

Traces, the guide

Traces of learning organised & paperwork made simple

Photograph what your children do, day after day, then produce the documents the Direction de l'enseignement à la maison asks for, simply. Everything is saved on your device, and no personal data is sent anywhere. Traces counts its own usage in anonymous numbers, and files your photos in your own cloud if you decide to connect it.

INSTALLING THE APP

Traces is a web page that installs like an app. There is nothing to download from a store, and no account to create.

- 1 Open the app's address in the device's browser.
- 2 **On iPhone or iPad**, with Safari: tap the Share button at the bottom of the screen, then « Add to Home Screen ». Safari is required; installing does not work from Chrome on iOS.
- 3 **On Android**, with Chrome: tap the three-dot menu at the top right, then « Install and create shortcut », then « Install ». Be sure to pick « Install » and not « Create shortcut »: a shortcut merely opens Chrome, with no full screen and no offline. Depending on the version, the entry is simply called « Install app ».
- 4 **On a computer**, with Chrome or Edge: click the install icon that appears at the end of the address bar.

On iPhone and iPad, installing it protects the data. Safari wipes on its own the data of sites nobody has opened for seven days, and that includes the app's traces and photos. An app added to the home screen is left out of that clean-up: Apple keeps it its own space, separate from Safari's. So keeping the address in your bookmarks rather than installing the app risks finding the app empty after two weeks without opening it. On Android and on a computer, that clean-up does not exist, but installing is still better for full screen and offline.

Why install it rather than bookmark it

Once installed, the app opens full screen, starts faster and works without a network. Capturing a trace never waits on a connection.

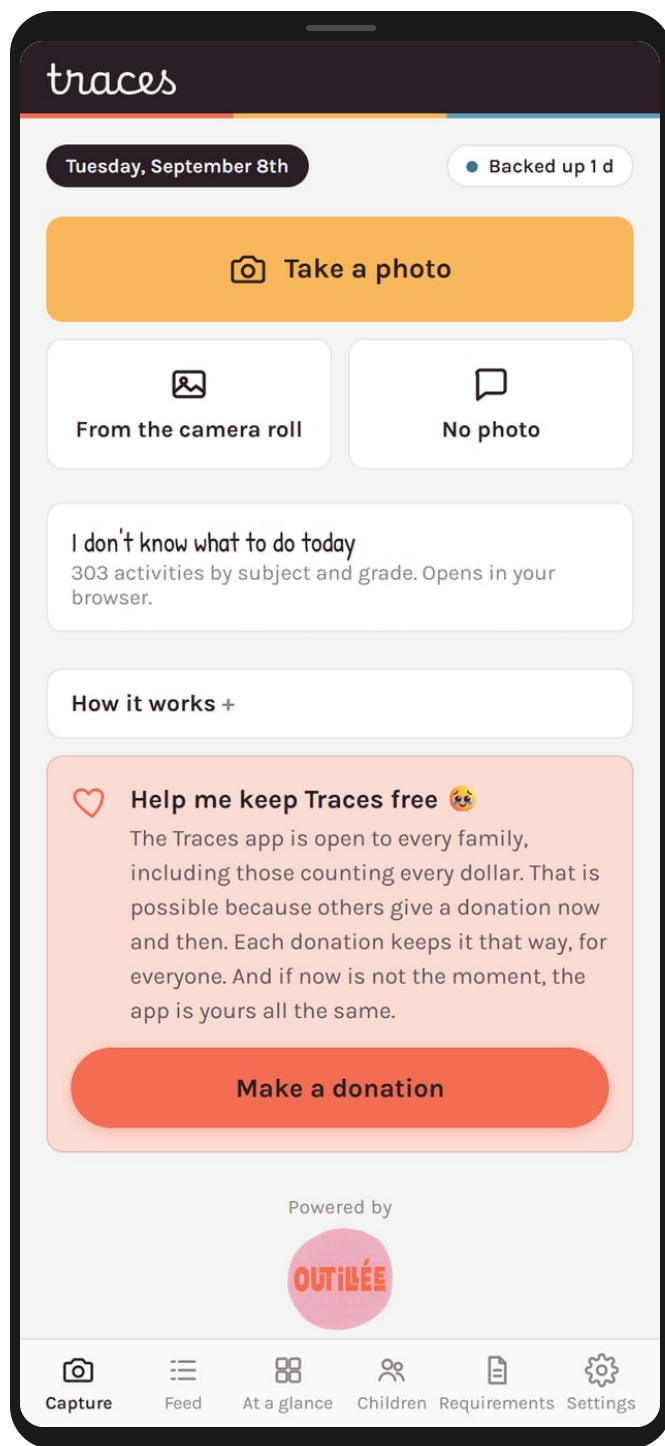
The first time you open it, the app asks three questions, once only.

1. Where your data lives. Nothing to answer, only to read: it is the warning in the box below.
2. Your school year, with its start and end dates. Both can be corrected later in the settings.
3. Your children: a first name, a last name and a grade for each. The last name is asked for because it appears in the heading of the learning project, the report and the portfolio, and a document made out to « Juliette » alone identifies nobody. You can add more later in the Children tab.

