



REPÚBLICA
PORTUGUESA

EDUCAÇÃO, CIÊNCIA
E INOVAÇÃO



AGRUPAMENTO DE ESCOLAS DE MIRANDELA

MIRANDELA SCHOOL GROUPING

RECEPTION GUIDE FOR MIGRANT STUDENTS AND GUARDIANS

ACADEMIC YEAR 2025/2026

"A educação deve ser o que prepara os homens e mulheres para a cooperação, a solidariedade e o desenvolvimento de uma atitude solidária que permita viver em um mundo complexo, caracterizado pela pluralidade e pelo respeito à diferença"

In Educação: Um tesouro a descobrir

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Welcome Notes

Welcome to the Mirandela School Group!

It is with great joy that we welcome each of you, students and parents, who come from different parts of the world. We know that starting a new academic stage in a different country can bring challenges, but also many opportunities for growth, learning, and sharing.

Our group values cultural diversity as a treasure that enriches the school community and strengthens the bonds between everyone. We are committed to providing a welcoming, inclusive, and respectful environment where each student can develop their potential and feel safe and motivated to learn.

This **Welcome Guide for Migrant Students and Parents/Guardians** has been prepared with the aim of helping you to get to know the school, its services, rules, and available resources better, as well as to facilitate communication with the professionals who work here. This document is intended to be a reference tool for parents, children, and young people, facilitating their understanding of the portuguese education system and the functioning of the Mirandela School Group.

We are available to support you in this phase of integration and learning, in a spirit of cooperation and empathy.

Background

The Mirandela School Group, located in the city of Mirandela, is characterized by its appreciation of diversity and belief that multiculturalism enriches the educational community.

Understanding the importance of the school integration of migrant students and considering that this begins with their first contact with the school, this Welcome Guide for Migrant Students and Parents/Guardians was developed to support these students and their parents/guardians in the process of adapting to the new school environment and portuguese educational culture.

School Calendar

The school calendar in Portugal is defined by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Innovation and establishes the start and end dates of the school terms, as well as school breaks, and is published in the *Diário da República* (Official Gazette). It organizes and schedules the educational and teaching activities of public and private preschool, primary, and secondary schools for each school year. As a rule, the school year begins in mid-September and ends in June of the following calendar year. Each school year is divided into three school terms.

School terms

In the current school year, the three school terms are distributed as follows:

- 1st Term

Start of classes: September 11 and 15, 2025

End of classes: December 17, 2025

- 2nd Term

Start of classes: January 2, 2026

End of classes: March 27, 2026

- 3rd Term

Start of classes: April 13, 2026

End of classes: June 5, 2026 (9th, 11th, and 12th grades), June 12, 2026 (5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, and 10th grades), and June 30, 2026 (preschool and 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades)

School breaks

The school calendar includes four breaks: Christmas (two weeks), Easter (two weeks), Carnival (three days), and summer (three months). Namely:

- **Christmas**

Start of vacation: December 16, 2025

End of vacation: January 5, 2026

- **Carnival**

Start of vacation: February 16, 2026



End of vacation: February 18, 2026

- **Easter**

Start of vacation: March 30, 2026

End of vacation: April 10, 2026

- **Summer**

Start of vacation: June 5, 2026 (9th, 11th, and 12th grades), June 12, 2026 (5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, and 10th grades), and June 30, 2026 (preschool and 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grades)

Organization of the Portuguese Education System

The education system in Portugal is regulated by the state through the Ministry of Education, Science, and Innovation and is structured to ensure access to education for all children and young people, promoting inclusion, equal opportunities, and the development of essential life skills.

- **Preschool Education (ages 3 to 5)**

Preschool education is not compulsory, but it is strongly recommended. It is intended for children between the ages of 3 and 5 and aims to promote personal and social development, as well as prepare them for entry into primary school.

