



NEWSLETTER OF BERKENDAEL CLASS REPRESENTATIVES

FOR PARENTS BY PARENTS



CHERS PARENTS

Do not hesitate to send us your pictures and brief text to be inserted in the newsletter!

apeee.berkendael@gmail.com

[UCCLEPARENTS.ORG/
BERKENDAEL](http://UCCLEPARENTS.ORG/BERKENDAEL)

Au sommaire

News from BK APEEE working group.....	3
News from school party teams	6
News from periscolaire	6
News from sections.....	7
Reports of recent meetings attended by your parents representatives	8
Update on the fox family.....	10

THE NEWSLETTER TEAM

Editor & Design:

Noemie Beigbeder Tatjana Domnina

Contributors:

Henning Ehrenstein Stephanie Ressort

Margarita Savova-Peyrebrune

Dheepa Rajan Justyne Balasinski

Saskia Hoermann





News from BK APEEE working group

19/03

Report of the meeting of the BK parents representatives

Justyne Balasinski

Saskia Hoermann

1. Update on the enrolment to EEB1 (Berkendael) (see also specific part below)

- Most applications in the first phase were for pupils in the language sections FR, DE and IT. The trend continues that the French section grows more than the others.
- The objective for EEB1 (Berkendael) is not to open classes in new language 'sections' but to consolidate the existing 'sections'.
- The estimated increase for EEB1 (Berkendael) is about 200 pupils for the school year 2019-2020. With this increase, EEB1 (Berkendael) will probably already reach its real capacity. The theoretical capacity of EEB1 (Berkendael) is 1.000 pupils, but only if all three buildings are used and all classes have a maximum of 30 pupils. Currently, this is not the case.
- Some classes might continue to be very small. It is possible that too small classes at different levels will be grouped (for example LV and SK)

2. Transfer from P5 EEB1 (Berkendael) to S1 of another European school

- The problem remains that five European school sites exist for primary level, but only four for secondary level.
- According to the guidelines for the enrolment procedures, EEB1 (Berkendael) P5-pupils will continue to have in general priority 1 for S1-places in other European schools under the condition that places are available. As other European schools only fill their S1-classes with pupils from their own P5 classes first, it's rather unlikely that all P5-pupils of EEB1 (Berkendael) will be able to go to their preferred European school for the secondary level.
- EEB1 Berkendael parent representatives are working hard to lobby for BERK P5 pupils in the present enrolment cycle.

- Beyond the current cycle, possible solutions to the current unclear situation could be:
 - ✓ more clarity in the guidelines on how EEB1 (Berkendael) pupils are treated in the enrolment process for secondary places;
 - ✓ monitoring the possibly available places at S1-level in advance, so that affected parents can make an informed decision where to apply for a S1-place;
 - ✓ more forward planning in the future: parents could be already asked when they enroll to EEB1 (Berkendael) P1-P5 where they will probably enroll their kids for secondary school, so that it is easier the other schools to take these kids into account in their planning.

3. Arts/Loi-Building, NATO-site and EEB1 (Berkendael)

- The Arts/Loi-Building is currently not getting the necessary permissions to open as a European School for S6-S7; new date: 2021.
- Until now, there is no final decision from the government, if the NATO site may be used to build the new EEB5; it is very probable, but the new school would not open before 2025.
- Consideration is also being given to use the NATO site with temporary structures (containers) instead of the Arts/Loi-building.
- EEB1 (Berkendael) will probably become a permanent school, possibly as part of the EEB1 (Uccle).

4. Infrastructure at EEB1 (Berkendael)

- There might be a possible lack of infrastructure at EEB1 (Berkendael) when expanding the eight sections vertically across primary levels.
- One of the three existing buildings at EEB1 (Berkendael) is currently not operational and has to be renovated.
- Already next school year some classes will possibly have to be established in the building of the “garderie”. It is possible that some class rooms have to be shared (class room in the morning, “garderie” in the afternoon). But this has not been decided yet.

