

Organisation of life at school

You aren't alone in wanting your child to do well at school and become an outstanding member of society!

In primary school, the head teacher is responsible for the school.

Your child's teacher, usually called 'le maître' (schoolmaster) or 'la maîtresse' (schoolmistress), is the teacher you contact to talk about your child.

At primary school there are also assistants called ATSEMs who help children at certain times of day and with certain activities.

In Middle school, the head teacher is called 'the Principal'.

The school buildings are bigger, there are more pupils and more people work there.

Your child has one teacher per subject, but you will speak of your child's work and behaviour most with their form tutor. They can point you towards other staff members. For example,

the Senior Education Advisor who is there for children outside lessons

the school psychologist who can give your child specialist help and advise them in their choice of subject.

the social worker if there are any family or financial difficulties.

You may also be in contact with the school nurse for any health issues or with the admin staff and secretary for enrolment procedures or payments.

In Sixth Form college, the head teacher is called 'the Proviseur'.

A college has the same staff as a Middle school.

For differently abled children, specialist staff will be available throughout their school life.

At school, your child can choose to eat at the canteen or school restaurant.

Your child can also board in certain Middle schools and Sixth form colleges.

Several other places are important for your child:

the school library, where they can read and do research

study rooms for doing homework

youth centres, student centres and clubs, for activities such as drawing, music and sport.

From Middle school to Sixth form college, your child's school day will change. They will have more reading, lessons and homework to do. They must have the right folders, books and workbooks with them, depending on their timetable. These can be stored in a personal locker.

School is a place of life. To make relationships between people easier, there are school rules which set out what is permitted and forbidden, the school timetables and safety information.

There is a secularism charter, teaching children how we can learn to live alongside each other better and teaching them to share French values like freedom of expression or equality between men and women.

Your child can actively take part in school life, for example, they can represent their classmates, make suggestions for improving student life; for the canteen or school outings for example; they can also take part in activities related to the environment, or solidarity.

Whether you are French or another nationality, you can all vote to choose the parents who will represent you in the parent teacher association meetings; you can even be elected yourself.

When you go to these meetings, you will make decisions and contribute to the running of the school.

As parents, it is important to meet with your child's teachers so you can speak to them about how your child is doing. You can also stay informed online, some schools have a digital space that you can access at home. On it you will find homework diaries, homework to do, grades, absences, etc.

By keeping an eye on your child's school work and school life, you'll contribute to their success and wellbeing.