Read this before anything else

Everything is saved in this device's browser. Nothing is sent to a server. Nobody can give your data back if it disappears: clearing the browser's data, reinstalling the system or losing the device wipes everything, and on iPhone, seven days without opening the app is enough as long as it is not installed on the home screen. Backing up is your responsibility.

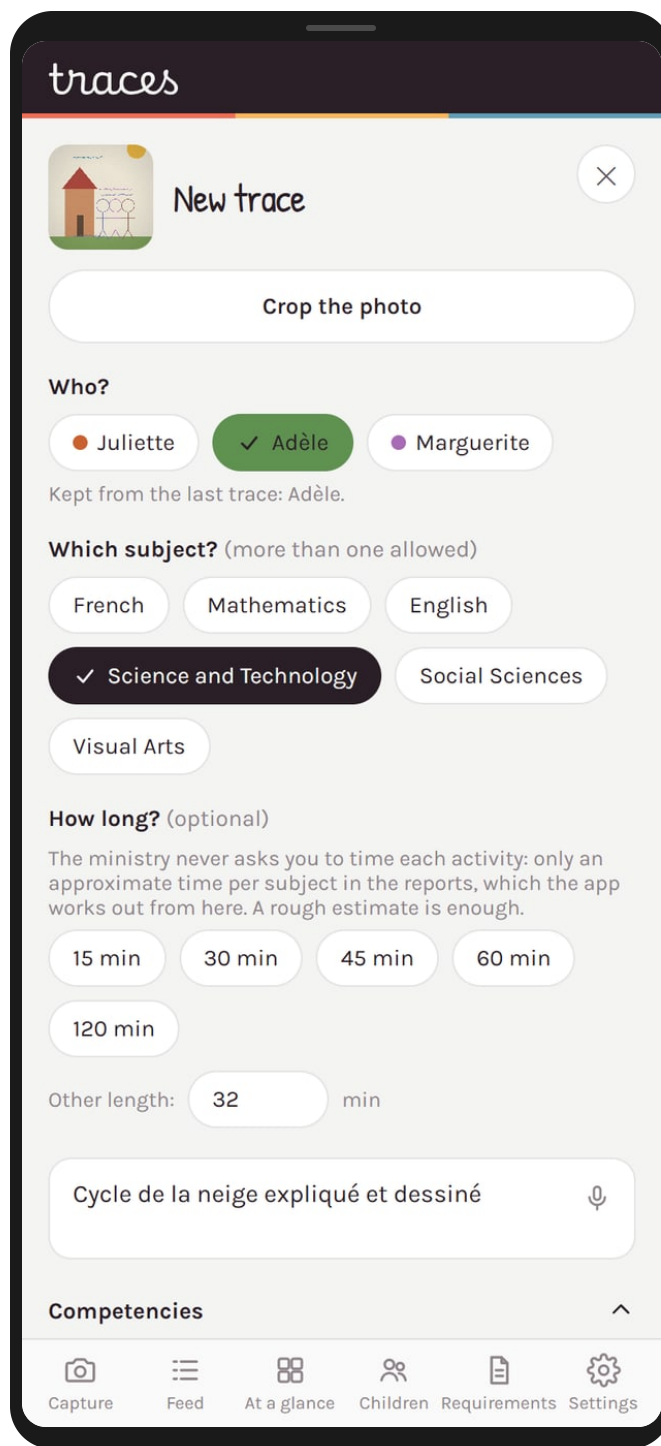
Take the time to enter the right start date: the app uses it to work out the window for the mid-term report, from the third to the fifth month after it, and for every deadline it announces. An approximate date gives approximate deadlines. This date can be corrected in the settings.



Capture. Three buttons: take a photo, pick one from the camera roll, or create a trace with no photo.

The home screen has three buttons to start a trace:

- « **Take a photo** », the big button at the top, opens the phone's camera. You take the photo, and the next screen opens on its own.



Fill in. Who, which subject, which competency. The length and the comment are optional.

- « **From the camera roll** » opens the photos you have already taken. That is the way to catch up on what was not documented at the time, yesterday or last month.
- « **No photo** » creates a trace with no image, for a discussion, an outing or a reading that leaves nothing to photograph.

A trace with no photo can get one later. Open it from the feed: « Take a photo » and « From the camera roll » are waiting at the top of the screen, under its title. This is what you need when the poster was not finished when you noted the activity, or when the build was completed the next day. The photo is then filed in pCloud like the others.

A photo taken from far away can be cropped. On the trace's page, « Crop the photo » opens it full size: drag the four corners toward what matters, drag the frame to move it, and the cropped photo replaces the other one. The gesture is not on the capture screen, so that taking a photo stays a ten-second affair.

Cut too close? Reopen the frame: it always opens on the whole photo, never on the previous cut. Take all of the frame again and the photo you started with comes back, even the next day, as long as the record has not been saved. That is also why cropping twice in a row does not trim twice.

