



**Schola Europaea**

Office of the Secretary-General

Pedagogical development Unit

**Ref.: 2012-05-D-14-en-9**

**Original**

## **Policy on the Provision of Educational Support in the European Schools**

---

**Amendment of point 5.1 approved by Written procedure 2017/9 of 7 February 2017 by the BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE EUROPEAN SCHOOLS at its meeting of 7, 8 and 9 December 2016**

**Immediate entry into force.**

**This document cancels and replaces document 2012-05-D-14-en-8.**

The previous version 2012-05-D-14-en-7 cancelled and replaced the following documents:

- 2009-D-619-en-3 Integration of Pupils with Special Needs into the European Schools
- 1512-D-2010-en-3 Vademecum on Document 2009-D-619-en-3
- 2009-D-669-en-2 Learning Support in the Nursery and Primary Cycles
- 2011-09-D-30-en-1 Learning Support in the Secondary Cycle
- 2009-D-559-en-3 Special Arrangements for the Baccalaureate for Candidates with Special Needs
- 2011-09-D-7-en-1 Quality Assurance for the Successful Integration of SWALS

## Background

The words expressing the essential aims of the European Schools have been sealed in parchment into the foundation stones of all the European Schools:

*“Educated side by side, untroubled from infancy by divisive prejudices, acquainted with all that is great and good in the different cultures, will be borne in upon them as they mature that they belong together. Without ceasing to look to their own lands with love and pride, they will become in mind Europeans, schooled and ready to complete and consolidate the work of their fathers before them, to bring into being a united and thriving Europe.”*

The European School is a multilingual and multicultural environment in which the primacy of a child’s mother tongue is safeguarded wherever possible. The European School offers a single type of general academic education, in which learning conditions become increasingly demanding. This single academic pathway, involving highly cognitive and abstract learning, leads to the award of the European Baccalaureate diploma. Different forms and levels of support are provided, designed to ensure appropriate help for pupils having special educational needs or experiencing difficulties at any point in their schooling in order to allow them to develop and progress according to their potential and to be successfully integrated.

## Introduction

- This policy replaces all previous documents concerning support: LS/SEN/SWALS and references to ‘*rattrapage*’ (catching-up) or language support found in existing documents.
- The policy clarifies and harmonises the provision of support in the European Schools and ensures that the child is at the centre of the support.
- The policy avoids categorising or labelling the child by recognising that every child may need support at some time during his/her schooling.
- The policy makes clear that decisions concerning support are made in the best interest of the child.
- The policy recognises the need to harmonise support across the schools. However, each school exists in its own local context, so detailed arrangements for meeting pupils’ needs should take local differences into account.
- The Policy on the Provision of Educational Support in the European Schools has been conceived in line with the key EU strategies.
- Schools’ internal guidelines and procedures must be in line with this document. In case of disagreement, the current document overrules the local rules and practices put in place by the Schools.

## **How to read this document**

The aims and principles of Educational Support in the European Schools are stated in this policy document. Definitions and descriptions of every area are set out in the document 'Provision of Educational Support in the European Schools – Procedural document' (2012-05-D-15).

As the European Schools exist in a multicultural and multilingual context it is necessary to agree on definitions for certain concepts which are used in a very specific way. These definitions have a meaning within the European Schools context which may differ from those used in member states.

Before discussing the different forms of Educational Support, the general principles of learning in the European Schools need to be noted.

## **1. Teaching and learning in the European Schools**

### **1.1. Communication with legal representatives**

The European Schools believe that where parents are involved in their children's education and work in partnership with the school, children achieve and thrive more. Communication between the school and the pupil's legal representatives should be open and regular. This communication is organised in accordance with Article 24 of the General Rules of the European Schools<sup>1</sup>. It is essential that parents inform the school of any issues which could affect their child's learning progress.

The European Schools (ES) are faced with ever greater challenges as the school population becomes increasingly diverse. In order to meet the needs of individual pupils, on the basis of their early identification, teachers use a variety of differentiated teaching methods in their classrooms.

### **1.2. Differentiated teaching**

Differentiation is the planning and execution of teaching and learning for all children in all classes which take account of individual differences in learning style, interest, motivation and aptitude, and reflecting these differences in the classroom.

Differentiation forms the basis of effective teaching. It is essential for all pupils, including those pupils requiring support. Differentiated teaching aimed at meeting all the pupils' needs is the responsibility of every teacher working in the European Schools and must be common classroom practice.

Differentiated teaching ensures that in planning and delivering lessons, teachers are aware of and take into consideration the different learning styles and individual needs of all pupils.