- **Basic Education (compulsory, lasting 9 years)**

Basic education is free and compulsory for all children from the age of 6 and is divided into three cycles:

- 1st Cycle (4 years) – 1st to 4th grade
- 2nd Cycle (2 years) – 5th and 6th grades
- 3rd Cycle (3 years) – 7th to 9th grades

During this period, students learn fundamental content in various areas: Portuguese language, mathematics, science, history, geography, English, visual education, physical education, among others.

- **Secondary education (compulsory, lasting 3 years)**

Secondary education is generally attended between the ages of 15 and 18, and is also compulsory. Students can follow different educational paths, depending on their interests and goals:

- Scientific-Humanistic Courses – aimed at students who wish to pursue higher education.
- Vocational Courses – with a practical and technical focus, these courses prepare students for a profession and/or further studies.

- Specialized Artistic Courses – in the areas of music, dance, theater, or visual arts.
- Scientific-Technological Courses – less common, but available in some schools and with similar objectives to vocational courses.
- **Vocational Education**

Vocational education is a type of secondary education that combines general education with technical and practical training. It is aimed at students who want a more direct link to the world of work, without ruling out the possibility of accessing higher education.

Professional courses:

- They last for 3 years (10th, 11th, and 12th grades)
- They include training in the workplace (internships)
- They lead to a double certification: a high school diploma and a level 4 professional qualification from the National Qualifications Framework
- They are organized by training areas, such as: Tourism, IT, Management, Health, Sports, Aesthetics, among others.

This route is valued by students who prefer to learn by doing, and is an excellent option for developing specific technical and professional skills.

Support for the Integration of Migrant Students

The Portuguese education system provides specific measures to support students from other countries, namely:

- Support in learning portuguese as a host language
- Individualized monitoring by specialized teachers and technicians
- Adaptation of the school curriculum to the student's needs

The school works closely with parents and guardians, promoting an inclusive environment that respects the cultural and linguistic diversity of all students.

Qualifications Equivalence System

The Qualifications Equivalence System allows for the recognition and validation of studies completed in another country, in order to integrate migrant students into the Portuguese education system in accordance with their previous academic background. To this end, Decree-Law No. 227/2005 of December 28 was created, which defines the system for granting equivalence of foreign educational qualifications to Portuguese educational qualifications at the primary and secondary levels.

This process is essential to ensure that each student is placed in the most appropriate school year, taking into account their age, knowledge, and skills already acquired.

- **How does it work?**

- The equivalence request must be made at the time of enrollment in the school.
- Guardians must submit documents proving the education already attended, such as:
 - Certificates or transcripts
 - Curricula or study plans
 - Documents translated into portuguese by a certified translator

- **Who reviews the application?**

The school where the student enrolls is responsible for initiating the process. The School Board and administrative services collaborate with the Directorate-General for Education (DGE) to review the documents and assign the appropriate equivalence.

- **What happens next?**

After review, the student is assigned an equivalence to the Portuguese education system, indicating the corresponding grade level. From that moment on, the student attends classes like any other student in their class.

- **Support during the process**

During this process, the school is available to answer questions, assist with gathering documents, and ensure that the student is well integrated into their new school environment. When necessary, learning support measures may be implemented, especially in portuguese.

Our Group

The Mirandela School Group offers a diverse range of educational opportunities covering all levels of education, from preschool to secondary school. It includes scientific, humanistic, and professional courses, providing a solid, comprehensive education tailored to the needs of the educational community.

The Group consists of the following educational establishments:

- Mirandela Secondary School – Group Headquarters
- Luciano Cordeiro Elementary School
- Elementary Schools and Kindergartens:
 - Convento
 - Fomento



Figura 1: *Mirandela Secondary School*



Figura 2: *Mirandela Elementary School*



Figura 3: *Fomento School*



Figura 4: *Convento School*

The Mirandela School Group is governed by its own identity based on ethical values and the fundamental principles of an organization. Values such as Equity, Justice, Citizenship, Responsibility, Solidarity, Transparency, Innovation, Excellence, and Entrepreneurship

The School Space

The school environment is where students spend a large part of their day, learning, forming relationships, and building their personal and academic paths. At the Mirandela School Group, the different educational establishments offer safe, welcoming facilities that are suited to the educational needs of their students.

