

Together in Play and Learning

Special Needs Education in Mainstream Settings



Adaptation for
participation and learning **1.3**



Adaptation for participation and learning

The objective is for all children and young people who require special adaptation in kindergartens and schools to receive the support they need in order to take part in the learning community. An important premise for this work is the child's right to be heard. Inclusive communities are contingent on structures, cooperative relations and professionals in kindergartens and schools who are able to safeguard the child's physical, academic, social and psychological needs. The following four chapters demonstrate in different ways how adaptation for participation and learning can occur in practice.

Gro Narten Markestad:

Contact teachers and special needs teachers working as a team to promote pupil participation

Gro presents and employs three success factors to show how contact teachers and special needs teachers can cooperate regarding individual subject curriculum (ISC) as a strategic document to strengthen pupils' participation and learning.

Contact teachers and special needs education teachers working as a team to promote pupil participation

In this chapter, I will argue that teamwork between contact teachers and special needs education teachers is an essential part of promoting participation at school for pupils receiving special needs education.

Gro Narten Markestad

What does working as a team mean? How do we facilitate collaboration between contact teachers and special needs education teachers in key areas in order to promote a pupil's participation in a learning community? What do we need in order to succeed? There is no set answer to these questions. However, there are mind tools that could be of assistance in this work. I will present and apply two tables that highlight how contact teachers and special needs education teachers can work together on Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) as strategic documents for promoting inclusive special needs education in schools. I will also present and apply three success factors for good collaboration.

Working as a team is important

Collaboration in schools can be difficult for a number of reasons. A Norwegian study performed by Gillespie (2016) claims that there is no culture of collaboration between educators in different roles in schools, despite the fact that the educators themselves would like this. There are some exceptions, with contact teachers and special needs education teachers having taken the initiative and made time for

collaboration. In this chapter, I am hoping to inspire schools to establish a system of collaboration between contact teachers and special needs education teachers, with follow-up by external guides from the PPT (Educational and Psychological Counselling Service), BUP (Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Out-patient Clinic), Statped (The Norwegian Support System for Special Needs Education) and other support services who meet both contact teachers and special needs education teachers when schools are discussing pedagogic problems.

One of the aims of working as a team is to facilitate social and academic participation for all pupils. Participation is about a pupil's contribution and right to be heard. For example, pupils shall participate in the planning, implementation and assessment of their educational provision. Participation is also about giving pupils an educational provision that is based on their requirements and that helps them to maximise their full potential. The educational provision shall be adapted around the best interests of the pupil. The same rights apply to all pupils. It would be very demanding for one contact teacher to facilitate participation for all the pupils in a year group. At times, this will be

a more demanding process than one person can achieve alone. Sometimes adaptation requires specialist skills that are beyond general teaching skills. Beside expertise, it is often necessary to think creatively and spot opportunities. That needs teamwork!

What is teamwork in practical terms?

In teamwork, the contact teacher and special needs education teacher will be equal partners with complementary skills that can support and complement each other. They will also have different roles and areas of responsibility. And it is this that differentiates teamwork from collaborating as a group: you have different roles and areas of responsibility and complement each other professionally. The contact teacher has a primary responsibility for *all* their pupils, both academically and socially, and acts as a link between home and school. By contrast, the special needs education teacher is an expert in pupils' learning difficulties and is familiar with methods in special needs education that do not form part of a general education teacher's areas of expertise. As well as the contact teacher and special needs education teacher, other professionals may be part of the team around the pupils, often in the form of assistants.

We will take a closer look at what contact teachers and special needs education teachers can collaborate on in order to promote participation for pupils receiving special needs education.

What can contact teachers and special needs education teachers collaborate on?

The study by Gillespie (2016), which has studied the experiences of special needs education teachers and subject teachers collaborating on pupils receiving special needs education in mathematics, identifies several contextual and cultural aspects that affect the educators' opportunity to

collaborate satisfactorily. Special needs education teachers and subject teachers experience that they collaborate to a small degree and that pupils do not achieve their learning goals. The study also shows that it is more common to describe measures for social participation and safe limits than measures for academic progression in the pupil's learning plan. The result of this is that the educators' perception is that they feel inadequate, that the pupils do not get the educational provision that they are entitled to. Gillespie (2016) refers to several studies when she argues that good collaboration between special needs education teachers and general education teachers can help pupils receiving special needs education to develop their academic and social potential.

