

Education and educational support at primary school ...inclusive education for every child.



SPPOH | Stichting Passend Primair Onderwijs Haaglanden

Giving every child a chance.



Inhoud

1. Primary school: education and educational support	3	4. Consultation with parents	8
2. Educational support at school: how does it work?	3	• Pupil development plan: a plan for every child	8
• Basic support	3	5. Education for children with special needs	8
• Each school its own speciality	3	• To SBO...	8
• Help at school: more than teaching alone	3	• ... or to SO	9
• Extra support packages	4	6. Objection process	10
• An individual approach	4	7. Support: seven examples	10
• Educational support: the 7 steps in detail	4	8. Further information	12
• Support in 7 steps	5		
3. Who does what?	6		
• The school	6		
• The inclusive education regional alliance SPPOH	6		
• The school social worker	6		
• Medical care at school	7		
• Other organisations	7		

Click on the blue text in the brochure to find out more.

1. Primary school: education and educational support

Every child in the Netherlands, including your son or daughter, receives an education that matches his or her abilities. This is called 'inclusive education' (in Dutch: *passend onderwijs*). Many children are best served by the education provided by 'mainstream' primary schools. However, some children require extra help, and this is what is described in this brochure. The brochure provides information on the various types of help and support offered by primary schools.

2. Educational support at school: how does it work?

A child who requires extra educational support at primary school normally receives this from the school itself. For example, **a child may have difficulty with a particular subject**, or **require extra help with planning and organising**. The child's parents are always involved in deciding what is required: the school discusses with you what your child's needs are, also if extra help or support is needed.

Basic support

In many cases, the help provided falls under 'basic support' (in Dutch: *basisondersteuning*, **see the examples of Milan and Emma**). This is support provided by the mainstream primary school. Primary schools have a special support team in place to make sure that every child receives the help and support that he or she needs. This support team consists of the teacher,

a **learning support coordinator** (in Dutch: *intern begeleider*, or *IB'er*), the director and/or the deputy director. It may also include specialists who work at the school. These are teachers who are specialised in a particular area such as reading, arithmetic or conduct.

Each school its own speciality

Although every primary school provides basic support, there are some differences. You can find out what a school's particular specialism is in the school handbook or on the school website. For example, some schools are specialised in providing support for children with reading or arithmetic difficulties or with ADHD. Parents can therefore choose a school with a certain specialism, and the school and parents can together determine whether the school provides the best learning place for the child.

Help at school: more than teaching alone

The school can help your child with learning, but also in other areas. Support may sometimes be provided individually, but sometimes as a class. For example, a course may be given to help





children develop their social skills. Such courses (in Dutch: *sova training*) are often given to the whole class (e.g. *Kanjertraining* or *Rots en Water*). Primary schools also provide support for children who have difficulty with reading or arithmetic (dyslexia or dyscalculia).

Extra support packages

If the school itself is unable to provide the help that your child needs, it may decide to offer an extra support package (in Dutch: *arrangement*). This ensures that the extra support required is paid for. This could be extra help in the classroom, or support from an expert. This extra support is organised by the school, often working together with the regional alliance SPPOH.

Various extra support packages are available:

- Teaching packages. Your child receives extra help with learning, either in a special class or in his or her own group at school.
- Care packages. Your child receives support from child welfare/youth care services.
- A combination of both, for children who require educational support and help from child welfare and/or youth care services.

An individual approach

Every support package is individually tailored to the child, because **every child is unique and every situation is different**. It depends on the child's needs which package is offered and for how long. Of course, a child in Group 6 may require different support from when that same child was in Group 4, which is why the school and other specialists keep a close eye on the

child's needs at each stage of his or her development. Children receive suitable education and, where necessary, suitable support throughout their time at primary school.

In practice, it is usually the teacher and the **learning support coordinator** who indicate that extra support may be required. The regional alliance of school boards of governors (regional alliance SPPOH) helps the school provide such support. Together, we ensure that your child can develop to the best of his or her abilities at primary school.

