

APEEE Well-being Working Group – Group de travail Bien Être de l’APEEE

Scope of the group

The working group aims at exploring, proposing and developing initiatives to ensure pupils’ well-being at school. The group is divided in small subgroups per topic, with one or few members assigned to each project. The group communicates through emails or phone. Periodical meetings, if necessary, are foreseen to discuss, brainstorm and agree on new initiatives.

Mission

The mission of the well-being group is to improve the aspects of school life that are beyond the purely pedagogical aspects, such as emotional balance about life in school (mainly in class and in recess) and its environment, building a healthy relationship with other pupils/students and teachers (or helping them to develop this ability) and indirectly quality and safety of the physical environment. In the last few years, the groups have started focusing also on mental health of the pupils. Our target audience is both pupils, teachers as the main pedagogical reference guide, as well as parents, as main reference educational guide for pupils.

Our main channels are:

- Ateliers/intervention in class, as we believe this are very effective way to closely interact and increase awareness in both pupils and teachers; teachers’ training where possible; and
- Parent’s conferences.

The WG plans to report annually the status and progress of its activities.

Group initiatives

- **Emotional Intelligence**, prevention program in primary;
- **EVRAS**: prevention program under implementation in secondary;
- **Substance abuse and prevention** (secondary): policy/prevention program under discussion;
- **Digital risks**: policy and prevention program under development;
- **Mindfulness**: prevention program to be explored for secondary;
- **Value**: prevention program implemented in secondary;
- **Several conferences**: digital risks, mental health (for students, parents and educators);
- **Child protection task force, Smartphone policy task force**: ongoing, but good progresses achieved;
- **Mediation**, assertive communication and conflicts’ management to be explored;
- **Mental Health**, healthy school project to be explored.

Group Composition (Member of the group, Main responsibilities)

DAGOSTINI Sara - Group Coordinator, Child protection Task force, Mental health, parents conferences

SZABO Kriszta - Deputy Coordinator, Substance abuse and prevention/Mindfulness

CAMBAS Caroline - Digital issues, Smartphone Task force Lead

MARTINEZ Lucia - Smartphone Task force

BOATI Talia - Smartphone Task force, CyberBullying

BEIGBEDER Noémie - Digital issues, Safe Internet

SIREN Jarkko - Bullying, Safe internet

SIAENS Corinne – EVRAS : Affectivité/sexualité

ORTIZ Veronica _ EVRAS : Affectivité/sexualité

MORTE Cristina – Emotional Intelligence, Values

GUITART Marc – Mental Health

SCHAT-EPPERS Malene – Mental health

BENGOETXEA Endika – Digital issues

MARMUROWICZ Malgorzata – Bien Être Berkendael

Outlook for 2021-2022

The focus for the school year 2021-2022 is well-being: mental health both for students and parents and continuity of programs for students. Early September during a fruitful meeting between school and WB group, a proposal for a WB framework was discussed and agreed. The framework defines a tailor-made WB activity for each level based on the challenges faced by pupils at that age. A school and WB APEE representative were assigned for each level and WB activity. In primary, the emotional intelligence project has kicked off: implementation started in November. In Secondary, the group has worked on the continuation of EVRAS and Values in the current Covid context. It has also supported the school to design a prevention and substance abuse pilot programme, as well as with the selection of external association as trainer. The group continues focusing on the use of screens and a safe online behaviour, possibly designing an awareness campaign. Last but not least, the group is exploring ways to introduce Mindfulness or stress related WB activities in upper secondary.

Actions carried out in 2020-2021

The 2020-2021 school year has been uncertain and not easy. Several initiatives for the pupils were not allowed, as the school's safety measures were restrictive and limited access for outside experts.

In Primary, the group proposed Emotional Intelligence workshops. These were agreed and ready for implementation in P4-P5 at Uccle by early 2021-2022. The group also organised a pilot project on safe internet called CyberHeroes in P5 at Berkendael. The positive feedback has encouraged us to extend both projects to the sister campuses. The KiVA anti-bullying programme continues to be run by the school at both campuses, with increased attention at Berkendael. At parents' request, the school plans to extend KiVA to early Secondary in 2021-2022.

In Secondary, the school task force on substance abuse, addiction and prevention remained on hold, so there was no progress on an updated Substance Abuse and Prevention Policy. Moreover, there was still no drug programme in place this year, nor conferences held on this issue. The EVRAS programme remained on hold as well. The Values programme was run this year under the topic "Impact of COVID on teens". It started in June 2021, covering S1; the rest of the Secondary cycle was postponed to 2021-2022.

The Mobile Phone Policy task force continued its work this year, seeking a common line with teachers and CdE representatives. Initial guidelines were drafted aimed at building a healthy smartphone culture. The task force worked intensively and produced a good draft by June 2021. This document has not been presented to the Secondary Education Councils by school year end, but sent for internal consultation.

In addition, several online conferences for parents were organised:

- April 2021: Conference: "Parenting teenagers: an evolving challenge", with psychologist/sexologist Thérèse Hargot.
- May 2021: Information session: "Teenagers and families: how to cope with this difficult period", with school psychologist Yannik Gladsteen.
- June 2021: Conference for parents, teachers and students from P5 to S4 "Internet, Social Networks, Cyberbullying, Pornography and Online Games", with consultant Christophe Butstraen.

Other initiatives aimed at parents include: a "High Five" card with tips to support parents and students through the COVID period (sent via the May 2021 APEEE NewsFlash); a tip sheet on social media behaviour; and links to relevant resources and events (posted on APEEE's Facebook page).