



# MODEL OF WORKING WITH A FOREIGN PUPIL COMING TO A NEW COUNTRY

*School Adaptability*

as a key to develop a child's potential



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# Introduction

The MODEL OF WORKING WITH A FOREIGN PUPIL COMING TO NEW COUNTRY (ADAPTATION OF FOREIGN PUPIL) is an inclusive educational model to facilitate the challenging experience of migration-adaptation process of children (6-14 years old), support inclusive school communities for all students and alleviate the risk of school failure and drop-outs.

It contains a description of working steps with a foreign pupil coming from another country (culture) in a new education system. It covers all the stages from making the decision of moving abroad till the first few months of transitioning to a new school, as well as engaging local communities. Aside from this, it stresses greatly the intercultural approach to teaching and learning and classroom group and individual processes. The addressees of the model are principles, school personnel, teachers, tutors, psychologists.

The Model of Working with a Foreign Pupil will be replicable to ensure future usability in different school systems, communities and countries struggling with diversity in their student population.

The Model is the original work of the authors and is largely based on hands-on experience, best practises applied in education, as well as theoretical background presented in the first chapter. The Model presents all the stages which should ideally be looked after in the adaptation process of a new, foreign pupil. Nonetheless, if some of the stages cannot be implemented in the suggested sequences or some of the roles and activities executed, it should be individually customised and adapted to each school reality.

# Chapter 1

## THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A FOREIGN PUPIL COMING TO A NEW COUNTRY

When defining the characteristics of a foreign pupil, it is easy to be tempted to draw up a list of common adjectives that encompass the profile of these pupils. And such a list could be drawn up but it would be ineffective for the purpose of this project. It is not enough to list the common factors. First, the idiosyncrasies of each child prevent or, at least, make it very difficult to infer characteristics that define the whole group in the same way. If cultural differences are added, especially those related to language and communication, it is practically impossible to draw a common profile.

Therefore, this section will be approached from different perspectives, trying to shed light from different angles to make the perception of what pupils are like as objective and practical as possible.



It will begin with an overview of the migration situation in Europe and of the context in which children find themselves, providing some statistical data that will help to understand what the phenomenon encompasses. The impact of the change of school on children's lives and the impact of the change of school and country will then be analysed from three intrinsically related dimensions: the psychological, the sociological, and the pedagogical aspects.

Finally, the cultural conditioning factors that inevitably affect the process of adaptation of pupils will be addressed and the main problems that may hinder development (especially linguistic) and integration in the new school will be tackled.

## 1.1

# FOREIGN PUPILS COMING TO A NEW COUNTRY - THE SIZE OF THE PHENOMENON

International law defines a child as a human being under the age of 18. The United Nations recognises, in its Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, that all children are entitled to special care and assistance. Specifically, it states that:

*"In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration."*

(Convention on the Rights of the Child, Art.3).

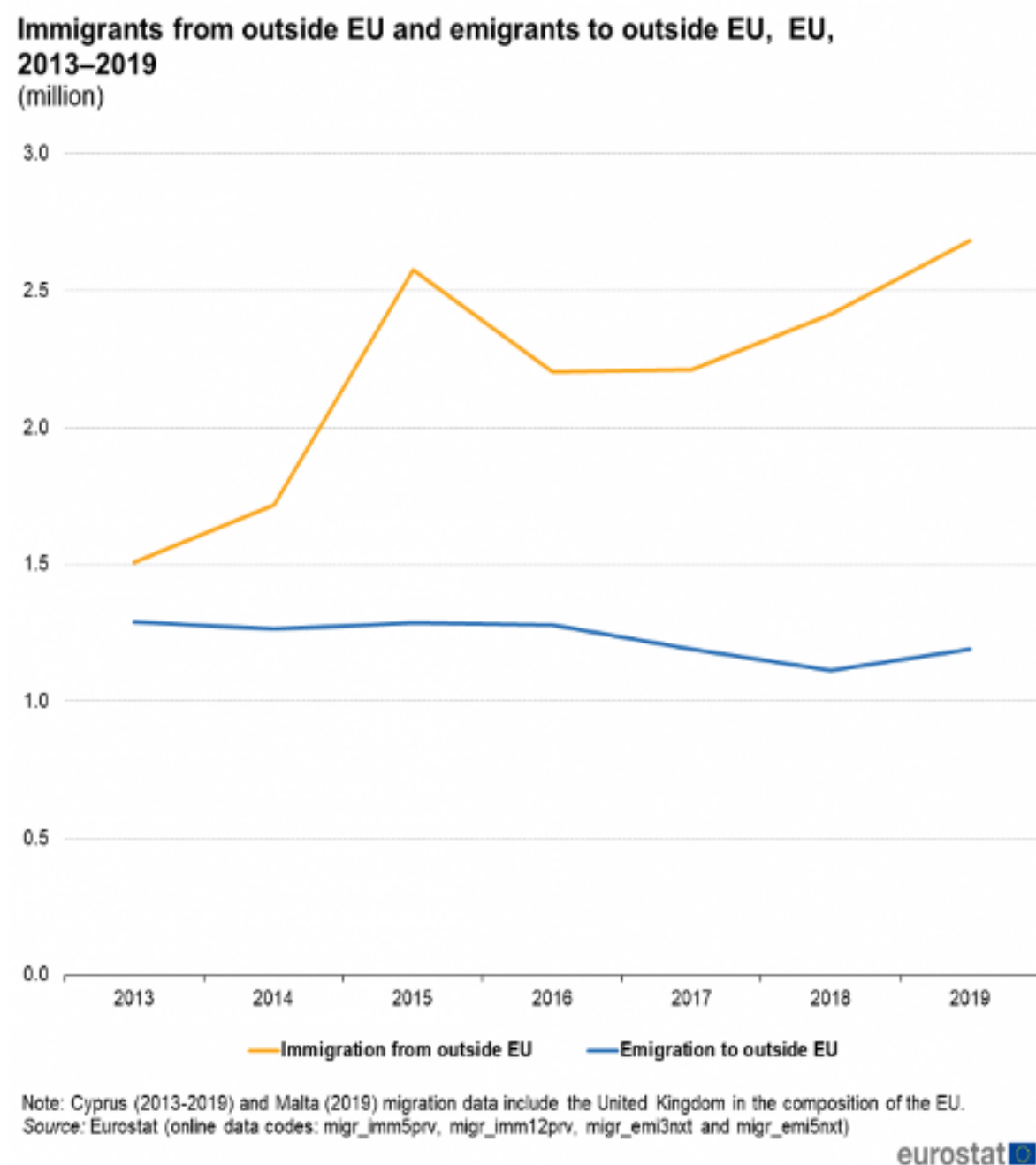
About 23 million EU inhabitants are non-EU citizens, which implies 5.1% of the total population. In 2019 alone, 2.7 million people settled in the EU from non-EU countries and 1.2 million people migrated from the EU to a country outside the EU - see Figure 1. In addition, 1.4 million people previously residing in an EU Member State migrated to another Member State (Eurostat, 2021).



Figure 1

Immigrants from outside EU and emigrants to outside EU, EU,  
2013-2019.

Source: Eurostat <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained>



The total number of migrant children (under 18) in the EU can be estimated at 6.9 million in 2018. This figure includes an estimated 2.6 million EU citizens living in another Member State and some 4.3 million nationals of other countries.

In relation to the total population of the same age group, the 6.9 million accounts for approximately 7% (Eurostat, 2019). These figures are presented in the demographic pyramid, as can be seen in Figure 2.

Age structure of the national and non-national populations, EU,  
1 January 2020  
(%)

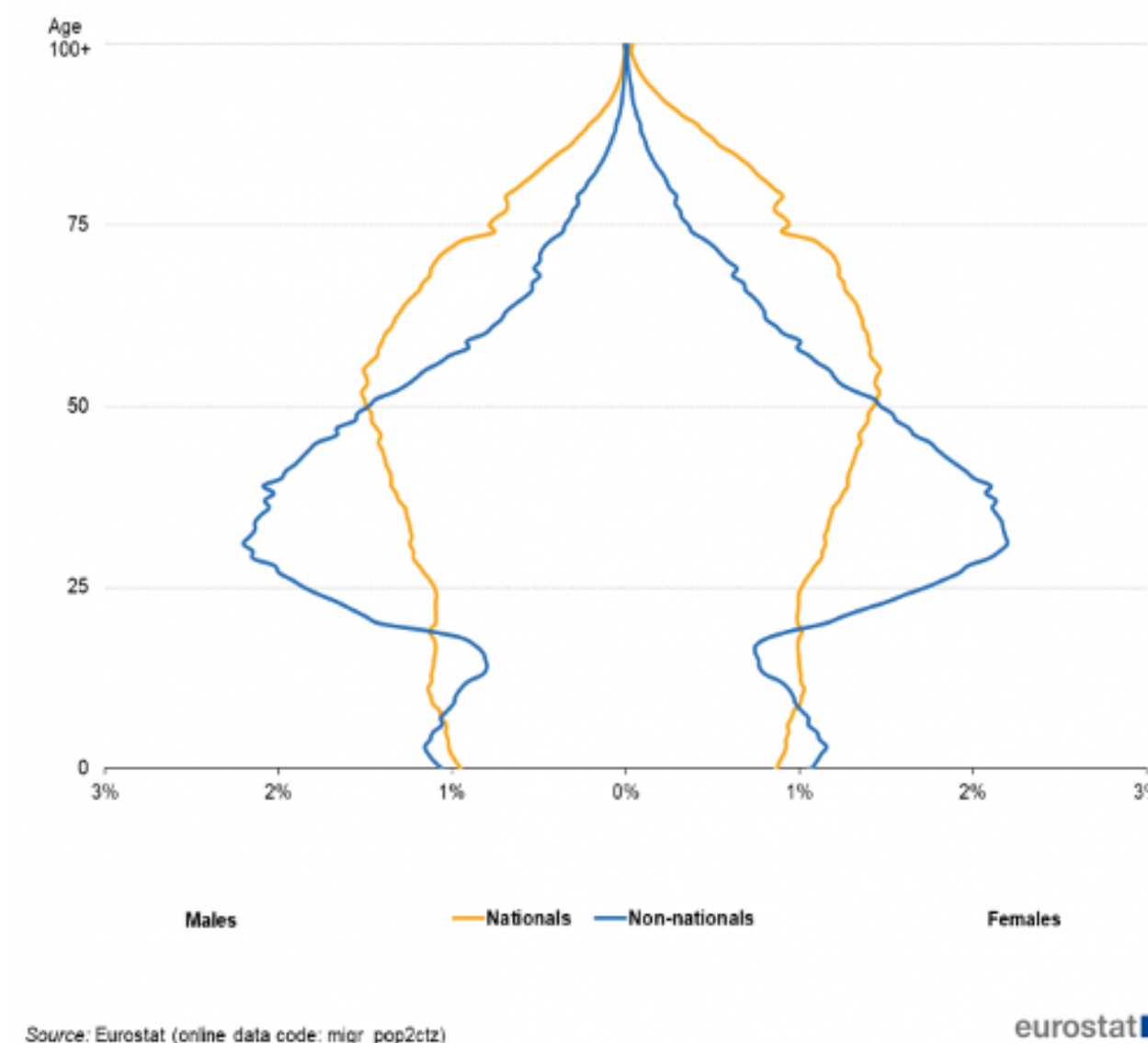


Figure 2

Age structure of the national and non-national  
population, EU, 1 January 2020

Source: Eurostat

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained>

For migrant populations, comparable data appears to be available only for all Member States since 2014. The breakdown according to nationality is available for 21 Member States, but data are missing for Greece, France, Croatia, Cyprus, Malta, Poland and the United Kingdom. These missing data account for approximately 30% of non-EU nationals and around 40% of intra-EU migration. Despite the missing data, there is a clear trend in terms of the nationality of migrants. Among non-EU countries, Syria and Morocco top the list of countries of origin, with a share of about a quarter of the total. Romania and Poland occupy the same position in terms of intra-EU migration.

In Italy, approximately 38% of all people aged 0-19 come from three countries: Albania (14.5%), Morocco (13.9%) and China (10.1%). There is also a large group from the Philippines (4.5%). Contrary to the general perception, the proportion of non-EU nationals has slightly decreased from 8% in 2014 to 7.7% in 2017. However, this percentage is still higher than in most EU countries. (European Commission, 2019)

As far as Spain is concerned, it is not surprising that the largest group is from Morocco (40.6%), as it is a neighbouring country. The second largest nationality is Chinese (9.4%). From Central and South America, the volume amounts to 25%, led by Colombia (3.6%) and Ecuador (3.2%).

In Poland, there are more and more foreign pupils at schools. The number of such students grew from 9610 (in 2009) to 51 363 (in 2019). Most of them come from Ukraine (74,8%). The remaining nationalities are the following: Belarusians, Russians, Vietnamese and Armenians (Supreme Audit Office, 2020).

Although the arrival of immigrants of certain nationalities could be explained by long-standing links with the countries of origin or by the common language, this does not imply easy psychosocial integration in the new country. For example, Sweden, Austria, Hungary, and Germany received in the period 2015-2016 a huge number of children compared to their own nationals of the same age group, which created great challenges in terms of reception and integration.

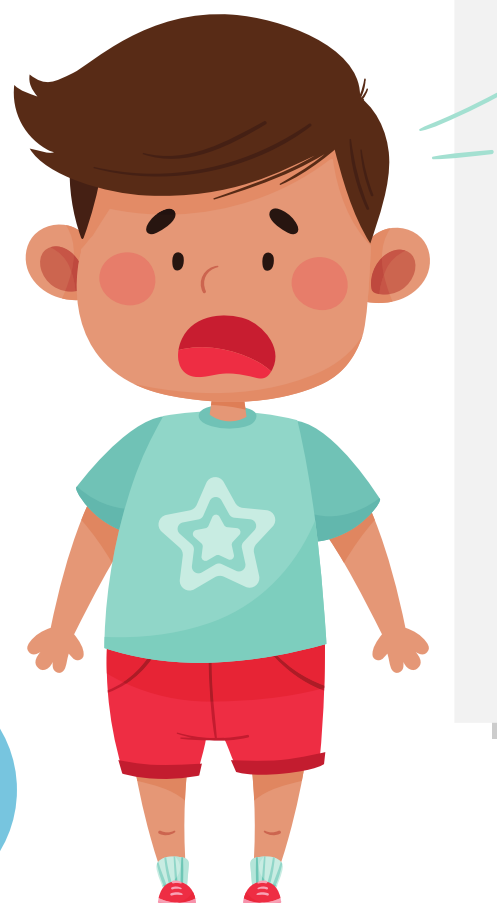
As mentioned above, Syria is among the main origins of nationals from non-EU regions, while Romania and Poland are among the main origins of intra-EU migration. Countries of origin such as Gambia, Afghanistan, Eritrea, Somalia, Iraq, Guinea, Libya, Mali, Senegal, or the Balkans lose large proportions of young people through migration to Europe. In addition, the proportion of unaccompanied children (mostly boys) from some of these countries is extremely high. In 2020, 13 600 asylum applicants in the EU Member States were considered to be unaccompanied minors, down by 4% compared with 2019 (Eurostat, 2021).



Migration affects children's developmental progress and can have a major impact on their identity when they become adults. Moreover, if they are far from home, travelling alone or separated from their families, negative experiences during the migration process can also be particularly traumatic for children. Therefore, children who migrate or have migrated need, and should be offered, specific and adequate protections. Therefore, education policies must not lose sight of this important phenomenon involving a substantial part of what will shape the future of the European Union.

## 1.2 PSYCHOLOGICAL CONDITIONING OF FOREIGN PUPILS COMING TO A NEW COUNTRY

The change of school is difficult for any child. For foreign pupils arriving in a new country and having to start at a new school, in addition to the usual difficulties that a change of school brings for any child, there are the specific difficulties of being in a new country, with a new language and culture. With the arrival in a new country, the children will experience an emotional impact in all areas, which will affect their integration into the new school and their academic performance.



**Steven & Vollebergh (2008) have defined three types of psychological problems related to migration:**

### 1. MIGRATION-RELATED STRESS

- a. Traumatic experiences prior to immigration
- b. Separation from friends and extended family

### 2. STRESS ASSOCIATED WITH RESIDING IN THE NEW COUNTRY

- a. Language problems
- b. Adaptation to the new culture, with different values, sometimes incompatible with those of the country of origin
- c. Perceived discrimination, due to physical differences, such as skin colour, or cultural differences, such as the way they dress or eat

### 3. ATTACHMENT TO THEIR OWN CULTURE

According to Mohler (2001), children relate to their own culture following one of two models:

1

#### "Problem-suppression model":

children immersed in a foreign culture suppress it and do not adopt the acceptable behaviours of the new society.

2

#### "Adult-distress threshold model":

culture is assumed to be an indirect influence of parents on children's behaviour. Parents through modelling suppress the development of undesirable behaviours and facilitate the development of appropriate behaviours. This can be a source of anxiety for the child.

These problems are exacerbated in the case of refugees, who in addition to the difficulties mentioned above have to add those specific to their status (Fazel & Stein, 2002). The stressors to which most refugees are exposed occur at three different points in time:

1

First in their country of origin: many refugees have experiences that are considered traumatic or have suffered the loss of close family members or friends.

2

Second in the refugee camp. Staying in a refugee camp also means increased vulnerability. It can last for months and expose refugees to many dangers.

3

Third in the host country. The period of residence in another country can be a difficult time, in which a new society has to be adapted to. Another source of stress is accepting or feeling obliged to follow the rules of the host country - rules imposed for the good of society, but seen as a restriction to one's freedom.

## The psychological determinants mentioned above vary according to:



- **Sex:** The difference in socialisation demands on daughters compared to sons, especially in families from more traditional cultures, could explain differences in the effect of migration on behavioural problems in boys and girls. (Dion, 2001).



- **Age:** Adaptive capacity tends to decrease with age so that school-age children are not as resilient as pre-schoolers. The adolescent questions parental roles: in an adolescent, with immigrant parents, this criticism may be even greater because the codes of the culture of origin transmitted by the parents are in many cases not the same as those of the host culture. The adolescent compares and evaluates the different cultural codes that are offered to him/her; this distanced perception of what is transmitted by the family can create a conflict (Baubet & Moro, 2009).

Guarnaccia and Lopez (1998) propose certain measures aimed at improving the mental health of immigrant children by addressing such stress, such as that schools with immigrants should have special support for these pupils. Teachers need to be trained to learn about different cultures and to work with the diversities of immigrant children. School programmes are needed to reinforce the value of cultural diversity and avoid prejudice towards newcomers.

