



Schola Europaea / Office of the Secretary-General

Pedagogical Development Unit

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Guidelines on Organizing Pupils' Mobility in the European Schools Network

Approved by the Joint Teaching Committee by means of the accelerated written procedure 2024/42 on 15th November 2024

Immediate entry into force

This document cancels and replaces the document 2016-01-D-49-en-6

1. General framework

A mobility programme in a different country gives pupils the chance to develop more intensively in many regards, e.g., to improve their language skills and to mature through experiencing a different educational and cultural environment.

European Schools and Accredited European Schools offer the possibility of hosting other pupils as well as supporting their pupils to visit other schools. Both can take place as one-to-one exchange mobilities or as one-way mobilities (see 6. *Glossary* for details). They are known collectively as "Pupils' Mobility Programme".

The Pupils' Mobility Programme takes place during the 1st semester of s5. However, if there are justified reasons, the 1st semester of s4 is also possible. The duration of a mobility is one semester, whereby the mobility must be finished on the last school day before the Christmas holidays.

Pupils and parents/legal representatives should be informed about the mobility procedures in advance.

2. Procedures

Both the sending school and the host school nominate contact persons to facilitate the Pupils' Mobility Programme at each school:

- a) a **Mobility Coordinator** (e.g. a teacher, an educational adviser, or other member of staff),
- b) a **representative** from the **Parents' Association**,
- c) **mentors** (a member of staff, normally educational advisers or class teachers¹)

The roles and responsibilities of the contact persons and other involved parties are described in *Annex 1: Roles and Responsibilities*.

Pupils apply for a mobility for the next school year by filling in the Online Application Form before the end of the first teaching week after the Christmas holidays. Applicants can choose a maximum of three schools from the European Schools network.

A structured pre-selection process conducted by the sending school will identify a short-list of eligible applicants. The pupils applying will be considered as a whole, including their attitude to learning, motivation and engagement, and not only their academic achievements. Pupils with a record of serious breaches of the rules may not be found eligible for mobility. It is recommended to include the Class Council in the pre-selection process. The final decision lies with the Director.

As soon as the pre-selection process is finalized the sending school will inform all actors involved (the applying pupil and the family, host school Mobility Coordinators). An information will be sent to successful pupils indicating that the mobility will be organised depending on host school's availability and providing that proper accommodation with a host family is ensured. Preserving school autonomy, the number of pupils accepted for a mobility should take into account the host school's capacity and be in a direct relation with the cohort of s5 pupils in the host school. Before the two schools involved approve a mobility, a host family must be confirmed to receive the pupil. A host family can be found independently by the applying pupil's

¹ In small schools the Mobility Coordinator might also perform the role of the mentor.

family, through the Mobility Coordinator or through the contact person from the Parents' Association at the host school.

Before the mobility is finally approved, all necessary documents and agreements must be completed and handed in (see 7. Annexes). Pupils accepted to the programme must present the Confidential Health Form (Annex 2) at the start of their mobility.

The pre-selection process organised by the sending school should be finalised by the end of the third week of February. The selection process should be finalised by the 30th of April of the school year preceding the mobility. Relevant stakeholders need to be informed in advance to allow sufficient time for performing their roles.

3. Pedagogical aspects

a) Curriculum

In general, the curriculum of the visiting pupil should be replicated in the host school as much as possible. The host school facilitates the pupil with the compulsory subjects attended at the sending school and with as many of the optional subjects as possible. Due to local organizational or timetabling considerations, deviations from the optional subject choices of the sending school can be considered in the interest of the pupil.

b) Language section

The language section to be attended at the host school will normally be the same as in the sending school. A pupil who does not find their L1 section in the host school will be treated as a Student Without A Language Section (SWALS), provided that the L1 course in s5 exists in the host school. And vice versa a SWALS pupil who does find a section of their L1 in the host school will integrate in their L1 section.

c) Individual circumstances

The visiting pupil should normally receive in the host school the same Educational Support accommodations and special arrangements as in the sending school (e.g., use of laptop, extra time for examinations, etc.) This would also apply to any special measures for pupils with special talents or abilities (e.g., elite athletes, young artists, etc). The host school should take this into consideration in the selection process.

d) Assessment

Assessments need to be facilitated in accordance with the rules and regulations of the European Schools. Pupils will come back to their home school with A and B marks given in all the subjects followed. If the pupil cannot be awarded a B mark because the B test at the host school takes place after the Christmas holidays, the Management of the sending school will decide whether to organise the B test in its premises or whether to count the B mark of the second semester double for calculation of the final mark.

