

Inclusive education: research and best practices



Dear colleagues and friends,

With the adoption of the federal law that officially introduced the concept of “inclusive education” into Russia’s educational policy and practice, the term “learner with autism spectrum disorder (ASD)” also entered professional and public discourse. These two notions have profoundly transformed professional thinking, public awareness, and policy-making in education. Inclusive education — recognizing the diversity of children’s needs and individual characteristics — and students with ASD, who have drawn educators’ attention to the fact that we are all different, share a common history.

Official statistics indicate a steady increase in the number of children diagnosed with ASD in Russia, as in the rest of the world. This trend reflects not only improved diagnostic quality but also the development of a more systemic and competent understanding of autism. Across Russia, conditions are being created to systematize the experience accumulated by state and non-state organizations over more than 40 years, while legislative frameworks now secure continuous interagency support for individuals with ASD and their families. These developments enable the creation of mechanisms that promote the successful socialization of children with ASD and their inclusion in general and vocational education.

Transformations are occurring not only at the policy level but also within the professional field itself: new knowledge is emerging, competencies are being formed, and new services and learning environments are being developed. Inclusive practices in working with children with ASD have become an es-

sential unit of professional experience and training — an area that now requires the application of an evidence-based approach.

One of the pressing issues in inclusive education today is home-based learning. A considerable number of children with autism receive education in this form — almost twice as many as those attending inclusive classrooms. At the same time, the number of students with autism learning within the inclusive “Resource Class” model continues to grow. All existing forms and models of education and psychological-pedagogical support for children with ASD are subjects of active methodological exchange among educators. The diversity of these approaches helps ensure every child’s right to quality and accessible education.

The topic of education and support for children with ASD remains highly relevant across both scientific and practical domains. It will be discussed at the VIII International Conference “Current Issues in Ensuring Inclusive Education in the Russian Federation”, to be held in Moscow on October 16–17, 2025.

This special issue of the journal is devoted to the theme of inclusive education and is dedicated to the conference organized by the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation.

Svetlana Alekhina,
PhD in Psychology,
Director of the Federal Center for the
Development of Inclusive General and Supplementary Education
Moscow State University of Psychology & Education