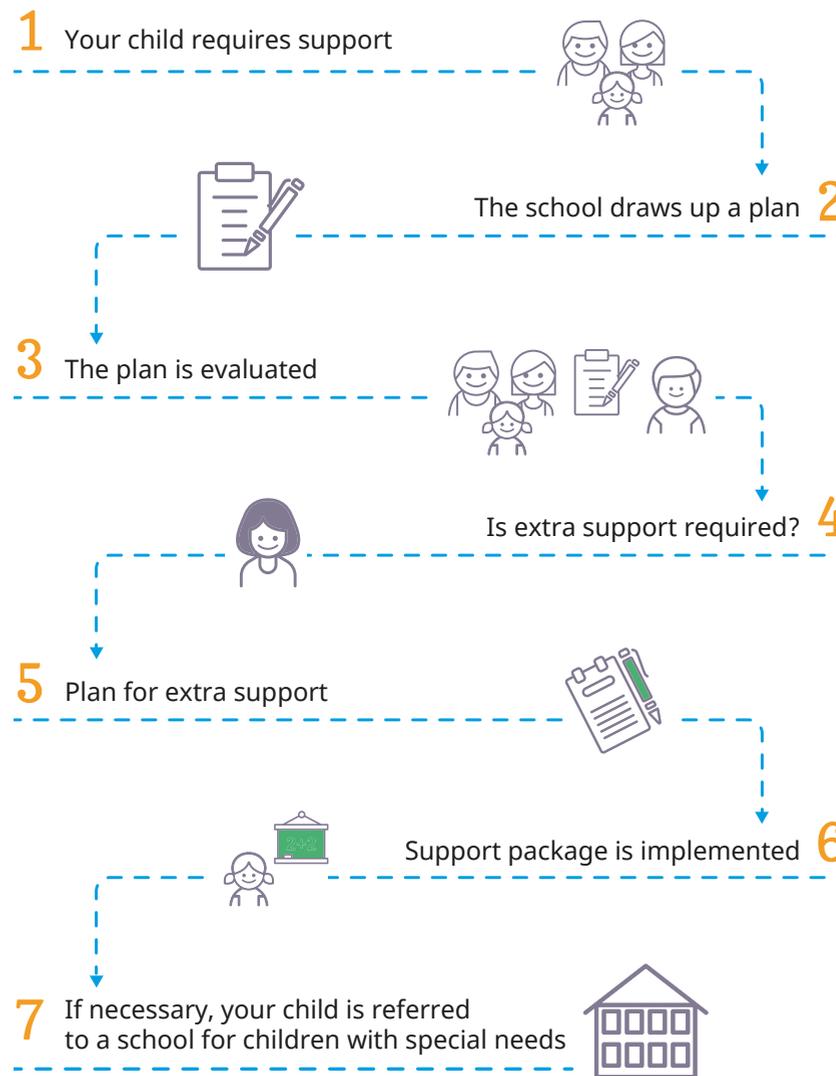
Educational support: the 7 steps in detail

Should your child require extra support, several steps are taken to put this in place. These steps are described below.

1. Your child **requires support** and you meet with the teacher and the school's learning support coordinator to discuss this.
2. The school draws up **a plan**, which it discusses with you, the parents, and possibly your child, depending on his or her age. Your input is important, both for your child and for the school. You probably have your own ideas and expectations when it comes to the help that your child receives or how the school should keep you informed, and it is good to discuss these with the school. The school will take this into account in its plan. The plan describes what kind of help will be provided for your child prior to, during and/or after lessons.
3. The next step is an **evaluation** after some time: has the plan resulted in the intended outcome?

4. If not, extra support may be required. This is where the **regional alliance SPPOH** comes into the picture. You discuss your child's needs with the teacher, the learning support coordinator and an educational adviser from the regional alliance. Other experts may also be involved, such as a school social worker, a teacher or other specialists from another school. We call this a **multidisciplinary consultation** (in Dutch: *multidisciplinair overleg*, or MDO).
5. The school will determine what **extra support** your child requires and the form that this will take. A dossier is also put together. Extra resources are requested from the regional alliance to enable the extra support to be provided. As a parent, you are involved in the process and asked to give your consent to the plan.
6. Your child receives extra support, called a **package**. This support is usually provided at the child's own primary school.
7. However, if the school is unable to provide the support package that your child needs, it may be better for him or her to attend a school for children with special needs. This is discussed with the parents in the MDO. If necessary, tests are conducted to find out what is best for the child. If the outcome is a recommendation for placement at a school for children with special needs, this is assessed by **two external experts** (e.g. a psychologist and a child and educational specialist). They may then request a **referral declaration** (in Dutch: *toelaatbaarheidsverklaring*, or TLV) from the regional alliance SPPOH. Once your child has this referral declaration, he or she can be admitted to a school for children with special needs.

Support in 7 steps





What does the learning support coordinator do?

The learning support coordinator (in Dutch: *intern begeleider*, or *IB'er*) is a teacher who is also responsible for pupil's care at school. If your child requires more help and/or extra support, you can discuss this with the teacher and the learning support coordinator. The learning support coordinator can advise on the best help and support for your child, and is part of the primary school's support team.