The children from the previous trace are already ticked on the next one. Documenting a single day almost always means the same children, and this saves ticking them twenty times. Untick them if that is not the case.

The next screen is where you say what it was about. Tick the child or children involved, then the subject or subjects, then the competencies worked. One trace can cover several children and several subjects at once: a museum outing counts in social sciences and in French, for all three children if they were there.

The length and the comment are optional. The length is used to work out the time per subject in the reports, where it gets corrected by hand anyway: a rough estimate is enough, and nothing forces you to give it right away.

What makes a trace complete

A child, a subject, a competency. As long as one of the three is missing, the trace stays marked « to finish » in the feed. The competency is needed because it is what lets the booklet of traces pick three pieces of evidence from different competencies, and lets the portfolio say which one each piece covers.

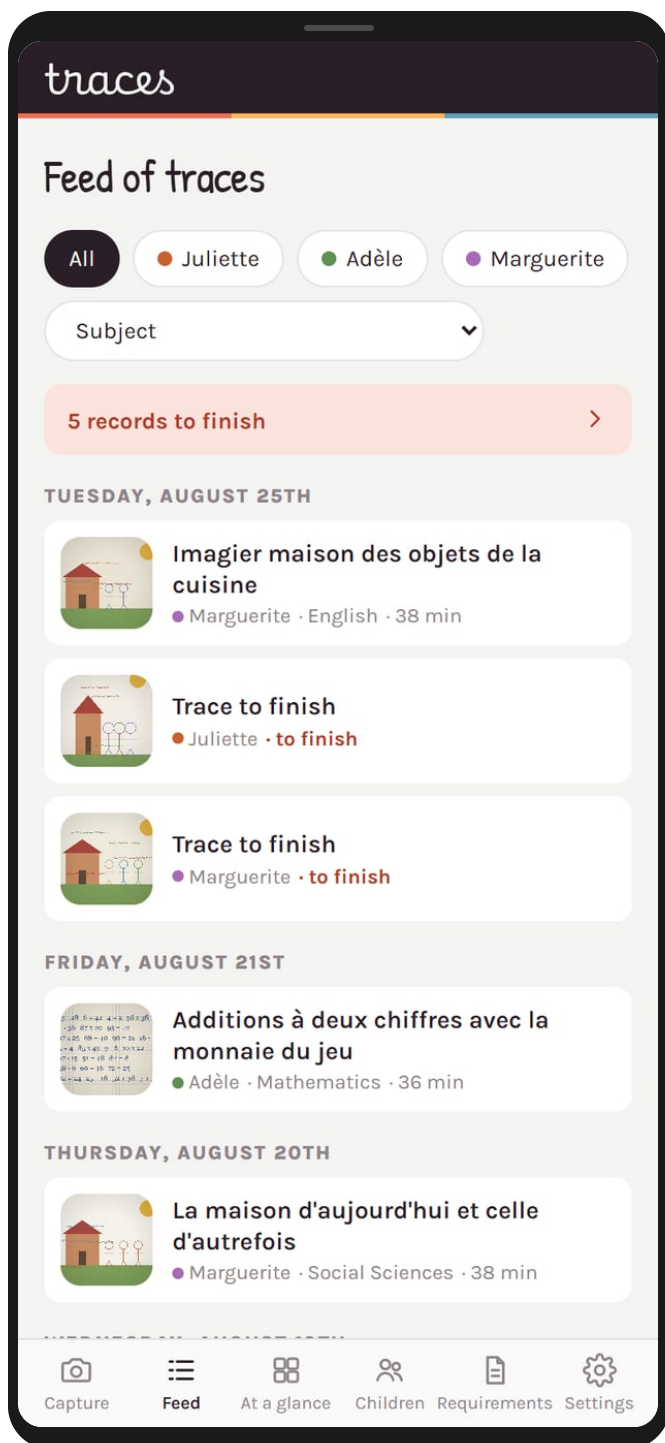
If you do not know which one to tick, there is a file to attach to the AI of your choice: you tell it what your child did, it tells you what to tick and what to write. [The file and how to use it.](#)

The comment field has a dictation button on the right. The same microphone appears in every text field in the app: the portfolio's per-subject comments, the status report sections, the child's own words, the learning project notes. It goes through the browser's speech recognition, so through an outside service, and the button says so before it switches on.

If the moment is not right, take the photo and leave the rest empty. The trace waits in the feed, marked « to finish ». Nothing is lost, and you pick it back up whenever you like by tapping it in the feed.

