Implementing Positive Behaviour Support in Early Childhood Education and Care

PBS-ECEC

Guide on Positive Behaviour Support in Early Childhood and Care in European Countries

PBS-ECEC

PBS-ECEC Guide

Guide on Positive Behaviour Support in Early Childhood and Care in European Countries

International Hellenic University – Greece

Institute of Development – Cyprus

August 2023

2

PROJECT INFORMATION

PROJECT TITLE	Implementing Positive Behaviour Support in Early Childhood Education and Care
PROJECT ACRONYM	PBS-ECEC
PROJECT NUMBER	2021-1-PT01-KA220-SCH-000034367
FUNDING AGENCY	Co-funded by the Erasmus + Programme of the European Commission
BENEFICIARY ORGANIZATION (PROJECT COORDINATOR)	INSTITUTO POLITÉCNICO DO PORTO (IPP) – Portugal (Project coordinator: Sílvia Barros)
LEADING PARTNER	INSTITUTO POLITÉCNICO DO PORTO
TARGET AUDIENCE	Children: 2,5 – 6 years old ECEC educators (22 – 67) Education Level: Various from basic to higher
OTHER PROJECT PARTNERS	CENTRE FOR ADVANCEMENT OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY LTD (CARDET) – Cyprus INTERNATIONAL HELLENIC UNIVERSITY (IHU) – Greece PROFEXCEL.NET LTD – Ireland NEOPHYTOS CH CHARALAMBOUS (IoD) (INSTITUTE OF DEVELOPMENT LTD - Cyprus

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

DOCUMENT TITLE	Guide on Positive Behaviour Support in Early Childhood and Care in European Countries (R1.A4. PBS-ECEC Guide)
VERSION	Final
DATE	August 2023
DOCUMENT AUTHORS	Katerina Krousorati (IHU) Vasilis Grammatikopoulos (IHU) Andri Agathokleous (IoD)
CONTRIBUTORS:	
CYPRUS	
CARDET	Victoria Michaelidou
INSTITUTE OF DEVELOPMENT	Andri Agathokleous
GREECE	Katerina Krousorati
INTERNATIONAL HELLENIC UNIVERSITY	Vasilis Grammatikopoulos
IRELAND	Aleksandra Szproch
PROFEXCEL.NET LTD	Moya O'Brien
PORTUGAL	Sílvia Barros
INSTITUTO POLITECNICO DO PORTO	Sara Araújo Miguel Santos Mafalda Sousa

DOCUMENT VERSION CONTROL

VERSION	DATE	DESCRIPTION
1	13/9/2022	R1.A4. PBS-ECEC GUIDE draft 1
1.1	23/9/2022	R1.A4. PBS-ECEC GUIDE draft 2
1.2	28/9/2022	R1.A4.PBS-ECEC GUIDE draft 3
1.3	3/10/2022	R1.A4.PBS-ECEC GUIDE draft 4
1.4.	18/10/2022	R1.A4.PBS-ECEC GUIDE Final Version
1.5.	30/8/2023	R1.A4.PBS-ECEC GUIDE After External Evaluator's feedback

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Guide on Positive Behaviour Support in Early Childhood and Care in European Countries (PBS-ECEC Guide) was developed as part the PBS-ECEC project's first output. PBS-ECEC Guide constitutes a planning tool for educators in early childhood education settings, which includes a practical source of information that supports the creation of a proactive programme-wide and high-quality classroom environment, where Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) is promoted. The PBS-ECEC Guide focuses on the first level of PBS. Specifically, the main aim of the PBS-ECEC Guide is to provide useful information for ECEC teams on how to implement the first level of a whole school approach, titled Programme-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (PW-PBS) (universal tier), across early childhood education settings in Europe. The PBS-ECEC Guide proposes practices that will help preschool educators to promote the social and emotional competence of all children and restructure the ECEC environments in order to make them more predictable, positive and safe for preschool children. The PBS-ECEC Guide constitutes a practical tool, which intends to help ECEC professionals: (a) identify the most frequent behavioural and socioemotional concerns in their ECEC settings, (b) guide them to define those concerns in a positively stated manner, (c) support them to decide programme-wide behaviour expectations, which are developmentally, socially and emotionally appropriate, (d) link these expectations to behaviours and socioemotional skills within activities or settings. This Guide can be used by preschool professionals for individual study, all preschool professionals as they participate in professional development initiatives, preschool coaches who provide support to preschool educators, parents and family members and stakeholders in ECEC.

INTRODUCTION

The Guide on Positive Behaviour Support in Early Childhood and Care in European Countries was developed as part the project "PBS-ECEC - Implementing Positive Behaviour Support in Early Childhood Education and Care", developed within the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union, which is funded with support from the European Commission (project number: 2021-1-PT01-KA220-SCH-000034367).

PBS-ECEC Consortium is constituted of **five partners** (Partner 1: Instituto Politécnico do Porto – leader, Partner 2: Centre for Advancement of Research and Development in Educational technology LTD, Partner 3: International Hellenic University, Partner 4: Institute of Child Education and Psychology Europe, Partner 5: Neophytos Ch Charalambous - Institute of Development LTD) from **four different countries** (Cyprus, Greece, Ireland, & Portugal). The Project duration is for **24 months** (01/01/2022 – 01/01/2024).

PBS-ECEC Project's main aim is to promote a whole school approach titled Programme-wide Positive Behaviour Support (PW-PBS) across Europe in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) settings.
Several EU policy reports have proposed the need to develop effective European schoolwide frameworks that promote social inclusion and educational engagement. PBS-ECEC project aims to respond to this need by developing a European schoolwide framework that will enhance social inclusion and educational engagement in ECEC. **Within this schoolwide framework, challenging behaviours will be addressed from the early years of children's education, by building their socioemotional competence, a crucial dimension for their overall development and well-being, in a socially inclusive environment.** Such an accomplishment will have multiple **benefits on early childhood children, early childhood educators and stakeholders (owners, managers, leaders) in early childhood settings**. In addition, through the project results preschool educators will have the opportunity to strengthen their education and training. Specifically, PBS-ECEC will examine the design and implementation of PW-PBS across ECEC settings, with specific emphasis on:

- training centre-based teams to deliver key elements of PW-PBS to the other professionals of the centres
- producing educator training resources regarding the evidence-based practices to develop socioemotional competence and to respond to challenging behaviour, and

- developing a web-based space to disseminate project activities, facilitating communication between consortium partners and other participants, as well as providing sustainable resources to be used in the future.

To achieve the aforementioned aims, the following Results (i.e., outputs) will be created during the lifespan of **PBS-ECEC project, and will be available at the PBS-ECEC website (https://pbs-ecec.eu/)**:

1. **Guide on Positive Behaviour Support in Early Childhood Education and Care**
2. **Online Modules of PW-PBS Instructional Practices in Early Childhood and Care Settings**
3. **Impact assessment study and practice recommendations**
4. **Policy and Strategy Toolkit and recommendations for PBS in ECEC**

THE GUIDE ON POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE IN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES (PBS-ECEC GUIDE): USER'S GUIDE

Orientation

The Guide on Positive Behaviour Support in Early Childhood and Care in European Countries (**PBS-ECEC Guide)** was developed as part the first output (i.e., Result 1) of **PBS-ECEC project**. **PBS-ECEC Guide** constitutes a planning tool for educators in early childhood education settings, which includes a practical source of information that supports the creation of a proactive programme-wide and high-quality classroom environment, where Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) is promoted.

Background

Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) is a research-based educational framework, which includes evidence-based practices, that promotes positive behaviours and socioemotional competences of all children (universal tier), address the socioemotional and behavioural needs of at-risk children (target tier), and support children with persistent social, emotional or behavioural concerns (intensive tier) (Horner et al., 1990).

Purpose

Within this framework, the PBS-ECEC Guide focuses on the first level of PBS. Specifically, the main aim of the **PBS-ECEC Guide** is to provide useful information for ECEC teams on **how to implement the first level of a whole school approach, titled Programme-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (PW-PBS) (universal tier), across early childhood education settings in Europe**. The PBS-ECEC Guide **proposes practices that will help preschool educators to promote the social and emotional competence of all children and restructure the ECEC environments in order to make them more predictable, positive and safe for preschool children.**

The PBS-ECEC Guide

This material was **developed based on ECEC centres' needs** and **proposes a programme-wide, preventive and proactive approach for supporting children's behaviour and socioemotional competence.** Prior to the development of this Guide, PBS-ECEC Consortium conducted extensive research in each partner country in order to acquire valuable data and resources, which were used to

11

identify specific needs and current practices connected with early childhood education, behaviour and socioemotional competence of children during early childhood. The data gathered by both desk and field research were used to create the present guide, which is available for free to early childhood educators and stakeholders in early childhood education settings, any other ECEC professionals and the public in general.

Contents

The **PBS-ECEC Guide** offers concrete and research-based information, definitions, methodologies, strategies, evidence-based practices and suggestions for creating an educational environment that promotes positive behaviours and socioemotional competence, by that discouraging and preventing challenging behaviours. This guide consists of eight chapters. The **first chapter** provides an overview of the most representative findings of the desk and field research conducted by the PBS-ECEC consortium. After reading this chapter, an early childhood educator should have a general idea about the results of the desk and field research, being able to identify the main challenges preschools face regarding behavioural and social emotional competence in ECEC settings across Europe. He/she should also be aware of specific areas in the partner countries national curriculum relevant to the PBS-ECEC project. Overall, the findings of the PBS-ECEC desk and field research are included in the Result 1. Needs Assessment Transnational Consolidated report (PBS-ECEC, 2022), available for download in the project's website , where the reader can find out more regarding the needs and the current status of behavioural and socioemotional difficulties in young children, the respective current pedagogical practices across early childhood settings in Europe and the impact of these practices. The second and the third chapters provide an overview of the field of PBS, including definitions, aims, origins, importance and theoretical framework of values. Specifically, the **second chapter** describes the programme-wide positive behaviour support framework and the three-tier model. **Chapter three** presents in more detail the primary tier (Tier 1) of the programme-wide PBS framework. The following chapters are devoted to practical strategies for ECEC teams to implement the programme-wide PBS framework. **Chapter four** includes information on the team approach, the assigned roles and responsibilities. **Chapter five** presents practical information regarding the behavioural matrix templates, where the programme-wide mission, expectations, and behavioural rules across early childhood settings can be specified. **Chapter six** describes the process of creating a behavioural matrix of desired behaviours and an example. **Chapter seven** presents suggested practices and activities for early childhood educators and stakeholders for encouraging positive behaviours and promoting socioemotional competence and **chapter eight** describes strategies for discouraging challenging behaviours. Finally, **chapter eight** offers

templates and practical information regarding the creation of a partnership agreement between a partner organisation and an early childhood setting in order to collaborate on establishing the first level of PW-PBS.

Operational guidelines

How to use?

The PBS-ECEC Guide constitutes a practical tool, which intends to help ECEC professionals:

- identify the most frequent behavioural and socioemotional concerns in their ECEC settings,
- guide them to define those concerns in a positively stated manner,
- support them to decide programme-wide behaviour expectations, which are developmentally, socially and emotionally appropriate,
- link these expectations to behaviours and socioemotional skills within activities or settings.

→ It is important to note that the effective implementation of the PW-PBS takes at least two years. Within the context of the two-year duration of the PBS-ECEC project, the present guide provides ECEC centres with general guidelines and resources to get familiar with the PW-PBS approach and implement its first level (universal tier). Therefore, each ECEC centre should target, intensify and individualise the established components that the schoolwide community will adopt based on their own needs to develop their own social behavioural system for universal support.

