

ANNUAL REPORT

2018

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I - INTRODUCTION

Dear Parents, dear all,

On behalf of the APEEE Board, I am honoured to present the 2018 Annual Report. The aim of this document is to give an overview of our activities during the year, focusing on the most important areas.

The Report cannot be exhaustive. It would be impossible to present all we have done, the discussions held, the initiatives put forward, and the decisions taken. As a small group of committed parents, we have done our best to cope with the diverse and challenging issues facing us.

You will read about some of the achievements of our different working groups below. A number of challenges are still unresolved. They will be proposed as top priorities to the next Board for which we hope to have solidly paved the way.

In one way or another, all these challenges are closely related to one top priority: ensuring that any decision taken on the forthcoming new school (and/or temporary site) is adopted by the relevant authorities taking full account of the legitimate interests of our children. You have all been informed about the plans for a temporary site in Brussels, pending completion of the 5th European school in Brussels. As the APEEE, we are aware of the importance of combating overcrowding in our school. However, we cannot accept any compromise that would seriously risk the wellbeing of our children and their right to study in a suitable environment. I am sure that the next Board will be fully dedicated to this issue.

Let me conclude this short introduction with some words for the people working with us. Whenever we have succeeded as a Board, a big part of the credit is due to our extremely supportive and professional staff. We offer our sincere thanks to each and every one of them.

A word of acknowledgment also to my colleagues on the APEEE Board: the “old” ones for accepting the greatest responsibilities on the Board and setting such high standards, the “new” ones for being so enthusiastic, creative and full of new ideas. Together we have worked as a great team. It is a pity that not all will be able to continue, but we are sure that the new members who will be joining will find themselves in a convivial and motivating environment in which to make a meaningful contribution. Being part of the Board is an exciting experience, I warmly invite you to consider this opportunity.

My thanks also to the school management for accepting to discuss with us such a wide range of potential policies and decisions, and for always being open to dialogue, even where views diverged. I sincerely hope that this working cooperation will last into the future.

Finally, thanks to you, the parents, in particular to the Class Reps and to the volunteers for their wonderful contributions. Our appreciation goes to all those who got involved this year and especially to those who, with their dedication and engagement, inspired us to go the necessary extra mile.

Francesca Tudini
President

II - EDUCATIONAL MATTERS

Pedagogical issues are at the core of the APEEE's work. Many of the issues are dealt and discussed within several of the working groups. We list here the most critical issues dealt with by the relevant working groups this year.

II-1 - Interparents (www.interparents@interparents.eu)

Representatives of the Parents' Association

Members of the Administrative Board

- Mr Andreas Rogal (EN), Group Coordinator
- Mr Jan von Pfaler (FI)

Interparents (IP) is the designated representative organ for the parents of all European Schools. It formulates positions of the parents and participates, with voting rights, in the organs of the European school's system level administration including the Board of Governors (BoG), Budgetary Committee (BC), Joint Teaching Committee (JTC) and related Working Groups, and it represents parents vis à vis the Office of the Secretary General (OSGES). Internally, IP's work is divided into topical working groups and collective meetings.

Our APEEE has been represented by Andreas Rogal and/or Jan von Pfaler at the five two-day meetings of Interparents (three in Brussels, and one each in Bergen and in Mol). In addition, our representatives have participated in Working Group meetings, in the two meetings of the Joint Teaching Committee and in meetings with OSGES. These meetings were prepared through a combination of internal working group meetings and IP meetings.

The issues raised in the European school system as a whole have consequences, often long term, for the individual schools. Regrettably, there often has not been enough time available for discussion of these matters in the APEEE board and at school level.

Below is our list of the topics which have been of particular interest this year:

Assessment reform (the new marking scale): the secondary school (up to S5 this year) adopted a new assessment structure as of the start of the current school year. The visible but perhaps least important change is that of "scale" from number (0-10) to letter (A-F) in lower secondary. The real change involves a fundamentally different approach to assessment that changes the criteria of the assessment itself. The new structure is designed to be an opportunity to establish common ground and a harmonised approach to assessment across all European schools and sections. Grades will and should change, and everybody should understand the new and changed assessment criteria. This change will and should also affect the conversion tables of European schools (ES) grades to the national systems relevant particularly to entry into higher education, including universities. Interparents is closely following the various aspects of the adoption process, but for the proper implementation, school level engagement of teachers and pupils (and their parents) is crucial.

Baccalaureate: Since 2016/17, Interparents has been compiling concerns regarding the Baccalaureate examinations, including issues arising during their performance, and submitting these to the BAC Unit of OSGES. The aim is to enable potential remedies to be found for any deficiencies as soon as possible and also to help parents and pupils to assess if they have a reason to raise a formal complaint.

There is also increasing pressure to review the Baccalaureate itself. In particular, the role of the pre-BAC has been questioned. The IP has been supporting a reassessment of the BAC but has

generally been advising strongly against changing the structure without proper vision, planning and implementation periods.

Language policy: Language policy has been intensively discussed in the framework of aiming for a common language policy at all European schools. The critical issues concern the use of vehicular (L2) and L3 languages in teaching other subjects. It also aims to determine the fundamental basis for what is relevant for a pupil's choice of language section.

Financing: The so-called cost sharing agreement determines which part of a school's and the school system's costs are financed by the Member States and which by the EU institutions, and on what grounds. Member States' contributions fundamentally consist of the provision and financing of seconded teachers to the schools. This contribution relative to the need has decreased during the current agreement, thereby increasing the use of locally hired teachers (fully paid by the Institutions). Also, the contractual conditions of locally hired teachers are making it increasingly difficult to recruit teachers, particularly in Luxembourg, but also in Brussels and in some schools in Germany, notably Karlsruhe.

Brexit: the effect of all potential Brexit scenarios on - particularly, but by no means exclusively - UK teachers, and the access of European school graduates to UK universities, has been a critical topic of discussion.

Future of the Brussels Schools: Interparents represented the parents' view in the BoG on the enlargement of the school system in Brussels.

Inclusiveness and Educational Support: A "Report on Inclusive Education in the European Schools" has been drafted and presented to the Budgetary Committee early in November and has been on the agenda of the BoG meeting in December this year. Equally, an "Evaluation Report on the Implementation of the Educational Support Policy in the European Schools" has been on the December BoG's agenda, having been presented to the Budgetary Committee initially. These recent efforts come amid increasing pressure for more inclusiveness by parents, by the UN through its 2016 guidelines on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and by NGOs, most recently Human Rights Watch and the European Disability Forum who have just published a critical joint report, "'Sink or Swim': Barriers for Children with Disabilities in the European School System".

Next year all the above-mentioned topics are likely to remain on the agenda. In addition, work on further aspects of the reform of the secondary school, including the reform of the BAC, is scheduled to start.

The Working Group and its members encourage all discussion around and feedback on the above topics. See also <http://interparents.eu> for selected communications.

II-2 - Primary and nursery educational group – CEP&M

Representatives of the Parents' Association

Members of the Administrative Board

- Mr Anthony Bisch (DE), Group Coordinator
- Ms Ruta Avulyte-Jelage until September. As of September Jovita Lazdiniene (LT)
- Ms Ana Dumitrache (FR) – Back-up: Ms Mounia Benyahia
- Mr Bengt Davidsson (SV) - Back-up: Christian Bondeson-Eggert
- Mr Jeroen Janss (NL) – Back-up Sanjee Goonetilake
- Ms Saïda Khanboudi (EN) – Back-up: Mr Andreas Rogal
- Mr Albert Raedler (DE) – Back-up: Mr Anthony Bisch
- Mr Guido Ricci (IT) – Back-up: Ms Francesca Tudini
- Ms Cristina P.M. Sarmiento until September. As of September Manuela Caramujo (PT)

- Mr Jan von Pfaler (FI)

Parent volunteer:

- Sara Roda (PT)

The task of the **Education Council for the nursery and primary (CEP&M)** is to seek optimum conditions for effective teaching and to promote positive and stimulating human relations, in particular by introducing all measures likely to highlight the school's European character¹. No individual issue is addressed at the Educational Council. The CEP&M is composed of Deputy Director Mr. Arnedo, of elected representatives of the teaching staff and of elected representatives of the Parents' Association (APEEE).

