



European School Bergen

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Social Climate in the European School Bergen

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1. Aims, objectives and mission

Mission statement of the European Schools

“Educated side by side, untroubled from infancy by divisive prejudices, acquainted with all that is great and good in the different cultures, it will be borne in upon them as they mature that they belong together. Without ceasing to look to their own lands with love and pride, they will become in mind Europeans, schooled and ready to complete and consolidate the work of their fathers before them, to bring into being a united and thriving Europe.”

General objectives of the European Schools

- to give pupils confidence in their own cultural identity – the bedrock for their development as European citizens
- to provide a broad education of high quality, from nursery level to university entrance
- to develop high standards in the mother tongue and in foreign languages
- to develop mathematical and scientific skills throughout the whole period of schooling
- to encourage a European and global perspective overall and particularly in the study of the human sciences
- to encourage creativity in music and the plastic arts and an appreciation of all that is best in a common European artistic heritage; to develop physical skills and instil in pupils an appreciation of the need for healthy living through participation in sporting and recreational activities
- to offer pupils professional guidance on their choice of subjects and on career/university decisions in the later years of the secondary school
- to foster tolerance, co-operation, communication and concern for others throughout the school community and beyond
- to cultivate pupils’ personal, social and academic development and to prepare them for the next stage of education

Mission statement of the European School Bergen

As one of the original European Schools, we offer a languages-rich, differentiated, all-round quality education in three language sections leading to the European Baccalaureate which provides access to a wide range of universities in Europe and beyond. Beyond academic achievement we encourage young people to develop other skills as part of a caring “one school, one learning community” in an atmosphere of tolerance and mutual respect.

2. Working towards a sustainable school environment.

The school has actively encouraged sustainability in the school in recent years. The school building is old and the windows are single-glazed, and this makes it challenging to be as active in this area as we would like to be. This is part of an ongoing project in which the aim is for greater awareness by all in the organization, and a commitment to make changes.

The following are examples:

- The reduction of printed paper in use. All communications to the teachers are electronic. The development of ICT across the school has led to a lot of digitalization.
- Limits on the amount of printing done by teachers.
- Recycling bins around the school, and efforts have been made to involve all pupils in this. They have become much more aware and critical in this area.
- Cartridges are recycled, and there is a recycling bin for batteries.
- The charity organization generate income from recycling which goes towards charity projects.
- The Parents Association has also been active and have supported the work of the school by purchasing paper recycling bins for the classrooms.
- Solar panels on parts of the roof, and there is a display in the entrance hall which shows the amount of energy created which saves up to 100 euros per month.
- Teachers are encouraged to be proactive in this area, set an example to pupils, and to look for opportunities in the curriculum to address sustainability issues.
- Science projects will be in the area of sustainability during the current school year.

A teacher working group has been established to look at three major questions:

1. What are we doing at the moment?
2. What can we learn from each other?
3. How can we take this further?

Although we have done a lot to raise awareness in this area, it is clear that this is an ongoing project which involves everyone in the school community. We all need to look constantly at ways in which we can make our community more aware about sustainability issues and learn from each other.

3. Social Climate - general

Core values of the European School Bergen

Everyone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is listened to and is entitled to give their views • Is respected and shows respect • Appreciates the diversity in, and European identity of, the school • Appreciates the academic and other opportunities the school can provide • Knows what is going on because of good communication systems • Feels a part of the school community
Pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feel safe and are happy at school, and enjoy attending the school • Are motivated, stimulated and encouraged to reach their full potential and achieve the highest possible academic standards using a range of formative and summative assessment tools • Have their individual needs met • Are able to communicate well in different languages • Are expected to conform to the standards of behaviour and tolerance expected in the school
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are valued and supported by management and each other • Are able to develop skills and talents, and in particular their language skills • Understand, appreciate and respect the work of their colleagues • Work as a team across the whole school, and achieve this partly by peer observation in different parts of the school • Who teach can motivate, support and inspire pupils of all abilities, and teach them not only WHAT to learn, but HOW to learn • Expect the highest possible academic standards • Are well qualified and interested in their own ongoing professional development
Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are well informed and involved in the education of their children, and are welcome in classes to support the learning of their children and others • Are open to asking teachers and the management for help and support in any areas of their childrens' education • Can send their children to the school with the confidence that they will have a quality education • Feel part of the community and are welcome at the school • Support the school through the Parents Association and in other ways
Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead by example in the promotion of a European culture in the school • Create a positive listening culture in the school • Resolve conflicts in a constructive manner • Present a positive view of the school to the outside world, and make it clear what it is that the European School system can offer • Put teaching and learning at the centre of all decision-making • Is fully informed of the rules and regulations of the system, and is able to interpret them to find the most effective educational solutions for the pupils

Promoting positive behaviour

The school is small enough for all members of the school to feel part of one community. All pupils are in one building, and share common spaces (such as the canteen). This makes it much easier for all pupils and staff of the school to interact with each other and it helps to generate a school climate which goes across languages, sections and age groups. The school has worked hard over the years to create an atmosphere which is safe for the pupils, and in which all members of the school community treat each other with respect. As a result we have a happy school in which our pupils and staff feel safe and supported, and when problems arise they are dealt with professionally and efficiently by class teachers, subject teachers, the Care Team and educational advisers in the secondary, and the deputies

and director.

