



NEWSLETTER OF BERKENDAEL CLASS REPRESENTATIVES

FOR PARENTS BY PARENTS

Berkendael School

December Newsletter

2019

Chers parents,

Vous aussi pouvez devenir les auteurs de cette newsletter! Avez-vous assisté à une réunion liée aux activités de l'APEEE? Êtes-vous impliqués dans la vie de votre section linguistique? Est-ce qu'il y a des événements ou sujets liés à la vie d'école qui vous intéressent en particulier? Faites-nous part de votre engagement et partagez vos contributions avec la communauté des parents de Berkendael. For parents by parents!

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EDITORIAL

With the Xmas holidays approaching, our thoughts go perhaps ahead, to the next year...

Soon you will start thinking of inscribing siblings, enrolling elder children to the secondary cycle, perhaps also wondering about the future of the Berkendael site or inquiring about the possible fifth school?

Your class representatives follow all issues concerning our school and attend, in their roles of APEEE delegates, countless meetings - for you! In this newsletter, we summarise the important news, so the Berkendael parents can always be up to date.

But hold on, before you start reading! Are there any things in our school that annoy you, disturb you, or - on the contrary - make you happy? Let them know to your class representatives so they can carry your voice to the next administrative meetings!

Or maybe you already have an idea for a project, workshop or event that could contribute to the way our school community is organised? Do not hesitate! There are not only funding opportunities available but first and foremost, there are other parents willing to join you to act together for the benefit of our children!



The fifth European School in Brussels: a mirage?

Henning Ehrenstein

The total student population at the Brussels European schools has this school year reached over 13,400 children. As in previous years, the annual increase of the total student population in Brussels stands at around 400 children. This number stands against the total maximum combined capacity of the Brussels schools of 12,400 children, meaning the schools in Brussels currently operate at over 1,000 children above capacity. This not only begs questions in relation to the safe practical operation of the four Brussels-based schools (the safety of the school sites and children taught there having been an item of discussion at the Board of Governors meeting earlier this December). It also begs the question where we actually stand with the creation of the fifth European school in Brussels.

A saga of delays and inaction

It was back in 2010 (yes, 9 years ago!) that the Board of Governors of the European Schools (essentially the Member States plus the Commission) approved the setting up of the fifth school in Brussels and requested the Belgian government to make the necessary arrangements for a school with a capacity of 2,500 children. In December 2015, the Belgian Council of Ministers finally decided to make a fifth school available for the school year 2019-2020, with Berkendael operating as a temporary site until the new school opens. In October 2018, the Belgian Council of Ministers approved a note providing for the assignment of a plot of land on the site of the former NATO headquarter in Evere for the construction of the fifth school. In December last year, the Belgian authorities informed the Board of Governors of the European Schools that the making available of the fifth school would be at least five years delayed (ie to the 2024-2025 school year). One year has passed – and unfortunately nothing at all has happened so far. In fact, in December this year, the Belgian authorities informed that the fifth school could now not be made available before September 2026 at the earliest (i.e. now seven years later than planned).



Temporary solution?

Given the overpopulation of the existing sites and delays with the construction of the fifth school, the making available of an additional temporary site (additional to the one at Berkendael) has been discussed for the past years. But again, nothing has come of it so far. A building located near Art-Loi was considered in 2018, but as an office building is entirely unsuited to be operated as a school (cf. safety concerns) and the plan seems to be no longer pursued after it became clear that the intended use of the building would have to be formally converted from office space to a school (and back again after the end of its usage as a school), a process not quite so straightforward.

Subsequently, during much of 2019 the option of building a temporary structure (essentially prefabricated building units) on a neighbouring plot to that assigned for the fifth school on the NATO site in Evere was considered, but no decision has been taken on this by the Council of Ministers to date. There are concerns over the costs of setting up a temporary structure for a few years only.

Where does this leave us?

