

## **Students with special needs watch Frequently asked questions (FAQ) aimed at parents**

### **What to do for the continuity of a student with special needs' studies in the event of a first expatriation?**

The only French schools existing abroad are general schools; there are no specialised institutions such as those which can be found in France.

Before you leave, gather information on the existing structures (educational, paramedical or care) as well as on the possibility to seek assistance from medical/paramedical staff, the cost and reception conditions of your future host country. Having a good understanding of all the constraints (whatever their type) is necessary (availability to accompany one's child, cost of an attendant, language barrier, socialisation, cost and financing of the care in a specialised institution abroad, etc.)

You will need to connect with the closest French school to your place of expatriation, as it will be able to provide you information regarding the educational adjustments that may be implemented.

Should you happen to settle abroad for a limited period of time, you may need to refer to your departmental MDPH (Departmental House for Handicapped People) before you leave so as to discuss with them the pursuit of your child's studies upon your return to France.

Should you plan on staying in the host country long-term, you will need to think about the pursuit of your child's studies or their beginning work.

<http://www.aefe.fr/> and <http://www.mlfmonde.org/>

<http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/fr/le-ministere-et-son-reseau/annuaire-et-adresses-dumaedi/ambassades-et-consulats-francais-a-l-etranger/>

As part of the Inclusive school policy, solutions may be found through the implementation of educational adjustments at the school level or with the support of the *Centre National d'Enseignement à Distance* (CNED - French Correspondence School) if your child is already registered there:

<http://eduscol.education.fr/cid84599/l-ecole-inclusive.html>

<http://www.cned.fr/scolaire/ecole/>

### **What to do when study difficulties arise, or disorders are discovered while living abroad?**

An educational team is gathered by the headmaster or their representative, comprising of the various people responsible for the pupil/student's education: the headmaster or their

representative, the parents or their representatives, the teachers involved, etc. This is the body which examines the child's situation in view of their studies.

It aims at looking for suitable answers, suggesting a plan of action and creating an educational system that is best suited to the pupil/student's school needs, within the school and/or with external help. The composition of such team may vary depending on the child's school environment.

Depending on the pupil/student's needs and always subject to the parents' agreement:

- The school may set up a PPRE (*programme personnalisé de réussite éducative* - personalised school success programme) to organise specific actions should there be an insufficient command of some skills or knowledge.
- Following a doctor's opinion, the school may plan a PAI (*projet d'accueil individualisé* - personalised reception plan) in the event of a disabling health disorder.
- In the event of a specific learning disorder acknowledged by a doctor and based on their expert assessment, a PAP (*plan d'accompagnement personnalisé* - personalised support plan) organised at the school level may be proposed.

In the event there is a need for compensation or the presence of a handicap is detectable, the family and teaching team will need to fill a document entitled "*grille d'évaluation scolaire*" (GEVASCO - school assessment grid). A guide to help assess the pupil/student's independence (i.e. of the child in a school environment) has been drafted jointly by the French Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Research and the *Caisse Nationale de Solidarité pour l'Autonomie* (CNSA - National Solidarity Fund for Independence). Depending on the child's situation, additional opinions may be given (particularly a psychological or medical check-up).

<http://www.cnsa.fr/documentation/formulaires/formulaires-geva-sco>

Such procedure allows for an adaptation of the education in a French school abroad to be considered. If you are a French citizen and your child's difficulties call for human support, specific equipment or an adjustment of the school hours, kindly contact an MDPH of your choosing in France to review your options and the amount of a potential allowance.

You also need to gather information on the local specialised structures which may, depending on the country, show some similarities to those existing in France. In order to join such structure, you will have to take into account how well your child masters the local language as well as the conditions under which an application is favourably received.

### **What is my role as a parent to a pupil/student with special needs?**

Parents are an integral part of the educational team whose members work together to design and follow the support programme to be implemented. The family may call on external professionals who have been caring for the pupil/student as part of an out-of-school follow-up: therapist, speech therapist, etc. Should these professionals not be able to

be physically present, they may submit a report. Each educational team's meeting must be the object of a written transcript of decisions made signed by all participants.

### **What is the situation of the French schools in terms of disabled access standards?**

The newly built schools observe the disabled access standards for people with a sensory or motor disorder (lifts, inclined planes, rumble strips, luminous alarms, etc.). In older schools, it will be necessary to anticipate and see what can be done (putting an inclined plane, for instance) to allow for a wheelchair in the school. Sometimes in nursery or primary school classes, it may be useful and practical for the pupil's classroom to be located near the entrance. From lower or upper secondary, the fact that teachers instead of students may move classrooms may be considered, when the situation permits.

### **How are the teaching aids recruited and paid for?**

Priority is to ensure such assistance is necessary in view of the pupil/student's independence, the main objective being the child's study and social inclusion. The number of useful weekly hours to guarantee the education is adapted to the child's needs is then determined within the educational team.

Abroad, parents are the ones recruiting and paying a handicapped pupil/student's teaching aid, according to the local legislation and the level of the local salaries. The teaching aids act under the teacher's educational responsibility and the headmaster's authority, while observing the school rules and regulations. French families entitled to a scholarship may benefit from a financial help from the French government.

<http://www.aefe.fr/scolarité/bourses-scolaires/cadre-general>

### **What is the suitable answer to the situation of a pupil/student suffering from a disabling health disorder?**

A personalised reception plan (*projet d'accueil personnalisé* - PAI) may be implemented at the family's request. It will be signed and shared by all stakeholders participating in the project (the school's health department, the parents, the headmaster or their representative, the teachers, etc.)