What can serve as a trace

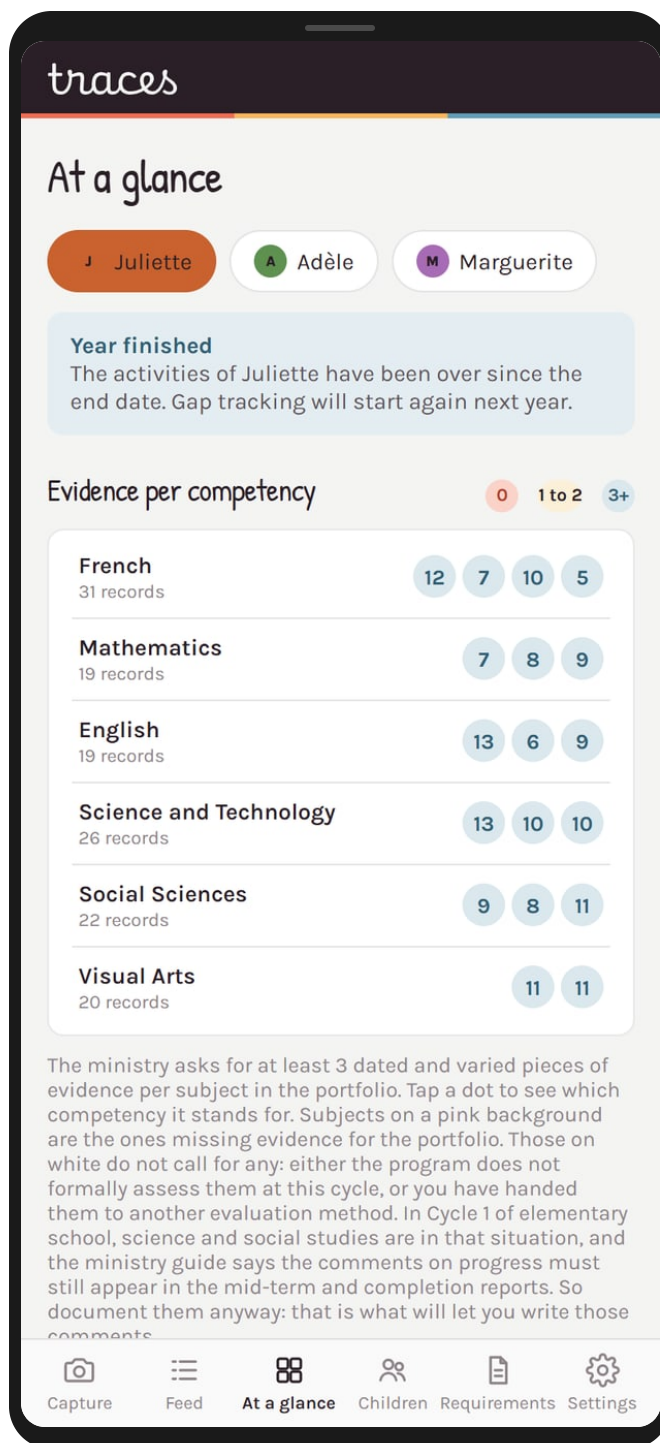
A photo taken on the spot, a photo already in the camera roll, a screenshot, a workbook page, a drawing. Or no image at all, if you would rather describe the activity in a line. The app takes images only: a PDF can be photographed, or captured on screen.



The feed. Every trace, filterable by child and by subject. This is where you finish, fix or delete.

In the feed, tap a trace to pick it back up: fix the comment, add a forgotten subject, change the length. The delete button is at the bottom of this screen, with a confirmation.

The dashboard flags a compulsory subject with no traces at all, a subject that has been silent for more than three weeks, a program competency never covered. A dot at zero opens onto example activities that could cover that competency.



At a glance. The gaps, and the table of evidence by competency. Tap a dot, or the « Ideas » button on an alert, for activities to do.

The Children tab holds each child's file. Tapping a subject opens it and lets you set three things:

- **The grade being worked**, independent of the child's own grade: a grade 3 child can work grade 2 mathematics. A free note field, below it, is there to write what a grade does not say, for instance « at their own pace ».
- **The evaluation methods** among the five in the Regulation, which can be combined. Choosing the ministerial examination rather than the portfolio takes the subject out of the evidence you have to supply.
- **The language of schooling**, at the top of the page, and also when you add a child. This choice decides which pair of language programs is required: Français with English as a second language, or English Language Arts with Français langue seconde. Switching streams swaps one pair for the other, keeps the optional subjects you added by hand, and wipes no trace.
- **Removing an optional subject**, with a confirmation if traces are already tied to it. The traces are not wiped.
- **The first name**, qui se corrige directement en cliquant dessus, en haut de la page.
- **Withdrawing the child**, right at the bottom. The screen first counts what would go: the traces that concern only them leave with their photos, those shared with a brother or sister stay in the feed, and their reports and learning project go too. You have to type RETIRER to confirm, and nothing can be undone afterwards. Years already archived do not move, and photos already filed in pCloud stay in your account.

The ministerial examination ticks itself when the grade being worked has one, and unticks itself when it no longer does. The two streams do not share a calendar: English Language Arts is examined neither in Grade 4 nor in Secondary 2, whereas French as the language of instruction is examined in both. A family schooling in English therefore has no examination in Grade 4. Their first comes in Grade 6, in reading and writing, alongside the mathematics one.

