

Action Research

Culture of learning – Wales

Introduction

During our stay in Wales (11.03.-15.03.2018) we had an opportunity to visit two different schools – St Joesph’s School and 6th form centre in Port Talbot and Greenway Primary School in Cardiff.

I was interested in how the teachers and management cope with badly behaving pupils.

1. Are there any methods and rules that all staff members can refer to?
2. Are they effective?
3. What do pupils and parents think about them?

To find the answers to my questions I observed school life in Port Talbot and Cardiff and interviewed some students and the teachers. I found out that in both schools there are clear rules to deal with the situation when a pupil disturbs the class persistently and the others children are distracted by his behaviour. The teachers in Wales can ask for help e.g. the manager or the headmaster and they can decide to put the trouble maker to a ‘silent room’. That pupil has to spend a day in isolation from his classmates, doing his tasks and being observed by the teacher. The headmaster of the school can also send misbehaving pupils home. These are solutions accepted by the teachers, students and parents.

Research Questions

1. How the teachers in my school cope with badly behaving pupils?
2. What are the procedures or rules?
3. What do the teachers and the students think about it?

Research Design

I had chosen the group of twelve-year-old children from 5th class (14 boys and 12 girls) and I gave them a questionnaire to fill out. They answered the following questions:

1. How often are you distracted by the other pupils?
2. If it is happens, what do you do?
3. What does the teacher do if a pupil behave really badly?
4. What should he do in your opinion?

I also planned to interview the teachers.

Data Collection Methods

The data collection method selected to help answering the question are the questionnaire and the interview. The surveys were anonymous, of course, so that children could feel safe and respond honestly.

Finding/ Analysis

This is how they responded:

1. 'How often are you distracted by other pupils?'
 - Very often – 3 responses
 - Often – 8 responses
 - Sometimes – 13 responses
 - Never – 2 responses
2. 'If it happens, what do you do?'
 - I try to calm him down myself – 17 responses
 - I'm poking him – 2 responses
 - I am reporting this to the teacher – 5 responses
 - Nothing – 2 responses
3. 'What does the teacher do if a pupil behave really badly?' (several answers were possible)
 - Asks him to calm down – 26 responses
 - Puts negative note to the register – 26 responses
 - Asks questions from the lesson – 26 responses
 - Calls the pedagogue – 1 respond
4. 'What should the teacher do in your opinion?'
 - Nothing, because we have fun – 2 responses
 - throw him out of the class – 20 responses
 - sit him at a separate desk – 4 responses

It is clear that most of the pupils are disturbed by the other's bad behavior. They rarely report that fact to the teacher and try to cope themselves with the situation. The responds of our pupils show, that the teachers have mainly two tools to calm the student: putting a negative note in the register or asking about the subject which is discussed during class. It helps in less serious cases. Sometimes the teacher can't

calm down the student and has to call the pedagogue. It is interesting, that most of the children would like to throw out badly behaving pupils from the class.

Our teacher said, they would like to do it also, but they can't. Our law does not allow to expel the student from the class or send him home, because all children have to go to school and have the right to learn even they don't respect the school rules and the other children rights to learn! We really envy our welsh colleagues the possibility to send away badly behaving pupils.

Conclusion

We couldn't transfer from Wales to Poland ways of solving the problem with badly behaving students – even the isolation room wouldn't be accepted by parents. We can call the medical help or ask parents to take the child from school only in case really dangerous behaviour.

Next steps

We decided to write down the procedures what to do when pupil's behaviour is dangerous for himself or for the other children and announce it to the parents and pupils.

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