

Observatory for students with individual educational needs

FAQ for parents

What to do if it is a first expatriation and we wish to continue with the educational background of our child who has individual educational needs?

Overseas, only general French educational centres exist. There are no specialized premises like in France.

Before leaving, you should get information on the equipment (educational, paramedical or nursing) that exists as well as the possibilities to call on medical/paramedical staff, on their costs and conditions under which you can be welcomed in your future host country. It is important to pay attention to the obligations of all type (availability to accompany the child, price of an educator, language barrier, socialisation, cost and financing of a specialized centre overseas...).

It would be a good idea to get in touch with the closest French educational centre to your expatriation place, so that it can give you information on the educational adjustments that could be set up.

If you need to move overseas for a limited duration, then your child's educational background should be discussed with the regional centre for disabled (MDPH) of your home place before leaving in order to talk about the continuity of his/her education once you get back to France.

If you wish to stay in the host country on a long-term basis, then you better plan the continuing of his/her education or fit into a professional life.

Within the framework of inclusive schooling, solutions can be found during the educational adjustments of a centre or with the CNED (online educational program) if the student has already registered.

What to do when academic difficulties arise or when we discover distress in a child while living overseas?

An educational team is reunited by the principal or by his/her representative. This team is composed of different people who are in charge of the education of the child: the principal or his/her representative, the parents or their representatives, the concerned teachers, etc. It is the body that studies the situation related to his/her academic background.

Its objective is to look for adapted answers, to suggest an action plan, to establish educational material that would help best the student- internally or externally. The composition of this team can change throughout the year depending on the evolution of the educational environment of the child.

According to the needs of the child, and always with the agreement of the parents:

- the school can set up a Personalised Programme for Educational Success (PPRE) to organise precise actions if an insufficient command of some skills or knowledge were to be noticed.
- based on a doctor's opinion, the school could plan an Individualised Integration Plan (PAI) for any invalidating health disorder.
- in case of a specific learning disorder recognised by a doctor and with the support of his/her expertise, a Personalized Caring Program (PAP) can be set up at the school.

When there is a need of compensation or that one suspects a child to have some kind of disability, then the family will have to fill in a document "school assessment matrix" (GEVASCO) with the educational team. An assistance handbook for the assessment of a student's self-reliance (in school environment) has been made in partnership with the French Ministry of National Education, Higher

Education and Research, and the National Solidarity for self-reliance Fund (CNSA). Depending on the situation of the child, additional opinions might be required (psychological or medical exam).

This process enables to think about adapting the education to a French centre overseas. If you have a French nationality and that your child's difficulties require human support, specific equipment, schooling adjustments, then please contact the MDPH of your choice in France to study the possibilities and allowance amount that you may benefit.

You shall also get information on local specialised premises, which might, depending on the countries, have similar existing equipment. You shall take into consideration that your child may need to master the host language in order to integrate the facility as well as check the conditions of acceptance of the file.

What is my role as parent of a child with individual educational needs ?

Parents are fully part of the educational team, which leads to collegial work in order to make and follow the support program to set up. The family can call on external people who can follow the pupil within the framework of outside the school monitoring: therapist, speech therapist, etc. If they cannot come to the school, they can then send a report. Each meeting of the educational team shall be subjected to a statement on decisions in written form and signed by all the participants.

What is the situation of French schools for disabled access ?

Newly built schools follow the standards on disabled access for people with sensory disturbances and motor disorders (elevator, inclined surfaces, rumble strips, luminous alarms...). In older schools, it is better to anticipate and see what can be done (like inclined surfaces) to enable the traffic of wheelchairs within the school. Sometimes, in kindergarten or elementary classes, it can be useful and practical for the room of the student to be situated near the entrance. Starting from secondary and high school, it can be planned for teachers and not students to change classes when the situation enables it.

How is the supporting team recruited and financed ?

The priority is to make sure that this support is in any use beneficial to the self-reliance of the student, with the objective first to integrate him/her educationally and socially speaking. Then, it shall be determined within the educational team, the number of daily hours useful to insure an education adapted to the child's needs.

Overseas, parents shall be the ones to recruit the school support necessary to help with the disability, and pay him/her, under the local law and their local salary level. Educators act under the educational responsibility of the teacher who is under the authority of the principal- respecting the school rules.