Each school has several areas dedicated to different activities:

- Classrooms – Spaces equipped with teaching materials and technologies to support learning.
- School Library – A space for reading, studying, and research, with access to books, computers, and other educational resources. It is also a place where cultural and literary activities are promoted.
- Cafeteria – Where daily meals are served, ensuring a balanced and healthy diet.
- Sports hall and outdoor areas – Used for physical education, sports, and other movement and leisure activities.
- Support rooms and specialized offices – Intended for educational support activities, guidance, and individualized monitoring.
- Class Director's Office and Administrative Services – Where students and parents/guardians can discuss school and administrative matters.

The school space is shared by the entire educational community, so it is essential to respect the rules of coexistence, classmates, adults, and equipment. Keeping the space clean, organized, and well cared for is everyone's responsibility.

The school is, above all, a place of learning, inclusion, and coexistence, where all students are welcomed with respect, regardless of their origin, language, or culture.

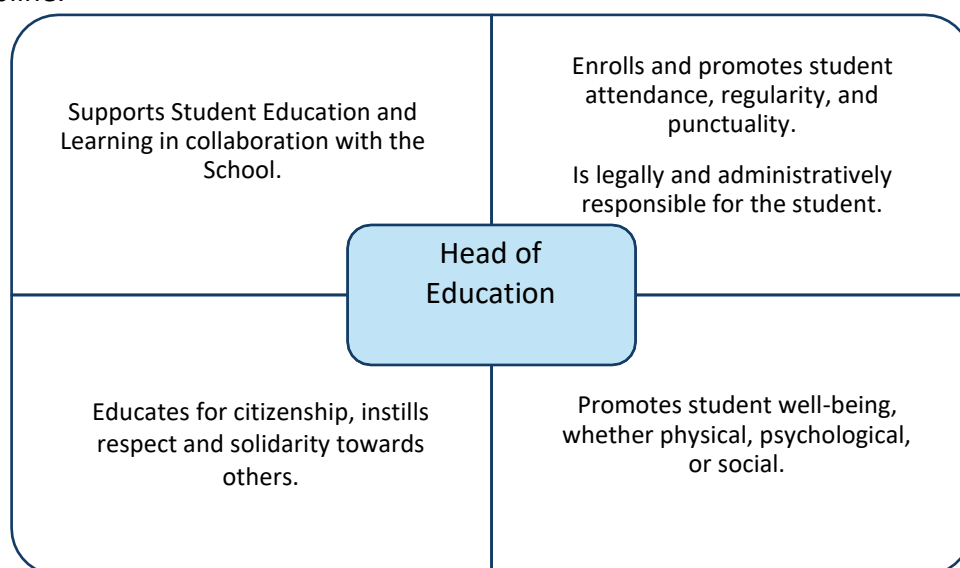
The Role of the Guardian

The role of the Guardian in Portugal is fundamental to the success of the educational process and to ensuring adequate support for the student's development, as it is seen as a pillar that guarantees the child or young person the necessary conditions to grow and learn in a full and healthy way. As such, the guardian is the person legally responsible for monitoring and educating their student, and is an essential figure in the student's school life. It is most common for one of the parents to take on this role, but it can also be a tutor or legal guardian if the parents are unable or unavailable.

It is a role that carries the responsibility of directing the student's education and, according to the Student Statute, it is the duty of the parent or guardian to:

- Monitor and collaborate in the education of children:
 - o Support them with their homework;
 - o Encourage daily study;
- Ensure that children's rights and duties are fulfilled;
- Instill in your child respect for teachers, assistants, and classmates;
- Attend school whenever called upon;

Be responsible for your students' duties, especially regarding attendance, punctuality, and discipline.



The Role of the Class Director

The Class Director is a teacher who plays a very important role in the school life of students, especially in the 2nd and 3rd cycles of basic education and in secondary education. In addition to their duties as a subject teacher, the Class Director is primarily responsible for monitoring the academic progress of the class as a whole and of each student individually.