It is the responsibility of the pupil to catch up if the programme in the schools involved is not alike. If there are subjects that are not covered at the host school, the results of the 2nd semester at the sending school will be doubled for calculation of the final mark.

At the end of the stay the Director of the sending school will receive the first semester report signed by the Director of the host school.

4. Administrative Aspects

a) Finances

For mobilities there must be no additional cost to the host school. Participating pupils will meet their financial obligations (school fees) with their sending school.

b) Insurance

Participating pupils must prove to the host school (through the Mobility Coordinator) and host family that they are sufficiently insured (health, travel, accident, third-party), before the start of the mobility.

5. Conclusion

All European and Accredited European Schools involved in the Pupils' Mobility Programme should follow the guidelines and use the forms annexed to this document. This approach will ensure a coherent and effective organization of the programme.

6. Glossary

- **One-to-one exchange mobility:** A school sends a pupil on mobility and receives a pupil from that same host school; pupils "switch" places, possibly also families.
- **One-way mobility:** A school sends a pupil on mobility and does not receive a pupil from that same host school in return.
- **Sending school:** The home school of the pupil. The school where the pupil selected for the mobility is currently enrolled.
- **Host school:** The school the pupil attends while on mobility, probably in a foreign country. The school provides educational services and cultural immersion for the visiting pupil normally during the 1st semester of s5.
- **Mobility Coordinator:** A teacher, educational adviser, or other member of staff coordinating the Pupils' Mobility Programme at each school (sending school as well as host school). Amongst other things, they are responsible for informing all involved parties about the programme, organising the pre-selection and selection process, and liaising with other Mobility Coordinators, colleagues, and the representative of the Parents' Association to manage the mobilities.
- **Host family:** A family that agrees to have a pupil stay in their home for one semester while on mobility. Host families offer housing, cultural support, and a welcoming environment for pupils who are visiting a different school.
- **Mentor:** A member of staff, usually educational advisers or class teachers nominated by the host school to support the visiting pupils. The mentor offers support to the pupils with regards to pedagogical issues and other aspects of school life. The mentor will take care of the visiting pupil's well-being.

7. Annexes and online forms

These guidelines are accompanied by four annexes:

- Annex 1: Roles and Responsibilities
- Annex 2: Confidential Health Form
- Annex 3: Consent form for participation
- Annex 4: Guidance on Crisis Management

Link to MS Forms *Online Application Form*:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ShareFormPage.aspx?id=aeA505McU0OzBwsicDW6QmNVbKsjufIPmWVW0cLXizNUNURaVUk5UDZUOTU3QjZQQkhQNzRRVUpJUy4u&sharetoken=xIE9aTHqHYEbiTSNRyV2>

8. Opinion of to the Board of Inspectors Secondary

The Board of Inspectors (Secondary) gave a favourable opinion on the revised guidelines. The document would be presented to the JTC for its approval with an immediate entry into force.

9. Opinion of the Joint Teaching Committee

The Joint Teaching Committee issues a favourable opinion. Nevertheless, considering the interventions of the members, this document needs to be revised, in particular by the DPO regarding sensitive GDPR and legal issues. Considering the short deadline for its entry into force, a meeting with some stakeholders will be organised as soon as possible to finalise the document before its approval by the JTC by means of an accelerated written procedure.

10. Decision of the Joint Teaching Committee

The Joint Teaching Committee approved the document 2016-01-D-49-en-6 *Revised Guidelines on Organizing Pupils' Mobility in the ES network* by means of the accelerated written procedure 2024/42 with an immediate entry force. The present version of the document takes account of the comments made by the Commission and InterParents during the procedure.

This final version of the document has the reference 2024-11-D-22 and will be sent to the Schools together with a Memorandum and will also be published on the web site www.eurasc.eu. This document cancels and replaces the document 2016-01-D-49-xx-6.

Annex 1: Roles and Responsibilities

1. The sending school

- ▶ Nominates a Mobility Coordinator (teacher/other member of staff).
- ▶ Ensures that the Mobility Coordinator has all the necessary means (allocated time, resources and help from colleagues) to support the pupil's mobility in the best possible way.
- ▶ School Management advised by the Class Council decides about a pupil's participation in the programme.

The **Mobility Coordinator**, in collaboration with their colleagues, will:

- Prepare the selection of suitable pupils.
- Prepare the pupil for the mobility providing advice about behaviour and practical aspects.
- Act as the link between the sending school and the host school, the pupil, their parent(s)/legal representative(s) and mentor(s) and share necessary information and documents, such as the *Online Application Form*.
- Treat all personal data received in the framework of this action as confidential, respecting data privacy, and process them in accordance with GDPR.
- Communicate regularly with the Mobility Coordinator in the host school.
- Provide support to the pupil to help reintegration into the home community.
- Keep the *Online Application Form* and the Consent form for participation only until the end of the mobility.