With this commitment to the maintenance of a positive school climate, we support and encourage all types of positive behaviour. Our Core Values reflect our commitment to the creation of a friendly, safe and supportive social climate and a listening culture in which we encourage anyone who is not happy about things in school to talk openly about what has gone wrong. A proactive approach is taken aiming at preventing problems developing by raising awareness and suggesting strategies that promote a positive, supportive environment.

The school has developed methods to deal with the consequences of negative behaviour. Parents are not always aware of what the school does in this area, and when there is an incident involving their child they can feel. Dealing with examples of negative behaviour is very time-consuming. It involves many people in the school, and must be dealt with sensitively and diplomatically. This is one of the reasons why parents sometimes may feel that actions are not as quick or direct as they would like. We have a complaints handling procedure, and we also have disciplinary guidelines which are laid down in the General Rules of the European Schools. There is no specific protocol otherwise for dealing with incidents because each incident needs to be dealt with in an individualised way which reflects the needs of the situation.

The school is aware of the need to work in partnership with parents to resolve problems, and expects parents to play an important and supportive role. In order for a successful and productive working relationship with parents, we request that parents deal with the school in an open, constructive and non-confrontational manner so that we can resolve issues in an objective way.

Pupils are constantly confronted with information about what is expected from them by class and subject teachers, and we recognize and praise examples of positive behaviour in many situations around the school. Similarly, pupils have a clear idea of what is acceptable and positive behaviour and the core values reinforce the expectations of all members of the school community. In Religion and Ethics there are many opportunities to discuss behaviour and relationships, and in all areas of school life, including school trips, positive behaviour is expected. In the secondary cycle there is a Care Team which can be involved in the case of behavioural incidents or problems. Pupils are encouraged to talk about problems when they occur, and how to be assertive. It is very important that pupils who are reluctant to talk feel that they can discuss problems with a member of staff which may be based on an incident in school, or a problem at home. If we don't know about a problem we cannot do anything. We are always impressed by the commitment of our pupils to this positive ethos in the school.

One of the great challenges in our school community is dealing with the different cultural expectations which pupils and parents bring with them to the school. It is therefore the job of the teachers to make it clear to the pupils and parents what are the very specific core values of the school, and by reinforcing these positive values, any negative behaviour is evident. This is what a European School is all about – incorporating the attitudes and values of different nationalities and cultures, and taking it into the core mission of the school, to create European citizens for the Europe of tomorrow.

Pupils understand that negative behaviour is unacceptable and not to be tolerated. Teachers and all staff are vigilant in providing supervision and accurate reporting for all incidents of negative behaviour through the reporting document or in other appropriate ways. All members of the school community have the responsibility to bring negative behaviour to the attention of those responsible, and to intervene when necessary. All pupils are taught through discussion and scenarios in school and home so that they understand that wherever possible they should help/protect their peers whom they see examples of negative behaviour.

Dealing with an incident.

If there is an incident in school it will normally be dealt with in the first instance by the class teacher who will deal with others (e.g. deputy directors and educational advisers). Listening is an important part of the initial process, and it is important that all pupils and others involved have an opportunity to give their version of the events.

What is most important is that all pupils understand what they have to do when things go wrong, and that all members of staff are presented to listen to them without judgement. It may not always be the class teacher that the pupil approaches – they are encouraged to talk to an adult they trust.

If the incident is a minor one it will be dealt with quickly. If it is more serious it will be documented and parents will be involved. What must not happen is that parents or pupils feel that actions have not been taken and that strategies are in place, and the school will communicate what it can to parents. Parents must understand that not all information can be communicated because there is often a lot of confidential information involved, and possibly external organisations involved.

Parents also need to understand that a lot of work in the school in such sensitive areas goes on “behind the scenes”, and as part of the development of a positive social climate, we ask the parents to put their trust in the school. Sometimes parents indirectly put a great deal of negative pressure on the school in conflict situations, and they are encouraged to talk directly to the school management if they feel that their needs have not been met.