They are the link between students, parents, teachers, and the various school departments. They are responsible for ensuring effective communication, promoting a good atmosphere in the classroom, and monitoring student behavior, performance, and integration.

Among the main duties of the Class Director are:

- Monitor students' academic progress and behavior;
- Meet regularly with parents/guardians and be available to answer questions or help resolve issues;
- Coordinate the work of classroom teachers and participate in the preparation of assessment reports;
- Promote citizenship and personal and social development activities;
- Liaise with educational support, psychology, and guidance services when necessary;
- Help integrate migrant students, paying special attention to their adaptation needs.

In the first cycle of basic education, this role is performed by the Class Teacher, who teaches most subjects and closely monitors each student throughout their school career. Like the Class Director in the following cycles, the class teacher:

- Maintains regular communication with parents/guardians;
- Monitors students' academic, social, and emotional development;
- Identifies difficulties and promotes support measures;
- Contributes to the integration of all students in the class and school.

Whether in primary school or other levels of education, this figure is a key reference point for students and their families, available to welcome, guide, clarify, and support whenever necessary.

The Role of the Linguistic and Cultural Mediator

The linguistic and cultural mediator plays an essential role in the integration of migrant students and families into the school environment. Their main mission is to facilitate communication and understanding between the school and students/families whose mother tongue or culture is different from portuguese, promoting dialogue, inclusion, and educational success.

This professional acts as a bridge between cultures, helping to overcome linguistic and cultural barriers that may hinder the teaching and learning process or the relationship with the school. Their work contributes to creating a more welcoming environment that respects diversity and promotes coexistence among all members of the educational community. Their main duties include:

- Support migrant students in the process of adapting to school, the portuguese language, and the rules of school life;
- Attend meetings or contacts between parents/guardians and the school, ensuring mutual understanding and clear sharing of information;
- Translate and interpret, when necessary, relevant school documents or communications;
- Promote intercultural dialogue by raising awareness of respect for diversity in languages, cultures, and experiences;
- Collaborate with teachers, class directors, and other technicians in monitoring the educational progress of migrant students;
- Support the resolution of situations of conflict or cultural misunderstandings, promoting understanding and inclusion.

The linguistic and cultural mediator is thus a figure of proximity, whom migrant students and families can trust, knowing that they will have support in their integration and in building a positive relationship with the school.

Student Rights

The education system is a RIGHT to which all students have access, regardless of their origin, economic, social, or cultural status. They also have the right to a quality education (which promotes their integral development—cognitive, emotional, and social), equal opportunities, and respect for their dignity and integrity. They are also entitled to a school curriculum that is appropriate to their level of learning, based on national curriculum guidelines. No student may be discriminated against on the basis of gender, race, ethnic origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or any other personal condition.

The Rights of Students aim to ensure that everyone has a fair, balanced educational experience tailored to their needs. The “Learn More Now” Plan consists of a set of measures designed to improve learning, with the aim of making the monitoring of learning more reliable and comparable. It includes measures that promote the integration of migrant students and accelerate the acquisition of portuguese language skills by migrant students and their families.

- Respect and Dignity
- Privacy and Protection
- Educational Support
- Freedom of Expression
- Health and Well-being
- Education and Teaching
- Equality and Non-Discrimination
- Participation

Student Responsibilities

Students are responsible, in accordance with their age and capacity for discernment, for complying with the duties set forth in the School's Internal Regulations, the Student Statute, and Portuguese law.

- Attendance and punctuality
- Respect for classmates, staff, and teachers
- Care for the conservation and cleanliness of the school and teaching materials
- No possession or consumption of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs
- Commitment to schoolwork

The disciplinary responsibility of students implies full compliance with the Student Statute, the School's Internal Regulations, the school's property, other students, staff, and, in particular, teachers.

No student may undermine the right to education of others.

Frequency and Attendance

In Portugal, attendance, regularity, and absences are key concepts in the school environment. Attendance refers to regular participation in classes, while regularity focuses on punctuality and completion of schoolwork. Absences, in turn, represent justified and unjustified absences, the latter with limits established by law, depending on the educational cycle.

