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GUIDELINES FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN THE GAZA STRIP, PALESTINE

EducAid
SOCIAL INNOVATION
AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION
FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

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Guidelines for inclusive education in the Gaza Strip, Palestine

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Summary

Introduction

"I-CAN: Independent, Capability, Autonomy, Inclusion. Centre for independent life for People with Disabilities (PwDs) in the Gaza Strip" is a project implemented by EducAid in partnership with several Italian and Palestinian partners[1] and it is funded by Italian Agency for Development Cooperation - AICS.
The project responds to the three main obstacle factors to the full inclusion of PwDs in the Gaza Strip:

1) Limited personal autonomy due to the poor availability of personalized assistive devices and the lack of accessible places.
2) Lack of opportunities for socio-economic empowerment.
3) The stigma linked to disability which leads to lack of social inclusion.

So, the specific goal of this project is to strengthen the independence and self-determination of PwDs, in particular of Women with Disabilities (WwDs) in Gaza, through the creation of a holistic and innovative centre that works on these 3 obstacles simultaneously, with a twin track approach (working both on an individual level with the person himself and with the surrounding environment). One of the results is the improvement of autonomy through the supply of personalized services provided by a multidisciplinary team that works on all aspects of the life of a PwDs. It is also intended to promote access to education and work as a socio-economic empowerment tool for PwDs and in particular WwDs. Lastly, the project intends to increase the awareness of the local community on the rights of PwDs and strengthen their participation within the Palestinian society.
More specifically, the project aimed at improving educational services offered to minors, especially in terms of accessibility, so no one would have been left behind. Based on the concept that educational services should respond to needs of the most vulnerable groups (children with learning difficulties, with a disability, from marginalized and poor backgrounds, etc), EducAid used the Index for Inclusion and Empowerment as tool for teachers' self-evaluation, to develop a participatory planning process of strategies to be adopted in order to ensure that educational services enhance their accessibility level. In this process, it was also important to organize opportunities for exchange among experts in the educational field from different experiences and contexts for mutual enrichment. In fact, the project worked in 15 schools of the Gaza Strip involving more than 110 school personnel (teachers, school directors, counsellors, etc.) providing them trainings about inclusive education and tools and realising rehabilitation works to improve school buildings' accessibility.
In particular, the project supported teachers during the Covid-19 pandemic in dealing with online learning, as it represented a valuable opportunity to tackle the challenge of accessible virtual learning, which was addressed thanks to the support provided by experts of the Department of Education Studies - University of Bologna and of C.E.I.S. (Centro Educativo Italo Svizzero) of Rimini, who engaged in fruitful exchanges with teachers from Gaza during the pandemic.

1. RIDS (Rete Italiana Disabilità e Sviluppo), C.P.A. Cooperativa Sociale Centro per l'autonomia Michele Iacontino, Department of Education Studies - University of Bologna "Giovanni Maria Bertin", United Nation Development Program – U.N.D.P., Social Developmental Forum – SDF, Gaza Chamber of Industry and Commerce, F.I.S.H. (Federazione Italiana Superamento Handicap).

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Part 1

The inclusive perspective at school to build an inclusive society

by Roberto Dainese[2]

1. Society and inclusion

From the social context are coming more and more pre-conceptions – some strong, some less – that often set directions opposite to the inclusive ones, to the point that the latter emerge as a transgressive and sometimes disruptive act.
The inclusive perspective, therefore, appears to stand in contrast to the opposing social drives that seem, above all, to threaten an idea of humanity understood as a community: individualistic assumptions are advancing everywhere, aimed at sacrificing the collective well-being of people, sometimes separating and distancing them.
It is the task of pedagogy to provide answers to the urgent questions posed by the reality that surrounds us today: how do we get out of today's rampant narcissism? How can we find solutions to the complexity of the current crises through an educational solution?
The pedagogical answers that we have to propose can only invite the construction of a "new" culture, a "new" way of thinking that spreads inclusive logic and suggests perspectives that can accompany human beings in their "community" project of building a better world (Canevaro, 2013).
These solutions, which are educational in nature and which transgress the dominant social logic, can find space in the school system, which is called upon to take care and educate all the children, and all the boys and girls which welcomes every day. Schools are asked to safeguard authentic principles of fairness and justice internally through specific educational and training actions, and to spread these principles and values outwards, almost as if by contagion.
The school should see the classroom as the exclusive reference point for the inclusion process; the classroom is the place where the identity of the people in it is supported and promoted, including the most disadvantaged pupils.
Inclusion breaks down differences, removes the assumptions of marginalisation by taking into account all people, intervening first on the contexts and then on the individual and transforming the specialist response into ordinary and creating the conditions not only for the inclusion of the individual, but for the creation of a welfare state that includes all members of the community.
"A state is 'social' when it promotes the principle of collective and community-subscribed insurance against individual misfortunes and their consequences. It is that principle (declared, activated and guaranteed to work) that raises an 'imagined society' to the level of 'authentic wholeness': a tangible, felt and lived community, which (to use John Dunn's definitions) replaces the 'order of selfishness' - which generates distrust and suspicion - with the 'order of equality', which inspires trust and solidarity. This is the same principle that makes the body politic democratic and raises the members of society to the rank of citizens, making them partners as well as shareholders in the system; beneficiaries, but also responsible actors in the creation and fair distribution of its benefits" (Bauman, 2013, p. 11).
Citizens open themselves to common responsibilities and social solidarity transforms society into a common and collective value. The individual today fears contact with diversity, feels threatened by it and therefore prefers, mistakenly, to build islands where similarity can converge, in order to isolate diversity:
"Mixophobia manifests itself in a drive towards islands of similarity and sameness amidst the sea of variety and difference. The reasons for mixophobia are banal - easy to understand

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if not necessarily easy to forgive. As Richard Sennett suggests, 'the we feeling, which expresses a desire to be similar, is a way for men to avoid the necessity of looking deeper into each other'. It thereby promises a kind of spiritual comfort [...] The drive to a homogeneus, territorialy isololated environment may be triggered by mixophobia; but practising territorial separation is that mixosophia's lifebelt and food purveyor" (Bauman, 2013, pp. 69, 70).
Education can demolish the loss of collective responsibility that is so evident today, including in politics, if human being is able to tune his choices - including political ones - with inclusive assumptions, leaving aside separatist and classist temptations.
"The time-honoured questions of democratic politics - how useful or detrimental is the way public figures exercise their public duties to the welfare and well-being of their subjects/electors? - has left the scene, and is inviting the public interest in good society, public justice or collective responsibility for individual welfare to follow them into oblivion" (Baumann, 2000, p. 72).
The antidote can only be inclusion. This is how the transgressive and countercultural value of Special Pedagogy is made explicit, by conflating the obsessive pursuit of individual well-being with, in the opposite direction, the need for the well-being of all.

2. School and education for inclusion

The class should be, for everyone, the context in which, every day, it is possible to experiment one's own potential and where everyone can experience the relationships that are indispensable for building a balanced identity (aware of its limits and possibilities). In the class, each pupil is free to test and experiment his/her own personality in relationship with alterity: other students who participate together in the social experience of learning.
The teacher should be able to relate the needs of the pupils to the learning proposal, the one he/she promotes for/in the class, soliciting a productive and meaningful mediation action between the pupils and the learning process.
Encouraging work among peers, promoting cooperative learning groups are the teacher's tasks; moreover, he/she must know how to manage the metacognitive components that impact on learning: motivation, the beliefs the student has about him/herself and his/her intelligence and abilities, his/her sense of efficacy and the meaning he/she attributes to his/her successes and failures.
These motivational and attributive factors - together with prior knowledge, cognitive, strategic and emotional aspects - have a profound effect on the learning process and shape identities that should progressively nourish in themselves the idea of progressing, growing, evolving and belonging. And development, growth, belonging are also constitutive aspects of inclusion processes.
The momentum of didactics towards an inclusive dimension of learning is based on theoretical assumptions that bring it closer to those theories of learning (Spiro, Feltovich, Jacobson and Coulson, 1992) and, overcoming the conceptions of the 50s and 60s anchored to behaviourism, they approached the constructivist approach which, in the 1970s and until the early 1980s, on the basis of a holistic view of the person, defined the learning subject as a constructor of meanings, expanding the cognitivist approach that reduced him to an information processor; Cognitive psychology offered us a vision of the mind as a complex system of information processing, disassociating itself from behaviourist psychology, focusing attention on the cognitive processes underlying the acquisition and exercise of learning performance, putting them in first place among its objectives. The constructivist view had the merit of offering a model of learning that made evident the interaction between the subject and the context.
Vygotsky - promoter of a constructivism of socio-cultural matrix - contributed to enrich the meaning of learning with aspects of sociability. He attributed to interaction with others the power to promote growth in that area that he defined as proximal development (Vygotsky, 1980). The well-known psychologist recognised the potentiality of learning to activate a

variety of evolutionary processes that can only act when the learning subject interacts with peers and with anyone involved in the context in which learning takes place.
The learning subject is recognised as a significant protagonist, rejecting the idea of a teacher as an exclusive transmitter of content and intensifying the idea of a construction of knowledge shared between subjective points of view.
Although constructivism does not have a single didactic to propose, we believe that some implications referring to didactics for inclusion are of particular importance, such as, for example, the need to prepare learning contexts which foster a cooperative construction of knowledge through adequate, but not easy and/or protected, social interactions between class members.
On a psychological level, the relationship that the pupil in difficult conditions has with others in a learning context contributes to defining a self-image marked by characteristics of effectiveness - if balanced with his or her real potential and possibilities - and is able to stimulate self-esteem, self-determination, motivation to learn further, distancing the pupil in difficulty from the prospect of assuming, instead, an idea of himself or herself linked to judgments of inability or ineffectiveness. Self-esteem, self-determination and motivation can support learning because they regulate it on a metacognitive level, making it meaningful, intimate and personal.
The teacher is asked to act consciously and responsibly, which originates from a knowledge of cognitive functioning in general, of strategies able to stimulate learning in pupils, of how they must know how to use cognitive self-regulation strategies and activate cognitive-motivational mediation processes, in order to make them adequately autonomous.
There are no easy, predefined solutions to be used, because the choices are generated by the professionalism of the teacher, who consciously structures actions, shapes contexts and stimulates interactions.
We can attribute to education the task of setting up, consolidating and assessing learning contexts that are the result of the integration of cultural, regulatory and technological aspects and of specific human actions and relationships.
Learning is effectively stimulated by education, which supports and coordinates the interweaving of elements belonging to the following three spheres

- the knowledge system: cultural implications, structural elements;
- the system of techniques: the elaboration of a project, the clarification of evaluation criteria, the selection of means and techniques;
- the pupil system.

Bruner Wood D., Bruner J. S. and Ross G. (Bruner, 1999) have recognized that learning processes are based on support and guidance strategies that they have defined as scaffolding, which implements the intertwining of the areas just mentioned.
The tasks of scaffolding are manifold:

- to recruit the child to the task
- to maintain the direction of the activity towards the problem to be solved;
- to simplify the components of the task;
- show possible solutions;
- reducing the degrees of freedom of the situation.

Therefore, didactic expertise is necessary, understood as the ability to propose articulated solutions, critically argued and reasonably accountable through the analysis of results expressed in all those contexts in which problems related to learning are faced.
School inclusion of pupils with significant difficulties must mature over time, gradually overcoming the initial idea that it was mainly aimed at socialisation objectives, and then intensifying the focus on learning tasks.

Andrea Canevaro reinforces the commitment of inclusion linked to learning and defines it as "[...] the meeting point of everyone's diversity and, if socialisation is of great importance, it can be achieved through learning" (Canevaro, 2001, p. 9); learning is given a prominent position and is directly related to socialisation that emerges as a product of learning itself.
The balance and synergy between learning and socialisation, moreover, goes hand in hand with the hypothesis of an education for inclusion that does not support in a specialised and exclusive way the actions for and with the pupil with difficulties, but that, appropriately, prepares educational actions that safeguard the needs of each one, extending to the class group and vice versa. In this perspective, learning is born, evolves and is fixed as co-construction, because the contribution of the individual arises from a widespread sharing with others.
The task of Education for Inclusion is essentially to promote learning through the activation and management of inclusive processes suitable to solicit a shared protagonism that protects the autonomous action of the individual learner, placing it in a participatory and relational context extended to the whole class. It is necessary to overcome the subject/object antinomy that in the past has characterised the theoretical explication of learning, in order to accept an approach that sees learning subjects and knowledge objects in interaction.
The learning process intersects the learning subject, the cultural object and the teaching action intervenes both on the cultural object and on the learning subject; the mediators, in the act of producing knowledge, establish the interaction between the subject and the cultural object.
In the case of students with difficulties or disabilities, mediation on the learning process gains a significant weight because the teacher must know how to manage that process and, even before that, it must know how to activate it even when the fragility of the biopsychosocial functioning of the pupil would lead to deny it; an even more solid interaction is required between the object to be acquired and the potential of the learning subject.
The use of individualised and personalised education, the introduction of compensatory tools - including alternative learning media and information technology - and dispensatory measures are envisaged, requiring a flexibility within which didactics for inclusion must be able to move.
The pedagogical background accompanies us towards the prospect of a search for possibilities, for levels that are probably possible, even utopian levels, which reject any excessive and unproductive preoccupation with failures, wrongly considered inevitable, by the constant fear and conviction of failure, conditioned by a chronic idea of the impossibility of achieving every achievement, even the smallest.
We cannot, however, avoid recalling an indispensable characteristic of significance to be assigned to learning, which further qualifies it, and which offers further guarantees of authenticity to the school's intervention.
Joseph Novak clarifies his theory of education as follows: "My theory holds that meaningful learning lays the foundation for a constructive integration of thoughts, feelings, and actions, fostering empowerment aimed at commitment and responsibility [...] true learning occurs when we take action to understand the meaning of what has been memorised: it is meaning, in fact, that gives value to learning" (Novak, 1998, p. 26, 27).
A learning individual cannot be forced to follow trivial externally induced procedures, cannot be forced to go with the flow by waiting for involvement from a marginal position, cannot be deprived of all personal initiative because he is prevented from acting autonomously.

Edgar Morin (2000) writes:
"Education must foster the general aptitude of the mind to pose and solve problems and correlatively it must stimulate the full employment of general intelligence. This full use requires the free exercise of the most widespread and lively faculty of childhood and adolescence, curiosity, which all too often the teacher extinguishes and which, on the contrary, it is a question of stimulating or reawakening, if dormant. It is immediately a question of en-

couraging and spurring the inquisitive attitude, and of directing it towards the fundamental problems of our own condition and our own time" (p. 16).
The use of facilitations and simplifications must necessarily increase the urge to attempt to conquer in, to engage, pupils with difficulties; education poses cognitive challenges to make pupils act in what Vygotsky called the zone of proximal development.
It is a question of upholding two principles, two undeniable rights, the right to equality and the right to diversity, and in order to implement them it is necessary not to exclude one of the two positions, but rather to try to interpenetrate them. In learning, making proposals aimed at everyone and, at the same time, encouraging the emergence and development of individual potential is not easy, but it is in this combination that the challenge of school inclusion of all pupils is concentrated.
The perspective of the workshop methodology is fully part of an idea of learning as research, construction and autonomous discovery; it takes place in the dimension of personal and social experience and is open to a plurality of people, to the group or groups.
The workshop activity corresponds to a research model which envisages pupils achieving knowledge and competence through a process based on doing, direct experience and experimentation and which, precisely for this reason, breaks with a traditional system in which the teacher offers subject content, describes, explains, gives examples, decides on methods and times, while the pupil, quite reductively, limits himself to listening, understanding and asking questions.
Knowledge as an active construction of the subject reminds us of the pedagogical thought of Dewey, who assigned the following main characteristics to education: 'learning by doing', the pupil at the centre of the educational process, the circularity between school and life and thought as a tool.
Dewey (1899) interpreted the possibility of reasoning as a tool for processing experience and, for this reason, he did not reduce the subject to reason alone, but made him take on the features of an active protagonist, who uses reason to create a balance between his own self and the surrounding environment, but starting from his own needs.
"Now the change which is coming into our education is the shifting of the center of gravity. It is a change, a revolution, not unlike that introduced by Copernicus when the astronomical center shifted from the earth to the sun. In this case the child becomes the sun about which the appliances of education revolve; he is the center about which they are organized" (p.51).

