

# Newsletter 8

## Interview with the Executive Director of CARDET, Dr. Charalambos Vrasidas, in the newspaper "Phileleftheros"

### Promoting positive behaviour and developing inclusive school environments

CARDET is an organisation that has a significant body of work and a multitude of actions to promote innovative approaches and tools in the field of education. One such project is the SWPBS, which includes an experimental implementation of the innovative Positive Behaviour Promotion System in primary schools in Cyprus. We talked to Dr. Charalambos Vrasidas, Executive Director of CARDET, about this system, as well as the actions and results of the project.

1. To start with, can you tell us a few words about the Positive Behaviour Promotion Scheme? What is it and what benefits does it have in the school community?

The Positive Behaviour Promotion System is a science-based and holistic approach and promotes a new philosophy for discipline and communication between students and teachers. It emphasizes prevention as well as teaching, promoting and encouraging positive behaviors and supporting children through rewards versus the use of punitive measures. Through this approach, the school provides pupils with an 'accepting environment' where positive behaviours are promoted and unexpected behaviours become opportunities for learning and further practice to develop social skills.

2. It is our understanding that this is a system that you have implemented through the SWPBS project in schools in Cyprus and abroad. Could you share with us some information about the project and its activities?

SWPBS is a European project funded by Erasmus+ implemented in Cyprus, Finland, Greece and Romania. In Cyprus the project is implemented by CARDET in cooperation with the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute of the Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth and the consultancy organisation INNOVADE. Through the project it has been implemented, on a practical level, in 31 primary schools in three districts (Nicosia, Larnaca, Famagusta) in Cyprus and over 100 schools in the participating countries. More than 2000 teachers and 15,000 children benefited from it and the conclusions drawn will be used to formulate policy recommendations.

3. What conclusions have you drawn from its implementation and what benefits have you seen?

Improvements in school and classroom climate, a reduction in undesirable behaviours, an increase in pupil wellbeing, and an improvement in teachers' collective sense of efficacy were recorded. We also had very encouraging feedback from teachers who noted that they now had a different perspective on managing unwanted behaviours in school and cultivating children's social skills. Crucially, they reported that they saw children regaining their confidence and coming back to school happy again.

4. What are your plans for the next day and how will you move forward to continue the dissemination and implementation of the system and to further strengthen the schools?

We firmly believe that the actions and results of the project will have multiple benefits to our education system and provide an excellent basis for the formulation of targeted policies and initiatives in the field of education. Our intention is to contribute to the expansion and adoption of the system in all schools in Cyprus and we are in the process of preparing recommendations and proposals so that more schools throughout Cyprus can benefit from the system. In addition, we are continuing and expanding our efforts to promote the Positive Behaviour Promotion Supports by conducting a similar project, ProW, in kindergartens.

