



DFJC - Département de la formation, de la jeunesse et de la culture  
DGEO - Direction générale de l'enseignement obligatoire

# Description of Cycle 1

## Information for parents

### Primary school

Years 1P to 4P

Compulsory schooling lasts for 11 years. It aims to help pupils acquire knowledge and skills, develop and exercise their intellectual, manual and physical faculties and develop their judgement and personality. School helps pupils to integrate into social, professional and civic life by gaining an understanding of themselves and the world around them and by respecting other people.

This leaflet describes the first cycle of primary schooling (cycle 1). It lasts for four years and is split into two parts: years 1 and 2 (also called kindergarten), followed by years 3 and 4. The following pages describe the characteristics of this first cycle: the various subjects taught, how many periods they are allocated, and how pupils are assessed.

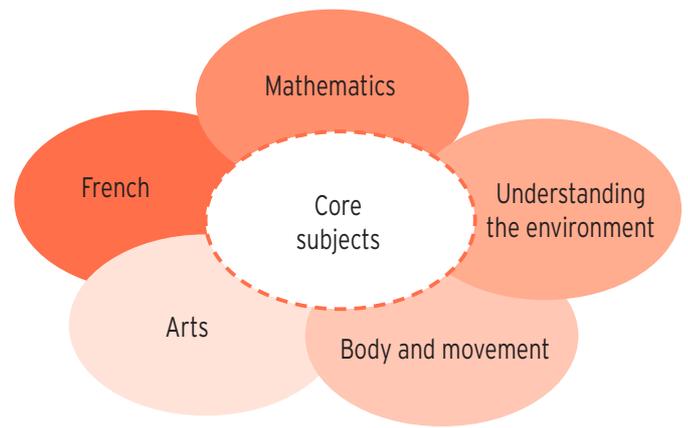
[www.vd.ch/solarite](http://www.vd.ch/solarite)

Sources: Loi sur l'enseignement obligatoire (LEO)  
Règlement d'application de la LEO (RLEO)  
Cadre général de l'évaluation (CGE)

This information is for guidance only; the legal and regulatory framework and the General Assessment Framework (CGE), which deals with various scenarios in detail, should be taken as authoritative.

## Years 1 and 2 (kindergarten)

Children start school once they have reached the age of four; the cut-off date is 31 July of the current calendar year. Years 1 and 2 are the child's first experience of school and much of the focus is on discovery, experimentation, play, creativity and learning, alone or in a group, in a safe and stimulating environment. This is an essential stage of the child's education and focuses on basic skills such as socialisation, developing tools for starting school (learning to learn) and building knowledge. The child gradually begins to engage with formal lessons, in the subjects and areas set out in the curriculum for French-speaking Switzerland (*Plan d'études romand*, PER).



The child is given a communication notebook, in which the school and the family can exchange information.

Pupils in year 1 have a timetable of 18 periods a week. This increases to 26 periods for pupils in year 2. The Department can authorise a different split of periods between year 1 and year 2.

### The curriculum for French-speaking Switzerland (PER)

[www.plandetudes.ch](http://www.plandetudes.ch)

The PER sets out what should be learned during the period of compulsory education in French-speaking Switzerland. It describes the subjects pupils should be studying during their 11 years of schooling.

## Assessment

Assessments of the pupil's work at kindergarten are expressed as comments, which are simply to inform the pupil and their parents about the progress they are making in their learning. The preferred way for schools and families to communicate is by arranging a meeting.

## Automatic promotion

Pupils move automatically from year 1 into year 2, and then from year 2 into year 3. A report on the pupil's attendance at kindergarten is issued at the end of year 2. This is added to their school report book, which accompanies the child throughout their schooling.

## Years 3 and 4

The child continues learning the subjects they began in kindergarten, but in more detail. Homework is gradually introduced in year 3 and is recorded in the pupil's school diary.

After four years in cycle 1, pupils are able to read and understand age-appropriate texts independently.

Years 3 and 4: 28 periods	
French	10
Mathematics	5
Understanding the environment <sup>1</sup>	4
Physical education	3
Creative and manual activities	2
Visual arts	2
Music	2

Periods per subject

Media, images and information and communications technologies (MITIC)

<sup>1</sup> Covers geography, history, ethics and religious cultures, and natural sciences

## Assessment

In years 3 and 4, the pupil's work is assessed and communicated using one of five grades:

- fully achieved (objectifs largement atteints, LA);
- comfortably achieved (objectifs atteints avec aisance, AA);
- achieved (objectifs atteints, A);
- partially achieved (objectifs partiellement atteints, PA);
- not achieved (objectifs non atteints, NA).

