

## Who are Exceptional Students?

An **Exceptional Student** is any student who requires additional support, assistive technology, or altered learning expectations in order to be successful in school. Typically, these students access special education services or specialized support of some form in the classroom. Exceptional Students include, but are not limited to students who have:

- Learning Disabilities
- Giftedness
- Blindness or Partial Sight
- Deafness or are Hard of Hearing
- Behavioral Disorders
- Mental Health Disorders
- Developmental Disability or Delay
- Cognitive Impairment or Delay
- Physical Disabilities
- Are English as a Second Language Learners

## Why Do We Use the Term Exceptional?

We use the term **exceptional** because it is:

- **Positive**- Students who need to access special education or receive more support in school have often been struggling for some time. Their confidence can be very low when they receive the label of “special needs.” Due to the negative perception that can be associated with “special needs” and “special education,” students’ confidence is often further damaged by being associated with these terms. By using the word exceptional, we are taking away this negative stigma and celebrating the differences in students as something that makes them unique learners.
- **Inclusive**- Typically, when people hear special needs or special education, they think of students with learning disabilities (LDs) or developmental disabilities (DDs). However, students who access special education have a wide variety of needs that are not always related to LDs or DDs, including students who are learning English as a second (or third, etc.) language, students who have blindness or partial sight, and students who are gifted. Using exceptional acknowledges all students who are receiving additional support.
- **Accepted**- Exceptional is quickly becoming the preferred speech within educational circles. Many teachers, educational professionals, and policy-makers are choosing to use the term exceptional for the same reasons Tutor Doctor has chosen to. Many Exceptional People and parents of Exceptional Students also feel that exceptional is a more appropriate term and prefer that it be used.