The CEP&M met quarterly four times during the mandate period (02/2018-01/2019).

The APEEE CEP&M Working Group aims at identifying parent's concerns and bring them onto the school's management agenda, informs and replies to parents' questions related to primary and nursery, provides support and advice through section Board representatives (the list is available at the beginning of the section).

The members of the APEEE CEP&M Working Group prepare the CEP&M meetings as well as address a large spectrum of issues on an-hoc basis. Parent section representatives (see the list above) act as contact points for parents in their sections. They organised several information sessions and meetings with class representatives and parents of their section during the year.

School population situation for the nursery and primary 6/12/2018

	DE	EN	FI	FR		IT	LT	NL	PT		SV		Total	Classes
M1 (2014)	10	10	10	8	9	9	5	7	8	9	8	8	101	12
M2 (2013)	17	18	11	15	15	5	15	12	9	8	8	8	141	
Sous-total Maternelle	27	28	21	23	24	14	20	19	17	17	16	16	242	12
P1 (2012)	18	17	17	11	20	19	20	17	20	20	20		199	11
P2 (2011)	17	22	26	23	23	22	19	10	30		24		216	10
P3 (2010)	21	21	21	27	27	18	22	15	22		23		217	10
P4 (2009)	28	27	24	28	27	19	14	19	19		24		229	10
P5 (2008)	16	18	25	29	28	21	20	18	24		20		219	10
Sous-total primaire	100	122	107	251		100	92	82	115		111		1080	51

You can find below a non-exhaustive list of the utmost issues discussed during the period.

¹ Article 21(2) du [règlement général des écoles européennes](#)

Overcrowding and its negative impacts on pupils and school community remains a general concern. The situation lightly improved at primary and nursery level. The number of pupils decreased to approx. 1325, down 4% compared to previous school year.

Teacher absence was a largely discussed topic over the year. Some sections, especially the Swedish one, were particularly impacted. This issue triggers the information of the parents and the effective replacement of the concerned teacher.

Regarding parent's information, the automatic notification of the info class representative was agreed and worked well for a limited period of time. Meanwhile it was suspended.

The replacement of a teacher cannot always be assured with a person speaking the language of the section.

Preventing bullying and violence in the playground was a highly discussed topic. The management took concrete actions (yellow angels, silent room, mechanism to inform parents...) to address this issue. We also acknowledge the positive impact of the CARE team. Nevertheless, we remain concerned by the negative impact of overcrowding and fully aware that parents consider that more could be done.

Communication between parents/teachers remains a field of discussion for improvement. Communications practices, frequency and level of details diverge from one section to the other. We consider that there are two aspects: one relates to the general communication on what is done at class level and the other relates on the personal feedback for each child.

Regarding general communication, we support the possibility to have more regular communication on what is currently done in the class to allow parents to better grasp what their child is currently studying. This could be achieved by the means of guidelines based on school's best practices.

Concerning the personal feedback for each child, we looked into the possibility for organising a second carnet oral. Nevertheless, the decision does not fall in the remit of the school. We would like to increase the possibility for parents to have personal feedback on their child more often and to be informed on their strengths and weaknesses in order for parents to support them. In fact it is always possible to ask for an appointment with the teacher for feedback or to discuss any specific issue.

Learning support. The school is not always able to find candidates with adequate profiles and relevant language skills to perform learning support. The management has made available an e-form for any person potentially interested to work at school and invites parents to circulate it. More information on this question is provided under the section on Learning support.

Classe de neige will be organised this year. The decision to go by bus instead of train was challenged by an important number of class delegates and parents who would have preferred an earlier consultation.

Teachers' recruitment and impact of Brexit: At this stage (December 2018), there is no clear information on whether UK will remain part of the European school system. However, Ireland already confirms not to be in a position to cover all needs.

Primary and nursery building infrastructure were largely discussed at CEP&M to highlight several major issues negatively impacting the safety and health of our children as well as of the teachers. The main issues related to the over-heating and non-sufficient ventilation of the 3rd level of the primary building, the outdoor fire escape from 3rd floor, heating regulatory system in nursery, humidity of the walls in some classrooms.

Belgian authorities, in particular the Régie des Bâtiments, is responsible for performing structural works to allow all pupils to study and teachers and other staff to work in an environment complying with the relevant health and safety legislation.

The Health Security and Safety working group is dealing with infrastructure issues in which forum infrastructure discussions mainly take place. You can find more information under the dedicated section.

Repainting of the classes is also becoming essential as classrooms have not been repainted since the school was built (1974). In one case in the German section, parents took the initiative to repaint themselves. Budget resources are expected to be available for major redecoration of classrooms in 2020.

II-3 - Secondary education group – CEES

Representatives of the Parents' Association

Members of the Administrative Board

- Ms Vanessa Aulehla (IT), Group coordinator
- Ms Vanessa Aulehla (IT) – Back-up: Mr Guido Ricci
- Ms Mounia Benyahia (FR) - Back-up: Ms Ana Dumitrache
- Ms Manuela Caramujo (PT)
- Ms Katarzyna Horemans (NL) – Back-up: Ms Sanjee Goonetilake
- Ms Jovita Lazdinienė (LT) – Back-up: Ruta Avulyte-Jelage
- Mr Johan Melander (SV) – Back-up: Bengt Davidsson
- Mr Andreas Rogal (EN)
- Ms Johanna Saarentalo-Vuorimäki (FI)
- Ms Bettina Schmidbauer-Mogensen (DE)

Enlarged Secondary Education Council (Conseil d'Education Elargie Secondaire - CEES):

The CEES consists of the Director of the School, the Deputy Director for Secondary, four parent representatives, and pupil and teacher representatives. Its task is to monitor the daily operations of the secondary school, discuss problems and seek better conditions for effective teaching and quality in our school, and promote positive and stimulating relationships between all those involved in school life. Its work also feeds into meetings of the SAC (School Advisory Council), IP (Interparents) and CA (Administrative Board). It meets about four times per year.

The parent representatives (as the 'Secondary Education Group') meet or exchange emails to prepare the CEES meetings and some sections also hold section meetings. Parent section representatives act as contact points for parents in their sections. Parent representatives also participate in specific ad hoc working groups established by the school.

The CEES met four times in 2018: on 22 February; 24 April; 27 September and 18 December.

To fix the agenda of the secondary working group - that has as its goals to work on common goals of the parents of the 1750 students - is always a challenge.

The points here below are the topics on which we were able to find common lines between us. In addition, we were in contact with many parents that asked for information or who put us in copy when addressing issues with the school management. Sometimes we were kind of a mediator between parents and school. We were often able to reassure parents simply by providing them with the missing information and to channel problems in the most evidence-based, constructive and calm way between school management, teachers and parents. We hope this works to the benefit

not only of the parents we represent but also the students and teachers of this highly complex and challenging school.

School population situation 6/12/2018

	DE	EN		FI		FR			IT	LT	NL	PT		SV		TOTAL	classe s	
S1 (2007)	21	26		25		26	2	26	27	14	21	21		17	19	269	12	
S2 (2006)	19	1	18	24		22	2	2	2	18	10	17	26		22		262	13
S3 (2005)	22	15		1	1	29	2	22	26	13	26	30		16	20	277	13	
S4 (2004)	22	26		28		27	28		26	12	26	27		30		252	10	
S5 (2003)	25	1	15	2		27	26		22		19	17		24		225	11	
S6 (2002)	18	1	17	1	1	25	25		26		13	30		16	17	220	10	
S7 (2001)	23	2	18	1		29	23		27		12	1	15	15	17	245	13	
SOUS-TOTAL SECONDAIRE	150	208		209		448			172	49	134	180		200		1750	82	

Streaming policy of English and French L2 (S1 to S3)

The issue was discussed at various occasions. We agreed with the school management that an assessment will be made still in this school year which should be focused on the large majority of students in the normal classes. Furthermore, as in many cases students of the higher-level classes seem to have already in S1 the required S3 level, it would be interesting to understand what educational goals covered by the syllabus the teachers have for these classes and students.

