



INCLUSIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (IECE) COUNTRY QUESTIONNAIRE – FRANCE

1. ACCESS, PROCEDURES AND PARTICIPATION

Key principles

1.1 Provision that is available and affordable to all families and their children.

1.2 Provision that encourages participation, strengthens social inclusion and embraces diversity.

Guiding questions	Country response
<p><i>Legislation and policy at national level</i></p> <p>1. Is there a national policy and legislation that gives the right to all children, without exception, from at least 3 years onwards, to attend mainstream Early Childhood Education (ECE)?</p> <p>2. Is there support available to enable every child to attend ECE?</p> <p>3. Is there a period of compulsory ECE before school starts?</p> <p>4. Are arrangements in place for transition from home to ECE and from ECE to primary education for all children?</p> <p>5. Is inclusion stated as a goal of ECE provision?</p>	<p>Pre-primary education is not mandatory in France. Pre-schools are free and open to children aged two to six.</p> <p>Children are not required by law to attend pre-primary education, but all possible measures are taken to enable all children between the ages of three and six to attend.</p> <p>To enrol a child in a pre-school in the public education system, families register for enrolment at the town hall in the municipality of their residence. This process is the same for all children, whatever their needs.</p> <p>The rate of pre-school enrolment for children between the ages of two and three varies greatly from one region to another. In 2015, the average rate of enrolment for two-year-olds was only 11.8%. Notwithstanding the legislation making pre-schools available to children aged two to six, specialists have voiced many reservations about the education of children between the ages of two and three. These views have limited the demand for early pre-primary education, and have perhaps even caused it to diminish.</p> <p>While pre-primary education is not mandatory, all children, regardless of needs, can be enrolled in the local pre-school in the family’s neighbourhood or community. Pre-school staff cannot refuse a child on the basis of special needs.</p> <p>In the year 2014–15, there were 30,113 children with special needs individually enrolled in mainstream pre-</p>



Guiding questions	Country response
<p>Is there a policy making ECE accessible to all children?</p> <p>6. Is there a policy that obliges mainstream publicly funded ECE to make adaptations so that all children can attend and participate? Please describe</p>	<p>schools (whether full or part time). About 7,000 children with special needs were collectively enrolled across the ULIS (localised units for school inclusion) support system (out of a total number of 2,464,663 children in pre-schools aged from two to six years old, therefore a percentage of 1.14%).</p> <p>A range of measures are designed to support inclusive education in pre-schools in France:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– The National Education system includes qualified professionals – e.g. psychologists, special education teachers – who can help pre-school class teachers identify the difficulties encountered by specific children and provide specialist assistance to pre-primary and primary school learners with major problems. This assistance includes teaching aids and remedial measures.– In the National Education network of special aid for children with difficulties (<i>Réseau d'aide spécialisé aux enfants en difficulté</i>, RASED) special education teachers and psychologists have a specific mission that complements that of class teachers, providing teaching staff with appropriate responses to learning difficulties and problems in adapting to school requirements experienced by some learners.– A specific mechanism has been put into place to allow children with disabilities to be enrolled in pre-primary education. Any child with a disability or disabling health condition can be enrolled in the pre-school closest to the child's place of residence. When they are enrolled in pre-school, children with motor, sensory, cognitive or psychological disabilities are also registered with the departmental office for people with disabilities (<i>Maison Départementale des Personnes Handicapées</i>, MDPH). At this service the child is evaluated by a multidisciplinary team of specialists and an individual education plan (<i>projet particulier</i>



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	<p><i>de scolarisation</i>, PPS) is drawn up. This personalised plan sets the framework for the child's enrolment in a mainstream school: pace, attendance schedule, need for full-time or part-time individual assistance, specific material requirements, etc. In very rare cases, the Commission for Rights and Autonomy (<i>Commission des Droits et de l'Autonomie</i>, CDA) directs children to a special school rather than to a mainstream pre-school. Even in these cases, the child remains enrolled in their mainstream pre-school. This formal enrolment is designed to underscore that placement in or return to the mainstream classroom is the preferred option where possible and that the National Education system remains responsible for the education of all children, even those directed to specialist teaching institutions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="576 1093 1445 1809">– From enrolment in pre-primary education onwards, an education plan is proposed for each child with a disability, elaborated in an individual education plan that includes the required adjustments and adaptation, with a preference for mainstream education wherever possible. The plan sets the pace of school attendance for the child (days and hours in the classroom), along with other conditions. This schedule is generally drawn up after a period of observation (the first month of school). It is intended to follow the pace of mainstream learners of the same age as closely as possible. Part-time attendance is often prescribed in plans for children with disabilities; however, only 37.7% of children with disabilities attend pre-school on a part-time basis, and only 4% attend just one day a week.<li data-bbox="576 1839 1445 2056">– Multidisciplinary medical and social services are often involved in the education of children with disabilities (preventive medical-social action centres – CAMSP – or specialised education and home-care service – SESSAD). These services are entirely free



