

## Primary school career of pupils with disabilities

While most 10-year-old pupils move up to grade 5, less than one in four disabled pupils attain this grade at the same age. Four years earlier, six in ten disabled pupils were attending grade 1 at the age of 6. While more than eight in ten disabled children aged 6 were enrolled in an ordinary class, less than one in two is in this type of class at the age of 10. Half of the disabled pupils will gradually be enrolled in a special class or school, and more often children with disadvantaged backgrounds.

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A cohort of disabled children born in 2005 is followed since the beginning of the 2013 school year. Information regarding their school career from the age of 3 (FIGURE 1) was collected through a survey conducted with their family (see "SOURCE AND DEFINITIONS"). All pupils had an Individual Education Plan (IEP) by at least 2014, although families may have identified a particular disability or disorder in their child much earlier.

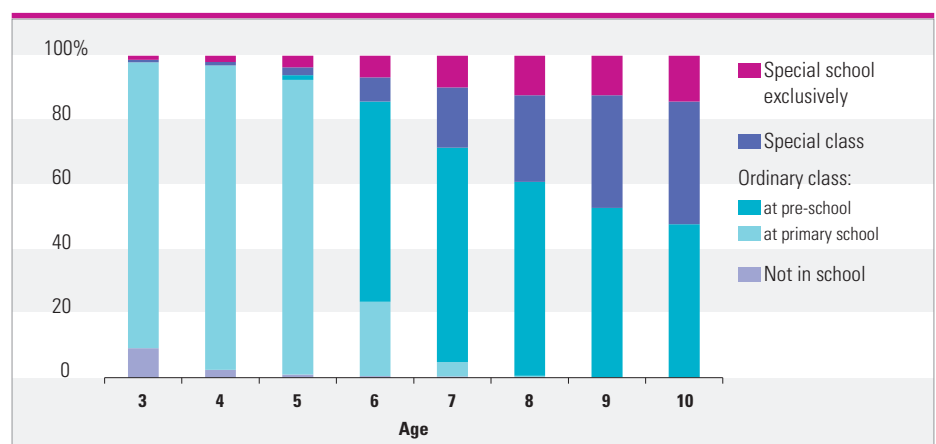
### The type of disorder has an influence on the first IEP

Recognition of a disability, which sets the IEP in motion, is not always done when the pupil is first enrolled in school. Indeed, four in ten children with a hearing disability and one in four children with a visual, motor or metabolic disability

or related multiple disorders get an IEP at the age of 3. In contrast, language or speech disability is often recognised when a pupil shows learning difficulties. The corresponding individual education plan is established after the age of enrolment in primary school<sup>1</sup> and even after the age of 7 for over half of the children with these particular disability. Half of children with a mental disorder and four in ten children with intellectual and cognitive disabilities have an IEP before the age of 6. Furthermore, 12% of children have an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), a disorder classified with intellectual, cognitive or mental disorders.

1. In France, compulsory school begins at the age of 6 with a five-year primary school, from grade 1 to grade 5 in this memo.

1 – School career described by parents in the Families survey (from age of 3 to age of 8) then by follow-up of children (%)



Non-responses excluded.

Source: MENESR-DEPP – Families survey conducted on a panel of pupils with disabilities born in 2005 and review of their educational situation between 2013 and 2015.

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In nine out of ten cases, this disorder was identified before the child reached the age of 5 and an IEP had been established for two-thirds of the children before this age.

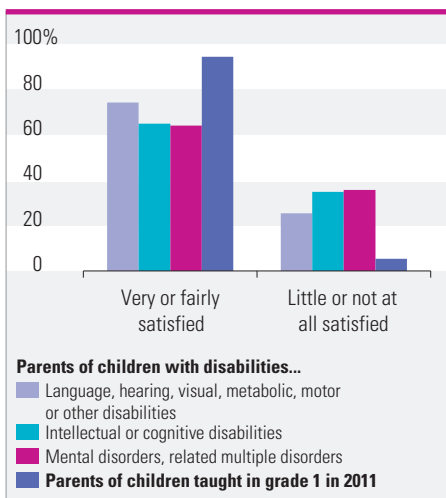
### Pre-school is regarded as a place for socialisation rather than a learning environment

Nearly all children with disabilities had attended pre-school, but one in ten had not yet been enrolled in school by the age of 3 and two in a hundred by the age of 4. Children with metabolic disorders, related multiple disorders or an ASD were less likely to be in school by the age of 3.

