



aefe
Agence pour
l'enseignement français
à l'étranger

MY CHILD IN NURSERY SCHOOL

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**PRACTICAL GUIDE
FOR PARENTS**

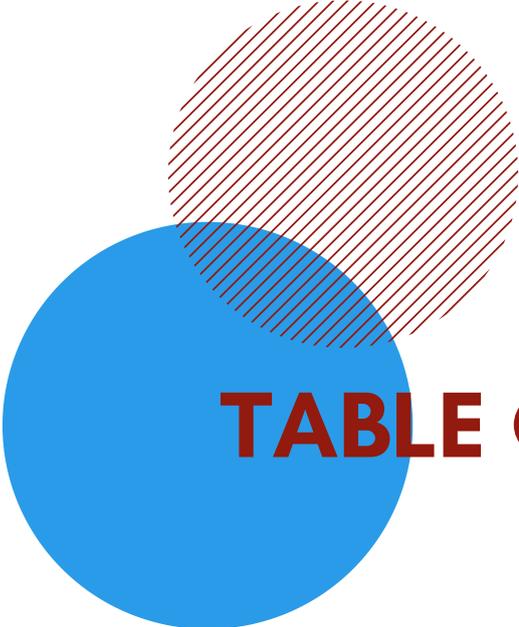


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PREFACE

The aim of the nursery school is to help each child, according to suitable approaches, to become independent and to acquire knowledge and skills in order to succeed in the basic learning process in the early years.

The main objective of nursery school is the acquisition of a rich, organised oral language that can be understood by others.

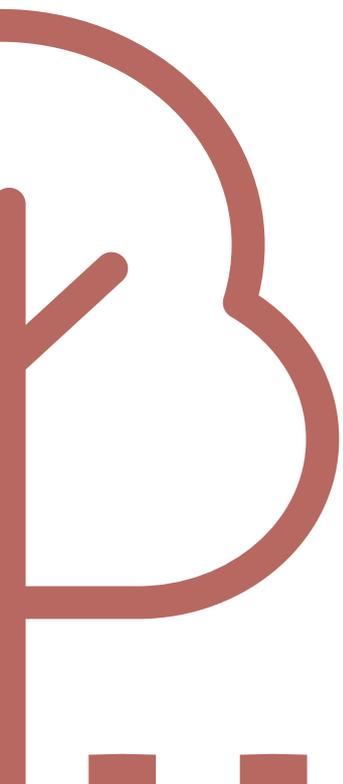
In kindergarten, the child establishes relationships with other children and with adults. They exercise their physical, sensory, emotional, relational and intellectual abilities; they gradually become students. They discover the world of writing.

The kindergarten programme, which is not a compulsory timetable, sets out the main areas of activity to be covered over the three years prior to entry into compulsory education; it sets out the objectives to be achieved and the skills to be acquired before moving on to primary schools. The implementation of the programme should take into account the stages and pace of the child's development.

The kindergarten has an essential role in the observation and prevention of difficulties or disorders, a role that it must fully assume, particularly for specific language disorders.







Praxis of the kindergarten



Your child has just started kindergarten. His or her success depends largely on the dialogue that will be established between the school staff and you, as well as on your involvement in supporting his or her progress. To help you, this guide provides advice and practical information.

- 1 -

What is a nursery school?

The first stage of primary school

The primary school, divided into cycles, includes the nursery school (Nursery 1, 2 and 3) and the primary schools.

Teaching takes place over a period of twenty-four hours, from Monday morning to Friday afternoon, thirty-six weeks a year. Two hours per week of personalised help are offered, beyond the twenty-four hours, to children experiencing difficulties.

From nursery 1-3, children learn to live together, to communicate with adults and other children. They discover the world around them and prepare for their entry into primary schools.

My child is entering nursery school :

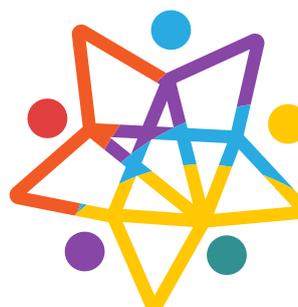
From what age?