2. The host school

- ▶ Nominates a Mobility Coordinator and (a) mentor(s) (the latter should be responsible for pedagogical aspects and other school-related tasks, may be the educational adviser/a teacher/member of staff).
- ▶ Provides the Mobility Coordinator and the mentor(s) (if applicable) with all the necessary means (allocated time, resources and help from colleagues) to facilitate the integration and follow-up of the visiting pupil.

The **Mobility Coordinator**, in collaboration with mentors and colleagues, will:

- Act as the link between the sending school and the host school, the pupil, their parent(s)/legal representative(s) and mentor(s) and share necessary information and documents, in close cooperation with the Parents' Association.
- Treat all personal data received in the framework of this action as confidential, respecting data privacy, and process them in accordance with GDPR.
- Establish contact with the host family before the pupil arrives.
- Be aware of child protection issues.
- Together with the mentor introduce the pupil in the school and help them adjust to the new school system.
- Ensure that the pupil receives all material (pupil's card, timetable) on the day of their arrival in order to be able to use all school facilities.
- Together with the mentor support the pupil throughout the mobility and be easily reachable for the pupil and the host family.

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- Add the visiting pupil to the School Insurance.
- Contact the insurance company where necessary (if an incident at school happens).
- Maintain records of host family details only during the duration of the mobility.
- Contact parent(s)/legal representative(s) of the pupil/Mobility Coordinator at sending school in case of an emergency.
- In case of a serious breach of the rules of conduct/laws of the host country decide with the agreement of the School Management to terminate the pupil's mobility (see *Annex 4 Guidance on Crisis Management* for more information).
- Have available for cases of emergency:
 - a copy of the pupil's European Health Insurance Card
 - a copy of the completed *Confidential Health Form (Annex 2)* in a sealed envelope
- Assist the School Management in carrying out the end-of-stay evaluation of the pupil's mobility.
- Assist the sending school with any follow-up or evaluation.

The **mentor** will ...

- Offer support to the pupils with regards to pedagogical issues and other aspects of school life.
- Take care of the visiting pupil's well-being throughout the entire mobility and support the pupil together with the Mobility Coordinator.
- Together with the Mobility Coordinator introduce the pupil in the school and help them adjust to the new school system.
- Build a supportive relationship with the pupil and communicate with the host family in the event of any problems.
- Try to mediate between the host family and the visiting pupil in cases where significant problems arise.

3. The host school's Parents' Association

- ▶ Facilitates finding host families, if not arranged by the sending family itself or by the school in case of a one-to-one exchange
- ▶ Treats all personal data received in the framework of this action as confidential, respecting data privacy, and process them in accordance with GDPR.
- ▶ Keeps in touch with the Mobility Coordinator of the host school regarding host family related issues.
- ▶ Ensures that host families identified by the Parents' Association are aware of the Pupils' Well-Being Policy Framework of the European Schools (document 2022-01-D-6).

4. The host family

The Pupils' Mobility Programme gives pupils the opportunity to spend one semester in a European or Accredited European School abroad. Staying in a host family is part of the intercultural experience and facilitates the pupil's integration in the host country and culture.

The visiting pupils receive pocket money from their parent(s)/legal representative(s) as well as means of contributing to costs incurred during the stay, such as costs linked to local transport or learning materials. The transfer of the pupil is organised and secured by the visiting pupil's parent(s)/legal representative(s). Furthermore, visiting pupils will be covered in terms of medical care and personal liability during the stay through insurance provided by their parent(s)/legal representative(s).

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In case of a one-way mobility, the sending and the host family may find an arrangement for covering incumbent costs.

Role

Being a host family is not just about providing board and lodging. There are two further important functions in relation to the well-being of the pupil and the success of their stay:

► Facilitator

The stay in a host family constitutes a very important part of the pupil's learning process. Through daily interaction with host parents and siblings, the pupil acquires valuable insights into cultural differences as well as proficiency in a foreign language. It is therefore important that the pupil is not treated as a guest or lodger but is integrated into family life to the greatest extent possible.

► Parental authority

The pupil is a young person who may have little or no prior experience of the culture and attitudes of the host country. They will consequently need the host family's help in relation to many aspects of daily life. This also means providing clear guidelines for their behaviour, what is acceptable and what is not, as a parent or legal representative would do.