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	<p>of charge for families. Depending on the paramedical services and the schools, these support services may be provided in school, during school hours, or outside of the school schedule.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– The overall educational perspective of the child is outlined in the individual education plan. It is discussed and constructed with the parents. The plan addresses the pace and duration of the child’s education in the mainstream classroom, the presence and time requirements of teaching assistants if necessary, and other paramedical support (psychologist, speech therapy, psychomotor therapy, etc.).– The third national autism action plan (2013–2017) aims, among other things, to increase the number of children with pervasive developmental disorders (PDD) attending mainstream schools. <p>There are no explicit measures at the national level to encourage classroom diversity, however. The geographic district school enrolment system that assigns children to schools corresponding to their home address is not sufficient to promote this diversity. It tends to reinforce the segregation effect in schools located in underprivileged areas, by granting ‘dispensations’ relatively easily to families that do not want to enrol their children in schools judged to be problematic, with this occurring as early as the pre-primary level.</p> <p>Each school establishes measures aiming to facilitate the transition between pre-primary education and primary school for families. These measures may be written up in the school’s pedagogical project. They are encouraged by the national administration, but each establishment is free to determine their form and implementation. The 2015 framework programme for pre-primary education states:</p> <p><i>Pre-schools build bridges between the daily routines of the family and the classroom, between school schedules and after-school activities. They also play a pivotal role in</i></p>



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	<p><i>the relationships established with early childhood care institutions and primary schools.</i></p>
<p><i>Practice at national level</i></p> <p>1. What percentage of children attend mainstream ECE provision at ages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 years • 4 years • 5 years (if not primary) • 6 years (if not primary)? <p>2. What are the main factors preventing some children from accessing mainstream ECE?</p> <p>3. Are there children who attend special ECE settings? Please provide data if available.</p> <p>4. Describe arrangements for inter-service collaboration to enable children's attendance and participation?</p> <p>5. What proportion of children is formally identified as having additional needs at:</p>	<p>Statistics for 2015 from the National Education Ministry show that all children from the age of three are enrolled in school, theoretically in mainstream classrooms and schools.</p> <p>The rate of enrolment of children between the ages of two and three in pre-primary education is highly variable from one region to another. In 2015, the average rate of enrolment for two-year-olds was 11.8%.</p> <p>The enrolment rate for two-year-olds is higher in underprivileged areas. In designated priority education zones (<i>zone d'éducation prioritaire, ZEP</i>), 20.8% of two-year-olds are enrolled in pre-primary education. This very early education aims to anticipate the emergence of special needs in these children.</p> <p>The main obstacles to enrolment in mainstream pre-schools are related to the health conditions and the degree of special needs presented by some children with disabilities. As a rule, all that can be done is done to allow them to be enrolled. However, some situations are too complex to be managed in mainstream schools.</p> <p>People employed to accompany children with disabilities enrolled in mainstream classrooms are called aides to learners with disabilities (<i>accompagnant d'élèves en situation de handicap, AESH</i>). Statistics for primary education (including both pre-primary and primary schools) indicate that 51.8% of children with disabilities receive this individual assistance. No statistics are available for the pre-primary level separately. It is likely that the percentage of pre-primary assistance is particularly high.</p> <p>A specific programme, Teaching Units (<i>Unité d'Enseignement</i>) has been set up in pre-schools. This programme relies on co-operation between schools and social, health and welfare establishments. The EU's</p>



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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3 years• 4 years• 5 years• 6 years	<p>specifications state that a group of seven students aged three to six should be under the authority of a specialist teacher who attends school full time, with an adult to child ratio nearing 1:1. Educational practices developed in the EU must comply with recommendations from the National Health Authority.</p> <p>The EU's plan calls for these students to attend mainstream schools following or during the three-year support programme. Therefore, the plan includes attending some mainstream classes with the support of a team member.</p> <p>At present, 90 teaching units devoted to autism are planned to be opened in France.</p>



2. WORKFORCE

Key principles

2.1. Well-qualified staff whose initial and continuing training enables them to fulfil their professional role.

2.2. Supportive working conditions including professional leadership that creates opportunities for observation, reflection, planning, teamwork and cooperation with parents.

Guiding questions	Country response
<p>Legislation and policy</p> <p>1. What level of qualification is required to work in ECE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for teachers? • for other staff? <p>2. What regulation is there for staff-child ratios in ECE?</p> <p>3. What provision is there for additional staffing to support children with diverse and additional needs?</p> <p>4. Does the initial training of staff include understanding and supporting children with diverse and additional needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for teachers? • for other staff? <p>5. Does initial training include preparation for working in partnership with families:</p>	<p>Teachers in public pre-schools in France have the status of Schoolteacher (<i>professeur d'école</i>). They hold a master's degree, but have not received specific training in early childhood education.</p> <p>Some private pre-schools and kindergartens employ early childhood caregivers who have received specific training in the care of very young children.</p> <p>Training pertaining to inclusive education is integrated into initial teacher training, with aims focusing on the development of skills in two areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – diversity of learners; – working in teams. <p>Initial teacher training does not specifically prepare teachers to work with families.</p> <p>Specialised training modules are offered each year as part of on-going education programmes for teachers who work in schools, middle schools and high schools that enrol learners with special educational needs related to disability, serious illness or academic difficulties. At the national level, training modules devoted to this subject are offered for primary education teachers.</p> <p>Resources available through the EDUSCOL website help primary education teachers to better address the needs of learners with special educational needs. Digital technology which boosts the enrolment of learners with disabilities is a high priority for the National Education Ministry, through platforms such as <i>M@gistère</i>, the experimental</p>