Gillespie (2016) differentiates between short-term and long-term collaboration. *Short-term collaboration* is about practical matters such as preparing timetables, exchanging work plans with each other and clarifying the division of rooms and groups. This interaction about practical matters requires little time or resources. Short-term cooperation is necessary but is still not sufficient to facilitate a pupil's participation. *Long-term collaboration* involves planning the pupils' long-term learning goals. Gillespie (2016) refers to several other studies arguing that long-term collaboration between general education teachers and special needs education teachers is vital for promoting a pupil's learning outcome and participation at school. Long-term collaboration requires more time and resources than short-term because its focus is on specialist discussions of educational activities. Examples of tasks requiring specialist discussions from a general education and special needs education perspective are the planning of the grade's annual plan in various subjects and the preparation of the ILP.

The tables below are based on Hausstätter's tables (2012, pp. 136–137) that describe how a school can use an ILP as a strategic document to promote a pupil's participation in a rounded educational provision. One of Hausstätter's tables (2012, p. 136) shows the significance of the teacher's and pupil's collaboration on the ILP, while the other table (Hausstätter, 2012, p. 137) shows the significance of the general education teacher's and special needs education teacher's collaboration on an ILP. The tables as they appear here have been adapted for use as mind tools for making decisions on responsibility, areas of collaboration, methods of collaboration and coherence between general education and special needs education adaptation and benefits for a pupil when the collaboration works.

Table 1 shows that general education teachers and special needs education teachers can have different starting points in terms of analysing and developing an ILP. The first column shows examples of what a general education teacher can bring to a collaboration on an ILP, while the third column shows a little of what a special needs education teacher can bring to the collaboration. The middle column describes relevant areas of collaboration between the general education teacher and special needs education teacher and shows how the school's educational activities could become more rounded by bringing the fields of practice of general education and special needs education together. The table provides an illustration of the different perspectives that come into play in the collaboration on a pupil's educational provision.

Table 1 Collaboration between educators on ILP (adapted from Hausstätter, 2012, p. 137)

	General education teacher	Areas of collaboration	Special needs education teacher
Focus	has an overview of the subject material for the year group and course of education	overview of each other's challenges	has knowledge of the pupil's development, resources, challenges and needs
	adapts the subject matter	coordinates subject matter and methods	adapts methods for learning and development
	develops ILP on the basis of simplifying the subject matter; looks at how the subject matter can be adapted	discusses what could be realistic learning goals and how the school can work to achieve these	develops ILP on the basis of the pupil's learning potential

Table 2 shows the results after such a collaboration if the collaboration works as it should. The middle column describes how teamwork between the general education teacher and special needs education teacher can help the school to develop a rounded strategy for teaching in a "school for everyone". The results show that both pupils and teachers benefit from this teamwork.

The first column shows that the pupils are able to maximise their learning potential after the school adapts academic goals and is able to achieve good progression in their work. The third column shows that the pupils are able to maximise their learning potential through adapted methods of achieving academic goals.

Table 2 Results when the collaboration works (adapted from Hausstätter, 2012, pp. 136–137)

	General education teacher	Areas of collaboration	Special needs education teacher
Result when the collaboration works	The pupil is able to maximise their learning potential through adapted academic goals and achieves the right progression in their learning work.	The school and teachers are jointly responsible for the ILP and general education.	The pupil is able to maximise their learning potential through adapted methods of achieving academic goals.
	Contact teacher prioritises spending time on adapting teaching for the pupil with special needs education needs, because it helps to ensure their active participation in the learning and development process of all the pupils.	The total challenges associated with a "school for everyone" are highlighted, and shared decisions can be made.	Special needs education teacher prioritises spending time on adapting strategies that promote the pupil's participation in their own learning and development process.

I will also look at how teamwork on an Individual Learning Plan can be achieved in practice. I will do this by presenting a case

that I illustrate and discuss on the basis of elements from Table 1 and Table 2 and success factors for good collaboration.

A case

Marte is the contact teacher and Hanna is the special needs education teacher for Kaja, who is a pupil in Year 4. Kaja has cerebral palsy and uses a wheelchair to move about. She has good function in her right hand, while her left-hand functions as a support hand. Kaja has cerebral visual impairment, which also affects how she perceives and interprets visual impressions. She has a rich and varied spoken language. For Kaja, everyday activities are hard work. Apart from the physical challenges, Kaja's prerequisites for achieving the competence objectives in all theoretical subjects are as good as for those of her peers. The school's task is to facilitate an educational provision that helps Kaja to develop her full potential as an active participant in an academic and social learning community. That needs teamwork.