Responsibilities

The host family will:

- Make sure that all family members fully understand their rights and responsibilities as a host family.
- Welcome the pupil into their home for a duration of one semester.
- In case of a one-to-one exchange, provide the pupil with suitable board and lodging free of charge.
- Integrate the pupil into family life to the greatest extent possible.
- Inform the pupil about household rules.
- Inform the pupil about customs and help them integrate into the culture and mentality of the host country, easing the pupil's transition and avoiding a possible "culture shock".
- Ensure that the pupil is not left alone overnight (e.g., at weekends or holidays). If this implies significant extra costs, this should be agreed on in advance with the pupil's parent(s)/legal representative(s). If the host family travels abroad with the visiting pupil, they should consider the possible insurance and liability implications.
- Help ensure that the pupil attends school on a regular basis, including ensuring that adequate transportation facilities between the school and home are available.
- Help ensure that the pupil observes the rules of conduct for pupils of the host school.
- Communicate with the pupil's mentor/Mobility Coordinator at the host school in the event of any problems.
- Not terminate the stay of the pupil abruptly and unilaterally without a prior attempt from the hosting school and/or the Parents' Association to mediate (except in the cases outlined below under 'rights').
- Familiarise themselves with child protection requirements and abide by them.
- Read about the risks and emergency procedures set out in *Annex 4: Guidance on Crisis Management* and follow them in case of emergency or crisis.
- Have available for cases of emergency:
 - a copy of the pupil's European Health Insurance Card

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- a copy of the completed *Confidential Health Form (Annex 2)* in a sealed envelope
- Keep all personal data concerning the pupil and any other personal data under this programme confidential, respect data privacy.
- Return to the pupil/sending family all documents and the Confidential Health Form once the mobility has finished.

Rights:

During their stay in the host family, the visiting pupil will be under the authority of the host parent(s). The host school has appointed a mentor for the pupil, to whom the host family can turn for information, advice or just to discuss any aspect of the pupil's stay in the host family. The mentor will also try to mediate between the host family and the visiting pupil in cases where significant problems arise.

Where mediation is not sufficient, the host family has the following rights:

- In the event of a serious breach of rules by the pupil (as defined by the schools), the host family can ask for the termination of the visiting pupil's stay in their home immediately and require that the host school arranges alternative accommodation or repatriation.
- In the event of irreconcilable personal differences between the host family and the visiting pupil, and where mediation has been tried and not brought an acceptable solution for the host family, the host school must provide for alternative accommodation or repatriation of the pupil within a maximum of 3 days.
- In the event of death, illness or any other serious incident occurring in the host family, they can ask the host school to provide urgently for alternative accommodation or repatriation of the pupil (normally within up to 3 days).

5. The pupil

The pupil will:

- ▶ Prepare for the stay abroad (linguistic preparation, if necessary, participation in training events provided).
- ▶ Nominate a pupil/friend in their home class as a facilitator (e.g. collecting material, copying/scanning work sheets, keeping the pupil up to date/informed).
- ▶ Get to know possible risks and emergency procedures (*Annex 4: Guidance on Crisis Management*) and act in accordance with them.
- ▶ Familiarize themselves with the laws concerning minors in the host country and abide by them.
- ▶ Participate in pre-departure and on-arrival information meetings.
- ▶ Be aware of and follow the rules of conduct of the host school.
- ▶ Behave responsibly and not take unnecessary risks.
- ▶ Know who to contact in a crisis.
- ▶ Be sensitive to local codes and customs.
- ▶ Give the completed *Annex 2: Confidential Health Form* (in a sealed envelope) to the host family and the medical services of the host school as soon as the mobility starts.
- ▶ Be respectful to the host parent(s) and follow their rules as they would do with their own parent(s)/legal representative(s).
- ▶ Keep all personal information concerning the host family confidential, respect data privacy.

- ▶ Write a feedback report at the end of the programme.
- ▶ Accept that mobility can be terminated earlier under the circumstances outlined below. All costs and liabilities derived from early termination of mobility will be covered by the parent(s)/legal representative(s) of the visiting pupil:
 - 1) In case of a serious breach of the General Rules of the European Schools or the local rules of the host school:

Attending school is compulsory. The pupil is required to participate fully in school activities and to complete all assignments and schoolwork. Pupils are expected to show good behaviour and respect at all times.
 - 2) Where the pupil has not abided by the laws of the country they are visiting.
 - 3) If the pupil displays behaviour that is deemed inappropriate or offensive to the host community, endangers themselves or other people, or causes damage to property.
 - 4) For medical reasons.