3. Who does what?

The school

The school is responsible for providing education and basic support. For a child to learn properly, it is important that he or she feels safe at school, and the school provides this safe environment. The school and the school's board of governors are responsible for providing your child with a suitable learning place. Once you sign your child up for a school, the school has a duty to care. Should your child require extra support, the school will decide whether it can offer a suitable learning place at the school. In some cases, the school may be unable, or no longer able, to provide a child with the education that he or she needs, in which case the school and parents together decide where a suitable learning place can be provided.



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The inclusive education regional alliance SPPOH

The boards of governors of schools in The Hague, Rijswijk and Leidschendam-Voorburg work together in the Stichting Passend Primair Onderwijs Haaglanden (SPPOH). In this brochure, we call this the regional alliance SPPOH. This organisation employs professionals with expertise and experience in children's teaching and development, such as educational advisers. Every school has an adviser who informs the school on the various types of educational support available.

The regional alliance SPPOH therefore provides the school with support in the form of information, but it also provides funding for educational support packages and awards referral declarations. Together we ensure that every pupil can develop to the best of his or her abilities.

The school social worker

Every primary school has access to the school social work service, normally through a school social worker employed by the school. The school social worker supports the child, its parents and the

school, for example concerning issues and challenges relating to conduct and education. The school social worker can also advise on the best way to help a child, for example with social skills training or by involving child welfare (in the municipality in which the child lives). The school social worker is acquainted with the many forms of help that are available and can bring parents and the school into contact with relevant people and organisations. Please contact the school social worker should you have any questions about development or parenting issues. You can contact the school social worker through the learning support coordinator or your child's teacher.

Medical care at school

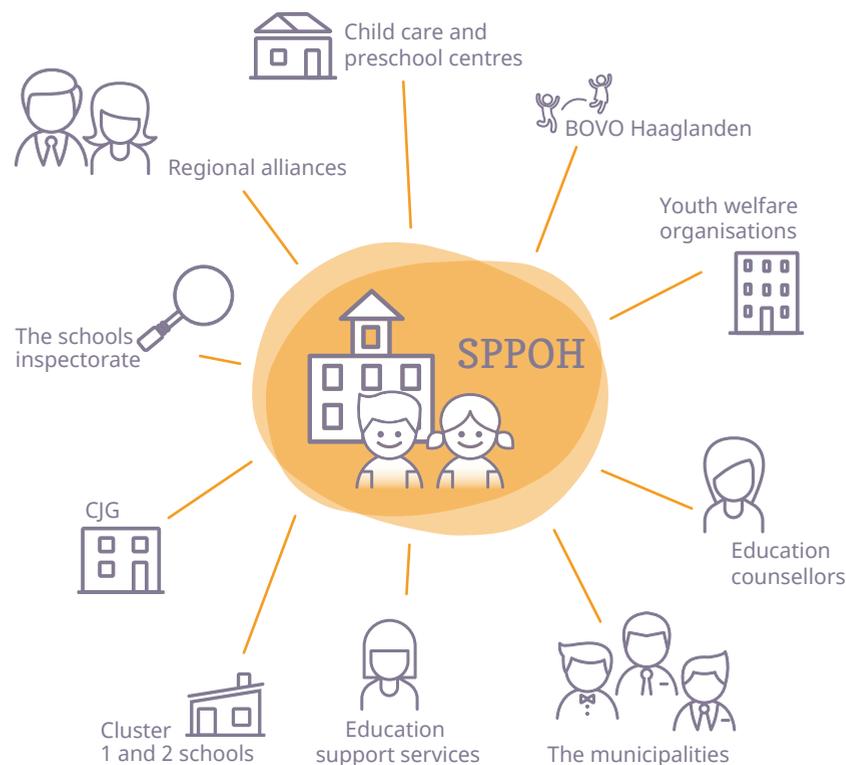
As well as providing various types of support, the school may also offer medical care such as speech therapy or physiotherapy. These healthcare providers often work at the school, and the care is paid for through your health insurance policy.

Other organisations

The primary schools and regional alliance SPPOH work together with various other organisations, some of which we have already mentioned. These organisations include:

- the Centre for Children and Families (in Dutch: *Centrum Jeugd en Gezin*, or CJG);
- the municipalities of The Hague, Rijswijk and Leidschendam-Voorburg;
- the schools inspectorate;
- youth welfare organisations;
- education counsellors;

- child care and preschool centres;
- other primary and secondary school regional alliances, such as PPO Delflanden, enabling us to help parents across different regions;
- schools for children who are visually handicapped or suffer from hearing, speech and/or language disorders, also called Cluster 1 and Cluster 2 schools;
- education support services;
- BOVO Haaglanden (transfer from primary to secondary school).