5. Organisation of the school party

- There will be bouncy castles, a library corner, demonstrations of extracurricular activities, shows organised by the teachers, a make up-stand, exhibitions, and a raffle.
- Several sections committed to have stands: IT (pizza, atelier), SK (arts and crafts), FR (crêpes), EL (culinary specialties), DE (popcorn and games for smaller kids). Other stands and ideas are welcome.
- For the raffle, gifts are welcome; they should be deposited at the security guards' office (for „Stephanie Ressort“).
- Many volunteers are needed on the day of the school party. All parents are invited to manage a stand for at least 30 minutes. An email with information and a doodle request will follow.
- In previous years, the profits of the school party were invested to buy a piano that is used for periscolaire activities and to part-finance an additional bus service allowing children using the school bus to take part in extracurricular activities on Tuesdays (this initiative still has to be communicated better).

6. Steering group on extracurricular activities

The steering group on extracurricular activities will meet in two weeks. It will decide on the strategy for next year's enrolment to the courses, how to build such courses, additional school buses allowing participation in periscolaire activities etc.



7. Security in the schoolyard

The nursery playground is closed since October 2018 due to a fox family which has settled there. The schoolyard is overcrowded and several accidents happened. However, dislodging the foxes is prohibited by Belgian laws. A solution to this problem is yet to be found.

There are signs that there could be a more aggressive behavior on the schoolyard of the primary school and that more incidents happened in the last months. It has been questioned if there are enough teachers during the school breaks on the schoolyard. It was agreed to ask parents if they know about any incidences in recent months to get a better overview of the situation.

8. AOB

The canteen council discussed a vegetarian day for the canteen but the issue turned out to be very sensitive and controversial.

As parents are not behaving correctly with their cars in the morning, the full closure of circulation in the Rue Berkendael is being considered as an option for the next school year.





News from school party teams

Stephanie Ressort

Lors de la fête du **18 mai**, les enfants seront fiers de vous présenter les différents spectacles qu'ils nous préparent.

Cette année nous sommes heureux de vous annoncer une importante mobilisation de nos enfants et de leurs enseignants.

Les différentes sections seront bien représentées au travers de plusieurs stands, sans oublier la brocante et les activités périscolaires!

Cette année, nous avons décidé d'innover et de vous proposer un souvenirs de cette merveilleuse année sous la forme de sacs en tissus réutilisables avec les dessins de nos enfants.

Vous pouvez les commander via le lien suivant:

<https://forms.gle/tRw2YUsLqNLV1kMS8>

Les sacs seront disponibles lors de la fête de l'école.

Vous recevrez bientôt toutes les informations sur le déroulement de cete journée ainsi que sur les modalités d'inscriptions (**Attention, l'inscription sera obligatoire**).



News from periscolaire

Dheepa Rajan

The periscolaire domain at Berkendael has grown considerably over the last year, with 40 classes on offer, 607 enrollments, and an extra periscolaire-subsidized bus on Tuesday afternoons. A Steering Group with the European School I - Uccle Site has been created to ensure more efficient supervision and management of activities.

Our current periscolaire coordinator will sadly be leaving us at the end of the 2018/19 school year; a recruitment process has already been launched to ensure a seamless transition and a smooth start to the 2019/20 school year. A periscolaire feedback survey will soon be sent out to all parents to gather views and ideas for next year's activity planning.



News from sections

La communauté multiculturelle en fête ! BERKENDAEL

Margarita Savova-Peyrebrune

Честита Баба Марта! Честит Зти март!

En ce mois de mars la communauté multiculturelle de Berkendael a célébré le printemps et la fête nationale bulgare du 3 mars. Les familles se sont rassemblées dans la salle de musique avec l'accueil bienveillant de notre Directeur Monsieur Longo. Nous avons échangé des *martenitsi* traditionnelles – rouge pour une bonne santé, blanc pour le bonheur - et les enfants ont chanté des chansons, dans un cadre décontracté.

Nous souhaitons à tous un merveilleux printemps ensoleillé!