Dewey's words suggest an active and student-centred methodology that inspires a workshop approach that totally changes the way of structuring the actions of pupils/students who, in fact, do, act and experiment, while teachers agree on a project, create motivation, solicit needs, interests and curiosity; they encourage participation and the recovery of previous acquisitions, organise and coordinate pupils' contributions, initiate and solicit the critical and creative elaboration of knowledge.
The didactic lines within which to proceed emerge from a pedagogical background which recognises the intertwined learning processes of cognition, metacognition and motivation and which corresponds to the constructivist paradigm we have already mentioned.

It should be pointed out that there is always the risk of reducing workshop teaching exclusively to the 'place', the classroom-laboratory, whereas workshop activity consists primarily of an approach based on research methodology, according to which learning is the result of a process based on doing, on direct experience, on activity, on concrete experimentation. In addition, the workshop methodology cannot only refer to certain disciplines that traditionally involve the laboratory (science, biology, physics...), but to all of them. The workshop, therefore, cannot be understood only as a space adequately equipped with materials and tools for artistic expression activities, science, music, etc., or as a temporary path, for example the theatre workshop, but here we intend to argue it.
The active teaching/learning process starts from a cognitive obstacle generated by a situa-

tion-problem that cannot simply be solved through the application of a procedure, perhaps learnt mnemonically, but requires an autonomous and creative cognitive commitment.
The workshop approach should also be placed in a learning context dominated by collaborative practices, capable of enhancing the co-construction of learning among peers.
The Johnson brothers (1996), who dealt specifically with cooperative learning, identified distinct teaching modes. In the 'teacher-mediated' mode of teaching, the teacher is the main source of knowledge and knowing, establishing and assessing what is to be known, setting the pace of learning, eliciting motivation or retrieving it, facilitating and individualising learning. In the 'socially mediated' mode the resources and source of learning are mainly the learners. Learners help each other and are co-responsible for their own learning, they set the pace of their work, they correct and evaluate each other, they develop and improve social relationships to foster learning.
We take up the key concept of Cooperative Learning which is positive interdependence because it allows us to understand, in addition to the significant possibilities offered in the educational sphere, the importance of social ties for learning, when they are based on effective possibilities to manifest one's own determination to others.
Interdependence binds people through, for example, a common goal to be achieved; it goes beyond, therefore, the simple being together because it is based on a link that connects the possibility of the individual to achieve his own goals and the possibility that others have to achieve theirs.
Attention must therefore be paid to three aspects:

- the sphere of personal responsibility
- the structuring of positive relationships based on cooperation;
- an appropriate choice of learning objects.

Bertolini (1996) defines the meaning of the term cooperation as follows:
"It represents the highest level of sociality or, if you prefer, the original sense of the same sociality. [...]. Cooperation [...] translates into a way of doing things together that allows or encourages not only an authentic movement of self-recognition (it is by actually confronting the other that one can realise one's own limits but also one's own possibilities), but also and perhaps above all the awareness that working with others does not limit but rather increases the possibilities of each individual. [...] cooperation is a powerful means of learning, as it allows the individual to build up knowledge that is valid precisely because it emerges from joint work that overcomes the negative consequences of a dangerous individualistic outlook" (p. 112).
We agree with the definition elaborated by Bertolini because it well highlights how 'working together' is useful for learning and for the construction of autonomous identities.
Deutsch (1962), in his studies, distinguishes two different types of situations: a cooperative and a competitive one. He states:
"Positive" interdependence specifies a condition in which individuals are linked in such a way that there is a positive correlation between the achievement of one individual's goal and that of the others. [...] 'Negative' interdependence is the condition in which individuals are tied to each other in such a way that there is a negative correlation between the achievement of one individual's goal and that of the others" (pp. 275-320).
D. W. Johnson and F. P. Johnson (Johnson and Johnson, 1991) recognised the bidirectional relationships between:

- commitment and effort towards results;
- quality of interpersonal relationships;
- mental health.

Commitment becomes a reciprocal effort that requires having to, for example, share one's

own difficulties and limits and welcome those of others, and this allows one to know and welcome the potentialities and limits of those we meet; consequently, each one, either because he or she is understood and welcomed and/or because he or she welcomes and understands, acquires positive effects on a psychological level: he or she learns to face difficulties, learns to ask for help, learns to resist stress, increases his or her self-esteem, tries to understand and open up to others.
The opportunities and theoretical principles that refer to Cooperative Learning offer useful indications regarding the interchange relationship that pupils with significant difficulties should implement, in a general sense, within the class group or in any work groups outside the class group. It is easy to run the risk of forming groups of pupils in which the pupil in difficulty may take on a marginal role in relation to the task assigned because no contribution, or at best a minimal contribution, is required of him or her. It is desirable, on the other hand, to ensure that there is a significant cooperative and participatory membership; on the contrary, insignificant participation can produce dependency and foster inauthenticity.

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The professionalism of the inclusive teacher
by Elena Pacetti[3]

1. For a quality school: the skills of the teacher from the perspective of lifelong learning

A school is a complex system in which different actors (teachers, students, assistants, parents) coexist (or should coexist) to learn how to become citizens. A school is a rich environment that includes the physical space, the people involved in the process, the amount of time spent together, the materials and tools, the educational objectives, the rules of behaviour, the interpersonal relationships, the emotions.
It is the first community, after the family, where boys and girls experience common rules, shared materials and spaces, collaborative activities, inclusive practices ... but also difficulties, competitions, isolation and exclusion when the school does not work well. It is therefore important that the school is inspired by the values of the community and that the pupils experience the importance of collaboration, mutual help, confrontation of ideas, negotiation, construction (Pacetti, 2017).
In a school of this type, the teacher becomes a designer of learning environments and intentionally builds them to allow active paths in which the pupil is oriented, but not directed. In these learning environments, pupils can help each other using a variety of tools, resources, work materials: the space is rich and varied, structured, but at the same time open and polysemic, so that they can have different experiences in guided activities. The teacher facilitates individual and collective reflection, heuristic questions and works: students can face self-determined ways and paths, based on their own style, personal interests and strategies (Carletti & Varani, 2005).
School can be defined as a learning environment with a variety of characteristics: inclusive (school for each and every one), networked (with families, communities, locally and globally), flexible (adaptable), sustainable (for each type of resource), democratic (with students, teachers, assistants, families), active (in its teaching), creative (able to enhance people's ideas), reflective (on its practices).
The teaching profession, which is inspired by the need to feed the potential of any individual in learning, exerts an important influence on society and plays a vital role in promoting human potential and training future generations. While offering high-quality education guarantees learners greater satisfaction and achievement, better social skills and more diverse employment opportunities, it is essential that teachers are prepared and trained to support this task. But what does it mean to talk about the formation of the teacher's professionalism? To reach the achievement of such ambitious goals it is necessary that teachers have an excellent basic preparation and continue to update themselves throughout their careers, considering their training process as an ever-changing and ever-evolving process. "Whoever is preparing to practice a profession, in fact, does not become an expert professional when the initial training ends. Rather, he will have to progressively gain experience and continuous professional development to reach a certain level of competence. This requires a dynamic learning process, (...) shared by the members of the group of professionals, given the complexity of the situations, a process that is never completed "(Minello, 2011, p.21).
The school represents an environment where pluralities of subjects in continuous evolution move. Facing the different cultural and social origins, the specific diversities of each child and the dynamics of developmental age, very often cultural and professional certainties vacillate and teachers are forced to rethink their work practices, the way of knowledge's transfer, their training project. Therefore, there cannot be a single didactic solution, but various attempts, alternative paths, sometimes even informal ways to lead the student to educational success, not so much in terms of accumulation of knowledge, but in terms of

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the actual training of the person. Therefore, teachers are forced to question the consolidated modules, their communicative faculties and traditional teaching practices, accepting the fundamental value of experimentation. The professionalism of the teacher is therefore inexorably linked to a lifelong learning path that lasts for the whole span of life, in which teachers are willing to confront and change their beliefs and working habits in order to implement their knowledge, improve the working method, didactic approach, understanding and the ability to manage different problems and social conditions of different origins.
After the Second World War, a reflection about the concept of lifelong learning began, with the significant development of adult education promoted by UNESCO during the Elsinor Conference in Denmark in 1945. Until the 1960s, training was understood as a single gradual process that took place without interruption only once in a person's life, in the period of adolescence/youth. This model went into serious crisis at the end of the 1960s, as it was unable to respond to the demands of society. The school model proved to be closed in itself, ignoring other training agencies, technological evolution, and the need for insights into the knowledge and skills acquired on the job and in the initial phase of training. In 1960 in Montreal the debate was expanded, and during the Conference "Adult Education in a Changing World" the concept of continuity of adult education was established. Adult education was recognized as part of a continuous process that lasts throughout life. In 1966, UNESCO presented to the General Conference the "Concept of Lifelong Education" as a project, which in the 1970s was defined in more detail and proposed as a model to inspire the educational policies of subsequent years. Lifelong education was considered a tool capable of offering the human being, in the different ages of life, the opportunities and means to develop his personality, to renew and perfect his knowledge, and to participate in the progress of society. With the Faure Report (1972) we began to speak explicitly about the formation of the human being in his totality, and therefore in his capacity for permanent self-development in all its dimensions, aimed at making himself the driving force of constant innovation. Thus began to reflect more deeply on the entire training model, hypothesizing a different articulation and developing new intervention strategies. "[Lifelong education] is a comprehensive and unifying idea which includes formal, non-formal and informal learning for acquiring and enhancing enlightenment so as to attain the fullest possible development in different stages and domains of life" (Dave, 1976, p. 34). The resulting model presented various training opportunities, some within the school and vocational training systems and others outside of them, implemented in subsequent times, so as to affect different ages of a person's life. At the base of this training strategy is the acceptance that we are living in a new era, in the so-called "knowledge society", in which the requests are so complex, so multifaceted and so rapidly evolving, that the only way which we will be able to survive is to engage in an individual, common and global learning process throughout the life span.
In this sense, the teacher is a researcher (Dewey, 1929), a professional responsible for his/her own teaching/learning processes, able to analyse them, critically evaluate them, adapt them.
In order for teachers to be able to make use of a self-critical attitude, and show an open-mindedness such as to prove willing to change their considerations on teaching and learning, they must have an essential quality: reflexivity. As long as our mind is incessantly thinking of the usual routine, there is no room for reflection. In the state of reflective suspension, the mind examines, discriminates, and draws conclusions, just like a researcher does. It is the experimental attitude that recognizes how, while ideas are necessary for the organization of facts, they are, at the same time, working hypotheses to be verified on the basis of the consequences they produce (Dewey, 1938). Reflexivity promotes the development of professional identity as it develops teachers' ability to consider their own practices: the teacher, as a reflective professional, knows how to interpret and reinterpret their own experience (Crotti, 2017).
As Marguerite Altet argued: "The professional teacher is (...) an expert teacher able to reflect on his/her own practices to find new appropriate strategies to solve the problematic

situations that arise during the ordinary working situation" (ChiappettaCajola, Ciraci, 2013, p. 161).
The reflection should be shared as much as possible, so that quality can be ensured both in the training of students and in the educational and didactic actions of teachers in the classroom. From this point of view, the need for confrontation arises overwhelmingly: confrontation with innovative teaching proposals, confrontation with oneself, confrontation with colleagues. These objectives are achieved only with continuous and permanent training, at the center of which must be experimentation and innovation. Through research, one's professionalism is increased, but the effectiveness of the action of the entire school community in each of its components is also improved.
On the basis of all these considerations, it is clear that the school system should lay the foundations for the pupils' training path, considering it from a perspective of evolutionary continuity; together with the consolidation of basic knowledge, the knowledge of the tools necessary to understand and deal with the various contexts and situations in which students will find themselves living and working is of primary importance. In order for students to master these tools, teachers must observe them carefully and with particular sensitivity in the individual situations that will arise within the class, supporting them in achieving academic and personal success, and demonstrating great competence and awareness of their professional role. In fact, the school sets itself the challenging task of teaching pupils the rules of living and living together, combining the goal of "teaching to learn" with "teaching to be".

2. School, family and society

The school is immediately after the family the first educational and socialization agency with which children come into contact. It is an institution that was born within society, and therefore cannot be immune to its cultural conditioning, nor carry out a neutral educational activity. Therefore, it too transmits to its students specific and oriented socio-cultural models relating to issues such as gender, ethnicity, customs, politics, religion and so on.
The school provides students with the socio-cultural heritage built up until then by past generations, but it can and must also offer the tools to interpret it in a new way, to overcome it without wasting it and even enriching it. In this sense, education plays an important role of mediation between the past and the future, without which there would be no possibility for a society and, more generally, for humanity, to build its own history. By embracing this point of view, education can be considered as the place where freedom is built and at the same time realized: those who educate provide those who are educated with the tools to freely express their individuality, and it is precisely this possibility of expressing themselves freely that it allows each member to interpret society in a personal, original, divergent way from the past and therefore to allow its progress.
All the relationships the pupil has with media (new and old media) - television, books, etc. or with more competent figures than him/her - they are educational to the extent and when they produce the learning of beliefs, values, behaviours or ways of reasoning typical of the social community to which the pupil belongs. This means that, if education can be achieved through the informal exchanges that characterize any relationship, the school can also be the seat of implicit as well as explicit education: in fact, beyond the educational objectives that teachers consciously set themselves and the modalities that they choose to reach them, the complex and concrete unfolding of their relationship with students could convey educational choices and effects not explicitly chosen and which therefore remain implicit.