Use of the Internet

Pupils are given guidance in ICT lessons on appropriate computer usage and internet safety, and what is expected and not acceptable in the use of social media. Pupils are constantly reminded to keep passwords private, and to change them frequently.

Out of school access to the Internet for gaming, social media and searches can bring problems into school. Parents are encouraged to support the school by monitoring access for children, particularly in the evenings. Often problems arise in school because of so-called cyber-bullying out of school, and we are often surprised at the kind of access pupils have to inappropriate materials. In this area we encourage parents to be vigilant about the online activities of their children.

In school, the use of the Internet is controlled and the use of smartphones and mobile phones is restricted. Many inappropriate sites are blocked in school, and the IT technicians are able to monitor internet usage. None of the pupils in the school below S5 should have phones in their bags or pockets, and phones (if brought at all to school with secondary pupils in S1-4) should be kept in lockers. No pupils in the nursery and primary cycles should have a phone in school unless given special permission, accompanied by a formal written request by the parents.

Use of experts and programmes

In the past the school has had various speakers and programmes with a varying degree of success. The KIVA project was briefly implemented, but it was beyond the resources of the school at the time, both financially and because of the staffing-intensive nature of the project. The school is open to new ideas, and welcomes ideas from the PA in this area. This is a frequent topic of conversation between the school management and the PA which reflects the interests and concerns from parents. These guidelines will therefore be revised as and when necessary and when new initiatives are introduced.

4. Nursery and Primary Cycle Guidelines

The European School of Bergen is committed to establishing and reinforcing a positive atmosphere and a caring school ethos, in order to increase the well-being of all pupils and to contribute to a successful learning community. Teaching assistants, the class- and support teachers, language teachers, Educational Support Coordinator and Deputy Director of Nursery and Primary share the responsibility for a safe and positive learning environment, where all Nursery and Primary pupils feel involved, respected and happy.

The school counts on the active support of the parents by sharing the school values and committing to the school and class rules. Parents are expected to prepare their young children to take their own share of responsibility as a member of the school community and behave in a respectful manner to other pupils and staff.

To support the social cohesion and to improve the social climate, the school foresees:

- a clear approach and sustained commitment by pedagogical staff and management
- involvement and engagement of all pupils from Nursery to end of Secondary
- reactions to inappropriate behaviour

In order to increase effectiveness, the school takes several initiatives in the areas of:

1. Prevention (pro-active actions)
2. Detection
3. Intervention
4. After-care

1 PREVENTION

Open communication

All Nursery and Primary teachers foster a child-friendly environment and open communication with all pupils. This enables the pupils to feel safe, to express their feelings, share emotions and ask for help when needed. In Nursery as well as in Primary many opportunities are created to teach and discuss social skills, behaviour and well-being.

Examples are:

- **Circle time** is a good moment for speaking, listening and discussion.
- **Drama sessions** are used to show and play scenarios, find solutions in specific situations and practice social skills.
- **Sports and games** are opportunities to overcome challenges and reinforce a sportive attitude when 'losing'.
- During **European Hours activities** (organized for Nursery and for P345 classes) the pupils learn more about and from others, improve collaboration and communication, while stretching the limitations of their dominant language.
- During **lessons and/or projects**, teachers raise awareness and make use of teaching materials and tools to discuss a range of topics, from social skills to more explicit lessons about 'bullying' (for the P345 age group). The more explicit lessons cover the difference between teasing and bullying, the role of bullies, bystanders and victims, and responsible behaviour.
- Apart from more explicit lessons, social skills

Playground areas

- Pupils have separate playground areas which are adapted to their specific age and needs. All areas offer plenty of space to enable the children to have a refreshing and healthy outdoor break.
- During break, multiple teachers are on duty to monitor the pupils and to assist where needed.

Nursery playground	Primary P1 and P2 playground	Primary P3, P4 and P5 playground
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A large playing field, swings and sand pit, outdoor bikes and small play equipment open opportunities for spatial and social development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One large climbing frame and 2 smaller climbing frames There is plenty of space to play football or different games Colourful tiles invite the pupils to play and invent their own games. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 'football cage' offers the older children a safe place to play football, following a weekly schedule. The climbing walls, adventure playground and bars give opportunities for more challenging climbing and tumbling. Balls and small playground equipment offer opportunities for different games and sports.

Pupils' Assembly

- In September all nursery and primary pupils are invited to a Welcome Assembly by the Deputy Director. The Deputy Director presents the most important values and rules for collaboration and working together to become a happy school.
- The importance of respectful behaviour is pointed out and the aim to work together and learn with and from others is reinforced.
- In February, all pupils will again attend a Pupils' Assembly, where attitude and behaviour are again discussed. Teachers and pupils can share examples of good practice.