The satisfaction rate of parents with disabled pupils concerning pre-school was much lower than the rate of parents with pupils from the same age questioned at the time of enrolment in grade 1 (see “SOURCE AND DEFINITIONS”). In particular, one-third of parents with disabled pupils was little or not at all satisfied with the education their child received in pre-school compared to just 5% of parents of non-disabled children of the same age enrolled in grade 1 in 2011 (FIGURE 2).

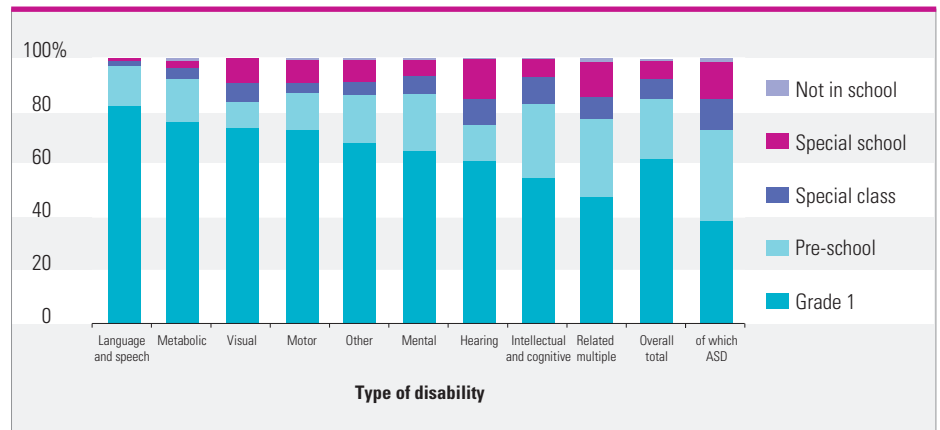
Parents with disabled children regard pre-school as a place more conducive to socialisation (improved socialisation with others; greater discipline and observance of rules, more autonomy in daily life) rather than a learning environment (improved language proficiency, solid foundations for

### 2 – Satisfaction rate of parents regarding the teaching received by their child at pre-school (%)



Source: MENESR-DEPP – Families survey conducted on a panel of pupils with disabilities born in 2005 and Family survey on 2011 panel.

### 3 – Educational situation at the age of 6 by type of disability (%)



Source: MENESR-DEPP – Family survey conducted on panel of pupils with disabilities born in 2005.

reading, writing and counting). Looking at this last point, there is a significant difference of opinion between these parents and those surveyed in 2011, nine in ten of whom thought that pre-school provided a good foundation for subsequent learning. Lastly, in the final year of pre-school, over one-quarter of parents with disabled children felt that their child did not enjoy pre-school much or at all and half of them believed their child did not learn sufficiently compared to less than 10% of parents questioned when their child was enrolled in grade 1 for these two criteria. The opinions of parents depend on their child’s disorder: parents of children with language or physical disabilities always have a more favourable opinion than parents of children with intellectual or cognitive disabilities, the latter always expressing a more positive opinion than parents of children with mental or related multiple disorders.

### One-third of children enrolled in grade 1 at the age of 6 reach grade 5 at the age of 10

At the age of 6, 85% of disabled pupils were enrolled in ordinary classes, but one in four was still in pre-school; 7% were taught in special classes and the same proportion attended a special school. While 1% were not enrolled in any school. One-third of children with an ASD had been kept in pre-school. Pupils with an ASD were also one of the largest groups to be schooled exclusively in a special school (14%), along with pupils with a hearing disability (15%), pupils with a motor or visual disability (9%) and pupils with related multiple disorders (13%) (FIGURE 3).

