"AFTER-SCHOOL CLUBS TO INCREASE MOTIVATION AND PREVENT DROPOUT" 2018-2020

A booklet containing a common programme for combating early school leaving
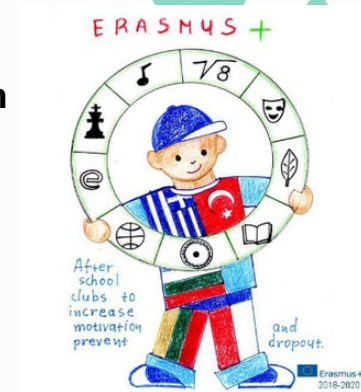
A programme for combating early school leaving

This programme was created within the collaboration of five schools:

- Gymnasium Keramotis in Keramoti, Greece
- Osnovno Uchilishte 'Geo Milev' in Grohotno, Bulgaria
- Utenos Vyturiu progimnazija in Utena, Lithuania
- Yavuz Selim Ortaokulu in Adana, Turkey
- Szkoła Podstawowa im. Kornela Makuszyńskiego in Pacanów, Poland

We prepared this programme enlisting strategies which have turned out to be successful in our schools during the implementation of the project. We are sure that by applying the following strategies, schools which struggle with early school leaving will be able to raise their effectiveness in preventing it.
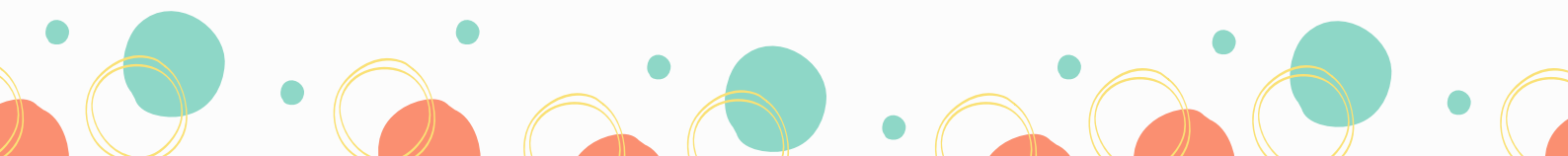
OBJECTIVES:

- to show strategies of increasing students' motivation and preventing dropout
- to support students who have problems with their schoolwork, low self-esteem and lack of motivation
- to show parents the importance of cooperation with school for the benefits of their children
- to equip teachers with essential knowledge for their professional development in order to be able to cope with children's problems

STRATEGIES AND EFFECTS:

1. Encourage and support cooperation between students, parents and teachers:

- Teacher-parent meetings held according to the needs foster a better communication and mutual understanding of the expectations from each side.
- Frequent contact with parents by any means (one-to-one conversations, by phone, online talks, etc.) shows that school is interested in helping and giving support.
- Involving parents into actions and events organized by the school makes them feel important and influential in the process of education.

2. React immediately to repeated absences of students:

- Psychological support for students and parents in order to prevent absences – finding the root of the problem and providing a solution to it.
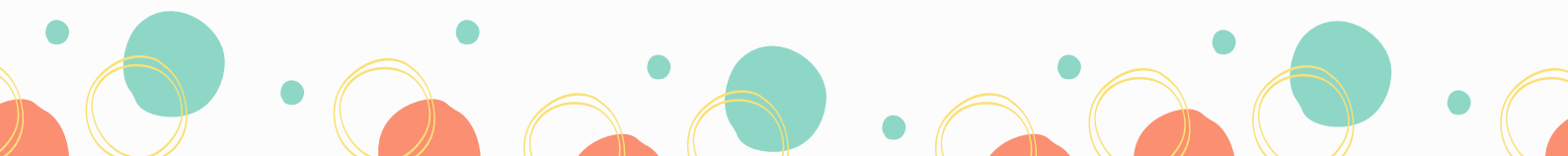
STRATEGIES AND EFFECTS:

3. Provide psychological support for students and parents whenever they face problems:

- School counsellor's support on a daily basis as well as hiring a full-time/ part-time psychologist in the school helps students see the ways of coping with problems and thus, improves their well-being.

4. Provide systematic trainings for teachers on how to deal with students' problems:

- Teachers who participate in regular trainings know how to deal with students' different problems and serve as a support for them.

5. Strengthen students' awareness of different study options:

- Organization of classes on career counselling helps students choose their future career path.

STRATEGIES AND EFFECTS:

6. Strengthen students' self-esteem, sense of purpose, self-identity and personal competence:

- Regular class conversations during form time with their form teacher or a school counsellor shows students ways to raise their self-esteem and the sense of purpose.
- Providing workshops run by psychologists – participation in workshops gives students necessary knowledge and helps them strengthen their self-esteem, self-identity and personal competence.

7. Maintain and/or improve the school's current offer of after-school clubs through monitoring students' preferences:

- Conducting questionnaires about their preferences at the beginning of the school year shows what they are interested in at a given moment and let us respond to their needs.
- Organizing involving activities within clubs motivates students for action and helps to build their interest in different subjects and, therefore, increases their motivation.

8. Develop students' key competences through involving them in a number of activities:

- Volunteering – it shows students the importance of caring about others (helping the poor, older people in care houses or animals at rescue shelters, etc.) and strengthen their sense of purpose.
- Working together in projects builds their social skills and team spirit.
- Participation in different competitions (language, ICT, science, maths, art, etc.) helps them see their strengths and improve their weaknesses.

9. Help students develop a sense of accomplishment.

- Students who see that they have shown success in any part of school activities will become more motivated.
- Give students a responsibility and change it in a regular manner. Allow them to share their new skills to others
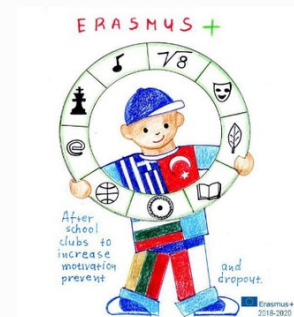
STRATEGIES AND EFFECTS:

10. Strengthen the image of the school in the local community.

- This can be done through participation in national and international projects like Erasmus+ programme which gives a great opportunity to exchange good practices with people from other countries and implement some good solutions in one's own school.

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