<http://eduscol.education.fr/pid23254-cid53567/la-scolarisation-des-enfants-malades.html>

### **What is the suitable answer to the situation of a pupil/student displaying long-term studying difficulties due to one or several learning disorders (of the "dys-" family)?**

A personalised support plan (*plan d'accompagnement personnalisé* - PAP) may be implemented. It must be shared by all stakeholders of this educational project (the parents or their representatives, the headmaster or their representative, the teachers, the pupil/student depending on their age, etc.) Such PAP shall specify the educational adjustments to be implemented as part of an ordinary education, following a doctor's or a staff member of the school's health department's opinion: nurse, referring doctor, general practitioner, etc.

<http://eduscol.education.fr/cid86144/plan-d-accompagnement-personnalise.html>

### **What is the suitable answer to the situation of an intellectually precocious child (IPC)?**

A personalised school success programme (*programme personnalisé de réussite éducative* - PPRE) may be implemented and specific adjustments provided for depending on the pupil/student's needs. It shall be signed and shared by all stakeholders of this project (the parents or their representative, the headmaster or their representative, the teachers, the pupil/student depending on their age, etc.)

The suggested PPRE document shall specify the possible adjustments as part of an adapted and personalised education plan depending on the pupil/student's potential.

<http://eduscol.education.fr/cid50680/definition-et-objectifs.html>

### **What is the suitable answer to the situation of a pupil/student with persistent school difficulties?**

A personalised school success programme (*programme personnalisé de réussite éducative* - PPRE) may be implemented. It shall be signed and shared by all stakeholders of this project (the parents or their representative, the headmaster or their representative, the teachers, the pupil/student depending on their age, etc.) Such programme is adapted to each pupil/student's needs and based on the skills acquired. Furthermore, it can be adjusted as its content and intensity evolve depending on the pupil/student. It is also temporary, as its duration depends on the pupil/student's difficulties and progress.

<http://eduscol.education.fr/cid50680/definition-et-objectifs.html>

A link PPRE must be implemented between the primary and lower secondary schools should the difficulties remain. It will allow for actions to be co-ordinated so as to give an efficient answer to the taking care of the pupil's difficulties in each education area of the core teaching.

### **How to request adjustments for the French national examinations (*Diplôme national du brevet* and *Baccalauréat*)?**

The headmaster must make sure that all pupils/students and their families are informed of such procedures and processes right from the beginning of the school year. It is also important to gather information on the help (whether physical or material) sometimes granted by local authorities. In order to take into account the time necessary to review the request for organising such adjustments, the applicants should submit their request to the headmaster (or to the examination centre manager for CNED candidates) as soon as possible, preferably upon registration to the examination. Such request shall be done in the following manner:

- The candidate's family sends the adjustment request to the headmaster. It must include written proof, such as medical information, educational elements enabling for the candidate's situation to be assessed and the adjustment needs for the examination sat underlined (PPS, PAP, PAI, etc. and/or the summary of the material and educational adjustments implemented for the pupil/student and performed by the educational team in view of the candidate's sitting for the examination);
- The headmaster forwards the request to the Cooperation and Cultural Action Counsellor (from the Embassy);
- The latter forwards all requests to the doctor appointed by the consular authority;
- The doctor gives an opinion according to the provisions of the circular of August 3rd, 2015 and hands it to the Cooperation and Cultural Action Counsellor;
- The opinions are forwarded to the Chief Education Officer of the affiliate Regional Education Authority who, in turn, notifies the candidates as well as the Cooperation and Cultural Action Counsellor of their decision.

### **What to do in the event of a request for examination adjustment submitted outside the time limit (case of an accident or a late diagnosis)?**

You must contact the headmaster as soon as possible, who will then get in touch with the examination centre.

### **How can the language offer be adapted in the case of learning difficulties?**

Upon registration in a French school, the pupil/student's language background including the family's linguistic environment shall be taken into account. As French is the school language, the pupil/student's education plan becomes part of a family's global project in terms of language and culture.

Schooling a pupil/student with learning difficulties in a multilingual school requires great availability from the family to support the pupil/student in their studies and work with the educational team.

All adaptations are subjected to the school's internal possibilities and discussed by the educational team. A medical opinion may be requested by the school and/or the family.

### How to consider the academic guidance of pupils/students with specific needs?

Such question applies to every pupil/student. Academic guidance is a process based on the questioning and designing of a project for the pupil/student. It requires for the pupil/student to be assisted by their family and the school's entire educational team. The class teacher is their first conversation partner. A PRIO (*Personnel Ressource Information Orientation* - Resource Information Academic Choice Staff Member) may also be present at school. You can find an explanatory sheet on the AEFÉ website in the "*orientation*" ("academic guidance") column, which will give you all necessary information on the role and missions of this staff member via the following link:

<http://www.aefe.fr/sites/default/files/asset/file/2015-10-13-note-2296-prio.pdf>

Many resources are available online for pupils/students schooled abroad.

When there is a PAI, PAP or PPS, the parents must take into account the main elements of the file in their academic application.

An online chat is also available; you can find relevant information by clicking on the following link: <http://www.monorientationenligne.fr/gr/index.php>.

The pupil/student can ask questions which are answered by a professional.