What is required of Marte as the contact teacher and Hanna as the special needs education teacher to succeed in their collaboration on an educational provision that accommodates the intention that Kaja should develop her full potential in an academic and social learning community? In order to answer this question, I will apply elements from the table above and discuss the problem in light of three factors that are needed in order for the collaboration to be successful.

Success factors for good collaboration

In her study, Gillespie (2016) identifies three factors that are important for achieving good collaboration in a school:

1. the external framework, i.e., time for planning, allocating responsibility and receiving guidelines from the school's management
2. a culture of collaboration, which includes established collaboration routines at the school in question and the degree to which the teachers themselves take the initiative to collaborate on a pupil's educational provision
3. the perception that the collaboration is expedient, appropriate and useful

The external framework must be in place

Gillespie (2016) found in her study that there was no established culture of collaboration on pedagogic adaptation at the school, despite the fact that the educators wanted the school's practice to include collaboration routines. One of the reasons why collaboration on pedagogic adaptation is so rare is that there is a lack of an established framework for collaboration between contact teachers and special needs education teachers. Nor is this collaboration prioritised as part of the school's practice.

Each school must define for itself the most appropriate way of facilitating collaboration. The school's management has a key role to play in clarifying the framework for collaboration on pedagogic adaptation, since they have an overview of the school's resources, options, needs and challenges. They can identify where collaboration is needed, they know what can realistically be achieved, and they can ensure that time is allocated in the schedule for collaborating on pupils' educational provisions. At Kaja's school, the head teacher made an individual decision for the special needs education provision to include scheduled time for collaboration, including what the collaboration will be about, and how the staff should

collaborate in order to achieve the pupil's goals. Marte and Hanna have an hour a week set aside in their schedules for collaboration. The school has also chosen to set up a working team around Kaja, comprising the contact teacher, special needs education teacher and two assistants. This team meets for 30 minutes every week. Time set aside in the schedule for planning is a requirement for facilitating collaboration. Marte and Hanna also need to know what kind of role and what tasks they have in the planning, implementation and evaluation of Kaja's educational provision.

The school's management has the important task of clarifying which are the roles and responsibilities of each person in the team around a pupil. Clear guidelines are needed about what is involved in being a contact teacher and special needs education teacher for a pupil receiving special needs education (Gillespie, 2016). In the same way, the school will benefit from clear guidelines on how internal collaboration will help to promote coherence between general education and special needs education. Hausstätter (2012) argues that it is important for contact teachers and special needs education teachers to be aware of each other's challenges.

Table 1 shows that it is expedient for contact teachers and special needs education teachers to be aware of the challenges that they are facing. For example, Marte as the contact teacher for Year 4 faces different challenges than Hanna as the special needs education teacher for Kaja and other pupils receiving special needs education. The dialogue concerning the challenges they face is vital for allowing the practices of general education and special needs education to come together, rather than being two separate educational provisions. Through this dialogue, they develop an understanding of each other's many challenges and gain a perception of each

other's responsibility for adaptation to ensure the pupil's participation in an academic and social learning community.

As already mentioned, Gillespie (2016) differentiates between *short-term* and *long-term planning*, and argues that both kinds are necessary, but that it is the long-term planning that has the greatest significance in terms of pedagogic practice. Findings from Gillespie's (2016) study show that the short-term planning, which deals with practical matters, often takes place immediately prior to teaching. It is mainly the contact teacher on their own who does the short-term planning regarding the general educational provision. The special needs education teacher only gets involved when the short-term planning concerns the special needs education. What Gillespie (2016) found was that the collaboration tended to consist of the contact teacher informing the special needs education teacher of the content of the teaching. The study points out the lack of a culture of collaboration between contact teachers and special needs education teachers on pedagogic practice in schools. On the basis of this, it is natural to draw a conclusion that there needs to be a cultural change in schools.

So, what is involved in a culture of collaboration on pedagogic adaptation to promote a pupil's academic and social participation?