When they reach the age of 10, 22% of disabled children entered into grade 5 but children with a visual disability (61%), children with a motor disability (53%) and children with a metabolic disorder (46%) were more likely to attain this grade. In contrast, only 8% of children with intellectual or cognitive disabilities got up to this grade. While eight in ten children with language or speech disabilities enter primary school at 6-year-old, only one-third of them reach grade 5 at 10-year-old. These pupils were, in fact, the least likely to have an IEP before enrolment in grade 1 and one-third of them did not receive a plan until they were 8-year-old or more, this particular disability tending to be identified during the course of learning. Two-thirds of children with an ASD were schooled in an ordinary class, one in five making to grade 5. One-quarter were enrolled in special schools (FIGURE 4).

### One-quarter of children reached grade 4 a year behind

Among the 23% of children who reached grade 4, one in five children did not repeat a year between the final year of pre-school and enrolment in grade 4. For children with mental or hearing disabilities reaching grade 4, this proportion increased to one in four. Not including pupils who enrolled late in primary school, disabled pupils were most likely to repeat grade 1: 38% of pupils were one year behind but 44% for those with a visual disability and 45% for those with related multiple disabilities. One-quarter repeated grade 2, nonetheless for pupils

with language or speech disabilities this increased to almost one-third. A small number of 10-year-old pupils in grade 4 (2%) started their educational career in a health institution (10% of children with a metabolic disorder) or special school (8% of children with a hearing disability). Furthermore, 5% of pupils with intellectual or cognitive disabilities and 4% with mental or visual disabilities started school in a special class (see “SOURCE AND DEFINITIONS”).

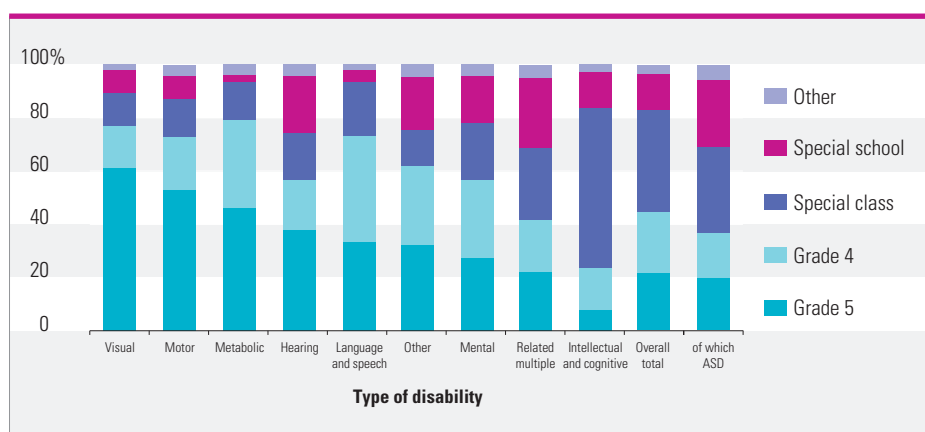
In total, 46% of disabled pupils aged 10 were schooled in ordinary classes compared to 85% of them aged 6.

### Six in ten pupils with intellectual or cognitive disabilities are in a special class at the age of 10

Pupils with intellectual or cognitive disabilities were more likely to be taught in special classes, while those with visual disabilities and those with motor and metabolic disabilities were the least likely (12% and 14% respectively). Before entering special classes, more than three in ten pupils were kept in pre-school and then were repeating grade 1 or grade 2 in ordinary classes. Six in ten pupils with language or speech disabilities attend three or four ordinary classes with repeated years before being enrolled in a special class. Four in ten pupils with intellectual or cognitive disabilities enrolled in special class at the age of 10 had attended this type of class for more than four years. When enrolled in special class, a greater number of pupils with visual or hearing disabilities were taught in this type of class for five years: 37% compared to 14% of pupils in special class.

The educational level of pupils in special classes did not exceed grade 2 for two-thirds of them: 13% were at grade 4 and 3% at grade 5. However, one-third of pupils with hearing or visual disabilities reached grade 4; 15% with a hearing disability and 19% with a visual disability reached grade 5. In total, 87% of pupils were schooled in mainstream education by the age of 10, all types of class combined, compared to 93% by the age of 6.

