

AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE



As early as possible: **all children have the right to receive the required support as soon as possible and whenever it is needed.**

This implies **co-ordination and co-operation among services**, led by one of the services concerned. The stakeholders involved need to build real communication among themselves, being able to understand and provide information to each other. **Parents are key stakeholders.**



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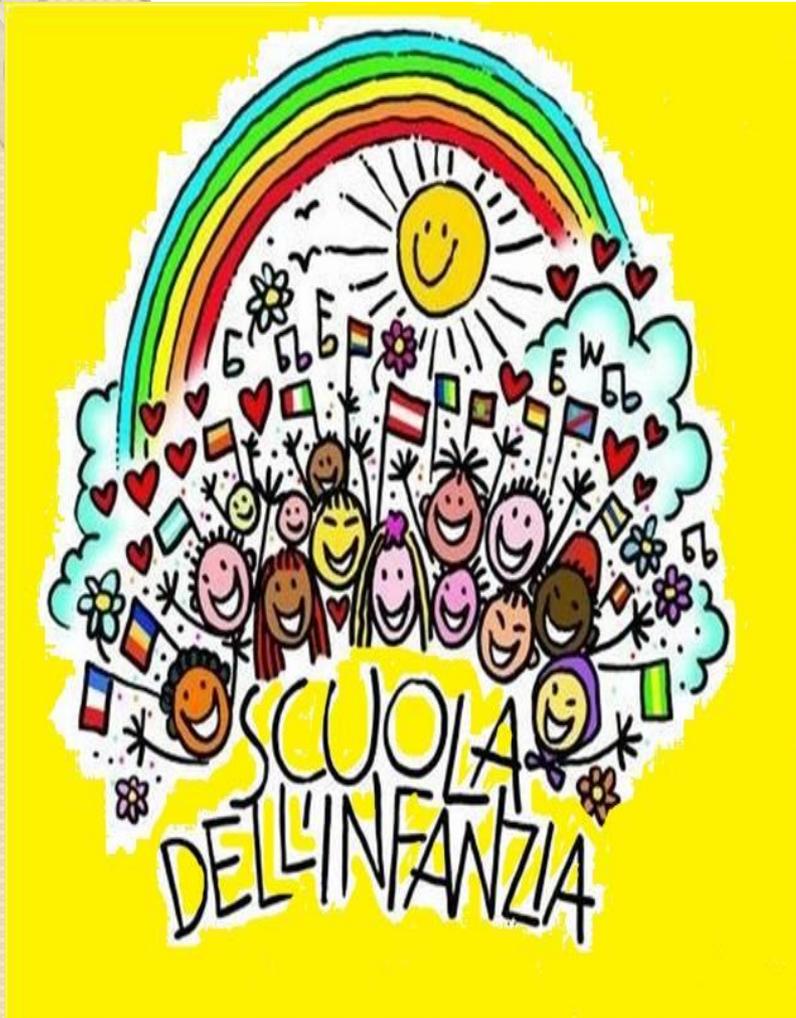


As early as possible Introduction

- ‘As early as possible’ concerns, first of all, **providing an intervention at an early stage in a child’s life.**
- It also covers many other relevant elements such as:
- **intervening as soon as the need is detected;**
- **putting early assessment in place;**
- **providing the required support as early as possible**
- **preparing and planning transition phases** from one educational phase to the next and to employment.



As early as possible



‘Inclusion starts in the kindergarten’

(European Agency, 2012a, p. 14);

‘Diversity is positive; it is important to prepare people from the beginning, to work with the kids to build up a better generation’

(ibid., p. 29).

Early detection and assessment



- The Agency report, **Assessment in Inclusive Settings: Key Issues for Policy and Practice**, provides an extensive description of this important aspect.
- It says that:
- **Initial assessment of pupils who are thought to have SEN [special educational needs] can have two possible purposes:**

Purpose 1

Tempestività ed accuratezza
possono fare la differenza...



- Identification linked to an official decision to **‘recognise’** a pupil as having educational needs that require **additional resources** to support their learning;
- ;

Purpose 2



Informing learning programmes, where assessment is focused upon highlighting strengths and weaknesses the pupil may have in different areas of their educational experience.

Such information is often used in a formative way – perhaps as the **starting point for Individual Education Plans (IEPs) or other target-setting approaches** – rather than as a one off, baseline assessment (Watkins, 2007, p. 22).

Early detection and assessment



- ‘ **Multi-disciplinary teams carry out initial identification assessment** with mainstream classroom teachers, parents and pupils as full partners in the assessment process’ (ibid., p. 38).

Early detection and assessment



The importance of early assessment followed by early intervention measures was highlighted within the scope of the Agency report **Multicultural Diversity and Special Needs Education (2009a)**,

as well as in **the findings of the Agency's Mapping the Implementation of Policy for Inclusive Education (MIPIE) report (2011a)**.

Early support I



The majority of the Agency's reports refer to the importance and benefit of early support.

The Inclusive Education and Classroom Practice project mentions that:

The criteria that should be used when offering part-time special provision to pupils are that they should be:

- **(1) as early as possible;**
- **(2) as flexible as possible** (if one approach is not working, choose another);
- **(3) as 'light' as possible** (without negative side effects);
- **(4) as close as possible** (therefore preferable within the mainstream class and within the mainstream school); and
- **(5) as short as possible** (European Agency, 2003, p. 16).

Early support 2

The report **Teacher Education for Inclusion Across Europe – Challenges and Opportunities** states that: :

- investment in early childhood education and an increasingly inclusive education system is likely to represent a more effective use of resources than short term initiatives designed to ‘close gaps’ or support certain marginalised groups
- (European Agency, 2011b, p. 77).



Planning transition I



- The report **Transition from School to Employment. Key Principles and Recommendations for Policy Makers** highlights that countries need to ‘**ensure the development of transition plans early enough in a student’s school career, not just at the end of compulsory education**’ (European Agency, 2002a, p. 5).



Planning transition 2

Within the framework of the Agency's work on this topic, **Individual Transition Plans**: it appears that transition to employment is part of a long and complex process, covering all phases in a person's life, which needs to be managed in the most appropriate way.

'A good life for all', as well as 'a good job for all' are the ultimate goals of a successful overall transition process.

The types of provision or the organisation of schools or other education locations **should not interfere with or impede the achievement of such a process**

(European Agency, 2006, p. 8)..



conclusions



- In conclusion, **the main goal of early intervention is to provide meaningful and positive activities to promote early child development, family involvement, quality of life, social inclusion and societal enrichment.** It must be borne in mind that **support services are essential for some, but also beneficial to all.** All children have the right to receive support whenever it is needed. This requires a **co-ordinated approach across sectors and efficient co-operation among all stakeholders**