Below the list, « Add an optional subject » brings back culture and citizenship, physical education, music or financial education. At the bottom of that same list, « A subject I name myself » covers everything else: Latin, robotics, gardening. No program competency is attached to it, but your traces go there, the time is counted and its report comment is written like any other subject's. At the end of the year, the settings offer to move on to the next one: each child goes up a grade and the previous year is archived.

Six themes, in the settings. The choice only touches the screen: the documents you submit print black on white either way.

Settings

Colours

The choice only touches the screen. The documents you submit stay black on white, as they should.

 Traces The official Traces colours.	 Paper Cream and terracotta, the original theme.
 River Calm blues, from sky to deep water.	 Forest Sage green and wood, more restful.
 Cherry Powdered pinks, from petal to raspberry.	 Ink Dark, for documenting in the evening without the glare.

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   Children Requirements **Settings**

Traces

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   Children Requirements **Settings**

Paper

Settings

Colours

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   Children Requirements **Settings**

River

SETTINGS

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   Children Requirements **Settings**

Settings

Colours

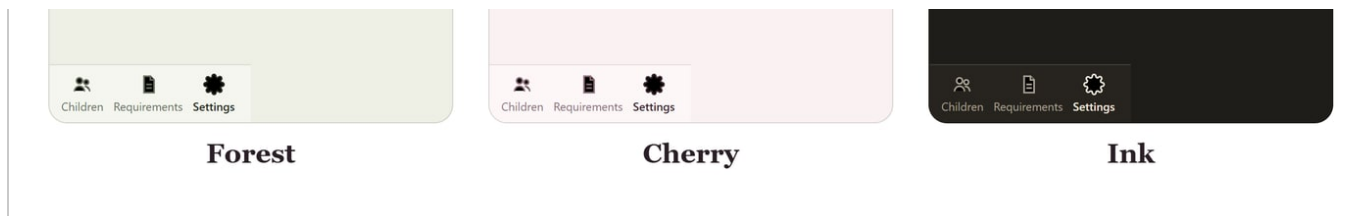
The choice only touches the screen. The documents you submit stay black on white, as they should.

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 River Calm blues, from sky to deep water.	 Forest Sage green and wood, more restful.
 Cherry Powdered pinks, from petal to raspberry.	 Ink Dark, for documenting in the evening without the glare.

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   Children Requirements **Settings**



Traces, the official colours. **Paper**, cream and terracotta, the original one. **River**, calm blues. **Forest**, vert sauge et bois. **Cherry**, powdered pinks. **Ink**, dark, with a light screen, for documenting in the evening.

The choice is remembered and applies from the moment the app opens, before anything is drawn. The phone's status bar follows the theme too.

Four documents, three moments, all in the Requirements tab. Each one comes out as a PDF from its print button.

traces

Documents

Year 2025-2026

J Juliette
Grade 6

START OF YEAR ?

Learning project >

To be submitted and started no later than September 30.

DURING THE YEAR ?

Booklet of traces >

OPTIONAL It gathers 3 traces per subject, in different competencies where that applies, so you can show instead of recounting from memory. Nothing obliges you to bring it to the monitoring meeting, or to submit it to the ministry.

Status report and mid-term report >

OPTIONAL The pilot project puts everything through the monitoring meeting, mostly out loud, in the window du December 2nd au February 2nd. The law still asks for this document, pilot project or not. So you can submit it anyway, if you are more comfortable that way. It gathers on one page the activities carried out, the time spent and the changes to the project.

END OF YEAR ?

Completion report and portfolio >

Capture Feed At a glance Children **Requirements** Settings

Documents. Start, middle and end of year. The « ? » on each section quotes the ministry requirement.

traces

< **J Projet de Juliette**
Year 2025-2026 · to file before September 30

Identification ?

Date of birth

2014-03-11

Permanent code (if the child has one)

TREJ14031107

Last grade completed at a school (and withdrawal date)

2e année du primaire

Educational approach

Tick what sounds like you: the sentences come together in the document, and the text field lets you say it in your own words.