#### 4 – Educational situation at the age of 10 by type of disability (%)



Source: MENESR-DEPP – Panel of pupils with disabilities born in 2005.

### Four in ten children taught in special schools in 2015 had been there for at least five years

Over two-thirds of children with visual or motor disabilities and half of children with hearing disabilities taught in special schools had been there for at least five years. This was also the case for four in ten pupils with intellectual or cognitive disabilities or related multiple disabilities. Children with hearing disabilities followed a different school path from those with other types of disability: 18% were taught in special schools compared to 8% of children with visual or motor disabilities and 2% of children with a metabolic disorder. Furthermore, one-third of children with a motor disability and one-quarter of children with visual or hearing disabilities taught in special schools had been there since the age of 4. Half of pupils in special school were at pre-primary level and one-third at grade 1 or grade 2 level. Overall, 3% were at the level of grade 5, but this increased to 11% for children with visual or hearing disabilities taught in these types of school

(see “SOURCE AND DEFINITIONS”). Pupils with visual or hearing disabilities and those with motor or metabolic disabilities are more likely to be taught in a special school before entering a special class in mainstream education. Fewer pupils moved from a special school to a special class than vice versa. Special schools were more likely to be attended by children with an intellectual or cognitive disability, mental disability or related multiple disabilities.

### Children from a disadvantaged background were more likely to be taught in special classes

A child’s career is also contingent on his or her social origin: children from very advantaged backgrounds reached grade 5 at 10-year-old more often than those from a disadvantaged background (39% and 15% respectively) (FIGURE 5); the latter group were often more likely to be taught in a special class (45% and 23% respectively). The gaps were less significant for pupils who were a year behind or taught in special school. Social differences affecting

#### 5 – Level attained at the age of 6 or 10 by social origin (%)

	Disadvantaged	Middle class	Advantaged	Very advantaged	Overall total
Ordinary class at age 6	83	84	90	91	85
incl. grade 1 at age 6	61	63	65	65	62
Ordinary class at age 10	36	49	58	61	45
incl. grade 5 at age 10	15	24	31	39	22
Special class at age 6	8	8	5	4	7
Special class at age 10	45	35	27	23	38
Special school at age 6	7	7	4	4	6
Special school at age 10	15	13	11	11	14

Source: MENESR-DEPP – Family survey conducted on panel of pupils with disabilities born in 2005.

children as they enter primary school tend to aggravate the situation with all disabilities combined: a child from a disadvantaged family was more likely to attend a special class than their more advantaged peers. They were separated by 22 points at the age of 10 compared to 4 points at the age of 6. Similarly, at the age of 10, children from disadvantaged social origins and children from very advantaged social origins in an ordinary class were apart by 25 points compared to 7 points at the age of 6. These differences occur for pupils who never repeat a grade in ordinary class and who are more likely to come from an advantaged background. The differences were less prominent for pupils taught in special school (FIGURE 5). The level a pupil attains depends in a large part on the particular disability he or she has (FIGURE 4). The type of disability also varies depending on the social origin (see “to learn more”). Further-

more, for a same disability or disorder, the social differences are patent. While children with a visual, motor or metabolic disability or disorder were more likely to reach grade 5 without repeating a grade, they were less likely to reach this grade when they came from a disadvantaged background than children with a language or speech disability from a very advantaged background. The differences are less significant for children with an intellectual or cognitive disability or an ASD. This group was, however, more likely to be taught in a special class or school if they came from a disadvantaged background (FIGURE 6). At the age of 6, children with intellectual or cognitive disabilities from disadvantaged backgrounds were already more likely to be taught in a special class than those coming from very advantaged backgrounds (11% and 6% respectively), the latter group is expected to be kept in pre-school (38%

