

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

Frequently Asked Questions

- **What is Educational Support (ES)?**

The purpose of the Educational Support policy is to provide appropriate help for pupils with difficulties or special educational needs, during their schooling, to allow them to progress according to their potential and to be successfully integrated.

Educational Support is not intended to compensate for a lack of ability, but to allow the pupil to fulfil its potential.

- **Does my child need Educational Support?**

There is an extremely wide range of disabilities and difficulties for which appropriate help, support and compensation are expected to be provided under the Educational Support programme.

More than one third of the pupils of the European Schools receive some sort of Educational Support.

The most common diagnosis groups are psychomotor impairments, eg, dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysorthography, dyspraxia, attention deficit disorder (ADD), attention deficit with hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and autism.

- **How can I request Educational Support for my child?**

Parents or teachers can request that a pupil benefits from Educational Support.

A need for Educational Support is identified either on enrolment or during the school year by the pupil's legal representatives or teachers

On enrolment, it is the responsibility of parents to guarantee that the information given to the school regarding the pupil's level of academic attainment and previous educational support provision and/or special educational needs is correct, reliable and complete.

After enrolment, parents should discuss with class of subject teachers whether Educational Support is necessary and should be requested.

- **To whom should I address the request for Educational Support?**

If the student is in Secondary school, parents or teachers should address the request for Educational Support to the support coordinator who will submit it to the Director. If the student is in Nursery or Primary, the request must be addressed via an e-form that is available at the school website (under vademecum - eforms).

The Director (or the Deputy Director, when so empowered) will decide to convene a meeting of the Support Advisory Group to consider whether the school is able to meet the child's needs.

The Support Advisory Group is composed of the Support Coordinators, the Support Teacher, class/subject teacher, the Support Assistant and eventually a psychologist or therapist.

In Nursery & Primary, the Support Advisory Group is called Care Team and is composed by the Deputy director, the education support coordinator and the school psychologist.

Any relevant information will be passed to the Support Coordinators:

- Mrs Fernandez Katrien (educational support coordinator for Primary)
katrien.fernandez@teacher.eursec.eu
- Mrs Gatto-Roissard Géraldine (educational support coordinator for EN, FI, SW sections)
gattorge@teacher.eursec.eu room 414
- Mrs Santos Anabela (educational support coordinator for FR, NL, DE, IT, PO sections)
santosaa@teacher.eursec.eu room 414

The Support Coordinator convenes the meeting of the advisory group and drafts the minutes of that group, with a proposal regarding the provision of Educational Support that will be submitted to the Director.

The Support Coordinator will ensure that the class/subject teacher is informed of any relevant information.

- **Which documents do I need to submit?**

Parents should provide a medical/psychological or multidisciplinary report. This report should not be more than two years old.

If not written in one of the working languages, the report should be accompanied by a translation into French, English or German

In order to avoid possible conflict of interests, the assessing expert should neither be an employee of the European School nor a relative of the pupil.

The report should be regarded as confidential. Great care must be taken about how and to whom access is given. Teachers working with the pupil are permitted to read these reports but the reports are not distributed.

In case of permanent and unchanging disability and when the Support Advisory Group agrees, no retesting other than regular updates will be required.

For a request for special arrangements in the European Baccalaureate, the completely updated medical/psychological/psycho-educational/multidisciplinary report will be required.

