

Pedagogical Continuity and a Distance Learning Strategy

Proposed Position

At its 28 April meeting the APEEE Board agreed to **ask the school management to develop a Distance Learning Strategy**, as suggested in the *Distance Learning Recommendations* produced by the Central Office (2020-03-D-11-en; version 6 published in September 2020). The strategy should be developed in consultation with stakeholders and should:

- include a common weekly structure and harmonised practices and minimum requirements using commonly-agreed tools (i.e. TEAMS modules) for each level or sub-cycle;
- go hand-in-hand with improved quality assurance based on tools (technical or other) allowing targeted quality assurance and quick identification of problems, including in particular tracking and replacement of teachers absent from online courses;
- take into account that parent access to TEAMS is currently limited;
- include the development of a code of conduct concerning the use of TEAMS.

The aim of the document should be to ensure pedagogical continuity in a range of scenarios and situations, including:

- for quarantined or vulnerable individuals who cannot attend classes *in situ*;
- for quarantined classes or levels;
- for teachers teaching from home;
- and for scenarios requiring hybrid (rotation) or full distance teaching.

Smooth transitions between different scenarios / risk levels should also be foreseen.

The APEEE are optimistic that the school management has agreed in several meetings (14 May and 2 September with APEEE Bureau; 7 July SAC; 23 September in Admin Board) that such a strategy will be developed, and we believe it will also help address issues with *harmonisation between sections and cycles* and *optimal use of teaching time* that were identified in the 2018 Whole School Inspection. We are also glad to see a similar objective set by the Central Office in the “Common Priorities” section of the *APSP 2020-2021*: “*Based on the quality assurance document of the task force the schools will provide updated policy on distance teaching and learning and will establish minimum standards in this respect...*” also to be accompanied by on-boarding procedures for newly-arrived pupils, a staff training plan, and the identification of teaching staff champions. To this end, at the Secondary CE meeting on 24 September, the APEEE also requested that a dedicated school Distance Learning Working Group be set up, a request eventually supported by the direction.

The APEEE has recently received positive feedback from families on the efforts from the school to ensure a more harmonised programme across all cycles and sections. We have also been reassured by increased communication to parents of the modalities/arrangements put in place, and we would encourage more formal consultation of parent representation on the specifics proposed. **We strongly believe that, in order to assure pedagogical continuity for all children in the current situation, a cycle-specific Distance Learning Strategy should be made available to all**

stakeholders. This strategy should set common standards and harmonise practice while also making it possible for teachers to use differentiated approaches.

Finally, we feel lucky that we as a system had the foresight to roll out TEAMS in previous years and that we have a strong pedagogical team in the Central Office to guide our distance and hybrid learning efforts. We believe that we are now in a position to reap more benefits from the guidance and structures already in place. Thus, we call upon the Central Office to share Best Practice examples from other schools in the system in order to guide our efforts in this challenging time.