Background: Since 2016 the school has established so-called higher-level classes in L2 English and French, an exception to the normal school policy of mixed ability classes. The syllabus for L2 in English/ French is to teach A1 level in S1, A2 level in second year and B1 level in third year. That is what is required by the syllabus as developed by the board of inspectors for all language sections. The school has created one advanced level group for the L2 French and English courses in S1, S2 and S3, which will bring together pupils who demonstrate a level of skill far above that of the rest of the group not only in speaking but also, and more importantly, in writing. (*This system will not be put in place for German L2 and we still have only one group for this language*). The official skill level to be reached remains the same for all groups. It will be evaluated in a similar manner for all groups throughout the different tests and exams.

By creating this group the school feels the most advanced pupils will benefit by being able to work with material more suited to their level, whilst also increasing the quality of differentiation across the mixed ability groups. As the skill levels within the other groups will be balanced, no bottom group will be created. Each group will therefore be more homogeneous, which means that teachers will more easily be able to reach their goals through differentiation. The makeup of the groups should in principle reflect that of this year, although the groups may fluctuate a bit depending on the criteria set by teachers. Of course, opinions will differ about differentiation, but the majority

thinks that differentiation improves when the set of abilities across the group are more evenly spread.

Goal: By S4, the gap between classes should be minimal and all students should be ready for the same material.

See APEEE board minutes of 5 March, 24 April 2018

Career counselling - orientation

School management informed that the Career counselling – orientation activities will be restructured giving students more possibilities to get information on other universities than the ones in their L1 language. Parents have volunteered over the year to help teachers organising university fairs, counselling etc. and offered school further assistance in finding professional career and university counsellors for all sections and students.

See APEEE board minutes of 24 April 2018

Improve the S3/4 preau

After requests made by parents and students the following improvements have been implemented since the May holidays: smoke detectors installed in toilets; the art classes decorated the preau and painted the toilets; S3/4 students are given access to the S1/S2 preau at lunch time when the S1/2 students are not using it. Notwithstanding this, parents made the point that the preau for S3/S4 students in the middle of the adolescence it is really not a good place and nobody needs to wonder if students become aggressive there. Best option would be to transfer S3/S4 preau to a more central and decent area of the school

See APEEE board minutes of 5 March, 24 April and 15 October 2018

Mobile phones

On the basis of an APEEE survey among parents on the use of mobile phones during school, a working group was established with school management, teachers, students, parents and IR specialists. The survey showed that a clear majority of parents agree with the school imposing stricter rules on mobile phones in the classrooms. The school management welcomed this outcome as an encouragement for their intention to align its policies on the use of mobile phones in school with the ones of other ES which are stricter on this issue. The school would like to tackle the negative impact of the use of mobile phones at school (discipline, increase of bullying via mobile phones and other internet related situations...) in a dialogue with all concerned actors. The working group worked in 2018 on this issue. A new school policy was developed that APEEE welcomes.

See school link:

<http://www.eeb2.eu/website/files/secondary/New%20policy%20on%20Smartphones%20sept%202018.pdf>

Information flow

The issue on how to improve communication between school management, teachers and students was discussed at various meetings. It led to a new school policy that APEEE welcomes.

See school link:

http://www.eeb2.eu/website/files/secondary/1_Secondary%20school%20policy%20for%20communication%20between%20teachers%20and%20students%20June%202018%20EN%20FR.pdf

See APEEE board minutes 5 March, 15 October 2018

Recruitment of Teachers / Absence of teachers/ Lost Hours

At CEES meetings discussions were held at several occasions on the situation of teachers, in particular the difficulty of recruitment of teachers for certain subjects and languages. Updated lists

of Departing and Replacing teachers were distributed in order to evaluate if additional efforts need to be made. School management worked closely with parents in order to minimise the delays encountered at the beginning of the school year. At the CEES meeting of 27 September, it was agreed to start working in a more structured way together on this issue. It will address the problem of lost hours in general.

See APEEE board minutes of 5 March, 15 October 2018

Choice of subjects - Derogations

At various CEES meetings the school informed APEEE on the situation of opening of classes and the need to ask for derogation in case the threshold was not met. School management and parents worked together to get derogation through various instances.

Non-compulsory trips

In secondary there are compulsory trips foreseen in S2, S4 (science) and S6 but there are many more non-compulsory school trips happening at the initiative of teachers. We have discussed it again among the APEEE board members and standpoints vary as they do also among parents in general, teachers and school management. Several issues are interlinked here: exciting additional offers for students, encouragement for motivated teachers, enhancing life skills, but also lost hours for students (the one's on a trip and the one's without teacher), different treatment from one class and section to another, financial burden for parents and peer pressure. This dilemma is recognised also by the school management when we discuss it during our CEES meetings. The school management announced to work on more guidance on this issue.

Assistance to parents/students during BAC 2018

APEEE Woluwe and Interparents as coordinators have - as in recent years - assisted parents/students with the BAC written exams. On the basis of the feedback received by parents about problems arising during written BAC exams, possible errors and patterns were brought to the attention of those responsible for managing the Baccalaureate. This year, many, many more complaints were introduced, much more than last year. It put a heavy burden on the few parents working on this. As a consequence, the collection of the complaints delayed the possibility for a proper analysis, which again resulted in a delayed communication with the Baccalaureate Unit. Contrary to last years, the new Head of European Baccalaureate was not responsive to the concerns raised. Furthermore, contrary to what was discussed with Director Schmelz beforehand, at least the Woluwe school decided not to enter into any exchange of information or discussion with the parent's association on the written exams. Director Sharron requested the teachers to give their assessment on the correctness of the questions only directly to the bac authority as foreseen in the on-line marking scheme. Officially no correction measures were taken following the concerns raised by Interparents.

See APEEE Board minutes from 27 September 2018

BAC statistics and bac reform

School agrees with parents that there seem to be variations in pupil performance particularly at the level of the Baccalaureate. There are variations between sections but further research needs to be done to see if these differences are significant. Variations tend to be greatest in written exams. On the basis of the latest available statistics (see <http://schola-europaea.eu/bacc/report/2018/mobile/index.html>, discussions with school have re-started only recently on this issue. It was decided to work in a separate working group beginning 2019.

Latest changes to the prebac, ongoing reform requests of the bac, possible changes of the conversion table of European bac grades into national marking schemes are quite worrisome. More detailed information will be sent soon.

See APEEE Board minutes from 27 September 2018

Student Exchanges within the European Schools

The student exchange programme had been somewhat dormant for quite a few years. But it has recently been relaunched by the General Secretariat under the name "Student Mobility Programme". APEEE endorses the programme. From a pedagogical point of view, temporarily visiting other schools in a different country gives students the chance to develop more intensively in many regards, e.g. to improve their language skills and to mature through experiencing a different educational and cultural environment.

All European Schools - both official and accredited – are participating in the programme and offer the possibility of hosting other students. Mobility programmes take place during the 1st semester of S5. It is recommended to do a 4-month exchange during the first semester from September - December, as this is much more enriching than only 5 or 6 weeks. In its guidelines², the General Secretary also proposed shorter exchanges for S4 students. APEEE regrets that our European School did not transpose this possibility and restricts the exchanges to S5 students³.

For the school year 2017/18, 3 pupils from S5 participated in the mobility programme, 2 went to Alicante, and one to Frankfurt. In exchange, our school hosted 2 pupils from Frankfurt and Varese.

For the current school year 2018/19, 6 pupils from S5 are participating, 2 in Varese, one in Alicante, Luxembourg, München and Frankfurt. In exchange, 3 pupils from Alicante, Varese and Frankfurt are hosted by our school.

