

Interventions in the countries of the partner countries

5.1 Pedagogical intervention in Poland

The pedagogical intervention in Poland was conducted between May 2019 and January 2020. Testing started with information / introductory classes in May / June 2019. The main part of the pilot started in September and was ended in December 2019/January 2020.

Pedagogical intervention was implemented in three schools in three different cities/towns:

1. Primary School No. 172 in Łódź
2. Primary School of King Stefan Batory in Szczawin
3. Sports School No. 3 of Józef Jaworski in Aleksandrów Łódzki

All three cities/towns are located in Central Poland.

Before the intervention, consultation was conducted. During the whole process of implementation of intervention were held regular meetings in the group of teachers involved in the project – to plan and share experiences of implementing in the classes procedures of the Toolkit. In the realization of the task were involved three teachers: Daniela Kuca, Wioletta Plich – Patora, Monika Kosiewicz.

The pedagogical intervention was implemented in the following classes:

1. First class (6-7 years) (Sports School No. 3 of Józef Jaworski in Aleksandrów Łódzki) – 24 students
2. Third class (8-9 years) (Primary School No. 172) – 22 students
3. Third class (8-9 years) (Primary School of King Stefan Batory in Szczawin) – 20 students

Additional pilot was realized also in one more first class (Primary School of King Stefan Batory in Szczawinie) – 20 students

4. Control: Second class ((Primary School of King Stefan Batory in Szczawinie)

The pilot was carried out during the curricular lesson, as well as during extra-curricular activities, or social education classes.

The overarching aim was to plan and develop concrete actions to prevent and reduce early school leaving and support students, parents of students in the development of basic life skills and emotional development of students.

In order to be able to assess the significance of the assumed positive change, teachers were requested to assess the skills listed in the survey tool prior to the intervention and compare them to those in the post-intervention phase. Assessment took a holistic approach. Students were assessed as group rather than individually.

5.2 Activities used in the Toolkit

Teachers participating in the pilot in Poland implemented activities appropriate for a given age group. Each of the teachers planned the implementation of several exercises from the ToolKit (about 10 activities). Teachers planned to implement activities from different areas, but first of all they chose tasks from areas such as: Coping with stress, Ability to relax and rest, Emotional intelligence, empathy, Interpersonal communication, Personal culture, Creativity and creative thinking, Teamwork, Conflicts management, Entrepreneurship, Independent and critical thinking.

Tested activities for students:

1. My favourite flower
2. Balloons of anger
3. Mindfulness
4. Counting breaths
5. Secret of Aunt Clara
6. Desert Island
7. Therapeutic fairy tale
8. Fairy tale about feelings
9. The mime game
10. Where is the stress?
11. Words for feelings
12. Good morning Captain!
13. Group class
14. Conflicts, NO!
15. Sign of stress
16. Out of Chaos-Polis – The rules for well-being together
17. Body scan
18. Song with different rhythms
19. Snakes and ladders for knowing each other

20. Thermometer of feelings

Tested activities for parents:

1. A book a way to fight the boredom
2. Healthy breakfast
3. Let me tell you about my job.../vocational consulting
4. Meetings of parents and teachers

Detailed descriptions of activities are in the Manual.

Teachers' feedback about the activities was collected during the regular meetings with teachers during testing time and at the end of piloting in completed by them document: teachers' feedback, pre questionnaire with feedback.

5.3 Results and discussion

Based on the feedbacks from all teachers that took part in the experiment we can say that many skills improved - the evaluation was done for the whole group not particular student. Of course there are some differences between each classes. But the following sub-skills were observed to have improved the most: "Volunteers to do an activity s/he likes any time the occasion arises", "Shows a consistent pleasure doing it", "Recognises her/his physical conditions or the level of tiredness", "Adjust her/his behaviour during playground to her/his level of tiredness", "Finds new friends if his best friend is relocated in a different school", "Creates imaginative writings or draws", "Relates and uses unexpected materials", "Identifies different format questions in a test (multiple choice and essay questions)", "Notices when talking too loudly where other schoolmates are trying to work", "Adjusts the volume or her/his voice to a more considerate level", "Feels comfortable in that situation (doesn't cry or feels frustrated)", "Manages to listen others' opinions and give their own, when working in a group".

Teachers were interviewed following the period of intervention. Some of the most interesting comments are cited here without naming the specific teachers:

1. Where the activities useful, easy to understand and implement?

Teacher 1: Yes, the exercises were useful and interesting. They aroused interest.

Teacher 2: Mostly yes, although I used modifications.

Teacher 3: The exercises included in the ToolKit were very helpful. Most of the exercises were not difficult to carry out, did not take too much time and did not require the preparation of additional materials. However, there were also those that required more space and consumed more time, such as "Desert island", "Common heads", "Group class".

2. Did you find any difficulties or doubts during the implementation?

Teacher 1: Difficulty in focusing attention, big restlessness in movement. In one exercise, there is a lack of writing skills of children at this age, no word understanding e.g. solidarity.

Teacher 2: The group in which I implemented the project consists of children who have specific learning difficulties, there are several children with autism. A desert island in the group caused a "storm". There were a lot of emotions, children were arguing about which idea is better. Activities should be implemented within one workshop!

Teacher 3: Piloting was smooth, in case of doubt I asked questions to the project coordinator, obtaining explanations and help. Due to the large number of free days (Christmas break and winter holidays), there was not enough time to carry out more exercises.

3. Have you observed changes in the dynamic of the class after the implementation?

Describe what type of changes.

Teacher 1: Improving in focusing attention, developing skills, ability to relax and rest (mindfulness), cooperation.

Teacher 2: After all, the project is too short for me to notice changes in class dynamics. This class needs a long process to show positive changes in class behavior.

Teacher 3: Students are more aware of their strengths and weaknesses, they communicate better, work better together, understand their emotions and know how to deal with them, they can relax.

4. How did your students react to the activities in general?

Teacher 1: They were willing and curious. Very psychomotorally active.

Teacher 2: They responded very well to most, but there were a few students who didn't like working in groups. (They always complain regardless of the activity)

Teacher 3: Students willingly participated in the proposed exercises. They felt joy and satisfaction with what they do. They were active, creative and willing to cooperate.