Éclectique Par projets Par la littérature

Par le jeu **Éducation en plein air**

Éducation classique Montessori

Charlotte Mason Waldorf Freinet

Apprentissages autonomes

Cahiers et manuels Cours en ligne

Capture Feed At a glance Children **Requirements** Settings

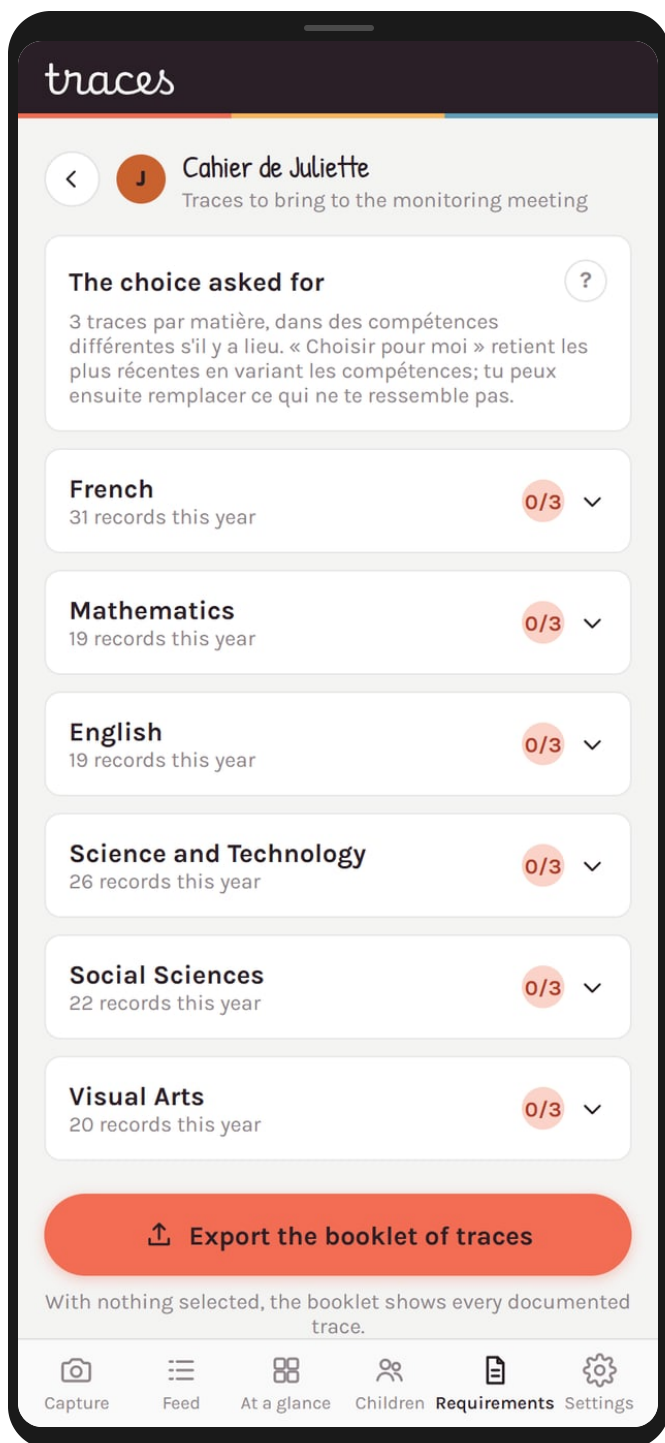
Learning project. Tick a type of activity, spell out which one in your own words. To file before September 30.

Learning project

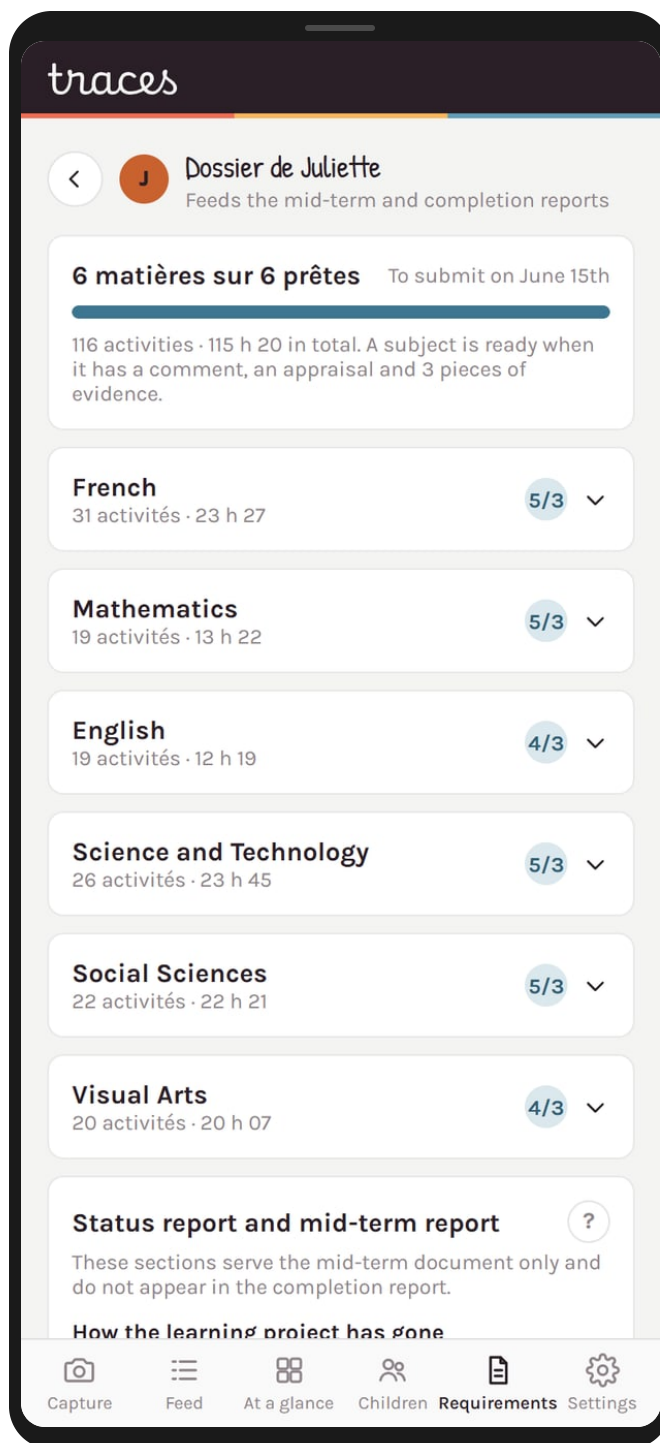
To be submitted and under way no later than September 30. You build it by ticking kinds of activities per subject, each tick spelled out in your own words: which workbooks, which games, which workshop format. The educational approach is filled in the same way: you tick the pedagogies you practise, and you spell out each one.