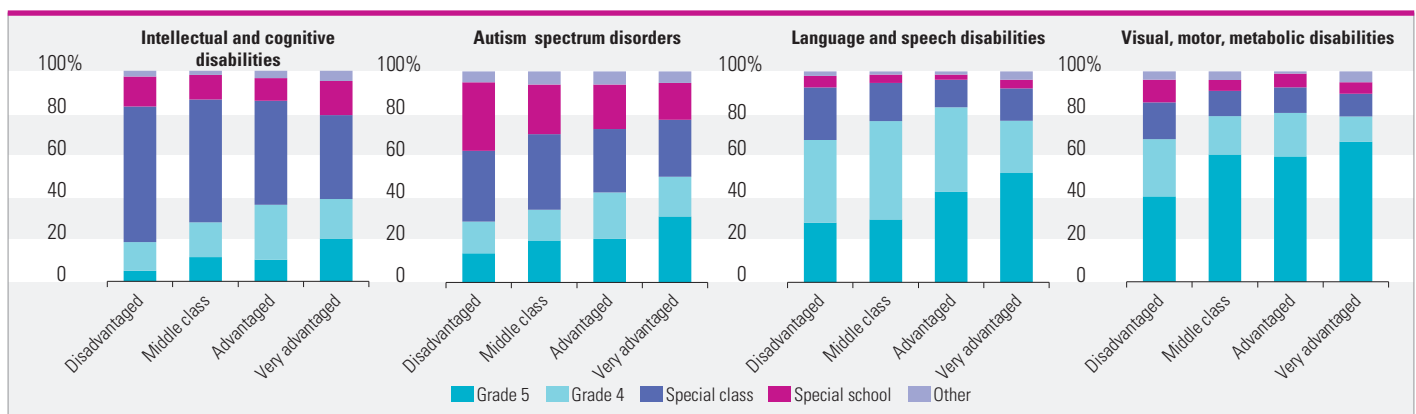
compared to 26% for disadvantaged children). At the age of 6, 14% of children with an ASD were exclusively taught in a special school but 17% is from a disadvantaged background and 9% from a very advantaged background (see “to learn more”).

## to learn more

- ✚ LE LAIDIER S., “Large academic and social differences for disabled children in primary and secondary school”, *Note d'Information*, no. 4, MENESR-DEPP, February 2015.
- ✚ *Repères et références statistiques (RERS)*, [Statistical benchmarks and references], 1.6, 3.6, 3.7, 4.20, 4.21, MENESR-DEPP, September 2016.
- ✚ To access this additional reading, see the section “Télécharger les données : tableaux et graphiques au format Excel” [Download data: tables and charts in Excel format].

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### 6 – Level attained at the age of 10 by social origin (%)



Source: MENESR-DEPP – Panel of pupils with disabilities born in 2005.

## SOURCE AND DEFINITIONS

### Source

In the new 2013 school year, the DEPP created a panel of pupils with disabilities born in 2005. A survey was conducted with the families of the selected pupils. It included a number of questions from the Families survey on the panel of pupils in grade 1 in 2011 for the purposes of comparison. The nature of the disability identified at the time of enrolment is the main survey criterion used alongside the year and month of birth. The survey used the unequal probabilities sampling method to ensure that all the disabilities are properly represented. The numbers were weighed to represent all disabled pupils born in 2005 taught in an ordinary school or a special school.

### Définitions

**Individual Education Plan (IEP):** formulated by a multi-disciplinary team from the MPDH (departmental centre for people with disabilities) including professionals from the health and education sectors, the plan

identifies the educational needs of the disabled pupil and the support to meet these needs.

**Mainstream education:** in a school, teaching can be ‘individual’ (in ordinary classes) or ‘collective’ in a **special class** in which the pupil receives teaching adapted to their specific needs with a specialist teacher.

**Special school:** health and social institutions under the authority of the Ministry of Health, they provide comprehensive – schooling, educational and therapeutic – care.

**Social origins** are defined from the professions and socio-professional categories of the actively employed and those of the corresponding unemployed or retired:

- very advantaged: company directors with ten or more employees, professions, executives and higher intellectual professions, professors and teachers;
- advantaged : intermediate professions(except professors and teachers);
- middle class: farmers, craftsmen and shop keepers, employees;
- disadvantaged: labourers, inactive (the life-long unemployed, people without a professional activity), non-respondents. ■