6. The parent(s)/legal representative(s) of the visiting pupil

The parent(s)/legal representative(s) of the visiting pupil will:

- ▶ Provide all necessary information (no omissions) which might be relevant for a long stay abroad at the application stage (*Online Application Form, Annex 2: Confidential Health Form*).
- ▶ Get to know possible risks and emergency procedures (*Annex 4: Guidance on Crisis Management*).
- ▶ Get to know the laws concerning minors in the host country.
- ▶ Identify and select a host family.
- ▶ Provide the host family with necessary information, contacts and documentation.
- ▶ Keep all personal data concerning the host family confidential, respect data privacy.
- ▶ Allow the host family to sign authorisation required by the host school for the pupil to participate in any school-sponsored activities, events or programmes with the agreement of the sending family.
- ▶ Arrange the visiting pupil's travel to and from the host country.
- ▶ Financially support the visiting pupil throughout the mobility (travel costs, extra expenses, etc.).
- ▶ Communicate any relevant problem to the Mobility Coordinator at the sending school.

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Annex 2: Confidential Health Form

The pupil is taking part in the Pupils' Mobility Programme and will spend one semester (about 4 months) in a host school and living with a host family abroad.

The pupil's doctor who is not an immediate relative of the pupil must provide the parents with an attestation of fitness for participation certifying that they have examined the pupil and that, to the best of their knowledge, the pupil is in good health and fit to participate to the Pupils' Mobility Programme. This attestation will be shown to the Mobility Coordinator of the sending school.

In addition to this certificate, the *Confidential Health Form* must be also completed by the pupil's doctor who is not an immediate relative of the pupil. Incorrect or incomplete information on their health could lead to problems while abroad. **This form will be duplicated and put into two sealed envelopes. The pupil will bring the envelopes on their mobility and give one envelope to the medical services of the host school and the other envelope to the host family.** The envelopes can only be opened by a doctor treating the pupil where medically necessary.

Pupil's Name:	Home Country:	Date of birth:
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1. Does the pupil have any ongoing medical conditions? (e.g., asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, allergies, heart conditions, etc.) YES NO

If yes, please describe:

2. Does the pupil have any known allergies? (e.g., food, medication, insect bites, environmental, etc.) YES NO

If yes, please describe:

3. Is the pupil currently taking medication or injections (other than those mentioned previously)? YES NO

If yes, identify the medication, reason for usage, dosage and frequency:

4. Is there a history of, or present evidence of, an emotional, nervous or eating disorder? YES NO

If yes, a FULL report by the specialist and a statement by the parent(s)/legal representative(s) about the illness or specific problem must be attached. Note: Placement in a foreign host family, school and community requires adjustment which often involves emotional stress. It will not be a time for relaxation or temporary relief from any current therapy. If the pupil is experiencing current emotional, physical,

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personal or family difficulties, these difficulties can be severely exacerbated by the adjustment demands of the programme. Therefore, you are requested to evaluate carefully the pupil's current or previous condition and treatment along with their ability to manage potential adjustment anxieties and stress in a foreign environment.

5. Are there any health limitations or restrictions on the pupil's activities and/or sports participation or any medical information which should be considered for a home/school placement?
 YES NO

If yes, please describe:

6. Pupil has had the following immunisations, if yes, please specify day, month and year (or if possible, attach a copy of vaccination card):

	NO	YES	dd-mm-yy		NO	YES	dd-mm-yy
Measles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Tetanus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Poliomyelitis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Mumps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
BCG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Rubella	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Hepatitis B	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Diphtheria	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Pertussis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

If other, please describe:

Signatures:

I, the undersigned, certify that a thorough physical examination of the pupil has been made and all important recent medical information has been included in the *Confidential Health Form*, that nothing relevant has been omitted, and that the pupil is able to travel. I understand that the omission of any information could be harmful to the pupil's health care and could result in early termination of the programme.

Doctor's Name and Degree	Stamp and Signature		
Contact details (address, phone, e-mail – if applicable):		Date	

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I, the undersigned, confirm that the information contained in this *Confidential Health Form* is correct and complete and that inaccurate or incomplete information could be harmful to the pupil's health care and could result in early termination of the mobility. I agree that the envelope containing this form can be disclosed to a doctor treating the pupil while on mobility where medically necessary. If necessary, I agree to communicate all relevant information relating to the health of the pupil to the host school and the host family. All personal data will be treated as confidential.

