



## GUIDELINES FOR “EX SITU” (DISTANCE) LEARNING - Nursery and Primary Cycle 2020-2021

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The following guidelines which are based on the regularly updated system guidelines, are set out to clarify the arrangements and expectations for distance learning at all levels of the Nursery and Primary Cycles in the event of a temporary suspension of lessons.

In line with the guidelines from the national authorities and the RIVM, Nursery and Primary pupils are expected to be in school. However, “in situ” lessons could be suspended – for example in the case that a class and/or group of pupils should need to go into quarantine following the identification of a positive case of COVID-19. In this case, teachers could be forced to move from classroom instruction to online instruction for a definite period of time as defined by the Dutch protocols.

### 2. PRINCIPLE AND OBJECTIVES

The objectives mainly aim to:

- Ensure pedagogical continuity via distance learning
- Support the well-being of the pupils

Distance learning should not be confused with online learning, as it is not intended to increase the time of exposure to the screen. Teachers can develop a balanced programme of work, which consists of a variety of activities, and may include online activities up to some extent.

### 3. CONSIDERATIONS

The school, as well as many of the Nursery/Primary parents, have recent experience with distance learning during the lockdown and the suspension of lessons between March - May 2020.

The school has taken feedback from stakeholders into account to learn from this experience and is prepared and organised in case of a temporary suspension of lessons and an “ex situ” situation.

Each home learning situation is unique and different. The working conditions could be extremely diverse. It is important to take into account some specific considerations, which might have a high impact on the working conditions of individual pupils:

- The digital skills of pupils (and their parents)
- The availability and accessibility of electronic devices
- Specific learning needs and/or disabilities
- The level of self-regulation

- The unusual and stressful (family) situation (stress, sick family members, pressure of working parents, isolation, ...)

The learning environment may make it difficult for children to complete their work on time. It is therefore recommended to avoid strict deadlines and to offer flexibility to individual pupils where needed.

The quality of the pedagogical relationship with the pupils has priority over a strict deadline for assignments.

Teachers are asked to monitor the work and follow up on the communication with pupils/parents.

Individual 'channels' have been created to assure the privacy of each child and parent.

If there are doubts about the communication with families, teachers can connect with the Primary secretary who will get in touch with the parents via phone to check whether or not communication is open and/or support is needed. It is the aim to reach all pupils and to involve all in the distance learning program of the teacher(s).

## 4. ORGANISATION OF WORK

### 4.1. Programme, tasks and activities

Teachers are asked to include a variety of exercises and tasks into the "ex situ" learning programme for the pupils. The programmes should be linked to the themes/period planning and may consist of:

- Practical activities
- Links to online activities, songs, storytelling, craft activities, nature education, school tv programmes, etc.
- Matific
- Links to online/web-based learning programs and activities (language development, literacy, Maths, etc.)
- Exercises and worksheets (attachments as well as tasks in work-books)
- Reading, and reading comprehension
- Open-ended tasks: (PowerPoint/Oral) presentations on a topic, writing texts, poems, ...
- Physical activities
- Creative challenges
- ...

### 4.2. Planning

Class teachers are responsible for a weekly plan, with an overview of the topics and/or themes which are planned for the week. This overview will be shared with the pupils and parents before the start of the week.

Each day, the class teacher will share a more detailed day plan, with the activities and the work to be covered on that day. The teacher will upload any documents/work sheets at or before 9:00am.

Non-obligatory tasks, games and/or activities will be shared on a weekly basis. This is to provide variety to the daily routine whilst also allowing children to be challenged.

Planning of weekly 'catch-up time' is recommended (e.g. final half day/day of the week to complete unfinished tasks, ...)

Teachers consider the domestic environment and are ready to handle requests for extensions fairly.

The time-frame of the daily workload for Nursery/Primary level is linked to the age and year level:

M1/2	P1-P2	P3-P4	P5
Max 1,5 hours	+/- 2 hours	+/- 2,5 hours	+/- 3 hours

The programme for the week is communicated via sms announcement. Attachments (overviews, worksheets, etc.) will be stored in the TEAMS class environment.

#### 4.3. Instruction

Some tasks are clear and appeal to the students' acquired knowledge and skills.

For more specific assignments, new learning topics or learning strategies, teachers share instructions with parents and/or pupils to guide them in how to approach the task or which strategy to use.

In a short daily instruction video, the class teacher explains the work for the day.

Depending on the age and level, the instructions can be detailed and addressed to the pupils rather than to provide a clarification for the parents.

The following tools for (direct) instruction are used:

- Instruction videos (e.g. "Loom", max. 15 minutes for P 3/4/5 level, see Annex)
- PowerPoint presentations (visual instruction, sometimes combined with audio).

All presentations (audio as well as video) will be shared via TEAMS before or at 9h on the same day.

#### 4.4. Monitoring, feedback, evaluation and correction

Teachers encourage the pupils to cover the work and keep track of childrens' progress.

They share correction sheets with the parents/pupils and/or offer feedback following scan/photos or shared assignments (stored in TEAMS) of individual work.

Feedback is shared when needed for the whole group, but mostly on individual base. This is important, even if it is only a boost.

Feedback can be given in writing, via audio/voice message or audio-visual/video message. The use of a variety of methods is preferred. This is very valuable and motivating for the children.

Teachers also follow up on the morale of the class and the work-load of the program.

Teachers are available to offer step-by-step guidance, clarification or evaluation to support the pupils in their individual learning process. They follow up more closely with struggling or non-participatory pupils, taking into account their individual strengths and needs.

To assure this follow up, the class teacher will organise allocated time-slots during the week for Q&A sessions to respond to individual questions and support the pupils via a small group or one-on-one conference-call. (see Annex)

Pupils from upper Primary classes are more in charge of their learning and are considered to take responsibility for the tasks assigned, whilst the youngest depend more on parents' support.

## 5. COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS/PUPILS

All (class) teachers make use of TEAMS as the default tool to share the planning and assignments with the pupils and their parents.

- Teachers can reply/respond to questions in the TEAMS application
- All video and audio messages are shared via TEAMS.
- The TEAMS application is used for conference calls with individual pupils or groups.

Personal contact between the class teacher and his/her pupils is of utmost value.

The organisation of online meetings by video, audio and written chat is therefore seen as a crucial option to contribute to the pupils' well-being.

- ! Microsoft TEAMS online meeting is the only official tool approved by the European Schools. WhatsApp, Zoom, etc... are not allowed as conversation/online video meeting tool for reasons of data privacy concerns. Exceptionally, if a teacher needs to use another resource than TEAMS online meeting, he or she must contact the school's DPO for advice.
- ! Teachers may post videos of themselves for their students or may organise video, audio or chat meetings where pupils may or may not appear on the screen.  
A live streamed lesson must not show images of any pupils in the classroom.
- ! It is not allowed to record video or screenshots of children by both teachers and pupils. The record button in the TEAMS application is disabled for all in Teams lessons so that nobody can record the lessons.
- ! A teacher can only **request** a pupil to use the camera – the pupil is not obliged to switch it on.
- ! TEAMS must not be used by parents to communicate with each other.