

2026.05.20

Procedure – Change of Language 1

Change of L1 – the dominant language

The definition and determination of a pupil's dominant language, the L1, is described in the General Rules of the European Schools (Article 47). To change the L1 during the school time is described in article 47.e:

Determination of L1 at the time of the child's enrolment is definitive in principle. A change of Language 1 may only be authorised by the Director for compelling pedagogical reasons, duly established by the Class Council and on the initiative of one of its members.

The Complaints Board of the European Schools has in the decision on an appeal provided a clarification of what are compelling pedagogical reasons:

By this wording ("compelling pedagogical reasons"), the General Rules require more than the mere existence of reasons of pedagogical aspects: the reasons must make the change of language appear essential or fundamentally necessary for the educational development of the child

If parents/guardians would like to request a change of L1, the formal procedure is as follows:

- 1 Send a written request for the change to the Deputy Director, providing a clear justification that details what the parents/guardians or pupil consider to be "compelling pedagogical reasons."
- 2 The request will be raised by the Deputy Director at the Class Council meeting held at the end of the school year.
- 3 The Director will communicate his/her decision as soon as possible after the request has been discussed by the Class Council.
- 4 Any approved request will take effect at the start of the following school year at the earliest.