- **Which criteria should fulfil the multidisciplinary report?**

- Be legible, on headed paper, signed and dated
- Be written or translated in one of the working languages of the EU (French, English and German).
- State the title, name and professional credentials of the expert(s) who has/have undertaken the evaluation and diagnosis of the pupil
- Through medical/psychological/psycho-educational or multidisciplinary report, state specifically the nature of the pupil's medical and/or psychological needs and the tests or techniques used to arrive at the diagnosis
- Report for learning disorders need to describe the pupil's strengths and difficulties (cognitive assessment) and their impact on learning (educational evidence) and the tests or techniques used to arrive at the diagnosis.
- Report for medical/psychological issues need to specify the pupil's medical/psychological needs and their impact on learning (educational evidence).
- All reports need a summary or conclusion and stating the accommodations required as well as where appropriate, recommendations for teaching/learning for the school's consideration.
- This documentation must be regularly updated and not be more than two years old. In case of permanent and unchanging disability and when the Support Advisory Group agrees, no retesting other than regular updates will be required.
- For a request for special arrangements in the European Baccalaureate, the completely updated medical/psychological/psycho-educational and/or multidisciplinary report will be required. Documentation should not be more than two years old, i.e. should not be dated earlier than April S3 and not later than April S5.-
- Solely in exceptional situations which are unforeseeable and duly attested (serious illness, accident, newly enrolled pupils etc.) the request for the granting of special of special arrangements may be submitted after the deadline indicated above. The request must be accompanied by full documentation setting out the grounds on which it is based.

- **Which types of Educational Support there are?**

The Educational Support programmes offer three types of support: General, Intensive and Moderate¹.

¹ see the Policy on the Provision of Educational Support in the European Schools document, accessible in [here](#)

There is also the possibility to ask for "special arrangements" in order that pupils with some sort of diagnosed disability or difficulty do not be discriminated against when sitting for exams or tests.

- **What is General Support?**

Who is it for? Every pupil may need General Support, at some time during schooling. For example, pupils that experience difficulty in a particular aspect of a subject or that need to 'catch up' due to late arrival, because of illness (or because they are working on a language different from their own. This is particularly relevant for SWALS.

In addition, pupils may need additional help with acquiring effective learning strategies or study skills.

- **How to apply for General Support**

Either teachers or parents can make a request for General Support to the Education Support Coordinator.

Support Coordinators should create small groups of pupils, whenever possible, or organise support in or outside the class room. In very exceptional cases, General Support may be provided for an individual pupil.

The Support Teacher should write the Group Learning Plan (GLP) of the group's work – the plan includes group targets and success criteria. Records of the pupils' progress are kept by the support coordinator. Parents are kept informed twice a year via the semester reports.

How long can General Support be provided? Normally for one year maximum. But every case is evaluated in the student best interest.

- **What is Moderate Support?**

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

It might be provided for a longer period than General Support and each pupil has an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) drafted by the Support Coordinator.

- **How to apply for Moderate Support?**

Teachers and pupils' legal representatives can make a request for Moderate Support to the Education Support Coordinator.

Support coordinators create small groups or individual support, in or outside the classroom, depending on pupils' needs and the availability of teachers.

Groups are organised vertically, horizontally, within or across sections, by focusing on the needs of the pupils concerned.

Support teachers write an Individual Learning Plan for each pupil in cooperation with the class/subject teacher. It includes specific learning objectives and criteria for evaluating pupil progress and the success of the support. This Individual Learning Plan should be monitored regularly. Parents are kept informed of their child's progress twice a year via the semester reports.

- **What is Intensive Support?**

There are two types of Intensive Support:

Intensive Support A

This type of support is provided for pupils with special educational needs: learning, emotional, behavioural and/or physical needs. It can only be provided following an expert assessment of the child's needs and the signing of an agreement between the Director and the parents. This agreement can be a bipartite agreement or a tripartite agreement (see below).

The parents should provide to the Support Advisory Group a medical/psychological/psycho-educational/multidisciplinary report complying with detailed criteria (see below), stating the nature of the pupil's medical and/or psychological needs and the tests or techniques used to arrive at the diagnosis.

Documentation should not be more than two years old.

For a request for special arrangements in the European Baccalaureate, it should not be dated earlier than April S3 and not later than April S5.

The teachers or pupil's legal representatives should make a written request to the Support Coordinator, accompanied by the relevant documentation.

The Support Coordinator sets up a meeting of the Support Advisory Group to discuss how best to meet the pupil's needs. The Support Advisory Group meeting is chaired by the Support Coordinator empowered by the Director.

