

EEBI PARENT FEEDBACK ON SECONDARY DISTANCE LEARNING AND ROTATION

Parents from across the secondary were solicited for feedback through their APEEE section and class representatives from 26 November to 1 December. The following questions were provided to the section representatives to help structure feedback from class parents:

1. any strengths and weaknesses that parents have identified—and comparisons with spring 2020 programme;
2. how well the timetable is followed and whether teachers use live teaching;
3. (for rotation) continuity between off- and on-days;
4. format of teaching (lecture, discussion, group work, autonomous work);
5. amount of homework and screen time;
6. clear homework assignments and assessment of work completed;
7. clear planning and communication from teachers;
8. provision of educational support;
9. use of different TEAMS modules;
10. netiquette/safety measures.

The APEEE has received the following feedback, presented below first by topic and then in annex by section. Most, but not all, sections turned in quite extensive feedback. In several cases, it was emphasised that feedback came mainly from certain levels. Nevertheless, we believe the feedback is quite a valuable overview of the parent/student experience of the recent programme.

General strengths and weaknesses—and comparisons with spring 2020 programme

- **General:** Parents in most sections have noted great improvement with teachers that “buy into” distance learning. The distance learning is far more organised than in spring, when many teachers limited themselves to giving homework during lesson times. There is more consistency in tools used to exchange information and in teaching approach. There is also a significant increase in live classes with full days of online lessons. Parents feel that there is more advanced planning and that their kids are given more manageable short-term tasks, lesson to lesson, rather than long time projects which were difficult for the kids to do in lockdown.
- **Comments:**
 - **Screentime:** There is more screen time than in the spring. Many feel it is too much time spent in front of the computer (8 hours, even during breaks, +homework). Possible back pain and eye strain may result.
 - **Overloaded school bags:** During rotation, the pupils are told to take home the full armory of books, as there is uncertainty about confinement or quarantine. There should be a way to avoid transporting all the books each day. Especially, as the size of schoolbags increased enormously, as lunch, drinks and all books were added. Teachers could potentially indicate whether children need to bring textbooks to school or not. Another suggestion is to look into electronic books, which would not only decrease the

- load but would lighten the burden on the teachers to scan pages.
- **Planning in advance:** Teachers should communicate clearly in advance when they will give live lessons and what material is required.
 - **Absent teachers:** If a teacher is absent for a class, they should be replaced or work should be set by another teacher.
 - **More two-way communication and group work in classes:** More group work, interaction, two-way communication and teaching tools can be used by the school and teachers.
 - **Consistent use of TEAMS and assignment management:** There is a strong call to introduce coherence between the use of different modules. In particular, posting of assignments/deadlines can have a clear protocol which all teachers follow so kids know where to look for their assignments.
 - **More feedback:** Students still don't get from teachers enough feedback (or marks) on the homework done and sent via TEAMS. Appropriate feedback from teachers in TEAMS would help parents to follow the progress of their children and to identify relevant issues.
 - **Some subjects not well covered:** There is a strong need to improve the on-line teaching by some teachers for subjects e.g. Ethics, Arts, Music and Gym. Some parents even suggest that these subjects simply are dropped until we are back to normal.
 - **Technical issues:** Online lessons are not fully effective (50% of the time is spent on teaching and other 50% on technical issues). In some school buildings the internet connection is not stable.
 - **Parent supervision:** There is still a need for parents to supervise students (especially younger ones) and there are concerns about disparities that may be created based on family life. The expected parental involvement could also be better communicated.
 - **Lack of student training:** Students have not been properly briefed to make full use of TEAMS and should have access to a tutorial or guidance. Training could also be offered to parents.
 - **Netiquette:** Netiquette and Internet Security are key issues and parents and teachers should be better prepared to meet challenges faced.
 - **Health and well-being:** The pupils receive no health advice or follow-up during classes. There is too little physical activity in classes. Students can be easily demotivated and distracted, especially the younger ones. Finally, some suggest that ethics/religion could be used to discuss students' feelings during these unprecedented times. On the bright side, with online lessons students can wake up later.

Adherence to timetable

- **General:** The timetable is being followed quite well, better than in spring. In general, work is set by teachers for the time that coincides with the periods for each subject. Teachers are using a variety of methods in the classes (see below).
- **Comments:**
 - **Communication of timetable and lesson material:** Teachers should indicate clearly in advance which online classes require presence. There are teachers who don't inform about virtual lessons beforehand or put an invitation for the class in the Calendar. This is not only confusing for the pupils, but they may be punished for not showing up in an unannounced lesson. It has also happened that an unannounced lesson has started 20 minutes after the starting time.
 - **Long lessons and breaks:** Many teachers have tendency to prolong online lessons (which eliminate breaks, can overflow into the next period and makes it difficult to focus

for a longer periods). Teachers should be asked not to schedule classes in breaks.

Amount of live teaching

- **General:** Live teaching is a common practice among most teachers, with about 5-6 lessons per day. Still, parents report a fair degree of difference between teachers, and there are questions on the quality control over the teachers' use of TEAMS. There are still teachers who have not delivered a single 'live' online teaching session preferring just to set work for the period. Some are not connected at all during their teaching hours.
- **Comment:**
 - **Language Classes:** There is a particular concern here for language learning which requires more interaction with the teacher and for which live interaction could work over the internet. Some language teachers (e.g. Italian language in S4) have not held any live sessions yet.