---

<sup>1</sup> See Article 24 of the General Rules of the European Schools – 2014-3-D-14 - <http://www.eursc.eu/getfile/278/2>

This includes meeting the needs of:

- pupils with different learning styles;
- pupils studying in a language section which does not correspond to their mother tongue;
- pupils arriving in the system at a later stage who have followed a different curriculum and/or whose knowledge and skills show possible gaps;
- pupils with a mild learning difficulty
- pupils with a diagnosed special educational need
- gifted and talented pupils

### 1.3. Educational Support

Where normal differentiation in the classroom is not sufficient, the European Schools provide a range of support structures. Support is flexible and varies as a pupil develops and his/her needs change.

These support measures result in general, moderate or intensive support, type A, B and/or special arrangements.

#### 1.3.1. Special arrangements

1.3.1.1 The European Schools offer special arrangements. These arrangements are listed and made available to pupils during examinations, tests and other forms of assessment to allow the pupil to fulfil his/her potential in the fairest possible way. The list of special arrangements is available in the document 'Provision of Educational support in the European Schools – Procedural document' (2012-05-D-15).

1.3.1.2. Special arrangements are authorised when they are clearly related to the pupils' diagnosed need(s) by means of a medical/psychological/psycho-educational and/or multidisciplinary report justifying these special arrangements.

1.3.1.3. The implementation of special arrangements is decided on an individual basis by the school Management (up to and including S5) following discussion with parents and teachers.

1.3.1.4. In S6 and S7, certain special arrangements can be directly authorised by the Director, other arrangements require the approval of the Board of Inspectors for the secondary cycle, according to the list of both categories of special arrangements as set out in the document 'Provision of Educational Support in the European Schools - Procedural document' (2012-05-D-15) and included as an annex to the document 'Arrangements for Implementing the Regulations of the European Baccalaureate' (2015-05-D-12).

1.3.1.5. If the evaluation conditions during the Pre-Baccalaureate and Baccalaureate examinations present a risk to disadvantage the candidate in terms of his/her performance – especially if he/she shows special educational needs – by preventing him/her from demonstrating the level at which he/she has acquired the required competences, special arrangements may be requested and authorised for the written and oral examinations. These special arrangements are not intended to compensate for any lack of knowledge or skills whatsoever.

The request procedure for applying for special arrangements for the European Baccalaureate is listed in the aforementioned document 'Provision of Educational Support in the European Schools - Procedural document' (2012-05-D-15) and included as an annex to the document 'Arrangements for Implementing the Regulations of the European Baccalaureate' (2015-05-D-12).

#### 1.4. Educational Support Provision

Additional support may result in individual or group lessons to supplement the regular curriculum.

All forms of support should be considered as progressive since they are based on meeting the pupil's needs, which may vary over time. It is possible for a pupil to benefit from several different levels of support at the same time.

A pupil's absence from other lessons while receiving Educational Support should be restricted to exceptional cases. Educational Support can be general, moderate or intensive.

##### 1.4.1 General Support

General Support concerns any pupil who may experience difficulties in a particular aspect of a subject or who may need to 'catch up' in a given subject, for example, due to late arrival in the school or illness or because he/she is not studying in his/her mother tongue. Pupils may also need additional help with acquiring effective learning strategies or study skills. Such support is provided in or outside the classroom, to small groups and it is short term. Groups are organised vertically, horizontally, within or across sections, by focusing on the needs of the pupils concerned. The support is planned and specific targets are set, including criteria for success and the information is included in the Group Learning Plan (GLP). The Group Learning Plan is produced by the Support Teacher and kept by the Support Coordinator.

##### 1.4.2 Moderate Support

Moderate Support is an extension of General Support and is provided for pupils with a mild learning difficulty or in need of more targeted support. This could be appropriate for pupils who may be experiencing considerable difficulty in accessing the curriculum due to, for example, language issues, concentration problems or other reasons.

It is provided for a longer period than General Support.

Each pupil has an Individual Learning Plan (ILP). The ILP includes specific learning objectives and criteria for evaluating the pupil's progress and the success of the support. The pupil receiving Moderate Support is following the standard curriculum and he/she is assessed according to the given criteria and learning objectives for his/her class.

This support is given to small groups of pupils with similar needs or, where appropriate, to individual pupils in or outside the classroom. Groups are organised vertically, horizontally, within or across sections, by focusing on the needs of the pupils concerned. The methods of assessment used by the subject teacher may be adapted and special arrangements may be considered appropriate.

#### 1.4.3 Intensive Support

Intensive Support is provided to pupils showing special educational needs according to the descriptions in A and B below and in the document 'Provision of Educational Support in the European Schools – Procedural document' (2012-05-D-15).

In both cases, support can be provided in order to help the pupil develop the required competences (subject knowledge, skills and attitudes). Support is provided in or outside the classroom and to small groups of pupils with similar needs or to individual pupils. All pupils receiving Intensive Support have an Individual Learning Plan.

