

Supporting teachers with comprehensive reports on pupil's needs

Belgium – VCLB Gent

SUMMARY OF PROJECT

The goal is to help teachers to treat and train pupils with all kinds of disabilities according to their individual needs in the classroom, specifically by focusing on their strengths. Using an elaborate database, a report is created describing what helps THIS pupil with THIS teacher in THIS class at THIS moment. The complex diagnose is then narrowed down to what the pupil's particular strengths are and what extra measures the child might require. These measures can be evaluated and shared with the next year's teachers, and even with other schools.

QUOTE:

"A pupil no longer has a problem, but a solution!"

—Mr. Tom De Moor, IT Manager of Project

FACTS & FIGURES:

- In 2010, 310 pupils were evaluated.
- The tool has been implemented in 200 schools across Belgium, involving some 2,300 pupils.

PROBLEMS TARGETED:

The target group are all pupils with special educational needs, from kindergarten to high school (and even university). These pupils have the right to reasonable accommodations, and with this review instrument, these accommodations can be ensured during the pupil's entire school career. The instrument was developed during an initial three-year project-phase, but has been continually optimized in the years following. Some aspects have been studied as part of doctorate research on chronically ill children, and for these children it is especially useful to take special educational measures and make individual arrangements. Another focus has been on pupils with behavioural problems and what measures are needed to help them (re)adapt to the classroom environment.

SOLUTION & METHODOLOGY

The programme was developed in collaboration with more than 100 schools in the area of Ghent; a school guidance centre and Artevelde College (Ghent); and an association of parents of children with

special educational needs (Sprankel). A committee composed of these partners developed the programme, known as *gemotiveerd verslag* (“reasoned report”), to share the approach of teachers to help pupils with special needs. Every successful measure or arrangement is indicated in the database, so that the next teacher knows how best to adapt to the needs of the pupil. The programme does not focus on problems or labels, but on solutions and approaches. The project had a three-quarter time teacher responsible for communication and coverage, and an ICT-manager responsible for developing a website and a web-application.

OUTLOOK & TRANSFERABILITY

Due to a recent decree by the Flemish government, a school must demonstrate what efforts were made for the pupil, before the school is allowed to refer the pupil to special education. The reasoned report is a user-friendly tool that can help the schools in this process. Multiple software vendors will be implementing the report in their software in 2016.

Photo: Yes

Life story: Yes

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