(Rotation) Continuity between off- and on-days

- **General:** Most think the rotation between school days and non-school days works well. In general, the current continuity between off and on days provides a good balance between the pros and cons of both. There is a noted preference for the current rotation policy (rather than a one week in one week out rotation of other EEBs) from at least one section while another reports mixed reaction. One section even thinks a rotation system (on a one-day per week basis) could be also beneficial for the S7 pupils. Nevertheless, it is also noted that there are no clear criteria for rotations, and the system seems to fall apart in the weeks around the exams. There could likewise be better co-ordination from teachers on what is required on in-school and out-of-school days. It is very difficult at the beginning of an online day for a student to know the day's schedule as some teachers are ill, some do not show up and some only give a 10 minute lesson before closing the TEAMS session. Parents are looking forward to a return to 100% in situ.
- **Comments:**
 - **Communication of teacher absences:** The illness list of teachers is often not updated on 'on-line days', so children do not know in advance, when it seems clear that the school knows the teacher is unavailable.
 - **Replacement of absent teachers:** Repeated absences by the teachers create pedagogical discontinuity. Arts, Music, Gym is in particular hard hit with the absence of teachers but also other subjects have teachers not showing up. Moreover, teachers are not replaced and appropriate work is not set for the kids in these periods.
 - **Lack of live teaching on online days:** Some teachers are simply not using TEAMS or teaching on 'on-line days'. Some teachers inform pupils that they will not be present during 'on-line' days, but opt to give more homework on 'in-situ days'.
 - **In situ priority for S6:** There is a plea from parents of S6 students that they have priority in situ teaching, to help them prepare for the Bac.
 - **In situ priority for S1-S3:** Some parents would like to understand why the rotation system has been introduced also for S1-S3, and argue that it is more difficult for younger students to adapt. In particular, the current system does not align with the Belgian solution, where S1 and S2 (S1-S3 in ES) have 100% in situ lessons. They note that the longer they stay home, the worse long term effects it will have on their social/academic/psychological/physical development.
 - **Exam periods:** There is concern that the system has not been respected in the week

- prior to or during the “exams week” and many levels spend additional days out of school.
- **Exposure rates:** It is felt by some that the exposure of children to potential virus is the same as 100% in situ: the classes are full, corridors are similarly full because of fellow classes. It could be an option to rotate by half-class or even by language section (which would mean fewer pupils in mixed classes). Both would, however, require that teachers can teach online and on-site simultaneously.

Format of teaching (lecture, discussion, group work, autonomous work)

- **General:** Several approaches have been reported with some teachers teaching full online lessons and others logging onto TEAMS for the first 5-10 minutes of a lesson to give homework and then switch off again. Some parents feel there is an inconsistency of approach even within the same subject with one teacher approaching it differently from another. It is also unclear how well the lessons are really adapted to the online format. There is a reminder that Bac level courses should be more structured and formal, while for others the format could be richer, including more interactive work, group work, and physical movement. Screen time can be a problem (see next point).
- **Comments:**
 - **Presence of teachers:** Some report that most distance learning is done on an assignment basis during the lesson with the teacher available if students need to ask questions rather than real ‘live’ teaching. In many cases, there is a short introduction only. While there is a mixed feeling about “offline” lessons, it is felt that teachers should at least be present during online classes to explain new topics. Some simply send students to the chat topic for the pupils to study on their own.
 - **Use of external videos:** The use of videos should be complementary to the teacher’s explanation and should not substitute it.
 - **Lacking two-way communication:** The teachers need to make the lessons more interactive and should be encouraged to find ways to develop two-ways communications. There are a lot of training aids on the internet to help with interaction.
 - **Group work underutilised:** Group work is clearly underutilized; group sessions amongst the children would increase interaction. Some teachers use break-out rooms in TEAMS to enable group work. This has been positively received by parents, and students find the variety keeps the work interesting.
 - **Physical activity:** There is no physical exercise, it should be built into each lecture. There could also be classes where pupils are allowed to move around freely, by using a Bluetooth headphone.
 - **Technical problems:** For younger students the technical side is still problematic (file processing - download, save and edit files) and some teachers have trouble explaining it.
 - **Gym classes:** There is no point in videoconferences during gym classes (especially if this is done in L3 and kids need assistance from parents to understand what to do OR when teachers just advise students to look for sport classes on YouTube); remote gym does not work, but there is thanks to those who promote at least walks.

Screen Time

- **General:** Too much screen time and too much screen-based homework. The screen-time should be reduced for teaching and autonomous work. Parents note that too much sitting in front of the screen leads to decrease of attention. There is a recommendation in particular

for more paper-based or offline tasks.