Who?

This Guide can be used by:

- preschool professionals for individual study,
- all preschool professionals as they participate in professional development initiatives,
- preschool coaches who provide support to preschool educators on PBS*,
- parents and family members,
- stakeholders in ECEC.

* Coaches are a crucial part on the implementation of PBS in school settings. Professionals trained in pedagogic methods and psychology and who are trained in the PBS framework (e.g. licensed school psychologist and educational psychologists) can undertake his role. For more information about coaches please visit the PBIS website.

When?

It is recommended that this is implemented for the entire school year. Carter et al. (2011) suggested that the establishment of the PW-PBS approach from the very beginning of the year offers more positive outcomes for ECEC teams.

Where to find the PBS-ECEC materials and outputs?

The PBS-ECEC Guide as well as all the project's materials are freely available at the PBS-ECEC website at https://pbs-ecec.eu/ and at the Erasmus+ platform.

It is recommended that the PBS-ECEC Guide is read in combination with the PBS-ECEC Transnational Consolidated report.

The PBS-ECEC Guide was developed based on the ECEC needs' assessment. Findings of the research conducted by the consortium showed the needs, the current status of behavioural and socioemotional difficulties in young children, their contributing factors, the respective current pedagogical practices across early childhood education settings in Europe and the impact of these practices. Although this guide presents a summary of the key findings, by reading the PBS –ECEC Transnational Consolidated Report: Research Findings for Developing the Guide on Positive Behaviour Support in Early Childhood Education and Care (https://pbs-ecec.eu/outputs/), teams will gain a deeper understanding of PBS and identify their own centre needs. In addition, the report includes an extended list of the implementation and good practices that have been conducted at the policy and individual level to provide support for children's behavioural and socioemotional competencies and for developing a system for promoting positive behaviours across Europe.

1. DESK AND FIELD RESEARCH: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Desk (literature review) and field (focus group interviews and survey with questionnaire distribution) research was conducted by the project partners during project output 1 to gain a better understanding of the current situation in each partner country regarding preschool education and Positive Behaviour Support across Europe in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) settings. The main conclusions were that it was common that preschool children experience difficulties in social interactions and in managing and expressing their emotions; they also tend to be more demotivated and more prone to boredom. Preschool educators tended to agree that the COVID-19 pandemic had a negative effect on preschool children's development, especially in the cases of Cyprus and Greece. Overall, findings from the four countries showed that all parties involved (Educators, Parents, School Administration and Management) and responsible authorities (Ministries, Stakeholders and Governmental Authorities) show an interest in finding ways to support the efficient functioning of preschools and safeguard the proper education of preschool children. However, several barriers and additional needs in preschool settings result in an immediate and imperative need to create effective European schoolwide frameworks and promote social inclusion (for more information see the Result 1.Transnational Consolidated report. Research findings for developing the Guide on Positive Behaviour Support in Early Childhood and Care available at: https://pbs-ecec.eu/).

Below there is a summary of the results organized by country.

1.1. CYPRUS

MAIN CHALLENGES PRESCHOOLS FACE REGARDING BEHAVIOURAL AND SOCIAL EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE IN ECEC SETTINGS

The literature review documents several issues concerning ECEC in Cyprus. There have been considerable changes in the context of reforming the education system, e.g., the appointment of pre-primary educators via criteria and other qualifications (Loizou, 2018). Another issue in Cyprus is the lack of research within the Cypriot context and follow-up research of newly implemented programmes (Loizou, 2007). This is expected to bring a new era in the education system which will be evident in the future. In addition, pre-primary educators in Cyprus have opportunities to learn through voluntarily participating in seminars and workshops offered by the Pedagogical Institute of Cyprus. Taking the above into consideration, the Cypriot education system follows a single-level career structure, as

defined by the absence of a predetermined career structure that can give the necessary flexibility to the educators to develop their career in different directions. This system is highly supported by the intrinsic values (wishes, talents) of the educator and the school's needs (Loizou, 2009, 2018; Childhood Education International, 2017). On the other hand, the risk of these educational systems is the limited variety of roles and responsibilities, which subsequently lead to the absence of formal recognition (EUROPEAN COMMISSION/EACEA/Eurydice, 2021; Eurydice, 2020; OECD, 2019). Therefore, there is space for improvements concerning several practices and contexts. There is a need to fully understand the concepts of ECEC and place emphasis on the ECEC educators' professionalism.

In addition, in Cyprus, the implementation of the SWPBS system is recent. During the last decade, there have been several interventions led by various research groups. Two such programmes were implemented with the Support of the Erasmus+ funding mechanism of the European Commission. Both programmes are examples of successful practices which aim to promote the notion of children's socioemotional skills in primary schools, the ERASMUS+ Key Action 2 project titled "Tackling School Discipline Issues with Positive Behaviour Support" (TaSDi-PBS) and the ERASMUS+ Key Action 3 Project titled "Building School-Wide Inclusive, Positive and Equitable Learning Environments Through A Systems-Change Approach" (SWPBS). However, both projects target primary school. There is no relevant research or programmes in Cyprus targeting ECEC settings (CARDET, 2021). A more recent intervention as part of a three-year ERASMUS + project called "Promoting Educators Well-being through Positive Behaviour Support in Early Childhood Education" (ProW) took place in Cyprus in 2021. The ProW action aims to develop evidence-based policies and practices that will promote the early childhood teaching profession in ECEC.

In addition to the limited research data regarding behavioural and social-emotional competence in ECEC settings, participants of the focus group conducted in Cyprus within the PBE-ECEC project identified several barriers when implementing preschool-wide practices to prevent challenging behaviours and support children's socioemotional competences in early childhood education and care. The most representative ones are the following:

(a) the absence of a common and evidence-based policy and strategy at the systemic level to deal with socioemotional difficulties and prevent inappropriate behaviours of children in ECEC settings;

(b) the bureaucratic delays in managing and resolving difficulties (e.g., hiring a classroom assistant in a class with children with special needs);

(c) parents' refusal to accept their children may have inappropriate behaviour;

(d) the lack of training for parents and educators;

(e) safety nets are needed and collaboration with other professionals and educational parties;

(f) the culture that children should not have consequences for their actions.

NATIONAL CURRICULUM: AREAS IN THE CYPRIOT CURRICULUM RELEVANT TO PBS-ECEC PROJECT

The ECEC systems and processes in Cyprus are reported to be under development (Bouget et al., 2015; Mills et al., 2013; Childhood Education International, 2017). Professionalisation of the ECEC sector emerges as a need in the Cypriot educational system, since ECEC professionals, workers and carers have different qualifications, from two- and three-year diplomas to four years' university degrees, especially those working in the public sector (Childhood Education International, 2017; Rentzou, 2016). The need to improve ECEC services quality in Cyprus emerges and actions taken towards this direction are reported necessary (Peeters et al., 2016; Loizou, 2009). Moreover, the issue of early childhood educators' careers and professional development is not officially on the agenda with governmental initiatives, being limited to a few actions taken by the Pedagogical Institute of Cyprus (2021) such as New/ Revised Curriculum and professional development training on Curriculum implementations. Contrary to governmental actions, a few initiatives on the topic may be found in the private sector, mainly in the form of EU funded actions and activities (e.g., projects, training the trainer's programmes, LTTAs and study visits, workshops, conferences) (Loizou, 2018). Though there are minimal attempts to approach early childhood educator's well-being in Cyprus, the OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) (2018) reports on primary educators' job satisfaction in Cyprus and states that about 91% of the educators in Cyprus express their satisfaction with their jobs and their salaries, with no similar data existing on early childhood educators in Cyprus. Although the early years' educators have the same qualification as other educators in all levels of education (primary, high school), their work is undervalued. The status of early childhood educators in Cyprus is low, and their contribution and professionalism are often undervalued (Vrasidas et al., 2021; OECD, 2019; OECD, 2020).

At the policy level, a project called "School and Social Inclusion Actions" (in Greek: "DRAsis Sholikis ke kinonikis Entaxis", or DRASE), from the Cypriot Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Youth is currently taking place in over 100 schools and offers a range of measures aimed at preventing social exclusion. They include new learning and creativity programmes, access to new information and socioemotional support centres, new school equipment and educational materials, and training programmes for teaching staff. With the support of EU Funds, Cyprus was allowed to implement targeted and innovative programmes in education, through which multilevel support is provided to students and their families (ESF, 2020).

1.2. GREECE

MAIN CHALLENGES PRESCHOOLS FACE REGARDING BEHAVIOURAL AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL
COMPETENCE IN ECEC SETTINGS

The frequency and intensity of challenging behaviours at schools have increased even during the early childhood years worldwide (Carter et al., 2011). Thus, many international institutes, organisations, governments and policy-makers have focused on the development of practices to promote child socioemotional competence and prevent challenging behaviours. As far as Greece is concerned, at a policy-making level, the Greek National Curriculum for Early Childhood Education provides directions for the support of children's socioemotional development. It also promotes specific values and behaviours in preschools, like mutual respect, cooperation, equality, equity, accepting diversity and helping others. However, this general guidance is not sufficient to prevent or resolve behaviour difficulties. For instance, in contrast to other countries, where specific guides or programmes are provided (e.g., the CASEL Guide (2013) or the Guide to Social Competence (https://earlychildhood.qld.gov.au/aboutUs/Documents/aedc-social-competance.pdf), in Greece there are few available resources. In addition, for early childhood education and care, there are no specific curriculum requirements, while the national curriculum for kindergartens was introduced in 2003 and updated in 2012. Furthermore, Greece does not have an institution or a structured curriculum, specialised in guiding to enhance children's socioemotional skills and prevent challenging behaviours (by contrast with the USA – CASEL). Therefore, applying the schoolwide PBS approach to teach socioemotional skills to children and to train and coach educators to increase child socioemotional competence in early childhood education and care settings will offer longitudinal positive outcomes for children and schools.

Several barriers were identified by participants of the field research conducted in Greece within the PBE-ECEC project, that prevent the implementation of preschool wide practices to prevent challenging behaviours and support children's socioemotional competences in early childhood education and care: (a) overpopulated classrooms, (b) lack of educational staff, (c) preschool educators' advanced age, tiredness and lack of motivation, (d) occupational insecurity of younger educators as there is no stable professional framework in relation to their work, resulting limited motivations to work on children's needs, (e) inappropriate school buildings, (e) ineffective communication and cooperation between educators and parents, (f) demanding parents who refused to cooperate with preschool educators, (g) lack of knowledge or professional development regarding the prevention or management of challenging

behaviours and support children's socioemotional competences (during the bachelor studies it is optional for pre-service educators to learn how to manage children's socioemotional needs and promote socioemotional development), (h) curriculum does not correspond to children's needs, as it is knowledge-centred.

NATIONAL CURRICULUM: AREAS IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM RELEVANT TO THE PBS-ECEC PROJECT

Greek early childhood education aims to promote and support children's physical, emotional, mental and social development (Greek Ministry of Education – Greek Pedagogical Institute, 2002). Within this framework, childcare centres aim to support the comprehensive development of children, while providing care services to working parents (Megalonidou, 2020). More specifically, the infant care, infant/child care and child care centres aim to provide a holistic support for children's physical, mental, emotional and social development, assist preschool children in their smooth transition from home to school environment, eliminate any discrepancies among children who come from families with several cultural, economic and educational backgrounds, offer daily nutrition and care to children adhering to health and safety rules and inform parents in pedagogy and psychology issues (Eurydice, 2021). However, until recently there were no specific curriculum requirements for early childhood education care and children's education under the age of 4 (Grammatikopoulos et al., 2014).