Students are responsible for fulfilling their duty of attendance and regular participation in classes and school activities, under the supervision of their parents or guardians. Teachers, in turn, are responsible for assessing and recording any failure to fulfill this duty, resulting in the recording of the respective absence.

Absences may be excused or unexcused, according to the rules set forth in the school's internal regulations.

Justified Absences

Justification for absences requires a written request submitted by the parent or guardian to the class teacher or head teacher, indicating the date and school activity on which the absence occurred, mentioning the reasons for the absence in the student's school record book, or on a specific form in the case of secondary school students.

Absences due to illness, medical appointments, death of a family member, or fulfillment of legal obligations must be justified by the parent or guardian within three days of their occurrence through the student's notebook, Inovar, by email to the class director, or on the appropriate form.

Unexcused Absences

Whenever the proper justification has not been provided, or has been provided within the stipulated period. When the absence results from the application of an order to leave class or a disciplinary sanction.

In each school year, unexcused absences may not exceed:

- 10 consecutive or intermittent days in the 1st cycle of basic education;
- twice the number of weekly teaching hours per subject in the remaining cycles of education, without prejudice to the provisions above.

When half of the expected absence limit has been reached, parents or guardians or students of legal age are summoned to the school to warn them of the consequences of exceeding the absence limit and to seek a solution that will ensure effective compliance with the duty of attendance.

Whenever it is not possible to guarantee the student's attendance and regularity, for reasons not attributable to the school, and whenever the seriousness of the situation justifies it, the class director has a duty to notify the Commission for the Protection of Children and Young People at Risk of the excessive absences of the minor student, as well as of all procedures and measures adopted by the school to overcome the lack of attendance.

Exceeding the Absence Limit

Exceeding the limits for unjustified absences requires the absent student to comply with specific remedial and/or corrective measures and may lead to the application of disciplinary sanctions.

All measures must be communicated to the parents, guardians, or the student, if of legal age, to the class director, and recorded in the student's individual file.

The Individual Student File

The Individual Student File is a fundamental document that tracks each student's academic progress from the moment they enroll in the School Group. The purpose of this file is to record, organize, and track all relevant information related to the student's school life, including the following elements:

- Student and parent/guardian identification data
- Enrollment and registration documents
- Assessment records (grades and reports)
- Relevant medical or educational reports (where applicable)
- Documents relating to equivalence of qualifications, in the case of migrant students
- Information on educational support measures and individualized monitoring
- Recording of behavior and participation in school activities

This process is confidential and can only be accessed by authorized persons, such as teachers, specialized technicians, and guardians, always in compliance with personal data protection regulations.

The Individual Process allows the school to:

- Monitor students' progress and development more effectively
- Adapt teaching strategies to students' specific needs
- Coordinate interventions with support services and families
- Ensure continuity of schooling in the event of transfer to another school

Parents or guardians may request to consult the student's file, participate in meetings about the student's progress, and contribute information that will help improve educational monitoring.

Student Assessment System

The main objective of the assessment system is to monitor students' learning and contribute to their educational success. Through assessment, the school identifies progress, difficulties, and support needs, helping each student to develop their full potential.

Assessment is a continuous process that takes place throughout the school year and involves different ways of gathering information, such as:

- Tests and written assignments
- Class participation
- Group and individual assignments
- Projects
- Behavior and attitude
- Self-assessment (conducted by the student)

And it also has different types of assessment:

- Diagnostic Assessment – Conducted at the beginning of the year or a new cycle, it serves to understand each student's starting point.
- Formative Assessment – Takes place daily and helps to adjust teaching to the student's needs.
- Qualitative Assessment – Conducted mid-semester and translated into assessments (very good, good, sufficient, insufficient), which reflect the student's performance progress.
- Summative/Quantitative Assessment – Conducted at the end of each semester and translated into grades (scale of 1 to 5), which reflect student performance.

