

# The Adventure of Strengthening Staff Relationships

Evaluation February 2020



The tasks we had chosen in November for our school:

Heinrich-Böll-Schule, Frechen	
Idea giver	Implementation in school
Janusz-Korczak-Schule	Peer supervision in form of “show strengths, share strengths”. Teachers can offer what they want to show and they can wish what they want to see. The focus might not be on lessons but on structural elements such as transitions, rituals, meals, ... Discussions about the seen activities in school are aimed at.
CSEI “Cristal”	Heinrich-Böll-Schule will try if teambuilding games in an adapted form could be used as a hook for creative workshops for the staff.

## Difficulties:

Because of a high rate of teachers who are absent for short or long time, the workload for the remaining colleagues is tremendous.

Many teachers are not open minded for additional work or experimental input in the moment.

Therefore

The number of participants is lower than expected.

The time for group meetings is shorter than expected.

The difficulties of organisation are much bigger than expected.



im possible

BUT...

We have given our best, have found flexible solutions and have collected new experiences.

## Peer Supervision

- One meeting for brainstorming and organisation
- 6 participants were doing 7 visits
- Observed teaching elements were 10 to 30 minutes
- Most of the visits took place during working hours of the participants.

## Difficulties

- Remaining colleagues were alone in class  
-> some supervisions had to be postponed for several times because of current events in class
- Small selection of opportunities for observation due to the small number of participants

## Benefit

- Suggestions for thinking:
  - adapting the observed elements for the own class,
  - developing own already existing elements because of the new input
  - expanding the own „thinking-pool“ for the future
- Enriching experience for improving the own professional acting
- Occasions for exchange and communication and getting an idea of others work
- improved relationships noticeably and increased respectful togetherness

## Ongoing work

- Presenting the experiences in the next staff meeting
- Pausing with peer supervision due to the difficult situation in school
- Inviting again for peer supervision at the beginning of the new school year

## Teambuilding game meets Creative Workshop

- A group of teachers prepared a creative meeting.
- The creative input invited the participants to have a look at our town from different perspectives and try to communicate the experiences in different performances.
- Ongoing work should have been: working with pupils on the same topic with the same idea (changing perspectives)
- 8 participants

### Difficulties

- as described in the beginning
  - very stressful atmosphere and too little time at the planned date (for school organisational reasons)
- > The creative workshop was cancelled.




## What have we done instead?

- Participants decided to use the remaining time to plan together a teaching project „We in Frechen“
- The group kept the focus on changing perspectives and decided to create a mascot figure, which explores our school and town and doesn't know anything before.



## Teaching project structure

<p>1. Five classes work on one aspect each concerning the life in our town -&gt; pupils become experts.</p>	<p>At the same time: The assembly of pupils speakers organise a voting for finding a name of the mascot. All pupils participate in the voting.</p>
<p>2. The mascot visits the classes and goes on a class trip with the pupils. They can share their expert knowledge.</p>	
<p>3. Pupils write / paint / tell the tale of the visit out of the mascot perspective „When I visited Dragon class, I....“ -&gt; a common tale of all classes develops</p>	
<p>4. Final event of all classes: The tale will be read during a photo / film / painting-presentation.</p>	<p>The mascot gets a fixed place in a special room and in the rituals of the school.</p>

## Conclusion

We haven't done exactly what we have had planned during the meeting in November but we worked really intensive on a lot of aspects of relationships:

### Staff Relationships:

First time of common planning of a whole teaching project  
-> exchange, communication increases, cooperation reaches a new level

### Pupil-Pupil-Relationships:

Pupils get into contact with pupils of other classes. Pupils get involved into democratic processes and learn from each other about tolerance, acceptance by adopting a majority voting.

### Pupil-Teacher-Relationships:

Adults and children have shared experiences and adventures

### School Community:

School has got a new mascot as an identifying figure for the community. All pupils participated in the finding of the name and could take responsibility for the community. Classes and single pupils can make experiences with the mascot further on and find an opportunity to share them during the weekly assembly and in a schools mascot photo album.

## Ongoing work

The teaching project „We in Frechen“ is going on until Easter holidays 2020.

About new common teaching projects we will decide in the beginning of the new school year.

Joint planning and joint implementation of this teaching project has undoubtedly proved to be a relationship-strengthening element among colleagues, so that a continuation is likely.

The mascot has „arrived“ with the pupils and will have a permanent place in school life. Ideas how to use the mascot have already emerged.

We tried several attempts to implement teambuilding games into our meetings but up to now we were not successful (due to difficult situation in school). We will go on trying.