Once – if ever - the fifth school will be in place, it is not unlikely that all children at Berkendael will be transferred there, either when they move from primary to secondary, or already as primary and nursery children. No decision is taken on this yet nor on the potential section and class structure. In the meantime, all families with children at Berkendael are left in the uncomfortable situation in which they do not know where their children move after completion of the primary cycle at Berkendael. Different from any other families, Berkendael families have to re-apply for a place in the secondary cycle for their children. Whereas in other schools, children move up automatically from P5 to S1 classes, Berkendael families must apply for S1 places in Brussels. While they are guaranteed a place at one of the Brussels schools and are given priority over other applicants for S1 places for available places, they get no guarantee of obtaining a place at the Brussels school site of their choice (this is true also for Uccle since Berkendael and Uccle are treated as separate schools for enrolment purposes).



Adoption of Enrolment Guidelines & Publication of Enrolment Policy for the 2020/2021 school year

Henning Ehrenstein

In October the Central Enrolment Authority (CEA) had prepared the guidelines for the enrolment policy for the next school year (see report in the previous newsletter). These were adopted by the CEA against the vote of parents representatives (concerned over the guidelines not adequately reflecting the overcrowding of the Brussels-based schools) and transmitted to the Board of Governors of the European Schools for their adoption in early December. The guidelines have in the meantime been published on the website of the European schools. As previously reported, the guidelines specify that Berkendael P5 children will have first priority in the allocation of S1 places, where such places are available within the foreseen S1 class structure (meaning priority in the allocation of available places: yes; guarantee of getting a place at the site of choice: no). They also specify that in principle no new language sections or satellite sections should be created at BERK.

The Central Enrolment Authority met in December again to prepare the more detailed actual enrolment policy for the next school year, based on the then adopted guidelines. A main issue of discussion were the precise terms under which the mandatory transfer of BERK P5 children to other Brussels-based school sites would take place. There was agreement that transfer requests must be made during the first enrolment phase running until 31 January 2020. There was furthermore agreement that the places offered in the foreseen classes would be those up to the actual maximum class size of 30 children (and not the places available up to the theoretical maximum class size of 26 children) and that the allocation of places would only take place after the Board had re-assessed and decided upon the potential creation of additional S1 FR classes based on 1st phase enrolment applications. Lengthy discussions took place on the relative prioritization of the allocation of places to BERK siblings. Parent representative insisted on changes to the policy ensuring equality of treatment of BERK siblings compared to other siblings (e.g. that are not yet part of the European school system). These changes were agreed and are reflected in the enrolment policy being published.



NEWS FROM ADMINISTRATIVE MEETINGS

MEETING OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD OF THE APEEE SERVICES, 13/11/19

Marek Bobiš

The APEEE Services' ("Services association") Administrative Board held its meeting on 13 November 2019 with only one item of the agenda: change of the statutes of the Services association in order to increase the number of Services association members in its General Assembly and to allow active participation in its Administrative Board.

The two main modifications of the statutes consist in the following:

- any class representative (in both campuses) elected shall automatically become a member of the Services association (and thus of its General Assembly)
- any member of the Services association Administrative Board and Steering committees (e.g. Steering committee on extracurricular activities in BKDL, which is currently led by Stephanie Ressort) shall also automatically become a member of the Services association

As a practical consequence of this statutes' change, any Berkendael class representative can actively participate at Services association General Assembly meetings (the next one has been scheduled for 12 December) and be elected as member of its Administrative Board.



NEWS FROM ADMINISTRATIVE MEETINGS

“GROUPE DE SUIVI” - MEETING OF 21/11/19

Tomas Elsner

The “Groupe de Suivi” usually meets several times a year to discuss the overcrowding situation of the Brussels schools and to follow-up on measures aimed to address this problem, in particular the planned fifth school in Brussels. Such meeting is chaired by the Secretary General of the European Schools (M. Marcheggiano) and comprises delegates from the European Commission (DG HR), the Belgian authorities and Régie des Bâtiments, the school directors, parents representatives (all five APEEEs), as well as teachers' and students' representatives. The local staff committee attend as observers.

