



Brussels, 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2020  
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**UPDATE 03/04/2020**

**COVID-19 outbreak**

**NEW**

Europe is taking measures to deal with the COVID-19 outbreak which has been classified as a pandemic. Luxembourg and The Netherlands have already announced suspension of in situ lessons in the schools on their territory up to May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2020.

It remains a fact that schools do not have the same structure as offices. Students move from one place to another, they meet for different activities, with different students and with different teachers/adults and have close physical contact in play, that professionals, in an office working environment do not normally have.

Interaction amongst pupils in a school environment is extremely pronounced, even more pronounced in the European School system. This mixing of pupils is found in a variety of contexts in the ES system, such as:

- classes and groups that change every hour and pupils who mingle across sections and levels,
- after school activities,
- school transport (bus),
- canteen and/or cafeteria,
- playground,
- corridors,
- study rooms and libraries,
- sport halls and changing rooms,

- toilets.

These are all examples of the different places where one pupil can meet other pupils (and/or teachers or staff) and can be (sometimes obliged to be) in close contact with them (less than 1 meter of distance).

Given:

- the continued situation of the declared pandemic,
- the nature of the European Schools daily organisation,
- the amplified risk of contamination in a school environment, particularly in a European School one,

as a preventive measure, it is highly recommended to prolong the suspension of the obligatory regular attendance of pupils (art. 30 “General Rules of the European Schools” Ref. : 2014-03-D-14) and of the lessons in situ in all European Schools, up to 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2020 inclusive.

School management and teachers, after the Easter time holidays, will go on providing distance education, using distance communication tools. Parents/Legal representatives of pupils are invited to support pupils’ efforts at home.

This communication is issued in advance, so that schools, teaching staff, staff and families dispose of enough time to make the necessary preparations for this extension.