



European Civil Service Federation Fédération de la Fonction Publique Européenne



Nous pouvons également tirer quelques témoignages que nous avons reçus en retour de notre sondage FFPE:

"Real integration would see the classrooms reflecting the diverse composition of society."

"Il faut EVOLUER avec notre société"

"Due to the lack of personnel and space limitations, any child which is not performing/behaving in a perfectly conformist manner poses a serious challenge to the EU school, not to speak of an individualised approach which any child should benefit from."

"Les écoles européennes devraient fournir dans le secondaire une plus grande variété d'options pour le baccalauréat et organiser des échanges linguistiques."

"The classes in the maternelle/kindergarten are too big, space is very limited and teachers do not have sufficient time to support children in an individual manner even if they are well intentioned"

A better school for all:

Learning support - promoting diversity and integration in the European Schools



Following our FFPE leaflet last November on promoting diversity and integration, 135 of you answered our survey on learning support in the European Schools. The FFPE thanks parents who shared their sometimes painful but always relevant experiences. The FFPE has analysed these responses and drawn up a list of specific proposals.

These contributions supplement the joint report by "Human Rights Watch" and the "European Disability Forum" of November 2018 entitled "Sink or Swim" which was based on interviews with some 27 people. <https://www.hrw.org/fr/news/2018/12/04/ue-les-eleves-handicapes-se-heurtent-des-obstacles-dans-les-ecoles-europeennes>

The FFPE stands behind the 5% of parents who replied to our survey. And we believe that a far higher percentage of parents share the dissatisfaction expressed by those who replied and have more to say about their experiences on this issue of learning support. Be assured that we are still listening and are willing to accompany and support you if you so wish.

80% of respondents to our survey have children who have been given learning support to catch up on courses. Of these, 37% were satisfied with this support, 41 % were not satisfied and 71 % believe that the teachers are not given sufficient training in how to meet special needs.

Many children end up feeling excluded, or at least with the impression that they have no place in the school. And if we refer to the following excerpt from the School Educational Project for Learning Support which states that "European Schools do not offer a fully inclusive education system... The school... has the right to declare itself unable to meet the needs of the student." This passage underlines the limits of the learning support offered and is an implicit recognition of the unwillingness of the school's authorities to respond in a decisive manner.

What concerns us most is the parents' testimonies about the suffering of their children. They often end up losing

"There is no alternative to the Baccalaureate and if a child has a modified curriculum due to special needs, he/she does not get any diploma and has no future."

"Each child is different and requires individual help"

"The same attention should be given to every child! Helping diversity and integration means also that we have to pay attention to all kids, including good ones...Talented kids cannot be always just left aside and asked to wait for the others and be silent, they also deserve attention."

"Sur le papier, tout le soutien est là, mais en pratique on vous fait sentir que vous coûte cher"

"The psychological support is completely ineffective. It should be very strong in a school of immigrants with few roots. Either a child integrates quickly or is left on her/his own."

"The European Schools must understand that they are here to support all children, and that their task is too easy if they want to concentrate only on those that perform well. They should help parents so that we can continue to dedicate our attention to work, and not to finding alternative schools."

"The schools insisted on periodic psychological assessments to justify the small amounts of SEN (Special Education Needs) they made available... These assessments were expensive, and non-reimbursable, being considered as pedagogically rather than medically motivated."

"There is a big waste of funds. To put a SEN child through private school in Brussels cost more than the salary of a SEN teacher at the European School, who can help several SEN students."

"We had to pay privately and were not reimbursed for testing to prove the severity of the dyslexia (because it was not done by a Belgian hospital). JSIS should be much more flexible, with the ability to reimburse non-standard testing

confidence and self-esteem and can even become aggressive or provocative as a means of self-defence against this feeling of forced exclusion.

Any perceived differences which set such children apart from the pre-established educational framework obscures the individual abilities that these children do possess and results in their potential not being realised. Many children are thus deprived of their chance to take their deserved place in our society. Making the most of each individual child's potential is therefore absolutely essential so that each of them can be offered a real future where they can fully integrate in an open and fair way into society.

The institutions urgently need to face up to this fundamental question concerning the future of our children and take their share of responsibility alongside the parents who invest their time, energy and money to make up for the current educational deficiencies of the European Schools.

According to commitments made in its own 2018 Report and the Action Plan on Diversity and Equality: <https://myintracomm.ec.europa.eu/staff/Documents/talent-management/diversity-inclusion/20180719-diversity-report-action-plan.pdf>, the European Commission has to conduct an independent external evaluation to identify and treat, in the light of the observations and recommendations of the UN Committee, the problems of learning support in the European Schools. The FFPE asks on behalf of the parents to be kept informed of the progress of this study and the conclusions that are drawn from it.

Following our analysis of the FFPE survey on "Learning support" In European Schools, the FFPE requests DG HR to take the following actions:

- *Training for teachers and management in detection, support and follow-up*
- *A wider variety in the curriculum to suit all abilities and not only for the European Bac*
- *Teach the culture and acceptance of variety and diversity*
- *Specialised educators: coaching to suit the degree of development and the age of the child and not only what suits the school*
- *An end to overcrowded classes*
- *More time for children with difficulties*
- *Working methods and educational techniques adapted to our changing society*
- *Provision of adequate equipment including computers*
- *School textbooks rather than loose notes*
- *Continuous monitoring (for children with difficulties) over the entire school career is necessary, not only year by year. We must avoid starting from zero each school year (but obviously taking into account the progress of the child).*
- *Access to the school for therapists; speech therapy, psychotherapists and other forms of learning support...*
- *Suitable psychological support in the school in line with the number of students*
- *A system of appeals against decisions to exclude children from the school*
- *Time off should be given to parents who have to go regularly to school for a child with special needs: "time for parents"*

Finally, as pointed out by one of the parents, it is essential to "ensure the necessary finance for the schools so that they can maintain the right standards."

In addition, the FFPE is also following the other topics concerning the European Schools that you have identified in response to our survey: location of new schools, overpopulation, shortage of English language teachers (+ post-Brexit situation), harassment issues, school canteens....

when not available via the normal system."