2.1 The school-family alliance

The entry of children into the school world, starting from kindergarten, creates an opportunity for parents to become aware of their responsibilities: the whole family is invited to take part in their child's school life, sharing its aims and contents. The school, therefore, needs

to establish relationships with families as a shared and continuous educational project and not only emergency relationships.
The alliance is a dynamic process, it must be continuously built and rebuilt, it must never be taken for granted and requires continuous adjustments and redefinitions recurring over time: it is more difficult than a simple interaction as it involves the understanding and acceptance of points of view also opposites (Contini, 2012).
The "secret ingredient" that allows an alliance even between very different people is motivation: this is aroused by mutual interdependence, it is necessary to work "in relationship with" other people to achieve a common goal and this interdependence leads to that the others are no longer seen as an obstacle, but as necessary and indispensable for the achievement of a common result. The development of this interdependence requires the complete development of a sense of sharing in the educational project. To do this, it is necessary that families are always informed on the ethical and value bases that guide the action of teachers, that they know and understand the objectives, educational and didactic, the evaluation methods and, above all, that they understand their role and tasks in this relation. One more step is what allows the growth of the sense of belonging to a community. Finally, we must let the differences emerge by working with a view to mediation, avoiding clashes and fractures between teachers and families. The teacher's task, in fact, is not only to accompany the pupil in his/her cognitive and psychic growth, but also to communicate effectively with his/her family, as communication between school and family is "a nerve center to the achievement of educational success and to the full enhancement of educational interventions: from this derives the possibility of thinking of the family not only as a subject who finds help and support in the school, but also as a subject who can contribute to qualify the school enterprise, putting them at disposes of one's wealth of experiences and reflections"(Fabbri, 2008, p.126).
The participation of families certainly affects collective or individual moments, but also small moments such as respecting school hours, daily incoming or outgoing communications, respecting deadlines, bringing the material when required, and many other small, no less important aspects of daily life. In a situation such as the one experienced during the Covid19 pandemic, and the relative closure of schools, this alliance with families has proved to be fundamental to allow continuity and to facilitate the transition from face-to-face to remote teaching.
For a concrete involvement of families that highlights how parents can bring their contribution within the school, some fundamental stages in the school-family relationship can be hypothesized:

- inform: the school must inform parents on a regular basis both about their child's school progress and about class and school initiatives, to help families learn about and understand school dynamics. This practice is possible through annual interviews, class meetings, but also (where possible) using digital tools such as the school website or communication via e-mail;
- listen: the objective of this stage is to get to know the pupil and his/her family, the social environment of origin, the lifestyle, habits, educational styles, in general the life of each child. It is very important to avoid any form of judgment. Listening takes place thanks to individual interviews conducted during the school year, written communications (both in the diary and by e-mail or telephone);
- encourage participation: that is, allowing families to enter the school context so that they know the school reality of their child, in order to bring the school experience closer to the family one. All this is possible by making families participate and collaborate in class and school activities, in moments of meeting also of a playful and informal type, or by organizing workshops. Families can contribute with their experience, with material resources, skills, etc.;
- involve: it is necessary to enter into a perspective of co-education in which school and

family listen to each other by elaborating a common action plan. It is put into practice through the formation of groups (the creation of a network between families is essential), the involvement of parents in the classroom, the use of documentation;
- support: the school has the task of supporting parents in their parental role by helping them to recognize and satisfy the needs of children through parenting support. The support can be explicit, by holding conferences, training seminars, or implicit, enabling one to learn in relation to oneself as a parent, for example by participating in readings with children (Milani, 2012).

It should also be added that it is not always easy to create this alliance with families: it is therefore the teacher's task to find the most appropriate strategies to enter into a relationship with those who struggle more, for example by going to the home of their pupils when they cannot communicate in other way with the family.

2.2 The relationship with the territory: for an integrated formative system

Faced with the continuous quantitative and qualitative growth of new educational opportunities in the territory, ignoring the phenomenon becomes progressively impossible even for those who are located in drastic school-center positions and then there are only two solutions: the first consists in recognizing them, eventually specifying and delimiting the tasks of the school, and this is the perspective of the wide formative system; the second is represented by the hypothesis of the integrated formative system, that is, by the attempt to redesign the entire educational system on new balances, betting on a new and possible interwoven between school and extra-school dimensions of education.
In short, the weight assumed by the extra-school dimension in determining the quality of the formative paths of the human being puts forcefully the problem of a new inequality that strikes those who are forced to use formative/cultural occasions of the territory in a subaltern or marginal way, or those who live in territories objectively poor of those occasions. Consequently, it is a question of reinterpreting the right to study in more global terms as a right to learn that must be guaranteed to all through the times and spaces of the individual. In this direction, the pedagogical and didactic perspective of the educational city (or of the so-called integrated formative system) is interesting in many aspects and, at least in words, widely shared. In short, the hypothesis of the integrated formative system proposes transforming into resources what at the beginning appears more than anything else as a problem: the change of roles (of the presence and the ability to influence) within the educational scene, the explosion of new cultural opportunities, the birth of a true and proper "market" for education. This is possible within a system that becomes aware of the impossibility of limiting training in school perimeters and that opens up to the recognition of the existence, and of equality and dignity, of other educational agencies. Within a system that goes beyond the strict dimensions of the school to assume those, more general, of the formative, and that at the same time rejects the neo-liberal hypothesis of a simple expansion of the places of education (in the scope of which each one would reproduce, positively and negatively, their own inequalities) to take care of the need for a rational and democratic integration of the educational resources present (or to activate) in the territory.
The integration of the formative system can be pursued through the inauguration of a dialectical interaction relationship between the culture of the "inside-school" and that of the "outside-school", according to complementary lines of the reciprocal educational resources. An objective, this, that can be pursued in exchange for the territory being put in a position to have multiple educational opportunities, of an institutional nature, intentionally formative (libraries, museums, media centres, theatres, ateliers, laboratories, sports, recreational and cultural centers and the branched network of secular and Catholic associations), whether of a non-institutional nature, not intentionally formative (the opportunities of the landscape and monuments on the one hand; the centers of production, commerce, communication,

on the other).
Specifically, this means that the school:

1. Recognize within the curriculum itself the importance of the experiences developed by the student outside the school, assigning them the value of true and proper didactic credits according to what is foreseen by the most recent school regulations;
2. Effectively use the territory's network of opportunities as non-episodic "decentralized didactic classrooms". On the other hand, current regulations on educational continuity and on the autonomy of school institutes specifically foresee, in the direction of horizontal continuity, that they activate forms of connection with the cultural, environmental and social realities present in the territory;
3. Build the aforementioned conditions by developing an adequate Formative Offer Plan that takes into account the existing training services in the surrounding territory (Guerra, Frabboni, Scurati, 1999).

The school is called upon to forge alliances with various associations in the territory, in order to create a learning path that is meaningful for the pupil and that allows them to draw on various resources available locally to consolidate knowledge and build new skills. The concept of the classroom changes considerably, transposing its meaning from a school classroom, understood as a physical place inside the school, equipped with desks, blackboard, etc., to a decentralized classroom, as a "conceptual" place that embraces numerous environments, interiors and outside the school building (Frabboni, 1991). If the culture of the traditional school described the institution as a closed system, today more than ever it is urgent to reaffirm its identity as a complex and open system, able to establish connections on the territory to which it belongs. This means that between the inside school culture and that of the outside school there must be a relationship of dialectical interaction, so that the action carried out by each agency is complementary to that carried out by the others. Today the school must go even further beyond its borders and establish relationships not only with entities belonging to the adjacent territory, but also with institutions belonging to the regional, national and international context: from a microcontextualistic conception we proceed towards a macrocontextualistic conception.
In this sense, the advent of the web and the development of communication systems that allow the exchange of information in real time between geographically distant countries also require the educational institution new skills, referable to the ability to create significant learning networks not only at local, but also nationally and internationally.
The Faure Report (1972) identifies two other types of learning together with the formal one, the one organized by a context used for this purpose (educational institutions of various levels):

- Non-formal learning, delivered as part of planned activities not specifically conceived as learning (in terms of objectives, timing or learning support) that takes place outside the main education and training structures. The results of this learning can be validated and lead to certification; sometimes non-formal learning is called "semi-structured learning". It is dispensed in the workplace or in the framework of activities of civil society organizations or groups (associations, youth associations, trade unions or political parties). It can also be provided by organizations or services established upon completion of formal systems (such as artistic, musical and sports education courses or private courses for exam preparation);
- Informal learning, the natural corollary of daily life resulting from the various activities carried out along its duration related to work, family or leisure. Unlike the other two learning, the informal learning is not structured in terms of learning objectives, times or learning resources. One may not recognize it, at times, as a contribution to his/her knowledge and skills. Its achievements typically do not lead to certification, but can be

validated and certified as part of the recognition of previous learning programs. Informal learning is also called experiential or fortuitous or casual learning.

In other words, non-formal contexts, like formal ones, are intentionally educational, while informal ones are not intentionally educational: but all three contexts contribute to the formation and development of the person.
In the Delors Report (1996) learning is outlined as an intrinsic "treasure" that everyone holds within Him/herself, "the highest value that each can possess, to generate his/her own future". The document, a result of the assiduous work of various specialists in the international field that has influenced the various national reforms in the educational field, places the person as a whole at the center of learning, who exercises his or her right of citizenship in a respectful and conscious manner in the context where it belongs.
The four pillars of the document respectively describe four different types of learning, which each School has the task of promoting, basing its own educational "mission" on these. They refer to:

- "Learning to know. Given the rapid changes brought about by scientific progress and the new forms of economic and social activity, the emphasis has to be on combining a sufficiently broad general education with the possibility of in-depth work on a selected number of subjects. Such a general background provides, so to speak, the passport to lifelong education, in so far as it gives people a taste - but also lays the foundations - for learning throughout life.
- Learning to do (...). In addition to learning to do a job of work, it should, more generally, entail the acquisition of a competence that enables people to deal with a variety of situations, often unforeseeable, and to work in teams, a feature to which educational methods do not at present pay enough attention. In many cases, such competence and skills are more readily acquired if pupils and students have the opportunity to try out and develop their abilities by becoming involved in work experience schemes or social work while they are still in education, whence the increased importance that should be attached to all methods of alternating study with work" (Delors, 1996, p.23).
- Learning to live together, "by developing an understanding of others and their history, traditions and spiritual values and, on this basis, creating a new spirit which, guided by recognition of our growing interdependence and a common analysis of the risks and challenges of the future, would induce people to implement common projects or to manage the inevitable conflicts in an intelligent and peaceful way" (Delors, 1996, p.22).
- Learning to be: "everyone will need to exercise greater independence and judgement combined with a stronger sense of personal responsibility for the attainment of common goals. Our report stresses a further imperative: none of the talents which are hidden like buried treasure in every person must be left untapped. These are, to name but a few: memory, reasoning power, imagination, physical ability, aesthetic sense, the aptitude to communicate with others and the natural charisma of the group leader, which again goes to prove the need for greater self-knowledge" (Delors, 1996, p.23).

These learnings, cultivated in school from early childhood, accompany the growth of all pupils who learn not only in the classroom, but also in other educational contexts with which the school itself can collaborate. Creating a network of relationships with non-formal educational agencies present in the area is good practice for the realization of transversal projects and paths, which take into account the needs and interests of pupils. For this reason, teachers, collectively, can work to network with the educational agencies of the territory, to build projects together, to propose extracurricular activities to families and pupils, to train themselves, to enhance the skills of pupils.
The activation of any form of integration of the formative system presupposes the specific knowledge of the educational presences in the territory. It is necessary, in other words, to

build the “atlas” of educational opportunities present in the environment and at the same time create a permanent monitoring of the same opportunities that allows to reveal the effective educational quality and to follow their evolution in real time. The construction of the atlas requires the carrying out of a specific investigation that allows to verify the knowledge of the educational environment that educators already have (teachers and operators of the territorial agencies), to remove any possible prejudices, to analyse not only the consolidated educational services but also trend lines, emerging hypotheses, informal realities.
Based on these premises, it is important a research on the effective consistency of the educational system in the territory where each school is located and the following objectives should be proposed:

1. systematic census of educational protagonists (formal and informal, public and private, with or without educational intentionality) existing in the territory;
2. analyse the quantity and quality of the educational experiences activated by the subjects in the census, adopting certain criteria of relief and classification;
3. locate ways for the atlas to be consulted in existing spaces such as a database of trainings available to students, teachers, educators, parents (Frabboni, Guerra, Scurati, 1999).

3. A school researching and documenting

An aspect linked to change in the school and quite relevant is that of research as a tool for managing change and innovation, which implies a “continuous re-elaboration of one’s didactic action aimed at improvement” (Castoldi, 2010, p. 23).
Teachers, therefore, are invited to design an innovative teaching action from a methodological-disciplinary point of view and, in this sense, research proves to be a useful element for the improvement and strengthening of the educational offer, for the optimization of teaching and, above all, to a reflective teaching. Doing research does not mean dwelling on the study and definition of theoretical practices, but rather reflecting and asking questions, observing and interpreting one’s own didactic action, and then acting on the context. The teacher, therefore, plans, formulates design hypotheses, chooses the methods and tools of evaluation, acts, collects and processes the data collected at the end of this exploratory survey and, once the set point has been achieved, shares his/her result with colleagues, also involved in the action research process.
The school also changes thanks to the contributions of teachers and experts in the sector, who collect the signals and challenges of a modern society in continuous evolution and movement, to adapt them to the school context. Reflexivity is a necessary condition for experience to produce learning: “The constant dialogue between context and actors requires a reflective rationality capable of «giving meaning» to change, recognizing it, interpreting it and producing learning. [...] What emerges is the centrality of the relationship between reflection and action of change, as complementary aspects of a single process”(Castoldi, 2010, p. 26).
To research and reflection must be added the documentation that helps keep track of the work of the teacher and the teacher group, the progress of each pupil and the entire class, changes, but also difficulties. Documentation thus becomes a tool that stimulates comparison, favours exchange, sharing of experiences between the different school communities, helps to overcome the self-referentiality typical of each institution, promoting rather the development of cooperative methods and common working methods, aimed at a real and productive growth of the school.
Documentation must not only be a practice that is added to others that are already part of the teacher’s baggage, but it can be an investment, a tool that allows to have information and stimuli as a return that facilitate the task, the work of all the professionals involved. From this perspective, therefore, documentation can and should be considered a resource

for starting, developing and implementing educational activities in schools; an "added value" if it is considered from the multiple perspectives of the pupil, the teacher, the institution and the system. Documentation becomes a resource when it manages to combine all these dimensions and thus create a project; when it manages to lay the foundations for circularity. In this case, the documentation helps to constantly monitor the paths proposed to children, leads to reflect on the experiences made and possibly to give a critical judgment, defining the interest and involvement of the children and therefore consequently the effectiveness of the proposals.
The documentation also serves to accompany the teacher's work in order to bring out the aspects of originality and uniqueness of their activities. Precisely on this it becomes indispensable to discuss with colleagues, find solicitations, exchange opinions, reflect together in the direction of constant self-training. All this means that the profession of the teacher is not learned only by studying within academic paths and with the succession of continuous refresher courses, but also and above all by constant comparison, reflections and dialogue with colleagues (Torelli, 2011). This is precisely because the knowledge that is produced by questioning the meaning of one's actions does not end once an activity, an experience, a path or a project is finished, but rather becomes a motivation for change (Di Pasquale & Maselli, 2001).