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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• for teachers?• for other staff? <p>6. Is there a policy for in-service training? Does it cover inclusive education skills?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• for teachers?• for other staff?	<p><i>CLIS'Tab</i> and projects such as <i>Educare, Vis ma vue, Eyeschool, TagTice, Transition réussite</i>, etc. These projects do not focus exclusively on pre-primary education, but attest to research, training and new technology developed to enable children with special needs to pursue a mainstream school education. The acquisition and maintenance of information technology devices fall within the purview of local municipal authorities, however, leading to strong territorial disparities.</p> <p>Service requirements for primary education (including pre-primary) teachers (<i>Bulletin Officiel, 21/02/2013</i>):</p> <p>The employment schedule for teachers is framed by the weekly school timetable as set by the Education Code and its terms pertaining to the organisation and functioning of pre-primary and primary schools.</p> <p>The employment of primary education teaching personnel comprises 24 teaching hours (all learners) per week, and an average of three hours per week under the responsibility of the National Education inspector for the school district in which the teachers work. This block totals 108 hours annually.</p> <p>This block of 108 annual hours is broken down as follows (article 2, decree of 30 July 2008):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– 36 hours of supplementary teaching activities conducted as part of the school's pedagogical project. This may be with small groups of learners, or help for learners encountering difficulties in mastering skills, or a personal project or activity stipulated by the school or related to a broader territorial educational project;– 24 hours to identify learners' needs, organise complementary pedagogical activities and co-ordinate them with other resources implemented to help learners in the school, in particular enrolment of children under the age of three, the 'more teachers than classrooms' scheme, and



Guiding questions	Country response
	<p>creating a more fluid transition between educational cycles;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– a block of 24 hours assigned to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ work in educational teams: teacher councils within the individual school and at the educational cycle level;○ elaboration of measures to ensure better pedagogical continuity between cycles and smoother transition from primary to secondary school;○ contact with parents;○ follow-up and development of individual education plans for children with disabilities;– 18 hours devoted to pedagogical training and on-going education. On-going education must amount to at least half of the block of 18 hours and must be pursued in whole or in part through distance learning, using digital resources;– 6 hours devoted to mandatory participation in school council meetings. <p>Specialist municipal staff (<i>agent territorial spécialisé d'école maternelle</i>, ATSEM) are employed as class assistants to work with the pre-school class teacher. Their role is to greet the children, participate in the activities proposed during the day and keep them clean. The ATSEM staff help prepare, put away and tidy up materials and equipment in the classroom. They are part of the teaching community; the teacher is in charge of education and learning, the ATSEM staff assist in this role and in the care of the children.</p> <p>In towns of over 2,000 people, the ATSEM staff are professionally certified to care for young children (<i>Certificat d'aptitude professionnelle petite enfance</i>), and must pass the ATSEM employment examination, which includes a qualifying test and an oral exam for final</p>



Guiding questions	Country response
	<p>acceptance. Preparatory courses for the ATSEM employment examination review legislative aspects (measures in favour of inclusive education), child development, hygiene and safety issues.</p> <p>Employment criteria for ATSEM staff have now been established, and are progressively being implemented at the territorial level. For a long time, employees without any particular training filled these positions. The employment criteria as currently defined apply only to new employees or to the upgrading of employee contracts. It should be pointed out that, at present, some ATSEM staff have not passed an entrance examination.</p> <p>The status of staff who accompany children with disabilities varies. The professional nature of this support function (<i>accompagnant de l'enfant en situation de handicap</i>, AESH) is the subject of diverse claims and is still under discussion. Out of some 69,000 support staff currently employed (across all school levels), only 5,000 have permanent contracts. The others are employed under fixed-term contracts with the National Education Ministry and do not necessarily have initial training, nor are they beneficiaries of subsidised job contracts.</p> <p>The professionalisation of the occupation of support worker for children with disabilities through permanent employment contracts began in 2014. A government bulletin (circa July 2014) set the terms of recruitment and employment of AESH support workers and outlined the measures taken to give these staff a genuine perspective of professional advancement, including access to permanent employment contracts. Candidates for employment as AESH staff must hold a professional diploma in the field of personal care provider. Currently these diplomas are generally either national Life Assistant diplomas, national Medico-Psychological Aide diplomas, or further qualifications as Household Aides. A single professional diploma will soon supersede these three diplomas. Individuals who have worked for at least two</p>



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	<p>years in the capacity of inclusive education aide for children with disabilities may be exempt from the diploma requirement.</p> <p>Training is offered to prepare AESH staff for their occupation. The training module includes 60 hours of instruction, implemented mainly by primary and secondary educational district supervisory teams and inspectors. Staff follow the training sessions during their first year of contractual employment. At the beginning of the school year, most staff start work without any training, and the training sessions are held earlier or later in the school year, depending on the regional academic district.</p> <p>INS HEA has devised and created resource materials to develop the skills expected of these staff; 20 three-hour modules have been available to academic authorities since January 2014.</p> <p>The subjects covered are: 1) Representation of disabilities; 2) Socio-historical trends, legislation; 3) Developmental psychology; 4) Adolescence; 5) and 6) French educational system; 7) Establishments and services; 8) MDPH; 9) Individual education plan; 10) Autonomy; 11) Position of AESH support workers; 12) Life trajectory; 13) Communication with families; 14) Cognitive impairment; 15) Deaf and hearing-impaired; 16) Visual impairment; 17) Motor impairment; 18) Behavioural disorders; 19) Learning disabilities; 20) Autism.</p> <p>Education aides for learners with disabilities (<i>auxiliaire de vie scolaire, AVS</i>) carry out four kinds of activities (see government circular no. 2003–092, 11 June 2003). They:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– work in the classroom with the teacher (movement of the learner, setting up equipment for the learner, help with manipulating learning materials, help with instructions for certain subjects, facilitation and stimulation of communication between the learner with disabilities and the entourage, development of