Pupil's signature (if they are not a minor)	Date
Parent(s)'s/Legal representatives(s)'s signature(s)	Date

Annex 3: Consent form for participation

I, the undersigned parent/legal representative, hereby consent for my child to participate in the Pupils' Mobility Programme, including preparation and follow-up activities. To this end:

1. Acknowledgment of the Programme's documents

I acknowledge that I have read and understood the following documents: Annex 1 – Roles and Responsibilities, Annex 2 – Confidential Health Form, and Annex 4 – Guidance on Crisis Management. Upon acceptance of my child's participation by both the sending and host schools, I will arrange for a doctor to complete the Confidential Health Form.

2. Privacy and data protection

I understand that the personal data provided in relation to my child's participation in the Pupils' Mobility will be treated as confidential, respecting data privacy, and processed in accordance with GDPR (link to be added by the school to the school's privacy policy). I understand that the sharing of relevant information with the Parents' association as necessary for the good functioning of the Mobility Programme. For more information or any concerns regarding data processing, I may contact the school's and/or The Parent Associations' Data Protection Officer.

3. Consent for photos and videos

I grant the host school permission to take photographs, videos, and/or audio recordings of my child, and to use, publish, and/or reproduce them, in whole or in part, for educational or informational purposes in materials produced by the host school, such as internal newsletters, school website and other related publications (please tick the appropriate box).

YES NO

4. Consent for medical treatment

I agree to the participating pupil receiving necessary medication and any emergency dental, medical or surgical treatment, including aesthetic or blood transfusion, as considered necessary by the medical authorities present. I understand that I will be notified as soon as possible, but emergency treatment need not be delayed to provide such notice.

I agree to hold harmless and release from all liability the host school and all staff or all members of the host family for any intervention in an emergency regardless of the outcome. I agree to assume all financial obligations beyond those covered by health, accident, and sickness insurance for any medical treatment rendered.

5. Emergency contact information

I provide the following additional contact in case I cannot be reached in an emergency:

Emergency Contact Name: _____

Relationship to Pupil: _____

Phone Number(s): _____

Parent/Legal representative Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Annex 4: Guidance on Crisis Management²

The purpose of this document on crisis management is to ensure a successful mobility experience for all parties involved. The annex provides information on what constitutes a crisis (chapter 1), who should be involved in preventing and managing a crisis (chapter 2), how to prevent the crisis from happening (chapter 3) and how to handle crises and ensure that pupils involved, responsible teachers, host families and parents/legal representatives have a common framework of reference in such an event (chapter 4). It should also ensure that a crisis will be dealt with effectively and will not escalate.

The present document *Guidance on Crisis Management* should be distributed to all those involved in a mobility – the mentor(s) at the host school, the Mobility Coordinators, the host family, the visiting pupil and their parent(s)/legal representatives(s). The Mobility Coordinator of the host school will ensure that all these parties have each other's contact details to enable prompt communication in the event of a crisis.

All parties should be aware that any sensitive information concerning the pupil must be kept confidential and can only be disclosed when needed to those who are directly involved in dealing with the crisis.

1. What is a crisis?

A crisis can be defined as an extreme situation which would lead to a serious disturbance of the mobility, and which requires urgent action. Crises should be distinguished from problems, which are not extreme, and which do not require immediate action. However, problems can develop into crises if not correctly handled.

Crises call for urgent action, but should, as far as possible, be prevented. It is at least as important to work on risk prevention as on crisis management. Despite all preventive measures, crises might happen. In that case, it is essential that all the parties involved know how to react and whom to contact.

The following list of extreme situations which could happen during a mobility is not exhaustive but may help illustrate various problems and solution scenarios.

- Medical problems:
 - serious illness or allergy
 - serious injuries
 - accidents (e.g. traffic accident)
 - unwanted pregnancy
- Psychological problems:
 - depression
 - psychological consequences of suffering violence
 - problems related to abuse of alcohol or drugs
 - eating disorders
- Mental and/or physical abuse of the pupil:
 - sexual/physical abuse
 - bullying
 - racism/xenophobia
 - living in a host family and/or area where living conditions are not healthy or are

² The content of this form is adapted from the European Voluntary Service crisis manual.

insecure for the pupil involved

- Death of the pupil
- Being a victim of a crime
- Breaches of the rules of conduct and legal problems caused by the pupil:
 - risk behaviour
 - the pupil goes missing
 - police arrest or detention
 - violent behaviour
 - theft
 - abuse of alcohol or usage of drugs
- Other:
 - family pressure to return home
 - death/serious illness of a family member
 - conflicts with the host family
 - conflicts with the mentor

2. Who must be involved in preventing and managing a crisis?

The mentor and the host family have a key role in crisis prevention and management during the pupil's stay in their country. Their efficient collaboration and communication are crucial in preventing and managing crises.