4. Inclusive teaching: tools and approaches for teachers and parents

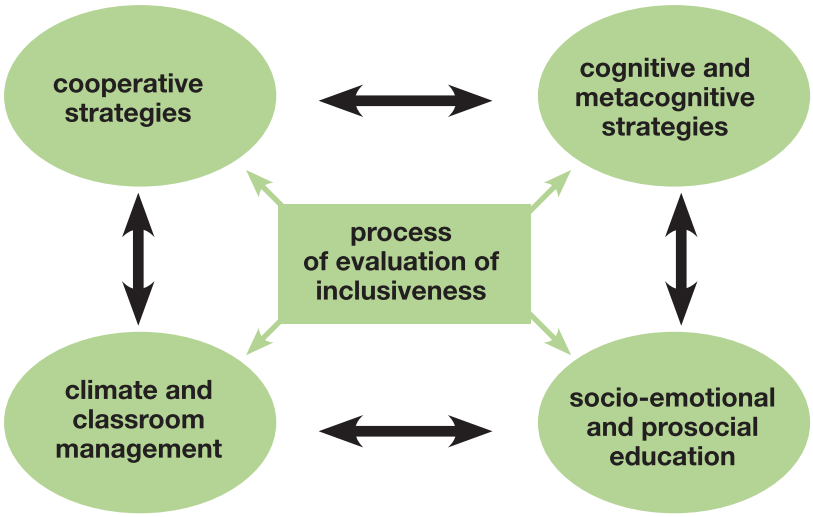
In the context described in the previous paragraphs, it emerges how important it is that a competent, researching and reflective teacher should design inclusive teaching for his/her pupils. In fact, a quality school must put the diversified needs of all pupils at the centre of its attention, in compliance with the principle of equal opportunities and active participation of everyone (Cottini, 2017). It is not enough to include all pupils in the classroom to talk about inclusive teaching, but it is essential to make contexts, methods and attitudes inclusive for everyone. Understood and articulated in this way, the concept of inclusion imposes new challenges on school and curricular planning, to give life to a project that takes into account the differences of each one, that is aimed at everyone and that promotes the best opportunities for individual and personal growth to each subject.
Working in schools from an inclusive perspective presents undoubted difficulties in implementation: it is certainly a complex work and requires a complex system organization. The perspective of inclusion necessarily passes through a refinement of teaching procedures, which must promote the active role of each student, facilitating the participation of all, as well as stimulating interactive relationships and mutual support. Therefore, there cannot be full inclusion if the entire school community is not committed to promoting and sharing the principles underlying this inclusive culture. For this reason, the use of the *Index for inclusion and empowerment* (see part 2 of this publication – p. 46) represents the framework for planning inclusive teaching and for promoting the culture of inclusion at school, in the family, in society, in politics.
When we talk about inclusion, as already explained above, we are talking not only about pupils with disabilities, but pupils in difficult situations or with special educational needs (SEN). It is very important to consider that there is no "SEN certification" since it would be difficult to identify a threshold within which a pupil's need is considered special or not. The need is educational, it must therefore be observed, analysed and detected as such, with the tools of teaching; the teacher will then evaluate which didactic or educational methodologies to adopt and through which type of intervention, starting from the family, cultural, socio-environmental context in which the child is inserted, and it is for this reason that teachers are asked to apply a pedagogical model and not a clinical model (Scarpin & Da Re, 2014).
The Index for inclusion and empowerment is a tool helping the users to better analyse their own contexts (the community, the school, the class, etc.), and better identify the needs of

the subjects involved. And it is a collective tool aiming at supporting a reflection and discussion to self-review the level of inclusion and empowerment in a specific context and its didactical and educational activities. It is also intended to help in the development of local policies, in order to improve the school planning, the student's performance and the community quality of life.
Alongside the Index, it is very important to use a student observation tool (see part 2 of this publication – p. 46) which becomes, therefore, a further way to collect data necessary for didactic planning: the teacher observes, notes, reflects, identifying critical elements, possible difficulties, but also positive aspects, opportunities, specific skills of the pupils. The observation of pupils' behaviour must be able to support more strongly an inclusive teaching program consistent with the rights and needs of pupils and with the learning objectives. Observing does not mean looking in a spontaneous and non-selective way: observing implies a cognitive action, the need to understand, to collect useful elements to address a problem or a situation. Observation is therefore configured as a cognitive process, as it is not only oriented to the reading of a phenomenon/situation, but above all to its understanding; it is not possible to observe in a distracted or superficial way: on the contrary, concentration and great attention are required. Faced with a situation, the teacher who acquires an observational ability is concerned, first of all, with focusing on what he/she deems most significant and relevant. This work of "breaking down" the events is extremely precious because it helps to identify the single variables on which the interventions will be hypothesized. Furthermore, in this process, strengths and criticalities are highlighted, in order to intervene by enhancing positive behaviours and minimizing negative ones. An observation tool, therefore, is designed to accompany the work of systematic observation and data collection of the teacher (both curricular and support teacher), and to support careful and accurate reflection, essential for effective teaching planning and to monitor changes, transformations, improvements or worsening and act accordingly.
The activities that are proposed must necessarily be structured in such a way as to be able to intervene on the specificities of each student starting from their difficulties, also taking into account their strengths, in order to stimulate self-learning and achieve educational success. Teaching can be defined as inclusive when it is designed to go beyond traditional teaching and programming, when it leaves each pupil the opportunity to enter actively and express him/herself.
"It then becomes essential [...] to generate objectives and activities aimed simultaneously and in a synergistic way both at the growth of individual skills and at the development of the social participation of the pupil in difficulty, understood as integration in the various contexts of life of the communities" (Ianes, 2001, p.35).
For these reasons, collaboration between all teachers is absolutely essential to implement the inclusive process in the school: a shared didactic planning, in terms of educational setting, rules, objectives, teaching methodologies, evaluation criteria, benefits not only students with difficulties, but the whole class. The real challenge is to create a learning environment that, in diversity, is meaningful for each and every one.
The inclusive logic necessarily implies the adoption of a relational systemic approach for the development of effective interactions and true collaboration within an integrated formative system (Berlini, Canevaro, 1996). For this reason it is important to monitor pupils at different times of the school year, sharing the results with other teachers and educational figures, and with the family. Likewise, a tool such as the *Parents' Observation Tool* (present in Annex 1) allows families to take part in the educational process, strengthening that alliance with the school mentioned in the previous pages. A systematic observation of one's pupils accompanies the teacher's work as it trains the teacher's observational skills, helping him/her to grasp characteristics that could otherwise be overlooked, but which, on the other hand, provide valuable elements for inclusive teaching and effective planning, respectful of the rights, needs and times of pupils. The observation sheet for parents, complementary to the Index and the tools used by teachers, allows to have an even more complete picture

of the situation of each pupil: it is good to remember, in fact, that children can have different behaviours in the family and school environment, and parents and teachers can mutually support each other in identifying the most effective strategies for learning and socializing each pupil.
Taking up the indications provided by Cottini (2017), it is possible to develop a graph that allows us to clarify and identify five lines of work, integrated with each other and referring to specific topics of the curriculum, which represent important characteristics of the methodological approaches on which a inclusive teaching is based:

- the climate and classroom management;
- cooperative strategies;
- cognitive and metacognitive strategies;
- socio-emotional and prosocial education;
- intervention strategies on the special needs of students.

Strategies for inclusive education (Cottini et al., 2016, p.67)



Climate and classroom management
The classroom is a complex reality, in which there are several students, with different needs and necessities; it is therefore essential that the teacher knows how to manage it better and organize activities in an inclusive way, trying to respond to the needs of the individual but never losing sight of the whole group-class. The attitudes and behaviours implemented by teachers, in fact, play a decisive role from this point of view, as it is the teacher who personally takes care of class management (D'Alonzo, 2012).
The classroom climate, understood in a relational and social dimension as the set of attitudes that characterize being together in a shared environment by pupils and teachers, is a very important component that affects the learning process, precisely because it involves all the actors of the educational process.
The creation of a serene environment, based on the values of cooperation and sharing, positively affects the quality of learning of all pupils and "allows teachers to enhance the potential of each student and to respect their uniqueness. [...] The individual diversities that coexist in the group-class combine to create the social environment within which the teacher activates the learning process or at least favours it" (Carruba, 2015, p.190).
The classroom climate "is built by paying attention to both organization and interactions, educational intentionality and respect for the rules" (Cottini, 2017, p.164) and by connecting

the different components: aspects such as the organization of spaces, sharing the rules, respecting common environments and materials are essential for pupils to feel they belong to the same class group. The teacher has the task of building a meaningful relationship with each student, through verbal and non-verbal communication methods and through the implementation of simple and specific behaviours: availability and courtesy, openness to listening and towards individual opinions are only some of the most effective conditions for creating a positive class climate.

Cooperative strategies
The organization and preparation of cooperative activities are certainly profitable for the creation of a serene and quality class climate, especially as regards the learning of individuals. "Peer education and, more generally, the promotion of collaborative strategies between classmates, has proven to be very effective in facilitating curricular learning, in enhancing self-esteem, perception of self-efficacy and social skills and in promoting inclusive processes" (Cottini, 2017, p.206).
From an inclusive education perspective, there are two cooperative strategies that are most useful and applicable in the school environment: Peer Tutoring and Cooperative Learning.
Peer Tutoring is an educational strategy that consists of a natural exchange of information, knowledge and emotions between peers, between some members of a group. This methodology implicates the involvement of some students who perform the function of tutors, to encourage and help the learning of other classmates who instead take on the role of tutees. It is very important that the roles are exchanged, avoiding to promote to tutors only the students considered good: they can all be tutors or tutees, it depends on the planned activity, the contents addressed, the skills valued (and all the students are competent in some field and they can teach their peers). The exchange of knowledge that takes place is not unidirectional, but benefits both parties involved: furthermore, tutoring offers enormous results, not only in a strictly scholastic sense, but also in interpersonal relationships, in motivation and in the emotional sphere. The collaboration and mutual help between students therefore offers great opportunities for education and learning to all children, including those in situations of difficulty or real disability.
The other cooperative strategy useful for the construction of an inclusive school is Cooperative Learning, which, through work in small groups, favours the learning process of each student, making them more willing to help and acceptance of the other.
Cooperative Learning is based on a series of principles that determine its correct application in the educational field:

- positive interdependence, that is, the fact that each member of the group is not concerned only with their own work, but also with that of their teammates. Teamwork is required to achieve a certain goal;
- individual and group responsibility, which must be clearly distinguished and require constant monitoring during group work;
- social skills, which are necessary to encourage interaction and collaboration within the group. Children, in fact, must be willing to help each other, to be helped, to encourage each other, to accept the advice of others and to improve themselves in a relationship of reciprocity;
- the revision and continuous improvement of group work, which must take place through continuous reflection and discussion on one's work and on the results achieved (Johnson & Johnson, 1991).

Cognitive and metacognitive strategies
This type of strategy refers to educational paths that allow pupils to acquire knowledge, skills and abilities, helping them in the management and organization of incoming information and that already possessed by the individual.

These paths are applicable to all disciplines and encourage "the development of a strategic approach to tasks and a capacity for metacognitive reflection, showing, at the same time, how the implementation of these strategies for the whole class can also connect with the promotion of inclusive contexts" (Cottini, 2017, p.228).
It is important for the teacher to direct his/her own actions towards:

- the enhancement of memory strategies;
- a metacognitive teaching, able to make the subjects more aware of their own learning process and to be able to manage their own cognitive processes;
- the development of didactic strategies for executive functions, i.e. planning, flexibility and cognitive/behavioral control;
- the development of cognitive self-regulation strategies, which aim to make the individual autonomous in the management of their learning process;
- a possible overturning of traditional didactic procedures, through the model of "flipped classrooms", the so-called inverted classes. This methodological approach is based on the possibility of elaborating and understanding certain didactic contents at home and of carrying out exercises and consolidation of contents at school, in the classroom. In this way, the active learning of the student and his/her real participation are encouraged, also thanks to the support of multimedia tools.

The teacher has the task of supporting and strengthen students, helping them to put into play all the resources available to learn to learn and self-evaluate, investigating their strengths and weaknesses.

Socio-emotional and prosocial education
Socio-emotional education involves a series of processes through which pupils and teachers learn and effectively apply their knowledge, skills and competences to understand and manage emotions, define and achieve positive goals, empathize with others and take responsible decisions (Morganti & Signorelli, 2016).
Students must therefore acquire, and then be able to manage, their socio-emotional and prosocial skills, in order to promote their personal well-being and that of the entire group-class.
A reference point for socio-emotional education research is CASEL (Collective for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning), which has identified five skills towards which the teacher must direct his/her pupils:

- self-awareness, through which the person is able to identify their own emotions and those of others, to nurture self-confidence, have a personal sense of self-efficacy, recognize their strengths and weaknesses and identify those of others;
- self-management, which consists of the ability to regulate one's emotions and behaviour based on circumstances;
- social awareness, that is, recognizing and respecting the other, feeling empathy towards her;
- relational skills, that is, being able to communicate and interact with others;
- the ability to make responsible decisions, that is, to make choices that are thought out, evaluated, and to be able to reflect on one's responsibilities.

Similarly, prosocial education is based on teaching aimed at making students able to identify and understand the needs of other people and to activate help actions towards them, always respecting the characteristics and diversity of each individual.
The teacher him/herself, as promoter of inclusive teaching, must configure him/herself as emotionally competent, with personal skills capable of characterizing him/her as an emotional leader, able to manage and regulate his/her own emotions, to welcome the emotions

of his/her students and to guide the behaviours that are triggered by these same emotions (Cottini, 2016; 2017).

Intervention strategies on the special needs of students
Inclusive education was born with the intent to try to understand the special needs of each student and activate effective solutions that allow him/her to overcome differences and obstacles to learning and participation. An inclusive school therefore requires the planning and strengthening of these didactic strategies, aimed specifically at the person.
However, this does not mean that interventions aimed at the individual should be activated, to be promoted with an individual relationship, perhaps in separate contexts; rather, it emphasizes how necessary it is to respond to specific learning needs, perhaps with actions to be developed in collective contexts, in a small group.
In addition to the dimensions of the inclusive educational action investigated so far, it is essential to activate and propose strategies aimed at:

- facilitate meaningful learning, such as behavioral strategies, video modeling or based on structured teaching and visualization strategies;
- facilitate communication, through procedures that involve the use of a verbal mediator or alternative forms of communication, such as signs and images;
- contain behavioral problems, which are a source of great concern for teachers, who are often unable to activate effective tools and methodologies in this regard. In fact, it is necessary not only to implement containment methods but also to promote particular skills, for example of a communicative type, to functionally replace problem behaviours (Cottini, 2017).

It is therefore a question of using these five work paths starting from the data collected in the *Index for the inclusion and empowerment*, in the *Parents' observation sheet* and in any other relevant teacher's tool, and monitoring the changes according to the strategies used, to verify their real effectiveness and to intervene ever earlier in an inclusive teaching perspective.