Reports of recent meetings attended by your parents representatives

Update on the Enrolment policy

Henning Ehrenstein, BERK Parent Representative on the Central Enrolment Board

Following the adoption of the enrolment policy and guidelines in December and the end of the first enrolment period at the end of January, the Enrolment Board met on several occasions to discuss the distribution of places at the Brussels European schools for the next school year. Given the fact that the schools in Ixelles, Woluwe and the Uccle site are all overcrowded and Laken is operating at full capacity, it is clear that next year we will see an increased number of pupils at Berkendael. This will be the case both, in maternelle classes (in particular given the continuous and strong growth in application for French language classes in Brussels) and in primary classes given the DE primary section will grow up to P4 level and several P1 classes will be opened in languages so far only taught at maternelle level.

The priority objective throughout the discussions on the Enrolment Board for us has been to help our current P5 children to obtain a place at the school site of their choice when transferring to S1 this summer.

We have had a number of difficult discussions on this and no final decisions are yet communicated. Whatever the outcome will be this year, it is important for parents to be aware that there is no right or guarantee that they obtain an S1 place at the school site of their choice. Yes, Berkendael P5 children enjoy top priority in the allocation of places, but only where such places are available within the existing class structures.

Final decisions on the allocation of available places at all levels will be communicated to parents later this month. Parents will then have the choice whether to accept the offer made or not. For some children and parents coming to Berkendael, this will have been their first choice. Others will come to Berkendael because classes at the school location of their choice were already full. We hope and will work toward ensuring that both groups will enjoy and make most of their time at our school!



Update on the Establishment of the Fifth School

Henning Ehrenstein, APEEE BERK Working Group

The situation as regards the creation and location of the fifth school continues to be evolving and at times confusing. Fact is that to date (early April) no formal decision has been taken by the Belgian Government as to where and when to open that school. Also, no formal decision has yet been made on the temporary solutions to be put into place until the fifth school opens. Press reports to the contrary (eg last summer and winter) are incorrect.

It is very likely that the fifth school will be located on the ex-NATO site in Evere, starting operations perhaps around 2024. Given that the European schools in Brussels are overcrowded, the authorities are looking for a temporary site to be used until the fifth school opens. The preferred option in recent month has been to open this temporary site close to Art-Loi and to use it for upper secondary children.

However, necessary changes to the building permit changes appear difficult to obtain so far. The government may therefore be looking at opening temporary structures in Evere first, while the permanent structures are still being built.

In the meantime, the government is considering, but has not formally decided yet, to make the Berkendael site permanently available to the European schools; so far the site is only temporarily allocated to them. It would be for the European schools to decide how to make best use of the site long-term. Maintaining it as a maternalle and primary school site is the most likely as the infrastructure does not allow for secondary classes to be taught there (eg no adequate science labs).

Update on School Infrastructure

Henning Ehrenstein, on the basis of information provided by school management

The expected growth of student numbers at Berkendael next year will imply that not all classes can be taught anymore in the main building. The preference of the school management, supported by parent representatives, has been to get the Belgian authorities (who manage the infrastructure the school use) to renovate the building in the back of the site that is to date not in use. An assessment of the necessary works has been done and it is still hoped that the building may be renovated in time for the start of the new school year in September.

But even if this was to be the case, some classes will have to move into the building currently accommodating the OIB garderie. Discussions between parent representatives and the school management are ongoing on what this may mean in terms of adjustments that will need to be made to the building if a school class is using a class room during mornings that in the afternoon is used by the garderie (a scenario that should be avoided if possible).



Update on the fox family

Henning Ehrenstein, on the basis of information provided by school management

As most of you will be aware a family of foxes decided last summer to make the maternelle playground its new home. The relevant parts of the playground had to be closed off to avoid the possible transmission of illnesses from the foxes. The school administration held several meetings with Brussels authorities with the objective to remove the foxes from the playground and open the playground again. But foxes are a protected species and their forceful relocation is forbidden by law. Fortunately, after now six months or so, the fox family decided on its own to relocate to a nearby site. Although the fox still appear on the school site from time to time, their relocation allows the school now to go ahead and replace the sand in the concerned sandpit on the playground, which should be re-opened to children after the Easter holidays.