4. Consultation with parents

If a school believes that a certain child requires extra support, the school discusses this with the child's parents. The parents and the school work together as partners, and the school involves the parents fully throughout the process. For example, the parents are always consulted if a child needs to be tested.

Pupil development plan: a plan for every child

The school puts together a dossier for every pupil who receives extra support. This dossier contains:

- the pupil's name and address;
 - information about the child at school and at home (why does he or she have learning difficulties; what will help the child?);
 - educational and support needs: how much and what type of extra support is required;
 - what type of school the pupil could attend after primary school.
- This part of the dossier is called the pupil development plan (in Dutch: *ontwikkelperspectiefplan*, or OPP). It also describes the support and supervision to be provided by the school.

A report is made of every meeting that takes place between the parents and the teacher, the learning support coordinator and any other experts (such as an educational adviser and/or school social worker), and this is included in the dossier. This ensures that the school has a complete overview of each pupil.

5. Education for children with special needs

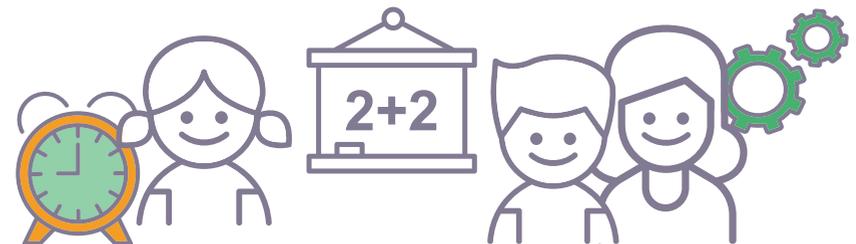
In some cases, extra support from the primary school is not enough and a child may require specialist teaching in a smaller group. For these children, there are primary schools for children with special needs (in Dutch: SBO) and special needs schools (in Dutch: SO).

To SBO...

Primary schools for children with special needs (SBO schools) have smaller classes than mainstream primary schools. This means that each child receives **more attention**. There are 12 SBO schools in Haaglanden.

SBO schools are for children with learning difficulties or problems relating to conduct or development.

Children at an SBO school learn the same as children at a mainstream primary school but are given more time, help and support.



Within a group, each child is taught at his or her level. Children may attend an SBO school up to the age of 14.

Placement at an SBO school follows a different procedure from placement at a mainstream school. Following consultation with the parents, the primary school requests a **referral declaration** for the child from the regional alliance SPPOH.

... or to SO

Some children require more and, more importantly, different support and supervision than that which can be provided at a mainstream primary school or at a primary school for children

with special needs. For these children, there are special needs schools (SO schools). There are different special needs schools for different groups of children (explained below), for example schools for children with a psychological disorder or a physical handicap. There are also SO schools for children with a conduct disorder or children who are mentally handicapped.

Placement at a special needs school follows a different procedure from that at a mainstream school. As with SBO schools, a **referral declaration** is required. Children may attend a special needs school up to the age of 14, after which most go on to attend a secondary school for children with special needs.

Special needs education: clusters

The government has grouped together different types of handicaps and challenges. These groups are called clusters. SO schools are specialised in teaching children with specific challenges and needs. Each SO school therefore has its own specialisation.

Cluster 1: visual handicap.

Cluster 2: hearing, speech and/or language difficulties.

Cluster 1 and cluster 2 schools are not part of the regional alliance SPPOH, although we do work together with these schools.

Schools that are specialised in cluster 3 and cluster 4 are part of the regional alliance SPPOH.

Cluster 3: chronic illness, physical or mental handicap or severe learning difficulties.

Cluster 4: conduct. This concerns children with a conduct or development issue (e.g. an attachment disorder) and/or a psychological disorder such as **PPD-NOS** or another disorder on the autism spectrum.



... what is a referral declaration?

A referral declaration (in Dutch: *toelaatbaarheidsverklaring* or TLV) allows your child to attend a primary school for children with special needs or a special needs school. Your child's primary school can request a TLV from the regional alliance SPPOH. This is always discussed with you first, but the regional alliance SPPOH is responsible for deciding whether or not to award a TLV. A TLV means that your child can attend an SBO or SO school for a single school year or longer.