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Teachers' digital competences. The importance of an inclusive approach in school-families communication dynamics mediated by technology.
by Alessandro Soriani[4]

1. Technologies within the scientific debate

The diffusion of technologies and digital media is now a fact with which the school system must measure itself on a daily basis and, with it, also the families. Alongside a wide range of potentialities, this diffusion also offers a long list of elements to be paid more attention to. The impact of the introduction of technologies in school contexts is articulated in different dimensions of school life: from influences on the level of educational innovation (Ferrari, 2017; Guerra, 2010; Pacetti, 2013a), to the stumbling blocks that digital media offer as a source of distraction (Goleman, 2014); from the perspectives that ICTs open to promote inclusion (Pacetti, 2013b), to the risks that they bring related to forms of discrimination, online hatespeech and cyber bullying; from the influences on students' cognitive abilities (Carr, 2010; Prensky, 2012; Spitzer, 2013), to the forms of media literacy in order to enjoy them critically and responsibly (Hobbs, 2016; Ito et al., 2010).
An aspect still little explored by the literature is represented by the influences and possible effects of technologies on the socio-relational level. While studies belonging to the Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) strand have long opened the track to an investigation, even in educational contexts, of the communication dynamics through digital tools, it must be stressed, however, that most of these studies contemplate in the discourse the analysis of "traditional" digital means such as email, mailing lists, forums or wikis (Bouhnik & Deshen, 2014; Cifuentes & Lents, 2011; Doering, Cynthia, George, & Nichols-Besel, 2008; Smit & Goede, 2012; Sweeny, 2010). The reason for this bias is predominantly because of the time period in which CMC took hold, well before the advent of smartphones and social networks, and also because of methodological difficulties that these new digital contexts entail and research that is interested in the new forms of communication opened up by social networks does so in contexts far removed from those of the school (Jenkins, Ito, & boyd, 2016; Turkle, 2016).
The prevalence of portable devices in people's lives (from the very young to the very old) has obviously altered, not to say profoundly changed, not only the ways in which these individuals inform themselves, study, learn, entertain themselves, or express their creativity, but also the ways, times, and spaces in which these same individuals communicate, collaborate, discuss, and weave relationships (Caron & Caronia, 2007; Thompson, 1995).
If we place this picture in the framework of the school world, we can recognize elements that already presented a deep complexity and that, with the introduction of technologies, have been enriched in terms of horizons of opportunities and educational challenges. Reference is made, in particular, to the relational dynamics that affect students, teachers and parents and how these have been further complicated by an increasingly constant access, by users, to the possibility of communicating through new channels (messages, phone calls, e-mail, audio messages, images, videos and other modes made possible by today's social networks).

2. School-family communication mediated by technology

Due to the lockdown caused by the pandemic, educational institutions around the world found themselves in the position of having to elevate technology as a unique and privileged tool for communicating with families and students. This change shed light not only on a series of factors that have brought various benefits, but also numerous difficulties and

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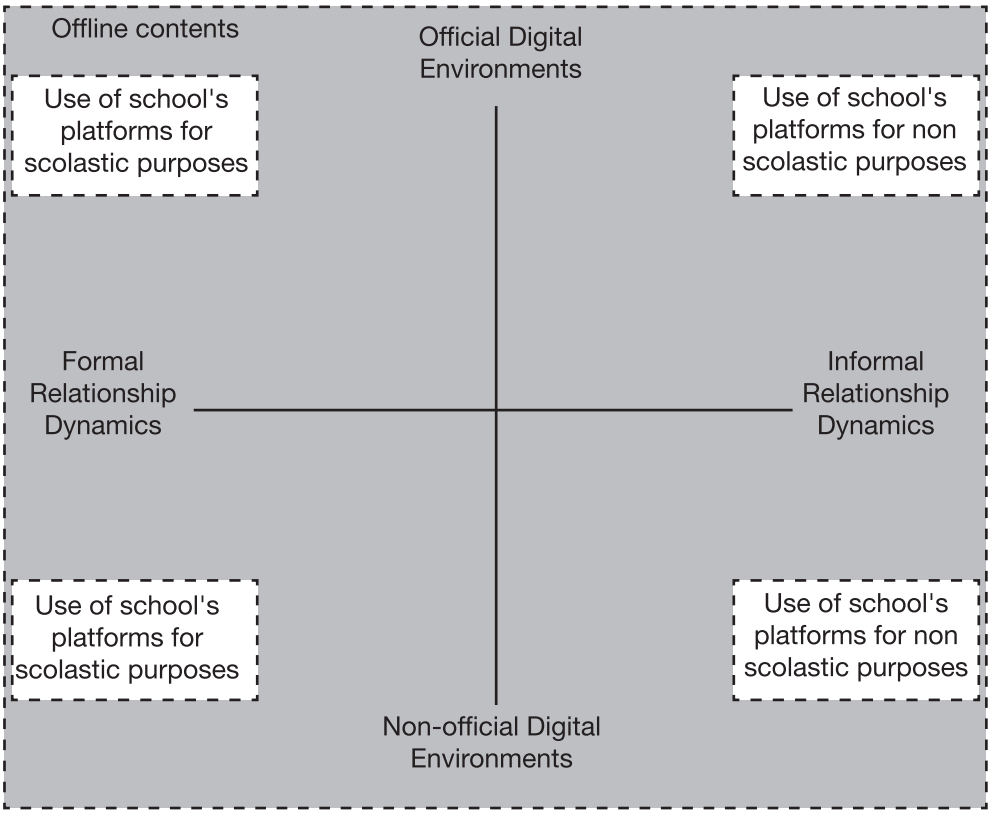
complications - previously certainly already present - that, through the human contact of the school place and the vis-à-vis relationship, were more or less controlled: reference is made, in particular, to the difficulty of some teachers and some parents to maintain contact with the most disadvantaged families in terms of access to technology, or management of spaces and devices.
The communication balance between school and family has always been, even before the emergency situation caused by the pandemic, a rather delicate subject. Despite the fact that many institutions have equipped themselves in recent years by implementing systems of communication with families through official websites, institutional e-mails, messages from the electronic register or through direct telephone calls, solutions such as the communication notebook - to be countersigned - or the meeting in front of the gate, remain the preferred methods and those considered among the most authentic and effective. However, communicative contexts do not end here: social networks, group chats and private messages exchanged between parents, between teachers, but also between students, contribute to broadening the boundaries of this field of reflection.
In this context, technologies have been positioned as a "third" space (Gutiérrez, Mendoza, & Paguyo, 2012; Rivoltella & Rossi, 2019) where they can give rise to integrative and hybrid forms of communication, straddling - in some cases - between officialdom and officialdom: a space in which the boundaries between what is official and what is not are at least as undefined as the character of the type of communication they can accommodate.
In this regard, it is worth spending a few words to better clarify the complexity and variety of these situations. Schools make available, in an official way, digital communicative contexts such as:

- online platforms of the electronic register, which parents can access with their own password;
- institutional emails available to students and teachers;
- LCMS platforms to enable distance learning (such as Google Classroom, Edmodo or Moodle);
- online suites for intra-class work and communication (such as Google Drive or Office 365).

School stakeholders, however, do not simply make use of these spaces. There is a plethora of other unofficial tools, which are spontaneously used by students, parents and teachers, for their usual communicative exchanges, such as:

- messages on private email addresses;
- messages via instant messaging services (such as WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook, etc.);
- chat or discussion groups on social networks.
- Within these two types of digital environments, there can be communicative dynamics that lie in a very wide variety of nuances between two polarities: formal - that is, having to do with strictly school matters - and informal - concerning other objects of discussion (Soriani, 2019).



Digital environments map

Official digital environments can therefore accommodate formal but also informal communicative dynamics. The same is true for unofficial digital contexts, which can easily be the scene of formal or informal communicative dynamics. This complexity gives rise to a series of hybrid situations that are difficult to categorize but deserve special attention.

3. The issues that emerged in the emergency: a "relational" digital divide

The term digital divide, originally created to give a name to the difference between those who have and those who do not have access to digital technologies, has expanded to include any form of discrimination or "inequality, barrier, limitation existing in the access to new information and communication technologies" (Zanetti, 2010, p. 59). The causes of this problem, so complex in its entirety, are not to be attributed to the simple possibility or impossibility of access to the devices but, rather, to "a system of inequalities of a social nature" (ibid., p.61).
As if to say that the main source of a dis-relationship with technology - a dis-relationship that causes a gap, a non-communication - is not the technology itself, but rather the level of mediation, participation and inclusion that is created around the experience of use around that technology. An experience that sees in the relationship between families and schools, and between families and other families, the main junction.
Not only a digital divide caused by lack of access to technologies, to a connection or by a lack of competence in using them, but a "relational" digital divide, whose causes and effects are closely related to a lack of access to a network of meaningful relationships, very important for the school.
As mentioned, there are two elements that specifically limit their children's participation in distance learning: the first concerns technical and logistical difficulties, the second con-

cerns the lack of digital skills. The lack of digital skills on the part of parents translates into an objective difficulty in monitoring the activities proposed to their children by their teachers: the fact that they are unable to access the school website to consult any updates can be the cause, in the home, of a low level of participation by the boy or the child. By technical and logistical difficulties, we mean factors such as possession of sufficient devices to allow all members of the family to be able to connect independently, or the possibility of access to a sufficiently powerful internet network. Not all families, in fact, have a Wi-Fi connection with a flat rate contract: some students, especially those coming from families in economically disadvantaged conditions, are forced to connect through a mobile network, with obvious limits in quality and time.
At the same time, the actions schools take to communicate with families should not be underestimated. Communication is an element that is often neglected and relegated to official communications given through more or less digital means (electronic register, email, school websites, but also notebooks for parents to sign...) often reverberated and passed from mouth to mouth through unofficial means (word of mouth, phone calls, messages between parents...).
The lack of communication protocols that regulate the communication and dissemination of information between class representatives and other parents is a problem: the absence of this kind of support from the school translates into a form of parent-parent communication that, while being a source of closeness and mutual support (which should not be overlooked!), ends up putting most of the work on the shoulders of the representatives, resulting not only in a potential overload, but also in very different forms of communication organization. If, for example, in the case of a class with parents who are very united, it can become an element of strength and greater cohesion, in the case of parents who are less involved or less included in the community, it immediately translates into a further factor of exclusion.

4. Teachers' Digital Competencies

It is important for teachers to be capable and competent professionals in using digital tools for their daily practices. But what exactly does this implies?
The issue of digital competencies of teachers and citizens in general is quite a debated topic at the international level. In this paragraph are presented the views of some countries on the issue of digital citizenship (henceforth abbreviated as DC, Digital Citizenship) although the attempt is to present in a comprehensive way each different vision offered by private, public or international organizations that have made their voice heard on the subject, a particular emphasis has been placed on how the different DC frameworks treat the importance of soft-skills and more specifically on how much the communicational and relational component is included in all these models.
This element is quite relevant because it anticipates how much, even for the world of education, digital media has brought about a radical change in the way subjects relate to each other. The ability to correctly and ethically use digital media to communicate, enter into relationships and collaborate with classmates, colleagues, teachers, parents, therefore, becomes a fundamental competence for the citizens of this digital era and educational agencies of all levels and degrees, in synergy with decision makers and other public and private actors, will increasingly have to work to educate subjects in this sense.

4.1 European Digital Competence Framework for Citizens - EU

Also known as DigComp, the European Commission's international project that the Joint Research Centre worked on was developed in three phases. In 2013, the first version of DigComp was published under the direction of Anusca Ferrari (A. Ferrari, 2013). In 2016, the framework was updated in its second version, DigComp 2.0 (Vuorikari, Punie, Carrettero

Gomez, & Van Den Brande, 2016) and finally, in 2017, the latest version of this framework was published, which will be presented below: DigCom 2.1 The Digital Competence Framework for Citizens With eight proficiency levels and examples of use (Carrettero Gomez, Vuorikari, & Punie, 2017).
This is a tool designed with the aim of improving the digital competence of European citizens, to help policy-makers in the formulation of appropriate policies to support the development of digital competencies, and to plan educational interventions and training paths aimed at improving the level of digital competence of specific groups-targets (Carrettero Gomez et al., 2017).
In its most updated versions, the 2.2 released in 2022 (Vourkari, Kluzer & Punie, 2022), the competency framework has been revised, coming to explicate a system of 21 competencies, grouped into 5 competence areas, in turn detailed according to 8 levels of proficiency.

1. Information and data literacy	**1.1 Browsing, searching and filtering data, information and digital content** To articulate information needs , to search for data, information and content in digital environments, to access them and to navigate between them. To create and update personal search strategies. **1.2 Evaluating data, information and digital content** To analyse, compare and critically evaluate the credibility and reliability of sources of data, information and digital content. To analyse, interpret and critically evaluate the data, information and digital content. **1.3 Managing data, information and digital content** To organise, store and retrieve data, information and content in digital environments. To organise and process them in a structured environment.

2. Communication and collaboration	**2.1 Interacting through digital technologies** To interact through a variety of digital technologies and to understand appropriate digital communication means for a given context. **2.2 Sharing through digital technologies** To share data, information and digital content with others through appropriate digital technologies. To act as an intermediary, to know about referencing and attribution practices. **2.3 Engaging in citizenship through digital technologies** To participate in society through the use of public and private digital services. To seek opportunities for self-empowerment and for participatory citizenship through appropriate digital technologies. **2.4 Collaborating through digital technologies** To use digital tools and technologies for collaborative processes, and for co-construction and co-creation of resources and knowledge. **2.5 Netiquette** To be aware of behavioural norms and know-how while using digital technologies and interacting in digital environments. To adapt communication strategies to the specific audience and to be aware of cultural and generational diversity in digital environments. **2.6 Managing digital identity** To create and manage one or multiple digital identities, to be able to protect one's own reputation, to deal with the data that one produces through several digital tools, environments and services.

3. Digital content creation	**3.1 Developing digital content** To create and edit digital content in different formats, to express oneself through digital means. **3.2 Integrating and re-elaborating digital content** To modify, refine, improve and integrate information and content into an existing body of knowledge to create new, original and relevant content and knowledge. **3.3 Copyright and licences** To understand how copyright and licences apply to data, information and digital content. **3. 4 Programming** To plan and develop a sequence of understandable instructions for a computing system to solve a given problem or perform a specific task.
4. Safety	**4.1 Protecting devices** To protect devices and digital content, and to understand risks and threats in digital environments. To know about safety and security measures and to have due regard to reliability and privacy. **4.2 Protecting personal data and privacy** To protect personal data and privacy in digital environments. To understand how to use and share personally identifiable information while being able to protect oneself and others from damages. To understand that digital services use a “Privacy policy” to inform how personal data is used. **4.3 Protecting health and well-being** To be able to avoid health-risks and threats to physical and psychological well-being while using digital technologies. To be able to protect oneself and others from possible dangers in digital environments (e.g. cyber bullying). To be aware of digital technologies for social well-being and social inclusion. **4.4 Protecting the environment** To be aware of the environmental impact of digital technologies and their use.

5. Problem solving	**5.1 Solving technical problems** To identify technical problems when operating devices and using digital environments, and to solve them (from trouble-shooting to solving more complex problems). **5.2 Identifying needs and technological responses** To assess needs and to identify, evaluate, select and use digital tools and possible technological responses to solve them. To adjust and customise digital environments to personal needs (e.g. accessibility). **5.3 Creatively using digital technologies** To use digital tools and technologies to create knowledge and to innovate processes and products. To engage individually and collectively in cognitive processing to understand and resolve conceptual problems and problem situations in digital environments. **5.4 Identifying digital competence gaps** To understand where one's own digital competence needs to be improved or updated. To be able to support others with their digital competence development. To seek opportunities for self-development and to keep up-to-date with the digital evolution.

The European Digital Competence Framework - DigComp

For a comprehensive presentation of the entire system, we refer to the official publication (Carrettero Gomez et al., 2017), which offers a complete and detailed rubric for each level of mastery of each of the 21 competencies, accompanied by concrete examples to better understand each nuance.

The first competency area, called Information and Data Literacy, groups together skills related to navigating, searching, selecting, filtering, evaluating, and managing online information and digital content.

The second area, Communication and Collaboration, is strictly about skills related to interacting with other users through technologies. Skills in which the ability to share information, to interact, collaborate, cooperate with other users in a correct and respectful way, are flanked by others more related to the management of one's own digital identity.