The grade objectives «achieved» (A) is deemed satisfactory.

The result of each assessment is recorded in the pupil's school diary.

A report is issued halfway through and at the end of the school year. This includes the pupil's results and attendance. The final report for each year shows the overall grade for each subject and, at the end of year 4, a decision on the pupil's next step. This is added to their school report book.

At the end of year 4, the pupil takes a baseline test (*Epreuve cantonale de référence* - ECR) in French to provide an indication of the level they have reached, particularly in reading. The result of the test is only used as additional evidence to help decide whether the pupil should move up to the next year.

## Conditions for promotion

Pupils are automatically moved up to year 4 at the end of year 3.

They must achieve their objectives (at grade A, AA, or LA) in French (particularly reading) and mathematics to move from year 4 up to year 5. If the pupil has only partially achieved their objectives in one of these subjects, they are treated as a borderline case and the decision is made by the school board.

**Core tasks (*travaux significatifs, TS*):** pupils' school work is assessed regularly throughout the year, based on their completion of core tasks. These are the key elements used for assessment. Each core task relates to at least one learning objective set out in the curriculum for French-speaking Switzerland (PER) with one or more components having been taught.

**Associated tasks (*travaux assimilés, TA*):** a series of tasks designed solely to check the acquisition of specific knowledge or skills. Together, these tasks are used to produce an overall assessment for each subject. For each subject, the number of associated tasks cannot exceed a quarter of all the tasks selected.

In general terms, **borderline cases** relate to situations where the results of the pupil concerned are very slightly lower than those required to meet the conditions for moving up to the next class. Borderline cases are decided by the school board.

At the parents' request, the school board will consider any **mitigating circumstances** (for example, if schooling has been seriously disrupted over a long period because of a prolonged absence, or if the child has recently arrived from another canton or from abroad). Success in the future must be considered likely for mitigating circumstances to be taken into account.

**Decisions on promotion** can be **appealed** by writing to the Department: *Instruction des Recours, Département de la formation, de la jeunesse et de la culture, rue de la Barre 8, 1014 Lausanne*. Appeals must be submitted in writing, with reasons, within 10 days of notification, including a copy of the decision concerned.

## Relationship between school and family

Schools are mainly concerned with children's formal instruction and acknowledge that their parents have primary responsibility for their broader education. These roles are not mutually exclusive, however: schools seek to cooperate with families with regard to instruction and support families on other aspects of education.

The class teacher and school management team are parents' primary point of contact for any issues around their child's schooling, since they are in close contact with the child and their situation.

Parents receive regular updates about what their child is learning at school and how they have performed in assessments. Their opinion is sought before any important decisions are taken concerning their child's schooling. Final decisions are made by the school board.

A joint information session for parents is held at least once a year, in principle at the start of the school year. Among other things, this explains what happens in school, the objectives of the curriculum and how pupils will be assessed.

School information is communicated regularly in the pupil's communication notebook or school diary, which parents are asked to sign at the end of each week. This is the main means by which parents and teachers can request a meeting. Meetings can take place at any time during the school year and ensure positive cooperation.

In addition, parents and children meet at least once a year in years 1 and 2, and when necessary in years 3 and 4, for an opportunity to talk about the progress the child has made in their learning.

Additional educational support can be provided if necessary, to help the pupil make progress. Other services can be provided by psychologists, psychomotor specialists or speech and language therapists (PPLS) according to the procedures in place in the particular school.

Information about extracurricular provision or other services can be requested from the school management team.

		Rac1 and Rac2 remedial classes		
14-15 years	11S	third cycle general division	third cycle pre-matura division	secondary school I
13-14 years	10S			
12-13 years	9S			
11-12 years	8P	second primary cycle		primary school
10-11 years	7P			
9-10 years	6P			
8-9 years	5P			
7-8 years	4P	first primary cycle (including kindergarten)		primary school
6-7 years	3P			
5-6 years	2P			
4-5 years	1P			

Structure of compulsory schooling in Vaud canton



[www.vd.ch/scolarite](http://www.vd.ch/scolarite)



[www.vd.ch/page/1055372](http://www.vd.ch/page/1055372)