The school, together with the family, plays a vital role in the emotional and personal development of the child. Two basic components of this development are found in self-regulation and self-concept, which will lead to self-esteem. The family will have the greatest influence on personality development, while the school context provides the framework for the development of social relationships (Goleman, 1995).

Self-regulation refers to the ability to understand, talk about, identify and manage emotions. This requires the use of self-control (or behavioural inhibition) and, to a large extent, language. Herein lies one of the key points of the psychological impact that a change of country and a change of school can have on a child. This is where the need to express emotionally comes together with the barrier that language can present. Each culture has norms and rules about how to express emotions in each context. Therefore, how to express one's own emotions or how to understand the emotions of others is one of the most important challenges facing a child arriving at a new school in a country.

The school will be a very important point of reference for the child and will be key to his or her later integration into society (Gualda, 2007). For this reason, it is essential that teachers and tutors are informed about the children's circumstances. For integration to be successful, it is necessary to involve not only teachers but also management staff, the children's classmates and figures such as a "foreign" school support who is trained or who is from a culture close to the child so that he or she feels welcome and can integrate into the new life.



## 1.3

# SOCIOLOGICAL CONDITIONING OF FOREIGN PUPILS COMING TO A NEW COUNTRY

Human beings are social by nature: they are born into a social environment and need that environment to acquire and develop increasingly complex competencies. To understand the influence of a drastic change in a child's social environment, such as moving to another country and starting a new school, it is necessary to consider how human beings develop their motivation to become and remain part of a group.

From birth, most human beings are forced to belong to certain social categories, such as family or ethnic group. But beyond that, people actively and voluntarily seek to be part of other groups. It is as if there is an innate motivation to form bonds with others. Along these lines, the need to belong hypothesis (Baumeister & Leary, 1995) proposes that all people need to be part of social groups. During the first months of life, the baby already needs to feel that, in addition to its basic needs, it will receive attention, support and connection with others to develop holistically. As he or she grows up, the sense of belonging broadens and is directed towards other social groups, becoming one of the most important reasons for identity development during adolescence.



The immigrant label is a pejorative attribute that becomes a heavy burden that is difficult to bear and hinders the integration process itself. In this scenario, one of the most difficult things that children must face during the migration process are situations of discrimination or racism in the places of arrival, especially when they belong to certain groups, such as sub-Saharan Africans or Latin Americans, which are subject to negative stereotypes.

These images are constantly disseminated in the media, which ends up affecting self-esteem and hopes for integration. If the social image reflected is positive, the child feels worthy and competent, with a high chance of feeling integrated. While immigrant children's responses to negative images can be varied and range from assuming the negative identity, to ignoring it, to developing active resistance, all these attitudes influence the type of child adaptation (Suárez-Orozco & Suárez-Orozco, 2002).

Children of immigrant origin participate in the socialisation of the culture of origin in their families. However, they also participate in the culture of destination through their friendships, cultural consumption, and schooling. In this way, they have both societies as a point of reference and share the identity categories of immigrant and native people simultaneously. This situation may allow them to experience a hybrid, dynamic and changing identity that is culturally challenging (García Borrego, 2008).

In the school environment, the exclusion of newcomer students by their peers is negative to self-esteem levels. Moreover, a study using magnetic resonance imaging of the brain (Eisenberg, Lieberman & Williams, 2003) showed that the feeling of being excluded activates the same neural regions as those involved in physical pain. It is therefore not surprising to think that experiencing such situations can have serious consequences for the mental health and well-being of the learner, in addition to the behavioural reactions that this entails, which can be aggressive and/or violent towards members of the group.

**Based on research by Baumeister et al. (1995) on the relationship between the threat of exclusion and self-regulatory capacity, the main effects that social exclusion can have on the individual are listed as follows**

- Tendency to behave aggressively and reduced propensity for prosocial behaviour (such as co-operating with others or helping).
- Cognitive deficits, which may be reflected in difficulties in performing tasks involving logical reasoning.
- Difficulties in concentrating attention.
- Low frustration tolerance.
- Passivity and lethargy.
- Distorted perception of the rhythm of time (time passes more slowly).
- Emphasis on the present and difficulties in looking to the future.
- Little reflection on self and life circumstances.
- Tendency towards self-destructive behaviours, reflected in an increase in counterproductive behaviours, such as taking unnecessary risks or making unhealthy decisions.

**In contrast, when a student "feels a part of", a number of vital benefits for healthy and balanced personal development emerge**

- Positive regulation of self-concept and self-esteem.
- Optimal development of cognitive and emotional faculties.
- A sense of tranquillity that influences general health and well-being.
- Increased adaptive and context-appropriate behaviour.
- Progress in autonomy and creativity.

As mentioned above, the influence of a major change in the child's social environment gains weight considering the needs of belonging to the group. It is clear, then, how many factors converge and influence the transfer of a child to another school, another country, another habitat. But by breaking down the elements and phenomena that occur when a child moves to another school in another country, we can address each problem more specifically and have more resources to intervene and help these pupils as quickly and as well as possible, so that their adaptation process is truly satisfactory.

## 1.4

# PEDAGOGICAL CONDITIONING OF FOREIGN PUPILS COMING TO A NEW COUNTRY

The right to education, access to educational services and participation in the life of the school community are fundamental pedagogical elements when it comes to foreign school-aged children successfully starting a new school. Local policies must guarantee the right to study, primarily by offering specific courses and initiatives that provide an opportunity for such children to learn the local language, as this is a vital, albeit not sufficient requirement for integrating into a new environment, and, above all, the activation of a series of protocols for the observation and recognition of the minor's capacities and relative entry lanes into the relational life of the school and the educating community in the broadest sense of the term.

In a school community, language and cultural differences are preserved as they are fundamental for mutual respect, cultural exchange and tolerance. As such, schools promote and foster initiatives that focus on welcoming and protecting a foreign student's language and culture of origin, and they try to offer shared inter-cultural activities.



**Generally speaking, placing a child in a specific class solely on the basis of age is likely to reduce the chances of bringing out the skills and competences the child already possesses. It would be far better to also consider:**

- The education system of the country of origin
- An assessment of skills, competences and prior learning
- The family situation and feasible educational/didactic goals
- Behaviour, attitude and emotions

In order to put these pedagogical attentions into action, it is necessary to put in place a series of steps aimed at assessing the cognitive, emotional and family data alongside with the skills and competences of that minor or group of foreign minors being introduced in the schools.

The greater the observational effort at the beginning, the lower the energy spent in managing the integration process and certainly the efficiency of the educational action will be maximized.

Only through this careful evaluation (and at the same time, the preservation of a non-judgmental attitude) is it possible to properly calibrate the actions of integration and support of foreign minors by putting in place only the resources that are really necessary.

Thus, the fast-track entry routes, i.e., the workshop activities, group work and school outings, will be pedagogically structured and tailor-made precisely for that class and, therefore, for those children who are entering.

This leads to an educational model that is inclusive and values difference, such that mixed classes are preferable to special classes and full integration becomes the ultimate culture horizon. In such a model, diversity is not only seen as fundamental for education because it allows cultural exchange and civic coexistence, but emphasis is also placed on what the potential diversity brings to education as it provides a source for building and increasing knowledge (Cornoldi et al., 2018). To meet the needs of students from different social and cultural backgrounds, methods such as individual teaching, group work, open classrooms and a research approach are recommended ahead of standard, teacher-focused lessons.

Educational and teaching strategies need to take into account how each person is unique, with a complex identity, skills and weaknesses, and consider the different phases of development and education. In this, the student must be placed at the centre, focusing on all aspects (cognitive, emotional, physical and cultural).

These strategies are primarily based on the observation of the socio-emotional abilities of foreign children. Remembering that the possibility of finding oneself in front of minors traumatized by the migratory process is not rare and that in any case, in any socio-economic condition, there always appears an emotional restlessness, a sense of disorientation and sometimes a tendency to social withdrawal.



For this reason, it is paramount to understand the real needs of these minors and build an ad hoc intervention, because simply presenting knowledge in a standardised, regulated fashion that is designed for a theoretical “average” learner is no longer adequate. Schools increasingly need to provide learning pathways to match the individual tendencies of students and, especially in cases of strong and traumatic change, adopt an approach that places value on the unusual aspects of each person and the cultures they come from, respecting and preserving the psycho-affective integrity of the minor.

This means it is much more important to focus on learning rather than certification, in schools where integration is important. For foreign students, especially those who have only recently started school, teachers should focus predominantly on a student's pathway, the steps achieved, possible goals, motivation, commitment and, particularly, the potential demonstrated for learning. In such circumstances, it is advisable to conduct an overall assessment of a student's maturation prior to evaluating the actual command of specific skills.

In the specific case of learning the new language of the host country, most foreign students go through three stages, and it is vital schools and teachers support and assist these effectively:

- 1 In the initial stage the focus and effort is on language acquisition to communicate. A foreign pupil will need help in understanding and expressing ideas orally, building up a foundational lexicon and learning techniques for reading and writing.
- 2 The second stage can continue through the first year, with the continued and extended learning of the language for basic communication with others. This is coupled with learning basic subject content, starting with those subjects that are inherently less "verbal", using specific worksheets, bilingual glossaries and simplified texts.
- 3 In this final stage, a foreign student follows the same programme as the other children, but receives additional teaching and language support, potentially through extra-curricular assistance outside of normal school hours. During this period, individualised teaching is based on the teachers' awareness of the difficulties of written language.

Therefore, in pedagogical didactics designed for foreign minors, a tailor-made and not industrial, standardized and pre-constituted attitude is relevant.

In fact schools often use and confuse two models that draw on slightly different views of the concept of individualised: genuinely individualised and personalised (or customised). Individualisation focuses on teaching strategies designed to ensure all students gain the basic skills required in the curriculum by diversifying the teaching. Personalisation is about teaching strategies designed to ensure each student finds his/her own form of cognitive excellence through elective options that cultivate his/her potential (Baldacci, 2006).

Individualisation is based on the ideal assumption, which is unlikely to be found in a multilingual classroom with different abilities, that everyone can reach the same goals, provided the necessary adjustments are made. In a personalised approach, goals are differentiated, and content is calibrated to actual individual abilities or needs, regardless of whether these are excellences or deficits (Block, 1972).

Therefore, foreign children can and must be supported not only with individualised teaching methods that are adapted, but also in the definition of personalised objectives that are really achievable.

Only this attitude can trigger a motivational fly-wheel that makes the child feel like the protagonist of an integration process that truly respects his/her history of origin and migration.

This makes it necessary to introduce adjustments in the assessment process, effectively giving up on judging the abilities acquired and focusing on the actual learning pathway completed. On the other hand, the concept of personalisation seems to remove the negative connotation of the concept of difference as a pupil is more directly linked to a specific goal, rather than a minimum standard that ends up being reductive for those students who can easily achieve it and pointless for those who are unable to reach such a standard or for whom it is meaningless (Schmoker, 2018). Since personalisation includes diversified teaching pathways to achieve personal goals, it guarantees that students, even newly arrived foreigners and right from the beginning, use their abilities. This happens, for example, where such students are allowed to attend more hours of lessons in which the primary method of expression is not the host language, such as art, music, foreign languages and physical education. This has positive repercussions for self-efficacy and motivation (Wong et al., 2014).



**To work optimally with students, the following simple measures could be applied to a broad range of school subjects:**

- Do not force students to read aloud
- Do not require writing at pace, as in dictation
- Allow dictionaries to be used
- Use simplified texts
- Use short computer-written handouts in simple, concise language with plenty of tables and diagrams
- Plan more time for written tests and home study
- Schedule oral testing
- Make oral and written tests focus more on content than the structure
- Provide differentiated written tests. It is especially useful to avoid written tests with open-ended questions, compositions and summaries, rather than using semi-structured tests, multiple choice tests and the application of formulae. An example should ideally be provided for each type of exercise.



For the implementation of the points, school staff must be constantly updated on new tools to be used or more efficient ways of communication.

However, teachers really have to exercise responsibility because personalisation can result in all too easily giving up on attaining and exceeding a minimum standard where this is possible and, more importantly, where this would be meaningful for a student's education and development (Vertecchi, 2003).

## 1.5

# CULTURAL CONDITIONING OF FOREIGN PUPILS COMING TO A NEW COUNTRY

Typically, when we think of culture, we think of an existing, stable entity that changes and evolves over long periods of time. But today it is possible to consider a different rhythm of cultural renewal and interaction. Not only does culture adapt, integrating change into its process as one of its environmental variables, but it is co-constructed in the processes of global and non-local learning and vision.

The movement of peoples or its minorities, always in search of an increase in the quality of their life, is expressed in the movement of new generations or the growth of new generations in families with a different culture than the surrounding environment.

The result is a new form of culture in which knowledge is seen as fluid and evolving. The personal is valued and refined in relation to the collective, and the ability to manage, negotiate and be part of the world is regulated by many and not a few in an integrated manner that respects diversity (Thomas, 2011).

Certainly, this is a wish, but the child is not always facilitated, supported in understanding the advantage of difference (diversity) and in highlighting the richness it brings. Often instead, the attempt, by the educating community, sometimes even unconsciously, is to readjust, to file away the differences to make them find their place within the categories of the hosting culture (D'Aniello, 2018).



The word diversity is commonly used in the contemporary world, but what is diversity? And importantly, how can it be managed? Diversity is an intrinsic part of human nature. Each person is diverse, because he or she has characteristics that make him or her different from others, special and unique. One of the hardest challenges faced today is not to wipe out all distinctions, but to include the specific characteristics of everyone into a collective design that is widely accepted, thus showing that differences actually bring overall enrichment and are not, as is erroneously believed, a limit or defect.

Think specifically of the school classroom context. How far-sighted it is to build a dynamic of expression of differences in order to highlight resources. The distinctive traits of each individual, therefore, must be conceived from another perspective, that is, as values and resources for one's own growth. Others allow us to reach places that are unreachable for individuals.

So, the individual traits of each individual must be seen in a different light - that is, as a value and resource for their growth. Differences must not be reduced or eliminated, otherwise it would impoverish human diversity and richness and so the unique characteristics of each individual (Mura, 2016).

The challenge teachers then encounter is to place and not select pupils as well as to find the right space for each individual child. Where the gap is fillable and the potential expressible.

Transferring this understanding into a school model that focuses on individualisation and personalisation for all students shows the intention is to generate transversal culture growth that does not affirm a specific cultural model, but that builds a new and inclusive model that is definitely more evolved (Baldacci, 2005). As such, schools must be places of transversal and, even more importantly, multi-directional learning. Schools need to find new tools and particularly demonstrate a willingness to accept diversity, often seeing new points of view as another tool for understanding reality.

This is why projects to help new students, language workshops, subject-specific remedial studies, inter-cultural projects and tutoring are all very useful. However, sometimes schools offer many projects but this is not coupled by an equal ability to develop identity. In practical terms, there might be a lack of coordination between the initiatives offered in response to the educational needs created by having foreign students and ordinary teaching activities. Similarly, there is often an inability to constantly and comprehensively monitor the repercussions of initiatives on individual students in order to pick up, along the way, any changes in progress or educational needs (Alba, 2013).

In such a context, it can be useful to shift the focus onto the individual, such that it is not solely on the school. It is clearly important to formalise what the school offers and the procedures used to help newly arrived foreign students, but it is also necessary to go beyond this, to formalise and document the educational pathways of individual pupils within what the school offers through customised educational planning.

**These questions guide the personalisation process:**

**Who's the student?**  
**What does he/she know and can he/she do?**  
**How does he/she do it?**  
**What can he/she realistically learn?**  
**How can he/she learn it?**  
**How should the learning be assessed?**



This study is not about imposing a specific form, but about contact and growth. It can be divided into three main sections: **the pupil's profile, common and subject-specific planning, and assessment (lanes, 2015).**

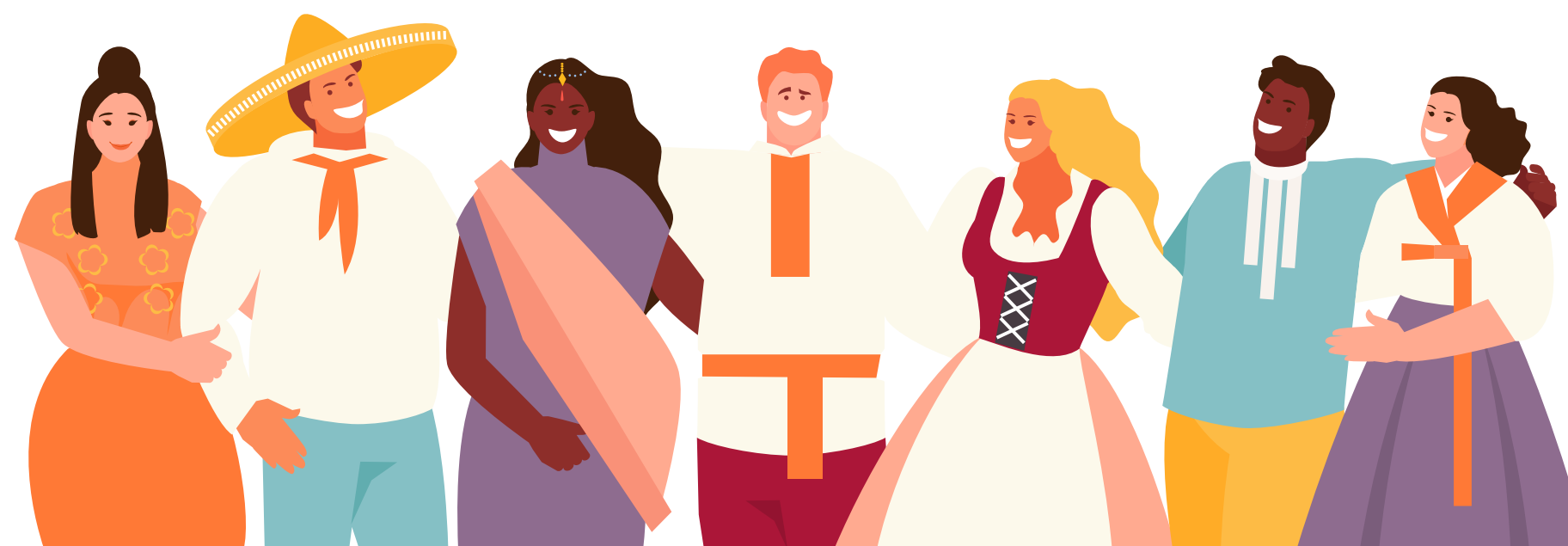
Describing a pupil's profile deserves special attention as it forms the basis on which a customised educational plan is built. A foreign student who enters a school runs the risk of seeing his/her complex identity being denied or, at least, being simplified through the often unwilling adoption of stereotypes that even impact how one observes that pupil and determines his/her abilities. Up till now, the focus has predominantly been on language issues and cultural diversity, so tools were developed to acquire the necessary biographical information, a general cultural profile and the skills the pupil already possesses. This was suitable in dealing with the initial phase in which foreign students started joining schools, but now it is time to reassess such tools using the special normality concept proposed by lanes (2015) and accepting that the presence of foreigners in the classroom is structural, and here to stay. Thus, it is essential the description of a foreign student is comprehensive and does not merely cover cultural aspects. It needs to include emotional/relational and cognitive aspects that are fundamental to learning and that could, in the worst cases, inhibit learning.