The involvement of parents and guardians is essential. They should regularly monitor the student's academic progress, consult assessment reports, attend meetings, and collaborate with the school to promote educational success.

Extracurricular Activities

In addition to the curriculum subjects, the Mirandela School Group offers its students a range of extracurricular activities that aim to complement their education, promote personal and social development, and encourage active participation in school life.

These activities are optional and usually take place outside school hours. They can cover various areas, such as sports, music, drama, dance, visual arts, experimental sciences, among others. There are also clubs and school projects where students can develop specific skills, work in teams, and explore their interests and talents.

Participation in these activities is an excellent opportunity for students to better integrate into school, make new friends, boost their self-esteem, and acquire habits of discipline and responsibility. For migrant students, extracurricular activities play a particularly important role in school and social integration, facilitating adaptation to the new environment and local culture.

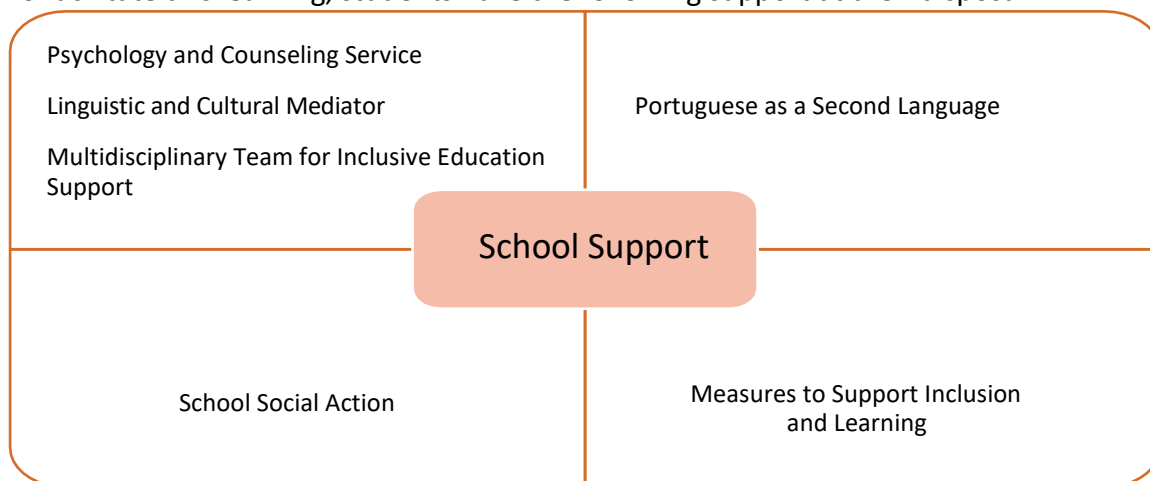
The activities are led by teachers, specialized technicians, or school partners, and may take place throughout the school year. The offer may vary from school to school within the group and is communicated at the beginning of each school year.

Registration for activities is done with the support of the school and may require filling out a specific form. Some activities are free, while others may have an associated cost, which will always be communicated in advance to parents or guardians.

School Support

School is not only the place where students learn the content taught, learning also involves socialization, coexistence, and respect for everyone and among everyone.

To facilitate this learning, students have the following support at their disposal:



This support is coordinated between teachers, administrative services, the class director, parents, and the school's specialized services. The goal is to ensure an educational path tailored to each student's needs, promoting their integration, well-being, and educational success.

Integration Tools

There are some “tools” that can help with the integration of students and their families:

- The Migrant Support Line (LAM) provides information in 14 different languages from the national landline network. Call 808 257 257 (cost of a local call) from a landline or +351 21 810 61 91 from a mobile phone.
- Platform that assists in learning Portuguese, with tests and interactive activities - <https://www.cibercursoslp.com/>
- Linguistic and Cultural Mediator (MLC) for the Mirandela School Group, Andreia Soares – email: andreia.soares@aemirandela.pt
- Group portal - <https://aemirandela.pt/>
- Inovar- <https://inovar.aemirandela.pt/inovarconsulta/app/index.html#/login>

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