APEEE assists in the exchange programme by providing the transport and canteen services for incoming students and also by assisting incoming students to find host parents, and also by helping our students finding host parents by liaising with the Parents Associations of the other schools. However, for the latter, our reach is limited and very much dependent on how seriously the Mobility Programme is treated by the Parents Associations concerned.

The mobility programme for the school year 2019/20 is currently open for applications from pupils in S4 (deadline 18 January 2019). Beginning of November 2019, the coordinator of the school in charge for the pedagogical assessments of the applications, Mrs. Hilde Christiaensen, held an info-session on the mobility programme. The APEEE coordinator explained the role of APEEE in the process.

III - SERVICES GROUP CONSISTING OF THE FOLLOWING WORKING GROUPS:

A) Canteen working group of the APEEE Board

Representatives of the Parents' Association

Members of the Administrative Board

- Ms Bettina Schmidbauer-Mogensen (DE), Group Coordinator
- Mr Anthony Bisch (DE)
- Ms Sanjee Goonetilake (NL)
- Ms Saïda Khanboubi (EN)
- Mr Johan Melander (SV)
- Mr Albert Raedler (DE)
- Ms Johanna Saarentalo-Vuorimäki (FI)

² <http://www.eeb2.eu/site/files/secondary/Memorandum%20Exchange%20EN%202016-01-D-49-en-4%20Dec%202016.pdf>

³ <http://www.eeb2.eu/site/files/secondary/Guidelines%20on%20exchanges%20january%202017.pdf>

Parent volunteer

- Sara Roda (PT)

Members of the APEEE staff

- Mr Daniel Vincent
- Mr Paul Orlovski
- Ms Monique Mallinus

This new school year started out with a challenge: the construction works in the canteen kitchen. We sent an info note to all parents informing them about why there was a need to renovate and what was the reason for the delay in works, which in turn left us with a loss of over 58000€. We were in close communication with the Commission to find a way to recuperate this amount. In any case, the APEEE can sustain this loss and there is no need to raise the prices now. Fortunately, once the canteen kitchen was 100% functional again, the team could concentrate on turning the self-service for the teachers and school staff into a success.

Self service

On 1st October the APEEE was able to welcome the teachers and school staff to the self-service. For quite some time the kitchen staff has reflected on the recurring requests of teachers and staff to improve the service to them, how to meet the demands of the adult staff and offer a modern cuisine of different flavors every day.

The idea of the self-service was born! Now all teachers and school staff can choose among a varied salad and organic vegetable bar, soup, dishes of the day, organic fruits and desserts, selection of hot and cold drinks. We were able to prolong the canteen time for the teachers as well (12-13:45) and cashless payments are now possible, too.

We are happy to announce that since the opening of the self-service the number of people coming to eat has tremendously gone up. Last school year there were about 45 people eating at the canteen, and this has gone up to about a 100 a day (except Wednesday).

Info meetings on general philosophy

We try to continue to improve our communication on the canteen philosophy to the school community and have organized 2 info sessions: on 7/11 and 28/11. During these evening events parents, teachers and school staff were invited to visit the canteen and discuss with our chef Paul Orlovski directly. Our passionate chef Paul explained about his philosophy and approach, the canteen working methods and products used. A power point presentation is online on the woluweparents.org website.

See link: <https://www.woluweparents.org/2018/12/11/reunion-info-de-la-cantine-presentation/>

In summary, many parents were happy to hear that we do our utmost to serve their children the best possible food. No additives, no glutamate, no pre-cut meat or fish reaches our kitchen. Everything is prepared on site, including the raviolis and fillings, the fish sticks with cod fillets, the pasta and now with the new equipment we can also produce purees from real potatoes and not flakes.

The products are mainly from nearby places, our chef Paul is regularly out checking the origin of the meat, making sure it is produced in an ethical way. The fish is certified, and the salmon comes from Scotland. Almost all vegetables are biological. And we are proud to say we produce only 2% food waste in comparison to the 25-35% produced in similar places. Moreover, all our cleaning products are bio, too.

In March and in April 2018 the nursery German section had the opportunity to visit the kitchen of the canteen and to see where their meals were prepared. The children learned in a fun way about the canteen philosophy and discovered how and by whom their daily meals are made. Other

sections who would like to visit the canteen with their class are welcome to do so and can send a request to the chef Mr Paul Orlovski, by sending a message to the canteen@woluweparents.org

Video film on "A day at the canteen of EEB2"

A short film was made on "a day at the canteen of EEB2" by the student run Media Club of the school under the supervision of our dedicated teacher Mr Colm Kehoe, whom we are grateful for the engagement and energy he puts into his work. Link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NA9D_k1VaRk

We would also like to thank and praise the professionalism and great work done by the student film makers. We are happy and proud to have such a dedicated canteen team and dedicated students.

Healthy and balanced food is essential for learning, and be assured, we will do all we can to give your kids good food!

B) Transport working group of the APEEE Board

Representatives of the Parents' Association

Members of the Administrative Board

- Mr Albert Raedler (DE), Group Coordinator
- Ms Vanessa Aulehla (IT)
- Mr Anthony Bisch (DE)
- Mr Bengt Davidsson (SV)
- Mr Johan Melander (SV)
- Mr Guido Ricci (IT)

Members of the APEEE staff

- Mr Reggy du Moulin
- Mr Hong Ha Nguyen
- Mr Ferhan Pelister

The activity of the transport section of APEEE may be summarized with the following numbers (daily averages):

- 50 buses operating in the morning
- 41 buses for the 1st departure in the afternoon and 23 for the 2nd departure
- appr. 2400 children with annual subscription
- 13 contracted bus companies, more than 85 adults supervising the buses and the parking
- overall more than 19.000 bus journeys

The annual subscription fee is 1.365 EUR per pupil. Last not least: Major incidents / accidents for the school year 2017/18: 0.

As per any year, the objective to maintain the level of quality and safety/security remains the main leitmotiv. For that reason, training on security and first aid is given to the bus supervisors and security courses on school transport is provided for pupils, in particular with regard to the correct behaviour for getting on and off the bus.

The transport service continues to be engaged in recruiting further personnel for equipping all morning busses with bus supervisors. In comparison to 2017 year, the transport group increased the rate from 2/3 of the busses to more than 90 %. However, although fluctuation of bus supervisors is rather low, the transport group is encountering difficulties in recruiting the necessary personnel to equip all morning busses. The afternoon buses at 15:30 for the kindergarten and primary students are all equipped with bus supervisors.

The “tablet system” for the morning buses and the 1st departure in the afternoon, if staffed with a bus supervisor, allows for real time tracking and checking whether a child has boarded and left the bus, indicating whether the child is allowed to leave alone or whether somebody picks the pupil up. The statistical data on occupancy allowed for a further optimization of capacity which needs to be provided and, in the end, allowed the transport group to keep the cost stable.

This year, special interest had been paid to ecological aspects. The transport group is inciting bus companies to use busses which comply with the EURO6 emission standard.

On the bus parking, a chalet has been installed which serves as an office for the bus parking supervisor. Thanks to this chalet the bus supervisors can go directly to the bus parking and sign the presence sheet there, instead of having to go up to the transport office in the prefabs at school.

C) Extra-curricular activities working group of the APEEE Board

Representatives of the Parents' Association

Members of the Administrative Board

- Ms Katarzyna Horemans (NL), Group Coordinator
- Ms Ruta Avulyte-Jelage (LT) until September 2018
- Ms Ana Dumitrache (FR)
- Mr Jeroen Janss (NL)
- Mr Johan Melander (SV)
- Mr Albert Raedler (DE)
- Mr Andreas Rogal (EN)
- Ms Bettina Schmidbauer-Mogensen (DE)
- Ms Francesca Tadini (IT)

Members of the APEEE staff

- Ms Agnieszka Jean-Villanueva
- Mr Aliocha Sioen
- Ms Donatella Carrero

The APEEE extra-curricular activities at our school, including the APEEE supervision, are organised by Ms Agnieszka Jean-Villanueva, in collaboration with Mr Aliocha Sioen and Ms Donatella Carrero, and under the supervision of the APEEE Working Group.