Guiding questions	Country response
	<p>learner autonomy, etc.);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – participate in occasional and regular class outings and field trips; – carry out technical tasks that do not necessitate paramedical or medical training, and help with the learner’s personal hygiene; – take part in the implementation and follow-up of the learner’s individual education plan (meetings with teaching staff and/or education supervisors).
<p><i>Practice at national level</i></p> <p>1. What proportion of staff has the required qualification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for teachers? • for other staff? <p>2. Please describe any proposed changes to the required qualifications.</p> <p>3. Describe the role of leaders of ECE settings in ensuring inclusive practice?</p> <p>4. Provide any data on staff–child ratio.</p> <p>5. Please describe the range of specialist support that is available and how it is organised?</p> <p>6. How do regular and support staff collaborate in IECE</p>	<p>The following statistical analyses refer to the primary education level (pre-primary and primary school) and not specifically to pre-primary education.</p> <p>In the public school system 98% of primary school teachers are qualified as Schoolteachers (<i>professeur des écoles</i>) and thus hold a master’s degree. A few teachers with the title of Primary Schoolteacher (<i>instituteur</i>) remain, who possess the qualifications required before the master’s degree requirement was instituted. There are also still a few substitute teachers, who hold at least a Licence, a three-year degree in higher education and are often preparing for the teacher employment entrance examination.</p> <p>In privately funded schools, the percentage of Schoolteachers is lower (88.4%), and there are more substitute teachers who are preparing for the teacher employment entrance examination.</p> <p>The teaching body in France is strongly critical of the lack of training pertaining to special educational needs and some teachers also point out the low level of training for pre-primary teaching.</p> <p>While training for working in teams is available (see above), it must be stressed that teachers’ working conditions limit the possibilities for team teaching. It is also difficult for teachers to share their practices with colleagues, even though some initiatives have emerged</p>



Guiding questions	Country response
settings? 7. Describe the role of support assistants in the ECE setting?	<p>(the 'more teachers than classrooms' scheme and pre-primary open house and conference days to present the school to families and partner institutions).</p> <p>www.ac-versailles.fr/public/jcms/s1_316746/les-journees-de-la-maternelle-2016</p> <p>Teachers' schedules include time for working with colleagues, but no hours are set aside for team work on a school-wide level, including non-teaching staff, support staff, after-school activity leaders. This can be detrimental to educational continuity and to the overall climate in the school.</p> <p>The learner/teacher ratio is regulated according to standards set at the departmental (geographic) level, and varies from one departmental jurisdiction to another in France. No allowance is made for learners with special needs, except in designated Priority Education Zones (ZEP) where a lower learner/teacher ratio is applied. The ratio is not adjusted over the course of the school year.</p> <p>Pre-primary classes numbered 25.8 children on average in 2014, with a staffing level of one teacher and one class assistant (ATSEM).</p> <p>Support network for learners with special needs: <i>Réseaux d'aides spécialisées aux élèves en difficulté</i> (RASED):</p> <p>Special education teachers and psychologists in the National Education RASED networks provide specialist assistance to pre-primary and primary school learners with major problems. This assistance includes teaching aids and remedial measures. These specialists have a specific mission that complements that of class teachers, providing the teaching staff with appropriate responses to the learning difficulties and problems adapting to school requirements experienced by some learners.</p> <p>Special education teachers work directly with the children, in various ways that are defined in collaboration with the teaching council under the supervision of the academic inspector, and are written into the school's pedagogical</p>



Guiding questions	Country response
	<p>plan. The school council (on which elected parent representatives sit) is informed of the working methods chosen, as stipulated by article D 411–2 of the Education Code.</p> <p>Special education teachers may intervene directly in the classroom, may take groups of learners for periods of time as appropriate to their needs, or may help learners on an individual basis. In all cases, the class teachers make sure that the learners involved do not miss the instruction that they need. They ensure that separate group activities are frequent and long enough to be effective.</p> <p>The specialised help project is always written up in a document that explains the articulation between the specific remedial aid and the help provided by the class teacher. This project document specifies the targeted objectives, the planned approach, an estimated time frame and the ways in which project implementation will be evaluated.</p> <p>Individual school attendance plan (<i>Projet d'accueil individualisé, PAI</i>):</p> <p>Individual school attendance plans are drawn up for learners with chronic illnesses (such as asthma), allergies and food intolerances, to enable them to attend school normally. Learners with these personalised measures can follow their treatment regime or special diet, ensuring their safety and compensating for inconveniences linked to their health status.</p> <p>Individual support plan (<i>Plan d'accompagnement personnalisé, PAP</i>):</p> <p>The individual support plan provides appropriate options and adapted teaching measures for all learners with long-term difficulties due to learning disabilities (dyslexia, dysphasia, communication disorders, etc.).</p> <p>Complementary pedagogical activities (<i>Activités pédagogiques complémentaires, APC</i>):</p> <p>Initially implemented as part of the reform of the daily</p>