Culture of collaboration

A culture of collaboration is about what routines for collaboration have been established at a school, and how these can affect planning, implementing and evaluating a pupil's educational provision. The established guidelines for collaboration must ensure that there is coherence between the general education and special needs education fields of practice. It is also important for the guidelines to include allowing the pupil's voice to be heard (Hausstätter, 2012).

Gillespie (2016) found in her study that each school had its own culture of collaboration. Among other things, there was variation in terms of the collaboration routines that were established at each school. There was also variation in the degree to which each teacher took the initiative to collaborate with others. At Marte and Hanna's school, routines have been established that ensure there is collaboration between the contact teacher and special needs education teacher on Kaja's educational provision. The school has clear guidelines on how the staff collaborate in order to create a rounded educational provision, in which the pupil participates in an academic and social learning community. In order for Marte and Hanna to feel that the collaboration is meaningful, it is important for the time allotted to them to be used constructively. Gillespie (2016) emphasises the importance of establishing good collaboration routines, in which each teacher feels that they are using their skills in planning, implementing and evaluating the pupil's educational provision. Hausstätter (2012) emphasises that the school has to look at the general education and special needs education in the same context, rather than as two separate services. In a collaboration, Marte and Hanna have different skills and knowledge of different areas, as can be seen in Table 1. Marte is acquainted with the current plans for the school and year group, competence objectives, and with the school's and year's working methods. Hanna knows about Kaja's resources, challenges and needs. Gillespie (2016) and Hausstätter (2012) emphasise that it is only when their competences are expressed through pedagogic adaptation that they contribute to learning and development through active participation with others. It is therefore extremely important for schools to have a culture of collaboration that addresses this criterion.

Gillespie (2016) also found that the educators in schools felt that the general education was being planned for the average pupil, with the national curriculum as the guiding document, while special needs education was being planned on the basis of expert assessments and Individual Learning Plans. Several teachers expressed that they struggled to find the balance between individual adaptation and the need for the whole community to achieve goals. If Kaja is to receive a rounded and satisfactory educational provision, it is absolutely essential for Hanne and Marte to collaborate on it. It should be part of the school's established collaboration routines for Hanne and Marte to discuss pedagogic problems in order to encourage participation for all their pupils. The right for pupils to participate in the planning, implementation and assessment of their own educational provision is one of the fundamental principles of Norwegian schooling (Education Act, 1998). Kaja has a rich and varied language and is able to participate and have a voice in the planning and adaptation carried out for her. Both Hanne and Marte can thereby have a dialogue with Kaja on learning goals, about which adaptations are most suitable for her, and which working methods she considers to be good for her.

Gillespie's (2016) study suggests that the culture of short-term collaboration is far more established than the culture of long-term collaboration in schools. She found that both general education teachers and special needs education teachers expressed that they felt there was a lack of pedagogic discussions, which were preferable to one-sided collaboration on practical matters (Gillespie, 2016). Time was set aside in the schedule for collaboration between Hanne and Marte, so both were anxious that the meetings should only focus on practical clarifications and swapping plans with each other. They were sceptical

about spending so much time together, but quickly found that it made sense to collaborate on teaching practice. Gillespie (2016) also found that the general education teachers felt that it was difficult to provide adaptation for pupils needing special needs education, and that they needed to collaborate with colleagues with special needs education skills. As the contact teacher, Marte is familiar with the feeling of inadequacy: she is aware that she does not have the skills to accommodate the adaptation needs of both Kaja and several other pupils. She has a fundamental desire and target for Kaja to develop her potential. Through her meetings with Hanna, she has become more aware of her own skills and what she herself can contribute to in this kind of collaboration. She also became aware of how much she was developing her own skills by discussing the pedagogic problems involved in matters concerning Kaja. As Table 1 shows, there is a need to bring the general education teacher's perspective and skills into the collaboration for a rounded educational provision for pupils receiving special needs education. As we can see in Table 2, a pupil gets to maximise their learning potential when the contact teacher adapts goals and progression in the pupil's learning work. Gillespie (2016) found that many special needs education teachers expressed that they did not feel part of the staff, because they were not involved in planning general education and general school planning. This is also what Hanna experienced. It was only when she and Marte sat down and discussed the learning goal for the year group and for Kaja and talked about adapting the subject matter and working methods that she felt a sense of belonging to the staff. The work that she and Marte did as a team resulted in a more rounded educational provision for many more of the pupils.