The Support Coordinator drafts the minutes of the Support Advisory Group meeting and drafts the Intensive Support Agreement for signing by the Director and the pupil's legal representatives.

The Support Coordinator organises the Intensive Support and any other arrangements required. An Individual Learning Plan is written by the support teacher(s) in cooperation with the subject/class teacher and/or support coordinator.

The Intensive Support Agreement is valid for one school year only and a full Support Advisory Group meeting should be held each year to begin, renew or terminate Intensive Support.

If necessary, the Support coordinator decides of a meeting of the Support Advisory Group, that may be held at any point during the school year to evaluate and/or amend the Intensive Support Agreement.

When the school cannot provide an appropriate education for a child it can declare itself unable to meet the child's needs. In such cases, the Director takes the final decision, taking the Support Advisory Group's opinion into account. This decision can be appealed pursuant to Article 66(1) of the General Rules of Procedure of the European Schools.

Intensive Support B

This type of support is provided for a pupil or group of pupils without diagnosed special educational needs. For example, it can be provided in the form of intensive language support for a pupil or a group of pupils unable to access the normal curriculum (because of recently arrived from a different school system in a different language).

It can be provided only in exceptional circumstances, and on a short-term basis, by decision of the Director. The Director's decision will be made following discussion with the Support Coordinator and relevant teacher(s).

The teachers or pupil's legal representatives can request short-term Intensive Support for the pupil in writing.

The Director and pupil's legal representatives sign an agreement stating the reasons, nature and length of the Intensive Support to be given.

The Support Coordinator creates small groups or organises individual support, in or outside the classroom, depending on the pupil's needs and the availability of teachers.

Groups are organised vertically (different levels), horizontally (different subjects), within or across sections, by focusing on the needs of the pupils concerned.

The Support Teachers write an Individual Learning Plan for each pupil, which includes specific learning objectives and criteria for evaluating pupils' progress and the success of the support. This should be monitored regularly.

Pupils' legal representatives will be kept informed of their child's progress twice a year via the semester report.

- **What are Special Arrangements?**

In order to compensate for a physical or learning difficulty, teachers or parents can request the Support Coordinator that a pupil benefits from special arrangements. This support only applies to Secondary.

- from S1 to S5

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Special arrangements need to be justified by a medical/psychoeducational/multidisciplinary report. These special arrangements are recorded in the pupil's file.

Examples of special arrangements:

- a) Separate room for the test/examination/assessment
- b) Change of seating arrangements.
- c) Taking of medication and/or refreshment in the case of a medical condition, for example, diabetes.
- d) An assistant to provide physical care for a pupil to ensure his or her well-being and safety. This assistant may not be a relative of the pupil or the teacher of the subject that is being examined.
- e) The use of a specific learning aid which is normally used in class, for example, a magnifying glass; a hearing aid; coloured overlay; a low vision aid; coloured lenses.
- f) For colour-blind pupils, colours can be substituted with words on the test/examination paper or a reader can name the colours for the pupil.
- g) Use of a spell checker because of severe dyslexia. This request has to be confirmed by the school.
- h) Modifications to the format of the assessment.
- i) Additional time can be granted to pupils whose working pace is affected by their condition. For each hour of examination, a maximum of 10 minutes can be granted. For 90 minutes' assessments, an additional 15 minutes can be granted.
- j) Use of a computer or laptop or a typewriter to replace handwriting for pupils diagnosed with dyslexia, dysgraphia or any other disorder affecting written expression. The school ensures that any computer/laptop being used is cleared of stored information and the spell check function and is not connected to the Internet.. It should be noted that in examinations, other than language examinations, content/skills and not language errors, are assessed.
- k) The use of a simple arithmetic calculator, whenever no calculator at all would be allowed.
- l) A scribe to transcribe word for word the pupil's dictated answers and to read back the pupil's answers where necessary. In this case additional time of 10 minutes per hour is allowed.
- m) An audio recording of answers where a scribe is not available.
- n) A reader to read both the assessment paper and to read back the answers. In this case, the additional time of 10 minutes per hour is allowed.
- o) A communicator to provide assistance to a hearing-impaired pupil through sign language or lip speaking

p) A prompter to assist a pupil with severe concentration difficulties or neurological disability in paying attention to the assessment tasks.

q) Written instructions for hearing-impaired pupils.

r) Written answers for oral examinations by a candidate who has severe difficulties in oral expression.