Booklet of traces

OPTIONAL Nothing obliges you to bring it to the monitoring meeting, and it is submitted to nobody. It stays useful: you arrive with traces already picked and printed, and you show instead of recounting from memory. The guidance is to present three traces per subject, taken from different competencies when the subject has several. The « Choose for me » button applies that rule and fills the document; you then swap out the traces you would rather present another way.



Picking the traces. Three per subject, in different competencies. A counter follows each subject.



Report and portfolio. Comment, appraisal, evidence. What the ministry requires, and nothing more.

Status report and mid-term report

OPTIONAL The pilot project rolls the monitoring meeting, the mid-term report and the status report into one point, discussed mostly out loud, between the third and fifth month after the project gets under way. The document exists for those who would rather arrive with something written: it lists the activities carried out, the time spent, the changes to the project and a comment on progress.

Completion report and portfolio

To be submitted no later than June 15. The report follows the ministry template; the portfolio has none, its layout is Traces'. The portfolio is required only if it was chosen as an evaluation method in the learning project; in that case it is submitted with the report, the two being analysed together. It calls for at least three pieces of evidence per evaluated compulsory subject, relevant, varied and dated, chosen from the traces made toward the end of the planned learning.

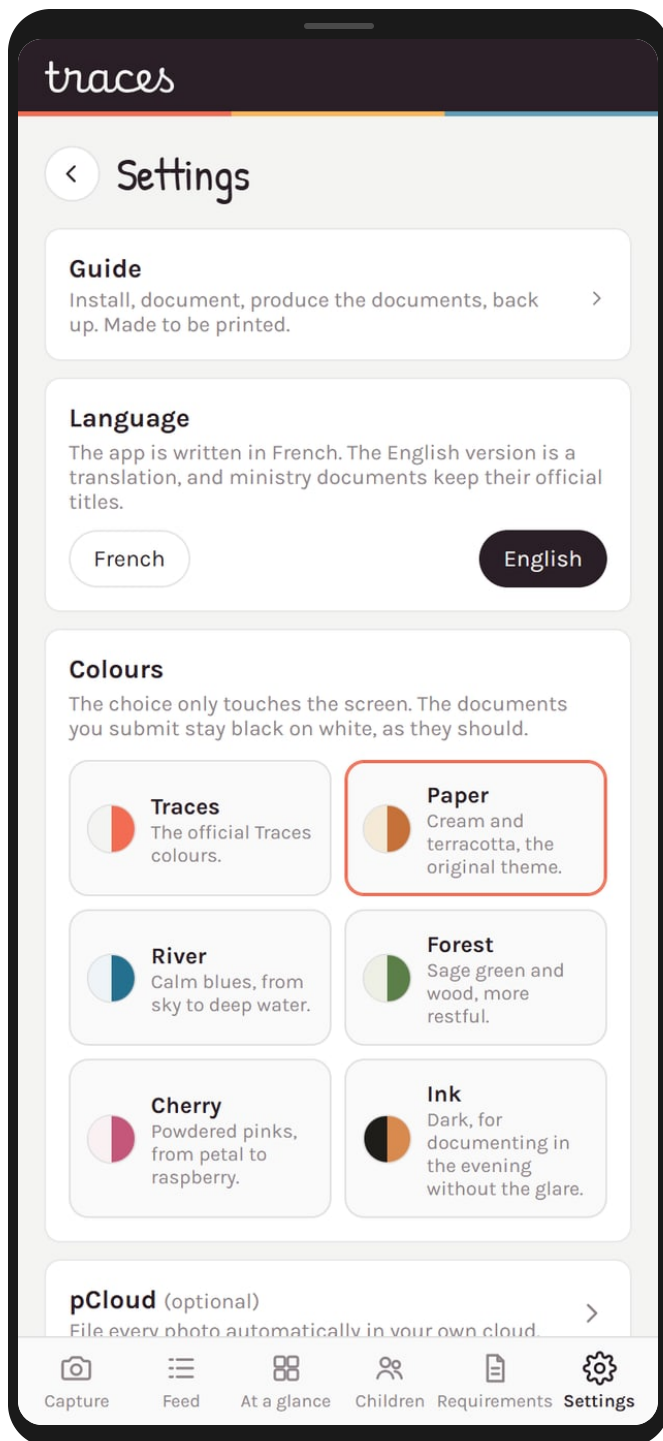
This document holds only what the guide requires of the report and the portfolio. Activities carried out, time spent and changes to the project belong to the status report and do not appear here.