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	<p>and weekly school schedules in primary education, teachers in all schools plan and carry out these complementary activities as part of their regular employment hours. The activities are not included in the block of 24 hours a week of mandatory instruction given to all learners; they are additional activities and require parental consent. The activities proposed consider existing extra-curricular offerings and may be devised in liaison with a wider territorial educational project.</p> <p>These complementary activities have a broad educational scope and provide an opportunity to give learners support tailored to their needs, to stimulate and reinforce their pleasure in learning. Teachers can help learners when they encounter difficulties in acquiring skills, accompany them in their individual work, or suggest an activity as part of the school's pedagogical plan.</p> <p>Complementary educational activities may be proposed for all learners at one time or another during the school year, according to needs detected by teachers.</p> <p>The school head teacher co-ordinates the various staff members (aides to learners with disabilities, class teacher, special education teacher) to ensure consistent and on-going support for learners. No scheduled hours are set aside at the institutional level for co-ordination between teachers, class assistants (ATSEM) and after-school activity staff.</p>



3. CURRICULUM

Key principles

3.1. A curriculum based on pedagogic goals, values and approaches that enable children to reach their full potential in a holistic way.

3.2. A curriculum that requires staff to collaborate with children, colleagues and parents and to reflect on their own practice.

Guiding questions	Country response
<p>Legislation and policy</p> <p>1. Is there a national ECE curriculum for <i>all</i> children?</p> <p>2. Does it include skills and competences to be achieved by children?</p> <p>3. Describe how the curriculum facilitates inclusion?</p> <p>4. Is the use of new technologies included in the curriculum?</p> <p>5. Is the curriculum adaptable to meet the needs of all children?</p> <p>6. How are parents involved in the adaptation of the curriculum to individual children?</p> <p>7. Is there awareness of the impact of labelling on children's participation</p>	<p>The content of pre-primary instruction is laid out in a national curriculum programme (<i>Bulletin Officiel</i>, 26 March 2015). This programme specifies the skills that learners are to have acquired by the end of their pre-primary education. Skills acquisition and requirements are differentiated for different learners, an essential factor for inclusive education.</p> <p>The 2015 Programme aims to create ‘schools that take children’s development into account’:</p> <p><i>Throughout the pre-primary years, children make considerable progress in terms of socialisation, language, motor skills and cognitive capacity, as they mature and are stimulated by the school environment. The pace of this progress is highly variable.</i></p> <p><i>Teachers envisage a common objective for their class, keeping in perspective the differences that may appear between individuals in the same class, particularly in the early years of their lives. The teaching staff arrange the spaces in the school (classrooms, special use rooms, outside areas, etc.) to create an environment that stimulates children’s curiosity, addresses their needs, notably for play, rest, movement and discovery, and offers multiple opportunities for safe sensory, motor, relational and cognitive experiences. Each individual teacher devises a timetable that is suitable for the age group, and is careful to incorporate less demanding periods in between sessions that are more demanding of corporal and cognitive attention.</i></p> <p><i>In this way, pre-schools ensure an initial acquisition of</i></p>



Guiding questions	Country response
	<p><i>the basic principles of life in society. The enrolment of children with disabilities in the schools enables those children to develop these principles, as well as helping to develop a positive view of differences among all children.</i></p> <p>Instruction includes using digital technology:</p> <p><i>Children are exposed to new technologies at a very early age. The role of the schools is to give them keys for understanding the uses of these tools – tablet, computer, digital camera – and to begin using them appropriately. Targeted research using Internet resources is carried out and discussed by the teacher.</i></p> <p><i>Class or school projects that aim to build relationships with other children provide stimulating experiences through remote communication. Teachers talk to the children about the notion of an interconnected world that allows them to talk with others who may be very far away.</i></p> <p>Parents are regularly informed of their child’s progress in school, and are reminded of their own obligations regarding education as set forth in article L. 511–1:</p> <p><i>This information is transmitted primarily via the learning progress booklets which record skills acquired in pre-school.</i></p> <p><i>This information is communicated several times a year, depending on a timetable established by the pre-school teachers’ council.</i></p> <p><i>At the end of the final year of pre-primary education, each learner’s skills development is summarised according to a national template issued by decree of the National Education Ministry. The summary record is drawn up by the council of primary education teachers, and forwarded to the primary school when the child is accepted into the first year of cycle 2 of primary education, which is devoted to the acquisition of fundamental skills. The record is also communicated to the parents or legal guardians.</i></p>



