

April 2017

Information for students with special needs Frequently asked questions (FAQs) for parents

What should you do if this is your first expatriation and you would like your child to continue his special needs education?

French schools overseas only offer a general education. Specialized structures, such as those in France, are not available overseas.

Before you leave, please check the existing systems in place (educational, paramedical or care), as well as the possibility to have access to medical / paramedical staff, their cost and the welcoming conditions of your future country of expatriation. You should consider all types of constraints (being available to accompany your child, the cost of a caregiver, language barrier, socialisation, the cost and funding of the care in a specialised establishment abroad).

You will need to contact the French school closest to your place of expatriation, who should be able to provide information regarding the pedagogical adjustments which can be implemented.

If you are moving for a limited period of time, your child's educational path should be discussed with the MDPH of your department of resident before you leave, to discuss the continuation of your child's schooling once you return to France.

If you intend to remain in the host country for a considerable length of time, please start considering the study options or when your child enters the working world.

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

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

Within the context of inclusive schooling, solutions can be found during the implementation of educational arrangements at the school level or with the support of the *Centre National d'Enseignement à Distance* (National Centre for Distance Education) if the student is already registered there:

[Http://eduscol.education.fr/cid84599/l-ecole-inclusive.html](http://eduscol.education.fr/cid84599/l-ecole-inclusive.html)

[Http://www.cned.fr/scolaire/ecole/](http://www.cned.fr/scolaire/ecole/)

What do you do when academic issues are encountered or when you discover issues when you live abroad?

An educational team is brought together by the Principal or his representative. This team is made up of the various persons responsible for the education of the student: the Principal or his representative, the parents or their representatives, the teachers concerned, etc. This body examines the child's situation in regard to his/her academic background.

Its objective is to find suitable answers, to suggest a plan of action and to develop an educational

system that best meets the student's schooling needs, internally and/or with external help. The composition of this team may vary according to the evolution of the child's educational environment.

According to the needs of the student and always in consultation with the parents:

- the school can implement a PPRE (*programme personnalisé de réussite éducative*) in order to organise certain measures in case certain skills or knowledge are not sufficiently mastered.
- Following a doctor's advice, the school can provide a PAI (*projet d'accueil individualisé*) for a health issue which is disabling.
- In the case of a specific learning disability recognised by a doctor and with the doctor's assistance, a PAP (*plan d'accompagnement personnalisé*) can be suggested and organised by the school. If compensation is needed or a disability is suspected, the family and the teaching staff will have to complete a document called the School Assessment Grid (GEVASCO). A guide for the assessment of the child's autonomy (when the child is at the school) has been created jointly by the Ministry of Education, Higher Education and Research and the National Solidarity Fund for Autonomy (CNSA). According to the child's situation, additional advice may be provided (psychological or medical examination in particular).

[Http://www.cnsa.fr/documentation/formulaires/formulaires-geva-sco](http://www.cnsa.fr/documentation/formulaires/formulaires-geva-sco)

This procedure makes it possible to consider adequate schooling in a French school abroad. If your nationality is French and your child's difficulties require a caretaker, specific equipment, school time arrangements, you should contact a MDPH (*Maison Départementale des Personnes Handicapées*) of your choice in France to examine possibilities and possible allowance amounts. You should also research the local specialised structures that, depending on the country, may have similarities with the existing systems in France; You have to take into account your child's command of the language of the country to integrate this structure, as well as the conditions of acceptance of your child.

What is my role as a parent of a student with special educational needs?

Parents are an integral part of the educational team that works as a team to design and monitor the support program to implement. The family can call on outside people who follow the student outside the school: therapist, Speech Therapist, etc. If they cannot travel, they can write a report. Each educational team meeting must lead to written decisions and signed by all participants.

What is the situation of French schools in terms of disability access?

Newly built schools meet the standards in terms of access for people with sensory or motor impairments (elevators, slope, rough strips, light alarms, etc.). In older schools, it is necessary to anticipate and see what can be done (for example, a slope) to allow wheelchair access in the facility. Sometimes, in kindergarten or elementary classes, it may be useful and practical for the student's classroom to be close to the entrance. From secondary school, it can be considered that it is the teachers and not the students who change class when the situation allows it.

How are the carers recruited and financed?

The priority is to ensure that the carer is needed in regard to the autonomy of the student, as the primary objective is that the student fits in at the school and socially. The number of hours per week needed for a schooling program which fits the child's needs has to be determined by the educational team.

Overseas, the parents employ the carer who will care for the student with a disability at the school

and pay the carer according to local regulations and the level of local salaries. Carers act under the pedagogical responsibility of the teacher who is under the authority of the Principal in accordance with the school rules.

French families with a scholarship can benefit from a financial contribution from the State.

[Http://www.aefe.fr/scolarite/bourses-scolaires/cadre-general](http://www.aefe.fr/scolarite/bourses-scolaires/cadre-general)

What is the appropriate response when a student has a disabling health disorder?