Mr Marcheggiano underlined that the overcrowding issue had now become critical in all sites besides Berkendael and informed that he would request safety audits of the current situation at each school, which could potentially also have an effect on future enrolments. Safety audits would take into consideration the total population on each site and not just student population. While he still saw some capacity in Berkendael, he confirmed that there were currently no plans to create additional sections. He noted that if additional capacity is not provided by September 2021, then it will likely be necessary to reject some Category I pupils, a historic first.

The Régie des Bâtiments confirmed that Berkendael would remain at the disposal of the European Schools until the fifth school was delivered, which was for the time being planned for September 2026. The Régie des Bâtiments announced that a decision by the Belgian Council of Ministers regarding a temporary site was still expected before the end of this year. This file has now been split from the request for the fifth school site and the question of the donation of Berkendael, which will be treated at a later time. This temporary site would be built on the former NATO premises, on a plot next to that intended for use for the fifth school, by September 2021, and would be designed for the MAT and PRIM cycles, with a capacity of 1500 children.



According to the current planning – and still subject to an official confirmation by the Belgian Council of Ministers – the fifth European school in Brussels would also be established on the former NATO site, by September 2026, with 2500 students capacity, and would be independent of that temporary site.

Parents' representatives expressed again their discontent with the present situation and lack of clear commitment from the Belgian state. The overcrowding situation continues to aggravate. In this context, a joint statement by all APEEEs had been annexed to the 2020-2021 Enrolment Guidelines that would go to the Board of Governors. Parents felt that capacity was not sufficient even to accommodate the intake for 2020-2021. And in view of the continuous growth in student numbers, parents' representatives questioned whether this additional capacity would indeed be sufficient. Parents' representatives stressed that the current overcrowding situation had an increasingly negative impact on the quality of teaching and the well-being of the children (e.g. stress, risk of accidents, etc.). Directors echoed these concerns. Besides safety audits, this aspect should be evaluated as well. Parents' representatives insisted on a more detailed and longer term planning of capacity, including the use of class rooms and common facilities such as canteens or recreation areas. Parents and the Local Staff Committee urged the Commission to become more involved.



NEWS FROM ADMINISTRATIVE MEETINGS

MEETING OF THE APEEE ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD, 21/11/19

Marek Bobiš

At the meeting of the APEEE Administrative Board held on 21 November 2019, several items of interest for the Berkendael campus were raised. Apart from the information on the state of play of creation of the fifth school in Brussels (see summary on Groupe de suivi above), meetings of parents' representatives with the management of the EEB1 and the Secretary General of the European Schools, the following items were discussed:

Proposal to set up a Gifted Students Network, aiming to create an effective educational support strategy for gifted pupils and a network of support for pupils and parents, allowing them to identify common problems, share information, propose activities or workshops etc.;

2018-2019 Draft Financial Report and 2019-2020 Proposed Budget, which will subsequently be adopted by the APEEE General Assembly on 12 December 2019;

Debriefing reports from funded projects (they could be well replicated in our campus – if adopted by the Berkendael volunteers - such as Internet Safety, and First Aid):

As regards the Internet safety project, parents of the Polish section (Uccle) decided to organise a series of dedicated interactive workshops on internet safety, receiving a financial contribution of 300 EUR from the APEEE. The project, organised in Polish, covered many issues starting from understanding the concept of global net, blogs, internet stores, social media, but also included topics like personal information, social networking, downloading, cyberbullying, gaming, digital footprints, online reputation, and many more.