Guiding questions	Country response
	<p>Pre-school instruction emphasises positive evaluation:</p> <p><i>Evaluation is a tool for guiding the professional practice of teachers; it is neither predictive nor selective. Evaluation is based on careful observation and interpretation of what each individual child says or does. Above and beyond the results achieved, teachers take care to highlight the progress made and the advancement of learners in relation to their starting point. This evaluation enables all stakeholders to identify successes, perceive changes and keep a record of this evolution. Teachers are attentive to what the child can do alone, with help (what children do with help is often a precursor to what they will soon do on their own) or with other children. Differences in age and maturity within the class group are taken into account.</i></p> <p><i>Evaluation is adapted to the specific features of the pre-school and carried out in ways defined within the school itself. Teachers make the approaches, expectations and modes of evaluation used in pre-primary education clear to parents.</i></p>
<p><i>Practice at national level</i></p> <p>1. Is there assessment of the learning and development of children from age 3 years?</p> <p>2. What arrangements are there for the screening of children's functioning?</p> <p>3. Is children's engagement and participation in ECE activities monitored?</p> <p>4. How do ECE settings</p>	<p>Pre-schools are caring and well-intentioned. Pre-primary education is based on a fundamental principle: all children are capable of learning and progressing. By showing confidence in each child, pre-schools encourage children to have confidence in their own powers of action and thought and in their ability to learn and be successful in school and beyond.</p> <p>Pre-primary education is structured around a central tenet of instruction for children: 'Learning together and living together'. The class and the group are a learning community that establishes the groundwork for building a body of citizens who respect the rules of secular society and are open to the cultural diversity of the world.</p> <p>In this way, pre-schools ensure the initial acquisition of the principles of life in human society. The enrolment of children with disabilities in the schools fulfils this</p>



Guiding questions	Country response
<p>reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of all children?</p> <p>5. How do staff adapt (prepare and present) the curriculum and the learning activities to make them accessible to all children?</p> <p>6. How are parents involved in this process?</p> <p>7. How are children themselves involved in this process?</p> <p>8. How is ICT used to overcome barriers to participation and learning?</p> <p>9. What provisions are there for meeting children's additional needs?</p> <p>10. How is the environment adapted to the needs of all children?</p>	<p>commitment for the children themselves and helps develop a positive view of differences among all learners. The adult community takes care to see that all children receive equitable treatment in all circumstances. Pre-schools ensure the conditions of equality, in particular between girls and boys.</p> <p>Instruction is organised into five areas of learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Using language in all its dimensions;– Acting, understanding and expressing oneself through physical activity;– Acting, understanding and expressing oneself through artistic activity;– Constructing the first tools for ordering one's thinking;– Exploring the world. <p>It is expected that learners will have acquired a certain number of skills in each of these areas by the end of pre-primary education. The official programme issued in 2015 emphasises that children learn at different paces, and underlines the need to support learning by all children.</p> <p>As of September 2016, two new tools will be available to follow the progress and skills acquisition of pre-primary learners: the learning progress booklet that is kept up to date throughout the education cycle and the summary record of skills acquired by the child that is established at the end of the final year in cycle 1.</p> <p>The following note is drawn up in response to items 1 to 7. The two new tools for following acquisition of skills in pre-primary education and for communicating learners' progress are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– the learning progress booklet recording skills acquisition throughout the educational cycle;– the summary record of skills acquired by the



Guiding questions	Country response
	<p>learner, established at the end of cycle 1.</p> <p>The Education Code states that learners in primary education shall each have a school record (<i>livret scolaire</i>) that serves as a liaison instrument between teachers, the school and parents. The record attests to the progressive acquisition of skills and knowledge by the child in the course of their education.</p> <p>The record follows the child throughout the primary education period and is forwarded to the new school if the child changes schools.</p> <p>Starting at pre-primary level, learners acquire knowledge and skills that serve as the basis for instruction in primary school. To this end, the skills acquired are assessed at the end of the final year of pre-primary education, referring to the official programme of instruction and this assessment is attached to the learner's school record.</p> <p><i>Bulletin Officiel</i> no. 45 of 27 November 2008</p> <p>http://cache.media.eduscol.education.fr/file/evaluation/48/3/note_accomp_eval_bienv_suivi_evaluation_maternelle_527483.pdf</p> <p>Items 8, 9 and 10:</p> <p>Each school establishment decides on the use of information technology, the fitting out of the physical environment and arrangements made to address learners' additional needs.</p>



4. EVALUATION AND MONITORING

Key principles

4.1. Monitoring and evaluating produces information at the relevant local, regional and/or national level to support continuing improvements in the quality of policy and practice.

4.2. Monitoring and evaluation which is in the best interest of the child.

Guiding questions	Country response
<p>Legislation and policy</p> <p>1. What standards are in place for ensuring the quality of ECE at national level?</p> <p>2. Describe the arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the quality of ECE provision?</p> <p>3. How is the participation of all children reflected in the</p>	<p>Source: CNESCO www.cnesco.fr/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Orientations_strat%C3%A9giques_Cnesco_2014_20171.pdf</p> <p>The Reconstructing the Schools of the Republic Act of 8 July 2013 (<i>Loi pour la Refondation de l'École de la République</i>) created the National Council for the Evaluation of the School System (<i>Conseil national d'évaluation du système scolaire</i>, CNESCO).</p> <p>The council answers to the National Education Ministry and its mission is to independently evaluate the organisational structure and results achieved by the school system. It pursues a threefold role: producing evaluation reports and summaries, notably with an international perspective; expert analysis of the methodology used in existing evaluations; and promoting the culture of evaluation among professional educators and the general public.</p> <p>As stipulated by law, the council is charged with the following tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – carry out or commission evaluations on its own initiative; at the request of the National Education Ministry, the Ministry in charge of agricultural instruction or other Ministries with competency for educational matters, the Ministry in charge of urban policy; permanent Parliamentary commissions devoted to education; – issue opinions pertaining to the methodology, tools and findings of evaluations conducted by the National Education Ministry or under European and international co-operation programmes; – undertake the annual assessment of experiments carried out in