A. This Intensive Support **type A** (ISA) is provided on the basis of a medical/psychological/psycho-educational and/or multidisciplinary report produced by an expert, justifying the pupil's special individual needs and including the signing of an agreement between the Director and the parents. Intensive Support is provided for pupils with special educational needs such as learning, emotional, behavioural or physical needs (see also the document 'Provision of Educational support in the European Schools – Procedural document' (2012-05-D-15).

The provision of Intensive Support is recommended to the Director by the Support Advisory Group. Pupils can follow the standard or modified curriculum. In the latter situation, the pupil accompanies his/her class with progression but without promotion to the next class and as long as this can be shown to be in the best interest of the pupil's social and academic development.

B. This Intensive Support **type B** (ISB) is provided in exceptional circumstances, and on a short-term basis only, and a Director may decide to provide Intensive Support B for a pupil without special educational needs, for example, in the form of intensive language support for a pupil who is unable to access the standard curriculum.

### 1.5 Non-integration of a pupil

The European Schools do not offer a fully inclusive education system. This means that there may be occasions where despite the school's best efforts, continuing education in the European School is not in the best interest of the child. This may become apparent either before admission or during the child's schooling.

The school has to be able to make appropriate provision for the pupil's pedagogical and social integration. If this is not the case, on the opinion of the Support Advisory Group, the school is entitled to declare itself unable to meet the pupil's needs and to recommend that the parents seek an alternative solution for their child's education, in an establishment better suited and equipped to meet the child's educational and developmental needs. In such circumstances, the school assists the parents as far as reasonably possible.

## **2. Roles and responsibilities**

The stakeholders responsible for successful implementation of the Support Policy are the national authorities, the preparatory committees of the European Schools, the Pedagogical Development Unit and the ICT and Statistics Unit of the Office of the Secretary-General, the Support Policy Group, Support Inspectors, schools, pupils and their legal representatives.

## **3. Resources**

### 3.1. Human resources

Educational Support is based on multi-professional cooperation. Roles, duties and working conditions of support coordinators, support teachers, support assistants and therapists are described in the document 'Provision of Educational Support in the European Schools – Procedural document' (2012-05-D-15).

### 3.2. Material resources

Educational Support requires suitable rooms, equipment and material for its activities. Calculation of the budget allocated for support follows the regulations of the European Schools. The allocation for General, Moderate and Intensive Support is described in the document 'Provision of Educational Support in the European Schools – Procedural document' (2012-05-D-15).

## **4. Administration**

The rules for admission, procedures and documentation are clarified in the document 'Provision of Educational Support in the European Schools document – Procedural document' (2012-05-D-15).

## **5. Assessment and promotion**

### **5.1. Principles of assessment and promotion**

Assessment of pupils receiving support and appeals procedures follow the regulations set out in Chapter IX of the General Rules of the European Schools. In accordance with Article 57(a) and with Article 61 of the General Rules of the European Schools, all decisions concerning promotion to the year above are taken by the Class Council.

5.2. Educational Support aims at enabling the pupil to reach the levels of performance as required for all pupils. A pupil benefiting from a modified curriculum in order to meet his/her needs will be promoted only if he/she meets the expected requirements for his/her study level as defined in the General Rules of the European Schools and in the assessment criteria of the different subjects.

If a pupil is not promoted, he/she may progress with his class group for as long as this is beneficial to the pupil's social and academic development. In that case, this is referred to as progression without promotion. From a formal point of view, the pupil who progresses without promotion remains 'non-promoted' (for example, with a view to integration into another school system).

5.3. Any pupil having benefited from progression without promotion may return to a 'standard curriculum' and be promoted to a higher class if he/she shows that the minimum requirements for his/her study level have been met.

Promotion from S5 to S6 is only possible when the pupil has followed the full curriculum and met its requirements.

All European Baccalaureate candidates must have followed the full S6 and S7 curriculum in order to qualify for award of the Baccalaureate diploma.

A pupil can only qualify for award of the European Baccalaureate when he/she has been duly promoted from S6 to S7.

## **6. Certification**

For some pupils the academic demands of the European Schools are not appropriate and they may be required to leave in order to continue with a different type of schooling. The European Schools will issue a certificate describing the subjects followed, the hours completed and the level of the pupil's attainment in the child's best interest.

## **7. Transition between cycles**

The document 'Framework for school-specific guidelines for transition nursery/primary/secondary' (2015-09-D-41) expands on the rules relating to transition.

## **8. Quality Assurance**

In order to ensure the quality of the Educational Support provided in the European Schools, a number of measures are in place. The roles, responsibilities and procedures are defined in the document 'Provision of Educational Support in the European Schools document – Procedural document' (2012-05-D-15). The effectiveness of the support provided is monitored and evaluated at both the system and the school level.