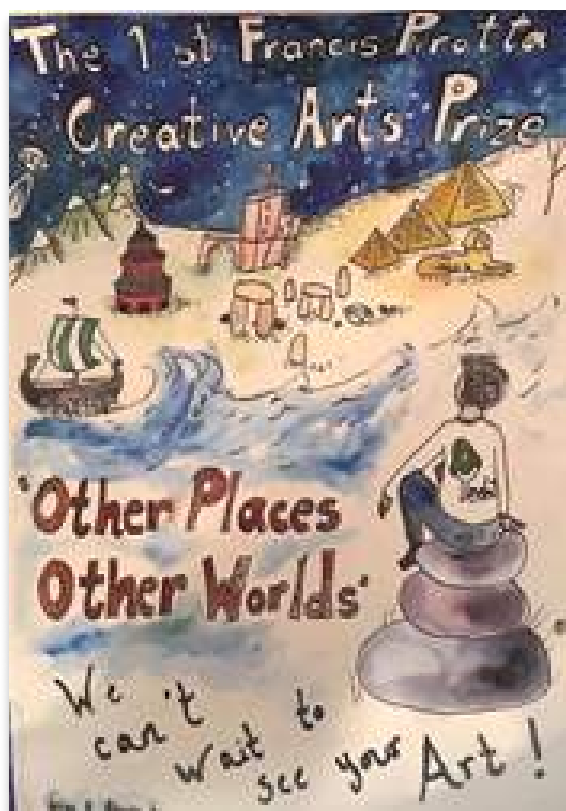


The First Aid project called "Save and learn how to save" aimed to instruct attending children some basic first aid techniques. The training, run by the professionals from The Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity foundation, consisted of theoretical and practical parts, but the emphasis was on practice. Trainers repeated several times that the rules are important but hands-on exercises are the most important. As part of the training, the organisers brought and passed 11 phantoms for first aid exercises to the school free of charge, to be used for further educational purposes.

Special attention was given to the **Francis Pirotta Creative Arts Prize**, organised in memory of Francis Pirotta, a pupil from the Uccle campus who passed away unexpectedly in May 2018.



His father presented the results of the competition, the uptake and outreach of the competition itself, the winning pieces of art and information on the continuation of the competition in 2020. Given the time frame and resources at hand, different options of Berkendael pupils participating in the competition as of the next academic year are now being explored.





NEWS FROM ADMINISTRATIVE MEETINGS

ELECTIONS WITHIN THE BERKENDAEI WORKING GROUP FOR FIVE POSTS IN THE APEEE ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD, 26/11/19

Marek Bobiš

With the change in the Statutes of the APEEE Administrative Board (mentioned in the previous newsletter), the Berkendael site shall be represented by five voting members as of this 12 December General Assembly. Henning Ehrenstein, Gundars Ostrovskis and Marek Bobiš, BK parents' representatives elected last year by the General Assembly on a two-years mandate for the additional seats allocated to membership in personal capacity, had stepped down from these posts in order to run in elections among other members of the Berkendael Working Group.

Subsequently, on 26 November, the Berkendael Working Group held elections for the five posts of the Berkendael voting members in the APEEE Administrative Board. The following section representatives were elected (in alphabetical order):

BEIGBEDER Noemie (FR)

BOBIS Marek (SK)

EHRENSTEIN Henning (DE)

KARAKOSTA Christina (EL)

OSTROVSKIS Gundars (LV)

The members of the Working Group also agreed that the following section representatives/deputies would be deputies also for the APEEE Administrative Board (they may attend Board's meetings but without the right to vote):

ELSNER Thomas (DE)

HACKBART Bartek (FR)

MARINO ENRIQUEZ Alba (ES)



Call for funding: presentation of projects proposed by BRK parents

Marianne Hodoul

L'APEEE Bruxelles I (Uccle + Berkendael) compte parmi ses réalisations le financement de projets par des bourses.

L'appel à projets a lieu 2 fois par an. Les projets peuvent être soumis par les élèves, les enseignants ou les parents d'élèves. Les thèmes d'intérêt sont très larges, ils comprennent entre autres : la création de liens entre Uccle et Berkendael, la tolérance, l'écologie, l'art, et de manière plus générale le bien être des enfants à l'école sous toutes ses formes. Les thèmes sont listés en détail sur la page web dédiée :

<http://www.uccleparents.org/apeee/subventions-de-projets/?lang=en>

Le dernier appel à projets a été clos le 25 octobre. La totalité de la somme allouée sera de 8000 €. Pour vous donner une idée des projets, nous vous présentons ceux qui ont été soumis par la communauté de Berkendael.