In exceptional cases, there can be also "extraordinary arrangements", ie, arrangements made on an *ad hoc* basis (in addition to the ones in the list mentioned above).

- For S6 and S7

At S6 and S7, special arrangements are only designed to compensate for any specific individual need. It should be noted that the same standards of assessment are always applied to all candidates/pupils. However, special procedures apply in respect of special arrangements in S6 and S7.

Normally, special arrangements in years S6 and S7 will be allowed only when similar arrangements have been used in a previous year or previous years. However, this does not necessarily apply to newly enrolled pupils in S6.

Either a teacher or teachers or the pupil's legal representatives should file a written request for special arrangements in S6 and S7 to the Support Coordinator.

The application must state (i) on which specialist's diagnosis the request is based and (ii) which special arrangements are being requested.

The application must be accompanied by a medical/ psychological and/or a multidisciplinary report (dating back not more than two years) explaining the need for the special arrangements which are being required.

The pupil's legal representative is responsible for providing the relevant documents.

- **Special Arrangements for the BAC**

When it comes to special arrangements for BAC, please note that there are deadlines to be respected: requests for special arrangements for the Baccalaureate must be made by 30 April of the year preceding entry into the Baccalaureate cycle, i.e. S5.

The schools must inform the Central Office by 15 May of special arrangements to be made in S6 and S7.

Solely in exceptional situations which are unforeseeable and duly attested (serious illness, accident, newly enrolled pupils, etc.) the request for the granting of special arrangements may be submitted after the deadline indicated above. The request must be accompanied by full documentation setting out the grounds on which it is based.

List of special arrangements for S6 and S7 authorised by the Director

Schools must inform the Central Office by 15 May of all special arrangements which have been authorised by the Director:

- a) Separate room for the test/examination/assessment.
- b) Change of seating arrangements.
- c) Taking of medication and/or refreshment in the case of a medical condition, for example, diabetes.
- d) An assistant to provide physical care for a pupil to ensure his or her well-being and safety. This assistant may not be a relative of the pupil or the teacher of the subject that is being examined
- e) The use of a specific learning aid which is normally used in class, for example, a magnifying glass; a hearing aid; coloured overlay; a low vision aid; coloured lenses.
- f) For colour-blind pupils colours can be substituted with words on the test/examination paper or a reader can name the colours for the pupil

List of special arrangements for S6 and S7 that can only be authorised by the Board of Inspectors (Secondary) or the Inspector responsible for support (Secondary)

The justification for any of these arrangements needs to be confirmed by the specialist's reports and by the school

- a) Modifications to the format of the assessment.
- b) Additional time can be granted to pupils whose working pace is affected by their condition. For each hour of the examination, a maximum of 10 minutes can be granted. For 90 minutes' assessments, an additional 15 minutes can be granted.
- c) Use of a computer or laptop or a typewriter to replace handwriting for pupils diagnosed with dyslexia, dysgraphia or any other disorder affecting written expression. School ensures that any computer/laptop being used is cleared of stored information and the spell check function and is not connected to the Internet. It should be noted that in examinations, other than language examinations, content/skills and not language errors, are assessed.
- d) Use of a simple arithmetic calculator, whenever no calculator at all would be allowed because of severe dyscalculia.
- e) Use of a spell checker because of severe dyslexia. This request has to be confirmed by the school.
- f) Rest period(s) – during this time a pupil may not read, write or take notes of any kind and may leave the room under supervision.

- g) A scribe to transcribe word for word the pupil's dictated answers and to read back the pupil's answers where necessary because of severe dyslexia.
- h) An audio recording of answers because a scribe is not available and because of severe dyslexia.
- i) A reader to read both the assessment paper and to read back the answers because of severe dyslexia.
- j) A communicator to provide assistance to a hearing-impaired pupil through sign language or lip speaking.
- k) A prompter to assist a pupil with severe concentration difficulties or neurological disability in paying attention to the assessments tasks.
- l) Written instructions for hearing-impaired pupils.
- m) Written answers for oral examinations for pupils who have severe difficulties in oral expression.

Other possible arrangements (*mesures exceptionnelles*)

Where the pupil's needs cannot be met by any of the arrangements mentioned above, further appropriate arrangements may be proposed by the school or requested by the parents. These arrangements will only be applied if the school is able to provide them.

- **Who provides the Educational Support?**

The support is provided by teachers and assistants.

More than 300 teachers provide Intensive Support A. Most of the support teachers work in the secondary cycle.

In the nursery/primary cycle, more than 140 teachers work in the field of Educational Support.

There are also assistants providing Intensive Support A, the vast majority of which work in the nursery/primary cycle.

- **Do the persons in charge of providing Educational Support have the adequate qualifications?**

When appointing seconded staff, the national authority should ensure that the seconded teachers have the qualifications and experience to identify and take account of the different learning styles and needs of individual pupils and to differentiate their teaching according to the pupils' needs.

The national inspector should examine and approve the qualifications and experience of locally recruited support teachers with the aim of securing the relevant expertise to provide support.

When appointing locally recruited staff, the school should ensure that teachers have the qualifications and experience to identify and take account of different learning styles and needs of individual pupils and to differentiate teaching according to the pupils' needs.

- **What are bipartite and tripartite agreements?**

Educational Support is implemented by means of an agreement signed between the parents and the school.

Bipartite agreements are entered into by the school and the parents. Support is provided by teachers, assistants or therapists from the school's staff.

However, sometimes the intervention of an external therapist (speech, psychomotor therapist) is necessary and the school can enter into a tripartite agreement between school, parents and the external therapist, that will be able to provide support at the school's premises.

- **If an application for Educational Support for my child is rejected, what can I do? Is there an appeal procedure?**

Decisions taken by the Directors of the European Schools concerning the children with special educational needs are subject to an appeal (Article 66 of the General Rules of the European Schools, available in [here](#)).

An appeal may be lodged with the Secretary-General of the European Schools within fifteen calendar days of notification of the decision.

The Secretary-General will take a decision within one month of the date of receipt of the appeal.

In the event of disagreement with the decision of the Secretary-General, a contentious appeal may be lodged with the Chairman of the Complaints Board subject to the conditions laid down in Chapter XI of the General Rules of the European Schools.

- **Practical consequences of a rejection**

The European Schools are not fully inclusive schools. When the school cannot provide an appropriate education for a child, it can declare itself unable to meet the child's needs. In such cases, the Director takes the final decision, taking the Support Advisory Group's opinion into account.

The school should provide an "incompetence letter" that will allow the parents to ask for financial support for an adequate schooling for their child to their employer.

- **Who monitors the implementation of Education Support?**

Support inspectors will promote the harmonised and consistent implementation of the Educational Support Policy and Provision.

They will advise school Directors or attend meetings of Support Advisory Groups, when this is requested and, where needed, ensure consistent application of principles for allocating and organising support.

Support inspectors will organise annual in-service training for Support Coordinators.

- **Where can I find the relevant rules?**

The schools are responsible for proper implementation of the Educational Support Policy and Provision. Those 2 documents can be found in:

[Policy on the Provision of Educational Support in the European Schools](#)

and

[Policy on the Provision of Educational Support in the European Schools - procedural document](#)

The schools will be expected to have clearly stated internal guidelines for the early identification of pupils' needs. You can find it in: [here](#)