Our main goal is to offer students the opportunity to discover a large range of activities that allow them to fully develop their potential within the chosen activity; be it learning a musical instrument, a competitive sport, or developing their artistic skills. We are currently focusing on continuously improving the quality and the range of available activities, by ensuring easy registration, by guaranteeing student security and reinforcing parent-instructor relationship.

In September 2018 the APEEE offers 45 different activities, which results in 306 classes per week. 1311 students are enrolled for activities, which adds up to a total of 2547 inscriptions per week. 64 monitors and 20 supervisors are available to make sure that each child can enjoy its activity in the best possible way, yet in the safe manner

New activities were launched such as science for fun, film-making, yoga for small children, typing classes, introduction to computer programming, robotics and theatre in English.

The workshop FlopCamp during the All Saints holidays was a huge success and might be proposed again in 2019. FlopCamp is an entrepreneurial game where kids aged 12 to 16,

motivated to succeed, will team up to experiment with and experience the phases of start-up creation, from ideation to prototyping, from testing to business modelling.

559 students are registered for the APEEE supervision, which results in 1366 inscriptions per week. A team of 20 dedicated supervisors are at their disposal to make sure that their time at the supervision is fun and safe.

As of September 2018, an educator has been hired to strengthen the APEEE supervision team. Ms L. De Vita makes sure that all children get along during the time they spend at the supervision, helps the monitors or the supervisors with conflict resolution, and takes care of the children with special needs.

The APEEE has made an agreement with the school for the use of the Dome on the sports field. APEEE will be able to use the sports Dome every school day from 15:30 to 18:30 and on Wednesday from 13:30 to 18:30. This covered sports field will allow the team to continue to organize outdoor sport activities during wintertime and for example stormy weathers.

Every single request by any parents has been followed by the staff and the Board with the greatest care. Where we have not been able to meet parents' expectations, this had been mainly due to constraints that are out of our control (such as lack of spaces or extra unforeseen and not budgeted costs).

IV - ENROLMENT POLICY WORKING GROUP (ACI)

Representatives of the Parents' Association

Member of the Administrative Board

- Ms Katarzyna Horemans (NL), Group Coordinator
- Ms Francesca Tudini (IT), back up
- All Board members are member of the working group.

Since the elections to the APEEE Board in 2018, the coordinator (or his/her substitutes) has participated in the numerous meetings of the Central Enrolment Authority (CEA) where the enrolment policy has been discussed. On top of the meetings and during the whole year, members of the CEA are requested to contribute to the responses through the written procedure. The nature of the enquiries is as follows:

- Comments on the guidelines of the Enrolment Policy in the European Schools of Brussels for the next school year
- Comments on the Enrolment form (to be available in January)
- Enrolment during the school year (after the beginning of school)
- Review of an enrolment application (new facts added to the initial request)
- Transfer requests (being verified very scrupulously)

The coordinator as well as other Board members have also responded to ad hoc questions asked by the parents wishing to enrol their child(ren) at the II EEB, or any other type of questions (number of children in our school and the structure of the classes, SWALS children in our school, transfer conditions, etc.).

Since all members of the Board are CEA members, there was no obligation to organise a dedicated meeting on this file. All CEA issues were discussed either through the written procedure or during the monthly Board meetings.

In 2018, Board of Governors has accepted the enrolment policy for 2019-2020 school year for all Brussels schools, which is again based on a flexible classes' structure: CEA may, in the course of the enrolment campaign, decide to close or open new classes. As all 4 schools are overcrowded,

the priority for creation of any new class will go to I EEB, site Berkendael (so called 'satellite classes') but taking into account the number of pupils in the existing classes in other schools. This measure is applied to protect classes with small number of pupils.

The crossed transfer ("*transfert croisé*") pilot project introduced last year will be abandoned in the next year's enrolment policy as it was too costly taking into account the number of the real transfers having taken place (4 transfers).

V - COMMUNICATION WORKING GROUP

Representatives of the Parents' Association

Member of the Administrative Board

- Mr Andreas Rogal (EN) - Group Coordinator
- Ms Ruta Avulyte-Jelage (LT) until September 2018
- Mr Christian Bondeson-Eggert (SV)
- Ms Ana Dumitrache (FR)
- Ms Sanjee Goonetilake (NL)
- Mr Johan Melander (SV)
- Ms Francesca Tudini (IT)

The Information Working Group was re-christened the Communication Working Group to reflect our commitment to inclusive engagement with the parent community and all other stakeholders of the school. We have also started work on a comprehensive communication strategy and are hoping to present it in time for the forthcoming APEEE AGM 2019.

This year has seen several unforeseen challenges to the APEEE and its communication efforts. The biggest immediate one has been the delay in the kitchen renovation works, where we were painfully reminded of our exclusion from any decision-making processes of the Belgian federal organisation responsible for the upkeep of our school building, the Régie des Bâtiments (RdB). Our Canteen and Health, Security and Safety working groups have written to the European Commission asking for assistance in securing the RdB's cooperation in all as yet unresolved issues, like the unacceptable conditions in the classrooms of the third floor of the primary school building during warm weather periods.

The suggested temporary school site for upper secondary at Arts/Loi is an ongoing concern and has occupied the Comms WG as much as many other parts of the APEEE in our school and of the other European Schools in Brussels.

The continued uncertainty of the future of English language teaching provision as a result of Brexit is another big issue which commands our attention.

Given the crisis management character attached to many of our activities, we have relied more on direct ad hoc e-mails than on our quarterly newsletter. For the future, the Comms WG will be suggesting better use is made of the APEEE website instead of maintaining the newsletter, in order to improve the immediacy and the efficiency of our communications

VI - IT WORKING GROUP

Representatives of the Parents' Association

Member of the Administrative Board

- Mr Johan Melander (SV), working group coordinator.
- Mr Anthony Bisch (DE)
- Mr Bengt Davidsson (SV)

- Ms Saïda Khanboubi (EN)
- Ms Jovita Lazdiniene (LT)
- Mr Jan von Pfaler (FI)

Parent volunteer

- Massimo Attorelli (IT)

From the APEEE office

- Ms Anja Galle
- Mr Aliocha Sioen
- Mr Erwin Van Dijck - in regard to finance related software

The IT group has worked on legal compliance, structure of data and invoicing this year.

The General Data Protection Regulation entered into force on 25 May 2018. The IT working group and our APEEE staff worked together and took actions in order to ensure compliance with this new legal framework. In this regard, APEEE took the following actions regarding the handling of parents' data:

- The privacy statement was changed, checked, updated and communicated in time.
- Databases were modified
- New email structure agreed and will be implemented from new board.
- Rules for storage and deletion of sensitive data on board members computers has been communicated.
- Data protection officer has been appointed.
- External testing of compliance has also been completed.
- All web pages are now https.
- APEEE staff and Board members received a training on data protection
- We are in negotiations to determine data flow between the school and APEEE

The functionality of the new invoicing module was rolled out, parents can now choose to receive invoices by electronic mean which saves APEEE paper and postage. The new module also gives the possibility to handle major changes with less effort than before. The continued success of this installation would not have been possible without the superb support from the team in our office.

The third focus during the year has been on file storage and accessibility, historical as well as collaborative. The aim was to have a solution in place by early fall but delayed due to time constraints. The next board will have archive safety with both file accessibility and functional mailboxes.