Homework Assignments and Load

- **General:** There is a feeling that homework loads are more manageable and assignments more clearly communicated than in spring. Though still some issues with students feeling overburdened (particularly leading up to exams), in general kids are given more manageable short-term tasks, lesson to lesson, rather than long time projects, which was difficult for the kids to do in lockdown. Still, consistent communication from different teachers remains an issue for both homework and tests. There is a general consensus that more homework not involving screens (reading, drawing, manual writing) is preferable.
- **Comments:**
 - **Communication of assignments:** General concern about protocols for where the teacher posts the homework. Different teachers seem to post the homework in a number of different places and this is confusing to kids and parents. Parents report across years that homework assignments are missed because their children didn't see it or because of technical issues. It would seem sensible if there was a standard protocol used by teachers and the kids know where to find their homework assignments.
 - **Communication of tests:** Several report that communication of tests is a problem and that children do not necessarily know they have a test and therefore do not prepare for it.
 - **Timing of communication:** Some teachers provide homework and instructions during the weekend and during non-school hours. If the pupils want to catch all homework, they are forced to log in on weekends and evenings. Homework should be set in class with an explanation and time for questions and due during regularly scheduled class periods.
 - **Overload:** Some teachers still tend to give a lot of homework. In some cases, they do not make allowances for different programmes of study. Also, in some cases, teachers seem to have difficulties estimating the amount of work which can be completed during an online lesson. This leads to too much homework.
 - **Typed Homework:** Some parents complain about teachers asking students to type their homework on TEAMS. It should be an option to handwrite work and take a photo.
 - **Feedback:** Students still don't get enough feedback (or marks) on the homework done and sent via TEAMS. Appropriate feedback from teachers posted regularly on TEAMS would help parents to follow the progress of their children and to identify relevant issues and would help assure that pupils fully understand their tasks.

Clear planning and communication from teachers

- **General:** There is a general feeling that communication and planning have improved since spring and is at about the same level as before COVID. Teachers regularly use TEAMS chat for this as well.
- **Comments:**
 - **Lack of communication:** Some felt that teachers still did not communicate well enough to the kids around the issues raised above, scheduled lessons/absences, testing and homework. More predictability would be desirable. Teachers should inform children well in advance about their scheduled online lessons and / or their cancellation. There are still teachers who don't inform about virtual lessons beforehand or put an invitation

for the class in the Calendar.

- **Consistency:** There is a need to unify the ways of communicating with students and with parents who lack information.
- **Communication to parents:** Some S1 and S2 parents would like more control over homework with scheduled weekly assignments. Teachers could also signal more often to parents if their child needs more supervision by parents to complete their tasks.

Provision of educational support

- **General:** little or no feedback on educational support. Parents did not complain but we also received little positive feedback.
- **Comment:**
 - **Enrichment:** There is no L2 enrichment offer to capable and interested students in S4. The criteria for selection of students for enrichment not communicated.
 - **Distance Teaching Support:** The in-class assistant for those teaching remotely is not always the best solution, as they do not all have pedagogical experience. The support from qualified parents could be a solution; a call from the school for the establishment of a reserve list could be useful.

Use of different TEAMS modules

- **General:** Teachers are generally better organised and deal better with technology than in the spring, and in general they are using different functionalities in TEAMS. Still, they do not necessarily use TEAMS in the same way; some use other tools as well; and some still don't use TEAMS at all. Thus students may be compelled to follow two or three different channels. Finally, the system may still not be clear to some (especially younger) students who call for parents' support. There is a strong call to introduce coherence between the use of different modules. A TEAMS handbook could be useful for newcomers as well.
- **Comments:**
 - **Calendar module:** It is noted that the Calendar module could be more consistently used to schedule classes in advance so that students are able to plan their days.
 - **Assignments module:** It is noted that the TEAMS assignments module works best when all teachers use it consistently during *in situ* and distance learning. This way pupils and parents can track all due, overdue and completed and marked assignments in one place, like an agenda. In one sample, only about half the teachers were using the assignments module. Its use should be promoted.
 - **Inconsistencies:** The school/teachers should work to define a uniform use of TEAMS.
 - **Use in Quarantine/Absences:** Some parents point to TEAMS as a very useful tool to upload corrections, lessons and pedagogical material for absent students (due to COVID or other reasons).
 - **Use in Parents-Teacher Meetings:** Parents commented that the TEAMS parent-teacher meetings were a positive experience.
 - **Student/Parent Training:** Students and parents should have access to some guidance material or tutorials on the different TEAMS modules.

Netiquette/Safety measures

- **General:** There are some nice guidelines, and in practice pupils follow these to more or less extent. But more guidance for pupils as well as supervision could be useful.

Some parents are concerned that teachers have not been given sufficient training on how to use TEAMS functions or on Safety and Security on the Web. Parents were curious to know what specific training teaching staff have gone through to help them navigate potential issues.

- **Comments:**

- **Class control:** Mute functions or the presenter functions are still not known to every teacher. This means that pupils can take over the control of TEAMS and 'kick out' other pupils during the lessons.
- **Chat monitoring/n-etiquette:** Some parents feel that more could be done to coach students in the appropriate and responsible use of TEAMS, including the chat. The chat seems overused during classes, and there can be a lack of understanding of n-etiquette (unkind comments, negative emojis on other students' comments, etc.). Many teachers do not follow up on antisocial behaviour of this kind.
- **External sites/tools:** It is not clear if apps requested for some subjects are safe are not. Some teachers claim an app is free but it turns out it isn't. Students often have to register on a website to use an app and it is unclear whether this use of the school email account is in line with school policy. Teachers have also asked students to use their own names when registering (e.g. for scratch for IT class) so that they could identify the child. However, this has GDPR consequences and could also make children vulnerable to grooming/abuse. There is a lack of awareness of potential risks among some teachers. Some children don't have compatible devices to run the apps requested by teachers.
- **Guidelines:** Some parents in the lower secondary cycle would appreciate harmonised guidelines of conduct on TEAMS, with specific instructions from teachers.