The programme "Kypseli" is a proposed pedagogical framework for early childhood education and care for children aged from 0 to 4 years old. The programme proposes a holistic approach for children, educators and parents; it includes values, and pedagogical strategies for quality and developmentally appropriate Early Childhood Education and Care. The main aim of the programme is to support infants' and toddlers' cognitive, socioemotional and physical development, in cooperation with families, for early childhood education and care which eliminates social inequalities and fosters creativity, democracy and equity. The basic principle of the proposed framework is that the education of infants and toddlers should be structured around play activities aiming to provide stimuli for cognitive, linguistic, socioemotional and motor development. Within this framework, preschool children's socioemotional development is settled in the centre of the programme "Kypseli" along with cognitive, linguistic, physical and motor development. Connecting with others, building relationships and learning through communication and cooperation with others are some aspects that are promoted in the programme. Also, involvement in a team is proposed as a means for children's socioemotional development. The programme "Kypseli" within the framework for early childhood education care and children aged from 0

to 4 years old in Greece is expected to be pilot-implemented and then be established in the Greek infant care, infant/child care and child care settings (Meghir et al., 2021).

The Greek Early Childhood National Curriculum for Kindergarten was introduced in 2003. The curriculum is designed to cover five learning areas: literacy, mathematics, science and environment, creation and expression, and computer science. However, it adopts a holistic approach, as it aims to promote children's physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development (Greek Ministry of Education – Greek Pedagogical Institute, 2002). The curriculum for kindergarten is accompanied by the Preschool Educator Guide, which is provided to support educators in implementing the curriculum efficiently (Dafermou et al., 2006). From this holistic perspective of children's development, the development of socioemotional skills is diffused in all learning areas in the national curriculum for early childhood education. Special emphasis on social and emotional learning is placed in the section on human environment and interaction. The new curriculum for the kindergarten (Greek Ministry of Education - Greek Pedagogical Institute, 2014) introduced the section on personal and social development as a separate learning area of the programme emphasising the development of children's social competencies. Some of the basic principles of the Greek national curriculum for kindergarten regarding socioemotional development are: to support children "delimit their behaviours" (p. 72), "resolve conflicts" (p. 76), "follow the rules" (p. 77), "to promote children's autonomy" (p. 76) and "to support children's self-regulation" (p. 70). Thus, the Greek curriculum for kindergarten implies the importance of promoting children's socioemotional development and early childhood educators are required to support children's social and emotional health beyond the academic outcomes.

1.3. IRELAND

MAIN CHALLENGES PRESCHOOLS FACE REGARDING BEHAVIOURAL AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE IN ECEC SETTINGS

While several supports, resources, programmes and policies related to behavioural and socioemotional competencies of young children have been put in place at a national level in Ireland, some differences remain between pre-school and primary school settings. Primary school educators are in a better position to be fully competent in nurturing children's socioemotional wellbeing. They are typically better qualified, better paid, enjoy more job security, are more likely to take part in continuing professional development (CPD), have access to more training programmes in the area of behaviour support and receive clearer guidelines regarding the best practice in the area. Children beginning school at a much

younger age than the rest of Europe may therefore be seen as a positive thing, as they are sooner exposed to staff members who have more qualifications, guidance and training on how best to support pupils' socioemotional development, but also how to spot, assess and intervene if a child needs extra support in this matter. The findings of the literature review highlighted the need for more research, resources, policy and legislation to be directed at pre-school services which should adequately support children's socioemotional needs and prepare young children for the transition to and progression through primary school. Pre-school services should be able to work at a similar level to primary schools in the area of nurturing children's socioemotional and behavioural competence and should have access to the same training programmes and staff educational opportunities.

Many barriers were identified by the participants of the focus group conducted in Ireland within the PBE-ECEC project, with a major challenge to implementing pre-school-wide practices to prevent challenging behaviours and support children's socioemotional competencies being the lack of government funding and resulting staff shortages. A ratio of one staff member to eleven children is recommended in early childhood services in Ireland. All participants of the focus group highlighted that it is almost impossible to dedicate sufficient time to children in their settings if one staff member must simultaneously take care of up to eleven children. The participants of the focus group also highlighted the lack of support being provided to them, compared to staff in primary school settings, concerning the availability of trauma-informed training and funding for external psychological care.

NATIONAL CURRICULUM: AREAS IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM RELEVANT TO PBS-ECEC PROJECT

There are some differences in the supports and guidelines provided to pre-school versus formal education settings about children's behavioural and socioemotional supports. In Ireland, the Early Years Regulations 2016 require all early years facilities to develop and put in place a broad range of policies, including a policy related to managing behaviour (Tusla, 2018a). The policy must support children's positive behaviour and ensure that the children's social, emotional and general wellbeing is supported in a happy, safe and controlled environment. At the same time, the policy sets out approaches for managing challenging behaviours in a way that is appropriate to the age and stage of development of the child (Tusla, 2018b). The Early Years Inspectorate has developed a Quality and Regulatory Framework (QRF), to support registered Early Years Services to comply with the 2016 Regulations (Tusla, 2018). Organisations like Tusla (Child and Family Agency), Early Childhood Ireland or Barnardos also provide online templates and sample policies on managing behaviour. The policy templates take into account the children's, parents' and staff members' needs. They set out procedures and practices to be

followed in a range of situations (e.g., in daily interactions, during boundary/limit setting, when using positive reinforcement/encouragement, when responding to challenging behaviour or when guidance is needed for conflict management). The policy should be communicated and made available to all parents and guardians (Tusla, 2018b) and should be fully acknowledged and used in the staff members' daily practice to ensure that the management of children's behaviour is being conducted with best-practice approaches in mind.

Aistear is the curriculum framework for children from birth to six years in Ireland, suitable for use by preschool educators as well as educators of infant classes in primary school (Woods et al., 2021). The framework is the outcome of eight years of partnership between the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment and the early year's sector (Daly & Forster, 2009) and is an attempt to improve the quality of the Irish early-year's education setting. Aistear provides information for educators to help them plan for and provide enjoyable and challenging learning experiences so that all children can grow and develop as competent and confident learners within respectful relationships with others. Among the many themes and goals of the framework, Aistear aims to promote educators' ability to support the management of the behaviour of young children and to allow them to understand what behaviour is desirable (Daly & Forster, 2009). The programme's play-based nature allows for the development of opportunities for natural social interaction between students (Cresham, 2021) and it decreases solitary play and increases group play and peer conversations (Murphy, 2016). Aistear has been found to have a significant influence on children's transitions from preschool to primary school in terms of developing skills and dispositions and the implementation of a playful pedagogy (Boyne, 2020). While the publication of the Aistear framework has been widely welcomed and acknowledged as a necessary step towards improving the quality of early years' education, there has been limited funding provided for its implementation and there is no coordinated national plan available to assist settings using the framework (Hayes & O'Neill, 2019). It is not underpinned by legislation; therefore, early years settings are not mandated to implement it in their practice. Nevertheless, it continues to be strongly encouraged as an example of best practice. In the absence of a comprehensive implementation plan, Aistear is not used nationally and there is confusion in the sector regarding its status (Hayes & O'Neill, 2019).

1.4. PORTUGAL

MAIN CHALLENGES PRESCHOOLS FACE REGARDING BEHAVIOURAL AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE IN ECEC SETTINGS

The literature review and the analyses of official documents and reports showed that systematic evaluation of interventions and public policies aimed at promoting socioemotional competencies and reducing behaviour problems in ECEC is not a common practice, at least with the dissemination of results in locations accessible for the general public or scientific publications. Some specific programmes, mostly authored by researchers from higher education institutions, in partnership with ECEC professionals and local authorities and part of them funded by Foundations (such as Gulbenkian Foundation), showed positive results on efficacy evaluations (e.g., Correia, 2019; Correia & Marques-Pinto, 2016; Santos, 2017). Others showed promising initial results (Simões et al., 2021). Positive effects for children were identified on social skills (Correia & Marques-Pinto, 2016; Santos, 2017; Simões et al., 2021), peer relationships (Correia & Marques-Pinto, 2016), adjustment to school (Correia & Marques-Pinto, 2016; Santos, 2017), emotional knowledge (Correia & Marques-Pinto, 2016), decrease in mental health difficulties and increase in well-being (Simões et al., 2021). The positive impact of intervention programmes on decreasing problem behaviours was identified (e.g., Simões et al., 2021) but results tend to be less consistent, with some results showing no impact of the intervention programme (e.g., Santos, 2017). Indeed, our revision shows a notorious tendency for intervention programmes to focus on the promotion of social skills and socioemotional competencies and less on reducing behaviour problems or difficulties.

In addition, participants of the focus groups conducted in Portugal within the PBE-ECEC project mentioned, among other challenges, the following barriers as the most important to implement preschool wide practices to prevent challenging behaviours and support children's socioemotional competences in ECECs: (a) the insufficient support of specialised professionals, due to the low number of professionals proportionally to the high number of children with additional needs of support (note that a professional in a smaller school context highlighted the specialised staff as a strength in dealing with behaviour problems); (b) the inappropriate identification of the children's needs by specialised professionals; (c) communication difficulties between preschool and elementary school (e.g., not sharing experiences and practices of success and failure between educators/professionals); (d) difficulties in implementing or effectively managing inclusion within ECEC setting (e.g., sending a child home due to the absence of a educator assistant); (e) waiting for primary school years to act upon behavioural challenges and not when they occur in preschool (e.g., perceiving that for a child with difficulties regulating behaviour it is only important to act in the next year when transitioning to school for the inability to reduce their classroom number earlier on in preschool); and (f) the advanced age / ageing of ECEC educators, causing tiredness, closure and less openness to talk about emotions.

NATIONAL CURRICULUM: AREAS IN THE PORTUGUESE CURRICULUM RELEVANT TO THE PBS-ECEC PROJECT

Nationally, the Portuguese Education Act (the law that establishes the general framework of the education system; *Lei de Bases do Sistema Educativo*, Law no. 46/86, 14th October 1986) refers: "The curricular organisation of school education will take into account the promotion of a balanced harmony, in the horizontal and vertical planes, between the levels of physical and motor, cognitive, affective, aesthetic, social and moral development of the students" (Article 50). Especially concerning preschool education, this law sets as its goals, among others: to contribute to the emotional stability and security of the child; develop the child's moral domain and develop the sense of responsibility associated with freedom; etc. (article 5th, Law No. 49/2005, 30 August).

Coherent with the Education Act, the Framework Law of Pre-School Education (Law 5/97, 10 April) states that preschool education should promote the balanced development of children, with a view to their full integration into society as autonomous, free and solidary beings. It specifies objectives of preschool education, here are some of the most relevant to our project: (a) Promote the personal and social development of the child based on democratic life experiences from a perspective of education for citizenship; (b) Encourage the inclusion of children in social diversity groups, with respect for the plurality of cultures, favouring a progressive awareness of the child's role as a member of society; (c) Contribute to equal access opportunities to school and learning success; (d) Stimulate the global development of each child, with respect for thual characteristics; (e) Develop expression and communication through the use of multiple languages as means of relationship, information, aesthetics awareness and understanding of the world; (f) Awake curiosity and critical thinking; (g) Provide each child with conditions of well-being and security, in the scope of individual and collective health.