VII - EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT WORKING GROUP

Representatives of the Parents' Association

Member of the Administrative Board

- Ms Manuela Caramujo (PT), working group coordinator.
- Ms Sanjee Goonetilake (NL)
- Mr Jeroen Janss (NL)
- Ms Saïda Khanboubi (EN)
- Mr Andreas Rogal (EN)
- Mr Jan von Pfaler (FI)

Volunteer parent

- Mr Miguel França (PT)

The main goal of this WG is to assist the parents. We have answered every call, every message sent directly to Working Group members or to the APEEE secretariat. More particularly, we have:

- Provided support and clarified doubts as they arose;
- Accompanied parents to meetings with the school administration as required; and
- Advised parents on how to formulate their demands for educational support and how to pursue their application in cases where their first demand was refused.

To further help with this process of assisting families and informing them about the practicalities of the system, we created the **Info-Evenings on Educational Support**. It took place for the first time on 20 November 2017 and it made a difference in relations between the parents and the school administration. In this event, both parties could talk constructively and share their experience of difficulties in the system. Following the success of this first event, on 20 November 2018, we organised a second Info-evening of Educational Support. Around 70 parents attended (out of the 156 who had registered their intention to attend). Mr Schmelz and the Secondary coordinators, Mr Arnedo and the Primary psychologist, represented the school administration.

As last year, the first goal of the evening was to **introduce both teams** (our WG and the Secondary and Primary school teams) and inform parents about our work 'on the ground'. The programme followed with a presentation by Miguel França on the **"practicalities of educational support"**, essentially explaining our FAQs (e.g. what is Education Support? Who can apply? Guidance on the legal texts, etc). Mrs Anabela Santos, the Secondary Coordinator, made a very detailed presentation on the **"Practices and challenges of the educational support at EEB2"** explaining how support is given to students in need. She presented data on Educational Support, showing that our school is the one who gave the most support to students (from 2016 Luxembourg II is almost equally placed).

Jeroen Janss asked the audience to reflect if **"highly gifted kids need educational support?"** and I think we were convinced by the end of his presentation, taking into account differing implementation methods.

Towards the end of the event, we heard an passionate speech by Mrs Franca Musumeci, a specialised teacher, about **Dyslexia** and how students must be encouraged to overcome this learning difficulty by accepting it. This is because dyslexia stays with children throughout their lives. It is also essential to diagnose the condition early.

During the debate, the **retention letters** came up in discussion as a cause of some stress and anxiety to parents. We will continue to work on this issue with the school administration, not only at the Educational Support levels, but also at the CEP&M.

In addition to this meeting, and with the goal of creating awareness about learning difficulties, on 26 February 2018, we organised a conference with Dr Nuno Lobo Antunes, neurological paediatrician, **"Learning disabilities: ADHD, Autism and Dyslexia"**. More than 150 parents participated (from 200 registered). The conference was an **Inter-APEEE event** and its costs were divided between the 4 Brussels European Schools APEEE's.

A closer **relationship and cooperation between the four APEEEs** in the domain of educational support has been established and encouraged for the second year running. Besides exchanging best practice, we have been working on the **"Inclusiveness of the European School System"**, according to the United Nations Charter of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD).

On the same theme of Inclusiveness, we had very rich and useful conversations **with the EU Ombudsman's office**. Even though the European Schools are not a part of EU administration, and therefore do not fall under its mandate, the Ombudsman monitors the follow up by the EU

institutions to the UN CRPD and includes a section on the European Schools on the agenda of the EU Disability High Level Group.

As we are always pursuing our goal of assisting parents, we are putting together a **list of therapists** from several areas of the learning difficulties spectrum. For GDP reasons, we cannot publicize the list in our website, but we can give the contacts to parents by forwarding an earlier recommendation from another parent. This list is a work in progress and we encourage parents to add their contacts, with the promise that it we will always treat it with the utmost confidentiality.

Finally, a personal note: this is my fourth and last year at EEB2 and my second on the APEEE board. I am leaving with the full awareness that our work makes a difference!

Manuela Caramujo
Coordinator for Educational Support

VIII - From Volunteer Task force to School Community Building WG

Representatives of the Parents' Association

Member of the Administrative Board

- Ms Sanjee Goonetilake (NL), working group coordinator.
- Ms Manuela Caramujo (PT)
- Ms Ana Dumitrache (FR)
- Ms Katarzyna Horemans (NL)
- Ms Bettina Schmidbauer-Mogensen (DE)
- Ms Francesca Tadini (IT)

Volunteer parents

- Ms Eleonora Apponi Battini (IT)
- Ms Taija Toratti (FI)

At the beginning of the year a Volunteer task force was created as a focal point between the school and the parents. The volunteer coordinator has been consulting the school management, teachers, parents and students in order to better assess the needs of the school, expectations of the school and the parents. It was concluded that before the establishment of a database there is a need to do a wide survey on the type of areas volunteers would be needed. Some volunteers have been identified in the process who will work on this survey.

This working group has been renamed School Community Building WG.

The objectives of the new working group are the following. To create an inclusive *school community built and nurtured with deep community ties* where students, teachers, the school administration and the parents play an active role to ensure that every child is happy, healthy and curious to learn. To create a school community where deep community ties between the teachers, the parents and the school administration lead to mutual trust.

The WG has the blessings of the entire school management and Mr Schmelz is directly involved with his full support to the school community building project. Mr Arnedo has also expressed interest in the project and will be soon starting some collaborations.

As a first phase, seven projects have been identified. At the request of Mr Schmelz, a group of volunteer parent translators were found to translate documents created by the teachers on the 8 life skills which would be integrated into the secondary school curriculum. The documents gets translated between English-French and German by parent volunteers.

The Debate Club, the Media Club, Feminist Club, the Ecology group, the Amnesty Group and MUN which is organizing BRUMUN have been identified as teacher run clubs to receive parent support when the teacher requests for help. The WG is currently in the process of identifying other areas of community building in the school with various teacher associated outside the class room projects.

Thanks to the WG which has identified the needs, APEEE is able to support BRUMUN, Media Club and other clubs including the Feminist club which received moral support from APEEE by promoting the He for She week.

Currently the WG is in the second phase of establishing contact with teachers and finalizing the draft consultation. The WG will present a comprehensive plan for school community building in early 2019.

IX - HEALTH, SAFETY AND SECURITY WORKING GROUP

Representatives of the Parents' Association

Member of the Administrative Board

- Mr Bengt Davidsson (SV), working group coordinator.
- Ms Vanessa Aulehla (IT)
- Ms Ruta Avulyte-Jelage (LT) until September 2018
- Mr Anthony Bisch (DE)
- Ms Manuela Caramujo (PT)
- Ms Ana Dumitrache (FR)
- Ms Sanjee Goonetilake (NL)
- Mr Jeroen Janss (NL)
- Ms Jovita Lazdiniene (LT)
- Ms Saïda Khanboubi (FR)
- Mr Johan Melander (SV)
- Ms Johanna Saarentalo-Vuorimäki (FI)
- Ms Bettina Schmidbauer-Mogensen (DE)
- Ms Francesca Tadini (IT)

Health, safety and security is at the forefront of the Parents Association agenda and features prominently in our discussions with school management. While we are not in charge of activities related to these matters, we monitor the situation and keep pressure on the school and other parties as a constructive critical friend of the school in order to foster good practices and to improve the situation at school.

The Parents Association's working group on health, safety and security was re-established in 2017. During this year we have identified priorities and key actions, and have participated regularly in meetings focused on these matters with the school. Bearing in mind our objective to ensure the pupils' right for proper health, safety and security conditions at our school, the Parents Association's priorities for 2018 were:

- To ensure a good and healthy climate for the pupils.
- To ensure that occupational health and safety audits of the school will be organized, so that school management is aware of associated risks and is in compliance with regulations and policies.
- To support the school in identifying major infrastructural problems of the school site and to support them in their contacts with appropriate authorities and agencies.
- To foster the exchange of information with school management aiming at offering a safe, secure and child-friendly school environment for the pupils.

We apply a systematic and action-oriented way of working on these priorities and we expect that the school will further develop in this direction. The new prevention officer on safety and security employed by the school is positive development in this respect. It should be noted that a similar position was re-introduced also at the European School's office of the Secretary General (OSGES) in Brussels.