Educational planning must not simply reflect the school's perspective, formalising what is required to become the equivalent of a good student from the local culture. It needs to positively describe the student's complexity and potential, and how the teachers can develop these aspects (Cottini, 2017). Take, for example, how motivating it can be to really value multilingualism in class activities and at school in general, adopting a system that not only recognises debits, but also credits.

School planning can also respect the differences in multilingual and multi-level classes by defining learning units that are not necessarily standard for the entire class, but that could be differentiated internally - in terms of the goals, content and methods (Caon et Al., 2020). At school, foreign students are often faced with stimuli that are to a large degree not designed with them in mind, but for the local mother-tongue students who make up the majority of the class. The challenge for the teacher becomes getting the proposed "stimulus" processed on multiple levels through layered, differentiated planning.

In truth, it is the school as a whole that is faced with the arduous tasks of dealing with two equally important and inalienable aspects: on the one hand, the right to equal educational opportunity, and on the other, the right to difference and individualised personal development (D'Aniello, 2018).

Such work must be based on a new way of viewing human beings. It is essential to realise people contain value beyond cultural differences - i.e. seeing people as unique and diverse. Only by respecting such existential variety is it possible to create a social project that will make it possible for all students, both foreign and local, to have equal educational opportunities.



## 1.6

# PROBLEMS FOREIGN PUPILS CONFRONT WHEN COMING TO A NEW COUNTRY

As we have seen in the previous paragraphs, the phenomenon of migration is not diminishing, and, therefore, requires a focus of attention in the educational-scholastic field.

Psychological-social, pedagogical and cultural conditions are crucial for a good integration process that allows for an improvement in the quality of life of the entire community, both native and foreign individuals.

In particular, by paying attention to the school system, we can highlight, as described, some details for each of the above conditions: psychological-social and pedagogical-cultural. But before each step we delve into an emerging issue, though not unique: the difference in language.

Having foreign pupils join a school foregrounds the acquisition of the host country language as it is the bridge and point of contact between two worlds.



**Cummins (2000) proposes an interesting linguistic difference between Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)** that might really help educators to find the right balance to support and integrate students.

At the risk of over-simplifying,

**BICS CAN BE SEEN AS THE VARIOUS  
SKILLS LINKED TO THE LANGUAGE  
OF COMMUNICATION**

and

**CALP AS MORE ADVANCED SKILLS  
LINKED TO THE LANGUAGE OF STUDY  
IN THE VARIOUS SUBJECTS**

(Cummins, 2000). What is required of pupils can be divided into primary language skills (language of communication) and secondary language skills (language of study). The former is vital, a transversal presence that is at the basis of relational and social processes, but it is also easier to acquire. The latter requires more complex methods and tools, and notably more time.

Language acquisition studies have shown that, on average, reaching the BICS level requires between 6 months and 2 years of language exposure, while up to 5/7 years of studying and exposure to the language of the school can be required to reach an equivalent level to a mother-tongue student in that language (CALP).

This clearly shows that a foreign student will be at a disadvantage for a substantial portion of mandatory schooling, compared to local students, merely for language issues, bringing increased likelihood of dropping out, losing motivation and educational pathways that fail to really match that student's real abilities. BICS is about being able to greet someone, ask a basic question, name everyday objects, while CALP is a level of being able to ask complex questions, describe a specific action or object, summarise a topic or tell a story in sequential fashion and so on. CALP becomes essential for micro-languages (the languages of individual subjects) and for achieving a good likelihood of a student continuing successfully to study.

Defining the language difficulties of a foreign student is specific and important, but unfortunately it is not the only difficulty. In a learning and acclimatisation process, foreign students might well experience a conflict of loyalties. Which ways or customs are best? The old or the new ways of schooling? (Geertz, 2000).

In fact, once the adversities of the journey have been overcome, often real traumatic experiences, and the work of language acquisition has begun, the work of reparation remains. Repairing the tear, the separation from the context of origin requires time to recognize the resources of one's past and the potential of the future (Adewumi, 2020).

As described above, it is important to protect the language and culture of origin, perhaps through shared inter-cultural activities. The goal must not be to remove any distinctions, but to include the specific characteristics of each in a far broader design that benefits from what each individual can bring to the table. In this process, it is necessary to value and protect previously acquired and achieved results so that previous efforts are not wasted, to minimise conflict and to encourage the integration process as directly as possible (McCammon, 2020).

It is also important to remember that integrating into a new school is the second stage of a far more delicate and complex process that follows the initial arrival at a new school. Widely available statistics show that many children have been through incredibly hard migration experiences and separation trauma on journeys that literally put their lives at risk. On this basis, there will almost definitely be difficulties in the classroom in the management of emotions and relationships with the whole class group.

The pedagogical/cultural differences described above highlight the primary shift to individualised, and then further personalized, intervention. The student must be observed/understood with extreme care in order to support him/her and generate benefit for the whole class. At the same time it can be very interesting to support those inclusive and spontaneous dynamics that sometimes can surprise the adult but not the peer group (Guldberg, 2009). It is really crucial that the teacher be a good observer and patient promoter of the relational skills that the child naturally has.

**In short, the following critical areas need to be monitored when a foreign student enters a school:**

- General language difficulties
- Specific language difficulties and those in specific subjects
- Conflict of loyalty between origin and host culture
- Recognition of resources in the previous course of study
- Psycho-emotional fragility linked to the migration journey
- Risk of social isolation due to cultural differences and fragilities developed during the process.

As such, educators need to develop a broad vision of the processes and sequences of the events in the lives of each student, especially so the contact with difference leads to sensitivity, welcoming and a far-sighted view for an integrated culture.



## Chapter 2

### DESCRIPTION OF THE MODEL OF WORKING WITH A FOREIGN PUPIL COMING TO A NEW COUNTRY

The description of the Model of Working with a Foreign Pupil Coming to a New Country covers all activities from the moment the pupil's family decides to move to another country, which include preparing the child to study at a school in another country and demonstrating how to obtain help in adapting the pupil and family in the new reality to increase their chance for success.



The Model of Working with a Foreign Pupil Coming to a New Country is intended primarily for schools hosting a foreign pupil and other educational institutions. It can also be used by entities supporting the foreign families whose children undertake education outside their own country.

The purpose of the presented Model is to equip the parent and pupil coming to a new country with the necessary tools to adapt themselves to the new educational system and to achieve success in this area.

The idea is to facilitate the adaptation of the pupil to the new school environment, and the adaptation of the family to the new legal system. These activities are intended to encourage the continuation of education after completing the basic schooling obligation.

The aim of these actions is to customise the forms of support for the pupil and the family. A key activity is the creation of an Individual Plan of the Adaptation of a Pupil (IPAP) based on the analysis of the child's educational and developmental needs tailored to the pupil's strengths.



The model assumes the involvement of an intercultural assistant and a classmate-guardian in the adaptation process to help the pupil relieve stress resulting from starting education in a new institution.

The Model also assumes cooperation between school staff and the pupil's family as well as support institutions. The Model is subject to modification and evaluation in the course of its implementation.

The Model Of Working With A Foreign Pupil Coming To A New Country responds to the needs of the above-mentioned stakeholders, as the educational market has lacked comprehensive solutions supporting schools hosting foreign pupils.

## 2.1

# STRUCTURE OF THE MODEL OF WORKING WITH A FOREIGN PUPIL COMING TO A NEW COUNTRY

The Model consists of 5 stages. For each stage, there is a list of tasks to be performed by certain responsible parties. Tasks are conducted through specific actions. The number of tasks assigned to a responsible party and the number of activities within the task may vary.

Stage 0 takes place in the country of residence of the pupil's family at the time of making the decision to move to a foreign country, and the subsequent stages (1-4) refer to the activities after their arrival in the new country.

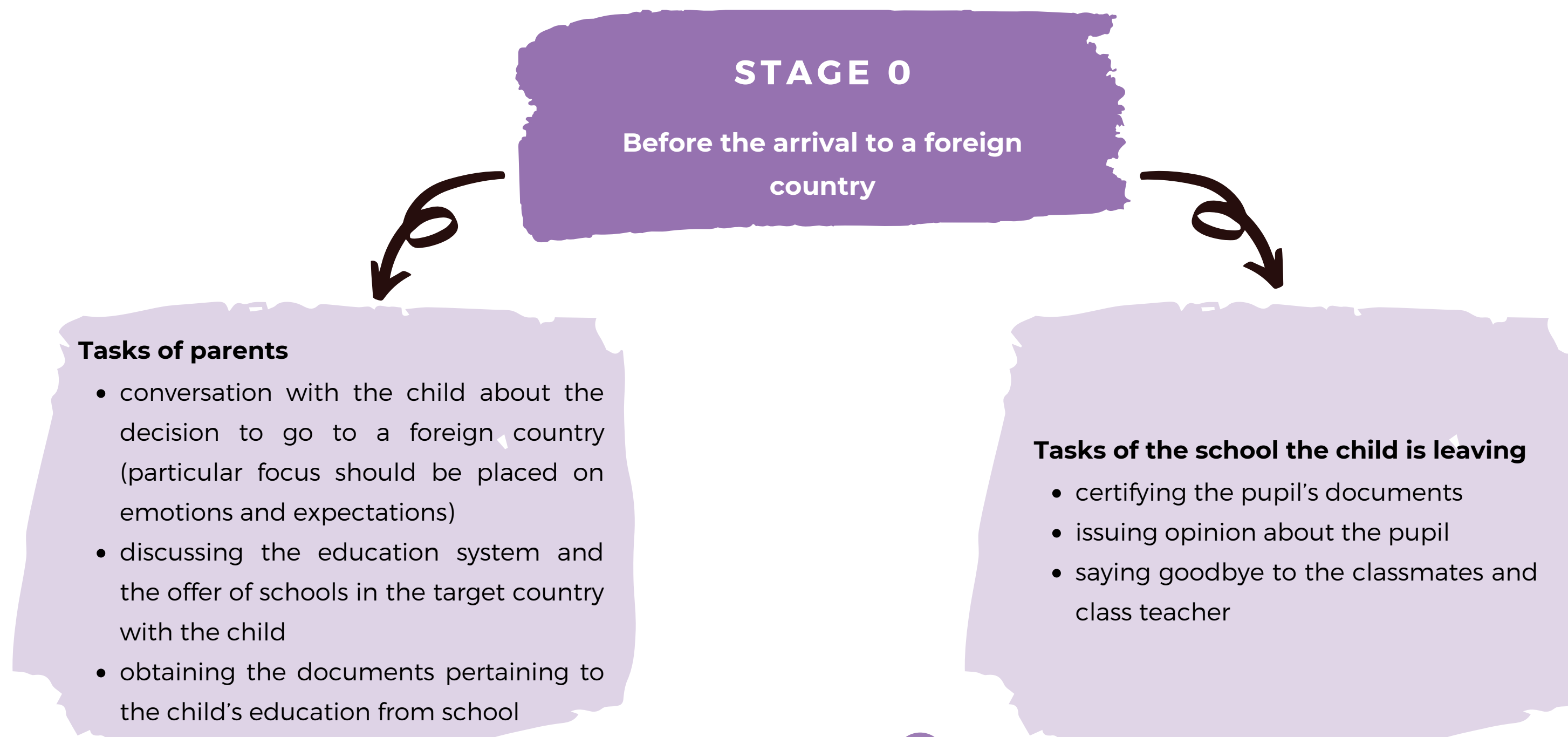
In order to properly adapt a foreign pupil to a new school, the best thing to do is to implement the Model of Working with a Foreign Pupil Coming to a New Country in its entirety, however, it should be treated as proposed solutions and approached in a flexible manner.



The capabilities of a given institution and the pupil's situation should be considered. The scale of the phenomenon is very important. In the case of the arrival of single foreign pupils, care should be taken when arranging situations that will place them in the centre of attention at school or in their environment. The activities should support the pupil instead of constituting an additional source of stress.

## 2.2

## GRAPHIC IMAGE OF THE MODEL



## STAGE 1

Before admitting the foreign pupil to  
school

### Tasks of school head teacher:

- Talking to school staff about admitting a foreign pupil to school
- Preparing the teaching staff
- Conversation with the class teacher
- Creating new roles and positions

Preparation of the school admitting  
the foreign pupil

### Tasks of teachers and other school employees:

- Updating school documents
- Preparing general document templates
- Equipping school in necessary aids and tools

### Tasks of the team of teachers

1. The first meeting
  - planning a poster
  - planning lesson topics

### Tasks of class teacher:

- Preparing the pupils by conducting lesson No. 1
- Preparing parents
- Initiating cooperation with the intercultural assistant

### Tasks of the local community:

- preparation of the local community
- initiating cooperation
- equipping the school admitting foreign pupils in necessary supplies

Preparation of the local community for  
the arrival of many foreign pupils

## STAGE 2

Arrival to the new school  
The first contact with school

### Tasks of parents:

- Conversation between the parents and their child before the first visit at school
- Preparation of the necessary certificates and documents

### Tasks of head teacher:

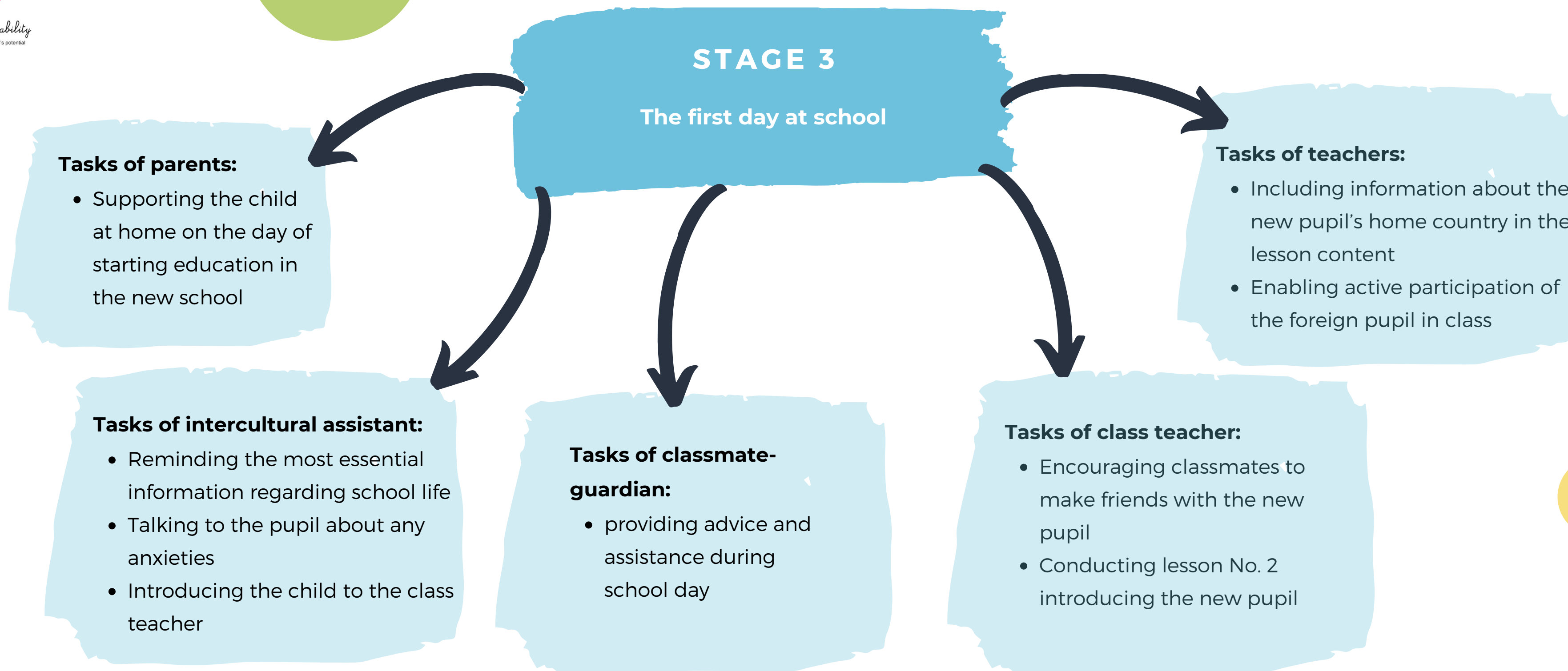
- Conversation with the parents and pupil (foreign students receive by the head teacher the following: bilingual announcements (translated in student's mother language), "survival language" images, a. illustration of lessons and activities)
- Completing part I of the Questionnaire

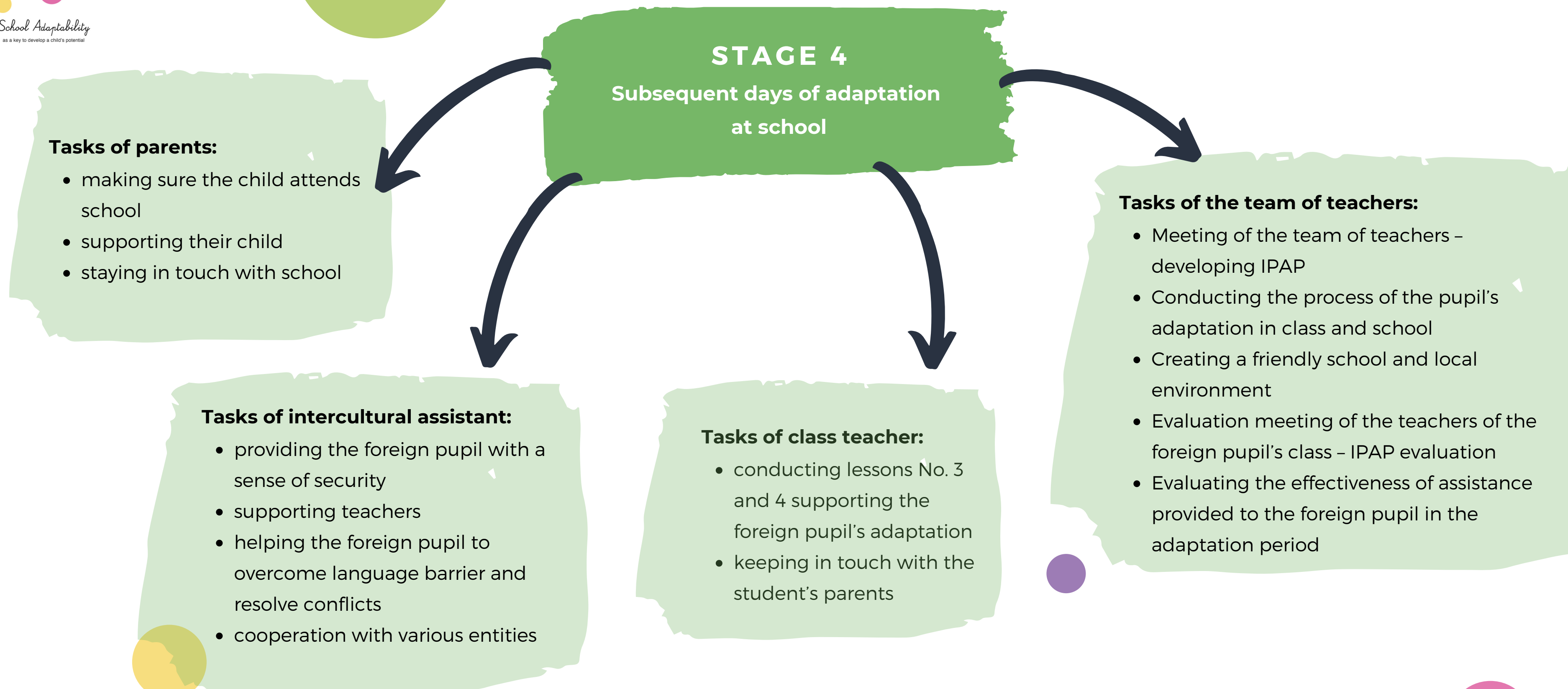
### Tasks of classmate-guardian:

- getting acquainted with the foreign pupil
- showing the foreign pupil around the school

### Tasks of intercultural assistant:

- Meeting with the parents and pupil
- Arranging a meeting between the classmate-guardian and the foreign pupil
- Completing part II of the Questionnaire.