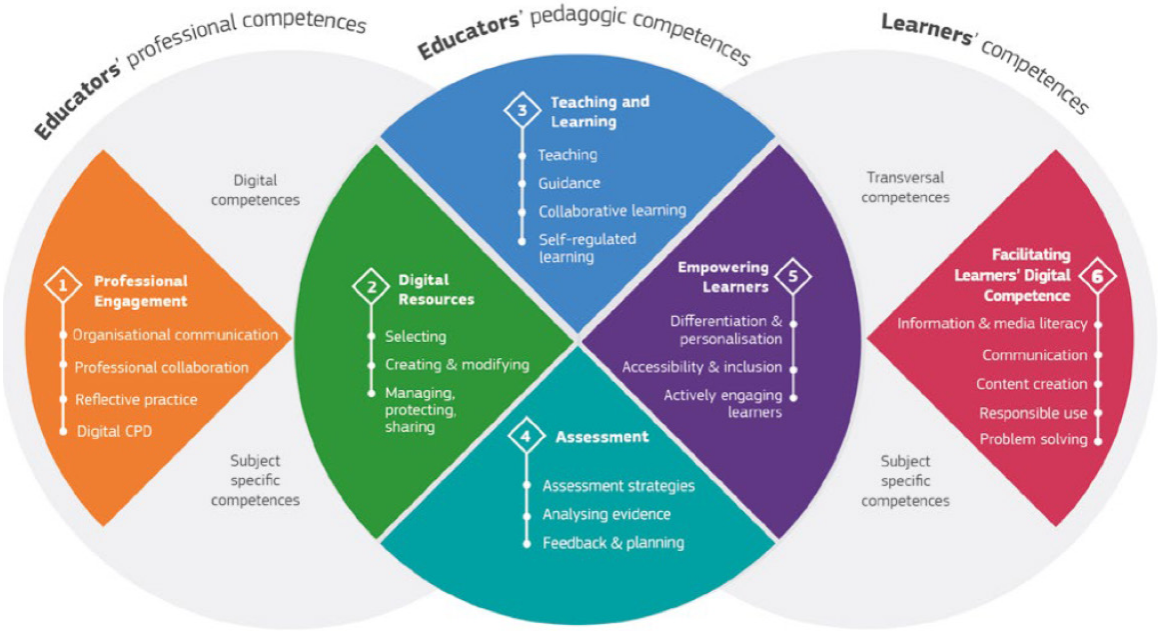
The third area, Digital Content Creation, refers to the ability to creatively use technologies to develop new content and rework or integrate existing ones, both in terms of written or multimedia production, and in terms of coding. This area also includes the skills related to the functioning, and respect, of digital copyright.

The fourth area, Security, is instead focused on skills related to the safe and responsible use of technological devices, paying attention to both more technical aspects (related to the protection of their devices from viruses or computer attacks), and more personal (related to the protection of privacy, to one's psycho-physical well-being), and broader (related to environmental protection).

The fifth and final area, Problem Solving, represents an area with less defined boundaries than the others and groups together skills ranging from solving technical problems, to the use of technology to identify and provide solutions to concrete problems in society.

The DigComp framework has been further expanded and enriched with a new system of competencies specifically designed to define a European framework of digital competencies for educators, teachers and trainers: the Proposal for a European Framework for the Digital Competence of Educators (abbreviated as DigCompEdu).

The model presents 22 competences articulated according to 6 different areas, in turn divided into three macro categories. Also in this framework, for each of the 22 skills are specified levels of mastery (structured in the image and model of the level of language proficiency) listed here from the most basic to the most advanced: newcomer (A1), explorer (A2), integrator (B1), expert (B2), leader (C1), pioneer (C2).



The European Framework for the Digital Competence of Educators (DigCompEdu)

The model is very broad and detailed, in the image above it is possible to see a summary diagram of it, and it is interesting to note that the last column, that of learner competencies, closely mirrors the original DicComp framework. The reason for this is precisely because of the ultimate purpose of the DicCompEDU, which is to train educators who can develop DigComp competencies in their students and youth.
This division into three areas - educators' professional competencies, educators' pedagogical competencies, learners' digital competencies - is particularly significant because it emphasizes that, in order to educate young citizens about technology, it is not simply necessary to possess basic digital skills, but it is appropriate to build and maintain a professional profile capable of:

- organizational, collaborative, reflective qualities with respect to one's professional practices;
- be aware of the digital resources to offer their students;
- didactic and pedagogical qualities supported not simply by common sense and enthusiasm but by a rigorous and careful method;
- effectively and self-critically evaluate the effectiveness or weaknesses of their practices;
- build learning contexts (digital and otherwise) that are engaging, learner-centered, equitable and inclusive.

4.2 Digital Citizenship Education - Education Department - Council of Europe.

In 2016, the Education Department of the Council of Europe also decided to enter the debate around digital citizenship by promoting a multi-year project aimed at formulating a set

of guidelines for the council of education ministers of the 47 member states.
On November 26, 2019, the Committee of Ministers of Education of the Council of Europe member states, meeting in Paris, approved a ministerial declaration entitled Citizenship Education in the digital era (CoE, 2019a).
The declaration underlines how the internet and digital technologies have profoundly changed societies and the contexts that citizens live in, focusing on the importance and the need for a concrete commitment - both at national and international level - towards the issue of digital citizenship education. Theme addressed by the Digital Citizenship Education project and detailed in Recommendation CM/Rec (2019)10 of 21 November 2019 of the Committee of Ministers of the Member States having as its object the development and promotion of Digital Citizenship Education - ECD (CoE, 2019b).
Some definitions regarding the concept of digital citizenship and digital citizenship education are also offered:

- A digital citizen is a person who: masters democratic culture skills in order to engage positively and competently in the use and management of digital technologies; participates actively, responsibly, and continuously in civic and social initiatives; is involved in a continuous learning process, in formal, informal, and non-formal settings; and is committed to the defense of human rights and the promotion of the dignity of human beings.
- The concept of digital citizenship is defined as the ability to participate actively, responsibly and continuously within communities (whether local, national, global, online or offline) on all levels (political, economic, social, cultural and intercultural).
- The concept of digital citizenship education is defined as the empowerment of learners (of all ages, genders, and social backgrounds) achievable through the acquisition of skills aimed at continuous learning and active participation in digital societies. Active participation that must be exercised through the defense of democratic rights and values, the respect of online responsibilities, the promotion of human rights and the role of law in cyberspace.

The proposed model is articulated according to two fundamental axes of reflection: the first is that of the guiding principles, i.e. 9 principles considered fundamental to be able to start digital citizenship education paths; the second axis is represented by the proposal of 10 digital domains, ten areas of competence that represent educational priorities on which to focus to form digital citizens.
The guiding principles not only embody a reference model for the development and definition of digital citizenship education initiatives, but also represent a point of reference for assessing the health of a community, from the point of view of digital citizenship possibilities. The principles are categorized according to three types: contextual, informational and organizational.
Contextual principles: principles belonging to this typology are considered as preconditions for digital citizenship.

- Access to technology: access to technology, networks and digital media is considered a fundamental building block for participation in community life. Ensuring equitable access to technology means allowing citizens - of all ages and socio-economic backgrounds - to enjoy a range of services that are fundamental to their democratic participation in society, such as access to educational, cultural and administrative services.
- Digital literacy and basic functional skills: citizens must have the basic skills to access, navigate, read, write, download and share information, participate in surveys and be able to express themselves freely. In this sense, being technology literate is a necessary condition for active participation in both home and online communities.
- Secure technical infrastructure: ensuring a secure and reliable technological infrastructure contributes to improving the level of trust of citizens. To create such an environment, it is necessary to set up a network of services and digital platforms that respect

standards of usability and security.

- Informational principles: this type of principles groups together a series of knowledge, skills and behavioral and value postures that are necessary for a model of democratic culture.
- Knowledge of rights and duties: Knowledge of one's rights and duties as a citizen is a critical factor for active participation in democratic societies. Societies that are influenced by, and at the same time affect, the value systems and attitudes of their citizens. The acquisition of a critical awareness of the set of these rights and duties occurs progressively in on- and offline environments.
- Reliable information sources: An infrastructure of reliable information providers is essential for active and positive participation in community life. Without a network of reliable sources of information, in fact, for some parts of the population it would be difficult or even demotivating to exercise their digital citizenship, risking to trigger forms of radicalization and extremism. In this dynamic, educational agencies (universities, schools, families) play a fundamental role in educating citizens to discernment and the exercise of critical thinking, but the role of service and information providers is also recognized as crucial and they must maintain a high level of attention to this issue.
- Participatory skills: Participatory skills depend on the spectrum of cognitive factors and practical skills that combine elements such as expressing oneself and taking sides, exercising critical and autonomous thinking, empathizing with others, and discerning cultural meanings through a deep and informed understanding of contexts with the mastery of digital tools in order to meaningfully and effectively express one's ideas and opinions.
- Organizational Principles: the last group brings together the principles that serve as a catalyst for effective and meaningful exercise of digital citizenship, both from a personal and societal perspective.
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving: embracing behavioral postures that rely on critical thinking to be able to effectively and creatively solve problems requires a conscious mastery of the twenty skills for a democratic culture. Mastery that can only be achieved through education and guided exploration in educational contexts: again, digital platforms and service providers play a key role as technologies can represent a very important "third space" (Gutiérrez et al., 2012) for learning and training on these issues.
- Communication: this principle implies the ability to create, receive and share information, using appropriate tools in a meaningful way, knowing values and attitudes, rights and responsibilities, privacy and security.
- Participatory opportunities: allows citizens to practice exercising their rights and responsibilities in a flexible, open, neutral and secure contextual framework without fear of personal repercussions, which enables them to actively promote and defend democracy, human rights and the role of law.

The ten digital domains are undoubtedly the most significant and useful element for the world of education (formal, informal and non-formal) to understand the proposal of digital citizenship education put forward by the Council of Europe: it is a set of 10 areas of competence divided into 3 macro categories that every digital citizen should possess, exercise, train and practice reflective thinking in order to call himself a responsible citizen, active, democratic, respectful of human rights and human dignity.
It is interesting to note how, especially in this vision offered by the CoE, there is a very clear emphasis on the convergence between digital and non-digital citizenship: society is moving towards a world in which it makes less and less sense to talk about online and offline because they are two sides of the same coin: two sides that, among other things, are increasingly difficult to distinguish and separate.
As regards, instead, the 10 digital domains, here they are schematized.

Being online	
Access and Inclusion	This domain includes a range of competences necessary for overcoming different forms of the digital divide and opening digital spaces to minorities and different opinions.
Learning and Creativity	This domain concerns the willingness to learn and the attitude towards learning through digital environments throughout life, and the capacity to develop and express different forms of creativity with different tools in different contexts.
Media and Information Literacy	This domain concerns one's own abilities of interpreting, critically understanding and expressing one's own creativity through digital media.
Wellbeing online	
Ethics and empathy	This domain concerns online ethical behaviour and interaction with others based on skills such as the ability to recognise and understand the feelings and perspectives of others. Empathy constitutes an essential requirement for positive online interaction and for realising the possibilities that the digital world affords.
Health and Wellbeing	This domain concerns one's awareness of the issues and the opportunities that can affect his/her wellness in a digitally rich world. Digital citizens inhabit both virtual and real spaces. For this reason, the basic skills of digital competence are not sufficient. Individuals also require a set of attitudes, skills, values and knowledge that render them more aware of issues of health and wellbeing.
e-Presence and communication	This domain refers to the development of digital citizens' personal and interpersonal qualities that help them in building and keeping online images of themselves and online interactions that are positive, coherent and consistent.
It's my right	
Active Participation	This domain relates to the competences that citizens need to be fully aware of how they interact within the digital environments they inhabit in order to make responsible decisions, whilst participating actively and positively in the democratic cultures in which they live.
Rights and Responsibilites	This domain concerns digital citizen's awareness and understanding of their rights and responsibilities in the online world. As citizens enjoy rights and responsibilities in the physical world, digital citizens in the online world also have certain rights and responsibilities.
Privacy and Security	This domain covers two different concepts: Privacy concerns mainly the personal protection of one's own and others' online information, while Security is more related to one's own awareness of online actions and behaviour.
Consumer Awareness	The World Wide Web, with all its dimensions like social media or other virtual social spaces are environments where often the fact of being digital citizens means also being users, being consumers.

Council of Europe's Digital Citizenship Education – The ten domains

Of particular interest is the idea, present in the definition, that DC also includes skills such as socializing and communicating positively and competently through technologies. This trend is also testified by the presence among the 10 digital domains of areas of competence such as "Access and Inclusion", which includes the idea of inclusion as a fundamental element for the construction of a digital world open to all; "Ethics and Empathy", which refers to a series of competences concerning the emotional sphere but above all relational; and finally, "e-Presence and Communication", in which particular attention is paid to communicational processes mediated by technologies and virtual spaces of socialization.

What attentions can be adopted?

Achieving a satisfactory level of education in digital skills at a time of emergency such as the one we have just experienced (and, let's point out, the one that will arise when we return to school) must be the priority to focus on. Adopting a holistic, inclusive approach that considers technologies not only as tools, but as environments is of primary importance. Environments where students study, communicate, spend their time, learn, get information, have fun, discuss, argue... A paradigm shift is necessary.

Schools alone cannot do it: action must be taken together with the community. If the community fabric around the school is inclusive, open to diversity, ready to help and support, then this type of problem will, perhaps, be a little easier to solve. It is therefore a matter of implementing technology education and its use, even in communication processes, that is open, continuous, inclusive, that goes with the flow and meets the needs of those most in need.

What schools and teachers can do is pay attention to create the conditions for this inclusion, paying attention to some strategies that we suggest here:

- organize training and discussion opportunities for parents and teachers on the most important issues for the community, such as training on Digital Competencies or the importance of Digital Citizenship Education;
- Clearly formalize communication protocols between schools and parents, and between parents and other parents. Contemplating (if the need dictates) perhaps even non-formal channels of communication that can facilitate participation;
- involving parents in the co-construction of such regulations and communication protocols, subsequently finding the right ways to communicate them;
- finally, emphasize the importance of a "warm" idea of technology, that is, one that can convey and influence relationships.

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Part 2

Using observation tools: tips, suggestions and examples

by Elena Pacetti & Alessandro Soriani

Teachers are used to observe their students everyday and in many different activities: while they lecture, they organize group work, during school break, when there is a discussion time, just to cite some of the possible activities happening in school times. During their observations, teachers can be supported by using specific tools, such as checklists with indicators about students' behaviours.