Nous espérons que ces exemples (les projets lauréats n'ont pas encore été choisis) vous montreront que chacun peut à son échelle contribuer à la vie de la communauté scolaire et vous inciteront à faire éclore vos idées:

Conférences pour les parents sur les gestes mentaux d'apprentissage et mise en pratique

The principles of analysis and awareness of "mental gestures of learning" ("gestion mentale" / "gestes mentaux d'apprentissage" in French) are a practical and benevolent gateway to discover the paths taken by our thoughts and our brain to learn: being mindful/vigilant ("attentif" in French), understanding, memorizing, imagining, projecting oneself...



The project aims at the organisation of two lectures/workshops, of 2 hours each, with 2 professionals of "mental gestures of learning". During those workshops participants (parents and teachers together) will be able to discover, to exchange, and to put into practice - also at home / in class in between both dates. The objective of the lectures/workshops is to get to know the gestures and to experience them to become aware of their usefulness with our own children/students.

This is the second time the project has been submitted for the APEEE call as the auteur (Noémi Beigbeder) is convinced, based on her personal experience, that it will help parents to better help/support their kids in their learning journey.

eTwinning project between P1EL and Ano Syros Primary school in Greece

This submitted project could run at the Science and Maths Coding Club, as among its pedagogical goals are acquisition of experimental skills and exploration of the S.T.E.M. and S.T.E.A.M. sector, meaning that children learn how to work as scientists and in groups, learn about computational thinking unplugged and plugged (how to code using lego we do). Students from different schools, separated in international groups, would work together to find solutions for each challenge.

The founders of the project, Thoma Ralia (EEB I – site Berkendael) and Farasopoulos Nektarios (Primary school of Ano Syros) are eTwinners who have already won Greek and European eTwinning quality labels, organize workshops for teachers about STEM and STEAM education.

Basic material for the Berkendael music room

Music is an important part of the education of our students. It helps them to learn to respect, to know and to be interested in the other.

Berkendael music room could be improved in so many ways, equipping it first of all with the instruments and materials. At present there are several djembés, some other percussion instruments and a piano.

The main idea of this project is to help the school to achieve a music room properly equipped - with all kinds of instruments that could well introduce students in the world of music, and help them to learn to love and enjoy playing and listening to music.



Conférence « Communication positive, l'approche Faber et Mazlich »

Marianne Hodoul



Vendredi 15 novembre, nous étions nombreux à avoir répondu à l'invitation à cette conférence sur la communication positive. L'amphi était plein et le webstreaming a été fortement suivi également.

Les deux oratrices Marylin Segat et Laurence Demanet nous ont fait un show constitué de multiples saynètes à faire rire, souvent jaune, réagir et réfléchir sur les écueils de la communication entre parents et enfants.

Le principe de base, c'est toujours **d'accueillir les émotions**, c'est à dire écouter et reformuler sans jugement ni projection de nos propres émotions. Typiquement : ne pas dire « ce n'est rien » à un enfant qui vient de se faire mal parce que ça nous fait de la peine qu'il souffre. Le cerveau d'un enfant trop plein d'émotions n'a pas de place disponible pour le raisonnement. L'empathie permet de faire descendre le niveau d'émotions, provoque l'envie de communiquer chez l'interlocuteur et permet au final de **conserver la relation** entre les personnes.

Différents objectifs de la communication enfant/parent ont ensuite été abordés, toujours en se demandant d'abord quel est l'effet chez l'enfant des réactions d'une réponse éducative « classique » et en proposant ensuite d'autres façons de faire appelées « habiletés » qui ne fonctionneront pas forcément chez tous les enfants mais qui constituent toujours une base pour réfléchir et évoluer.