French families who can get a scholarship can benefit from financial help of the State.

What answer is adapted to the situation of a student suffering from an invalidating health disorder?

A PAI can be set up on request of the family. It can be signed and shared by all the people taking part in the project (health department of the school, parents, the principal or his/her representative, teachers...).

What answer is adapted to the situation of a student having long-term academic difficulties coming from one or several learning disorders ("dys")?

A PAP can be set up. It has to be shared by all the people taking part in the educational project (parents or their representatives, the principal or his/her representative, teachers and the student depending on his/her age...). The PAP will precise the educational adaptations to be brought to give normal education, after getting the doctor's opinion or staff of the health department of the school: nurse, referring doctor, GP...)

What answer is adapted to the situation of a child intellectually premature?

A PPRE can be set up and specific adjustments can be planned to respond to the needs of the student. It shall be signed and shared by all the people taking part in the educational project (parents or their representatives, the principal or his/her representative, teachers and the student depending on his/her age...).

The document offered by PPRE will precise the possible adjustments within the framework of an adapted and individualised educational background that will depend on the potential of the student.

What answer is adapted to the situation of a child presenting lasting educational difficulties?

A PPRE can be set up and specific adjustments can be planned to respond to the needs of the student. It shall be signed and shared by all the people taking part in the educational project (parents or their representatives, the principal or his/her representative, teachers and the student depending on his/her age...). It is a programme that is adapted to the needs of each child following the skills that he/she already acquired. It is adjustable: content and intensity can evolve depending on the pupil. It is also temporary: the length depends on the difficulty of the student, as well as his/her progress.

A "Passerelle" PPRE shall be set up between the school and the middle school if difficulties remain. It enables to coordinate actions to bring to an efficient answer to taking care of difficulties encountered by the student in each one of the common base learning fields.

How to ask for adjustments for French national exams (Brevet and Baccalaureate exams)

The principal shall make sure that students and their families are informed at the beginning of the year of those procedures and steps. It is also important to provide information on the support that can sometimes be granted by the local authorities. In order to take into consideration the necessary time to study the request by the principal, it is important for candidates to give in their request to the principal (or the person in charge of the exam centre for CNED candidates) as soon as possible, during their registration to the exam would even be ideal. This request shall be done as follows:

- the family sends the adjustment request of the candidate to the principal. It shall go together with the following documents: medical information, educational elements that enable to assess the candidate's situation and to show the adjustment needs for the exam (PPS, PAP, PAI...and/or the assessment of material and educational adjustments set up for the student, which was made by the educational team with the perspective to do the exam);
- the Principal sends the request to the Counsellor for Culture Science and Education (Embassy);
- the Counsellor for Culture Science and Education compiles all requests and pass them on to the doctor designated by the Embassy
- the doctor gives an opinion in compliance with the provisions of the memorandum dated August 3, 2015, and transfers it to the Counsellor for Culture Science and Education;
- transfer of the opinions to the rector of the Academy of which foreign school is attached which notifies his/her decision to the candidates and informs the Counsellor for Culture Science and Education as well.

What is to be done when an adjustment request for exams has been made too late (because of an emergency or a late diagnosis)?

You shall go to see the principal as soon as possible who will get in touch with the exam centre.

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

When enrolling in a French school, the language background of the child integrating the linguistic environment of the family shall be taken into consideration. French being the schooling language, the

student's background shall be in line with the global project of the family linguistically and culturally speaking.

Sending a child with learning difficulties to a multilingual school requires the family to have great availability to accompany the student in his/her studies and to work in pairs with the educational team.

All the adaptations depend on internal possibilities of the school and are discussed within the educational team. The school and/or the family can solicit a medical opinion.

How to plan the orientation of students with individual educational needs ?

It is a question that concerns all the students. Orientation is a process, which is based on the questioning and the making up of a project for the student. It requires the support of the family and all the educational team of the school. The homeroom teacher is the first person to talk to. In the school, it is also possible to get a PRIO (Resource Information Orientation Staff).

Many resources are available online for students living overseas. When a PAI, PAP, or PPS exist, the main elements of the file are to be taken into consideration by the parents during their orientation request.

An online chat room exists as well; you can find the information by clicking on the following link: <http://www.monorientationenligne.fr/qr/index.php> .

The student can ask questions and a professional spokesperson will give him/her answers.