The work of observation of one's pupils, and especially of the pupils who are most in need, is a job that requires a lot of time if you want to carry it out with seriousness and professionalism: it is important to analyse different areas, such as the relational sphere, the area of development, the socio-emotional sphere, the environmental and contextual sphere, using numerous indicators that help to verify the presence or absence of a behaviour and its frequency. The relational area analyses the behaviour of pupils in the classroom towards peers, teachers and any other educational figures. The relationship between peers, in particular, conditions the life of every student by strengthening or diminishing his/her aspirations, motivations, commitment and consequently influencing the behaviour held during school hours. The development area monitors learning and cognitive changes: it is essential that the teacher is able to verify how the pupil learns, his/her difficulties, memorization, concentration, problem solving skills and how these are vary over time. The socio-emotional area focuses on socialization relationships with others, on social skills and on the sense of self-efficacy and self-determination of each pupil. The environmental and contextual context analyses the environmental factors and the socio-family context that can affect school life. It is also important to analyse the relationship with the family and with other educational services. For a good observation, the strengths of the pupil and of the class group should be noted: these indications represent the resources on which the teacher can count both to motivate the pupils most in difficulty, and to carry out curricular activities. The same observation sheet should preferably be used at 3 different times of the school year: at the beginning (the first month of school), in the middle of the year and during the last month of school. In this way it becomes possible to track the changes of the pupil and, at the same time, monitor the effectiveness of one's educational action. And for each of the indicators the frequency of the behaviour must be reported, because it is necessary to rigorously identify how often the same behaviours occur.

It is very difficult for a teacher to have a lot of time to fill in an observation tool instantly during lectures: more often, the compilation of the form is the result of work in small steps, of annotations, of observations in specific situations and this work takes time. The presence of an observer in the class dedicated exclusively to observation work would certainly be very effective: a teacher from another class, a support teacher, an educator, or a university trainee studying to become a teacher.

Since it is understandable that these human resources are rarely present in schools, here are some tips to help you work optimally.

- Study the tool: before starting the observations it is necessary to know the tool you are going to use in its individual indicators well, in order to learn to recognize the elements and behaviours that can actually be observed. In this phase of analysis, a collegial study of the tool can be very useful, a moment shared by all the teachers of the school to reflect together on the indicators, their meaning, as well as on how to fill in the form itself.
- Make brief observations: focus on one part of the sheet at a time, to get to collect data in all areas. Observing for 10-15 minutes at a time allows us to train ourselves to be good observers until this type of observation becomes the practice in our work.
- Observe at different times of the day (first hour, second hour, after school break, at

the end of the day; on Monday, , Tuesday, Wednesday, ...). In this way we will be able to observe our students in the different situations that are experienced during the school week, monitoring how much, for example, physical fatigue can affect certain behaviours, or how much a certain subject (Arabic, mathematics, English) or a certain activity (group work, individual verification, recreation) affect pupils' behaviour.

- Plan the use of the tool: it is very important to plan how you intend to use the observation tool, committing to dedicate a few moments of your day (and marking these moments in your weekly diary). This pattern should be repeated for at least two weeks and for all three moments of detection, in order to observe the pupils in parallel always at the same times of the day during the 3 data collections. An example of a scheme could include, for example:

First survey at the beginning of the school year
First week:

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
10 minutes at the start of the first hour		10 minutes at the start of the first hour		10 minutes at the start of the first hour
10 minutes during the school break		10 minutes during the school break		10 minutes during the school break

Second week

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
	10 minutes at the start of the second hour		10 minutes at the start of the second hour	
	10 minutes at the start of the last hour		10 minutes at the start of the last hour	

Third week

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
10 minutes at the beginning of the hour immediately after school break		10 minutes at the beginning of the hour immediately after school break		10 minutes at the beginning of the hour immediately after school break
10 minutes before the end of the school day		10 minutes before the end of the school day		10 minutes before the end of the school day

This pattern must also be maintained for the second and third surveys during the school year.

- If there are several teachers in a class, plan the times and moments of the survey collectively, divide the tasks and then compare the observations between colleagues: in this way it will be possible to better understand the behaviour of each pupil during the day, verifying the development of positive or negative situations and attitudes.
- Do not be in a hurry: it may seem obvious, but the purpose of a survey is NOT to fill a form with crosses in the shortest possible time, on the contrary time is the most precious ally of teachers, together with the patience to fill out a tool that is very rich in indicators.

For this, you must not be in a hurry and must proceed with the survey one step at a time, filling in all the indicators a little at a time.

- Do not take anything for granted: it may happen that during the observation of a pupil you are a bit biased and you already think you know what you are going to observe because we know the pupil and we know what to expect from him. A good observer takes nothing for granted and also considers how obvious and irrelevant it might appear at first sight, skilfully trying to grasp not only the global dimensions, but also the details that characterize the different situations. It is therefore necessary to observe "with new eyes", without prejudice, trying to grasp as many elements as possible.
- Persevere: the use of an observation tool does not involve the immediate change of what happens in the classroom. To the time necessary for the observations must be added the time for the planning of educational and didactic activities consistent with what has been observed, for the realization of these activities and the subsequent monitoring. Therefore, a circular process is generated which in fact never ends because observation accompanies the entire school cycle of pupils. There are no immediate and effective solutions, especially if the pupil in a difficult situation has diversified behaviours. We must not be discouraged if positive changes do not happen quickly, but we must continue our observation and planning work.
- Be discreet: it is very important not to let our students notice that we are observing them because this could affect their behaviour, compromising the authenticity of the survey. The form must not be completed in front of the pupils or, if you do, you must be sure not to be discovered by the pupils. It is better to use a notebook in which to write down the observations, and then report the behaviours observed at the end of the lessons in the form you normally use. It is also very important to never leave completed forms or notes taken unattended, especially if they contain pupils' names and surnames.

After the data collection, it is essential to work collectively to plan the educational and didactic action to be carried out: also in this case it is suggested to focus on a few problems at a time, not having the claim to solve everything immediately (it would be frustrating because it is impossible to carry out) and using the same procedures if there are several teachers on the class, in a coherent and shared way. If, for example, you intend to work on problematic behaviour such as that of the pupil who disturbs during the lesson, it is good that the most effective strategies are identified collectively and are adopted by all teachers, discussing the success or failure of these strategies. Another aspect to keep in mind is the involvement of families: as previously stated, it is important to build and maintain an alliance between school and family in order to work together with the same educational goals for each pupil. It is therefore necessary to keep families updated on the work done at school, on any support that is required at home, on the initiatives to be carried out, on the progress or difficulties that are being faced.
At the end of this chapter, two examples are proposed that suggest operational ways of using the data collected for an inclusive didactic planning.

Example 1

Report of the observations made by teachers and educational planning

We are in a second grade of a primary school, at the beginning of the school year. The first class took place almost entirely at a distance due to the Covid-19 pandemic, so it is foreseeable that in this first month of school a pupil like Nedal struggles to follow the rules and "get into the rhythm" with school activities: Nedal, in fact, spends most of his time at home alone, without any adult who can support him in completing his homework (which he almost never does), in preparing the backpack with school materials, in dressing appropriately (sometimes he comes to school too dressed for the season or with dirty clothes). In school activities he finds it very hard to keep up with his classmates and he realizes it, for this reason he often shows himself listless and not very interested, he gets distracted and

every opportunity is good to do other than what is requested. Nedal is not the only pupil to behave in this way: in the classroom there are other pupils who are having a hard time adapting to the rules and concentrating on school activities. Furthermore, the relationships between pupils are also very complex because many still do not know each other well and tend to prefer the small group (2-3 pupils who usually stay together in many activities). Basically, therefore, the problems of this pupil concern the cognitive delay and the rules to be respected at school.
In this first part of the year, teachers thus decide to focus on the classroom climate, on the rules and procedures to be adopted during the different activities, on relationships.
Regarding the classroom climate, teachers reflect on how to create a positive climate for all pupils: the positive climate allows pupils to experience a serene atmosphere (of tranquillity) in which pupils commit themselves because their actions are aimed at learning and not at the result: The aim is to promote an inviting and welcoming atmosphere, a comprehensive atmosphere that allows students to also experience errors as an opportunity for learning and not as a stigma; a cohesive and shared atmosphere in which great importance is given to the group relationship, to achieving goals together; a supportive atmosphere in which the helping relationship (between classmates and teachers) accompanies the learning process.
To create a good classroom climate, it is decided to start the day with a circle-time moment (lasting 15-20 minutes) during which the students can express themselves on a specific topic, initially chosen by the teacher (but later it can be the pupils themselves, in turn, to choose the theme, or a proposal box can be created where pupils can write and deposit their suggestions). During the circle-time the chairs are arranged in a circle and the teacher facilitates knowledge and communication between pupils. The rules of circle-time provide for respect for speaking time and active listening: everyone must participate and express himself or herself freely and no one can judge others. Some topics that will be addressed during this activity are: my favourite games, what I do when I'm at home, a song I really like, what to do when it's raining outside, my favourite animal. Another activity that teachers decide to carry out is to propose some cooperative games during school break: through the games they aim to educate pupils to respect the rules, to collaborate, to be responsible, to relate. During these playful activities it will be important that everyone participate actively and have fun. In these games it is good that there are no winners and losers, but that students learn to play together in an atmosphere of trust and cooperation. The teachers will monitor Nedal's behaviour in particular, facilitating his inclusion and active participation in games: in this way it will also be possible to improve his motor skills (which currently appears underdeveloped) and his ability to concentrate on a task.
Regarding rules and procedures, it is necessary to prevent inappropriate behaviour. Teachers will work on the whole class to share the most important rules to be respected. These rules must be clear, reasonable and enforceable: they must therefore be understandable for all pupils, they must be rational or correspond to a real need, and sustainable, i.e. all pupils must be able to comply with them without difficulty. The rules must not be too general, but not too specific and must concern the behaviours to be held in the classroom. For example, some rules might be:

- Speak one at a time when the teacher asks a question
- Ask for permission to use other people's materials
- Bring the necessary materials for the activities to school
- Complete the scheduled activities respecting the times given by the teacher

Along with the rules, it is also decided to establish some procedures, the usual methods to be put in place to carry out an activity (what is done, by whom, in what way, where, when, for what reason). Procedures can be divided into

- Procedures relating to the classroom space (in the classroom)

- Procedures to be followed outside the classroom (corridor, bathroom, courtyard, canteen)
- Procedures to be followed in activities within the class group
- Procedures to be followed during small group work
- Specific procedures during particular times of the day (entering the classroom, the end of the day) or in particular situations (for example, during a visit to the classroom by an external person).

The rules and procedures will be used by the whole class, therefore also by Nedal, to also learn social, relational and communicative skills and to really feel part of the same community.
Regarding relationships, teachers decide to adopt peer tutoring, help and mutual learning strategies. In this way they intend to promote the relationship between peers and the development of relational skills that motivate and support learning. The teachers will create pairs of peers who must work together, arranging specific activities to be carried out in pairs: the activities will relate to the correction of homework (exchange of notebooks while the teacher corrects homework), couple interview (pupils interview each other reciprocally following an outline prepared by the teacher), or to an activity proposed by Kagan called "think - pair – share". Each student thinks individually the answer to a question/problem posed by the teacher; in pairs the individual responses are compared and discussed; an answer shared by both members can be reached taking into account the contributions of each; a member of the couple, called at random (individual responsibility), shares with the whole class the elaborate answer. In this way Nedal will always be involved and will create a meaningful relationship with many of his classmates, learning to take responsibility of his actions and feeling motivated to learn.
Finally, the teachers decide to find a way to support Nedal in carrying out his homework: this is why they take action to report the pupil to a free homework help service in the area, managed by young volunteers and, at the same time, report to Nedal's family the importance of having the child participate in these activities on a regular basis. For this reason they sign a pact of responsibility with the family, the service and Nedal in which the parties undertake to attend and participate in activities (reporting to the school if something does not work or if one of the parties fails to agree).
The second compilation will be useful for verifying how these interventions proceed and how to design subsequent ones, verifying that you have actually implemented what was designed and monitoring the changes.

Example 2

Report of the observations made by teachers and educational planning

We are at the beginning of the third grade, after more than a year of school closure due to Covid-19. Until the school was open, Amira always proved to be a kind, attentive and very polite child: she had good relationships with many classmates, preferring the small group. When school closed, it was very difficult to maintain a relationship with Amira as she had no way of taking the lessons online at home and it was difficult to get her lessons and homework to do. From the information teachers were able to obtain, it seems that the pupil spent most of her time at home with her grandmother watching television, rarely seeing her peers, apart from Dalia, her neighbour from school with whom every now and then she has seen herself and has passed her some school activities. Her cognitive difficulties are therefore very evident and Amira realizes it: for this reason she finds it very difficult to follow the lessons, she has not yet acquired a study method and sometimes she gets angry in class and is ashamed of not being able to carry out even simple activities. The pupil seems, in fact, angry and frustrated for her condition and teachers believe that this is the main reason that pushes her to isolate herself and get distracted during lessons, as if she thought she was incompetent and unable to recover. Basically, therefore, the problems of this student con-

cern the cognitive delay, motivation and sense of self-efficacy and relationships with peers. The teachers are aware that a year of closure of the schools has affected a lot on the relationships in the classroom and first of all they decide to promote the development of social and relational skills of the whole class to increase knowledge, a sense of belonging and trust between classmates. They decide to involve the pupils in the search for a logo that is representative of the whole group (which will also be designed with everyone's contribution) and invent a song to highlight the positive characteristics of the class and to enhance its skills. As the school year progresses, the song will be enriched with new stanzas that tell the most important events in the class and which will document the results achieved. The logo and the song will thus become the hallmark of the class and will strengthen the sense of belonging and the common path of growth. Furthermore, teachers will propose some confidence games during motor education activities, such as, for example:

- Driving a blindfolded companion on a certain path;
- In a circle, support a partner who moves within it;
- The Snake game: the group is arranged in single file and each one holds the partner in front of the shoulders. Everyone, except the first, closes their eyes and lets them be guided by this, without speaking.

At the end of these games it is always important to have a moment to discuss how they felt, what they learned, etc. These games help develop collaboration between classmates, mutual respect, and commitment: for Amira, they too will be fundamental to gain self-confidence and to enter into a relationship with the class.
The teachers also decide to value Amira within the class starting from what she can do: since the pupil is very good at drawing, this competence will be enhanced and Amira will also support her classmates and companions most in difficulty in artistic education according to a peer education approach. In this way, those same classmates will be able to support Amira in other school disciplines without the pupil feeling mortified. Another aspect that will be valued (but it is hypothesized in the second part of the school year) is that of dance: Amira loves dancing very much and the teachers would like to involve the class in a dramatization that includes acting, dance, music and singing, to enhance everyone's skill (and therefore the dance in Amira's case). If the class is able to mature in social and relational skills, it will be possible to proceed with this didactic project.
As for Amira's cognitive recovery, the teachers decide to propose simpler activities in the classroom for the pupil, with increasing complexity over time, as she recovers her learning and consolidates them: it is also decided to ask for the help from Dalia's family to carry out afternoon homework and to support Amira's grandmother with school commitments and deadlines. Meanwhile, the school is also looking for an association that will help students with their homework and can support Amira.

Annex 1

Parents' observation tool

(Please note: this form can be used during the school year when the teacher deems it appropriate, but it is suggested during the first months from the beginning of the school. A specific introduction is proposed relating to distance learning activities, if there are prolonged school closure conditions such as those occurred due to the Covid-19 pandemic).

Dear parents, we ask you to help us in better understanding your child's progress in carrying out his/her homework. If possible, observe your son/daughter's behaviour and answer this short questionnaire: because the success of teaching is the result of constant work and support between pupils, families and teachers.
Alternatively, if the school is closed:
Dear parents, in this period when there is remote teaching and your children follow from home, we ask you to help us in better understanding the situation you are experiencing. If possible, observe your son/daughter's behaviour and answer this short questionnaire: because the success of distance learning is the result of constant work and support between pupils, families and teachers.