- **Susciter la coopération** : en particulier parce que nos demandes de parents , innombrables au cours de la journée d'un enfant, interrompent souvent ses activités.
- **Remplacer la punition et la récompense** : car la punition n'engendre que la soumission ou la rébellion et ne permet pas à l'enfant de comprendre. Il faut réussir à comprendre les mécanismes et émotions sous-jacents (en cas d'agressivité par exemple) et permettre à l'enfant de réparer son erreur.
- **Développer l'autonomie** : en n'imposant pas son aide à l'enfant lorsqu'il est devant une difficulté. Difficile pour nous de lâcher prise sur l'efficacité et le temps nécessaire à l'enfant pour résoudre son problème, mais il a besoin de faire ses expériences pour la développer, cette autonomie.
- **Nourrir l'estime de soi** : comment ne pas complimenter une réalisation ou un comportement de l'enfant pour éviter la motivation extrinsèque (faire plaisir à l'adulte qui juge) mais réussir à développer sa motivation intrinsèque (être fier de ce qu'on a fait).
- **Sortir des rôles et des étiquettes** que l'on attribue consciemment ou non, et dont les enfants ne peuvent sortir sous peine de se sentir déloyaux aux parents. Il faut différencier la personne de son acte. Cela permet à l'enfant d'oser changer et d'assumer les conséquences de ses actes sans se réfugier derrière son étiquette (exemple typique : l'enfant « maladroit »).

Ces techniques de communication inspirées de la Communication Non Violente appliquée aux relations parents/enfants sont de plus en plus connues et leurs bases scientifiques reconnues. Les personnes qui ne connaissaient pas encore le sujet trouveront nombre d'explications et de formations sur Internet. Pour commencer, vous pouvez vous rendre sur le site de l'éditeur en français des ouvrages d'Adele Faber et Elaine Mazlich : <https://www.auxeditionsduphare.com/> ainsi que sur le site officiel du réseau de formateurs en langue française : <http://www.ateliersfabermazlish.com/>. Le premier livre s'appelle Parler pour que les enfants écoutent, écouter pour que les enfants parlent mais il en existe d'autres orientées sur les relations entre frères et soeurs, entre élèves et professeurs... Je conseille également à titre personnel la lecture des livres d'Isabelle Filliozat, en particulier J'ai tout essayé pour les enfants d'âge préscolaire/maternel et Il me cherche pour les enfants d'âge primaire, eux aussi orientés directement sur des comportements typiques d'enfants, leur explication neurologique succincte et des suggestions d'autres manières de faire.



Poux / Lice

Marianne Hodoul

**les poux
sont de retour!**



pensez à vérifier la tête de votre enfant

Nous recevons régulièrement les mails de Marie-France Adechoubou l'infirmière de l'école au sujet des épidémies de poux sur les têtes de nos enfants.

Voici quelques points importants à garder en tête pour le bien être de tous les enfants :

- Les poux ne sont pas dangereux ; c'est seulement très gênant à cause des démangeaisons qu'ils provoquent.
- Tout le monde peut attraper des poux, ce n'est pas lié à une mauvaise hygiène.
- En revanche les traitements sont déconseillés en prévention.
- Il existe plusieurs traitements dont l'efficacité a été démontrée. Le traitement est toujours de longue haleine car il faut éliminer les poux nouveaux nés après leur éclosion qui a lieu 7 à 10 jours après la ponte.
 - Avec les insecticides (malathion ou pyréthrine), un contrôle doit être effectué après 7 à 10 jours et le traitement répété si nécessaire. Il faut changer de molécule si le second contrôle montre la persistance des poux.
 - Avec les traitements à base de silicone (diméthicone), il faut répéter à 7 jours.
 - Le traitement mécanique avec le peigne à poux nécessite une bonne technique de peignage ainsi que de la patience et de la persévérance car il faut répéter l'opération au moins 4 fois dans les 2 semaines suivantes.

Il est fortement conseillé de lire le site <https://danseaveclepoux.be> qui explique de manière très précise comment bien rechercher les poux et qui présente les différents traitements avec la bonne manière de les appliquer, leurs avantages et inconvénients et vous permettra de faire votre choix et d'avoir une technique efficace.