

Definitions: normal education, special education and inclusive education.

In the US, we would term it "general education" rather than "normal education." But normal/general education is the unmodified curriculum. In theory, the average student should be able to learn and thrive in this setting.

Special education, in the US, is not a place but a service. It is available to students who have identified special educational needs, which cause them to require modifications in their educational program. This may include students who have learning disabilities, sensory impairments such as problems with vision and hearing, conditions such as autism. etc. Special education services are on a spectrum, from accommodations and modifications to the curriculum, to specialized support in the classroom, to pull-out programs such as resource rooms, to special day classes for students with disabilities, to special schools. There are many ways of providing the appropriate supports for students with special educational needs, and the least restrictive environment (LRE) demanded by federal law will vary depending on the individual student.

Inclusive education is one way of providing special education services. In inclusive education, a student with special educational needs is enrolled in a general education classroom, with appropriate supports. This often means that the student has a one-to-one assistant, who can assist the student with specialized instruction and modifications to the curriculum in order to help the student succeed with his or her age group peers. There should also be an inclusion specialist who helps the classroom teacher in developing the best strategies for teaching the inclusion student. In theory, this is a great plan. In actual fact, it is sometimes great and sometimes a miserable situation for everyone involved.

Source(s):

I have had relatives with special needs in specialized programs and in inclusion programs. I am a special day class teacher, and my husband is a one-to-one assistant for students in inclusion programs

"Normal" education is designed for learners without any major disabilities or handicaps [mental, physical, learning, psychological,...]. It is a regular school/institution, with regular functioning & curricula meant for 'average' or 'normal' kids.

Some kids have disorders & disabilities where Special resources, techniques, systems & tools need to be employed to ensure optimal learning. Some children are blind, deaf, autistic, dyslexic, etc. etc. They find it difficult to learn through the normal medium & need special care & attention. eg. the blind learn through Braille & audio-based techniques.

When the entire class or school is structured for such kids, it becomes a Special class or school.

At present, the philosophy is towards Inclusive education wherein All kids are catered to in the same school. The 'normal' class will have some 'challenged' students as well. Reason is to Include the entire spectrum, as it is healthy for both the child with disorder, & the one without. - they both learn from each other & become more empathic towards each other. However, care is taken to see that at least Some special time/coaching is given to the 'needy' in order to keep them abreast with the rest of the class.

Hope this clarifies the distinction.

Ref.: <http://in.answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20091230032203AAqUUAe>