The mentor needs to build a supportive relationship with the pupil. This can happen thanks to regular, frequent and face-to-face contact. The mentor should be available to deal with any matters that the pupil or host family would like to raise and be easy to reach in case of emergency. A replacement person for the mentor should be nominated in case the mentor is absent or unable to perform their tasks. The school must make sure that the pupil can always contact somebody in case of emergency. The pupil must be provided with the phone numbers of all individuals involved in their mobility programme to ensure they can call if necessary.

The host family acts as the actual parent or legal representative would do. The host family should establish smooth and efficient communication with the pupil and the mentor.

If the pupil shows signs of serious difficulties (e.g. serious personal problems or difficulty in adapting to the host country) the mentor and the host family must act quickly to prevent any dangerous situation. This may require more intense counselling of the pupil or helping them to overcome emotional challenges. However, both the mentor and the host family should seek expert help if the pupil shows signs of serious difficulties and not try to solve them on their own. The mentor and the host family should look out for any signs that the pupil is feeling uncomfortable and should encourage them to speak honestly about their feelings.

An overview of the roles and responsibilities of all parties involved is listed in *Annex 1: Roles and Responsibilities*.

3. How to prevent crisis situations?

- The recruitment and selection of pupils should follow the guidelines.
- The mentors must understand and perform their tasks.
- The correct identification of a host family is one of the key elements in preventing crises.

- Pupils and Mobility Coordinators at the sending school must attend the pre-departure info-session organized by the sending school.
- Pupils and mentors at the host school must attend the on-arrival info-session organized by the host school.
- Pupils must know and observe the rules of conduct of the host school.
- Pupils should also know and observe the law in the host country (info provided by the host school).
- Pupils must always know in advance the persons they can turn to in case of problems. In principle, these should be the mentor and the host family. Contact details of these persons have been provided to the pupil by the host school.
- Parents/legal representatives of the pupil must make the necessary arrangements to ensure that the pupil does not travel alone from/to the airport/railway station/other to/from the home of the host family.
- All parties must abide by their roles and responsibilities outlined in Annex 1.

4. How to manage crisis situations?

4.1. Communication of key crisis contact details

The Mobility Coordinator at the host school will ensure that prior to the pupil's arrival all those involved in the mobility, including host family, mentor, sending school, parent(s)/legal representative(s) and pupil, have each other's contact details to enable prompt communication in the event of a crisis.

4.2. Basic emergency procedure

Basic procedure to be followed in case of crisis:

- The first action to solve the situation must be taken by the mentor or the host family, depending on who is informed first (i.e. calling emergency, expert help).
- The host family/the mentor immediately inform each other about what happened, and the pupil's parent(s)/legal representative(s) must be notified as soon as possible.
- If the mentor and the host family are not able or competent to solve the pupil's problem at local level, they should contact the Management of the host school for help and advice.
- The mentor contacts the pupil's parent(s)/legal representative(s).
- After a crisis, the pupil's wish to continue the mobility should be respected, except in cases where the pupil's behaviour has already made it unlikely that the stay will be successful.
- In very urgent cases, the mentor can propose to terminate the pupil's mobility. However, they should consult with the Management of the host school, which will finally decide.

At the end of the crisis, a detailed report should be produced by the mentor, summarizing the circumstances and consequences of the case, and giving an evaluation of what to do in the future (e.g. recommendations on how to avoid similar situations and on how to act in a similar crisis). This report may be necessary for insurance purposes, legal action or other administrative procedures.

This basic procedure should be applied in any case of emergency. In addition, specific procedures apply to certain types of emergencies, as described below.

4.2.1. Medical emergencies

Medical emergencies can be any situation related to the health and well-being of the pupil.

The basic emergency procedure should be followed as described above. The following documents should be kept together and be available for medical emergencies:

- the *Online Application Form*,
- *Annex 2: Confidential Health Form* (in a sealed envelope)
- a copy of the pupil's European Health Insurance Card³ or of another equivalent health insurance of the pupil (the original stays with the pupil),

The first action must be taken by the mentor, or the host family as explained above. The mentor/host family should be able to quickly collect and provide the following information (all the information must be treated as confidential):

- exact condition and safety of the pupil
- correct name and birth date of the pupil
- symptoms and complications
- treatment already received and given by whom
- documents needed for the health emergency (as stated above)
- In case of death, further facts must be checked:
 - circumstances of death (time, place, event)
 - who has been notified
 - where the body is
 - liaison with police and notification of the embassy concerned, if necessary
 - collection of all medical reports, death certificate and police reports
 - liaison with insurance regarding the return of body and the funeral

4.2.2. Psychological emergencies

This category includes situations that require special psychological treatment/monitoring, such as illness, unwanted pregnancy, psychological consequences of crime, drugs and alcohol abuse, depression, eating disorders, etc. Intervention for problems in this category can either be requested by the pupil themselves or warning signs should be detected by the host family, the mentor, other teachers or fellow pupils.