Guiding questions	Country response
<p>national quality standards for ECE?</p> <p>4. How does national policy identify and address inequalities in participation in ECE?</p> <p>5. How does research inform policy and practice in ECE?</p>	<p>the context of school educational projects.</p> <p>Source: www.education.gouv.fr</p> <p>The National Education Ministry pursues a coherent evaluation policy at a national level, alone or in collaboration with specialist bodies. The objective is to develop a culture of evaluation within the educational system, seeking to improve its performance.</p> <p>The Evaluation, Prospective Studies and Excellence Division (<i>Direction de l'évaluation, de la prospective et de la performance</i>, DEPP) of the National Education Ministry carries out studies on teaching practices, either on its own or in collaboration with general inspectorates in the education system, with research teams or other external national or international bodies.</p> <p>The National Education Inspectors General take part in the evaluation of the entire educational system (excluding higher education). Their assessments cover the content of instruction, curricula, teaching methods and the resources implemented in education.</p> <p>A number of research centres specialise in pedagogical issues, in particular the Institut français de l'éducation (Ifé). Ifé is the successor to the <i>Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique</i> (INRP), pursuing all its missions and obligations (except its museographical mission).</p> <p>Evaluation of education policy:</p> <p>Public policies implemented to improve learners' success and the achievements of the education system are assessed by the Evaluation, Prospective Studies and Excellence Division (DEPP) and by research laboratories and institutes.</p> <p>International comparative studies are drawn up to compare the performance of education systems around the world. The French National Education Ministry contributes information on France to these studies.</p> <p>Bodies that carry out international comparisons:</p> <p>International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA):</p> <p>IEA is a co-operative group of national research institutions and governmental research agencies. It conducts a broad range of</p>



Guiding questions	Country response
	<p>comparative studies on educational matters.</p> <p>Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD): OECD publishes forward-looking studies, annual assessments and statistical comparisons based on economic surveys conducted by OECD countries.</p> <p>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO): UNESCO encourages the work of all societies to provide quality education for all at the international level.</p> <p>Eurydice information network on education systems and policies in Europe: The Eurydice network gathers information and data on European education systems and analyses education policy.</p> <p>European Commission: The European Commission publishes annual indicators that compare the means, operations and achievements of the education systems of Member States.</p> <p>Recent international studies:</p> <p>PISA: The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) evaluates the knowledge of 15-year-olds in several different areas. The survey is conducted every three years.</p> <p>PIRLS Assessment: The Progress in International Reading Literacy Survey (PIRLS) evaluates reading skills in nine- and ten-year-old learners. It is conducted every five years.</p> <p>TALIS: The Teaching and Learning International Survey appraises teaching practices and knowledge acquisition. France participated in TALIS for the first time in 2012. The survey's objective is to provide OECD countries with information pertaining to the professional environment of teachers, their working conditions</p>



Guiding questions	Country response
	<p>and the impact of these conditions on the effectiveness of teachers and schools.</p> <p><i>Bulletin Officiel</i> no. 45, 27 November 2008.</p>
<p><i>Practice at national level</i></p> <p>1. How do staff monitor and evaluate the participation and learning of all children?</p> <p>2. How are parents involved in this process?</p> <p>3. How are children themselves involved in this process?</p>	<p>Some teams of educators have elaborated assessment grids for the three levels of pre-primary education (<i>'petits'</i>, <i>'moyens'</i> and <i>'grands'</i>, roughly three-year-olds, four-year-olds and five-year-olds).</p> <p>These assessment grids provide a basis for dialogue with parents from the child's first year of pre-primary education.</p> <p>They are used to detect children who are encountering problems and to encourage teachers to seek support from other professionals (school psychologist, special education teachers, etc.). Parents are always informed, implicated and their consent sought for support action. In some cases, pre-primary teachers may advise parents to consult specialists at the departmental office for persons with disabilities (MDPH) if they detect problems that the school system cannot handle alone.</p>



5. GOVERNANCE AND FUNDING

Key principles

5.1. Stakeholders in the ECE system have a clear and shared understanding of their role and responsibilities, and know that they are expected to collaborate with partner organisations.

5.2. Legislation, regulation and/or funding supports progress towards a universal legal entitlement to publicly subsidised or funded ECE, and progress is regularly reported to all stakeholders.

Guiding questions	Country response
<p>Legislation and policy</p> <p>1. Under which ministry(ies) / department(s) are ECE provisions regulated and funded?</p> <p>2. How is intersectorial (health, social and education) collaboration promoted among all stakeholders in ECE?</p> <p>3. How is free or affordable provision guaranteed to all children age 3 years and over?</p> <p>4. What additional economic measures are available for children with additional needs and their families to access mainstream ECE?</p> <p>5. How is additional funding allocated?</p>	<p>Funding and management of schools:</p> <p>Pre-primary and primary schools in the public school system do not have ‘public establishment’ status in France. They are not independent legal entities (moral persons) and are not financially autonomous.</p> <p>Sources of funding:</p> <p>Funding of public pre-primary and primary schools comes from a number of sources: the municipality, the state, parents, the local education fund (<i>caisse des écoles</i>), the school co-operative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The municipality is in charge of public schools (primary level). It owns the school buildings, and ensures construction, rebuilding and renovation, extension, major repairs, equipment and fittings, and operations of these buildings (article L212-4 of the Education Code). Traditionally primary schools are managed under direct municipal authority, with funding for material needs coming from the municipal budget. The budget is managed entirely at the municipal level: expenditures are authorised by the mayor, accounting is ensured by the municipal funds collector. Class assistants (ATSEM), janitorial and security staff are municipal employees. – The French state is responsible for the remuneration of teaching staff and pays copying