The Curriculum Guidelines for Pre-School Education (Lopes da Silva et al., 2016) define three content areas in preschool education: Personal and Social Education, Expression and Communication, and Knowledge of the World. The first one is considered a cross-sectional area, referring to how children relate to themselves, to others and tto he world, in a process of development of attitudes, values and dispositions, which forms the basis of successful lifelong learning and an autonomous, conscious and solidary citizenship. This area encompasses four articulated components: (a) Building of identity and self-esteem; (b) Independence and autonomy; (c) Self-awareness as a learner; (d) Democratic coexistence and citizenship. Moreover, the document stresses the importance of the educational environment (organisation of space, materials, time, group, relations and interactions) and pedagogical

intentionality in developing practices that can have a positive effect on children's holistic learning and development. In the same area, the Specific Professional Profile of the Early Childhood Educator (Decree-Law 241/2001, 31 August) defines the core professional roles of early childhood educators, including the organisation of the educational environment, observation, planning and assessment, and roles concerning relations and educational action. About these, emphasis is given to (a) relating with children to promote their affective security and autonomy; (b) Promoting the child's involvement in activities and projects initiated by her, the group, the educator or of joint initiative; (c) Encouraging cooperation among children, ensuring that they all feel valued and integrated into the group; (d) Supporting and encouraging the affective, emotional and social development of each child and the group; (e) Stimulating the child's curiosity, promoting her ability to identify and solve problems; (f) Fostering children's ability to perform tasks and their dispositions to learn; and (g) Promoting personal, social and civic development from a perspective of education for citizenship. So, these official documents, focused on ECEC, highlight the importance of promoting socsocio-emotionalmpetences and educators' role in that domain.

Furthermore, the Students' Profile by the End of Compulsory Schooling (2017) defines competencies in several domains, including social and emotional competences, thus highlighting their importance throughout the educational system (e.g., competencies related to interpersonal relations and autonomy and personal development and autonomy). Also in 2017, a National Strategy for Educating for Citizenship was developed, emphasising the crucial role of schools, at all educational levels, in the promotion of educational practices with the potential to foster future civic adult behaviours that privileges "equality in interpersonal relationships, the integration of differences, respect for Human Rights and the valorisation of concepts and values of democratic citizenship" (Grupo de Trabalho de Educação para a Cidadania, 2017).

The Portuguese educational system follows the principles of inclusive education, established by the Decree-law no. 54/2018. This decree was established to change the school system so that each school can address the diversity of needs of their students, assuming the principle that success is within the reach of all students through increased participation in academic and social school life. This piece of legislation abolished the separation between a regular and a special education system, promoting a flexible organisation of the support available in the schools. Supports are organised into a multi-tiered system, including a universal level, addressing all the children, including those that receive support from the other two levels; a selective level, including supports that complement the universal measures; and an additional level, when the student's difficulties are significant and persistent and involve

communication, interaction, cognition and learning, and the previous two levels of support are not enough to achieve success. The decree-law also establishes a set of specific resources that should be available, including human (e.g., Special Education Educators), organisational (e.g., the Multidisciplinary Team Supporting Inclusive Education, and the Learning Support Center), and community resources (e.g., Local Early Intervention Teams). This legislative change is aligned with the documents previously mentioned in this section. The Decree-law no. 54/2018 assumes a positive approach to the education of all students, focused on the development of multiple levels of competencies (e.g., cognitive, behavioural, socioemotional). It also presupposes the organisation of a multi-tiered school-wide system of support that can contribute to the development of all students, changing the focus from a remediate or compensatory approach to a preventive and constructive one (Santos et al., 2021).

The Manual for the Promotion of Socioemotional Skills in the School Context / "Saúde Mental em Saúde Escolar. Manual para a Promoção de Competências Sociais em Meio Escolar"; Carvalho et al., 2016), published by the Ministry of Health is defined as a pedagogical resource to facilitate the training and implementation of projects to promote Mental Health at School, framed within Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programmes (Carvalho et al., 2016). These guidelines are supported by foundational processes and principles, such as a comprehensive and holistic whole-school approach, integrated into health promotion and education; intervention supported by models based on scientific evidence, using the evaluation results to justify decisions; training of educators and school health teams to be, essentially, a resource to support choices at a personal and group level and facilitators of learning and decision-making regarding health potential; implementation of interactive and participatory methodologies, etc. (Carvalho et al., 2016). The ultimate goals set by this resource are to create in schools "safe and supportive environments that promote well-being, personal development and learning; help children and young people to develop effective socio-emotional skills and to understand their behaviour; develop school organisation and community articulation strategies that support well-being, namely, through a survey of needs and the identification of partners to turn to; signalling and referring to appropriate structures for children, young people and families at risk from the point of view of their mental health and well-being" (p. 15).

In 2017, the same ministries also published The Health Education Reference (Referencial de Educação para a Saúde; Carvalho et al., 2016) aiming at establishing a "common understanding and language on the themes, objectives and contents to be addressed in health promotion and education initiatives aimed at children and young people, as well as in the materials, resources and communication platforms that support them". This document identifies five global themes: Mental Health and Violence

Prevention, Food Education, Physical Activity, Addictive Behaviours and Dependencies, Affections and Education for Sexuality. For preschool-aged children, in the area of Mental Health and Violence Prevention, several specific objectives are set, such as: to communicate in a positive, effective and assertive way; develop self-knowledge in its emotional dimension and develop emotional literacy; develop autonomy; build positive relationships; identify violence directed at him/her-self and others; adopt a culture of respect and tolerance; use the phases of the decision-making process: setting goals and managing emotions and associated values; learn values of citizenship, solidarity and respect for differences.

2. Introduction to Positive Behaviour Support

In the PBS-ECEC project, we assume that a high-quality ECEC refers to an effective and inclusive learning environment that promotes and supports positive educator-child relationships, and a child's socioemotional competence, well-being, engagement and participation. Children spend a great amount of time in preschool settings; thus the preschool context may have an important impact on their behaviour (OECD, 2021). Researchers acknowledged that the implementation of preschool-wide interventions may offer beneficial effects for preschool children including the promotion of positive behaviour and the development of social skills (Fox & Little, 2001; Steed et al., 2013).

Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) is a research-based educational framework, originally developed during the 1980s in the USA. It was designed to promote learning, social and behavioural outcomes for all children (Horner et al., 1990). A growing body of literature supports that its effective implementation in preschools can promote preschool children's positive behaviour and increase their social and emotional competence (Albrecht & Brunner, 2019). In addition, positive learning outcomes (Freeman et al., 2019) and improved organisational health (e.g., schoolwide climate) have been also reported (Bradshaw et al., 2008).

2.1. Origin of the Positive Behaviour Support

During the 1980s, researchers identified the need for community and educational inclusion for people with developmental disabilities and improving the interventions regarding students with behaviour disorders (Dunlap et al., 2009; Walker et al., 1996). During this decade, the term "positive behaviour support" was introduced to describe a "technology of no aversive behavioural support". The characteristics of this new technology were presented, and the first formal application of PBS was focused on individuals with behavioural disabilities (Horner et al., 1990).

During the 1990s, researchers recognised the beneficial effects of the approach and extended the application of the PBS to populations without significant developmental disorders, for instance children showing social and emotional disabilities and/or challenging behaviours.

In the 2000s PBS has developed rapidly and became a broad and multifaceted approach with widespread acceptance and use in diverse populations and settings, aiming to address behavioural difficulties and implement interventions for enhancing children individuals and schools (Dunlap et al., 2009).

2.2. Definition of terms

Positive behaviour support (PBS) is defined as a person-centred approach that focuses on understanding what sustains an individual's challenging behaviour and how to change it (Heather et al., 2009). PBS approach uses preventive, learning, and reinforcement-based strategies to help individuals to achieve meaningful and durable positive behaviour outcomes (Sugai & Horner, 2002).

Several definitions have been developed to conceptualise PBS. First, Horner et al. (1990) referred to PBS as "a broad-based movement … in support of no aversive behaviour management" (p. 125). Horner then (2000) described PBS as "an approach that blends values about the rights of people with disabilities with a practical science about how learning and behaviour change occur" (p. 97). Carr et al. (1999) mentioned that "the PBS approach refers to those interventions that involve altering deficient environmental conditions … or deficient behaviour repertoires'' (p. 7). They also stated that the PBS approach is linked to the dependent variables of "(a) increased positive behaviour, (b) improved lifestyle, and (c) decreased problem behaviour" (p. 8). Three years later, Carr et al. (2002) extended their research in the field and defined PBS as "an applied science that uses educational methods to expand an individual's behaviour repertoire and systems change methods to redesign an individual's living environment to first enhance the individual's quality of life and, second, to minimise his or her problem behaviour" (p. 4). So, it became clear the important focus on the improvement of the educational environments in order to promote socioemotional competence resulting in positive behaviours and in preventing problem behaviours, as well as the focus on positively dealing with challenging behaviours.

In addition to the large number of definitions of PBS, a variety of terms have been used to refer to PBS, including the "non-aversive behaviour management", "positive behavioural support", "positive behaviour(al) interventions and supports (PBIS)", "school-wide positive behaviour support (SWPBS)" and "programme-wide positive behaviour support (PW-PBS)". Dunlap et al. (2014) discussed the differences among these terms and concluded that "positive behaviour support" is the most appropriate term to refer to the entire framework of PBS. They also proposed that PBIS is the best term for school-based applications; the term of "programme-wide positive behaviour support (PW-PBS)" describes the PBS in early childhood programmes; the "school-wide positive behaviour support (SWPBS)" refers to PBS in school-aged students (from kindergarten through Grade 12) and is used interchangeably with the term of PBIS. Despite the differences between PBS, SW-PBS, and PW-PBS, the terms are often used interchangeably. However, the authors acknowledged that a comprehensive definition of the PBS remains unclear resulting in some inconsistency and confusion.

Kincaid et al. (2015) proposed an updated definition including the key elements and features of the concept. According to Kincaid et al. (2015) "PBS is an approach to behaviour support that includes an on-going process of research-based assessment, intervention, and data-based decision making focused on building social and other functional competencies, creating supportive contexts, and preventing the occurrence of problem behaviours. PBS relies on strategies that are respectful of a person's dignity and overall well-being and that are drawn primarily from behavioural, educational, and social sciences, although other evidence-based procedures may be incorporated. PBS may be applied within a multi-tiered framework at the level of the individual and the level of larger systems (e.g., families, classrooms, schools, social service programmes, and facilities)" (p. 3).

Concerning the SWPBS, PWPB and PBIS, the following definitions intend to clarify the differences between the terms. School-wide positive behaviour support (SWPBS) refers to a systems approach for establishing the social culture and individualised behaviour supports needed for a school to be a safe and effective learning environment for all students (Sugai & Horner, 2009, p. 309).

The extension of SWPBS to the preschool level is commonly referred to as program-wide positive behaviour support (PW-PBS) (Frey et al., 2010). PW-PBS provides training, technical assistance, and coaching to selected programs in the development, implementation, and evaluation of a programme-wide model of Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) for young children. Finally, positive behaviour(al) interventions and supports (PBIS) are defined as a framework for enhancing the adoption and implementation of a continuum of evidence-based interventions to achieve academically and behaviourally important outcomes for all students (Sugai & Horner, 2006).

2.3.   Aim of the Positive Behaviour Support in ECEC

The main aim of the PBS approach is to offer support and interventions to improve individuals' social, emotional, and physical success (Dunlap et al., 2009). Within the preschool context, PBS aims to offer all the processes and procedures to help preschools promote children's developmental social and emotional competencies, establish positive school cultures and create supportive environments. In these ongoing processes preschool children have an active role in creating and negotiating rules, procedures and rituals in ECEC centres and participate together with the preschool educators.