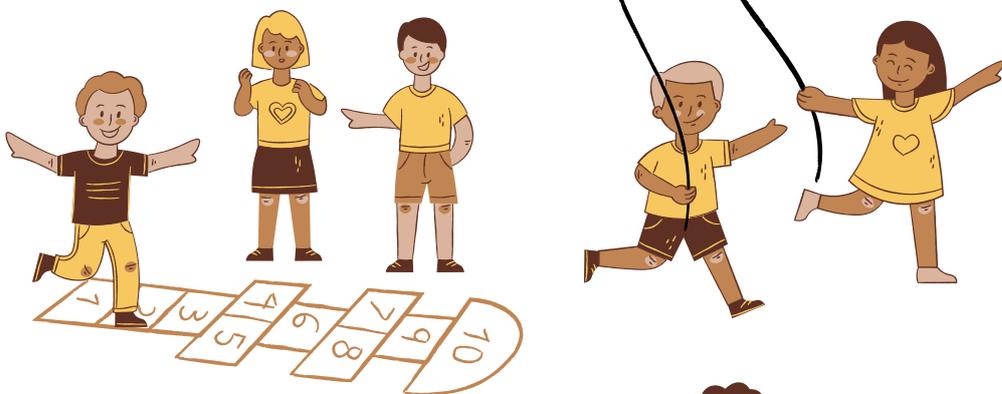
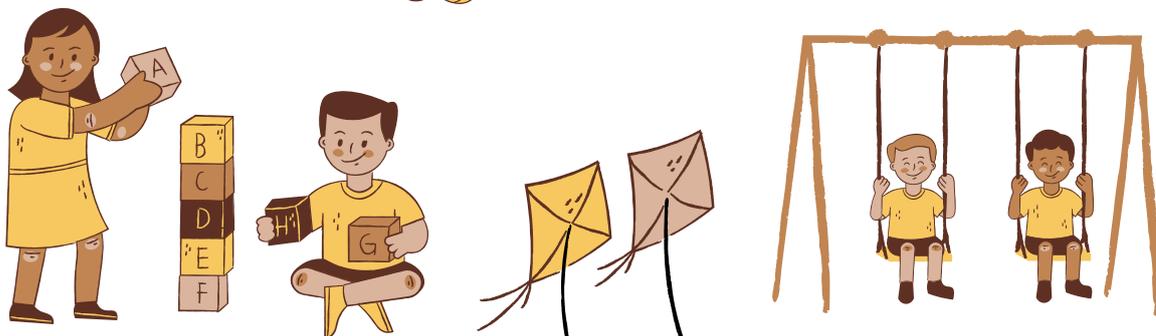
Children, of all nationalities, can be accepted at the beginning of the school year from the age of 2. The children must have a satisfactory standard of hygiene and cleanliness.

What will he or she learn there?

The aim of the nursery school is to help each child to become independent and to acquire knowledge and skills, using appropriate approaches, in order to prepare for success in the primary school. The main objective of the nursery school is the acquisition of a rich, organised oral language that can be understood by others. Learning is structured around the following areas of activities:

- appropriating language ;
- acting and expressing oneself with the body
- discovering writing ;
- discovering the world;
- becoming a pupil ;
- perceiving, feeling, imagining, creating.





Everyday life in nursery school

A typical day in the nursery school.

The time schedule at school is adjusted to suit the rhythms of young children.

Throughout the day, the children are placed in activities aimed at specific learning in various areas. These activities sometimes take the form of games: this is more often the case in the early years, and less so in the later years, when guided exercises appear. All activities promote language learning, which is the primary objective of the nursery school programme. The progression of the activities is designed throughout the nursery cycle and, of course, within the framework of the school year. The forms of activity alternate between small groups, often called "ateliers", and moments of regrouping.

These groupings are an opportunity for the teacher to present the activities and give instructions or to take stock of what has been achieved, to comment on successes, to identify and explain errors or difficulties, and to highlight what should be retained.

The children express themselves in front of their classmates and listen to them; they discover the rules of communication in a group. It is often during groupings that the teacher tells or reads stories and organises discussions to ensure that the meaning has been understood. It is also during groupings that children sing, say rhymes or poems from memory or learn new texts.

Everyday life in nursery school

The objective of making each pupil succeed drives the teachers who choose the appropriate teaching methods and present them to the children. If necessary, personalised help is provided to enable each child to achieve the objectives set. The nursery school is attentive to the particular needs of young children and provides them with appropriate responses.

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The reception is a special time for listening and paying attention to each child and the adults who accompany him/her. It encourages a serene separation.

It is an interface between the world of the family and that of the school. Limited in time, it is usually held in the classroom. It is particularly important in the early years.





Break time is a pause in the learning activities during each half day. They are slightly longer than in primary schools.

They are educational moments: physical activities are possible in a space designed to meet the physical needs of the children and under the supervision of the teachers. They encourage contact between children of different ages and the empowerment of older children. These activities take place outdoors as often as possible and contribute to a healthy lifestyle.



My contacts

The teacher in charge of your child's class is your first point of contact for all matters relating to learning and life in the classroom. You can also contact the school headmaster, who is responsible for the smooth running of the school.

- 2 -

Being a parent

By supporting your child in his or her schooling, you can help him or her to succeed. Accompanying your child means, first of all, keeping yourself regularly informed of what is happening in the classroom and at school, and taking advantage of opportunities to be present whenever possible. It also means encouraging your child. It also means helping your child to develop his/her autonomy and sense of responsibility, teaching him/her respect for him/herself and others as well as the usefulness of the rules of life in common.

I wish to be informed

As a parent, member of the educational community, you have rights recognised and guaranteed by the Education Code.

The first right is to be informed, directly and regularly, during personal meetings with the teacher, of your child's progress and difficulties, of any measures taken to help him or her, and of his or her behaviour at school.

Parents are kept regularly informed of their children's school results and behaviour, notably through the school report. The school director also ensures that any requests for information and interviews you make are answered.

I communicate with the school

Do you have any questions about your child's schooling or classroom life? Do not hesitate to ask for a personal meeting with the teacher in charge of his/her class. In any case, this is your first point of contact.

If you do not understand or do not agree with a decision concerning your child, the first thing you should do is to contact the teacher.

I wish to participate in school activities

The surest way to participate in school life is to vote in the election of parent representatives to the school council and, if you want to get more involved, why not stand as a candidate in these elections. The elected parent provides a link between the educational team (headmaster, teachers) and the other parents and attends the school council meetings



Getting involved in the school council

The school council brings together the teachers, the management, the COCAC and the parents' representatives.

It votes on the internal rules and adopts the school project. It gives opinions and makes suggestions on the functioning and on all questions concerning the life of the school (hygiene, safety of children).

At its first meeting, the school council examines the conditions for organising dialogue with parents. It may provide for any additional action to take account of local specificities and the guidelines of the school project.

Election of parent representatives

Parent representatives on the school council are elected every year in the middle of October. You can vote at the school's polling station. Every parent, regardless of their situation (married or not, separated, divorced...) is eligible to vote. The election takes place through a list system with proportional representation.

Each list must contain at least two names and at most twice the number of seats to be filled.



You can put together a list, even if you are not a member of a parent association represented in the school your child attends.

Parent representatives contribute to the smooth running of the school and can usefully represent the views of families. The election is therefore an important act for every parent.

For any information, you can contact the school principal.

*Understanding and participating in school life
helps our child to succeed*

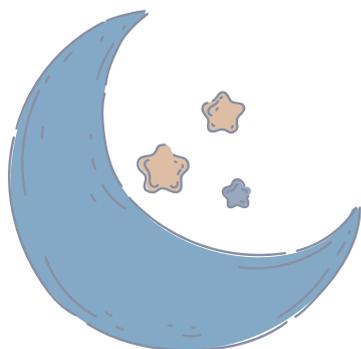
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My child's health and safety

Prevention

At the time of registration

You must present your child's up-to-date vaccination record. For school attendance, vaccinations against the following diseases are compulsory: diphtheria, tetanus, poliomyelitis (often combined with whooping cough). Others are strongly recommended: measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccines. Be aware of the booster dates.



Tip:

Encourage him/her to sleep. Set a reasonable time for bedtime and make it a regular thing. You can explain that sleep is important for growing up, recovering from the day's fatigue and being ready to learn the next day.



Care and emergency situations at school

The national protocol

A protocol on the organisation of care and emergencies in the school describes the conditions for the organisation of care. Specific instructions on how to behave in case of emergency must be posted in the school. A telephone line to contact the emergency services must be accessible at all times. In all serious cases, the family is notified as well as the school principal.

