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Word from the coordinator:**Vzw Nascholing in het katholiek onderwijs Flanders – Belgium (Rik Vanderhauwaert)**

Dear all,

The members of the Erasmus+ KA2 Linpilcare consortium are proud to present you their fifth newsletter.

At this stage, this European strategic partnership for innovation is halfway and the consortium is really on the right track. The consortium has developed an outstanding frame of reference, useful tools to realize practitioner inquiry, professional learning communities & easy access to relevant results of academic research. The consortium members provide at this stage local professional learning on Linpilcare.

If you look for real innovation in your school, than Linpilcare is the solution.

Without any extra financial investment, you get great results in your school. Linpilcare supports schools to create a culture of professional collaboration starting by the real challenges of students and teachers. The 62 schools that this partnership supports are particularly excited about linpilcare and can attest to what linpilcare realizes in their school.

You can learn more about Linpilcare and meet consortium members and partnership schools during the first conference from 3 till 5 October in Tartu Estonia. You are also kindly invited on the two courses that the partnership organize from 14 till 18 November 2016 or from 8 till 7 May 2017 in Tartu, Estonia. You can use your Erasmus+ KA1 mobility to attend these conference & courses. You can find detailed info on www.linpilcare.eu In this newsletter you can learn more about the local activities that the consortium partners realise for linpilcare.

Looking forward to meeting you in Tartu

The PLCs' feedback to the tool: Issaquah protocol and its use in Dene Magna University of Tartu – Estonia (Anita Kärner)

On April 7th, the PLCs of Estonian partner-schools in Linnpilcare met for the third time for a learning session. That was the second time to run our 4-hour long session in one of the partner-schools. This time Tartu Hansa Kool was the host introducing their newly established open learning area in the traditional school building.

The main topic was the Issaquah protocol and its use in Dene Magna (Look Newsletter 4, Marleen Clissen's article). First, the case was introduced and its description divided between the participants. After reading it, everybody wrote down two statements – one about the case presented and the other about the protocol as a tool for the PLC. Teachers' notes about the protocol and its usefulness were as follows:



Introducing the opportunities and a blend of teaching methods in the open classroom environment.

- Protocol as a useful tool to give constructive feedback to those who are looking for it:
 - o logical and meaningful
 - o like conclusions by carrying out the PLC meeting
 - o the room for analysis and different views to the problem appear during the discussion
 - o self-reflection plus discussion leads to the result; it helps the teacher to understand her/his problem better
 - o keeps within boundaries, structures the discussion

- Putting into question/observations
 - o focusing on the problem, not the person, is important to bear in mind
 - o this kind of process requires a strong facilitator to be useful
 - o good questions but it was hard to make difference between questions and their types and level – it seems complicated to manage
 - o 40 minutes seems to be too short for this kind of meeting; what will happen if some levels of the protocol would not be followed (due to the lack of time)
 - o Introvert teachers could clam up, extraverts would defend her/himself – facilitator should make difference between discussing a problem and a person
 - o Does the strict conformation of the protocol lead to a more effective/powerful/considerable result?
 - o What are the advantages of the protocol compared to other frameworks?

Some teachers mentioned their experience with similar kind of tools (e.g. co-vision). Some teachers worried about the danger of blaming the presenting teacher her/himself for the problem that arose. The main conclusion drawn – this well-structured protocol needs an experienced and responsive facilitator to work effectively.



Teachers reading the case study before the discussion.

Training teacher educators to facilitate plc's Fontys – The Netherlands (Rutger van de Sande)

In a growing number of cases, teacher students in the Netherlands are educated towards teaching in professional development schools. This makes teacher education more and more a 'coproduction' between universities and (in our case: secondary) schools. It also highlights the need to work on shared understandings between all stakeholders. Both for building these shared ideas and for facilitating student teacher learning processes, inquiry oriented professional learning communities seem a promising approach.

In the first semester of the next academic year (September 2016 – February 2017), Fontys University of Applied Sciences will facilitate a plc / course aimed at teacher educators who intend to facilitate plc's in the near future. The course consists of five sessions aimed at knowledge that helps in setting up a plc with teachers and teacher students. The sessions will be partly shaped as plc meetings. Some of the participants will also be attending the Linpilcare conference in Tartu next October.

The plc / course is also open for registrations by teachers from Dutch primary and secondary schools. More information can be found on the website of the Fontys UAS' professorship 'Science and Mathematics Education' (www.betadidactiek.nl) or by emailing Rutger van de Sande (rutger.vandesande@fontys.nl).

International multiplier event

Vzw Nascholing in het katholiek onderwijs Flanders – Belgium (Rik Vanderhauwaert)

The coordinator & the external evaluator of Linpilcare were invited on the 21st of April at the teacher education knowledge mobilization at the National Liberal Club in London.

After setting the scene, where presenters from UNESCO, OECD, ASEAN and the UK could tell about the perspectives on the provision of high quality up-to-date lifelong education, some organisations could present their models and tools for innovation in education.

Linpilcare could present the frame of reference that they developed on the pillars of the project: evidence based teaching, starting by practitioner inquiry, linking it with relevant results of academic research and using professional learning communities to realise the link.