## 2.3

# DESCRIPTION OF THE STAGES OF THE MODEL OF WORKING WITH A FOREIGN PUPIL COMING TO A NEW COUNTRY (INCLUDING TASKS AND ACTIVITIES)

## STAGE 0. BEFORE THE ARRIVAL OF A FAMILY TO A FOREIGN COUNTRY

For various reasons, families decide to leave their country either permanently or for a specified period. Generally, two groups of reasons can be distinguished: improving the economic status and/or the willingness to explore the world, or in the case of refugees, seeking safety. In the case of a planned move, it is advisable for parents to analyse the offers of schools or kindergartens in the town where they plan to settle and choose the school that best meets their expectations. In this way, they can provide themselves with a sense of security and predict what awaits them in the educational institution abroad.

### The tasks to be performed by parents planning to move to a foreign country:

- Preparing the child for functioning in the new reality. It is important for them to help their children get to know the new surroundings, natural environment, geography as well as different architecture, and accept the presence of new neighbours. Calm conversation with the child, answering all questions will eliminate excessive anxiety regarding the new and the unknown. When talking to a child, parents can use videos, publications, information leaflets and websites.

- It will be beneficial for the family to involve their child in reviewing the educational system of the country to which the family is planning to move. The parents should gather information regarding the documents required to enrol their child in school in the target country.

The parents should complete the formalities in the school that the child currently attends before their child enters a new school. If possible, inform the head teacher or the class teacher about moving abroad and secure the child's school documentation.

### Tasks of the school the pupil is going to leave:

- The head teacher certifies documents confirming the course of the pupil's education: certificates, opinions, characteristics containing a description of their strengths, interests, skills.
- The class teacher, at the request of the parents, prepares an opinion about the pupil, their skills, interests, or educational problems and the measures taken to overcome them (it is advisable to translate it into English or the language of the target country).
- The class teacher gives the pupil a chance to say goodbye to his/her classmates.

At the closure of the current educational stage in the home school the pupil should have a chance to say goodbye to friends, schoolmates, class teacher and other teachers. Time should be provided for remembering the moments spent together. A warm goodbye ensures support for the child, preventing them from losing self-confidence, and helps them establish lasting and positive relationships in the new school.

### Tasks of refugee parents:

- When families leave their home country, they can expect that, for example, they will live in a refugee centre and will not have any influence on the choice of school.
- In the event of a sudden decision to leave or one that has been kept secret, the parents should also talk to the child about their new situation. The child should receive parental support and get prepared to enter a new school. The parents should seriously consider the fact that their child did not manage to succeed the completion of the class in their former school and will therefore find it difficult to make a new beginning in another country's school and therefore start from a lower educational level. to start a new stage.
- It is advisable for the parents to ensure that, at some point after leaving, the child gets a chance to write a "letter" in which he/she can mentally say goodbye to their old school.

**Involved parties: parents, class teacher, head teacher, school abroad**

## STAGE 1. BEFORE ADMITTING A FOREIGN PUPIL TO SCHOOL

The key event that starts the sequence of tasks is informing the head teacher that a foreign pupil is coming to their school.

Proper preparation of the school (pupils, parents, school staff) and the local community for the admission of a foreign pupil determines the subsequent educational and social success of both the individual and the entire school, local and even supra-local community. The interdependence between these areas determines the success at this stage and the entire process, therefore careful preparation of this stage will be very important.

### Preparation of the school for admitting a foreign pupil

Preparation of the school and staff for the admission of a foreign pupil ensures safety of all stakeholders. The support that the school staff receive from the head teacher translates into more effective assistance provided to the foreign pupil and their family. It is the responsibility of the head teacher to manage the school preparation process in such a way that each employee knows the tasks assigned to them in relation to the admission of a foreign pupil and that it is clearly defined what kind of support (both a foreign pupil and school staff member) can expect and when they can expect it. The intensity of the activities should depend on the number of admitted foreign pupils.

A foreign pupil will spend most of his/her time at school. Therefore, it is the class teacher's responsibility to properly prepare the pupils, their parents and teachers who are going to work with the foreign pupil. Subject teachers play a significant role in the adaptation process by introducing such issues as history, religion, geography, natural environment and literature of the pupil's country of origin during their lessons.



## Tasks of the school head teacher

### Task 1. The head teacher's discussion with school staff regarding the admission of foreign pupils to school

Informing the staff about the probable admission of a foreign pupil to school:

- familiarizing school employees with the provisions of the law regarding the admission of foreign pupils;
- explaining the reasons for migration and the reasons for settlement in this area, as well as benefits resulting from this fact and problems that may arise;
- recording all questions that the school staff may have to address their concerns;
- finding answers to the questions and obtaining information on the areas of concern;
- informing about institutions that can provide support to the staff members.

### Task 2. Preparation of the teaching staff

The task will be performed by means of the following activities:

- The head teacher's discussion with the school staff and setting up a foreigner reception training programme: thematic scope, duration. The training should cover the following topics:
  - ▶ "The functioning of a foreign pupil at school";
  - ▶ "Learning differences between school systems and problems resulting from changing schools; understanding the foreigner's situation";
  - ▶ "Factors that support education of foreign pupils - how to enhance them?";
  - ▶ "Factors that inhibit education of foreign pupils - how to eliminate them?"

Teachers of related subjects can form groups and exchange information within various workshops.

- The head teacher establishes liaison with a school that has experience in working with a foreign pupil and organizes a workshop that takes place at the head teacher's school. Teachers have the opportunity to obtain information about working with a foreign pupil and to learn about the education system of the country from which the pupil comes.
- Teams of teachers are appointed to develop document templates and relevant provisions in the internal school rules and regulations (division of responsibilities) and the head teacher coordinates work on the quality and timeliness of task completion.
- A team of teachers is selected whose task is to find information about organizations working for the sake of foreign children; forms of assistance provided to families and foreign pupils; the scope of support that the school can obtain from these organizations.



### **Task 3. Conversation between the school head teacher and the class teacher in charge of the class to be joined by the foreign pupil**

In the conversation with the class teacher, the head teacher should define the tasks incumbent on them in connection with the admission of a foreign pupil and ensure that they can obtain support, if necessary, from other staff members and institutions working for the sake of foreign pupils.

It is recommended to inform the class teacher about:

- preparing pupils in class;
- selecting and preparing a classmate-guardian whose role involves:
  - ▶ being a friendly spokesperson for the interests of the foreign pupil at school,
  - ▶ supporting him/her in the first period of adaptation,
  - ▶ familiarizing him/her with the school layout,
  - ▶ helping him/her find themselves in everyday school life,
  - ▶ accompanying the foreign pupil, especially in the first days;
- preparing parents;
- convening a team of teachers to develop and evaluate the IPAP;
- coordinating the implementation of the following project by the subject teachers during their lessons: "We know your country."

#### Task 4. Creation of new positions

Due to the admission of a foreign pupil to school, and especially of a larger number of pupils, there is a need to create new positions and new roles for pupils that will facilitate and improve the adaptation process.

- The head teacher files an application to the governing body for hiring an intercultural assistant. After obtaining consent, this position is created at school and the appropriate person is employed. The duties and tasks of the intercultural assistant are described below. If the head teacher does not have the possibility to employ an intercultural assistant, this function may be entrusted to the class teacher or another staff member.
- The head teacher asks the class teacher to appoint a classmate-guardian for a foreign pupil. The class teacher selects a pupil to perform this role. It is voluntary. The role is temporary, and it should be recorded as the pupil's achievement, e.g. as a form of volunteering, and the pupil should be rewarded by increasing their conduct grade (if possible). The number and duration of classmate-guardians depend on the needs of school.

#### Tasks of teams of teachers and other staff members

##### Task 1. Updating school documents (school statutes)

- Adding entries in school documents regarding a foreign pupil. When we talk about equality and equal responsibility, we should be able to refer to documents that guarantee equal rights.

The school statute should include provisions on:

- ▶ ensuring that the interests of foreign pupils are represented by the presence of their representative in the student council (it is necessary when the number of foreign pupils corresponds to the average school class size);
- ▶ ensuring that the interests of foreign pupils are represented by the presence of their parents' representative in the parent council (it is necessary when the number of foreign pupils corresponds to the average school class size);
- ▶ specifying the gala (formal) outfit, which emphasizes the solemn character of a given day, while remaining in line with the tradition of the school, religious views or cultural identity of the pupils - however, this outfit must not in any way infringe the well-being of other pupils, e.g. the outfit must not include elements that are dangerous or hinder the pupil's identity;
- ▶ the location of a foreign pupil of a different religion at the time when their class participates in religious education or religious practice (applies to schools where religious education is taught at school).

- Including the provision on the role of the intercultural assistant in the school statute:

### **The role of the intercultural assistant at school:**

- ▶ providing emotional support for foreign pupils, helping them in difficult and conflict situations, building a positive image of the school, maintaining cultural identity, assistance in integration into the environment,
- ▶ providing support for teachers, help during lessons, help in resolving conflicts, controlling attendance, informing about the family situation of pupils,
- ▶ cooperation with the school psychologist and pedagogist,
- ▶ staying in touch with parents: by phone and in person,
- ▶ participation in meetings with parents (to discuss children's difficulties, translating utterances),
- ▶ participation in the faculty meetings (at the invitation of the head teacher) to take part in discussion of educational matters concerning foreign pupils,
- ▶ demonstrating pupils the benefits of education, encouraging them to participate in all school activities,
- ▶ conducting multicultural activities for the entire school community,
- ▶ assistance in organizing events that are aimed at supporting intercultural integration, e.g. organizing an international food day to give the foreign pupils at school a chance to present their traditional national dishes.

- Including a provision on the role of a foreign pupil's classmate-guardian in the school statute.

### **Task 2. Development of general templates for school documents.**

The school hosting a foreign pupil should develop procedures and document templates to simplify reception activities. Model of Working with a Foreign Pupil Coming to a New Country will play a predominant role, however, it is important to distinguish some documents that help achieve the goals of particular stages:

- Questionnaire of a Foreign Pupil Coming to a New Country: (pupil's personal data, basic family data, part I - educational path, resources, abilities, interests) and part II (pupil's functioning and the needs and expectations of parents - diagnosis necessary for the Individual Plan of the Adaptation of a Pupil (IPAP);
- Individual Plan of the Adaptation of a Pupil (IPAP);



### **Task 3. Equipping the school with the necessary aids and tools to work with a foreign pupil**

The arrival of a foreign pupil at school requires the provision of necessary aids that will facilitate communication, maintain cultural identity, and improve the work of school employees.



**Responsible parties: head teacher, class teacher, intercultural assistant, pedagogist, foreign pupil's classmates and their parents, subject teachers.**

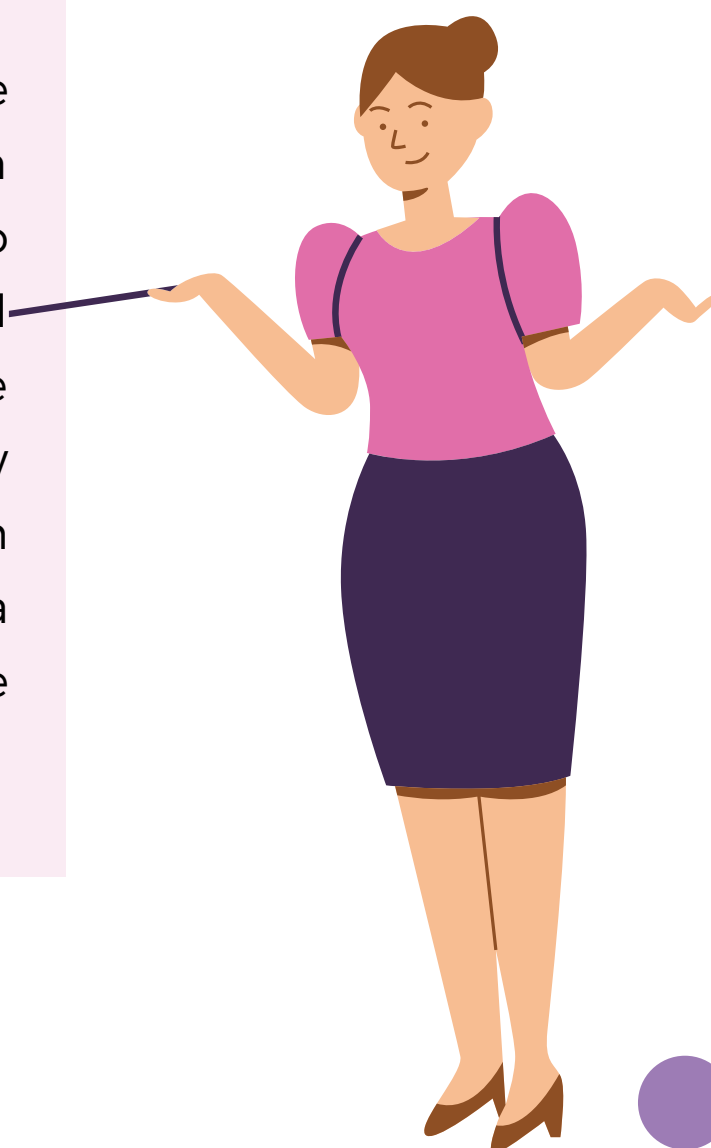
#### **It is reasonable to:**

- create a literature index, a list of institutions supporting multiculturalism at schools, links, websites through which school employees can broaden their knowledge about a foreign pupil;
- equip the library with bilingual dictionaries, literature in the language of foreign pupils;
- collect publications in the language of the country of origin of foreign pupils in the school library;
- purchase textbooks and aids for learning the language of foreign pupil's home country as a foreign language;
- purchase devices enabling communication via a translator (phone, tablet, computer);
- adjusting the school canteen menu to the dietary preferences of a foreign pupil, if possible;
- presentation of the national symbols of the foreign pupils' home countries at a representative place at school;
- issue a newsletter/organise an exhibition about the foreign pupils' home countries.

## Tasks of the class teacher

### Task 1. Preparing their class for welcoming a foreign pupil.

The class teacher has the greatest influence on the integration of the class with a foreign pupil and on how he or she will adapt to the new class. To facilitate this process, the class teacher should provide the pupils with information about the geographical location and culture of their new friend's country. The social and political situation should be presented, especially in the case of a refugee pupil. Pupils should acquire this knowledge before the arrival of a new pupil.



The most important activities include:

- The class teacher works on the basis of prepared scenarios of form period. The first form period subject should be: "Before we get to know you."
- The class teacher coordinates the implementation of a cross-curricular project consisting in creating a poster: "We know your country", presenting the culture, history, natural environment and uniqueness of the foreign pupil's home country.
- The class teacher appoints a classmate-guardian whose task is to help in faster adaptation of the new pupil. This role is assumed by a pupil who agrees to it and who is well prepared for the role.
- A classmate-guardian prepares a meeting scenario, practices its application, and learns to communicate by means of a translator. It is a good idea to schedule a classmate-guardian meeting with the new pupil before his or her first day of school.
- The class teacher checks the preparation of the classroom in which the new foreign pupil will sit: a chair, a desk next to the classmate-guardian.

## **Task 2. General preparation of parents of pupils of the class to which the foreign pupil will come**

It is very important for the class teacher to prepare the parents of pupils from the class to which the foreign pupil will come, because their reaction to foreigners affects the attitude of their children towards the foreign pupil.

This action is aimed at reducing or completely eliminating any anxieties the parents might have, often resulting from ignorance and stereotypes perpetuated in a given society about the culture and country of origin of the foreign pupil. For this reason, before a foreign pupil comes to class, the pupils' parents should be informed about this fact.

The first form of providing this information is for the class teacher to write a letter to the parents, the second - to organize a meeting/workshop with the parents.

## **Both the letter and the meeting should include the following:**

- Information that a new pupil is coming to class,
- explanation why the pupil has arrived in the country,
- discussion of the main reasons why foreigners make decisions to leave their homeland, especially the political aspect in the case of refugees,
- presentation of cultural and religious differences,
- pointing out the patterns of behaviour typical of a given culture.

It is also worth encouraging parents to participate in creating an atmosphere of kindness for pupils from foreign families. The parents should be made aware that all pupils will benefit from encountering many distinct cultures in class. It teaches tolerance, cultural awareness and broadens pupils' knowledge about religion, history and geography of other countries. This facilitates gaining valuable skills and shaping attitudes of respect towards people of different culture. Expectations and attitudes related to the foreign students coming to the classroom will be evaluated.

### Task 3. Establishing cooperation with the intercultural assistant.

The class teacher should initiate the cooperation as he/she will benefit from the support provided by the intercultural assistant on many levels. The assistant will be a liaison between the foreign pupil, their family, institutions working for the sake of foreigners, and, at the same time, an advocate of the pupil's interests. Proper cooperation between the class teacher and the intercultural assistant will translate into the quality of support provided to the foreign pupil.

The main activities of the intercultural assistant in cooperation with the class teacher include:

- mediating and facilitating communication in the following relations: pupil-pupil, pupil-teacher, parent of a foreign pupil-class teacher;
- participating in the work of teams of teachers of a given class;
- help with learning;
- explaining cultural differences in school situations;
- providing support to the classmate-guardian who cooperates with the class teacher and the foreign pupil;
- helping the foreign pupil to promote the culture of their home country both in their class and the entire school.



### Tasks of the team of teachers of a class attended by the foreign pupil

#### Task 1. The first meeting of the team of teachers of the class.

The cooperation between teachers of the class, working out common positions, and sharing knowledge about the pupil will allow them to undertake activities that help in achieving success.

The activities of the team of teachers include planning the activities aimed at creating, during different subject lessons with the class, a poster: "We know your country" and the current implementation of the task of presenting the country of the foreign pupil to the class.

## **STAGE 1. Preparing the local community for the arrival of many foreign pupils and their families.**

The local government should ensure that the local community is informed about the plans of settling foreign families in their area and about that the foreign children and youth may be attending schools. The authorities should also establish permanent cooperation with the centre for foreigners. The aim of these activities is to create an attitude of openness and respect for other cultures. If, for any reason, the above activities do not take place, the school head teacher should initiate them.

## **Tasks of the local government, community, the school governing body, when many foreign families with children are moving to the area.**

- The agenda of local government council meetings should include a detailed discussion of the situation of a given municipality/district in the scope of admitting foreign families and foreign pupils;
- Meeting with representatives of other local governments that have foreigners in their area in order to take advantage of their good practices and experience;
- Establishing cooperation with employees of the local centre for foreigners in order to get to know each other, determine the scope of cooperation, methods of contact and communication, and appoint persons responsible for particular areas of cooperation;
- Providing foreign pupils with means of getting to school;
- Reminding residents of the events in the history of the region that indicate the presence of other cultures and nationalities in the area;
- Initiating a series of articles in the local media introducing the cultures of other nations, what causes refugees to leave their country, the effects of having foreign neighbours, highlighting the enriching elements;
- Additional equipment for the schools accepting foreign pupils.

**The tasks of the centre for foreigners (in terms of the functioning of a foreign pupil at school) include:**

- Establishing cooperation with the local government and schools in order to get to know each other, determine the scope of cooperation, methods of contact and communication, and appoint persons responsible for particular areas of cooperation;
- Organizing language courses on their premises for parents and pupils to teach them the language of the country of settlement as a foreign language;
- Mediation in establishing the first contact between the parents of a foreign pupil and the school representatives;

There is no need to implement the above-mentioned activities if, for example, there is only one family migrating to the area.



**Responsible parties: local government; employees of the centre for foreigners, local media, and, optionally, school head teacher.**

## STAGE 2.

# ARRIVAL IN A FOREIGN COUNTRY. FIRST CONTACT WITH THE SCHOOL.

Culture shock, stress related to finding themselves in a new situation and uncertainty of tomorrow mean that the families of foreign pupils are looking for contact with the school rather quickly. Parents want to provide their child with a better start and a proper education. The preparation of the first meeting may decide on the success of the adaptation process or make it much more difficult, so it is worth conducting subsequent tasks carefully and deliberately. The continuous task for parents will be to provide support, to ensure that the new environment gives opportunities for new friendships, experiences, and learning many interesting facts. The first conversation with the school head teacher should ensure the pupil and the parent that they are treated subjectively. Its purpose is to familiarize pupils with the school, the procedure involving a foreign pupil in the school system of a given country and to find out what the needs of the pupil and the family are. Parents should feel that the school will provide a safe environment for their child and that he/she will be well looked after.

### Tasks of parents:

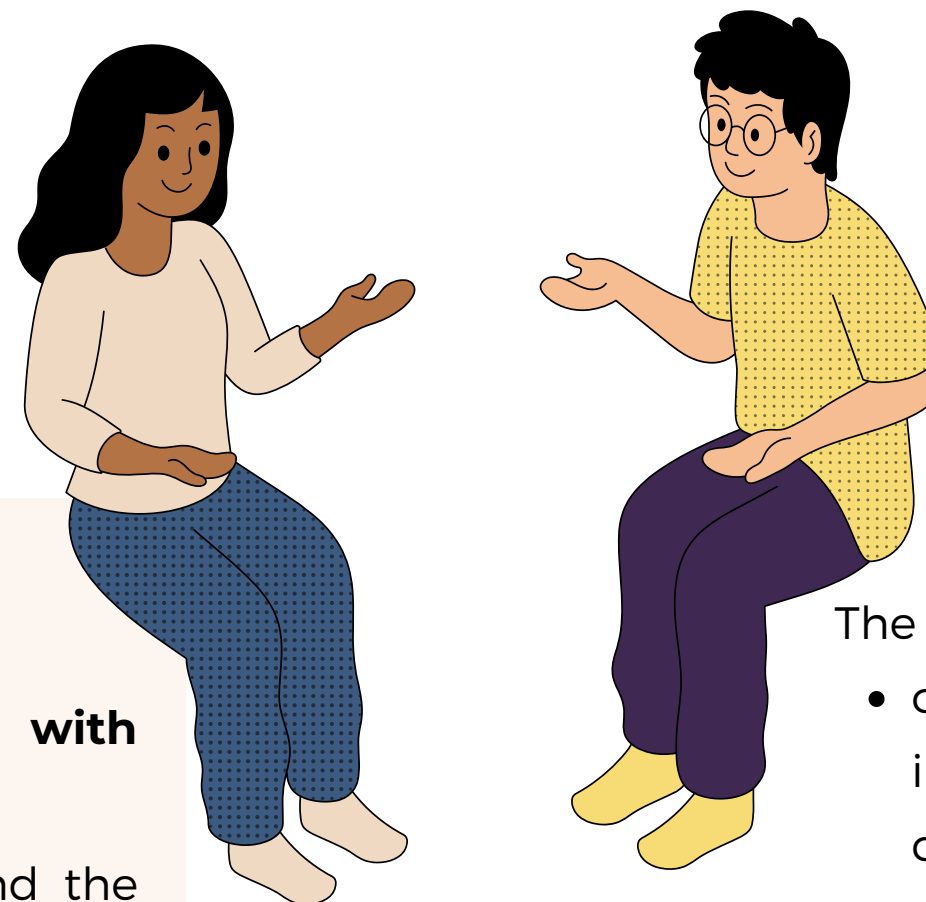
#### Task 1. Parent-pupil conversation before visiting the school.

The day before the conversation about "tomorrow's visit to the new school" seems to be a good option. Reassuring the child that they will visit the school together will reduce tension. The child should be informed that he/she will get to know not only the school building, but also very important people with whom he/she will establish the first relationship: with the head teacher, intercultural assistant and classmate-guardian - a friend who also wants to meet them.



#### Task 2. Preparation of necessary certificates and documents.

Providing documents confirming the pupil's schooling so far, certificates, teachers' opinions will allow to determine the scope of assistance that the school may offer in the initial period. Identity documents are necessary to register a pupil in the school system.



## Tasks of the school head teacher:

### Task 1. Head teacher's conversation with parents and the pupil.

The contact between the head teacher and the parents may be difficult due to the fact that the parents do not know the language of the country of arrival, Interpreter's assistance is necessary in this case. It can be the intercultural assistant or another teacher in the teaching staff who knows the language of the family's home country or another language that can be used for effective communication. It is worth creating proper conditions for the parents to ask questions and dispel doubts about enrolling their child in school. The meeting should be scheduled at an appropriate time and a sufficient amount of time should be reserved. It should not be held in a rush.

The following issues should be discussed during the meeting:

- organization of schoolwork (school working hours; break times; information on the way and place of spending breaks; school canteen operation and its offer; if the pupil is going to use the school bus, information about the place and time of departure and return to the place of residence should be provided);
- handing over the welcome package - the package includes, among others: contact details of the school, map of access to the facility, calendar of the school year, schoolwork organization, grading scale, form templates, e.g. excuses for absences, mini-glossaries with basic phrases necessary for school communication;
- description of the Model of Working with a Foreign Pupil Coming to a New Country;
- assigning a pupil to a class; providing the timetable; discussing issues related to the child's participation in extracurricular activities;

- agreeing with the parents on the form of communication that is most convenient for them: the language to be used, written or oral form; establishing rules for justifying absences; getting acquainted with the documents used in the school;
- presenting the options of providing support from the school pedagogue or psychologist, as well as the intercultural assistant. assistance provided by the psychologist can help the pupil understand certain behaviours. The meeting provides the parents with an opportunity to clarify and concerns, reservations, receive instructions on how to prepare the child for the change;
- familiarizing parents with the conditions at school, the appearance of the rooms, the available equipment;
- informing parents that the school provides assistance of a nurse in an emergency, and that medical services are called in the case of a life-threatening situation;
- information about the school's expectations/requirements towards pupils: bringing textbooks, notebooks and other required supplies to school; doing homework; preparing for school activities; school dress code, including formal outfit and physical education outfit - respecting the pupil's religious requirements; pupil's rights and obligations;
- getting acquainted with the curriculum, taking into account the differences resulting from the specificity of teaching in a given country;
- presentation of the intercultural assistant (coordinator of the Model implementation), who acts as an intermediary between the school and pupil's parents.

## Task 2. Completing Part I of the Questionnaire of a Foreign Pupil Coming to a New Country:

During the first meeting between the school head teacher and the pupil's parents, the parties cooperate in completing the first part of the Questionnaire, which includes personal data, information about the family situation, health condition, information about the pupil's current educational path, and the pupil's resources.



## Tasks of the intercultural assistant.

### **Task 1. Meeting between the intercultural assistant (with the possible participation of the pedagogist and the class teacher) and the parents and pupil.**

Before the meeting, it is important to prepare the room - the décor of the room is intended only for this meeting, without any stressful elements, e.g. a large clock in a visible place. It is recommended to seat the participants in a circle and establish the meeting leader.

The first conversation between school staff and parents before the pupil meets their new class is used to establish closer relations and build bonds. Direct contact persons on behalf of the school are: intercultural assistant, class teacher and pedagogist/psychologist.

- The meeting begins with welcoming the pupil and parents, introducing the participants, briefly discussing their roles in the team;
- A time frame should be established and the parents must be ensured that all comments will be heard;
- Information on the method of collecting information about the pupil during the first month of adaptation at school should be provided;
- The parents should get to know what kind of support the pupil can count on from the school staff present at the meeting;

## Completion of Questionnaire Part II

When completing the questionnaire:

- it is necessary to learn from the parents whether the previous education was systematic, whether the pupil has experienced any traumatic events, whether the parents noticed any disturbing situations or behaviours, whether developmental defects or disorders were observed, whether the child suffers from an illness;
- parents should be alerted to problems with adapting to the new environment, possible occurrence of a culture shock related to the behaviour of native pupils, distinctive style of dressing, etc.
- the parents may be asked about the pupil's knowledge of the local language and the new country;
- the parents should be asked about the knowledge of foreign languages, what subjects were the child's favourite, awarded top grades or least favourite, associated with the biggest problems, what school or extracurricular activities the child enjoys, the type of support the child needs;
- the parents should be encouraged to talk about their child, his/her strengths and weaknesses, what they like to do in spare time, what hobbies they have, what motivates them to increased efforts;
- the parents can share their suggestions, needs and expectations with the teacher, as well as present the opinion issued by the school in their home country.

## Establishing rules of conduct with the parent in order to support the child in the adaptation process.

The rules are to show the parents how important it is to participate in the child's adaptation process and what the school's expectations are in this respect.

- Making parents aware that their cooperation with school employees is a condition for the child's successful adaptation.
- Informing the school (assistant, class teacher) by parents about disturbing signals during the pupil's adaptation at school will allow the causes of discomfort to be removed or problems to be solved.
- Participating in teacher-parent meetings, informing about the reasons for the child's absence, joining the life of the class and school during class and community events.
- Striving for positive relations with the parents of the pupil's classmates.
- Getting familiar with cultural differences (e.g. learning dances, preparing a regional dish).
- Joining the parent-class teacher cooperation team or the Parent Board.
- Making sure that the child has the necessary school supplies, textbooks, notebooks, and a change of footwear.
- Motivating pupils to do their homework, participating in additional lessons in the language of the country of residence as a foreign language.
- Responding to school calls if the pupil gets into conflicts.
- Accepting phone calls and letters from school (also in electronic form).

The meeting ends with handing over the textbooks and introducing the classmate-guardian to the pupil and parents.

It is advisable that at each level of the meeting, the parent confirms that they understand what the team is working on and that they pass it on to their child.



## Task 2. Organizing a meeting between the classmate-guardian and the foreign pupil.

During the first meeting, the pupils get to know each other. They agree on the form of communication: they choose the language and method of communication. If they wish to visit school independently (just the two of them), this should be facilitated. If there is the slightest anxiety, the school should be visited in the company of a parent of the foreign pupil and the class teacher (or intercultural assistant, pedagogist). During the school visit, use the school plan included in the welcome package and indicate strategic places.

Pupils determine the time and place of the next meeting on the first day of the foreign pupil's stay at school.

At this stage, additional support may be obtained from:

- psychological and pedagogical counselling centre,
- family support institutions,
- free legal aid offices,
- local government units,
- organizations operating within the local community.

**Responsible parties: pupil, parents, teachers, classmate-guardian, intercultural assistant, pedagogist.**



## STAGE 3.

# THE FIRST DAY AT SCHOOL - THE MOST IMPORTANT DAY FOR THE PUPIL.

The first day at school is a very important experience, especially for the foreign pupil. Parental support before leaving home for school is crucial. Entering the school, the foreign pupil has a chance to meet the intercultural assistant, class teacher and classmate-guardian again.

### Tasks of parents

#### Task 1. Support from the parent on the day the pupil starts school.

When talking to the child, it is important for the parent to ensure them that there are many new experiences and challenges ahead of them, e.g. the opportunity to meet new friends, remind them that there is a classmate-guardian, class teacher and intercultural assistant at school, and that they can report any concerns to school staff.

#### Ways of parental support:

- Taking care of mental and emotional security - increasing self-confidence;
- Telling the child about their first day at school, their fears, experiences, clothes, hairstyles, friends, teachers they met;
- Calming down the child, referring to the experiences and feelings of siblings, other children who also feel anxiety before the first day at school;
- Telling the child that it is very important for a parent to see them go to school, meet other children, learn a lot of interesting things;
- Answering all of the child's questions;
- Taking care of physical safety - making sure that the pupil eats a meal, taking care of their clothes and the morning toilet;
- Make sure that the pupil does not forget to pack all the necessary supplies, notebooks, textbooks, etc.



## Tasks of the intercultural assistant.

The intercultural assistant provides the pupil with the most important information about the life of the school, talks about anxieties, and introduces the child to the class teacher (if the meeting was not held earlier).

## Tasks of a classmate-guardian.

On this day, a classmate-guardian provides advice and help to the new friend, supports them, helps them find themselves in class-lesson situations as well as during breaks and lunch breaks.

## Tasks of the class teacher.

It is important for the class teacher to support the new pupil and encourage their classmates to socialise with him/her.

The pupil meets his class for the first time during the form period conducted according to the lesson scenario topic No. 2: "We create our class team." Later in the day the pupil participates in lessons according to the timetable.

## Tasks of teachers.

Teachers should pay attention to the new pupil, make sure that they find their place in the classroom, and make sure that the classmates react to their presence properly.

- It is important to incorporate content related to the pupil's home country into the lesson subject matter;
- It is advisable for the teacher of a given subject to enable the pupil to be actively involved. This will be facilitated by the use of a dictionary or other communication tools, as well as the preparation of other teaching aids if possible.

**Responsible parties: pupils, parents, class teacher, pedagogist / psychologist, intercultural assistant, teachers**

## STAGE 4. NEXT DAYS OF ADAPTATION AT THE SCHOOL.

The class teacher plays the most significant role in the following days of adaptation in class. The series of form periods planned by him/her is to facilitate the subsequent stages of this process. The classes are conducted in such a way as to involve the foreign pupil in the work of the class team, and at the same time to enable them to get to know one another. This is achieved by active working methods, e.g. drama, presentation, play, integration games, trips in the school vicinity. Similar tasks are performed by other teachers who have contact with the pupil.

For the proper adaptation of a pupil in the new country, it is also necessary to build relationships outside the school and involve the foreign family in the life of the local community.

### Tasks of parents:

Adaptation of a foreign pupil in the new school reality is very difficult. In the adaptation period, the parents play a vital role as they are watching over the fulfilment of compulsory education and reassuring their child.

Parents should follow the rules established at the first meeting with the head teacher, stay in touch with the school - the class teacher, intercultural assistant. They can and should be active in the school and local environment.

### Tasks of the intercultural assistant:

Conditions created at school should make the foreign pupil feel safe in the new environment. At this stage, the intercultural assistant supports the foreign pupil.

The assistant's task is also to support teachers, help overcome language barriers and resolve conflicts. The assistant takes care of contacts with parents. The assistant is recommended to cooperate with the head teacher, pedagogist, psychologist, centre for foreigners and the classmate-guardian.

The assistant should also cooperate with various entities in order to create a friendly school and local environment (projects, multicultural activities, events enhancing intercultural integration).

## Tasks of the class teacher.

The class teacher holds the following form periods:

*Topic No. 3: What are we interested in and what do we have in common?*

*Topic No. 4: We get to know beautiful places in our country.*



The class teacher makes sure that the foreign pupil engages in the class activities and convenes a meeting of the team of teachers teaching the class to consolidate information about the pupil.

## Tasks of the school staff and the team of teachers of the foreign pupil's class.

### Task 1. Meeting the team of teachers

The head teacher or the class teacher calls a meeting of the team of teachers of the foreign pupil's class in order to take the following actions:

- analysis of available documents provided by parents, academic performance at the school the pupil attended before;
- development of an Individual Pupil Adaptation Plan (according to a previously created draft) based, among others, on the data contained in the Questionnaire of a Foreign Pupil Coming to a New Country, Parts I and II;
- assigning the tasks of teachers of particular subjects in the adaptation process; the method of evaluating achievements in individual subjects;
- determining the forms of support for the pupil (individualization of teaching: restraining from giving grades, in particular negative grades - for the period agreed at the meeting; adapting the requirements to the pupil's abilities; establishing compensatory or improvement classes, e.g. additional sports activities or additional classes in the language of the country of arrival;
- planning any written or oral tests well in advance; always in the first period and establishing patterns to be followed in studying to facilitate oral tests; some foreign students come from countries where there is no oral examination, for example; take into consideration also this aspect of verification of the study.

## **Task 2. Implementation of the process of adaptation of the pupil in class and school.**

In the first months of schooling, the process of adapting a pupil consists in involving them in the tasks of the class and school and engaging them in the lesson process.

During the lessons, teachers use various methods to facilitate the pupil's integration with the class, e.g. project method, activating methods, group cooperation, integration through specific scientific tasks.

## **Task 3. Creating a friendly school and local environment.**

Conditions should be created for the pupil and his family to make them feel that they are a part of the local community. The pupil can be actively involved in activities enabling the presentation of his/her strengths, interests, home country and culture. The inclusion of the parents of the foreign pupil in the school life fosters faster adaptation of the child at school and integration with the school environment.

Activities that create a friendly school environment for the pupil and his parents and accelerate the adaptation of foreigners in the local community include:

- Electing a representative of foreign pupils to join the student council;
- Electing a representatives of parents of foreign pupils to join the Parent Board;
- Creating opportunities for foreign pupils to present their talents and abilities through, for example, participation in art and music competitions and sports competitions;
- Organizing intercultural workshops, during which foreign pupils and their parents present elements of their culture, e.g. cuisine, music, tradition;
- Organizing events presenting the foreign tradition, holidays and creating opportunities for foreigners to participate in national, religious and local community holidays;
- Implementation of intercultural projects, during which the local community can learn about the elements of foreign culture and vice versa;
- Participation of foreigners in local social events;
- Organizing exhibitions presenting the home countries of foreigners;
- Promoting joint activities aimed at intercultural integration through articles in the local press, broadcasts on local radio, television and the Internet.

**Task 4. Evaluation meetings of the team of teachers of the foreign pupil's class** (the first evaluation meeting after a month, the next one as needed).

After a month, an assessment is made of the pupil's situation i.e. of the academic progress, behavioural and emotional condition of the child, and social functioning at school (without using traditional forms of checking knowledge, taking into account their activity, answers, homework and work input during the first month in class). The basic purpose of the meeting is to discuss the adaptation process, successes and problems. A parent may participate in the meeting at the invitation of the class teacher.

The meeting is aimed at collecting information about the pupil and modifying the IPAP:

- Suggestions for further work are recorded in the IPAP.
- If necessary, the pupil can continue receiving teaching support at school, e.g. additional individual tutoring in the local language as a foreign language; classes to compensate for curricular differences in mathematics, foreign languages and the native language; support from a psychologist / pedagogist.
- Acquainting the foreign parent with the effects of the child's work to date and possible modifications to the IPAP.
- The parent's observations, proposals and suggestions are taken into account and recorded in the IPAP.

**Task 5. Assessment of the effectiveness of assistance provided to the foreign pupil in the adaptation process.**

**Evaluation meeting of the team of teachers of the foreign pupil's class** (e.g. at the end of a semester or school year).

After subsequent months of observing the child at school, meetings with parents, intercultural assistant, class teacher cooperation with other teachers, it is possible to evaluate the effectiveness of the assistance provided. It is conducted through the analysis of academic achievements and behaviour of the pupil, conversations with the pupil and their parents. It is important to note the strengths and weaknesses of the child, which will be used to prepare a proposal for further work.

- The assessment will serve to further individualize work with the pupil;
- Making further modifications to the IPAP and providing support as needed;
- Effectiveness is assessed by: parents, head teacher, class teacher, subject teachers, pedagogist / psychologist and intercultural assistant. Parents have the right to participate in every meeting and to make their comments and express their will regarding the support offered by the school;

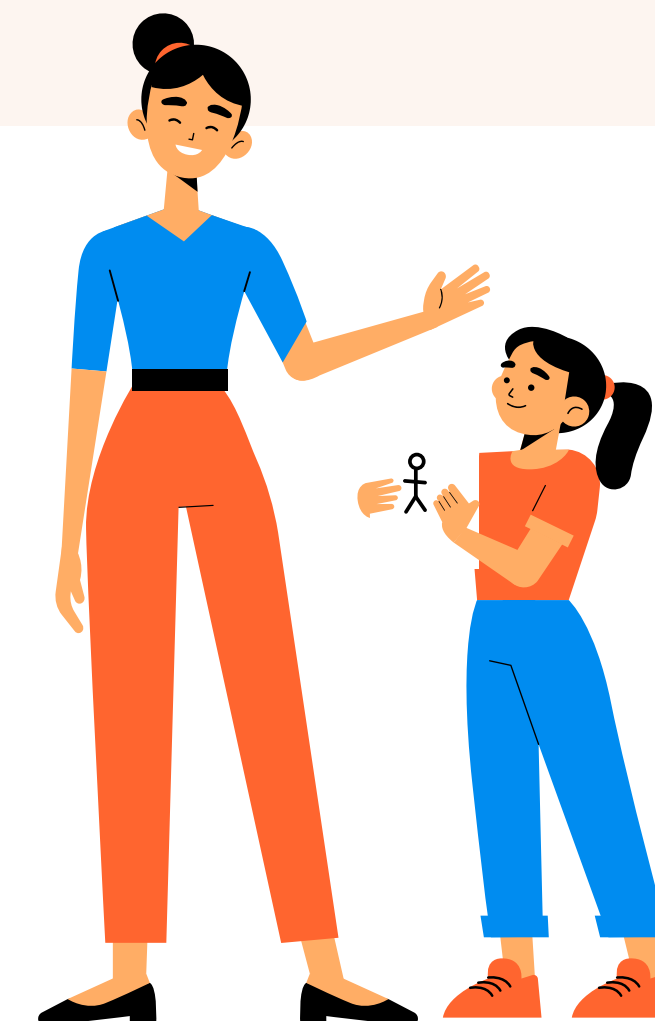
- The adaptation process can be considered successful when the pupil and the family implement the following activities:
  - ▶ he pupil becomes involved in the life of the class and school;
  - ▶ the pupil is planning to continue their education;
  - ▶ the foreign pupil is ready to assume the role of a classmate-guardian;
  - ▶ they will be successful in an area important to them;
  - ▶ their parent is active in the new environment - takes part in school celebrations.

### Support that can be provided to the pupil:

- psychological, speech therapy and pedagogical support at school and other institutions;
- extracurricular activities - external companies;
- support from organizations in the local community (developing the child's relations outside the school).



**Responsible parties: parents, pupils, class teacher, pedagogist / psychologist, intercultural assistant, subject teachers.**



**To sum up. The adaptation of a foreign student arriving in a new country depends on:**

- the support provided in the family home;
- the preparation of the local community to welcome people arriving in a foreign country;
- the preparation of the school environment, both organizationally and in terms of inclusive didactics and peer group;
- continuous mutual cooperation to build kindness, respect and independence;

The role of adults is to monitor and evaluate the process if it becomes disrupted or does not produce the expected results.



## Chapter 3

### ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN BY TEACHERS IN INDIVIDUAL CONTACT WITH THE PUPIL AND THEIR PARENTS

This chapter describes the principles of individual work with the pupil and family coming from abroad. Two key documents used in the process of adapting a foreign pupil are described: Questionnaire of a Foreign Pupil Coming to a New Country and Individual Plan of the Adaptation of a Pupil (IPAP). One-to-one contact between teachers and a pupil from abroad is one of the key elements of the adaptation process - hence it is so important that the process is conducted correctly.



## 3.1

## FIRST TALKS WITH PARENTS AT SCHOOL

The first direct contact of parents with a school representative (head teacher, school psychologist / pedagogist) is an opportunity to start building positive relations and attitudes in an atmosphere of mutual trust. The purpose of the first meeting with the head teacher is to familiarize parents with the specificity of the school and to complete the necessary formalities related to enrolling a child in a given school (Stage 2, task 1 - Tasks of the school head teacher). On the other hand, the purpose of the first meeting with the intercultural assistant (or with a psychologist / school pedagogist / class teacher) is to prepare and instruct parents on how to effectively support the child in the process of adaptation to the new school, as well as to diagnose the child and find out what the parents' needs and expectations are for the adaptation process (Stage 2. Tasks of intercultural assistant. Task 1).

It is worth taking care of the external conditions in which the meeting with the parents takes place (including without third parties), as well as limiting the atmosphere of formalities and official attitude towards the parents to an absolute minimum. It is also important to reserve enough time so that the meeting is not rushed. The conversation should start with introducing the parents and the school head teacher / specialists and with casual topics, such as the reason for choosing the school, the child's favourite activities, the country from which the family comes, etc. Certainly, you should not overwhelm parents with forms to fill in at the beginning. Although completing the formalities and supplementing the documents is an essential element of the meeting with parents, the meeting should not begin with this. The beginning of the conversation should help build a friendly atmosphere.

It is important for parents to be able to express their perceptions and expectations, and during the discussion, as well as throughout their child's adaptation and schooling process, they should feel valued and important. An important element of the pupil's adaptation to a new school is taking into account their cultural and religious identity. The ability to listen actively, show understanding and interest in what parents say is extremely valuable here.

## 3.2 PRINCIPLES OF COOPERATION BETWEEN TEACHERS AND PARENTS IN THE PROCESS OF PUPIL ADAPTATION

It should be kept in mind that parents should become allies of the school in the process of pupil adaptation. The success of this process depends on the complementarity of teachers and parents.

**In implementing the Model, it is worth adopting the following principles of cooperation between teachers and parents:**

- (1) **Partnership** – assuming duties and responsibilities in the implementation of the Model. In the adaptation process, the complementarity between schools and parents is crucial;
- (2) **Unity of interactions** – the implementation of common and compatible goals for the benefit of the child;
- (3) **Mutual respect** – acceptance of school rules and the values, culture, identity and nationality of the family;
- (4) **Information flow** – informing about the pupil's situation, their progress in adaptation and experienced difficulties. It is important to establish the form of contact and the language in which communication will take place between the school and the family;
- (5) **Systematic contact** – regular meetings between parents and the class teacher / subject teachers / intercultural assistant; (6) **Honesty** - open communication and honesty in cooperation in the implementation of the Model and Individual Plan of the Adaptation of a Pupil.

### 3.3

## CONVERSATION TO SUPPORT THE PUPIL

A supportive conversation is communication between the teacher and the pupil, based on empathy, respect, acceptance, authenticity, curiosity and openness to the pupil's needs and expectations. The teacher should give the child a sense of security and, in an atmosphere of trust, help them to cope with difficulties resulting from starting education in a new school and, in addition, in a foreign country, described in chapter 1.

It should be kept in mind that when the child talks about problems and difficulties they are experiencing, it is possible for the teacher to provide them with adequate support. But for a child to talk about their concerns, they must feel safe in the relationship with the teacher. And it is the teacher who is responsible for creating safe atmosphere.



It is important that the conversation between the teacher / class teacher / intercultural assistant and the pupil from a foreign country takes place in conditions that guarantee the confidentiality of the conversation. It is usually not easy for a child to talk about their difficulties; therefore every effort should be made to build an atmosphere of trust and kindness.

In a conversation to support the pupil, it is worth focusing on the child, postponing all other activities. The child must feel that they are in the focus of interest, which is achieved through eye contact, appropriate body posture (leaning towards the child, nodding, friendly gestures), articulations: "Aha, hmm".

The language used must be understandable to the child - the conversation should take place in a language that the child knows at the communicative level (you can use an electronic translator or, in exceptional cases, the help of an interpreter).

The teacher providing the support should encourage the child to speak and follow what they say. The teacher should gently encourage the child to continue talking (e.g., "It is important what you say") by using additional open-ended questions and avoiding "if" questions where the possible answer is yes or no (e.g., "What happened next?" ; "How did you react then?").

It is worth using paraphrases, i.e. repeating the child's statements in your own words (e.g. "From what you said, I understand that ...."; "If I understand you correctly, then ... ..") and reflect emotions, i.e. statements in which you describe what the child feels ("I can see that the situation you are talking about has upset you very much"; "I can hear the regret in your voice"). Statements containing evaluation or disapproval should be avoided (e.g. expressing surprise, astonishment with the pupil's experiences, indicating contradictions in the utterances of the interviewed person).

A supportive conversation does not always have to end with advice from the teacher. Sometimes just talking about the problems experienced by the child brings relief. At the end of the interview, It is important to appreciate and praise the child for opening up and talking about their situation. It is important for the intercultural assistant to know the native language of the child - this will make it easier to support the child.

## 3.4

## WELCOME PACKAGE

The welcome package is a set of the most essential information about the school provided to parents at the first meeting with the head teacher (Stage 2, Task 1. Head teacher's conversation with parents and the pupil).



The welcome package should contain:

- School contact details (exact address with a map, telephone numbers to the head teacher's office, class teacher, intercultural assistant, school specialists - psychologist / pedagogist / career counsellor).
- A map showing how to get to school with the route of school buses or public transport stops near the school.
- Basic information about the school (map/diagram of school buildings, school timetable (e.g. with marked lunch breaks), number of pupils and teachers, extracurricular activities, the most important recent achievements of pupils, institutions the school cooperates with, etc.).
- Calendar of the school year with marked national holidays, days off from school (winter break, summer holidays), important school celebrations, etc.
- Information on the dress code applicable at school (including the requirements regarding outfit during sports activities and school celebrations).

- Selected, most important information from the Internal Student Assessment System (grading scale and its meaning, rules for assessing pupils' achievements, rules for issuing mid-year and end-year grades - school leaving certificate, etc.).
- Rules of behaviour during lessons and breaks.
- Forms applicable at school, e.g. excusing absences, exemptions from lessons, consent to the child's participation in various events.
- Contact information of institutions that support migrants (e.g. local government unit, social welfare centre, free legal aid office, psychological and pedagogical counselling centre, non-governmental organizations, parish office, local residents' associations, etc.).
- Simplified diagram of the educational system in the country.
- Mini-glossary - basic phrases used in contacts between parents and the school head teacher / subject teachers.



The welcome package should be written in a language known to the pupil's parents. Depending on the specificity of the school, the package may also contain information other than the above-mentioned.

## 3.5

# QUESTIONNAIRE OF A FOREIGN PUPIL COMING TO A NEW COUNTRY

The Questionnaire of a Foreign Pupil Coming to a New Country consists of two parts, and its completion takes place in the Stage 2. Completion of the first part is the task of the head teacher (Task 2), and completion of the second part is the task of the intercultural assistant (Task 3). Apart from parents and the pupil, a pedagogist, class teacher and intercultural assistant may participate in the process of the questionnaire completion. Pupil's presence is necessary in completing the first part of questionnaire only.



The Questionnaire includes fields to be completed by the school head teacher, intercultural assistant, school specialists (school psychologist/pedagogist) in the course of two meetings with the pupil's parents. The purpose of this Questionnaire is to collect vital information about the pupil in a single document, which will be used in the process of this pupil's adaptation. It is important that the pupil's class teacher, intercultural assistant, school psychologist/pedagogist and all subject teachers of the pupil have access to this Questionnaire. The idea is that individual teachers do not have to collect this information from parents, and thus parents do not have to repeat information about their child over and over again.

First, the pupil's personal details and their parents' contact details are collected (Stage 2.Tasks of the school head teacher. Task 2 of the Model). The introductory section of the Questionnaire includes a description of the family situation and the reason for coming to a foreign country. Information on whether, for example, a child is brought up in a two parent or single parent family, who has legal and physical custody of the child, who can collect the pupil from school, relations between parents, if migration was due to fleeing a war, traumatic experiences of the child and family in their home country, etc. . may be important in the process of pupil adaptation and may sensitize teachers to the way they work with the child. Talking to parents about the above topics should be conducted with great tact and gentleness, accepting the parents' boundaries. In the beginning, it is worth explaining to the parents how this information can help their child at school.

Part I of the Questionnaire contains a description of the child's educational path to date at school in their home country, their academic achievements, skills, talents and interests. This information may come directly from the parents and/or may be obtained from documents from the child's previous school, presented by the parents.

At the parents' meeting with the head teacher, the level of the child's abilities should be assessed (mathematical skills, logical-abstract thinking, spatial imagination, musical skills, plastic skills, manual skills, motor skills, interpersonal skills, language skills (using and learning foreign languages), knowledge of the language of the country in which the pupil begins education, knowledge of English and knowledge of other foreign languages) on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is very low, and 10 - very high level of ability. It should be clarified to the parents what each ability means and they should be provided with examples of the child's behaviour related to particular ability. Parents should assess each ability with a number between 1 and 10.



Part II of the Questionnaire describes the pupil's functioning as well as the needs and expectations of parents and should be completed in Stage 2. (Tasks of the intercultural assistant. Task 3 of the Model). Information about the pupil (health, strengths and weaknesses, social functioning, emotional sphere) should come from the parents on the basis of questions asked by the school pedagogist, psychologist and intercultural assistant. Information about, for example, diabetes or epilepsy, allergy to various food products, etc. will improve pupil's safety at school, while the child's prior functioning in the peer group and their ability to manage own emotions will be the key information in the development of the Individual Plan of the Adaptation of a Pupil.

In a summary of this area, it may be useful for the intercultural assistant and the parents to make a list of the pupil's resources facilitating their adaptation at school.

The second area of this part of the Questionnaire concerns the needs of the pupil in the process of the child's adaptation at school and parents' expectations towards the school management, class teacher, intercultural assistant, subject teachers and school specialists (school psychologist / pedagogist). Parents should be presented with the responsibilities of individual school employees, and in the event of parents having difficulties in verbalizing their expectations, examples of actions the school staff members can take to help their child can be provided.

At the end of the Questionnaire there is a space for the head teacher, intercultural assistant and parent/parents' signatures.

## 3.6 INDIVIDUAL PLAN OF THE ADAPTATION OF A PUPIL

After evaluating the child's situation by means of the Questionnaire of a Foreign Pupil Coming to a New Country, the Individual Plan of the Adaptation of a Pupil (IPAP) should be developed - Stage 4 (Tasks of the team of teachers. Task 1. Meeting of the team of teachers - IPAP preparation). Adaptation should take place in the social, cultural, emotional and academic/school aspects. The persons responsible for the development of Part I of the Plan are: the school head teacher, class teacher, intercultural assistant, school pedagogist/psychologist, and, in the case of Part II, also subjects teachers of the foreign pupil's class, who should closely cooperate with the pupil's parents.

The introduction to the Plan includes the pupil's data, a brief description of the pupil's prior educational path at school in his/her home country, and the expected barriers, difficulties, problems, critical points related to the process of the pupil's adaptation at new school, along with the ways to minimize and overcome them. It is necessary because the teachers need to know the prior path of education (the scope of the curriculum content in individual subjects) and must be prepared for possible difficulties in the process of the pupil's adaptation process.

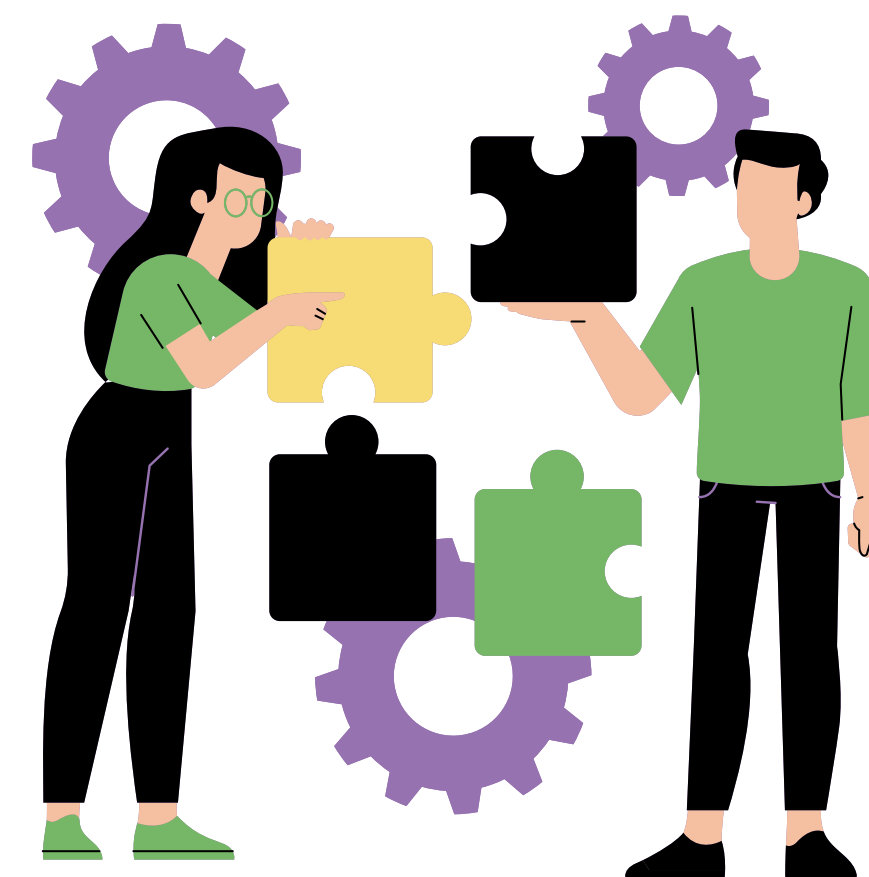


Part I of the IPAP (Appendix 2.) to be developed and implemented in Stage 4 contains fields for entering activities facilitating pupil's adaptation in the social, emotional and cultural aspects and persons responsible for their implementation. These activities should respond to the child's needs and parents' expectations, as well as to the expected difficulties in the adaptation process. These activities may include: scheduling regular meetings between the pupil and the school psychologist/pedagogue; scheduling a conversation between the class teacher and the child; planning observation of the child's functioning in class by the class teacher and subject teachers; planning the use of activating teaching methods, e.g. the project method with the teacher indicating who is to work with whom (without leaving the decision to the pupils); arranging tasks in which the pupil can succeed in the classroom; planning ways of supporting the classmate-guardian, etc. You can enter activities of other institutions, which can be involved in pupil's adaptation (e.g., psychological and pedagogical counselling centre).

Part II of the Plan (to be developed and implemented in Stage 4 (Task 1. Meeting of the team of teachers) of the Model) contains fields for entering activities facilitating the pupil's adaptation Model) in the academic/school aspect. These activities should respond to possible curricular differences between the pupil's previous school and the current one, or problems with meeting school requirements. These activities may include: additional tutoring in the language used at school (the country of residence); providing additional support in subjects where curriculum differences have been diagnosed; participation of the child in clubs and interest groups, extracurricular activities, etc.

At the end of the Individual Plan of the Adaptation of a Pupil there is a space for the head teacher and parent/parents' signatures. The activities included in the Plan should be monitored and evaluated by the team of teachers teaching the pupil and the school head teacher.

The above Plan is subject to modification after one month. Modifications are made by teachers of a given class, class teacher, pedagogist/psychologist, taking into account the information obtained from direct work with the foreign pupil (Stage 4. Task 4. Evaluation meeting of the team of teachers), while the effectiveness of the actions taken is assessed at the end of the semester/school year.



## Chapter 4

### ACTIONS TAKEN BY TEACHERS IN THE CLASS (GROUP OF PUPILS) TO WHICH THE FOREIGN PUPIL HAS BEEN ASSIGNED



The protagonists of this chapter are: the teacher, class and foreign pupil coming to a new country. Good preparation of the teacher for the implementation of activities aimed at helping the newly admitted pupil will have a positive impact on the adaptation process. In order for the parties to feel satisfied with the performance of these tasks, they must feel safe.

The chapter contains suggestions of teachers' activities in various subjects and ready-made scenarios to be used when working with a class that has been joined by a foreign pupil. All presented lesson plans are available in the form of an appendix (Appendix 3). They can be used in full or provide inspiration for developing other solutions.

## **4.1 ACTIVITIES OF TEACHERS INCREASING THEIR COMPETENCES IN WORKING WITH A FOREIGN PUPIL COMING TO A NEW COUNTRY.**

The following activities are advised: (Stage 1. Tasks of the school head teacher with the support of the class teacher if needed, Tasks 2, 3 and 4)

- making use of assistance from teachers who already have experience;
- collaboration between teachers constituting the team of teachers of a given foreign pupil;
- searching the Internet for information about methodological institutions that support teachers' work with pupils coming from abroad and enhance the teacher's skills, and attempt at establishing permanent cooperation with these institutions;
- using materials available on websites devoted to work with a foreign pupil;
- obtaining bilingual dictionaries and mobile devices with Internet access for use during subject lessons;
- cooperation with the classmate-guardian and intercultural assistant from the very beginning;
- using, if necessary, the support of the school psychologist and pedagogist;
- establishing cooperation with the pupil's family (Stage 2. Tasks of the intercultural assistant. Tasks 1 and 2).

## 4.2 ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN WITH A VIEW TO ENSURING A SENSE OF SECURITY FOR THE FOREIGN PUPIL

Before coming to a new class (Step 1. Tasks of the class teacher: 1,2,3):

- friendly and sympathetic attitude towards a new foreign pupil, not perceiving him/her in the context of a problem;
- informing classmates that a new pupil will be joining the class;
- showing pupils the benefits of having a foreign pupil in class (e.g. enrichment through contact with another culture, another language);
- drawing pupils' attention to difficult situations that they will have to face together;
- showing pupils ways to overcome the resentment that is often shown because of ignorance about foreign people;
- Joining the class in learning a few words and phrases in the native language of the new pupil (greetings and goodbyes, basic courtesies, etc.);
- conducting the first form period "Before we get to know you".

### After a new pupil comes to class (Stage 3. Tasks of the class teacher: 1, 2):

- greeting each new pupil with a smile;
- introducing oneself and asking the pupil to introduce themselves;
- correctly pronouncing the name and surname, allowing the pupil to correct the teacher's pronunciation;
- determining how the pupil wants to be referred to (an abbreviation, diminutive);
- preparation of bilingual dictionaries and/or permission to use devices with Internet access during class work and tests;
- informing the pupil how to ask for permission to go to the toilet, signal health problems and report other needs;
- showing the place where the pupil can get medical help;
- it is advisable to require less rather than too much in the beginning;
- using simple commands and adjusting requirements;
- in the initial period, focusing on observing the pupil's work rather than evaluating them with quizzes or tests;
- checking if the pupil has the necessary supplies;
- having an additional pen and notebook (in order to lend them to the pupil so that they can work in class);
- motivating the foreign pupil to learn, praising his/her language progress; learning about the dates of holidays, fasting period commanded by the pupil's religion (the pupil may be lethargic and hungry; in that period they should not be required to exercise too hard during physical education classes);
- paying attention to whether they are dressed according to the season and circumstances;
- controlling whether a pupil coming from abroad to a new country engages in the assigned tasks, whether they work in groups, whether they have found their place among classmates, and whether other pupils are sensitive to their needs;
- being vigilant to conflict situations involving the foreign pupil, solving them immediately;
- not focusing attention entirely on the newly arrived pupil, there are also other pupils who need attention and support;
- conducting subsequent form periods No. 2, 3 and 4;
- encouraging peers to make friends with the foreign pupil.

## 4.3

# TEACHERS' ACTIONS BASED ON THE FORM PERIOD SCENARIOS

The scenarios presented in this chapter can be used in full or become an inspiration for developing your own solutions.



The appearance of a pupil from a foreign country in class creates new challenges for teachers and pupils. In order to facilitate the adaptation process, it is suggested to conduct four form periods with the use of the provided scenarios. They will help new pupils overcome the difficulties associated with their adaptation and learning in a new setting and help pupils in the class understand what it means to make friends with foreigners. This will provide positive reinforcement offered by bonds formed with classmates.

### Lesson topics in the Model of Working with a Foreign Pupil Coming to a New Country:

1. Before we get to know you (Scenario No. 1)
2. We create our class team (Scenario No. 2)
3. What are we interested in and what do we have in common? (Scenario No. 3)
4. We get to know beautiful places in our country (Scenario No. 4)

The subject matter of these lessons is structured in such a way as to help teachers awaken the curiosity and initiative of children in order for the new pupils to develop an attitude of acceptance of their new class and school. The long-term effect of these lessons will be the emergence of pro-social attitudes in pupils: kindness, helpfulness, understanding others, as well as the ability to cooperate, empathize and accept.

The proposed scenarios of form periods should be adapted to the age of children. The teacher should decide how much time to spend on them. You can also modify the forms of tasks and working methods, taking into account the abilities of your pupils. Lesson topic "Before we know you" (Scenario No. 1) (Stage 1. Tasks of the class teacher. Task 1) should be introduced before the arrival of the first new pupil in class. If more new pupils come to class during the year, it is not necessary to repeat the entire series of the presented scenarios. Always inform and prepare the class for the arrival of the next new pupil. It would be advisable to repeat selected elements of the "We create our class team" lesson.

Subsequent lessons (Stage 3. Tasks of the class teacher (Scenario No. 2) and Stage 4. Tasks of the class teacher) (Scenarios No. 3 and 4) will allow the new pupil to find their way in the group and become part of it. They will help the foreign pupil feel and demonstrate both their individuality and belonging to a group of peers. The above mentioned lessons are associated with the following benefits: the foreign pupil will feel better in the new class, it will be easier to break the barriers in contact with classmates and acquires a sense of acceptance.

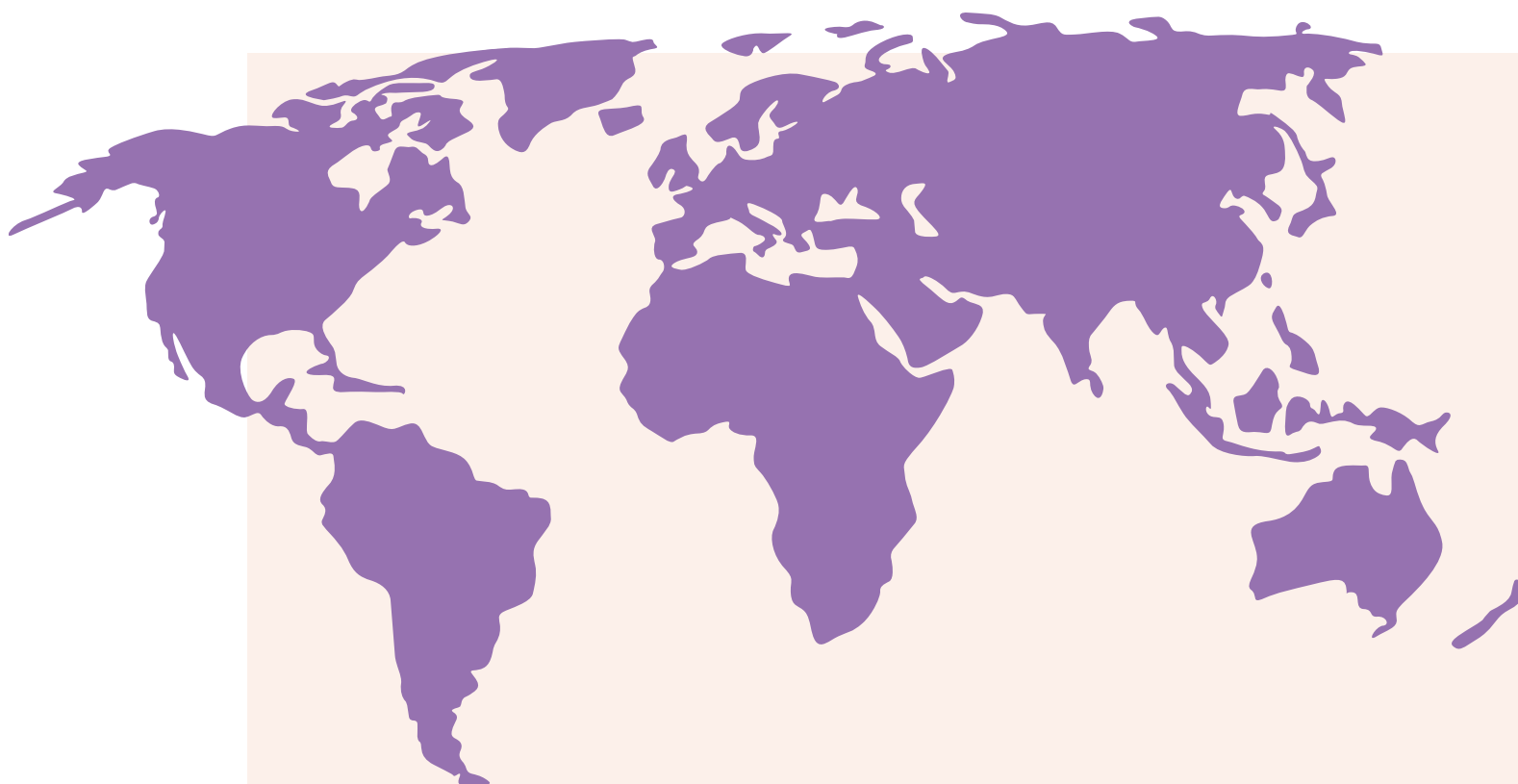
Each lesson is structured around aims, methods and forms of work and uses necessary props and aids.

Each lesson is divided into three stages:

- Introduction (defines the lesson objective, highlights the discussed issues, indicates the methods of conducting the lesson);
- Activities (using active methods, involving each pupil, working around the lesson topic, stimulating reflection and drawing conclusions);
- Summary (it is the punch line of the lesson, an opportunity to share emotions, impressions) - it allows to shape the educational process conducive to the adaptation of the foreign pupil in the new education system.

Depending on the age and capability of the group, classes are scheduled from 45 to 90 minutes for groups aged 6 to 15 with guidelines for working with younger pupils.

## **4.4 ACTIONS TAKEN BY TEACHERS OF OTHER SUBJECTS AS PART OF WORK WITH THE PUPIL (STAGE 3. TASKS OF TEACHERS. TASKS 1 AND 2)**



- planning preparation of a poster with class at lessons on different subjects: "We know your country";
- the poster should include new knowledge about the new pupil's home country acquired during the classes, e.g. on natural environment - about animals and vegetation, on the history, tourist values, on geography landscapes and climate (ensuring that the poster is an aesthetic product, focusing attention and is displayed in a visible, well-lit place);
- each teacher of a given class should plan lessons (as part of the curriculum) providing the opportunity to present the unique characteristics of the foreign pupil's country of origin;
- entrusting the foreign pupil with functions performed by other school pupils, e.g. the function of a prefect;
- attending meetings of the class teaching team to evaluate the IPAP;
- planning the subject matter of extracurricular projects so that they give foreign pupils a chance to demonstrate their abilities and skills.
- involving a foreign pupil in the work of groups and teams, so that they can be among the architects of the final effect: this includes the making of the poster and other teamwork;
- referring, as far as possible, to the knowledge of the foreign pupil in the aspects raised in the lessons and presenting his/her point of view;

## 4.5 DESCRIPTION OF THE ADAPTATION PROCESS OF FOREIGN PUPILS COMING TO A NEW COUNTRY - INCLUDING SUPPORTING AND INHIBITING FACTORS.

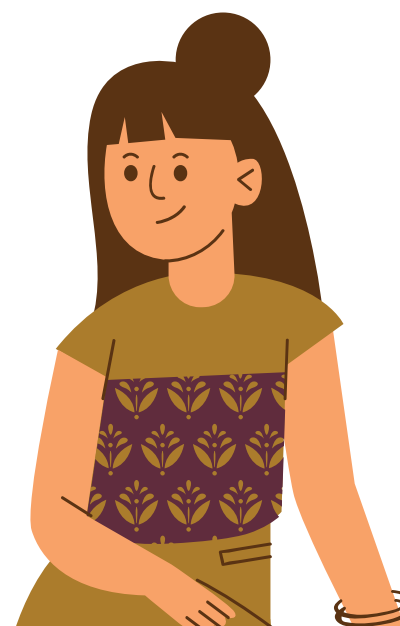
Below you can find statements and reflections of foreign pupils in the process of adaptation in new school. Factors and situations that were helpful and those that hindered the process were taken into account. The situation seen through the eyes of a pupil may inspire teachers to seek appropriate solutions.