A *projet d'accueil individualisé* (PAI) can be done at the request of the family. It will be signed and shared by all the persons taking part in the project (school health representative, parents, Principal or its representative, teachers ...).

[Http://eduscol.education.fr/pid23254-cid53567/la-scolarisation-des-enfants-malades.html](http://eduscol.education.fr/pid23254-cid53567/la-scolarisation-des-enfants-malades.html)

What is the appropriate response when a student with long term academic difficulties which comes from one or more learning disabilities (dys)?

A *plan d'accompagnement personnalisé* (PAP) can be put in place. It must be shared by all the persons taking part in this pedagogical project (the parents or their representative, the Principal or its representative, the teachers, the student depending on his/her age). The PAP will specify the educational adjustments to implement in the context of regular schooling following the advice of a doctor or a health staff at the school: Nurse, referring physician, attending physician, etc.).

[Http://eduscol.education.fr/cid86144/plan-d-accompagnement-personnalise.html](http://eduscol.education.fr/cid86144/plan-d-accompagnement-personnalise.html)

What is the appropriate response to the situation of an intellectually precocious student (EIP)?

A Personal Educational Success Program (EPPP) can be implemented and specific arrangements can be made to suit the student's needs. It will be signed and shared by all the persons taking part in the project (the parents or their representative, the Principal or its representative, the teachers, the student according to his age).

The proposed PPRE document will specify possible adjustments in the context of an individualised and adapted study path according to the potential of the student.

[Http://eduscol.education.fr/cid50680/definition-et-objectifs.html](http://eduscol.education.fr/cid50680/definition-et-objectifs.html)

What is the appropriate response to the situation of a student who is experiencing persistent academic difficulties?

A *programme personnalisé de réussite éducative* (EPPP) can be implemented. It will be signed and shared by all the persons taking part in the project (the parents or their representative, the Principal or its representative, the teachers, the student according to his/her age). This program is tailored to the needs of each student, based on the skills acquired. It is also flexible: its content and intensity evolve according to the student. Finally, it is temporary: its duration depends on the difficulty encountered by the student, as well as on his progress.

[Http://eduscol.education.fr/cid50680/definition-et-objectifs.html](http://eduscol.education.fr/cid50680/definition-et-objectifs.html)

A bridge PPRE is established between the primary school and junior secondary school if difficulties persist. It allows to coordinate actions to provide an effective response to manage issues encountered by the student in each training fields of the common skills base.

How can you apply for adjustments for the French National Exams (Brevet and Baccalaureate)?

The Principal must ensure that students and their families are informed at the beginning of the year of these procedures and steps. It is also important to enquire about the aids or care sometimes provided by local authorities. Taking into account the time required to study the application to organise the adjustments, candidates should submit their application to the Principal (or the head of the Examination Centre for CNED candidates) at the earliest, preferably at the time of registration.

This request is made as follows:

- the family sends the applicant's request to the Principal. Supporting documents must also be provided: medical information, educational information in order to assess the candidate's situation and to show the need for adjustments for the exam (PPS, PAP, PAI ... and / or a report of the equipment and pedagogical arrangements put in place for the student, carried out by the pedagogical team in order to sit the exam);
- transmission of the request by the Principal to the Cultural Counsellor (Embassy);
- transmission by the Cultural Counsellor to the doctor appointed by the consular authority;
- the doctor gives an opinion, in accordance with the provisions of the circular dated 3rd August 2015 and gives it to the Cultural Counsellor;
- transmission of the opinions to the Rector of the Academy of affiliation which notifies his decision to the candidates and also informs the Cultural Counsellor.

What can be done if an application has not been lodged on time (in the event of an accident or a late diagnosis)?

You must contact the Principal who will in turn contact the test centre.

How can the linguistic offer be adapted in case of learning difficulties?

When enrolling in a French school, the student's language pathway which impacts the family linguistic environment must be taken into account. Since French is the language at the school, the student's journey is part of a global family project in linguistic and cultural matters.

Enrolling a student with a learning disability in a multilingual institution requires a high level of readiness by the family to accompany the student on his / her path and to work with the teaching staff.

All adjustments are subject to the internal possibilities of the school and are discussed by the educational team. Medical advice may be sought by the school and/or the family.

How should study pathways for students with special educational needs be considered?

This is an issue for all students. Study pathways is a process that relies on questioning and developing a project for the student. It requires the accompaniment of the student by his/her family and by the entire school teaching staff. The *professeur principal* is his first interlocutor. In an institution, there may also be a PRIO (*Personnel Ressource Information Orientation*). You can find an explanatory note on the AEFÉ's website in the guidance section which will provide you with the necessary information on the role and missions of this staff:

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

Many resources are available online for students abroad.

When there is a IAP, PAP or MAP, the essential elements of the file must be taken into account by the parents in their application for study pathways.

An online chat also exists; You can find information by clicking on the following link:

<http://www.monorientationenligne.fr/qr/index.php>

The student can ask questions and a professional interlocutor provides answers.