Questionnaire filled in by
- o Mother
- o Father
- o Other adult of the family (please specify) _____

- o Presence of older brothers/sisters
- o Presence of younger brothers/sisters
- o Twins

Compilation date _____

When your son/daughter does his/her homework (one answer for each line):

	Never	Rarerly	Sometime	Often
He/She has a hard time in concentrating				
He/She wants to be left alone				
He/She is easily distracted				
He/She asks to be helped				
He/She is able to start alone				
He/She finds excuses to do other things				
He/She eats and drinks				
He/She shows me the notebook				
He/She gets angry when he/she fails to complete the task				
He/She is worried because he has too many homework to do				
He/She is happy when he/she finish his/her homework				

Your son/daughter usually does his/her homework
- In the afternoon
- In the early morning
- In the evening
- In the night
- Other (please specify) _____

To be completed only if in the presence of brothers: is homework disturbed by the presence of brothers and sisters?
- Yes, they are a nuisance
- Yes, but they are an element that favors homework
- No, I wouldn't say, everyone is autonomous
- Other (please specify) _____

Favourite subjects

_____
_____
_____

Favourite activities at school

_____
_____
_____

Hobbies, extra-school activities, sports

_____
_____
_____

How does your son/daughter spend his/hes free time?

_____
_____
_____

Thank you for your collaboration!

Guidelines for teachers and parents

by Alessandro Soriani & Elena Pacetti

This final section of the publication aims to provide teachers and parents with some guidelines about how to cope with distance learning in emergency situations.
To compile the following guidelines, the researchers from the Department of Education Studies of the University of Bologna implemented several group interviews dedicated to different groups of teachers and parents belonging to 7 different public schools located in Gaza, covering all the territory.
More particularly, 11 teachers - 8 from primary schools (1-4 grade) and 5 from middle school (5-6 grade) – and 10 parents participated to the interviews which have been conducted during the months of April and May 2021.
The guidelines are structured in a way that it is possible to see the questions of the interviews and a summary of the answers of the different groups. At the end of each section of questions the reader can find some guidelines to reflect about his/her own practice.

Teachers' Guidelines

Section 1 – Instructional design

During the pandemic, have you managed to keep organising regular meetings with the rest of you colleagues?

One of problems that hindered teachers to have regular meeting online was the lack of digital competence.
Teachers find difficult to interact through digital tools. In this sense, WhatsApp represented the main tool where they could communicate.
Some teachers could attend meetings face-to-face with their school principal where they organized the "online migration" of the lessons.
According to some teachers, communication was very difficult: they had to face difficulties of different kinds, from technical to relational.
Some schools (in coordination with some teachers) tried to reach the families: especially those which were cut off from the school-family communication through digital tools.

Instructional design - Guidelines

As group of teachers, organise periodic meetings (weekly or monthly) to discuss about:

- professional development trainings (teaching strategies, digital competences, etc...)
- planning of educational activities
- relationship with families

Section 2 – Distance learning

During the pandemic, have you changed and adapted your way of run and manage your lessons? How?

There are mainly two categories of teachers: those who have changed the way they manage their lessons and those who have not.

- Teachers from the first category opted for different methodologies such as sharing clear learning goals with the students, creating audio instructions , making videos and creating WhatsApp group. These teachers also used unofficial digital spaces to interact with their students.
- Teachers from the second category stated to follow the same way of teaching that they used before the pandemic: these teachers only changed a bit their learning goals (making them simpler) and they disseminated them through different platforms (Facebook,

WhatsApp, ...). What hindered the second category of teachers to re-think their way of teaching was mainly the lack of digital competence and the lack of teaching strategies.

Teacher faced great difficulties in the virtual classes in planning the online lessons and re-thinking the teaching strategies.
Most of the teachers opted for a simplification of the teachings which lead to a greater use of pictures, presentations and in the use of easy tasks, to be accomplished in a shorter amount of time.
This simplification implied also focusing more on the general goals and focusing less on the values to be learned during the class (cooperation, inclusion...) and providing less examples or experiences.
Some teachers used also written showcards that put in front of the camera to teach concepts.

Which major challenges have you faced?
The main challenges faced by teachers were:
- Lack of digital competence;
- Lack of adequate digital tools both from teachers and families;
- Lack of educational competences to use technology for implementing active learning strategies;
- Technical issues (such as problems with audio and video devices);
- Lack of parents' cooperation and involvement in the distance learning process;
- Lack of students' participation;
- More workload: planning the lessons, preparing the materials, running the lessons and manage the follow-up.

Which aspects of your past practices have you maintained because successful?
Teachers have intensively kept using systems of rewards for students (i.e.: badges and stickers) and various forms of verbal feedback and encouragement.
Other past practices that teachers have maintained were: focusing on the basic skills and plan online lessons to develop them, presenting the lesson's aims and presenting the class rules in order to have them all shared with the students.

Distance Learning - Guidelines

- Being forced to deliver online lessons does not mean to apply the same teaching strategies that are effective in presence it always needs some adaptation. You can, for instance, use online digital tools like Jamboard or Padlet to create online shared brainstorming activities, or Mentimeter or Kahoot to create online real-time surveys that you can use to get feedbacks from the students.
- Having one official space where to store all the information, all the lessons' materials could be really useful: Moodle, in this sense, is one of the most useful platforms, together with Google Classroom.
- Having the lessons' materials shared and stocked in a unique and officially recognized online space could help families to make some order in all the materials they receive. It can also be useful for you to store the homeworks from your students.
- In order to do not lose communication with your students, you can organise weekly meetings with these small groups and ask also questions about their quality of life, how they feel, how they are copying with all the difficulties.
- Interacting with parents is also a key issue: you should try to organise a safe online space (with defined and negotiated rules) where to share the most important information with them. A group-chat on WhatsApp or on Facebook could be really useful to keep in touch with them and to work on a sense of community. Be aware that these spaces, if not moderated or curated, can easily generate conflicts and misunderstanding.

Section 3 – Distance evaluation

During the pandemic, have you changed and adapted your way of evaluating your students? How?

Here it is important to make a distinction between teachers from different school grades.
Teachers from 1st to 4th grade used different forms of digital-mediated evaluation such as: self-learning worksheets that students are supposed to fill and re-send to the teacher for the evaluation, online oral tests (with live video call with students), online written tests (with the camera open in order to control the students) or asking the students to produce videos of themselves while solving the assignments.
Teachers from 5th to 6th grades mainly used traditional assignment sent via email or social media to their students.

Which major challenges have you faced?

Teachers from 1st to 4th grade encountered these difficulties:

- Technical issues (internet cuts, electricity cuts...)
- Lack of adequate devices at disposal (smartphones, cameras, etc...) from teachers and from students
- Lack of support from parents (in terms of alliance but also in terms of parents' digital competences)
- Lack of communication with children (especially those with learning difficulties)
- Teachers from 5th to 6th grade encountered these difficulties:
- Technology-mediated evaluation presented lots of troubles and problems: written tests only are not enough
- Difficulty in getting feedback from the students about their learning process
- Parents seem not to understand the importance of the evaluation and tent to help too much the students or to underestimate these moments

Distance evaluation - Guidelines

- Asking your students to make small projects can help you in the evaluation process. You can work on short digital storytelling, podcasts, presentations, but also online boards (using Jamboard or Padlet).
- You can also ask your students to work on these projects in small groups so that they are fostered to interact with each other and not being isolated.
- In order to do not loose communication with your students, you can organise weekly meetings with these small groups and ask also questions about their quality of life, how they feel, how they are copying with all the difficulties.

Section 4 – Digital competences

Were your digital skills sufficient to manage the emergency and distance learning moment?

The general level of digital competence is very low, but many teachers tried to develop their competences and technological skills by following capacity building programs or online learning videos

Digital competences - Guidelines

- It is paramount to organise trainings and professional development occasions about digital competence for educators.
- This manual contains lot of information about digital competences, please feel free to share it among your colleagues and to organise moments with them to discuss about the topic.

Section 5 – School-family communication

During pandemic, which communication channels have you used to communicate with parents?

The schools have not set up any official tool for school-family communication.
Teachers communicate with their students' parents with unofficial tools such as: Zoom, Facebook groups, Messenger groups, WhatsApp groups, or the same tools used for direct 1-to-1 communications.

Which major challenges have you faced?

Teachers encountered the following difficulties concerning school-family communication

- Technical issues (internet cuts, electricity cuts...)
- Lack of adequate devices at disposal (smartphones, cameras, etc...) from teachers and from families and students
- Lack of support from parents (in terms of school-family alliance but also in terms of parents' digital competences)
- Privacy issue: parents are contacting teachers and ask for appointments in inappropriate times.

Which aspects, if present, have you appreciated the most?

The lockdown situation made teachers appreciate the following aspects:

- The importance of face-to-face meeting
- The importance of creating school-family alliances
- The importance of active learning strategies
- The importance of managing time properly (also connected to the privacy of teachers)
- The importance of parents in the educational processes

School-family communication - Guidelines

- Using too many channels and too many communication environments could lead to misunderstandings, stress, and privacy issues.
- Try to concentrate your communication only in one space and define the timings (in coordination with families and with your colleagues).
- Use a virtual class platform like Moodle or other blogging platforms, as hub for all the learning materials and as a space for all the communication history. If parents will lose track of some updates they will know that they can find all the information in one single space.

Section 6 – Communication with other teachers

During pandemic, which communication channels have you used to communicate with your colleagues?

The schools have not set up any official tool for internal communication among teachers and colleagues. This put the teachers and the school principals to communicate with their colleagues through unofficial tools such as:

- School's group-chat on Facebook or WhatsApp (for collective calls or individual calls)
- Classroom teacher gatherings (Facebook or WhatsApp)
- Special group-chats dedicated to teachers who teach specific subjects (Facebook or WhatsApp)
- Supervisors' group-chats (videos and experiences are also shared with students) - (Facebook or WhatsApp)

Which major challenges have you faced?

The main difficulties faced by teachers in the communication dynamics with their colleagues and their school principals touch the following aspects:

- Difficulties in sharing experiences with the colleagues
- Struggles in conducting regular meetings and being in touch with the colleagues.
- Psychological stress: too much workload, no free time, absence of breaks
- Lack of digital competences
- Workload increase: some teachers had to cover the hours of those who could not, due to technical or health reasons, deliver their lessons.

Which aspects, if present, have you appreciated the most?

- The lockdown situation made the teachers appreciate the following aspects:
- The fact that is important, more than ever, being at schools: living those spaces and experience the cooperation is priceless;
- The importance of sharing the experience with the colleagues and also with colleagues from other schools;
- The sense of cooperation with the colleagues;
- The fact that, through technology, teachers could exchange skills, worksheets, methods of explanation, and exam questions.

Communication with other teachers - Guidelines

- Like with parents, using too many channels and too many communication environments could lead to misunderstandings, stress, and privacy issues: agree with your colleagues which platform to use.
- Try to organise periodical (weekly or monthly) meetings (in presence or online) with your colleagues to discuss about classroom issues, future planning or simply to share valuable materials or teaching strategies.

Parents' Guidelines

Section 1 – Distance learning

Which kind of challenges and struggles are generated by the management of your children digital-school-lives? Especially when one has more than one son/daughter.

Parents reported that the main struggles generated by the home-management of their children's digital-school-lives are the following:

- Not enough devices for all the family members
- Low quality of the connection
- Frequent electricity cuts
- Too many schools' tasks
- There isn't a proper time for the schools to send the communications
- Parents don't have the competences to mediate their children's learning
- Some teachers don't send the homeworks or the learning cards
- Some parents couldn't understand the tasks proposed to the students and they struggle helping them

It is important to report that parents denounced a state of psychological pressure of being home and follow school's tasks and home/family management. For instance, when working on producing videos with their children, many parents reported that the noise in the house was a problem, of that they had not the proper spaces and the proper devices.
Moreover, when attending to virtual classes, many parents reported the lack of privacy for the child and, contextually, lack of control for the rest of the children.

Were the technological devices at your family's disposal enough to guarantee everybody's participation to school's distance activities?

Many of the families reported a lack of devices: this can hinder the possibility for some children to work on their assignments. Few devices (sometimes one smartphone, the one of the mother, is shared with 3 or 4 children) also means less space to store apps, videos, photos and learning materials.

Distance Learning - Guidelines

- If possible, dedicate one device of the house to your children school's tasks.
- If it is not possible, try to store the pictures and the videos on free online storage services (like Google photos or Amazon photos): this could help in creating more storage space on the device
- Try to involve older brothers or sisters in helping the younger ones: this mutual support could be key in the management of the school's tasks

Section 2 – Digital technologies

Were your digital skills sufficient to manage the emergency and your sons'/daughters' distance learning?

At the beginning parent's digital skills were far from being sufficient to face the situation but the continuous efforts brought parents to develop new competences (in part supported by teachers, in part developed by themselves thanks to online tutorials, etc.).

Which were the most challenging aspects for you?

Parents struggled in dealing with different software and apps and using them to communicate effectively with teachers. Another element that represented a challenge for the parents was monitoring all the platforms to check the homeworks (having more than one child complicated this task even more).

Lastly, the limited storage space in the devices owned by the families may not be enough to contain all the videos and all the materials that the teachers ask to do.

Digital Technologies - Guidelines

If you find hard to use some app or some software, try to reach your children's teachersor try to ask your son/daughter: he or she may be very talented about it

- another way to find some help are online tutorials (you can try looking for them on YouTube or other platforms)

Section 3 – School-family communication

Do you manage to communicate effectively with the school (Teachers, Principals…) using ICTs? Which major challenges have you faced?

Most of the parents reported that they feel the need for a more open and continuous communication with the parents. The main reason is the fact that parents feel uncomfortable in explaining to their children the materials that teachers send.

In addition to this, parents reported that not all the teachers were available (on WhatsApp, Facebook and on virtual class), but in general they could communicate with them sufficiently. Some parents complained about the fact that teachers not always replied on time to their request for help: in this regard, 1st to 4th grades' teachers were much more available and reachable compared to 5th to 6th grades ones.

Which aspects, if present, have you appreciated the most?
Parents appreciated that some teacher could dedicate one-to-one time with the students, even if not always.
Another aspect really appreciated is the fact that working with their children made the parent-child relationship closer.

School-Family communication - Guidelines

- Try to mediate with the teacher on a time span, weekly or daily, when it is possible to contact them.
- Using official emails and other official platforms is a safer, more appropriate and more efficient way to contact the teachers: it will help them, also, in not losing track of the many messages they receive.
- If your school have not set up an official way to communicate with teachers, try to find one together with them.

Section 4 – Communication between parents

Do you feel the need to communicate more with other parents of your children's classmates?
Parents did not report to feel the need for further contacts with other parents. In fact, they do not have any contact with their children classmates' parents.

Communication between parents - Guidelines

- You may consider creating a parents' group-chat where you can get in touch with other parents and ask for clarification, information, and help.
- Be aware, though: when you create such a group, pay attention on sharing the rules on how to use it. Parents group-chats can easily become spaces where parents share useless things, pointless jokes and fruitless complains. These groups should not be place for complains or bad talks about teachers or other parents. They should be, on the opposite, inclusive spaces open to everyone, with the aim to provide an immediate support for important matters.
- In using group-chat, if you want to reach one specific person, do not involve the others: write directly to him/her.