

# Benefits of Inclusive Education

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**Benefits for people with special educational needs**

**Benefits for people without special needs**

**Benefits for teachers**

**Benefits for society**

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## Benefits of Inclusive Education

Inclusive education means that all students in an educational setting, regardless of their strengths or weaknesses in any area, become part of the local community. The primary reason for promoting the attendance of students with special needs in mainstream schools is to increase their learning opportunities through interaction with peers and to encourage their participation in the life of community. This uniting process has a great impact on the societal development, which is backed up by research

## Benefits for people with special educational needs

In a study comparing students with SEN in a special education environment to the ones in an inclusive environment, statistics showed that those in the inclusive setting made more academic progress. Improvements have been noted in the areas of social interaction, appropriate behaviour, self-esteem, and language development. Being involved in the same learning activities as their peers allows children with SEN to develop better interpersonal skills. Often such children are lonely, and increased social connections through contact with peers, friends, and teachers give them more chances to form relationships with community members. Furthermore, the longer the students with special needs are included, the more positive effect there is on educational, social, and occupational outcomes. Self-esteem and social competence turn out to be significantly improved.



## Benefits for people without special needs (1)

The research points the benefits not only for students with SEN, but for their non-disabled peers as well, most of these benefits being social in nature. The most significant benefit attributed to inclusion practices seems to be the increased diversity awareness and tolerance. Students learn to be sensitive to the needs of others and can be 'helpers — not superiors, but useful'. Serving students with special needs, their peers obtain such features as willingness to help, which remains with them for the rest of life. Students without special needs also find that true affectionate friendships can be formed with their special needs classmates. If the students had not been included but rather set apart in a special classroom, these special relationships probably would not have been shaped.

## Benefits for people without special needs (2)

Other benefits for ordinary students are the presence of an extra aid in the classroom as well as an adaptation to different learning styles. Often, even in a fully inclusive environment, a one-on-one assistant is necessary. A highly-qualified assistant or special education teacher can provide a valuable resource for the non-disabled classmates. In an inclusive environment, different teaching techniques must be used in order to educate all types of learners effectively. The students without special needs can benefit from different learning styles being taken into consideration in an inclusive environment, because every student, disabled or not, has his/her own style of learning. If as many various learning styles as possible are presented in the classroom due to the inclusion of special needs children, the benefits can reach everyone.

## Benefits for teachers

In spite of the widespread opinion among teachers, that they need special skills to teach children with special needs, research has shown that in most cases inclusion can be successfully implemented through good, clear, accessible teaching which encourages the active participation of all students. Such practices show teachers that all students have skills and strength, and create awareness of the importance of a direct individual way of instruction.

Inclusion has challenged teachers to develop more child-centred, participatory, and active teaching approaches — and this benefits all students. Such educational environments bring teachers to the necessity to apply new approaches and methods, and to acquire specific technological skills. The skills improve vocational competence of a teacher. In this connection, inclusive education can act as a catalyst in educational practice, thus improving the quality of education.



## Benefits for society

Inclusion also has a great benefit for the society, as it supports the social value of equality by providing a miniature model of the democratic process. Inclusion can help overcome discrimination and break the cycle of exclusion. Discriminatory attitudes toward people with special needs persist in the society because of scarce awareness and information on how to live close with such people. It is difficult to break down the attitudinal barriers, but experience has revealed that, within the right context, people can be more tolerant and helpful and gain the skills of socialization and collaboration. It seems to be the only way to uphold the civil rights of disabled people.



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