As described earlier, there is a clear connection between the long-term collaboration practised by the general education teacher and special needs education teacher and the pupil's learning outcome (Gillespie, 2016). The long-term collaboration covers the pupil's long-term learning goals and requires pedagogic discussions of the school's approach to ensuring that the pupil will develop their academic and social potential. We can also see this in tables 1 and 2: we need both the general education teacher's and special needs education teacher's skills to ensure that the pupil develops their potential in an academic and social learning community (Hausstätter, 2012).

The fact that contact teachers and special needs education teachers collaborated neither on the general educational provision nor the special needs education (Gillespie, 2016) could suggest that the general education provision is the contact teacher's domain in terms of planning, implementation and assessment. In the same way as the contact teacher or subject teacher designs year plans, it is the special needs education teacher who develops ILPs. Gillespie's (2016) study shows that the year group's year plan is designed on the basis of competence objectives from national curricula, while ILPs are designed on the basis of individual decisions on special needs education. The educators in the study expressed the opinion that there was so little coherence between the content of the ILP and the year plan for the rest of the year group that it was difficult to develop adaptation for a practice that combined the content of the plans. There is therefore reason to claim that if schools are to be successful in their adaptation for an inclusive community, the general education and special needs education fields of practice must come together through collaboration (Hausstätter, 2012).

As shown in Table 1, the teachers can contribute to the collaboration on the basis of their own starting points. In the discussions about Kaja's educational provision, Marte made her starting point the competence objectives from national plans and the year group's year plan, while Hanna's starting points were the expert assessments and individual decisions on special needs education. They discussed how they could modify the year plan, which included methods, to allow the general educational provision to accommodate Kaja's needs to a greater degree. They also discovered that there were several other pupils who were benefiting from this adaptation of subject matter and working methods.

Gillespie (2016) argues that it is important to be aware of resistance and barriers that may be encountered in the process of developing and establishing guidelines for collaboration between contact teachers and special needs education teachers. As an example, she mentions how difficult it can be to go from being "the private-practising teacher" to being the teacher who is part of a collective. This can result in both schools and pupils losing talented teachers, because the transition to a completely different way of working can be too taxing. Hanna's perception was that her work was being threatened when she had to collaborate with Marte. Hanna had been Kaja's special needs education teacher since she attended a day-care centre, and she felt that she knew what was best for her. She had no desire to be an auxiliary teacher for the rest of the year group. She wanted to be a special needs education teacher. Marte, on the other hand, had found a good way of teaching the year group. She was tired of constant changes and thought that the system in which the special teacher took responsibility for Kaja was working well. The school's head teacher decided to start a process among the staff of creating a shared

attitude, that they should work together to achieve a more rounded provision at the school. Gillespie (2016) points out that a school's management should facilitate new working methods and work to establish a culture of collaboration that promotes pupils' academic and social participation. It is important for teachers to play a part in a transition process, ensuring that everyone agrees on good collaboration routines, in preference to teachers feeling that collaboration has been forced upon them. As shown in Table 1, it is important for teachers to talk about each other's challenges. From Marte's point of view, the fact that Hanna listened to her challenges had a positive effect on her attitude to the collaboration. Similarly, Hanna seemed to understand that Marte was facing a number of challenges in terms of providing adaptation for a diversity of pupils for whom she was the contact teacher. Hanna appreciated being able to say that she felt an outsider among the staff and was afraid that all the skills she had would be ignored.

In their busy working days at school, Marte and Hanna would like the meetings they hold to be perceived as useful in terms of the job they must do in order to facilitate the pupils' participation in an academic learning community. This is in line with the third factor that must be accommodated, according to Gillespie's (2016) findings: The collaboration must be perceived as expedient, appropriate and useful. What is needed for Marte and Hanna to feel that their collaboration inside and outside the classroom is time spent productively?

The collaboration must be perceived as expedient, appropriate and useful

Hausstätter (2014) points out that it is the causal factors, or *factors that can be changed*, at which it is expedient to aim any measures. It will not lead to good results if one chooses to spend one's energy on

factors that simply cannot be changed. For example, for Marte, who is a contact teacher for Year 4, it is not very expedient to spend too much time thinking about the pupil group's composition, because she cannot do anything about that. In the same way, it is not very expedient for Marte and Hanna to be separately focusing on what Kaja cannot manage. It is only when they direct their attention at the factors that can be changed, that the collaboration can be perceived as expedient (Hausstätter, 2014). Examples of factors that can be changed are *goals, subject matter, working methods and the assessment practice*.

For Marte and Hanna, the ILP could be something that they can collaborate on developing, implementing and evaluating. This is because the ILP describes goals, content, structure and working methods that are aimed at ensuring that Kaja benefits satisfactorily from the teaching. This way of collaborating on the ILP will also be in accordance with governing documents that provide guidelines on special needs education. Guidelines for special needs education (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2014) recommend collaborating on the development of ILPs in order to ensure that there is coherence between the general education provision and the special needs education.

When Marte and Hanna prepare the *ILP*, they need to use national plans in addition to the school's and year group's plans, expert assessments and individual decisions on special needs education. *Goals* and criteria for achieving those goals will be one of the topics that Marte and Hanna will discuss in their work on the ILP. As Table 1 shows, the contact teacher knows which goals the general education aims to achieve, and which criteria will be used as a basis for achieving those goals. The special needs education teacher knows which goals will be realistic for the pupil in the various subjects.

When Marte and Hanna discuss *goals* and criteria for achieving those goals, it is thus important for them to attach importance to academic development as well as social development. Gillespie (2016) points out that there is an imbalance in favour of social goals rather than academic goals in Individual Learning Plans for pupils receiving special needs education. Kaja may express her opinion about what she feels are realistic learning goals for her, including short-term and more long-term goals.

The school should assess what practical educational progression may be achieved, and how the ILP's goals can be considered in context with the goals in the general education plan (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2014). The individual learning objectives must be based on the individual decision and considered in context with the core curriculum and year group's goals. They must be realistic and based on the pupil's resources and opportunities for development (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2014).

The goals must be formulated to show the competence that the school wants the pupil to build up in the subjects in question (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2014). The dialogue between Hanna and Marte plays a key role in this assessment. It is the year group's goals and skills that must be used as the basis, also for Kaja who is receiving special needs education. The Individual Learning Plan must describe which special measures need to be introduced in order to allow the school to help the pupil to achieve their competence objectives on a par with their fellow pupils. When Kaja herself gets to be part of putting her own learning goals into words, she will become more familiar with the goals and able to work more consciously towards them. It is therefore important for Hanna and Marte to be in dialogue with Kaja on long-term and short-term learning goals.

The choice of content is another factor that can be changed in the educational provision. The content must correspond with the individual decision's assessment of the pupil's needs, abilities and requirements, description of learning goals, scope and any deviations from the core curriculum and Education Act (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 1998).

As Table 1 shows, the contact teacher and special needs education teacher will bring different perspectives to a discussion of the content of the teaching. Marte will have an overview of the subject material for the year and course of education. This overview allows Marte to suggest how the subject matter could be adapted. She may also have ideas on how this can be wholly or partly facilitated in the general teaching. In the discussion, Hanna as the special needs education teacher may provide input about how the content could be adapted in lessons. For example, Kaja is capable of following the academic progression of a subject in lessons. What she needs are adaptations that allow her to participate actively in the learning community. Hanna has expertise in what kind of adaptation works best for Kaja in terms of her visual impairment. This is also something about which Kaja herself can provide a great deal of information. For example, what works best in terms of where Kaja sits in order to see what Marte presents on the board? What do illustrations in books need to be like for Kaja to get as much as possible out of them? How can mathematical problems best be set up to allow Kaja to perform addition? How does Kaja feel that the adaptations made by the school are working? Is there anything that needs to be changed? As a special needs education teacher, Hanna knows which working methods work well for Kaja, both because she has observed Kaja and talked to her, and because she has expert knowledge of her visual impairment.

It is important for both Marte and Hanna to take on board Kaja's views in the dialogue about which adaptations are best in terms of allowing Kaja to be an active participant in her own learning and development process.

Working methods are a third factor that can be changed. It is extremely important for Marte and Hanna to discuss what practical working methods may be used. Table 1 shows that this will provide an opportunity to coordinate subject matter and methods. It also provides an opportunity to discuss whether the method by which Kaja works could also be used as a method in the general education. Is it possible that there could be more pupils who would benefit from the same working methods? For example, Kaja will need pictures that do not have too many details. Sometimes it may be an advantage for audiobooks to be the format. Markestad (2012) mentioned that working methods are rarely described or evaluated in ILPs. This could be because the ILP template does not ask for a description of that field of approach. When the pupil does not achieve a goal that has been set, it then becomes important for the special needs education teacher and contact teacher to discuss what they could do differently. Is it the goal that is not realistic, the content that was not adapted to the pupil's requirements, or is it the working method that is not appropriate? Kaja can provide Marte and Hanna with valuable information about working methods that work best when she is working alone, in small groups and with the whole class.

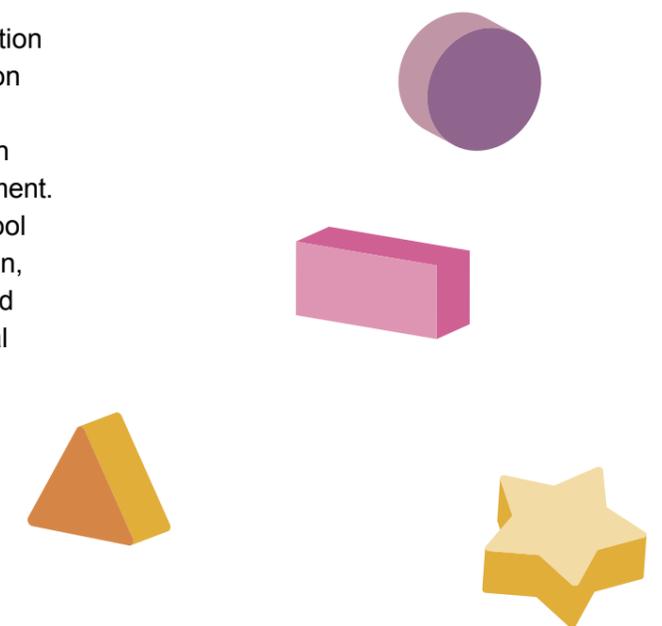
The school's assessment practice also constitutes a factor that can be changed. The contact teacher and special needs education teacher can collaborate to achieve a good assessment practice for the pupil and for the school in terms of its practice. Pupils receiving special needs education, like Kaja, have the same right to assessment as all other pupils. When Marte and Hanna have to assess the pupil's educational provision and school's practice, a dialogue discussing Kaja's own assessments could help to promote participation in an academic and social learning community.

When teamwork has results

By far the greatest benefit from teamwork is that the pupil becomes an active participant and maximises their learning potential. Hausstätter (2012) points out that general education and special needs education skills must both be present in the classroom, allowing the teachers to utilise and develop their professional expertise and help to support the pupils in their development. As can be seen in Table 1, the contact teacher's participation in the collaboration on the ILP helps to ensure that the pupil maximises their learning potential through adapted academic goals and progression in their learning work. The special needs education teacher's participation in the collaboration will help to ensure that the pupil gets to maximise their learning potential through adapted methods for academic development. By working together as a team, the school and teachers together will be able to plan, implement and assess processes around the special needs education and general education.

A contact teacher who prioritises spending time on adapting teaching for a pupil with special needs will continue to do so, because it promotes participation in an academic and social learning community for the other pupils. When Hanna, as the special needs education teacher, prioritises adapting strategies that promote Kaja's participation in her own learning and development process, Kaja feels that she is developing her learning potential. As shown in Table 2, teamwork helps to illustrate the complex set of challenges a school is facing when it needs to provide adaptation in order to assure that all its pupils participate in "a school for everyone". Consequently, this allows a school to make common choices and help to promote inclusive strategies in the school.

Teamwork can bring the general education and special needs education fields of practice closer together. The teachers form a complementary relationship, in which they support and complement each other in planning, implementing and evaluating the teaching. This in turn will develop the skills of the individual teachers.



Summary

In this chapter, I have illustrated and discussed the significance of the contact teacher's and special needs education teacher's collaboration in order to promote participation in an academic and social learning community for pupils receiving special needs education. There are three factors that must be present if the collaboration between the teachers in the school is to work well: the external framework must be in place, a culture of long-term as well as short-term collaboration should be established, and the collaboration must be perceived as expedient, appropriate and useful. It is only when the general education and special needs education fields of practice come together and complement each other that a pupil's participation in an academic and social learning community becomes possible. Working as a team is worth it!

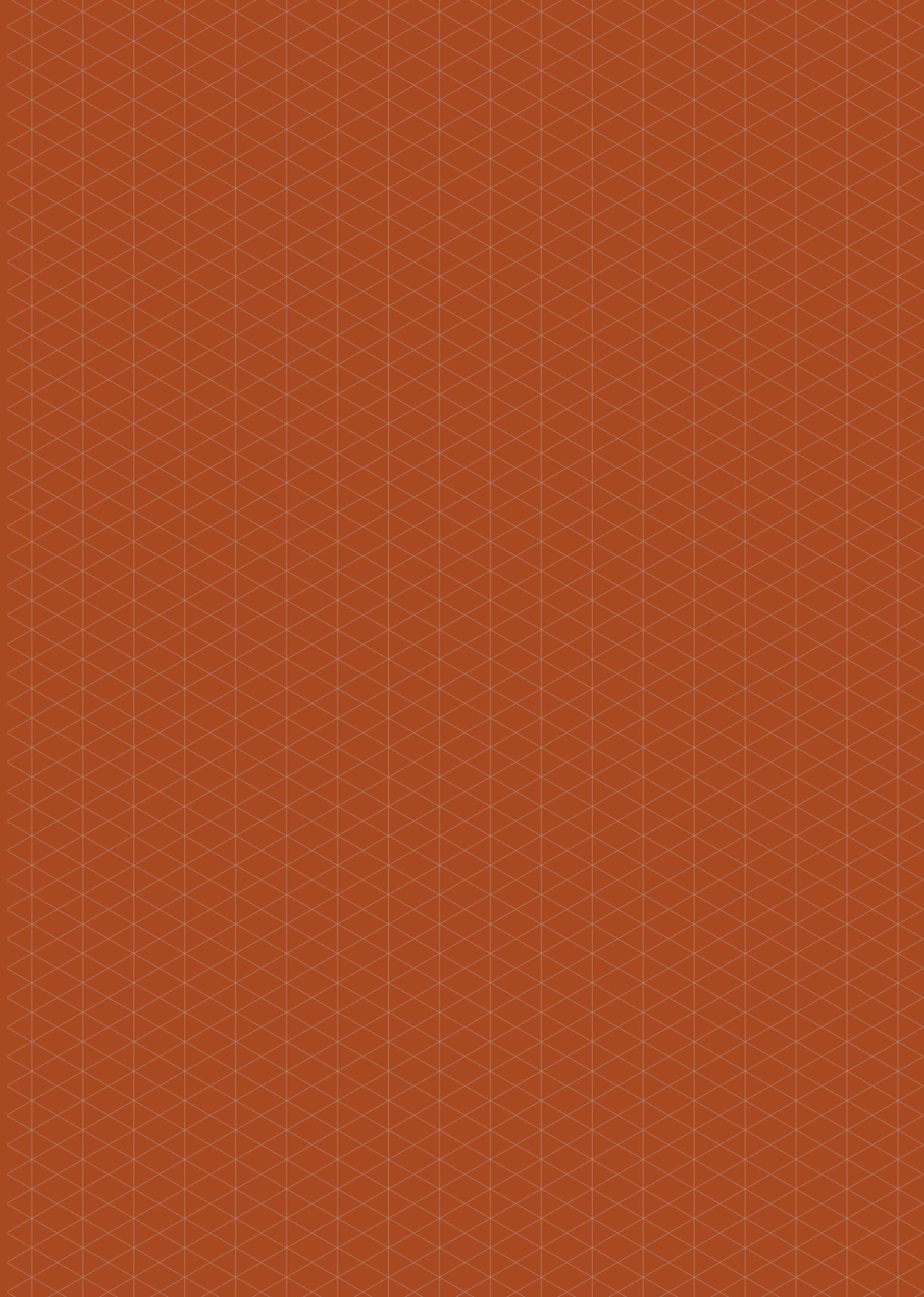


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From a sociocultural perspective, children’s learning and development occurs through participation in social communities – where community with peers is of particular importance. Children’s participation in learning communities with other children, or facilitation of such participation, is a recurring theme in this anthology. The contributors to this anthology are advisers at Statped with experience from a variety of fields. They account for various approaches founded on experienced-based and research-based knowledge. What they all have in common is that they, through their adviser roles, have worked closely with the field of practice. This anthology shares the experiences from collaborations with kindergartens and schools in the efforts to develop a knowledge-based practice.

The anthology is primarily directed at students and professionals who work in kindergartens and schools but may also be of interest to others.