Below is our list of the main outcomes of health, safety and security activities during this year. We have brought all of them at the attention of the Belgian authorities and of Commissioner Oettinger.

Safety

Safety, generally defined as non-intentional incidents, includes the school site, infrastructure building issues, incl. gas and electricity, indoor climate, air quality, humidity and mould, fire safety, etc.

At first, the working group conducted a mapping exercise identifying problems that would need follow-up – either basic maintenance, structural maintenance or rebuilding. The mapping generated a long list of issues, ranging from general maintenance needs under the responsibility of school management to structural maintenance, rebuilding and upgrade provided by the Belgian federal building authority, Régie des Bâtiments (RdB). The latter includes problems ranging from hygiene of toilets to heating system errors to unacceptable working conditions due to high temperatures and poor indoor air quality. Identified problems are regularly discussed with the school management.

In this report, we highlight two areas with systemic problems concerning health and safety at school.

- The legally required **fire safety** escape route of the primary school building was installed during Easter after a long wait of five years. The need for the outside staircase was identified in the aftermath of the gas leak in early 2013, but the responsible authority, RdB, delayed its installation in spite of repeated pressure from the school. APEEE made a contribution to this by lobbying the Belgian deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior, Mr Jan Jambon. We considered the installation of the outside staircase a great success, only to find out in November 2018 that the staircase is, in fact, not yet operational, as an alarm system for the lower part of the staircase still needs to be installed by the RdB. This amounts to an extension of the daily risk for 400 pupils. We have urged the responsible authorities to find a solution.
- A second major problem are the **working conditions** on the third floor of the primary education school building. During warm days, temperatures in the classrooms there reach 30-35° and beyond. In spite of this, and the poor air quality indoors adding to the sufferance of pupils and staff for years, the RdB has so far refused to improve the working conditions.

In view of the Parents Association, these are just two examples of the dysfunctional cooperation between our school and the RdB. Much needed structural maintenance, repair and upgrade to the school buildings – now 44 years old – have either only been taken place after excessive delays or not at all. Therefore, the Parents Association is pressing for high level discussions in order to remedy the problems we are experiencing. On the positive side, the school will commission a technical assessment of the primary school building in order to get data and information of the building's capacity and a basis to identify concrete solutions to the problems.

After all, the host Member State shall provide and maintain suitable premises for the school for free according to Article 2(3) of the Convention defining the Statute of the European Schools. Furthermore, the Belgian laws that relates to work and well-being conditions applies to schools and

APEEE is investigating applicable aspects, in particular the aforementioned working conditions during warm days.

Security

Security, generally defined as intentional incidents, includes access, control, surveillance, training, disinformation, etc., and the one-kilometre long perimeter around the school yard.

Although security measures were identified as a priority after the terrorist attacks in 2016, these are still in their infancy. In order to advance, the school has engaged a technical project manager for the second phase of this project which is expected to lead to tangible results in the coming years.

Health and wellbeing of pupils

As parents, our main concern is the safety of our children and by safety we mean not only their physical status but also their mental well-being. The APEEE considers the prevention and confrontation of emotional, physical and sexual abuse, harassment and bullying as crucial for mental health. We also believe it important to point out the negative effects of smoking, alcohol and drugs abuse; and of the excessive use of electronic devices and problematic social media behavior.

Drugs abuse policy

Drugs are a scourge of modern society and our school is also concerned. We have been discussing the harmful effects of drug abuse and traffic of illicit substances with school management, who have acknowledged some incidents and promised to do their best to improve the situation. We also acknowledge that some good initiatives are already being taken up by the school under the leadership of the Principal Education Adviser.

To mention two such examples, which we endorse: A well-being program based on reinforcing social skills and resilience, with special emphasis on peer pressure. And the individual smoking cessation program, in which students can enroll on a voluntary basis to stop smoking cigarettes or cannabis.

To develop these programs, the school is working with several authorities and institutions, from the tobaccologists of the Institut Bordet, to the advisors from the "Collège des Aumoniers du Travail" (Charleroi), to the Belgian Federal police, and private companies of self-empowerment and life skills as "Live'n Learn". During all the workshops organized throughout the year, students were encouraged to develop their critical thinking on drugs and the impact of substance abuse on their lives.

The Parents Association is always there to listen to parents and their worries and concerns on the drugs matter. While appreciating all the good work done by the school, we believe that education about drugs is most effective as part of a wider personal, social and health education program that should begin at primary school and continue into secondary. And we would support a compulsory and complete use of the syllabi of Integrated Sciences, Biology and Ethics to work on drugs and addiction issues with the students during class time, and not be dependent on the good will of some teachers.

In 2018, we started a "Prevention Inter-APEEE Group". Its first aim is to share experiences and best practices between the four parents' associations of the European Schools of Brussels. During our discussions, we understood that EEB2 is often seen as a model by the other schools, as our well-being program is recognized to be more complete. However, there are examples that we would like to see implemented in our school in spite of the controversy that it may cause among some parents. In EEB4 (Laeken) they use the intervention of an ex-addict who comes to work with the students. EEB3 (Ixelles) organizes a workshop on the legal consequences of consuming illicit substances with the Belgian police.

Based on written contribution from parents at the beginning of the school year, we will further explore several suggestions made, such as conferences, specific film screenings, etc. Our next new initiative, foreseen for April or May, is to organize a conference for parents and students on the subject.

Mental Health & Wellbeing

Wellbeing has its roots in health. Broadly speaking, a distinction can be made between physical health and mental health. With the first addressed to a certain extent through school sports, and a focus on healthy eating and related areas, our focus is on how wellbeing should turn to mental health.

Being a relatively new area of specific focus for the working group, its initial steps were to:

- 1) Define mental health and wellbeing of children in the school context
- 2) Research mental health and wellbeing of children in the school context;
- 3) Raise awareness and seek support for the topic within the school
- 4) Agree on priorities and a roadmap to cultivate mental health and wellbeing at school
- 5) Develop a survey to understand current mental health and wellbeing levels of secondary students

The WHO defines mental health as “a state of wellbeing in which every individual realises their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.” Thus, mental health is not just the absence of illness.

Clearly, the focus on mental health and wellbeing of school children and well-being practices varies significantly within the EU and even within countries and regions. However, an increasing body of evidence supports the benefits of taking a pro-active approach. Therefore, APEEE has developed a paper that summarises the main findings and statistics of WHO, EU, academics and NGO initiatives.

Awareness raising and seeking support for the topic was discussed with the school at length during several meetings of the working group. Based on the discussions, a common understanding and appreciation of the importance of the subject was reached. This same understanding and appreciation was found at the Board of the APEEE as well as with school management during meetings with Ms Andries, the Principal Educational Adviser, responsible for wellbeing practices at secondary level. Based on the various discussions, priorities and a road map were defined to foster the mental health and wellbeing of our children. The priorities and the roadmap were subsequently approved by the APEEE Board.

The next task is to develop a survey with the purpose of gaining an understanding of current mental health and wellbeing levels of secondary students. While there is a general appreciation of the importance of health and wellbeing, not everybody is convinced of the urgency and the scale of the challenge. To have a basis for action, it was decided to launch a wellbeing survey, anonymous, as a pilot at secondary level. Supported by school, the survey will be launched together with the student council in early 2019.

Mobile phone policy

School management has identified an increase in the number of incidents related to social media abuse, which has resulted in cases of cyber bullying, gaming, screen addiction and health issues such as self-harm. As one response by school management, a mobile phone task force has been set up, comprising representatives of teachers, students and parents. The work of the task force generated great interest from many stakeholders and lengthy discussions took place stretching over a one-year period.

An initial task was to conduct a survey on the possible location where the mobile phone devices would be allowed. The project, completed in July, suggested that a mobile phone device ban to be introduced in secondary school in the academic year starting in 2018 with a grace period of two

months.