The syntax of the pupil's speech was preserved. Pupils' statements are in italics.

### ***This helped me:***

- classmates,
- when the teacher approaches, checks the notebook and shows me what to do;
- playing with other children;
- help of Polish friends, when I could not understand the instructions, they noticed themselves and came to help me, showed me where we were in the exercise, told me what to do;
- I go to dinners together with my classmates (I don't eat pork and the lady doesn't put it on my plate, then I eat potatoes, pasta or groats without meat).

**Jasmina,  
10 years old**



### ***This made things more difficult:***

- I do not speak up during lessons;
- spelling is difficult when writing;
- it is difficult for me to talk about myself in class;
- I don't know what the class reaction will be;
- it's good when the teacher pays attention to each pupil, for example when I want to go to the toilet (I say it once, it's hard for me to repeat it a second time)

***This helped me:***

- it's good when classmates come up to me and talk;
- conversations with the pedagogist;
- a friend from the centre (centre for foreigners - author's note), someone I know, whom I can trust, someone who speaks my language;
- I prefer when a girl helps a girl (a girl doesn't like a boy to help her).

**Miriam,  
12 years old**

***This made things more difficult:***

- I don't know all PE games and it's good if someone explains and shows me;
- when I ask them to explain to me, for example, written subtraction, I hope that they will help immediately, I am ashamed to approach a second time;
- I don't like when others look at me;
- the class laughed, when I was late for a lesson, the bus was late and I didn't know how to tell it to the teacher.



***This helped me:***

- when the teacher explains well what to do and what not to do;
- it is better when Polish pupils answer first during the lesson, then I know what's going on, what to say. In the same way, in PE I wait for other pupils to show the exercises, I don't always understand what to do when the teacher explains;
- I do not speak up during the lesson, sometimes I volunteer to answer and then I want to be asked.

**Magomed,  
11 years old**



***This made things more difficult:***

- I do not understand Polish commands;
- reading is the problem, I count better;
- quizzes and tests are difficult;
  - at first it was difficult for me to read, I wanted to, but did not know how to read;
- taunts, when they bug us, then we want to fight.

***This helped me:***

- help from Chechen pupils who have been in Poland longer;
- I helped other Chechen pupils who came to school later;
- I like Maths and English;
- it helps when the teacher clearly explains the instructions;
- two weeks spent together with Polish pupils during the holidays.

**Adlan,  
14 years old**



***This made things more difficult:***

- I don't know all the rules at school;
- the teacher talks a lot, and I do not know all the words, I cannot interrupt the teacher if I do not understand something;
- in the new class, it is difficult to ask for help;
- it's difficult at the lessons of Polish, I don't understand anything, I don't like history, I don't understand;
- I want the teacher to check my homework and tell me if it is correct;

## Chapter 5

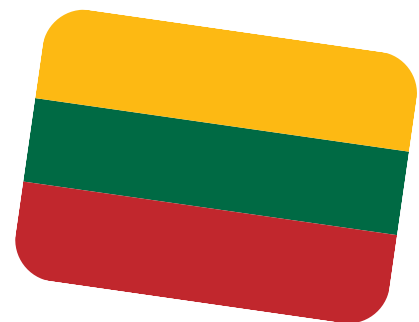
### **ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE SCHOOL HOSTING A FOREIGN PUPIL IN ORDER TO BUILD A FRIENDLY SCHOOL AND LOCAL ENVIRONMENT**

The chapter contains examples of involving foreign pupils and their parents in school and out-of-school activities. The ways of using the friendly coexistence of diverse cultures are also presented. Proven examples of the use of various forms of assistance to foreign pupils are demonstrated. Due to the variety of activities and solutions adopted in the described school, pupils deal with common childhood and teenage problems, and not problems associated with nationality or ethnicity.

All the presented activities have been implemented in Zespół Szkół im. Unitów Podlaskich in Wohyń (School Complex in Wohyń, Poland), attended by foreign pupils since 2008. and constitute (on average) 8 to 15% of all their pupils. The teaching staff and school staff have done a tremendous job to host foreign pupils and to improve the process of their adaptation. Teachers are constantly improving their competences. They share their experiences and willingly participate in the exchange of ideas with other schools that face similar challenges. Examples of good practices that have been used and refined in Wohyń school for many years are presented in italics in this chapter. They were collected by the school teachers, participants of the School Adapt project.

## 5.1

# NATIONAL SYMBOLS. THE PRESENCE OF PUPILS AND PARENTS IN SCHOOL STRUCTURES.



The process of creating a friendly school environment should begin from the moment of obtaining information about a foreign pupil coming to school. This process should ensure the foreign pupil's safe into new educational structures. At the very beginning, it is beneficial to create an opportunity to present the national symbols of the foreign pupil in a representative location such as school, where the national symbols of the host institution are also located. Such a view upon entering school conveys a message "you are OK", "your nationality is OK", "both our nationality and yours deserve respect".



In the representative place, in the school hall, there is an exhibition of flags of all nationalities of pupils attending the school. Newcomers visiting the school are informed that pupils from many nations attend the school. The sight of foreign pupils singing the national anthem of the host country is both a norm and a touching sight.

Depending on the scale of the phenomenon, it is necessary to consider the presence of a representative of foreign pupils in the Student Council. One or two pupils - it is easier in a pair - represent the interests of the community of foreign pupils. The role of the Student Council is defined in various schools, but in most of them, it influences the development of school law, solving problems that arise in school life, the organization of areas where pupils can display their interests or even participation in creating the school lunch menu and updating the collection of fiction books in the school library.

*The international Student Council has established a method of compiling meals in the school canteen in such a way that every day one dish does not contain pork.*

In the case of individual foreign pupils coming to school, excessive exposure of their presence may be a factor that impairs and inhibits adaptation.

The presence of parents of foreign pupils in the Parent Board should also be considered. Of course, the representative group will be decisive. The practical presence of foreign parents in this body will facilitate openness, trust and greater involvement in school life as well as better adaptation of the families in the society.

*The school accepting foreign pupils became involved in a charity campaign aimed at collecting a large amount of money needed for a child's surgery. Teachers, pupils and parents supported the action with various activities: selling knick-knacks, participating in raffles, searching for prizes. In solidarity and understanding with the needy family, mothers of foreign pupils baked their national dishes, which were put up for auction. Later on, the mothers of foreign pupils were praised on the social media in gratitude for their donation, their generosity was emphasized. They had a chance to promote their home country but, above all, to show solidarity in the misfortune.*

*Pupils' parents are eager to take active part in school and class celebrations. They accompany their children during the ceremony of integrating first-year pupils into the school community, they are present at the meeting with Santa Clause. They help in the preparation of the carnival ball. They celebrate the First Day of Spring and take part in the end of the school year. Mothers (most often) prepare national dishes as snacks; fathers take photos and participate in attractions.*

A valuable experience of the school hosting foreign pupils is establishing cooperation with the foreigner community elders and spiritual guides. It is especially important when homogeneous refugee groups from countries with different religion arrive at the centres.

*On the initiative of the school head teacher, an ecumenical meeting of local religious leaders of the main denominations took place. The fact that the representatives of Catholicism, Islam and the Orthodox Church were praying for the well-being of the pupils of the school and on its premises together resulted in the lack of religious animosity.*



## 5.2 SHOWCASING SKILLS, ACHIEVEMENTS AND TALENTS

The motivating role of recognizing talents and expressing recognition for them is indisputable in the development of a pupil. Most often it is done in the following way: occasional speeches of pupils at school assemblies, awarding pupils with distinctions for achievements in science, sports and arts, participation of pupils in shows and exhibitions, and presentation of diplomas and trophies. The availability of these distinctions for all pupils is self-evident. How to reward a foreign pupil or recognize their talent if they have just begun their education at a new school?

*This is practised at school in various ways. A mini-exhibition of artworks is always an accessible form. The prepared exhibition of works by a foreign pupil attracted many visitors every day. They were usually the same pupils, but the meeting at the easel turned into a social event. Parents of pupils visiting the school at that time, including foreigners, were eagerly stopping by the exhibition.*

*Another good experience that deserves dissemination is the awarding of the "Prize for Prowess" at school. It can be awarded to pupils for raising the average grade by 0.5 between two assessment periods (the level from which the pupil starts working on the grade improvement is not important). In the history of the school, there were foreign pupils among the pupils who received this distinction.*

## 5.3

# BUILDING A MULTICULTURAL SCHOOL AND LOCAL COMMUNITY

Respect for people is expressed in many ways. Also by showing respect to people, traditions and customs that are important to them. When working with pupils of many nationalities, we should be able to show the beauty of each culture.

*One of the first projects implemented by the school at the time of accepting foreign pupils was "Multiculturalism as the heritage of the Wohyń Municipality". It was reminiscent of the rich history of the region and the fact that 11 languages were spoken in the main square of Wohyń before World War II. As part of the project, the "Chechnya Stars" dance group performed (Chechen pupils were the largest group among foreign pupils at that time), and a Gypsy vocal and dance group also performed. The presence of Jews, Armenians, Germans and Tatars in Wohyń was recalled. An audio story was prepared that illustrated this mixture of languages and nations. Foreign pupils also joined the activities. A great local event was the "World Cuisine Festival". Both parents of foreign pupils and representatives of local Polish organizations participated in the preparations. It was touching to see the preparation of national dishes by one representative of Ingushetia. The dishes prepared by him, as well as the dishes of Georgian, Polish, Jewish, Ukrainian, Chechen, Dagestani and Tajik cuisine won the hearts and stomachs of the visitors. About 1,500 people attended the school that has 450 pupils. Local newspapers and dailies returned to the event a week later, and the school recorded these activities in a brochure that was issued.*

Foreign pupils regularly present themselves to the local community at the beginning of September during the so-called Harvest Festival. They prepare songs in Russian, English or national languages with elements of choreography.

During the September events related to the national reading of Polish literature, the works of art by foreign pupils constitute a perfect decoration. This event takes place in a local square in the centre of the village and attracts a large audience.



Every year - in autumn, there is also a municipality event called "Foreign Languages Day". Its creation was a response to the need to show the culture of the countries of origin of foreign pupils. Representatives of other schools come to the school in Wohyń to prepare short declamations, vocal performances or fragments of theatre plays in various languages. This celebration has an open structure. Its permanent elements are: individual or group performances, a parade of all participants, including invited guests (local VIPs) through the town, with flags of different nations, accompanied by snare drums (we are making a lot of noise) and a poster exhibition of tourist attractions and characteristics of selected countries (including all the countries our pupils come from) - prepared by pupils.

In December, the municipality-wide integration and sports event "Mikołajowisko" is held, which provides a lot of thrills and chills. It was established when the school in Wohyń accepted a larger number of foreign pupils. The assumption of "Mikołajowisko" was to create a platform for healthy international competition and the integration of pupils from the entire municipality.


*A dozen or so intercultural projects have been implemented with the participation of foreign pupils. Many of these activities were aimed at presenting theatrical, artistic, sporting or journalistic skills. Foreign pupils are co-authors of murals. The painting inside the school building on the corridor walls shows the characteristics of the school graduate written in all the languages spoken by the pupils of the school. There are two external murals - one shows the outlines of buildings characteristic for different cultures and nations of our pupils' origin, and the other shows the main sports activities. Some of the depicted athletes are modelled on our foreign pupils. To this day, for over 11 years, murals decorate the walls of the school and emphasize our work in building a friendly environment for foreign pupils.*

*Children's Day is a special celebration. It has often been organized in the form of an amusement park for all pupils. Whole families of foreign pupils come to this event and it is true celebration of social integration.*



## 5.4

## RESPECT FOR DISTINCTIVENESS



When a foreign pupil arrives at school, it is important to get to know their country, culture and religion. This knowledge allows teachers and pupils to better understand the realities that we encounter when working with a foreign pupil.

*Today we know that during Ramadan, older pupils can become lethargic due to ritual fasting and mortification. During sports activities, you should not require them to exercise too strenuously as food deprivation may lead to fainting. The last lessons in the timetable may be additionally difficult due to getting up very early.*

*We carefully select the prizes awarded to foreign pupils. The aforementioned "Prize for Prowess" is a transparent crystal obelisk weighing over 1 kg, with 3D-printed figures of the school's patrons inside - Uniates (followers of the Greek Catholic religion, who were residents of Wohyń and the surrounding area, who gave their lives for their faith). The silhouettes of the three figures gathered around a cross. A foreign pupil who has earned the prize may choose to take the crystal figurine or a substitute for the award (e.g. a book).*



*A novelty for teachers was that they should not ask pupils of different gender to sit at the same desk and or provide each other assistance, even in the case of very young children.*

*Many misunderstandings, at the beginning of work with foreign pupils, result from different understanding of adulthood in Poland and, for example, in the countries of the Russian Federation, where a 16-year-old is already treated as an adult, e.g. they can smoke cigarettes.*

*We inform about these differences during the first meetings with the foreign pupil and their parents.*

## 5.5

# SUPPORTING THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF FOREIGN PUPILS

Working with a foreign pupil on a daily basis, we are not sure how long we will be working together. This applies in particular to pupils from refugee families. That is why we try to equip the pupil with competences that will make him/her a citizen of the world. In particular, we strive to obtain funds from various sources for additional improvement and compensatory classes dedicated to foreign pupils, which will equip them with social, linguistic (especially English, thanks to which they will be able to communicate in every country), mathematical, scientific and ICT competences.

*The school raises funds for additional classes in the local language as a foreign language and in English. The study groups are small (5-8 pupils). Participants are selected into teams with similar competences, classes may take place at any time agreed with the teacher, also with the use of distance learning techniques. The result of these classes is faster assimilation of the language of the country of education and an increase in English competences, which facilitate communication.*

*Funds are also raised for remedial classes, according to the needs of a given class and group of foreign pupils. In grades 0-III they are focused on mathematics and natural sciences, and in grades IV-VIII on various subjects. The result of these classes is easier assimilation of knowledge in mathematics, physics, chemistry and the understanding of professional terminology, which is the basis of communication at lessons of various subjects.*

*Another type of support is encouraging a foreign pupil to participate in extracurricular activities developing social competences or specific forms of interest, such as: sports, art - in various forms, theatre, photography, piano. We manage to overcome problems such as: commuting to school, adaptation problems with the help of a classmate-guardian, and difficulties related to not speaking the local language.*

Each disabled pupil is a challenge in terms of education and school infrastructure.

*Knowing that a mute foreign pupil may come to school, one of the teachers completed a sign language communication course. A system of supporting handrails has been installed for a foreign pupil with a physical disability.*

*A person who speaks four languages efficiently works in the school office. A two-year English language course was organized for teachers. Half of the teachers can communicate in Russian.*

Most of the foreign pupils commute to school and spend their waiting time in the library or school common room.

*The school library and the librarians working there offer additional conversation classes in Polish. During their stay in the common room, these pupils can do their homework under the teacher's supervision.*

Growing up is a period of searching for identity and expressing distinctiveness with a great need for acceptance. There are many tensions and conflicts between pupils of the school, including foreigners. School should develop original methods of resolving disputes and problems arising from the adaptation difficulties of a foreign pupil, in cooperation with a pedagogist, psychologist and intercultural assistant.

School documents have been developed that deal with the issues of respect, empathy, cooperation, independence and gratitude and they help in resolving the most undesirable situations.

*During the lockdown, our school provided pupils with distance learning equipment. All the foreign pupils in need received equipment for distance learning from the school.*

## 5.6

# COOPERATION WITH NON- GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS. EVALUATION OF UNDERTAKEN ACTIVITIES

Integration of foreign pupils with the community of the country of arrival is fostered by the school's joint leisure activities in the form of excursions, integration trips and summer and winter camps.

*Foreign pupils benefit from this form of rest and recreation. More often with short class trips, less often with longer forms of rest. One of such trips to Warsaw (the capital of Poland), combined with a visit to Wilanów and a chance for Muslim pupils to visit the mosque and Christian pupils to visit the cathedral was unforgettable.*



School staff members working with a foreign pupil and integrating their family with the local community are constantly improving their competences.

*All teachers and school staff members learned the specifics of working with a foreign pupil. The school has developed a number of documents that describe the competences and tasks of its individual bodies in terms of work with a foreign pupil. Teachers participate in conferences organized by non-governmental institutions, the topics of which include working with a foreign pupil, their adaptation, providing assistance to the pupil, and raising funds. They take part in study trips to refugee reception centres in other countries, and the school management cooperates with government institutions involved in providing assistance to foreigners. Work with a foreign pupil is subject to constant evaluation. Our school is looking for newer ways and more creative systematic solutions in order to obtain the best results, as evidenced by joining the School Adapt project financed by the Erasmus+ program for the years 2020-2023 (working on solutions and tools supporting teachers in the process of adapting pupils coming from abroad).*



# Summary

The presented Model presents a template of work with foreign students. It's helpful to schools, teachers, parents and educational institutions which would like to acquire or extend their knowledge about admission procedures, creation of necessary documents and tools aimed at quick adaptation of the newly arrived students.

In Chapter 1 the reader will find information on the characteristics of foreign students, their psychological, sociological, cultural and pedagogical conditions. The problems of pupils arriving in a new country are also outlined here. Chapter 2 shows and describes a model of work with foreign students. You can read about the activities undertaken by teachers in individual and class contact in Chapters 3 and 4. Chapter 5 illustrates concrete actions that the host school can take in connection with the arrival of such pupils in its school. It may be helpful to develop lesson scenarios to help the newcomer integrate into the classroom. The appendices present suggestions for ready-to-use materials such as a questionnaire for a foreign student arriving in a new country, an individual adaptation plan for the student and a welcome pack.

This Model is the authors' original proposal to be used and modified as needed by each school and community. Though, it is based on literature and case study. If the Stages assumed in the Model of Working with a Foreign Pupil Coming to a New Country cannot be implemented in the presented sequence, it may be advantageous to carry them out in a different order. If the tasks and activities assigned to persons cannot be fully executed, it is advisable to implement them in part. The most important thing is that the foreign pupil is properly looked after at each stage. The authors assume the presence of unpredictable situations that are impossible to solve within a single model, hence their request is to treat the Model as an inspiration and a basis for working with a foreign pupil coming to a new country. For their part, the authors will be interested in your comments on the use of the Model in your schools. They would like to thank you in advance for all the feedback, responses and modifications presented that they might receive.

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