6. Objection process

Parents want the best for their child, as does the school. However, the school and parents can sometimes have different ideas about what kind of support a child needs. If you are not happy with the support provided by the school, you should first discuss this with the people directly involved. If the school cannot resolve the problem, you may ask the regional alliance SPPOH to mediate or you can submit a formal complaint to the board of governors. Is your complaint related to the award of a referral declaration? If so, you may make a complaint to the regional alliance SPPOH. In most cases, the problem will be resolved. However, if this is not the case you may contact the *Landelijke Bezwaardviescommissie*

Toelaatbaarheidsverklaring (advisory committee for referral declaration TLV objections).

7. Support: seven examples

This brochure informs you of the different types of support provided by primary schools. A number of examples are given below to illustrate the help and support on offer.



Milan finds arithmetic difficult and has problems keeping up with the lessons in Group 4. His teacher has noticed this and discusses it with his parents and the **learning support coordinator**. As a result, it is decided to provide Milan with one hour a week of individual tutoring from a specialist teacher. This teacher discovers that Milan has a need to understand everything straight away. If he hears something that he does not immediately understand, he carries on thinking about it and no longer listens to the rest of the lesson. The specialist teacher helps Milan to listen to instruction and works on his arithmetic with him.



Emma has a mild autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Although she has done well so far at primary school, now that she is in Group 6 and gets more homework she finds it difficult to plan and organise her work.

Emma's parents talk about the problem with the teacher and the learning support coordinator. The **learning support coordinator** suggests that Emma is given a buddy to help her plan her homework. Emma and her parents think this is a good idea and Emma's teacher asks her classmate Yasmin. Yasmin is now Emma's buddy.



Maris cannot cope if there are lots of children around her. She needs peace and quiet to properly understand what she needs to learn. She often finds the work difficult: language, arithmetic and other subjects. As a result, she starts to fall behind and to enjoy school less.

The teacher and the **learning support coordinator** discuss this with Maris' parents. Together with the parents and the regional alliance SPPOH, the school decides to request a referral declaration. Maris is given a place at a primary school for children with special needs, where she benefits from the smaller classes and extra attention and starts enjoying school again.



Aziz is easily distracted in the classroom. He has ADHD and finds it very difficult to concentrate, as a result of which he starts to fall behind. Aziz's teacher discusses this with his parents, and the learning

support coordinator and school social worker are also involved. They suggest involving child welfare, and Aziz starts to receive help from a psychologist (cognitive behaviour therapy). The psychologist explains what ADHD is and helps Aziz cope with it better. Aziz's parents also have problems with the fact that their son is often hyperactive at home. The regional alliance SPPOH recommends parenting support and Aziz's parents are given some tips. For example, Aziz now sometimes goes to stay with his aunt and uncle for a weekend, giving his parents a rest and giving them the time to pay more attention to Aziz's younger sister. This helps Aziz and his family.



Fleur often gets angry at school. When she does, she throws her book or screams at the other children. The teacher talks to her mother and discovers that Fleur's parents are getting divorced. At the recommendation of the **learning support coordinator**, the school social worker also talks to Fleur. Fleur tells the social worker that she has problems with the divorce but that she can't talk about it at home because she doesn't want to upset her parents. As a result, she lets the anger out at school. A parenting adviser gives Fleur's parents tips to help them talk to their daughter. Fleur also takes part in a training course to help her recognise when she gets angry and express her anger in other ways. This helps Fleur, her teacher and her classmates.



Malika is often bored at school. She finds the lessons too easy and finishes her work quickly. Her parents notice that she is getting quieter and no longer enjoys going to school. They talk about this to the teacher and the **learning support**

coordinator, who recommends getting Malika tested. Malika's parents agree, and the test shows that she has a high IQ. This means that she needs to be challenged in her learning and likes learning new things. The school helps Malika: she attends a class for gifted children once a week, where she is given challenging exercises, and when she has finished her work at school the teacher gives her more difficult exercises.



Robin needs a lot of structure at school. If the teacher deviates from the day's plan, he panics. The learning support coordinator and the regional alliance SPPOH recommend that Robin should be tested. This is done following consultation

with his parents. The test shows that Robin has PDD-NOS and needs more support than the school can provide. The school therefore requests a **referral declaration** for him. The regional alliance provides the declaration, so that Robin can be given a learning place and support at a special needs school that is specialised in PDD-NOS and other autism spectrum disorders. Based on the declaration, Robin obtains a place at the special needs school.

8. Further information

Do you still have questions? Please do not hesitate to ask them, either by contacting the school or the **regional alliance SPPOH**.

Colofon

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