Where necessary, the mentor, in cooperation with the families, should help to find a qualified person to give psychological support to the pupil, e.g. among the resource persons of the host school.

- If the situation also involves health problems, and in all cases where there is a crisis, the same procedures as for medical emergencies should be started.
- Contact with local specialist institutions is recommended.

4.2.3. In the event of crime committed on the pupil

This category can include situations in which the pupil is a victim of a crime such as violence or theft.

The following procedure should be followed:

- Either the pupil/host family contacts the police immediately, or notifies the mentor, who helps in dealing with the police and insurance issues; if possible, the pupil's parent(s)/legal representative(s) must be notified beforehand.
- If the pupil contacts the police themselves (or if this is done by the host family) the mentor

³ [European Health Insurance Card - Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](https://european-council.europa.eu/media/en/press-operations/infographic-116166.attachments)

must be notified as soon as possible.

- The host family and parent(s)/legal representative(s) are informed by the mentor and involved where appropriate.
- The mentor assists the pupil in reporting the case to the relevant authorities.
- The mentor assists the pupil in contacting the medical insurance whenever psychological assistance is needed.

Some of the action in section 4.2.2 *Psychological emergencies* may be necessary for psychological support to the pupil.

4.2.4. Breaches of the rules of conduct and legal problems caused by the pupil

This category can include breaches of the rules of conduct and legal problems caused by the pupil such as violence, drugs and alcohol abuse, accidents or police arrest and detention. The basic emergency procedure (section 4.2) should be applied. The mentor/host family should also be able to:

- Quickly collect the reasons for arrest or charges made.
- Find out whether the pupil has been detained and, if so,
- Find out the details of the police staff involved.
- Liaise with pupil and police.
- Inform the Management of the host school (via the mentor).

In case of a serious breach of rules/laws of the host country, the mentor can propose to terminate the pupil's mobility, after consulting the Management of the host school. The final decision is to the Management of the host school.

4.2.5. Family pressure to return home

- The pupil/the host family tells the mentor that their family would like the pupil to return home.
- The mentor at the host school/Mobility Coordinator at the sending school discuss the reasons with the family.
- Unless the reason is related to serious illness or death in the family, the host school/Mobility Coordinator at the sending school should first try to convince the family that the pupil should continue the mobility.
- If the family still wants the pupil to return home, the mentor and the Management of the host school will terminate the mobility. The travel expenses and all other costs are borne by the pupil's family.

4.2.6. Serious illness/death in the sending family

- The pupil informs the mentor about the serious illness/death in the sending family.
- The mentor contacts the insurance at the dedicated phone number and requests help in arranging a trip home for the pupil. Arrangements that are made and paid for by the mentor/school/host family/pupil without the agreement of the insurance will not be reimbursed.

4.2.7. Serious illness/death in the host family

- A member of the host family informs the mentor about the serious illness/death in the family.
- The mentor informs the sending family and discusses with school management the impact

on the mobility, searching for an alternative family.

4.2.8. Conflicts with the host family

- The pupil/the host family informs the mentor about the conflict.
- In case of a minor conflict, the mentor tries to mediate.
- In the event of irreconcilable differences between the host family and the pupil, and where mediation has been tried and has not led to an acceptable solution, the body which has helped finding a host family originally will support finding an alternative as soon as possible, however, it is within the responsibility of the parent(s)/legal representative(s) of the pupil to find alternative accommodation, or repatriation of the pupil within a maximum of 3 days.
- In the event of a serious breach of rules by the pupil, the host family can ask for the immediate termination of the pupil's stay and require the parent(s)/legal representative(s) of the pupil to plan for alternative accommodation or repatriation. In case of repatriation, the travel costs will be borne by the parent(s)/legal representative(s) of the pupil.
- In the event of any doubts in relation to a host family and child protection risk issues, the mentor together with the Management of the host school will immediately remove the pupil from the family and try to provide the pupil with an alternative family, with the support of the Parents' Association.

4.2.9. Conflicts with the mentor

- The pupil/the host family/the Mobility Coordinator at the sending school informs the Management of the host school about the problem.
- In case of a minor conflict, the Director tries to mediate.
- In case of irreconcilable conflict or a loss of trust, a new mentor is nominated.