by Act 642/2010)

⁹⁶ Basic Education Act, section 15(2) (as amended by Act 477/2003)

the event of acute crisis, threat and risk situations. The curriculum must include a plan for safeguarding pupils against violence, bullying and harassment⁹⁷.

The local curriculum will describe:

I. Organization of pupil welfare cooperation, its structure, objectives and operating methods

- provision of pupil welfare services in the municipality, cooperation, responsibilities and division of work among different parties
- organization of pupil welfare work
- pupil welfare as a collaborative activity and strengthening involvement
- cooperation between home, school, experts in pupil welfare services, other experts and local support networks
- pupil welfare support and, where necessary, cooperation with child welfare authorities or the police in situations where a child's or young person's growth and development may be at risk due to factors in the growth environment
- promotion, monitoring and assessment of health, safety and well-being in the growth and learning environment within the school community
- general recording practices in pupil welfare; instituting and processing a matter concerning an individual pupil
- pupil welfare support in schooling and in support for children's and young people's physical, psychological and social growth and development
- pupil welfare as part of support for pupils in need of intensified and special support and those in flexible basic education
- pupil welfare support in difficulties relating to a pupil's development and mental health
- support in various difficulties relating to a pupil's circumstances, such as domestic violence or substance abuse or mental health problems in the family
- disciplinary procedures and pupil welfare offered in connection with disciplinary punishments or when a pupil has been suspended from school
- pupil welfare cooperation at different educational transition points
- cooperation in guidance and counselling and in planning further studies
- provision of support and monitoring required for a pupil's health care or treatment
- accident prevention, first aid, referral for treatment, and monitoring
- prevention, monitoring and notification of absences
- prevention of and intervention in smoking and substance use
- organization of school meals and possible snacks
- guidelines concerning the safety of school transport and organization and safety of waiting periods

⁹⁷ Basic Education Act, section 29(2)

- orientation of staff, pupils and parents or guardians, and partners to the plan concerning organization of pupil welfare
- updating operating guidelines; monitoring and assessment of implementation.

2. Procedures for acute crisis, threat and risk situations

Procedures for acute crisis, threat and risk situations are to be determined as part of the curriculum. This section may be called a crisis plan. Preparation of the crisis plan involves cooperation with the relevant authorities while also taking other plans and guidelines concerning threat and risk situations and crisis situations into account. The plan will describe:

- prevention of and preparation for crisis situations
- cooperation and mutual division of work and responsibilities in preparing for and dealing with crisis situations
- coordination of the rescue plan, the school rules and other safety guidelines
- operating guidelines for various acute crisis situations
- principles for management, internal and external information and communication, and information and communication between schools and the education provider in acute crisis situations
- organization of psychosocial support and aftercare
- provision of information about the crisis plan, orientation to the plan and rehearsing operational readiness
- updating and review of the crisis plan.

3. Plan for safeguarding pupils against violence, bullying and harassment

The education provider must draw up, in connection with curriculum design, a plan for safeguarding pupils against violence, bullying and harassment, execute the plan and supervise adherence to it and its implementation⁹⁸. This should take both interactive relationships between pupils and those between pupils and adults into account. The plan will describe:

- prevention of and intervention in bullying
- prevention of and intervention in violence and aggressive behaviour
- prevention of and intervention in harassment
- dealing with the issue at individual, group and community levels, individual support for pupils, the necessary treatment and follow-up both in terms of the perpetrator and the target
- methods of contacting pupils' homes and cooperation with parents or other guardians
- cooperation with authorities

⁹⁸ Basic Education Act, section 29(2)

- provision of information about the plan and orientation of staff, pupils and parents or guardians, and partners to the guidelines
- updating the plan; monitoring of implementation and documentation and assessment relating to monitoring.

8. PUPIL ASSESSMENT

This text presents only the amendments to chapter 8.

8.1 ASSESSMENT DURING THE COURSE OF STUDIES

Assessment of pupils in need of support

Learning difficulties must be taken into account in pupil assessment. This also concerns pupils with minor difficulties who have not been awarded a decision on special support. When assessing pupils, it is imperative to use methods that enable each pupil to demonstrate his or her knowledge and skills as well as possible. Assessment feedback helps pupils identify their own development needs.

The principles of assessment of pupils receiving special support are defined in each pupil's own individual educational plan (IEP).

If a pupil studies a subject according to the general subject syllabus, the pupil's performances will be assessed in relation to the objectives and descriptions of good performance set out for the general syllabus.

If the decision on special support specifies that a pupil should study according to an individualized syllabus in one or more subjects, the pupil's performances will be assessed on the basis of the individual objectives defined for the pupil in the individual educational plan. In such cases, the pupil's performance is not assessed in relation to the descriptions of good performance defined in the National Core Curriculum. Verbal assessment may be used for all subjects studied according to individualized syllabi in all grades.

Assessment of pupils within extended compulsory education is based on the general syllabi of basic education or individualized syllabi, as specified in each individual decision on special support.

Assessment of pupils whose instruction is provided by activity area is based on the individual objectives set out in each pupil's individual educational plan. Pupil assessment focuses on progress by activity area. The activity areas to be assessed are motor coordination, language and communication, social skills, skills in activities of daily living, and cognitive skills. Assessment is to be based on each pupil's own learning and growth process, its starting points and objectives. In assessing learning, allowances are to be made for the learning impediments created by the pupil's disability or illness.

8.2 FINAL ASSESSMENT

Task of assessment

The task of final assessment is to define how well pupils have achieved the objectives of the basic education syllabus in different subjects at the end of their studies.

Principles of assessment

Final assessment must be nationally comparable and treat pupils equally. In each core subject, the final grade is to be based on pupils' performance in the final phase of basic education – that is, in the eighth and ninth grades. Criteria for final assessment in basic education have been prepared for all core subjects. Pupils' performance is assessed with those criteria, on the basis of diverse evidence.

If studies in a core subject end before the final phase of basic education, pupils' performance is assessed according to the final assessment criteria for the subject in question.

The final assessment criteria define the level of knowledge and skills for grade eight (8). The criteria have been drafted so that a pupil receives that grade if, on average, he or she demonstrates the performance level required by the criteria for the subject: failing to meet some criteria can be compensated for by surpassing the standard of other criteria.

A pupil has acquired the knowledge and skills required in basic education adequately, earning a grade five (5), if he or she is able to demonstrate to some degree the performance level required by the criteria.

In the final assessment, the assessment of work skills is incorporated into the grade for the subject.

If the decision on special support specifies that a pupil should study according to an individualized syllabus in one or more subjects, the pupil's performances will be assessed on the basis of the individual objectives defined for the pupil in the individual educational plan. In such cases, the pupil's performance is not assessed in relation to the final assessment criteria defined in the National Core Curriculum.

The final assessment of pupils whose instruction is provided by activity area is based on the individual objectives set out in each pupil's individual educational plan.

8.3 CERTIFICATES AND REPORTS

Pupil certificates and reports are public documents. If they contain information relevant to verbal assessment of the pupil's personal characteristics, however, they are to be kept confidential in that respect, and can be given only to the pupil and his or her parent or other guardian.

Certificates and reports used in the course of basic education

The certificates and reports used in the course of basic education are as follows:

1. School year reports
2. Intermediate reports
3. Certificates of resignation

Each pupil is to be awarded a school year report at the end of each school year. During the school year, the school may also issue intermediate reports. When unit instruction is being employed, a unit report, issued at the end of the unit, may function as an intermediate report. The unit reports given in the course of a school year may together form the school year report.

A certificate of resignation is issued to a pupil who resigns from a school or transfers to another school, or who has not completed compulsory education in the allotted time. The lesson-hour distribution observed by the school and an account of any possible emphases of instruction are to be appended to the certificate. No assessment of behaviour is noted in the resignation certificate. A separate resignation certificate does not need to be issued if the pupil is transferring to another school maintained by the same education provider.

The information to be indicated in certificates and reports includes the names of the education provider, school, and pupil, the pupil's personal identification number, the date of issue of the document, the principal's signature, the assessment of the pupil's behaviour, the pupil's study programme, and the assessment of how well the pupil has achieved the objectives. If work skills are being assessed separately, that assessment is also documented. In school year reports, information regarding promotion or possible retention is also noted. When grading is used, the certificate or report makes note of the grading scale conforming to section 10 of the Basic Education Decree. Documents must include a notation that they conform to the National Core Curriculum adopted by the Finnish National Board of Education on 16th January 2004. Each education provider decides on the outward appearance of certificates and reports.

If a pupil receives instruction in his or her own religion, and that instruction has been given by a provider of basic education, the assessment he or she has received is noted in the report or certificate. Any grade that may have been received in respect of instruction given by a religious community is not noted.

If at least half of the pupil's lessons in the course of a school year have been taught in a language other than the school's language of instruction, the certificate or report must mention that other language, and the subjects taught in it.

If the decision on special support specifies that a pupil studies in accordance with individualized syllabi in one or more subjects, the numerical grades and verbal assessments for the subjects concerned are marked with an asterisk (*). The “Further information” section of the certificate is to include a reference to the fact that the pupil has studied the subjects marked with asterisks in accordance with individualized syllabi.

Basic education certificate

A basic education certificate is issued at the end of basic education to a pupil whose performance in all graded subjects has been at least adequate.

The information indicated on the basic education certificate is the same as that noted on certificates and reports used in the course of basic education, with the following exceptions. The pupil’s full name and personal identification number, the principal’s signature, and the grades (5–10) and corresponding verbal assessments (adequate–excellent) in core subjects and graded optional subjects are to be indicated on the basic education certificate. In the case of subjects with multiple syllabi (mother tongue and literature, second national language, foreign languages, and religion), the syllabus completed is noted. With respect to arts and crafts subjects and physical education, the extent of the subjects studied by the pupil is indicated on the certificate in terms of weekly lessons per year. The extent of studies in arts and crafts subjects and physical education is noted beginning from the fifth grade. The basic education certificate must mention that the pupil’s study programme has included guidance counselling and the introduction to working life. No assessment of the pupil’s work skills and behaviour is noted on the basic education certificate.

All optional subjects connected to core subjects are noted on the basic education certificate immediately below the core subject in question. For graded optional subjects, the subject’s name, the number of weekly lessons per year, and the grade given are noted. The notation “optional studies” is to be entered next to the name of an optional subject receiving verbal assessment, and is to be followed by the total number of weekly lessons per year for all subjects that are assessed verbally and are connected to the core subject in question, and then by the notation “pass”.

Those foreign languages studied as optional subjects, and other optional subjects that have no connection to any core subject, are noted on the basic education certificate under the heading “Other optional subjects”. The subject’s name, number of weekly lessons per year, possible syllabus, and assessment, whether by grade or the notation “pass”, are given.

If the pupil transfers from one optional subject to another, the names of both subjects, and the number of weekly lessons per year taken in each, are noted on the basic education certificate. Under the optional subject left uncompleted, the notation “attended” is to be entered. In terms of the new optional subject, either the grade or the notation “pass” is to be entered, depending on the number of weekly lessons per year.

If the pupil's parents or other guardians request in writing that a grade should not be entered in the basic education certificate in the case of a language to be studied as an optional subject, the grade is omitted and the notation "pass" is entered. The second national language is taught as a core subject, however, and is subject to a grade.

The basic education certificate may include attachments, such as an assessment of the pupil's behaviour and work skills, or a verbal assessment respecting optional subjects involving fewer than two weekly lessons per year. Every attachment is to include the pupil's identification information. Attachments to the basic education certificate are not to be mentioned on the basic education certificate itself.

If a pupil receives instruction in his or her own religion, and that instruction has been given by a provider of basic education, the assessment he or she has received is noted on the basic education certificate. Any grade that may have been received in respect of instruction given by a religious community is not noted.

The basic education certificate is to make note of a subject's language of instruction if at least half of the lessons in the subject have been taught, in the final phase of basic education, in a language other than the school's language of instruction.

If a pupil studies one or more subjects in accordance with an individualized syllabus, the final assessment may also be verbal in these subjects. On the basic education certificate, grading may also be used in these subjects. Both the grade and the verbal assessment are marked with an asterisk (*). The "Further information" section of the certificate is to include a reference to the fact that the pupil has studied the subjects marked with asterisks (*) in accordance with individualized syllabi. Final assessment of a pupil whose instruction has been organized by activity area is verbal.

When needed in applying for further studies, a ninth-grade pupil is to be issued an intermediate report in which his or her performance is assessed on the same basis as in the basic education certificate.