Guiding questions	Country response
	<p>fees for the reproduction of protected works for pedagogical purposes (article L212–4 of the Education Code).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Children’s families may be asked to make voluntary contributions to pay for optional activities organised by the school, such as overnight field trips and outings that extend beyond regular school hours. No child may be excluded for financial reasons. In cases of financial difficulties, solutions for alternate funding must be found, through the municipal government, the school co-operative or other authorised school-related groups. Activities organised during regular school hours are mandatory, and therefore must be free of charge for families.– The local education fund (<i>Caisse des écoles</i>) is a mandatory independent municipal public establishment, funded by fees, municipal, departmental or national government subsidies, and gifts and bequests. The fund provides aid to learners according to need and family resources. The local education fund often manages school-related municipal services such as the food service, after-school care centres, school outings, field trips and travel.– Most schools have a school co-operative. The co-operative has an educational mission which is to teach children to conceive and execute joint projects. The co-operative’s budget comes from the earnings generated by its activities (festivals, fairs, performances), from gifts, subsidies and fees paid by members. Most school co-operatives are affiliated to an umbrella organisation, the <i>Office central de coopération à l'école</i> (OCCE). <p>Management: Subject to direct municipal management, and without</p>



Guiding questions	Country response
	<p>financial autonomy, schools do not have much leeway in terms of management. To remedy this situation, there are some good and some bad solutions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="576 456 986 495">– De facto management <p>Practical solutions intended to make things easier often lead to irregular practices. For instance, if a person who is not a public administration accountant, or not delegated to act for a public administration accountant, handles public funds or regulated private funds, that person is accountable for de facto management. The de facto accountant or manager incurs the same obligations and responsibilities as a public administration accountant. The de facto manager may be charged under penal law.</p> <p>Likewise the procedure by which a municipality pays funds to a school co-operative or any other group created for this purpose, and allows the school head teacher to cover school operating expenditures with these funds, is an irregular procedure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="576 1189 900 1227">– Imprest account <p>An imprest account (cash fund), set up by the municipality, is a simple way to make direct municipal control more flexible, without resorting to de facto management. An imprest cashier is designated by the public accountant and entrusted with a portion of the municipal budget for the school. The cashier may be the school head teacher or another teacher who accepts this role. Acting in the name of the accountant, the cashier agent can use these funds for small expenditures (materials, operating expenses), such as purchasing chalk or photocopier paper, as needed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="576 1771 895 1809">– Earnings cashier <p>In the same way as the imprest cashier, an earnings cashier can be designated to collect sums of money from children's families. This mechanism is useful for organising an optional school outing, for instance. The cashier is accountable to the public administration accountant. In</p>



Guiding questions	Country response
	<p>the absence of an earnings cash account or a school co-operative, teachers are not authorised to collect money from families for school operating expenses.</p> <p>Pre-primary education is a free service.</p> <p>French legislation (Law of 11 February 2005) addresses disabilities in their social context, i.e. considering the learners' situations in relation to their environment. Two principles follow from this foundation: accessibility (access to all for all) and compensatory measures (individual measures to attain equal rights and opportunities).</p> <p>The departmental government council (<i>Conseil général</i>) provides funding for compensatory measures required to allow children to be enrolled in mainstream schools. Generally, the departmental government council covers transport for children from school to other education locations.</p> <p>The 'individual compensation plan' for learners may include, for example, in-school support by an education aide (AVS), or provision of care by professionals in medical and social services centres, in addition to education. The plan also provides for a disability card and the right to transport services.</p> <p>Multidisciplinary teams at departmental offices for people with disabilities (MDPH) assess the needs of each child with a disability and propose an individual compensation plan that incorporates their individual education plan. The Commission on Rights and Autonomy determines the measures to be implemented, based on the team's assessment.</p> <p>The National Education system implements the measures indicated by the MDPH team jointly with health facilities, medical and social services centres and local authorities.</p>
<p><i>Practice at national level</i></p> <p>1. How far does the</p>	<p>It is regrettable that even today measures in favour of inclusive education are not consistently applied. These differences can be seen between academic districts, in schools where inclusive education is supported to a</p>



Guiding questions	Country response
<p>standard of ECE provision vary across regions and localities?</p> <p>2. How effective is collaboration between the ECE and health, social and other relevant agencies for children and families?</p> <p>3. What proportion of children (3 years to primary education) make use of additional funding?</p> <p>4. How well does additional funding support inclusive education?</p>	<p>greater or lesser degree by the education authorities.</p> <p>Differences are also found between different departmental jurisdictions in France, with varying policies implemented by departmental offices for people with disabilities. Compensation measures are financed by departmental government authorities, leading to varying conditions for learners, depending on more or less positive budget support and on the interpretation of applicable texts by professionals.</p>