ANNEX - Feedback by Section

DE – GERMAN

None.

DK - DANISH

The overall message is that for the teachers that have embraced on-line teaching, GREAT improvement have been made. However there are still a large number of teachers who do not want, are not trained, can not adapt to on-line training and the learning is suffering as a result.

The second take away is that group work, interaction, two-way communication and teaching tools (on-line) is not at all being used by the school and the teachers.

Any strengths and weaknesses that parents have identified—and comparisons with spring 2020 program;

- Great improvement noted with teachers that buy into distance learning.
- However, due to the comments below, there have been suggestions that in the subjects where the teachers are not serious about/able to do the on-line teaching that these subjects simply are dropped until we are back to normal.

How well the timetable is followed and whether teachers use live teaching;

- See above

(for rotation) continuity between off- and on-days;

- Some teachers are simply not using TEAMS or teaching on 'on-line days'. This is feedback received from many parents. Arts, Music, Gym is in particular hard hit with the absence of teachers but also other subjects have teachers not showing up.
- Some teachers only log onto to TEAMS for the first 5-10 minutes of a lesson to give homework and then switch off again
- The illness list of teachers is often not updated on 'on-line days'. It is very difficult at the beginning of a day for a child to know the planning of the day as some teachers are ill, some do not show up and some only give a 10 minute lesson before closing the TEAMS session.
- Some teachers inform pupils that they will not be present during 'on-line' days, but opt to give more homework on 'in-situ days'
- It is good that some rotation was possible.

format of teaching (lecture, discussion, group work, autonomous work);

- Often it is one-way communication when teaching on-line.
- Teachers should be encouraged to find ways to develop two-ways communications.

amount of homework and screen time;

- Too much screen time.
- One big issue is that some teachers provide homework and instructions during the weekend and during non-school hours. In other words, if the pupil want to make sure to catch all homework, they are forced to have to log in during the weekend and during the evenings.

clear homework assignments and assessment of work completed;

- no comments

clear planning and communication from teachers;

- Same level as before COVID.

provision of educational support;

- the teachers need to make the lessons more interactive. There are a lot of training aids on the internet and with the smallest amount of pre-planning for the lessons, it would be easy to find tools to help with the interaction.
- Group work is clearly underutilized. It is obvious that group sessions amongst the children would increase interaction.

use of different TEAMS modules;

- some teachers still do not use TEAMS. This is a problem as the children (and parents) needs to follow two or even three different channels.

netiquette/safety measures

- Not all teachers are trained or know the functions of TEAMS. For example the mute functions or the presenter functions are not known to everyone. This means that pupils can take over the control of TEAMS and 'kick out' other pupils during the lessons.

EN - ENGLISH

Key Action Points For The School

- Posting of Assignments has a clear protocol which all teachers follow so kids know where to look for their homework assignments.
- If a teacher is absent for a class, can work then be set by another teacher? Currently this is not happening.
- Teachers not scheduling classes in breaks
- There is too much screen time for the kids. They can be online from the start of school until, in some cases, 18:00. Can there be some form of co-ordination between teachers so that not all distance learning involves screen time?
- Netiquette and Internet Security are key issues and parents feel teachers are not fully equipped to meet challenges faced.
- Many people mentioned the anomaly that the Canteen is not open but kids are allowed to congregate there. Do Belgian regulations preclude the canteen opening? Parents would like it to.

Strengths and weaknesses that parents have identified—and comparisons with spring 2020 programme?

- Parents from all EN sections feel that the Autumn distance learning programme is far more organised than the Spring one and are very grateful for that. There is more consistency in tools used and parents feel that their kids are given more manageable short-term tasks, lesson to lesson, rather than long time projects which was difficult for the kids to do in lockdown.

How well the timetable is followed and whether teachers use live teaching?

- EN sections report that the timetable is being followed and on the whole work is set by teachers for the time that coincides with the periods for each subject. Teachers are using a variety of methods in the classes. Parents report a fair degree of difference between teachers. Some parents feel that certain teachers have not delivered a single 'live' online teaching session preferring just to set work for the period. There is a particular concern here for language learning which requires more interaction with the teacher and this live interaction could work over the internet.
- Parents from a number of EN Sections feel that there is an issue when a teacher is indisposed. Firstly, children are not told in advance when it is clear the school knows the teacher is unavailable. Secondly, appropriate work is not set for the kids in these periods.

How is the School Rotation Policy Working?

- Most parents from the EN section think the rotation between school days and non-school

days works well. Although there could be better co-ordination from teachers between what is required on in-school and out of school days.