Social skills

- Each school year the Nursery/Primary teachers agree to work on one common monthly action point, to support and promote a positive school climate. Class teachers and Ethics teachers include the topics into their class life and lessons.
- Representatives of P345 are involved in the promotion of respectful behaviour.

P345 pupils' representatives

- P3, P4 and P5 classes vote for 2 class representatives, who attend meetings with pupils' representatives and the Deputy Director.
- The pupils are asked to take responsibility and to be involved to improve the day-to-day life in Nursery and Primary. (Involvement can be seen in following areas: social climate, canteen, playground, class etc.)
- 5 meetings are scheduled each school year.

2 DETECTION

- At the beginning of the school year, rules of good behaviour in the Nursery and Primary Cycle and the class are set.
- Class teachers and other teaching staff are committed to monitor the pupils' behaviour in the class setting as well as in the corridors and on the playgrounds.

3 INTERVENTION

- When pupils show unacceptable behaviour or express themselves in an inappropriate way,

the pedagogical staff will intervene.

- Interventions will mainly take place at the scene by the teacher present and will be in line with the age of the pupil(s).
- When needed, the teacher(s) will investigate the circumstances of the incident and will question the pupil(s) involved.
- When the intervening teacher is not the class teacher of the child, the information will be shared with the class teacher, who is the main person responsible for the pupil, in all aspects of their learning.
- When a more severe incident or conflict is detected, the teacher(s) will also inform the Cycle Support Coordinator, and if needed the Deputy Director.
- Appropriate measures are discussed by the teachers involved, put in place and communicated.
- Measures can take place at individual level, classroom level and school level.

Possible consequences of inappropriate behaviour are clearly communicated with the pupils as stated in the General Rules of the European School:

- Verbal message, reminder and/or warning (from a teacher)
- Teacher informs the parents (note/meeting)
- Pupil meets the Deputy Director
- Deputy Director informs the parents and makes a note in the pupils' file
- Warning and/or sanction by the Director
- Warning and/or sanction by the Director, following a proposal from the Discipline Council

4 AFTER-CARE

- After an incident and/or conflict, the class teacher monitors the child/situation to assure that the measure taken was effective.
- During teachers' meetings, parent-teacher meetings, class councils, transitions meetings and informal discussions, the well-being and behaviour of pupils is an ongoing point of interest and discussion, and sustained attention is given to the reinforcement of a positive social climate.
- Regular evaluation of the measures taken provide the essential input to add to and/or review the initiatives in the areas of prevention, detection, intervention and after-care.

5. Secondary guidelines

1. PREVENTION

- The aim is to educate and train the students to tolerate and respect each other, to understand that we all are different.
- Social skills, use of Internet and cyber safety are taught and discussed in the lessons of many subjects (e.g. Ethics, Religion, Sports, IT).
- In all classes the House Rules and school values are discussed in first lessons with the class teacher at the beginning of the school.
- During the break times students are asked to be in the dedicated areas which are supervised by the teachers.
- Mobile phones are banned in S1-S4
- Students do not have access to social media in school
- S1-S3 students have to be in the study hall if they have a free period.
- Assemblies are arranged where attitude, behaviour, school rules and values are discussed
- Students' president and class reps are involved in discussions of positive atmosphere and good learning environment for students.
- Students at risk (socially and/ or academically) are identified by the pedagogical staff and discussed in the Caret Team. The GGD nurse is involved in needed.

2. DETECTION

- Teachers and pedagogical advisers monitor behaviour of students in and outside the classrooms and react if any worrying signals have noticed.
- Students are taught to inform any teacher or adult in school about the situations of unacceptable behaviour
- Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they have information about an unacceptable behaviour or incidents in school .

3. INTERVENTION

In case of inappropriate behaviour a teacher/class teacher with the educational advisers deal with the case immediately. If needed, the deputy director is involved.

All students involved in the incident are listened to.

All disciplinary events are recorded on SMS, and via the SMS system the parents are informed.

Possible consequences of inappropriate behaviour can be

- Verbal warning
- Detention
- Student on report
- Community tasks
- Students meet with the Deputy Director
- Educational advisers and /or Deputy Director Meeting with the parents
- Official warning letter
- Warning and/or sanction by the Director
- Discipline Council

Behaviour Incident Form

Name of pupil affected:	
Name of pupil(s) who have caused the problem:	
Date of report:	
Reported by:	
Reported to:	
Short description of incident:	
Actions taken:	

Signed:

Date:

Follow-up check

Interview with the pupil affected:	
Interview with the pupil(s) who have caused the problem): Further actions necessary:	
Follow-up check completed on	

Signed :

Date: