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INFORMATION NOTE

To Directors and Deputy Directors for the Nursery and Primary cycles of the European Schools

From Manuel BORDOY – Deputy Secretary-General of the European Schools

Re **Decision of the Joint Teaching Committee (Written procedure 2024/39 ended on the 29th of October 2024): “Information for Parents on Determination of the Dominant Language” (Ref.: 2024-09-D-47-en-3).**

Dear Madam,
Dear Sir,

The Joint Teaching Committee (JTC) approved on the 29th of October 2024, by means of written procedure 2024/39, the document “**Information for Parents on Determination of the Dominant Language**” (2024-09-D-47) with an immediate entry into force.

This document has been adapted according to the remarks expressed during the JTC meeting on 11th – 12th of October, and has also been revised by the OSG Legal Department.

The main purpose of this document is to help the parents asking for the admission of their children in the European Schools to understand the fundamental principle of mother tongue/dominant language education in our schools as stated in article 47e of the General Rules:

“A fundamental principle of the European Schools is the teaching of mother tongue/dominant language as first language (L1). This principle implies the pupils’ enrolment in the section of their mother tongue/dominant language where such a section exists.”

[...]

In schools where the section corresponding to a pupil's mother tongue/dominant language does not exist, the pupil will generally be enrolled in one of the vehicular language sections and will attend the mother tongue/dominant language classes organised for so-called SWALS (Students Without A Language Section) as L1.

Parents will not be free to choose their child's first language (L1), its determination being the responsibility of the school's Director. L1 must correspond to the child's mother tongue or dominant language, in the case of multilingual children, the dominant language being the one of which they have the best command."

The document consists of:

- Rationale supported by research on the importance of mother tongue/dominant language education as a distinctive feature and fundamental principle of our system,
- A section with answers on FAQ focusing on family and pupil language contexts where the dominant language is not immediately obvious,
- Annex: With references for further information on plurilingualism.

This document (2024-09-D-47-en-3) is now annexed to document 2018-09-D-23 (*Establishment of a harmonised procedure for the organisation of language tests [...]*) which has four annexes:

- Annex I: Rules for the organisation of language tests in nursery classes and primary 1 ;
- Annex II: Evaluation report to determine the dominant language in nursery and primary 1,
- Annex III: *Guidelines for testing dominant language in n1, n2 and on entry to p1, p2-p5* (Document 2020-01-D-63);
- **Annex IV: Information for Parents on Determination of the Dominant Language (2024-09-D-47-en-3).**

In a near future, the document 2018-09-D-23 will also be annexed to the "Language Policy of the European Schools" Ref.: 2019-01-D-35-en (published on the www.eursec.eu).

Please, note that Annexes I, II and III of document 2018-09-D-23 remain unchanged.

Please, be kindly reminded that these provisions apply to all European Schools and must be carefully followed.

You will find document 2018-09-D-23-en-6 and Annex IV (as an individual Word file for your convenience) attached to this note (in EN for the time being).

Please, note that **document 2018-09-D-23-en-6 repeals and replaces the document 2018-09-D-23-en-5.**

I would appreciate it a lot if you could pass this information and the attached documents to the responsible staff at your school for enrolment and for the organisation of the comparative language tests to determine the dominant language.

It goes without saying that Annex IV: Information for Parents on Determination of the Dominant Language (2024-09-D-47-en-3) can be shared with the concerned parents. We remain at your disposal for any questions.

Best regards,



Manuel BORDOY,
Deputy Secretary-General of the European Schools

Attachments – EN :

- Document 2018-09-D-23-en-6 *Establishment of a harmonised procedure for the organisation of language tests (Article 47(e) of the General Rules of the European Schools) + Guidelines for testing dominant language in N1, N2 on entry to P1, P2 - P5 + Information for Parents on Determination of the Dominant Language.*
- Individual Word file of the Annexe IV (ref. doc.: 2024-09-D-47-en-3) to the document 2018-09-D-23-en-6.

Copy : Directors of the Accredited European Schools, Inspectors of the European Schools, Enrolment Central Authority for the Brussels European Schools, InterParents.