- In general, it appears that parents prefer the current rotation policy rather than a one week in one week out rotation.
- There is a plea from parents of S6 students that they have **priority in situ teaching**, to help them prepare for the Bac.
- Children now have to take all their books into school every day they have classes rather than leaving them in their lockers which means they have to carry heavier bags than they would normally. Teachers could potentially indicate whether children need to bring textbooks to school or not.

The format of teaching (lecture, discussion, group work, autonomous work). What is working and what doesn't?

- Kids report different formats used for teaching and are generally happy with this. Some parents feel there is an inconsistency of approach even within the same subject and that one teacher approaches it in a different manner from another.
- S3EN reports that most teachers give full classes online but some use break-out rooms in TEAMS to enable group work. This has been positively received by parents, and students find the variety keeps the work interesting. Other years report that most DL teaching is done on an assignment basis during the lesson with the teacher available if students need to ask questions rather than 'live' teaching.

What do parents think about the amount of homework and screen time?

- Parents are almost unanimous across all years of EN Section that the amount of screen time for the children is too much. As parents, in our office environments we are constantly encouraged to take breaks and not to sit at our screens for more than an hour without a break. The kids are in many cases doing much more than this. If there is some way for the teachers to recognise that the kids are doing far too much screen time and set paper-based tasks or ones that involve them using their workbooks.
- Some parents feel there is too much homework others don't have this concern and some feel it is not enough! All parents agree that homework that doesn't involve screen time would be good – reading, drawing etc.

Are there clear homework assignments and assessment of work completed?

- There is less concern about the homework assignments themselves and more of a general concern about protocols for where the teacher posts the homework. Parents report that homework assignments are missed because their children didn't see it. This is consistent feedback across all years. Teachers can post the homework in a number of different places and this is confusing to kids and parents. It would seem sensible if there was a standard protocol used by teachers and the kids know where to find their homework assignments.
- Most years also report that communication of tests is a problem and that children do not necessarily know they have a test and therefore do not prepare for it.

Is there clear planning and communication from teachers?

- Although most parents didn't have huge issues with this some felt that teachers did not communicate well enough to the kids particularly around the issues raised above; planning, testing and homework. Parents don't feel that teachers contact parents about issues, however parents also acknowledge that by secondary children should be able to report back to their parents about any issues.

What about the provision of educational support?

- There does not appear to be much provision of education support. I got a good response overall for this feedback, very few reported any issues with educational support but also didn't feel their children had experienced it.

How are Teachers using the different TEAMS modules and functionality?

- EN Reps report that teachers are using the different functionalities of TEAMS. The kids now seem to have lots of Groups on TEAMS. Parents are not sure whether this is a good or a bad thing! Overall parents do appear to be happy with the use of TEAMS during our second foray into distance/rotation learning and in particular with the scheduling of live classes, but not all teachers are using all TEAMS modules. S5EN rep notes that in particular the TEAMS assignments module works best when all teachers use it consistently during in situ and distance learning. This way our kids can track all due, overdue and completed and marked assignments in one place—a modern-day agenda! *One parent excavated the TEAMS assignments of her son recently, and says when they use it well, it is quite amazing as you can view it by class or generally by date, but only about half the teachers are fully using it, and another quarter are sporadically using it, while a few don't use that module at all.*

What do parents think about netiquette/safety measures?

- Parents are concerned that teachers have not been given sufficient training on how to use TEAMS or on Safety and Security on the Web. This has become a big issue for most companies and institutions over the last 5-10 years and parents wanted to know what specific training teaching staff have gone through to help them navigate potential issues.
- So, parents don't think teachers are well equipped to support children in this area. The parents feel that more could be done to coach children in the appropriate and responsible use of TEAMS, including the chat, etc. There is a lack of understanding of netiquette (unkind comments, negative emojis on other students' comments, etc.) and many teachers do not follow up on antisocial behaviour of this kind.
- Regarding internet safety, it is not clear if apps requested for some subjects are safe or not. Some teachers claim an app is free but it turns out it isn't. Students often have to register on a website to use an app and it is unclear whether this use of the school email account is in line with school policy. Teachers have also asked students to use their own names when registering (e.g. for scratch for IT class) so that they could identify the child. However, this has GDPR consequences and could also make children vulnerable to grooming/abuse. There is a lack of awareness of potential risks among some teachers. Some children don't have compatible devices to run the apps requested by teachers.

ES - SPANISH

- On the rotation system: there are no clear criteria for the application of the rotation system. In principle the system would be whether "3 days-on" or "2 days-on" per week on an alternate basis. However, in practice, this system has not been respected in the week prior to the "exams week". Similarly, during the "exams week", no exams are scheduled every day of the week, but a distance learning rotation system has not been foreseen.
- On the use of different TEAMS modules: there are questions on the control over the teachers' use of TEAMS. According to the input received, it seems that there are teachers who use no TEAMS for their lectures and are not connected during their teaching hours.

Any strengths and weaknesses that parents have identified—and comparisons with spring 2020 programme

Strengths:

- significant increase of videoconference sessions and larger exchange of information **via TEAMS** (concerning homework and class materials).
- **Consistent approach:** with regard to their effective teaching hours and the

upload/delivery of tasks teachers **apply a similar approach now**

- Lessons are planned in advance and tasks can be easily identified. (By contrast, in spring 2020, the channels of communication between teachers and students were divergent: some students were requested to do certain homework by email, others by chat, and occasionally the task menu of the TEAMS group was used).

Weaknesses:

- Lack of electronic books: the school should **encourage the use of electronic books**, whenever possible, to avoid previous problems. In case this is not possible, **the school should contact the editing companies** to find a potential solution. In doing so, teachers wouldn't need to devote time scanning pages of the books and students won't need to take all the books back home after school.
- Lack of feedback: Students don't get from teachers enough feedback (or marks) on the homework done and sent via TEAMS. Appropriate feedback from teachers would help parents to follow the progress of their children and to identify any relevant issue.
- Lack of tutorial or guidance on TEAMS for students: students **have not been properly briefed** on how **to make full use of TEAMS**. It would be advisable that students could have access to a tutorial or guidance with tips and tricks for them in order to optimise their performance. **Proposal: organisation of workshops** for students on the use of distance learning tools. The current approach by the school seems to be "learning by doing", but it would be advisable having a long-term approach in this field.

How well the timetable is followed and whether teachers use live teaching;

- Sometimes **teachers prolong their lectures beyond their schedule, overstepping the next period**. As a result, students must link up to 4 hours periods, which is not the most suitable.

(For rotation) continuity between off- and on-days;

- There are no clear criteria for the application of the rotation system. In principle the system would be whether "3 on-days" or "2 on-days" per week on an alternate basis. However, in practice, this system has not been respected in the week prior to the "exams week". Similarly, during the "exams week", no exams are scheduled every day of the week, but a distance learning rotation system has not been foreseen.
- The rotation system (on a one-day per week basis) could be also beneficial for the S7 pupils.

Format of teaching (lecture, discussion, group work, autonomous work);

- Some teachers, particularly in Maths and Physics **must continue being structured** in their teaching, especially focusing on the BAC. Remote learning is in general based upon lectures from the teachers, with little interaction. Discussions are reduced significantly in comparison with spring, and a teamwork is seldom organised.

Amount of homework and screen time;

- **Sometimes teachers don't bear in mind the various levels of learning hours chosen by their students**(from 32 periods for some students to 36 periods per week for others). The load of homework should be assigned by the teachers bearing in mind these differences.

Clear homework assignments and assessment of work completed;

- Sometimes students **don't receive feedback via TEAMS on the quality of their homework done**, but from the "acknowledgement message" indicating that the task has been delivered on time. Sometimes, the feedback is late.

Clear planning and communication from teachers;

- Communication and planning have improved tremendously regarding spring 2020. Sessions are planned in advance.

Provision of educational support;

- No educational support provided.
- It seems that the support of an assistant in class for those teachers who are teaching on remote is not always the best solution. The assistant should have pedagogical experience. The support from qualified parents could be a solution, a call from the school for the establishment of a reserve list could be useful.

Use of different TEAMS modules;

- Some students use different modules in TEAMS. Students should have access to some **guidance material or tutorial** on how to make the best use of the different TEAMS modules.

Netiquette/safety measures.

- Suggestion on the way of implementing the rotation system (off-days and on-days) was made: splitting the number of students within the group. This will reduce the number of students in the classroom and improve the respect of the physical distance rules.

FR - FRENCH

Strengths and weaknesses that parents have identified—and comparison with spring 2020 programme:

- **Strengths:** parents acknowledge a clear improvement in this DL period and are thankful to the teachers. Compared to last spring when many teachers limited themselves to giving homework (often too much) during lesson hours, now students have full days of online lessons. In general terms, there is now more consistency and uniformity compared to the spring programme. On the bright side, with online lessons, time spent in the school bus is reduced and students can wake up later.
- **Weaknesses:**
 - Excessive screen time. School days are very long (too many hours in front of the computer: online lessons+homework+studying). Possible back pain, eye strain. There is less interaction with fellow students, less sociability. On the practical side, for lessons without textbooks students may find themselves somewhat lost.
 - In some school buildings Internet connection is not always stable. Some technical problems persist.
 - In the S1-S2 years, parents are more worried about the degree of autonomy required by online lessons, thus creating disparities between parents who can oversee their children and those who can't (full time job, siblings).
 - Students can be more easily demotivated and distracted, especially the younger ones.
 - Online lessons are not a substitute for in situ lessons and our aspiration should be to return to in situ lessons as soon as the sanitary situation improves.

How well the timetable is followed and whether teachers use live teaching;

- In general terms, timetable is followed but some teachers leave little time between lessons, some overrun. Most of them use live teaching, a few prefer to give homework.
- In some classes, gym lessons are given online but not in all of them. No Latin lessons in S2 and S3.

Continuity between off- and on-days;

- Good continuity. Some parents in the FR section are happy with the rotation system. Others would rather have a week on, a week off. Some parents complain because children have to carry too many books and schoolbags are very heavy.
- Some S6 parents feel that their children should have in situ lessons, like in S7 (university entry at stake).

Format of teaching (lecture, discussion, group work, autonomous work);

- Teachers don't really adapt the lessons to the online format. All the format are used, mainly lectures with some teachers giving shorter lessons and asking the students to work on their own. Substantially less group work (it is a pity, but difficult to organize). Apart from some isolated cases, teachers are mostly accessible online during scheduled class hours, and eager to answer student's queries.