Conseil :

*Veillez à son alimentation.
Préparez-lui un petit déjeuner complet qu'il prendra avant de partir à l'école, évitez les produits de grignotage trop salés, trop gras ou trop sucrés*

School insurance

School insurance covers damage that your child may cause, but also damage that he or she may suffer. It cannot be requested for compulsory school activities, but it is strongly recommended that you take one out. On the other hand, it is required for participation in an optional activity (school outings). In addition, the organisers of extracurricular activities may require pupils to be insured for the risks associated with these activities. Finally, it is recommended that your child is insured for travel and extracurricular activities (sports, etc.)

If my child has allergies or is undergoing medical treatment



If your child requires special care due to his/her state of health (emergency medication, diet, etc.), you can ask the school to establish a personalized reception project (PAI) which will be drawn up in consultation with the nurse, the school principal, the teacher and yourself.

The school can establish an individualised reception programme if your child's health requires it

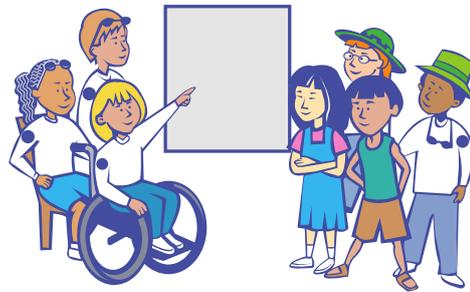
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Schooling for children with disabilities

Reception at the nursery school

A child with a disability can be educated from the age of two in nursery school, like any other child.

The best way to find out with you what arrangements are best suited for your child's needs is to have your child's disability assessed.



Individual education

If your child has a disability requiring special conditions of reception, for example if he or she needs special equipment, his or her PPS (personalised schooling programme) will specify the necessary arrangements and, possibly, the allocation of individual or shared human assistance.



The detailed programmes

Giving each child the keys to knowledge and the reference points of the society in which he or she is growing up is the first requirement of the Republic and the sole ambition of the elementary school.



- 1 -

Mobilising language in all its dimensions

The word "language" refers to a set of activities carried out by an individual when speaking, listening, thinking, trying to understand and, gradually, reading and writing.

-Oral language: used in interaction, in production and reception. It enables children to communicate, understand, learn and reflect.

-Written language: introduced to children gradually until they start using it, it accustoms them to a form of communication whose specific features and role they will discover in keeping track of, reflecting on, anticipating and addressing an absent recipient.

It prepares children for learning to write and read in cycle 2.

opportunities to experience new emotions and sensations. They allow children to explore their physical possibilities, to broaden and refine their motor skills, to master new balances. They help them to build their laterality, the oriented image of their own body and to better situate themselves in space and time. These physical experiences also aim to develop cooperation, to establish constructive relationships with others, while respecting differences, and thus contribute to socialisation. The participation of all children in all the physical activities offered, the organisation and the approaches implemented seek to combat stereotypes and contribute to the construction of equality between girls and boys. Physical activities contribute to health education by leading all children, regardless of their "performance", to experience the pleasure of movement and effort, and to better understand their bodies in order to respect them.

- 2 -

Act, express themselves, understand through physical activity

The practice of physical and artistic activities contributes to the motor, sensory, emotional, intellectual and relational development of children. These activities mobilise, stimulate and enrich the imagination and are



- 3 -

Act, express themselves, understand through artistic activities

This learning area refers to the visual arts (painting, sculpture, drawing, photography, film, comics, graphic arts, digital arts), the sound arts (songs, instrumental music and

vocal) and performing arts (dance, theatre, circus arts, puppetry, etc.). Nursery school plays a decisive role in giving all children access to these artistic worlds; it is the first stage in the artistic and cultural education pathway that each child completes during primary and secondary schooling and which aims to acquire a personal artistic culture, based on common points of reference.



a rank or position in a list (ordinal use). This learning process requires time and the confrontation of many situations involving pre-numerical and then numerical activities.

A structured approach to teaching is needed throughout cycle 1 so that by the end of nursery school the knowledge and skills acquired can form a solid foundation on which to build further learning.

- 4 -

Building the first tools to structure one's thinking

4.1 - Discovering numbers and their uses

From birth, children have an intuition of magnitude that enables them to compare and evaluate lengths (sizes), volumes, and also collections of various objects ("there are many", "not many", etc.). By the time they reach nursery school, they are able to discriminate between small quantities, one, two and three, especially when they form culturally known configurations (dominoes, dice).

Finally, although they know how to say the first few words of the numerical sequence, this recitation does not reflect a true understanding of quantities and numbers. Kindergarten should gradually lead everyone to understand that numbers can be used both to express quantities (cardinal use) and to express

4.2 - Explore shapes, sizes and organised sequences

Very early on, young children intuitively recognise shapes (square, triangle, etc.) and sizes (length, capacity, mass, area, etc.). In kindergarten, they build knowledge and reference points on a few shapes and sizes. The approach to flat shapes, objects in space and sizes is made through the manipulation and coordination of actions on objects. This approach is supported by language: it allows these objects and actions to be described and encourages the identification of initial descriptive characteristics. This knowledge, which will remain limited, is a first approach to geometry and measurement, which will be taught in cycles 2 and 3.

- 5 -

Exploring the world

5.1 - Finding one's bearings in time and space

From birth, through their exploratory activities, children intuitively perceive certain spatial and temporal dimensions of their immediate environment. These perceptions enable them to acquire, within their living environments, an initial series of reference points, to develop expectations and memories of the recent past.

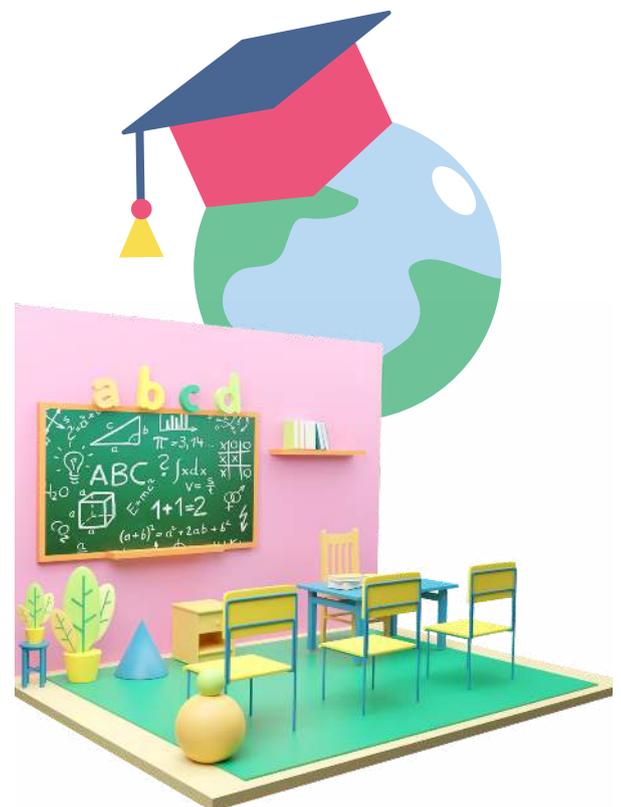
However, this knowledge remains implicit and limited. One of the aims of the nursery school is precisely to gradually bring them to consider time and space as relatively independent dimensions of the activities in progress, and to start treating them as such. It also seeks to get them to gradually go beyond their own point of view and adopt that of others.

Each activity is an opportunity for oral expression, in anticipation, in situation, in retrospect or decontextualised.

5.2 Exploring the world of life, objects and matter

When they enter nursery school, children already have representations that enable them to take bearings in their daily lives. To help them discover, organise and understand the world around them, the teacher proposes activities that lead children to observe, formulate more

rational questions, build relationships between observed phenomena, foresee consequences and identify characteristics that can be categorised. The children begin to understand what distinguishes living from non-living things; they manipulate and make things to become familiar with objects and matter.



**At nursery school, your child will
will gradually learn to live in a group,
communicate with adults and other children
and to discover the world around them.**

*How is his schooling organised?
What do they have to learn?
How is a child helped in case of difficulty?
What are your rights and duties as parents?
Who will you be dealing with?*

**To answer all these questions, the Marcel-Pagnol French School
Abuja offers you this guide.
You will find in it the teaching programmes and practical
advice to help your child in his education.**