The main logic of this ban was based on 'inside no and outside yes' policy where the mobile devices would not be allowed in the class rooms with some exceptions to the library and the study rooms and where they will be allowed outside the school buildings but inside the school premises such as the playground. On request, however, mobile phones can be used in the class room for a very concrete and time limited task relevant to the syllabus, particularly with older pupils.

In relation to the mobile phone policy, school management organized workshops on cyber bullying with an expert from Germany for students in different grades and also for the parents. The Parents' Association had suggested topics related to the theme of the school debate club hence generating awareness and critical thinking skills, e.g. 'This house believes that technology is stealing our lives' (web www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q9mFk32t1bg and www.youtube.com/watch?v=BDtzKQdSDp8).

The topic of mobile phone use will be included in the upcoming survey on mental health and wellbeing.

Air pollution and air quality

APEEE conducted together with a dedicated German section teacher a project with Greenpeace to measure the air pollution and quality levels at several places at the school. The outcome was communicated to all parents and included some recommendations to the school management. While poor ambient air quality is not within the responsibility of the school, it affects our children health and wellbeing situation. The main conclusion was that the highest measures of air pollutants is around the school entrance, mainly caused by the daily car traffic and parents picking up their children.

This problem requires time and work, in order to change behaviour or make the school promote more bicycle lanes, racks, etc. As this is a subject of importance to parents and pupils, APEEE aims to pursue this subject further in the next year with a new APEEE board to identify this as a priority. Currently, we do not have the resources available and would need some volunteer parents to help us work on it.

Call for volunteers

The working group consists of members of the APEEE Board but volunteering parents are most welcome to contribute with ambitions, initiatives, expertise and network. Please contact us if you are interested in joining us, if you have questions or have suggestions for actions and new initiatives!

Contact details

- Mr Bengt Davidsson, working group coordinator, APEEE Board (davidapeee@gmail.com)
- Ms Manuela Caramujo, focal point drugs abuse policy (mcaramujo@hotmail.com)
- Ms Anja Galle, Director APEEE (anja.galle@woluweparents.org)
- Mr Reggie du Moulin, Prevention Advisor, APEEE (reggy.dumoulin@woluweparents.org)

X - WELCOME & COMMUNITY SERVICE

Representatives of the Parents' Association

Member of the Administrative Board

- Ms Ana Dumitrache (FR), service coordinator
- Ms Ruta Avulyte-Jelage (LT) until September 2018
- Ms Manuela Caramujo (PT)
- Ms Sanjee Goonetilake (NL)

- Mr Andreas Rogal (EN)
- Ms Cristina P.M. Sarmento until September 2018
- Ms Bettina Schmidbauer-Mogensen (DE)
- Ms Francesca Tadini (IT)

The "Welcome Service" was created only last academic year, 2017 – 2018, to fill in a gap and facilitate as much as possible the arrival at our school for new families. Its aim was to provide information and personal support to parents and students who were new to the Primary and Secondary school and to Brussels. It took into account the results of a consultation of the parents and students of the last three years in the school, which was done through a detailed on-line questionnaire.

The service was maintained this year and extended to *all* families, from all sections and levels, even if they were not new in the school. Its name was changed into "Welcome & Community Service", to reflect the wish to have a service that allows people to meet and feel supported, thus contributing to the creation of a sense of belonging to a nice school community.

The work has started with the updating of last year's packs of information for primary and secondary levels, which are distributed at various events and available on APEEE's website.

Meetings were then organised with the school directorate, Mr Sharron, Mr Arnedo and Mr Schmelz, to ascertain their respective views and to consolidate the good partnership with the school, which is key to ensure complementarity and avoid duplication of information.

On the 4 September 2018, a joint APEEE – school Welcome cocktail took place. The Welcome & Community team had a stand and took time to greet new parents, giving the much-needed personal contact, answers to queries and sharing our maps and brochures to the new students. The cocktail was followed by school orientation tours led by the school teachers and pupils from all the linguistic sections.

Several informal coffee mornings were held during the year, to socialise with both "new" and "old" parents of our school and offer them a personal orientation and replies on their specific questions, over coffee and cakes. In an informal atmosphere, parents received each time a brief introduction from the APEEE's Board members on the parents' association's role and activities and an update from the school directors. Parents had the opportunity to ask questions to APEEE's staff members, in charge of services such as transport, canteen and extra-curricular activities and to discuss with the school directors, who were each time present, the Board members and volunteers from various sections. This provided valuable opportunity for personal contact, sharing of experience and networking for new parents in all language sections.

Finally, an e-mail address is available and functional for all parents who have questions: welcome@woluweparents.org. They are directed to the right service or person, from the APEEE or the school administration.

The feed-back from parents on the Welcome & Community Service was very good, and people generally felt impressed and reassured that if they needed information in the short-while, they would know whom to contact.

The service will certainly be continued next academic year, and we will do our best to further improve it, keeping the good partnership with the school management and administration and stepping up synergies with volunteer parents. Among future activities, we could try to organise evening events for parents and students to socialise and learn more about our school as well as playdates for children in indoor or exterior playgrounds.

Until then, *many thanks* to all the APEEE's Board members, APEEE's staff and volunteer parents involved in the Welcome & Community Service activities of this year! Let's continue and develop it, to make our school a nice and warm place to learn and grow!

Ana Dumitrache (FR)
Coordinator of the Welcome & Community Service

XI - FINANCIAL SITUATION

See financial report.

WHO DOES WHAT? ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD 2018			WORKING GROUPS: M = Member / C=Coordinator															
NAME	SECTION	BUREAU MEMBERS	Interparents	Primary CEP&M	Secondary CEES	Active community	Welcome policy	School Community Building WG	Education support	Canteen	Transport	Extra-curricular activities	IT WG	Health, Safety & Security	Information	Budget Working group	Enrolment policy	Compliance & risk assessment wg
AULEHLA Vanessa	IT		M		C		M				M			M			M	
AVULYTE-JELAGE Ruta	LT		M	M	M	M	M					M		M	M		M	M
BENYAHIA Mounia	FR		M	M	M												M	
BISCH Anthony	DE		M	C						M	M		M	M	M		M	
BONDESON-EGGERT Christian	SV		M	M													M	
CARAMUJO Manuela	PT		M		M	M	M	M	C					M			M	
DAVIDSSON Bengt	SV		M	M	M						M		M	C			M	M
DUMITRACHE Ana	FR		M	M	M		C	M		M		M		M	M		M	
GOONETILAKE Sanjee	NL		M	M		M	M	C						M			M	
HOREMANS Katarzyna	NL	Member of the Bureau	M		M	M		M				C					C	
JANSS Jeroen	NL		M	M					M			M		M			M	M
KHANBOUBI Saïda	EN		M	M					M	M			M	M			M	
LAZDINIENE Jovita	LT	Treasurer	M	M	M								M	M		C	M	
MELANDER Johan	SV	Vice-Presid. Adm. Aff.	M		M					M	M	M	C	M	M	M	M	M
P.M. SARMENTO Cristina	PT		M	M		C until Sept	M										M	
RAEDLER Albert	DE	Secretary	M	M						M	C	M				M	M	C
RICCI Guido	IT		M	M	M						M						M	
ROGAL Andreas	EN	Secretary of information	C		M		M		M			M			C		M	
SAARENTALO-VUORIMÄKI Johanna	FI		M		M					M				M			M	
SCHMIDBAUER-MOGENSEN Bettina	DE	Vice-Presid. Pedagog. Aff	M		M		M	M		C		M		M		M	M	
TUDINI Francesca	IT	President	M	M				M				M			M	M	M	
VON PFALER Jan	FI		M	M					M				M				M	M

Responsible for the APEEE administration: F. PELISTER

Director APEEE: A. GALLE
 Manager Administration & Finance: E. VAN DIJCK
 Manager canteen: D. VINCENT
 Manager transport: R. DU MOULIN
 Manager extra-curricular activities: A. JEAN VILLANUEVA