Within this context, apart from the decrease in problem behaviour, children are provided with the opportunity to develop in a safe, inclusive and effective environment, enhance their social and emotional outcomes and increase their learning (Heather et al., 2009).

2.4. Importance of implementing the Positive Behaviour Support in ECEC

Challenging behaviours may appear in preschool settings with different degrees of intensity and frequency, and result in a negative effect on the safety, wellbeing and learning of children, and on the overall quality of the preschool learning environment (Sugai & Horner, 2006). Research findings suggested that effective classroom management and the establishment of programme-wide approaches can decrease challenging behaviour and socioemotional difficulties, promote children's socioemotional competence and benefit whole classes and individuals (Albrecht & Brunner, 2019).

The **benefits of the implementation of PBS** in the whole preschool context include:

- Prevention and effective intervention, when challenging behaviour occurs;
- Behavioural improvements;
- Positive socioemotional and learning outcomes;
- Children's and educator's better mental health;
- Healthy relationships and interactions with others;
- Safe and effective learning environments;
- Positive preschool culture and climate;
- Improvement in preschool educator's health and wellbeing;
- Preschool educators' work satisfaction (Bradshaw et al., 2008).

2.5. Elements of the Positive Behaviour Support framework

A programme-wide Positive Behaviour Support is an approach that includes young children, families, preschool educators and early childhood services aiming to support an on-going commitment through systems change. The programme-wide PBS framework derives its theoretical basis from the theory of Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA). According to this theory, the changes in someone's environmental context can cause changes in his/her behaviour (Carr et al., 2002). Therefore, the implementation of the programme-wide PBS in ECEC settings focuses on the promotion of the socioemotional competence of children in positive and safe learning environments (Benedict et al., 2007).

Sugai and Horner (2002) proposed four interconnected elements to describe the programme-wide PBS framework: outcomes, systems, data and practices. The four interconnected elements of the programme-wide PBS framework are presented below:

- **Outcomes:** This element refers to measurable outcomes that might result from the implementation of the PBS, such as behavioural, social, emotional, and academic improvements in children and in a positive school climate.

- **Systems:** refer to the establishment of effective strategies that prepare and support implementers to use them with high fidelity and durability to achieve the above-mentioned positive outcomes. Each preschool setting should adopt a strong and sustainable system based on its own needs for implementing the preschool-wide PBS practices.

- **Practices:** include the preschool and classroom evidence-based practices that are important to be implemented for achieving individual and community outcomes.

- **Data:** Within a programme-wide PBS framework, teams should collect data to assess all outcomes, practices, and systems and take effective decisions regarding their PBS implementation and outcomes.

The PBS-ECEC will examine the design and implementation of the programme-wide PBS in ECEC settings in partner countries.

2.6.   The multitier model of Positive Behaviour Support

Positive behaviour support in the context of early intervention is conceptualised into a broader framework consisting of three tiers or levels: primary, secondary, and tertiary (Figure 1). The three-tier model promotes a schoolwide continuum of academic, behavioural, social, and emotional support based on how young children are involved in interventions. In this ongoing process, the educator with the preschool children explores, identifies, acknowledges, experiments and finds meaning in a set of competencies. In addition, a continuous strategy across all levels is provided, where support becomes more targeted and intense as we move to the top to be matched to children's needs (Sugai & Horner, 2002).

The Centre on Positive Behavioural Interventions and Supports (PBIS, 2022) describes each of the three tiers as follows:

- **Primary-Tier**: At the first level, there are common practices that are implemented with all children by all the school staff members aiming to promote their success. Practices of Tier 1 include:
    - Collaborating with children, families, and educators to define positive school/program-wide expectations and prioritise appropriate desired social, emotional, and behavioural skills;

- Aligning classroom expectations with preschool/program-wide desired behaviours and skills;
- Encouraging and acknowledging behaviours which are developmentally and socially appropriate;
- Preventing and responding to unwanted behaviour respectfully and inclusively;
- Fostering school/program-family partnerships.

- **Secondary-Tier**: At the second level, specific strategies and practices take place and are implemented with children that did not respond at the first level. Those children could receive support in smaller groups. Practices of Tier 2 include:
  - Providing additional practice for behavioural, social, and emotional skills;
  - Increasing adult support and supervision;
  - Providing additional opportunities for positive reinforcement;
  - Increasing prompts or reminders;
  - Increasing access to educational support;
  - Increasing school-family communication.

- **Tertiary-Tier**: At the third level, children who did not respond to primary and secondary prevention, will receive intensive and individual support, customised to their needs, skills and abilities. Tier 3 practices include:
  - Engaging children, educators, and families in functional behavioural assessments and intervention planning;
  - Coordinating support through wraparound and children-centred planning;
  - Implementing individualised, comprehensive, and function-based support.
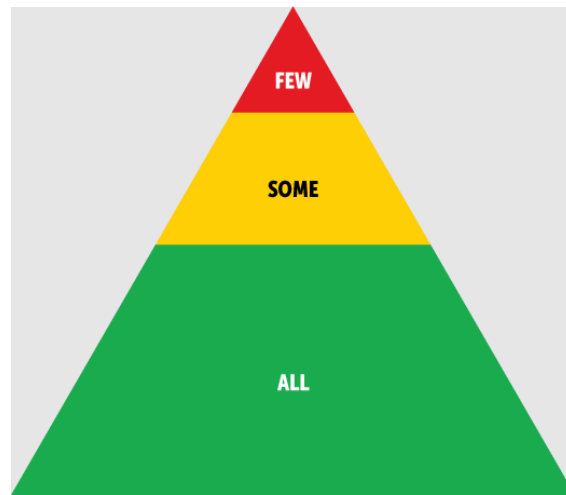
Figure 1 The three-tier model of PBIS (retrieved from: https://www.pbis.org/pbis/what-is-pbis)

The PBS-ECEC Guide aims to provide practical information for ECEC teams on how to implement the first level of a whole school/centre approach, titled Program-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (PW-PBS) (universal tier), to support preschool educators to promote socioemotional competence and positive behaviours of all children across early childhood education settings in Europe. Therefore, this guide is focusing on the primary-tier level of the model. The next chapter describes in more detail the characteristics and the foundational systems of Tier 1.

3. THE PRIMARY TIER - TIER 1

The primary tier (also referred to as the universal tier or tier 1) is the foundational tier of the Program-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (PW-PBS) approach, which represents the support provided to all children across all settings in a preschool centre. Specifically, tier 1 is intended to have an impact on 80%–90% of the children (Heather et al., 2009). The primary tier includes systems, data and practices designed to create predictable, positive and safe ECEC environments, where children's socioemotional competence and positive behaviours will be promoted. Tier 1 clearly defines the desired behaviour, the socio-emotional skills and the respective expectations; thus, at this level, it is important to ensure that all children have understood the socially acceptable behaviours (Hemmeter et al., 2007). Within a whole-school approach, the implementation of the primary tier is considered to be effective for the majority of children by promoting more meaningful and lasting change.

3.1. PURPOSE OF TIER 1

The main purpose of tier 1 is for young children to develop socio-emotional competences and learn about positive behaviours. For this purpose, several practices have been suggested including modelling and acknowledging positive social, emotional, and behavioural (SEB) skills (Carter & Pool, 2012). The Centre on PBIS (2022) set the core principles of Tier 1 as the following:

- Promote the development of appropriate SEB skills to all children;
- Intervene early before undesirable behaviours escalate;
- Use research-based, scientifically validated interventions whenever possible;
- Monitor children's progress;
- Use data to inform decisions.

3.2. IMPORTANCE OF TIER 1

Tier 1 is of critical importance since it sets the foundations for the establishment of a safe and inclusive preschool environment, where development and learning can be promoted. The effective implementation of the first level of PW-PBS from the beginning of the school year right through to the end of the school year offers the opportunity for ECEC teams to promote children's learning and socioemotional competence (Carter et al., 2011). In addition, it helps to lower challenging behaviours

and prevent the development of more serious unwanted behaviours in both typical and "at-risk" children. The primary tier intervention offers the opportunity to decrease the use of more expensive and time-consuming interventions in the long term, namely at the secondary and tertiary tiers of PW-PBS (Carr et al., 2002). In general, tier 1 introduces the systems upon which all the other tiers will be built. Therefore, these systems are critical to ensure that preschool children and staff identify those children who need additional support and may need intervention at tier 2 and tier 3 (Center on PBIS, 2022).

3.3. THE CORE SYSTEMS OF TIER 1

The core systems of Tier 1 (see, for example, MO SWPBS, 2018-2019; ProW, 2021; Sugai & Horner, 2008) are the following, and are explored in the subsequent sections of this Guide:

1. Common Philosophy and Purpose (see sections 3.3.1 and 5.1)
2. Leadership (see sections 3.3.2 and 5.2)
3. Identifying Desired Behaviour (see sections 3.3.3 and 6)
4. Learning and Practicing Desired Behaviour (see sections 3.3.4 and 6)
5. Encouraging Desired Behaviour (see sections 3.3.5 and 7)
6. Discouraging Inappropriate Behaviour (see sections 3.3.6 and 8)
7. Ongoing Monitoring and Assessment (see section 3.3.7)
8. Training, Development and Support of Preschool Staff (see section 3.3.8)

In Figure 2 you can see the core systems of Tier 1 in a schematic order proposed for preschool settings to follow when implementing PW-PBS.
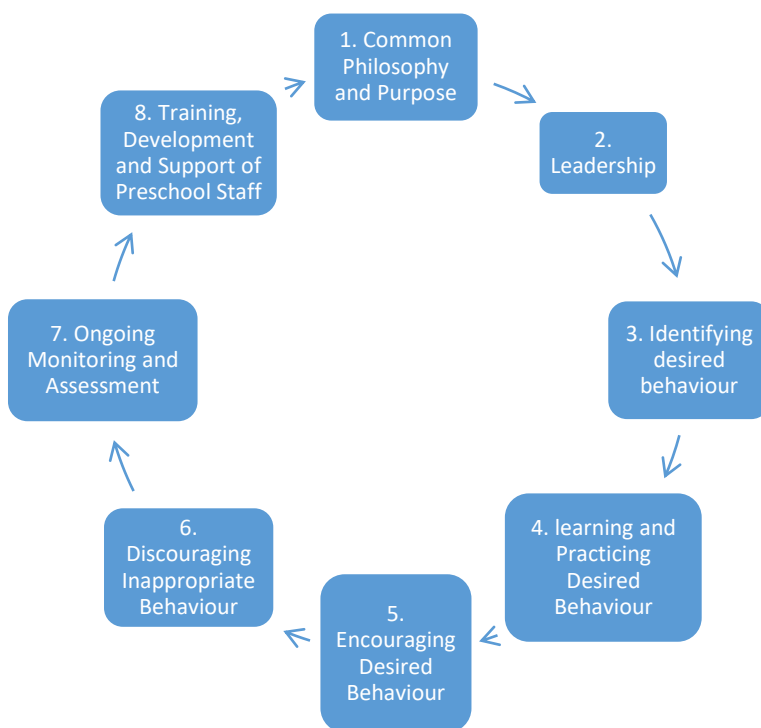
Figure 2. The basic elements of Tier 1 SW-PBS framework (Source: Sugai & Horner, 2008; MO SW-PBS, 2018)

3.3.1. Common Philosophy and Purpose

A basic requirement for the effective implementation of the PW-PBS is the identification and examination of the ECEC staff's beliefs and values. Beliefs are the underlying sentiments, assertions, or assumptions that inform the customs or practices of a group. Values can determine one's thoughts and acts and form attitudes. Therefore, within the PW-PBS approach, ECEC teams should develop their (new) common statements regarding their vision and philosophy, based on their identified needs.

Having a shared philosophy in the preschool setting helps all members (preschool educators, preschool staff, administration and parents) to develop a common discourse and practice based on the guidelines and form the basis for actions or consequences. The development of a common vision reflects how each member can interact in the preschool setting positively and proactively. Finally, along with the establishment of a common vision and shared philosophy, the development of a common purpose

guides preschool staff members' actions. Within a PW-PBS approach, the promotion of positive behaviours and socioemotional competence of all children is the desired outcome.

3.3.2.Leadership

Systems - level implementation of PW-PBS is led by a team of usually 4 to 5 people in each preschool centre. These individuals take primary responsibility and organise, integrate, and coordinate the implementation of effective behavioural interventions and practices. Team membership includes administrators, preschool educators, preschool staff, family members and preschool children.

Within the PW-PBS approach, the leadership team has several responsibilities. First, they have to review the team member's beliefs and ensure that they are committed to the established common vision, philosophy and purpose. Second, the PW-PBS process begins by organising and delivering an implementation action plan for the development and maintenance of a positive and safe ECEC environment for preschool children. Third, it is recommended that they organise training on the core features of the PW-PBS, the activities and strategies involved in adoption and implementation; teaching the practices of tier 1, and other good practices, and encouraging staff members to adopt more effective teaching methods. Typically, this can be done during a 3-day workshop. Another important activity of the leadership team is to collect data for planning and decision-making. Finally, the main goal of the leadership team is to ensure that the team follows all the PW-PBS processes and continuous support is provided. Overall, the tasks of the PW-PBS leadership team at the primary-tier level include (Heather et al., 2009):

1. Developing an action plan.
2. Monitoring and analysing existing behaviour data.
3. Hold regular team meetings (at least monthly).
4. Maintaining communication with staff and PBS coach/facilitator.
5. Evaluating progress.
6. Reporting outcomes to staff, children, parents, PBS coach/facilitator, and PBS district coordinator).

3.3.3.Identifying Desired Behaviour

As soon as the common philosophy, vision and purpose are mutually agreed upon, the next step is the clarification of the behaviours which are developmentally and socially appropriate, involving all the

members of the team, including children. This step assists ECEC teams to develop a school culture that is clear, positive and consistent. In addition, clearly defined expectations and promoting children's identification and understanding of the desired behaviours positively guide the child's socioemotional development and promote positive behaviours.

In order for positive behaviour to be defined, each member of the ECEC team should agree and choose the behaviours that are aligned with the values that have been selected to be promoted and demonstrated in the preschool setting. All the chosen desired behaviours should be observable, measurable, positively expressed, understandable and simple (Missouri SWPBS, 2018-2019). The chosen behaviours should also be contextually appropriate (e.g., plan to practice the identified classroom behaviours in the classroom, and playground behaviours in the playground). The next step is to target one or two social skills that will underlie the desired behaviours.

All desired behaviours should be clearly defined in a simple way that can be understood by all preschool children. A recommended method is to start by defining the overall desired behaviours and then further define these desired behaviours into smaller subsections or areas of the classroom behaviour (Carter & Pool, 2012). It is also recommended that a visualised material (e.g., a behavioural matrix) is posted in the classroom and various areas of the preschool (e.g., hallway) that will remind all participants, both staff and children, of their common purpose and help them work jointly to contribute to the successful implementation of these behaviour outcomes.

Using these methods in all preschool spaces, will create opportunities for children to learn important social and emotional skills, with a better understanding of how to behave, and thus minimising the likelihood of challenging behaviour. Importantly, this will contribute to the promotion of a positive climate, that will support children to make decisions for their behaviours and will further support self-regulation.

3.3.4. Learning and Practicing Desired Behaviour

Supporting children in learning and practicing the expectations for behaviour in the classroom is a vital part of the tier 1 system since PBS starts with learning the desired positive behaviours (Carter & Pool, 2012). Once desired behaviours have been developed, it is not enough to post them on the walls throughout the preschool centre; opportunities for dialogue and reflection with children around these behaviours and the respective socioemotional skills should be created regularly. Furthermore, the preschool setting and all the interactions should create the appropriate conditions for learning and development.

Effective strategies to support preschool children learn positive behaviour are:

- Planning activities to meet the needs of preschool children;
- Supporting children to comprehend and acquire the desired behaviour;
- Supporting maintenance of the desired behaviour.

The leadership team may choose several methods to model the desired behaviours, including role-playing, discussions, preparation and presentation of supporting material (e.g., graphic cues in the setting where the behaviours are expected). However, the more those desired behaviours are modelled by adults/staff and other children in preschool settings, the more successfully the new behaviours and socioemotional skills will be understood, comprehended, acquired, and maintained. Specific steps proposed in the Training Manual for Pro-W (ProW, 2021) that could be followed by ECEC team members in order for children practice the desired behaviours and social skills are the following:

1. Naming and describing the behaviour/social skill, until it is understood by all preschool children.
2. Starting a reflective dialogue with the children about a specific behaviour/social skill and its benefits.
3. Presenting this behaviour/social skill with support material (e.g., pictures showing several situations, behavioural matrixes).
4. Starting a dialogue with children and making examples of such behaviours and skills.
5. Role-playing.
6. Acknowledging and reinforcing behaviour and socioemotional skills as they occur in the classroom.
7. Trying to promote the generalisation of this behaviour/social skill and demonstrate to the children using reminders and feedback that it is something that they should use daily in their social interactions.

3.3.5. Encouraging Desired Behaviour

Encouraging the desired behaviour in children is an essential process for reducing challenging behaviours (Carter & Pool, 2012). It is also crucial for the improvement of the school climate, and it must be given a special emphasis. Encouraging the desired behaviours can be promoted by bringing positive feedback. This refers to the positive statements that educators use to show children that their behaviour is appropriate. Once the desired behaviours and the socio-emotional skills have been taught, team members should encourage children to express and practice what they have learned. Using positive feedback to encourage desired behaviour is crucial for developing and maintaining a safe,

predictable, positive, and consistent preschool-wide climate. It is also an effective strategy that preschool educators can use to reduce challenging social behaviours and improve positive social behaviours.

Clear and specific feedback on behaviour is more effective than general praise or commonly used phrases such as "good job". It is important that children learn and demonstrate the positive behaviour and related values, and not just receive a vague positive message. Therefore, feedback should be informative. Besides, the amount and frequency of the positive feedback and the acknowledgement of the appropriate behaviour should be balanced. Concerning the balance between feedback to positive and to inappropriate behaviours, researchers recommend a ratio of 4:1; which equals four positive responses to the desired behaviour versus one corrective feedback to inappropriate behaviour (Reavis et al., 1993).

A commonly used method for increasing the positive feedback ratio is by using tangible and intangible reinforcers (also referred to as rewards) in addition to the verbal statements. Examples of tangible reinforcers may be sensations (listening to music), materials (stickers, badges, stamps, coupons, certificates, etc.), and intangible could be activities (working on a preferred activity or with a special friend) and privileges (extra free time, new seating arrangement). Providing tangible and intangible reinforcers may benefit both children and preschool educators for acknowledging appropriate behaviour since they remind children that the desired behaviours have positive consequences and educators are reminded that they should maintain frequent and positive interactions with them.

For the effective use of the rewards, educators are encouraged to:

- Prefer symbolic intangible reinforcements, rather than material tangible rewards.
- Use small rewards frequently, rather than large rewards infrequently.
- Deliver rewards quickly after the desired behaviour is shown.
- Reward the behaviour, not the individual, and communicate to children the specific behaviour that led to the reward.
- Use different kinds of rewards selected carefully to ensure that they are reinforcing children and that they convey positive and healthy messages.
- Gradually begin to reduce and then eliminate rewards.

Although using tangible reinforcers is a suggested practice with some effective results in acknowledging appropriate behaviour (Carter & Pool, 2012), it is important to note that gradually we introduce intangible and social reinforcers, highlighting that our education system is based on positive values, on child/human rights, on the promotion of socioemotional learning and the development of intrinsic

motivation is the priority. A preventive approach that includes a reward system with tokens can be a valuable tool for promoting positive behaviours at preschool. However, educators should strike a balance between external rewards and intrinsic motivation while considering the advantages and disadvantages and the unique needs of each child (Filcheck & McNeil, 2004).

3.3.6. Discouraging Inappropriate Behaviour

Apart from learning, practising and encouraging the desired behaviours, the way that ECEC teams handle inappropriate behaviour is an important part of the PW-PBS too. Inappropriate behaviours that could constitute a threat to children's physical and/or emotional wellbeing (e.g., fighting, hurting a peer, offensive language) should be stopped, and explicitly and contingently discouraged. Despite the negative effects of inappropriate behaviours in the preschool learning environment, educators should immediately respond to them and could take advantage of their occurrence by treating them as an opportunity to re-teach and explain values and expected behaviours.

3.3.7. Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation

Data collection is an important part of the first level of the PW-PBS, as it helps the ECEC teams to review and assess their processes and make decisions. Data can be gathered from all team members of each preschool setting, such as preschool educators, other preschool staff, children, administrators and/or parents. Based on the findings from the data analysis, ECEC teams should identify the successes, the continuing challenging behaviours and possible causes. Once the continuing challenging behaviours that need improvement are identified, the action plan should be revised. Additional goals and respective strategies should be developed to handle the continuing challenging behaviours. The progress of achieving the new goals is monitored. Finally, the plan is evaluated for modifications or setting a new plan.

3.3.8. Training, Development and support of School Staff

Coaching schools to provide constant training and development opportunities, as well as a constant support in implementing strategies of primary prevention, constitutes an essential pivotal part of the PW-PBS approach. Two key persons involved in this would be a trainer of the leadership team and the assigned external coach of the schools, whenever possible. Other resources may be used, depending on the setting or even the country.

4. PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

Before starting the implementation, all school personnel should agree to work on PBS in their ECEC setting. Applying PBS is a whole-school approach and the effort of all is of high importance for the implementation to have an impact on the school community. A short "agreement contract" should be provided for all to sign before starting the implementation. An example can be found in the Annex V. A suggestion is for the "agreement contract" to be placed in a prominent place in the educator's lounge acting as a reminder and collective encouragement for the centre's personnel to work together towards a common goal.

5. THE TEAM APPROACH

5.1. COMMON PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE

Below a step-by-step guide is provided to assist preschool settings in creating their common philosophy, and purpose (vision) and choosing their preschool values (Missouri SWPBI, 2018-2019). This team approach has been used in other projects, such as Pro-W (2021).

1. **Write down a few sentences to answer the following questions.**
- What do we want to see at our preschool?

Example: In our preschool, we want to see happy people and children who develop and learn in a positive environment.

- How do we want to feel at our preschool?

Example: In our preschool we want everyone to feel happy, safe and motivated to learn from one another.

- What do we want to create at a preschool?

Example: In our preschool, we want to create a positive learning environment.

This process aims to assist in creating the preschool's vision. A preschool's vision should consist of 2-3 simple sentences that children can understand and learn. A good tip is incorporating your preschool values (see next section).

2. **Select your preschool's values:**

The next step is for the preschool setting to select the 3 main values to cultivate. This is encouraged to be done collectively through a group discussion.

3. **Create a sign with your centre's vision**

Within a PW-PBS approach, the promotion of positive behaviours and socioemotional competence of all children is a common purpose. The final step to communicate this purpose to all is to create a sign with your preschool vision to be placed at the entrance of your preschool for everyone to see. This facilitates group spirit, working together towards a common goal and as a motivator for all.

4. **Create your centre philosophy on positive discipline**

PBS framework aims to incorporate positive discipline. Positive discipline posits that teaching and guiding children should be a process of teaching desired behaviours to children in a consistent, yet kind way. In addition, punishment is not used, instead, re-teaching is the method of choice when children behave in an undesirable way.

Rephrasing the preschool's philosophy of discipline positively is a key component of implementing PBS.

Examples of a positive philosophy is:

In our school, we teach and reteach positive behaviours as necessary. We provide children with informative feedback to strengthen them, occurring more frequently. We consider misbehaviour or children's exploratory behaviour that is not yet in harmony/consonance with social and emotional desired behaviours as social "mistakes". These need re-teaching and more practice. We also understand that some challenging behaviours are typical in some periods of development.

We believe that positive behaviours need a collective effort from all members of the school community.

The preschool personnel at this stage should rewrite their school's philosophy of discipline in a positive frame and incorporate positive ways to manage unwanted behaviours and, especially, their causes.

5.2. LEADERSHIP

The Leadership team in each preschool setting should consist of staff members responsible for implementing the PBS framework (teaching staff and other personnel). The Leadership team is the core of good implementation (Missouri SWPBI, 2018-2019). In each centre, the leadership team meets at least once a month and consists of five roles:

1. **Chairperson/Coordinator**

   The chairperson coordinates the preschool meeting of the Leadership team and develops and monitors the overall schedule of the activities in the action plan for PBS.

2. **Internal coach**

   The internal coach oversees the implementation of PBS in the preschool setting:

   - Monitors the overall implementation in collaboration with the coordinator, the external coach and the team;

- reminds regularly educators to document behavioural data and to monitor their children's behaviour
- Informs new professionals about the PBS framework and its implementation at their school, and supports them to familiarise and implement PBS.

3. **Timekeeper**

The timekeeper ensures that timeframes are kept regarding meetings and when the teaching period for each identified behaviour or social routine is taught, and ensures the teaching schedule is updated accordingly.

4. **Secretary (recorder/ note taker)**

The secretary keeps records of all meetings taking place regarding PBS and safely stores the files accordingly.

It is advised for quick access the secretary to keep records of basic **documents** for future reference (e.g., teaching schedule, lesson plans, etc.).

5. **Contact person**

The contact person is responsible for the overall communication with the members of the preschool setting (parents, children, coaches, community, etc.).

In the case of a preschool setting with less than five staff members, you may incorporate these roles into three as follows (Missouri SWPBI, 2018-2019):

1. **Chairperson**

The chairperson acts as a coordinator and a contact person, as previously described.

2. **Secretary**

The secretary acts as a secretary and as an internal coach, as previously described.

3. **Timekeeper**

The timekeeper acts as a timekeeper, as previously described.

A table documenting the role of each Leadership Member should be filled, stored and reviewed regularly (Missouri SWPBI, 2018-2019):

- At the beginning of the implementation in the preschool setting.
- At the beginning of the school year.
- On occasion, a change in preschool personnel occurs.

*An example of a school's Leadership Table is provided in Annex I.

6. BEHAVIOURAL MATRIX OF DESIRED BEHAVIOUR

The next step in creating a behavioural curriculum matrix for your preschool setting is to choose the desired behaviours to cultivate by "Identifying Common Expectations" and teaching them in the classroom and other preschool settings (e.g., the playground, the hallways, the toilet, etc.). All members of the centre should promote by example the desired behaviours, and attentively explain them to the children considering the situation (e.g., children alone vs. in group; inside the classroom vs. outside) and the children's behaviours and needs. This will encourage children to adopt the expected behaviours in their behavioural repertoire. Also, note that the whole preschool environment should be organized to set all the conditions for developing socioemotional competence and to promote the desired behaviours.

In the preschool setting, two types of behaviours can be identified:

Social behaviours: specific interactive or communicative behaviours that occur in the preschool setting (e.g., raising your hand to speak).

Social routines: A social routine is a sequence of actions regularly followed (i.e., appears as a pattern). In the school setting a social routine could be for example, children waiting for their turn to use the bathroom, getting ready to go to the playground.

To identify the desired behaviours in a school setting, the 3 main values should be the starting point. Select a value and think of 3-4 simple behaviours linked to that value that is expected in the preschool setting (e.g., The value of **respect** could be linked with keeping quiet when someone is talking, raise your hand to get a turn to talk).

Follow the same guidelines to decide the expected behaviours for the other values as well.

Decide in the same way 1-2 social routines connected to your values, completing the behavioural curriculum for the preschool setting.

Document the expected behaviours and your values in the behavioural matrix (example in Annex II).

7. Suggestions for encouraging positive behaviours and promoting socioemotional competence

This section presents preschool-wide practices and available resources for preschool professionals for promoting socioemotional competence and positive behaviour in ECEC settings. They are suggestions, and other appropriate practices and resources can be used.

7.1. Preschool-wide practices for organizing the learning environment to create opportunities for children's autonomy and responsibility

Five (5) preschool-wide practices for promoting socioemotional competence and positive behaviour

1. **Use a four-one ratio of positive responses:** The 4:1 ratio of positive responses is based on research findings (Reavis et al., 1993) that suggest that children behave better in preschool settings when adults show their ability to self-regulate and thus control their responses to children's behaviour, and spend more time attending to positive behaviour than to challenging behaviour.

2. **Use visualised schedules readable by children**: Creating a daily schedule and directly teaching it helps children to be aware of the routines, easily follow them and predict what comes next.

3. **Develop routines within the routines:** This practice helps children to be informed about the specific programme that they have followed during a routine and maximise their ability to self-regulate their behaviours. Also, it often helps preschool educators to prevent children's challenging behaviours.

4. **Identify and define the developmentally and socially expected behaviour:** Once preschool children recognise the importance of positive behaviours and define them with the educators, it is important to ensure that children are aware and have understood the socially desired behaviours in each routine. For a better understanding of the desired behaviours in preschool, no more than three expectations for any one routine are recommended. Examples of desired and expected behaviours across different contexts and defined values are presented in Appendix II.

5. **Promote the development of socioemotional skills:** Socioemotional skills can be developed through a variety of activities and strategies aiming to enhance positive interactions by

performing acts of kindness to others, caring about them, promoting cooperation among children, and supporting positive relationships with peers during play.

6. **See behaviour as Communication**: When we view behaviour as communication we take a different response. Try to ask the following questions: What is the message behind this behaviour? What is the child trying to communicate? How can we meet the child's goals in a positive way? Is this a skill deficit or a motivation problem? If the message is unclear, track the behaviour using the ABC (Antecedent behaviour consequences) analysis to try to identify patterns.

Positive Behaviours Bingo

The preschool educator presents a table with different pictures presenting various actions and behaviours in terms of positive and expected behaviours. Children are asked to observe the table and to discuss the different behaviours presented. Then each child takes one picture (the one selected to be discussed) and puts it in the bingo (Coco et al., 2001).

The idea is to teach the desired expected behaviours by playing bingo; and instead of numbers, the children will erase or place a bottle cap on the pictures that depict the positive behaviours. Each time the educator reports a behaviour by showing it on a picture, the children have to decide whether or not to erase or place a bottle cap on that picture from their card. Some behaviours for example could be "share toys", "sit in your spot", "toy dumping" etc.

Educators can implement this activity to teach children the classroom rules.

The educator can ask children to show their cards to their classmates sitting next to them and reflect together on their answers. A short discussion about the importance of maintaining these positive behaviours may follow. Specifically, after children get a "bingo", they can do one of the following:

- Explain why one or more of the positive behaviours/rules are important
- Tell about a time when they saw someone showing/following one or more of the positive behaviours/ rules
- Describe how a particular positive behaviour is different at school compared to at home

Giving tokens to encourage children's expected behaviours

Acknowledging and praising children's positive behaviour helps maintain a predictable, positive, and consistent positive environment.

An effective way to provide positive feedback based on the recommended rate is by giving praise and tokens when children show appropriate behaviour or follow the rules and routines. When a child is not following the rules or has an unwanted behaviour, the most effective redirection comes from the educator highlighting the example of those children who are behaving well appropriately.

If a child shows appropriate behaviour, as well as being given verbal feedback, each class can have a wide range of rewards to focus on positive behaviours, which should be agreed upon and chosen with the children and may include:

- Stickers and stamps;
- Awards and certificates;
- Recognition at assembly;
- School displays;
- Golden time where children can choose an activity.

Children are also encouraged to work as a group or table to gain points or tokens which are "banked" towards a progressive set of group or class rewards. For example, the group gaining the most points in a week may be awarded a particular privilege such as an extra break, listening to their favourite song, etc. Likewise, a class may agree on targets and rewards for all the children to work together to achieve. This may be linked to a topic or theme and result in a particular activity in school for the class. See section 3.3.5 for further information about the use of positive feedback and rewards. For more on using a reward system and tokens read the article by Filcheck and McNeil (2004).

Three stars and a wish

Each child can be asked to identify 3-star things that they did well that week and a wish for something they have to work on for the coming week. This way they get to identify positive behaviours and also what they can improve on in the classroom.

7.2. OTHER AVAILABLE RESOURCES FOR PRESCHOOL PROFESSIONALS FOR ENCOURAGING POSITIVE BEHAVIOURS AND PROMOTING SOCIOEMOTIONAL COMPETENCE

In this section preschool educators can find resources with materials to be used to encourage positive behaviours and promote socioemotional competence in ECEC settings.

Promoting Educators' Wellbeing through Positive Behaviour Support in Early Childhood Education (ProW)

Promoting Educators Wellbeing through Positive Behaviour Support in Early Childhood Education (ProW) (2021-2023) is a policy experimentation project, which aims to develop evidence-based policies and practices to enhance the teaching profession and enhance educators' careers and capacities in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) settings. Specifically, the goals of the project include the support of educators in using Positive Psychology and School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) approaches through the enhancement of their motivation, improving their competencies, wellbeing, job satisfaction, self-efficacy, and reducing burnout levels. The ProW project involves 11 organisations from four European Countries (Greece, Cyprus, Romania and Portugal). Among the project's deliverables, the consortium is developing a digital platform and eLearning portal, which will provide online modules for educator professional development and just-in-time practical tips as well as learning resources to better manage their wellbeing and their students' social skills development. In addition, the eLearning platform offers a source of the material (examples, activities and templates) for early childhood educators to clarify, teach and encourage expected behaviours in preschool. By the end of the project, it is expected the development of an Educator Wellbeing and Career Observatory that will conduct annual reviews and surveys in the field and most importantly, design and implement initiatives and actions to support early childhood educators.

More info: www.prowproject.eu

RESILIENT PRESCHOOLS

The "Resilience and Wellbeing in Preschool Education to prevent emotional, social and behavioural problems" (RESILIENT PRESCHOOLS) (2020-2022) is a project funded with the support of the European Commission. Six partners from five European countries (Cyprus, Czech Republic, Greece, Romania and Portugal) participate in the project. RESILIENT PRESCHOOLS project aims to build the capacity of preschool educators to enhance preschool children's psychological resilience and promote their psychological wellbeing. To achieve this purpose, the consortium developed quality resources for preschool educators to promote a positive culture in ECEC settings, based on Positive Psychology practices and scientific findings. Specifically, the RESILIENT PRESCHOOL Toolkit includes useful information and practical applications for Preschool Educators on how to teach children to strengthen their psychological resilience and improve their overall wellbeing. The RESILIENT PRESCHOOL Training Package (training program and material) for preschool educators includes strategies and techniques that derive from the PERMA evidenced based wellbeing Model and Character Education theories to improve their children's social and emotional skills and overall school experience. In the material, early childhood educators can find several practices and activities to enhance preschool children's mindfulness, character strengths, positive relationships, positive emotions, positive behaviours and self-esteem.