Saving a document as PDF

On iPhone: the print button, then pinch to enlarge the preview and share. On Android: the print button, then pick « Save as PDF » as the printer. On a computer: print, then choose « Save as PDF ».

NOT MISSING A DEADLINE

At a glance shows the deadline coming up, worked out from your start date. The link « Add the ministry dates to my calendar » produces a file to open on your phone: the dates land in your calendar with real alarms, one month then one week before each deadline, even with the app closed.



What the file holds

photos/ les photos sous un nom lisible,
 traces.csv the full list for Excel,
 donnees.json the data used to restore.

It is an ordinary zip folder. It opens without the app: the photos can be viewed, and the CSV file opens in Excel.

Settings. Backup, restore, the year's dates, pCloud if you want it, and this guide.

Once the file is ready, two buttons appear. On a phone, « Send to iCloud, Drive or email » opens the device's share menu and drops the file wherever you choose. On a computer, the same button is called « Open the share menu », because a computer's menu does not offer those destinations. « Download the file » puts it in your downloads, and moving it afterwards is up to you.

Keep the file in two places, one of them off the device: a cloud service and an external drive, for example. A copy kept on the phone disappears along with the phone.

To restore, in the settings: « Restore a backup », then pick the file. Restoring replaces the current data. The pCloud connection has to be redone by hand: your credentials do not travel in the file.

AUTOMATIC BACKUP WITH PCLOUD (OPTIONAL)

This part is for anyone who already has a pCloud account, and anyone who would like to open one: the basic account is free. You then have to create an application in it, which takes about ten minutes. None of this is necessary: the manual backup produces exactly the same file. The full guide, from opening the account to connecting, is at traces.outillee.com/pcloud.

Once connected, you no longer have to think about backing up. The app puts three things in your account on its own:

- **The photos**, filed in `School / Traces / child / grade / subject`, as soon as a child and a subject are chosen.
- **A copy of your text and your lists**, updated at every change: children, traces, lengths, competencies, projects and reports.
- **A full copy** once a day, photos included, the same file as the manual backup. The old ones are wiped as it goes.

« Restore » brings everything back from the last full copy, in one go. If there is none yet, the app starts from the text copy and brings the photos back one at a time.

- 1 Open `docs.pcloud.com/my_apps` and create an application.
- 2 Wait for pCloud to approve it. A new application cannot be used right away: count on 24 to 48 hours. You get an email when it is done, and that is when you pick up where you left off.
- 3 Enter as the redirect address the exact address shown in the pCloud card of the Traces settings, character for character.
- 4 Copy the application ID you get and paste it into the Traces settings, then connect.

It is also the answer to the warning at the start. If a browser wipes everything, or a phone is lost, « Restore » brings the year back from your pCloud account, without you having had to think about backing up.

« Test the connection » checks the whole chain, and « See what is in pCloud » lists what your account really holds, folder by folder.

THE MINISTRY DEADLINES

STEP	WHEN
Annual declaration notice	July 1
Learning project submitted and under way	September 30
Monitoring meeting, with the booklet of traces	3rd to 5th month
Completion report, and portfolio where applicable	June 15
Conclusions of the other evaluation methods	June 30

The dates the app works out take your start date into account. The detail can be checked in the settings, with the source of each one. When in doubt, your school board's resource person decides.

WHAT THE APP DOES NOT DO

Nothing is transmitted

No document goes to the ministry on its own. You produce the PDF and file it yourself in the secure space.

No writing on your behalf

Comments on progress must be personal and detailed. You are the one who writes them.

No legal advice

The requirement reminders come from the ministry guide. They replace neither the regulation nor your resource person.

No automatic backup

Without pCloud, the only copy off this device is the one you make yourself.

QUESTIONS, BUGS AND SUGGESTIONS

A question about the app, a problem you ran into, an idea for improvement: write to traces@outillee.com. The link in the settings opens the email with your version already in the subject line, which saves a round trip.

Your version number is written right at the bottom of the settings, in the form of a date: « Version 2026.09.01 ». It is the first thing you will be asked for, because a problem fixed last week does not get fixed twice. To pick up the latest version, close the app completely and open it again.

What is new are announced by email. The settings card keeps a box to sign up: a few sends a year, to say what has changed and nothing else.

The app is offered as is, with no warranty. Outillée cannot be held responsible for data loss, for the consequences of using the app, or for a document being refused by the ministry. The data and the backups remain the responsibility of whoever uses the app, and the documents produced rest on what was recorded in them. When a requirement is in doubt, your school board's resource person decides.

The screenshots in this document come from the demo version, with a made-up family.