

## **Information about the Educational and Psychological Counselling Service**

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### **The Educational and Psychological Counselling Service (PPT)**

The Educational and Psychological Counselling Service (often referred to as PPT or PP-tjenesten in Norwegian) is a municipal or county municipal advisory and guidance service. Its intention is to aid children, adolescents and adults who are experiencing developmental difficulties or having difficulties related to education.

PPT exists to provide kindergartens and schools with guidance and counselling about how to organize learning and social situations for children and pupils who need help.

PPT will assist schools to organize learning in better ways to help pupils with special needs.

PPT is subject to the duty of confidentiality. Information about a child or pupil is exempt from public disclosure. The information is not disclosed or shared with anyone without consent from the parents. Information about the child or pupil is archived in a separate case journal and folder based on guidelines set for these procedures by the Norwegian Data Inspectorate.

### **What does PPT do?**

PPT will explore a situation to establish the needs a child, adolescent or adult has when deemed challenged in order to provide guidance and counselling about these issues:

- Language difficulties and speech impairments
- General learning difficulties or problems in a specific subject area
- Reading and writing difficulties
- Difficulties with mathematics
- Problems with concentration
- Social and emotional problems
- Behavioural disorders
- Vision and hearing problems

### **How can a parent contact PPT?**

You should speak with someone about your worries at the public health clinic, kindergarten or school before contacting the Educational and Psychological Counselling Service. Pupils age 15 and older may also contact PPT directly. PPT can also assist adults who wish to complete a primary/lower secondary education.

Individuals and institutions (kindergartens, schools etc.) may contact PPT anonymously for advice.

A child or pupil can be formally referred to the Educational and Psychological Counselling Service if more assistance is needed. A referral to PPT is normally done using the referral form; see the website of your municipality or county municipality. Please contact the kindergarten or school for help to fill in the referral form.

Other agencies that can refer a child, pupil or adult to PPT:

- Kindergartens, schools and adult education centres.
- Public health clinics and hospitals, based on parental consent, if a child or pupil has not reached the age of 15.

A pupil or parent can require a school to carry out an examination to decide whether the pupil needs special help with his or her education, and if so what kind of education, instruction or training this implies.

### **How does PPT do its work?**

PPT cooperates with kindergartens and schools to structure any help a child or pupil has a right to. The manner in which PPT processes a case can be divided into three phases:

#### **1. *The examination***

When PPT receives a referral or notification of concern it is customary to speak with the parents and kindergarten or school together to find out what help is needed. Ppt uses conversations, interviews, observations and testing to establish the most complete image possible of the child or pupil's aptitudes and needs. The examination will be done at the kindergarten or school, or at one of PPT's offices.

#### **2. *Expert assessment and recommendations***

An expert assessment (a written report) will be prepared based on PPT's examination. The assessment will include recommendations as to what a kindergarten or learning institute can do to help the child or pupil. PPT will provide the expert recommendations. The recommendations normally result in some form of special educational assistance for pre-school children and special teaching arrangements for compulsory school pupils.

#### **3. *Follow-up***

PPT can provide follow-up services in the form of guidance for parents, kindergarten employees and schoolteachers. PPT is available for supportive conversations if a pupil feels the need for such conversations. This will allow PPT to consider any further action or referral.

PPT's work is based on legal frameworks laid down in the Norwegian Education Act based on the following paragraphs, among others:

*§ 5-1 The right to special education*

*§ 5-3 Expert assessment*

*§ 5-4 Processing cases based on decisions concerning special education*

*§ 5-6 The Educational and Psychological Counselling Service*

*§ 5-7 Special educational assistance prior to reaching compulsory school age*