Amount of homework and screen time;

- Some parents think the amount of homework is ok, others complain about too much homework, mainly during the weeks preceding the B tests. S1 and S2 would like more parents' control over homework, with weekly assignments.
- **All parents agree that screen time is excessive.**

Clear homework assignments and assessment of work completed;

- Assignments are not always clear. Sometimes they are posted in the group chat instead of under assignments. That way, students miss deadline reminders.
- Moreover, it can happen that homework is posted on TEAMS outside school hours, even at late hours. Students are not allowed to disconnect and they feel obliged to constantly check TEAMS.
- Many parents, mainly in S1 and S2 think that homework should be given one week in advance to facilitate family life and planning. They also think they have too many documents to print.
- Homework should be given in class with an explanation and time for questions. No homework should be asked for a day where the teacher has no scheduled lesson.
- Some parents complain about teachers asking students to type their homework on TEAMS. It is better to handwrite homework and then take a photo.
- Assessment is uneven. Some teachers correct exercises during the lessons. Others send individual corrections. It would be good to post corrections systematically on TEAMS.

Clear planning and communication from teachers;

- More predictability would be desirable. Teachers should inform children well in advance about their scheduled online lessons and / or their cancellation. All the lessons are not announced on the Calendar and sometimes they are announced 5 min before they start.
- Concerning communication from teachers to parents, some teachers continue to send emails about homework whereas others have stopped doing it.
- As far as communication with the students is concerned, it is quite smooth and teachers give relatively quick answers to students in the TEAMS chat.

Provision of educational support;

- Not much feedback about this point. One parent seems happy with S6 Chemistry 4 "rattrapage" lessons. Others say they don't have enough information.

Use of different TEAMS modules;

- Teachers seem better acquainted with TEAMS but there are still problems to be solved, mainly concerning the planning of lessons: some teachers send an Outlook invitation before the lesson, others don't. Not all the lessons are announced on the Calendar, etc. A TEAMS handbook could be useful for newcomers.
- Some parents seem happy with the use of TEAMS for quarantined students whereas others think that there is room for improvement. In any case, most parents see TEAMS as a very useful tool to upload corrections, lessons and pedagogical material that can be used by absent students (due to COVID or other reasons).
- Some parents found the TEAMS parents-teachers meeting to be a good experience.

Netiquette / safety measures.

- Students are better behaved now in comparison with the spring DL. Some parents think students use the chat too often during lessons.

- Some parents suggest that Morale/Religion lessons could be used to discuss student's feelings and difficulties during this unprecedented situation.
- Parents in the lower secondary cycle would appreciate harmonised guidelines of conduct on TEAMS, with specific instructions from teachers.

HU - HUNGARIAN

Please find here the feedback from the Hungarian section. Main concerns are the long screen-time and the heavy school bags.

any strengths and weaknesses that parents have identified—and comparisons with spring 2020 programme;

- Towards parents, this time the online teaching is better planned than during the spring.
- No systematic update on COVID situation to parents.
- There is more screen time than during the spring.
- The pupils are told to take home the full armoury of books, as there would be uncertainty on next confinement or quarantine. There should be a way to avoid transporting all the books each day. Especially, as the size of schoolbags increased enormously, as lunch, drinks and all books are added.

how well the timetable is followed and whether teachers use live teaching;

- The teachers follow the timetable pretty well, perhaps a bit better than in the spring. But there are teachers who don't consequently put an invitation for the class in the calendar, which is confusing for the pupils, especially if they are punished for not showing up in an unannounced lesson.
- Live teaching is a common practice, with about 5-6 lessons per day.
- Parents from S4 signalled that the old teacher for Italian has not held any live session yet - while online classes are particularly important for languages.

(for rotation) continuity between off- and on-days;

- The exposure of children to potential virus is the same: the classes are full, corridors are similarly full because of fellow classes. In this sense I wouldn't call it reduction, at least not for children.
- There is no physical exercise, it should be built into each lecture.
- It could be an option to rotate following language sections - this would mean less pupils in the classroom in classes where pupils are mixed from different sections. This would, however, require that teachers can teach online and on-site simultaneously.

format of teaching (lecture, discussion, group work, autonomous work);

- The screen-time should be reduced, for teaching and autonomous work, too. Too much sitting in front of the screen leads to decrease of attention.
- Teachers could indicate clearly in advance which lectures are presidential. There could be also classes where pupils are allowed to move around freely, by using a Bluetooth headphone. There should be more physical exercise. Homework should be more paper-based. Teachers could signal more often to parents if their child needs more supervision by parents to complete their tasks.

amount of homework and screen time;

- As explained above, there is too much screen time and too much screen-based homework. Teachers seem to have difficulties estimating the amount of work which can be completed during an online lesson. This leads to too much homework. The pupils receive no health advice and medical follow-up. In S4 in particular, some teachers tend to give a lot of homework - which means sometimes that pupils have to digest a whole new chapter on

their own.

clear homework assignments and assessment of work completed;

- Feedback on homework should be more systematic, including verifying if pupils fully understand their tasks.

clear planning and communication from teachers;

- More timely info is needed whenever a lesson is skipped, the teacher is off.
- There is no need to make pupils sit in front of screens, there should be at least 50% self-study on papers.

provision of educational support;

- We receive no news on it.

use of different TEAMS modules;

- Works quite well.

netiquette/safety measures.