National in-service training linpilcare

Vzw Nascholing in het katholiek onderwijs Flanders – Belgium (Rik Vanderhauwaert)

The results of Linpilcare are local spread by national in-service training. Teams that are interested in Linpilcare learn during 4 half days more about Linpilcare. The consortium partners learn the participants to use the frame of reference, to run a practitioner inquiry, to work in professional learning communities and to get access to relevant results of academic research.

During local the sessions, the developed tools are piloted and participant can give their feedback on the tools.

International conferences and courses

The consortium kindly invites you on:

- Courses
 - o 14th – 18th November 2016 on the content of Linpilcare, Estonia
 - o 8th – 12th May 2017 on the content of Linpilcare, Estonia
- Conferences
 - o 3rd – 5th October 2016, on the content of linpilcare, Estonia
 - o 24th – 26th August 2017, on the content of Linpilcare, Slovenia



Training activity at National Education Institute for our twenty-two partner schools Zavod Republike Slovenije Za Šolstvo – National Education Institute - Slovenia (Tomaž Kranjc – Barbara Lesničar)

In March and April 2016 we organised a two day training activity entitled How to Facilitate Group Processes to Meet Different Needs in Education. The main objective was to provide some input on the second Linpilcare pillar for our partner schools' school teams. The training was similar to the one NEI organised for school team facilitators in December 2015 and was mentioned in the previous edition of the Newsletter.



This time, among other tools and protocols the participants experienced **The World Café (TWC)**. Using seven design principles and a simple method, the World Café is a powerful social technology for engaging people in conversations that matter. Based on the understanding that conversation is the core process that drives personal, business, and organizational life, the World Café is more than a method, a process, or technique – it's a way of thinking and being together sourced in a philosophy of conversational leadership. With the help of this method the participants discussed what they needed in the practitioner learning community (PLC) to learn effectively, how they could contribute to the culture of collaboration and critical friendship in PLCs and what the PLC's potential was. It turned out that using this method was a very useful experience which gave the participants the opportunity to exchange different views and where everybody's voice was heard.

In addition to this the school teams presented their research questions and dilemmas. Most of them deal with how to make students' learning more effective, some use the formative assessment steps or peer observations and others still struggle with their PLC's and especially with the lack of their colleagues' motivation. They report that some colleagues at their schools are very reluctant to join the PLC and are not willing to see the need for change. One of the schools for example explained that they had introduced the 15 minutes for Linpilcare activity which meant that the Linpilcare team had some time to report at each monthly staff meeting. They also set up the Linpilcare bulletin board in the staff room.



The training activity finished with feedback strategies and Chalk Talk which enabled the participants to reflect in a silent way. It gave our group a chance for thoughtful contemplation and initiated the closing discussion.

According to the participants' feedback one can claim that on one hand the contents and the activities of the training activity gave the group new knowledge and on the other hand made it experience different tools and protocols which would enable the participants to feel more competent as facilitators.

Dene Magna: An example of whole-school Practitioner Inquiry

Dene Magna – United Kingdom (Liane Pitcher)

At Dene Magna, every member of the teaching staff is undertaking their own classroom research. The focus of this research varies enormously; however, for each teacher it is firmly rooted in their classroom practice. This has meant that, whilst it has helped teachers focus on key issues of their practice, it has run alongside their classroom practice and has not been an added pressure.

Each teacher was encouraged to identify a key issue in their practice at the start of the academic year. For some, this has been something that has been worrying them: a particular topic, or group, that they were concerned about. For others, it has represented an opportunity to try different approaches. Some teachers have used their Practitioner Inquiry to trial a particular approach that they are considering implementing as a department initiative: our Head Teacher has chosen the subject of Teaching Assistants - a sometimes contentious topic in England at the moment - as his Practitioner Inquiry. He will be using his findings to inform Best Practice across our school.

The biggest change for some - though not all - teachers has been the use of published research to inform practice. By far the most frustrating issue has been the availability of research and the ease of finding/accessing it. Some of our staff, who have university affiliations, have found this to be not such an issue: the majority, however, have struggled to find high quality, peer-reviewed, recent research on their chosen topic. Although there has been a great deal of support for this issue, the truth is that, in England at least, academic research is not yet as readily or easily available to teachers as it should be.

In school we have one formal PLC and a range of informal PLCs. Indeed, the Practitioner Inquiry topic of one member of staff is to assess the efficacy of the formal and informal PLC construct, to see which to carry forward. The formal PLC meet half-termly and use a range of resources to support their Inquiries. We have been very fortunate to have benefited from a visit by Marleen Clissen, from the Linpilcare team, who conducted a formal protocol - the Issaquah Protocol - as defined by the School Reform Initiative*. This was extremely useful; Marleen has written a case-study of the experience which will be available on the website.

At the moment we are coming to the end of the first cycle of whole-school Practitioner Inquiry. Staff are examining their data and writing up their individual Inquiries. Already, I have read some fascinating and useful work: for example: our Head of Maths has been researching Literacy in the Maths classroom and this will certainly be an enlightening and valuable piece of research, as it will inform practice in the whole of our Maths department.

In June, we are holding a Marketplace Toolbox: a meeting where staff can showcase and share their work. This promises to be an exciting and enjoyable experience and will provide a clear focus for our Inquiries for next year.

- SRI: School Reform Initiative Resource and Protocol Book: Denver 2014