- Netiquette: no problems noticed.
- Safety measures at school: There are nice guidelines, in practice pupils follow to different extent. More supervision could be useful.
- Parents are concerned about letting fresh air frequently into the classroom during the coming exams. This might lead to pupils getting a cold.

IT - ITALIAN

S1 representatives would like to signal these two issues in relation to distance learning for the Education Council:

- Videos: the usage of videos from the teacher should be complementary to the teacher's explanation and should not substitute it. There were cases where the teachers asked S1 pupils to follow a long video (>25 minutes) with complex terminology and at the same time take notes. This proved difficult for some pupils as they did not know the topic and found it difficult physically and mentally to take notes for a long time.
- Lessons vs individual study: teachers should be present during online classes and explain new topics instead of simply sending to the chat the topic for the pupils to study on their own
- Netiquette Also second what was mentioned by the English section on the netiquette in relation to unkind comments in the chats.
- Teachers' absences - repeated absences by the teachers create pedagogical discontinuity. Leaving aside absences linked to COVID and quarantine periods, there are a certain number of teachers' absences that are not communicated and teachers are not replaced. What alternatives (even online) can be proposed by the school to keep learning continuity?

PL - POLISH

Please find below a summary of the feedback (overall positive as compared to last year lockdown) of Polish Secondary section. To note: most comments received from S1-S3, limited from S4 and S6.

Rotation system

- The general feeling is that the rotation system works well, certainly much better than during the spring lockdown (clearer for students, parents and teachers). The current continuity between off and on days provides a good balance between the pros and cons of both.

- Still the vast majority of parents are looking forward to 100% in situ and for the regular continuity. Of course 50% presence is better than nothing.
- Some parents would like to understand why the rotation system has been introduced also for S1-S3. The school management has repeatedly claimed that the European Schools (ES) align their solutions with those adopted in Belgium. How come S1 and S2 (this corresponds to S1-S3 in ES) in Belgian schools have in situ lessons at a rate of 100% and in ES these classes follow a rotation system.
- The younger the students, the more difficult for them to adapt. Therefore S1 parents appreciate the system when compared to P5 (past difficulties) but the longer they stay home, the worse long term effects it will have on their social/academic/psychological/physical development.

The online teaching still has its weaknesses:

- Too much time spent in front of the computer (8 hours even during breaks online chats);
- The need to supervise students by the parents (especially younger);
- carrying material and books every day (overloaded bags);
- online lessons are not fully effective (50% of the time spent on teaching and other 50% on technical issues)

Timetable

- Generally followed and teachers mostly use live teaching. However many of them have a tendency to prolong lessons (which eliminate breaks + difficult to focus online for longer periods). Cases of continuous inexistence of lessons noted, especially for Ethics in S3 and S4. Some teachers don't reply to messages and don't inform about virtual lessons beforehand. It happens that a not announced lesson starts 20 minutes after the starting time. Students sometimes miss out of information on upcoming assignments and tests due to technical interruptions and are then blamed for not being prepared. Teachers should always inform about tests and key assignments in the chat or on TEAMS.

Format of teaching

- there are clear limitations online. Overall all depends on teachers and their personal commitment to diversify teaching formats. Older students remark that although different formats are used but there is currently less group work. For younger students technicalities are still problematic (file processing - download, save and edit files) and some teachers have trouble explaining.

Gym classes

- No point in video conferences during gym classes (especially if this is done in L3 and kids need assistance from parents to understand what to do OR when teachers just advise students to look for sport classes on YouTube); remote gym does not work, thanks to those who promote at least walks.

Homework

- Feedback not unanimous. The amount of homework seems fine or excessive; but rather more balanced than in Spring. The problem is that a considerable amount of homework is also to be done on screen which extends screen time even more. Clear assignments in most cases but some teachers are unclear and not all teachers provide feedback.

Communication

- Depends on the teacher (probably also in normal times); language is sometimes an issue (for L3). Overall, after some bad experiences in spring, all seem to have found a more or less adequate way of communicating. Still there is a need to unify the ways of communicating with students and with parents who lack information.

Learning support

- No enrichment offer to capable and interested students in S4. The criteria for selection of students for enrichment are not communicated.

Use of TEAMS modules

- Much improved as compared with last year but still not clear to some (especially younger) students who call for parents' support. Teachers use TEAMS more often but not always and not in the same way. **There is a strong call for Introducing some coherence between the use of different modules e.g. identify good examples and promote it.**
- Teachers are generally better organised and deal better with technology than in the spring. They seem to have accepted the new reality and complain less about the situation.
- Students are now more competent with TEAMS, act more independently but we are not in spring anymore so school/teachers should work to define a uniform use of TEAMS; learning options vary too much.

Netiquette/safety measures

- Kids are left to themselves, not much comments.

SWALS

We have received very limited feedback on distant learning for SWALS L1 for primary. It was positive, the main concerns being technical issues (poor quality of TEAMS) and the length of the time that students spend on screen.