More info: www.resilientpreschools.eu

Area Based Childhood (ABC) Programme

The ABC Programme is an Irish, area-based prevention and early intervention initiative that targets investment in evidence-based interventions to improve outcomes for children and families living in areas of disadvantage in Ireland (Hickey et al., 2018). Amongst the many programmes promoted, the ABC initiative utilised programmes supporting social and emotional development in children including the PAX Good Behaviour Game (GBG), Roots of Empathy and the Incredible Years suite of interventions. An evaluation of the Area Based Childhood (ABC) Programme (Hickey et al., 2018) found that the programme made a positive contribution to the lives of children and their families, improving relationships between parents and children, increasing children's readiness for school and improving children's social and emotional well-being.

ZIPPY'S FRIENDS

Zippy's Friends is a school-based social-emotional learning program for children attending preschool. The programme is implemented in several countries to promote socioemotional skills in ECEC and it is taught to the whole class by educators trained in Zippy's Friends internationally.

The programme was developed jointly by Partnership for Children, academics and educational resources specialists. Zippy's Friends has been running around the world since 1998 and is now in over 30 countries.

The fundamental concept behind the programme is very simple – if we can teach young children how to cope with difficulties, they should be better able to handle problems and crises in adolescence and later life. Zippy's Friends has been evaluated and found to improve children's coping skills, social skills, emotional literacy, improve the class climate and reduce bullying. The programme was created to prevent suicidal behaviour.

Zippy's Friends is based on a series of stories and the programme has 24 sessions of 45 minutes. The six modules cover feelings, communication, friendship, conflict, change and loss, and moving forward. Children develop their positive strategies to deal with problems through engaging activities: listening to stories, discussion, games, role-play and drawing.

Read more about the evaluation studies of Zippy's Friends: https://www.partnershipforchildren.org.uk/research.html
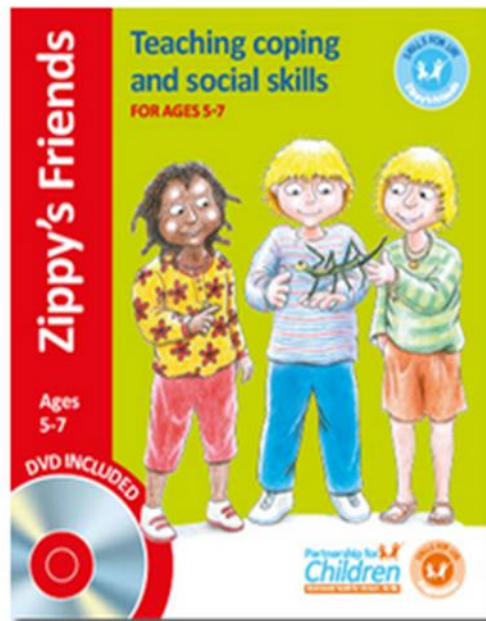
8. Suggestions for discouraging challenging behaviours

Preschool-Wide Practices for Discouraging Challenging Behaviour

To discourage challenging behaviour in the context of PBS, the first step is to define misbehaviours in a preschool setting. Use the table in Annex III to write what you would consider as minor and major challenging behaviours in the specific preschool setting.

Focus on 3-4 maximum behaviours and their definitions applying to your school to focus on each academic year, based on the preschool settings' needs; e.g., children intentionally hurting other children).

Minor challenging behaviours should be addressed by educators in the classroom setting, while the major challenging behaviours that the educator cannot deal with should be directed to the Leadership team for managing to get further support, and to initiate procedures needed in the other levels of the multitier model. Use the table in Annex IV to document the major challenging behaviour you identified.

The next step is to act proactively before the challenging behaviours occur. These strategies are in the category of indirect strategies because the intervention occurs through a change in the context, i.e. there is a change in the environment, without focusing explicitly on that child's misbehaviour. These strategies are shown to reduce minor behaviours before they increase their frequency and intensity.

1. **Proximity:** Move closer (about 1 metre or less) to the child you observe exhibiting a minor challenging behaviour.

2. **Signal/ Non-verbal cue:** Use a pre-agreed signal to bring attention back to you. A brief touch on the shoulder can act also as a silent signal for attention without disrupting the interactions or activities.

3. **Ignore - Attend - Praise:** Ignore the minor challenging behaviour of a child and give informative feedback to a child close to him/her showing the appropriate behaviour so he/she can observe and recognise what would be desired. Once the intended child exhibits the appropriate behaviour, give him/her feedback for it.

Direct strategies are used when a challenging behaviour has already occurred or escalated. The aim is to re-teach and explain the appropriate behaviour and praise when exhibited. Furthermore, understanding its causes or triggers, and acting upon it to solve that situation, may prevent its repetition.

Some direct strategies to deal with challenging behaviour are:

1. **Re-direct:** Redirect verbally the attention back to you and request from children to show you the appropriate behaviours.

2. **Re-teach:** Repeat the value and the expected behaviour, request students to tell and show the rule and go through role-playing or other activities for children to practise the expected desired behaviour. Praise for exhibiting the appropriate behaviour.

3. **Provide choices:** Provide 2 choices to the child exhibiting the minor challenging behaviour. One choice should be the desirable choice for you and the other should be an unpleasing behaviour for the child. (e.g., Andrea, would you prefer to put in the box the toys you use right now or when you finish your drawing?)

4. **Children Conference**: Have a 1 to 1 meeting with the child to discuss any difficulties they have and provide additional support to them. Discuss with the child what you expect from them and why this behaviour is important and make a joining agreement to focus on this behaviour for the next few days until it is learned and mastered.

9. CONCLUSION

During the last 20 years, the **Preschool-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SW-PBS)** has been developed. It is an organisational framework or approach that enables preschools to act proactively and in a comprehensive way for supporting all children's academic, social and behavioural skills.

Some studies (Albrecht & Brunner, 2019; Sugai & Horner, 2006) have emphasised the benefits and positive effects of the implementation of the PW-PBS in the whole preschool setting including behavioural improvements, positive socioemotional and learning outcomes, safe and effective learning environments and positive preschool culture and climate

Based on the desk and field-based research conducted by the consortium of the **PBS-ECEC** project within Result 1, this **Guide** was developed as a **planning tool** for educators in early childhood education settings and includes a practical source of information that supports them to create a proactive program-wide and classroom high-quality environment, where Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) is promoted.

Implementing the PW-PBS in preschool settings supports ECEC teams (children, educators, staff), by providing a framework for promoting developmentally appropriate behaviours and developing social and emotional competence, helps staff and children to "speak" a common language, secures consistency in educators' everyday efforts with children and finally promotes and enhances success for all.

Several contributing factors to children's socioemotional difficulties were reported among the four partner countries including family factors, child's characteristics, quality of the educator-child relationship, educators' social and emotional skills, the Covid-19 pandemic, and family-preschool partnerships. Overall, the results of the needs assessment survey conducted in the four partner countries showed that preschool children experience difficulties in social interactions, managing their behaviour and expressing their emotions. In addition, preschool educators tended to agree that the COVID-19 pandemic had a negative effect on preschool children's development since their behaviour and socioemotional difficulties have increased after the related safety measures. Furthermore, a tendency for intervention programmes to promote social skills and socioemotional competencies and less to reduce behaviour difficulties or support positive behaviours at schools was identified during the needs assessment survey conducted by the PBS-ECEC consortium.

The **PBS-ECEC Guide** was developed based on the ECEC centres' needs and proposes a program-wide, preventive and proactive approach to supporting children's behaviour and socioemotional competence. The PBS-ECEC Guide is expected to constitute an effective tool that provides **useful information for ECEC teams on how to implement the first level of a PW-PBS, across early childhood settings in Europe**. Finally, it proposes practices that will help preschool educators **promote the social-emotional competence** of all children and **restructure the ECEC environments to make them more predictable, positive and safe for preschool children.**

This Guide can be complemented by other resources available at different sources, such as the PBS-ECEC website, where you can find: resources for training (available in a Moodle platform), a report about the implementation of the PBS-ECEC in four European countries, and a policy and strategy toolkit and recommendations.

REFERENCES

Albrecht, N.M.R., & Brunner, M. (2019). How positive behavioural supports and social-emotional curriculum impact student learning. *The European Journal of Social and Behavioural Sciences, 24*(1), 2789-2804. DOI:10.15405/e1sbs.245

Benedict, E. A., Horner, R. H., & Squires, J. K. (2007). Assessment and implementation of positive behaviour support in preschools. *Topics in early childhood special education, 27*(3), 174-192.

Bouget, D., Frazer, H., Marlier, E., Sabato, S., & Vanhercke, B. (April 2015). Social investment in Europe. A study of national policies 2015. Brussels, Belgium: European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion.

Boyne, S. (2020). *Pre-school to Primary Education: Educator Perceptions of Children's Needs and the Influence of Aistear on Children's Transitions*. Professional Master of Education (PME), Marino Institute of Education.

Bradshaw, C. P., Koth, C. W., Bevans, K. B., Ialongo, N., & Leaf, P. J. (2008). The impact of schoolwide positive behavioural interventions and supports (PBIS) on the organizational health of elementary schools. *School Psychology Quarterly, 23*(4), 462-473.

CARDET (2021). SWPBS - *Building School- Wide Inclusive, Positive and Equitable Learning Environments Through A Systems-Change Approach*, Retrieved from: https://pbiseurope.eu

Carr, E. G., Dunlap, G., Horner, R. H., Koegel, R. L., Turnbull, A. P., & Sailor, W., et al. (2002). Positive behavior support: Evolution of an applied science. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 4*, 4–16.

Carr, E. G., Levin, L., McConnachie, G., Carson, J. L., Kemp, D. C., & Smith, C. E., et al. (1999). Comprehensive multisituational intervention for problem behaviour in the community: Long-term maintenance and social validation. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 1*, 5–25.

Carter, D. R., & Pool, J. L. (2012). Appropriate social behavior: Teaching expectations to young children. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 40(*5), 315-321. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-012-0516-y

Carter, D. R., Van Norman, R. K., & Tredwell, C. (2011). Program-wide positive behavior support in preschool: Lessons for getting started. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 38*(5), 349-355. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-010-0406-0

Carvalho, A., Almeida, C., Amann, G., Leal, P., Marta, F., Pereira, F., Ladeiras, L., Lima, R., & Lopes, I. (2016). *Saúde mental em saúde escolar. Manual para a promoção de competências socioemocionais em meio escolar*. Ministério da Saúde. Direção-Geral da Saúde. Available at

http://aeesgueira.edu.pt/attachments/article/47/826_DGS_Manual_Sa%C3%BAde_Mental_em_Sa%C3%BAde_Escolar.pdf

CASEL - Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. (2013). *Effective Social and Emotional Learning Programs: Preschool and Elementary School Edition.* Chicago, IL: Author.

Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (2022). What is PBIS? Retrieved from: https://www.pbis.org/pbis/what-is-pbis

Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (2022). Tier 1. Retrieved from: https://www.pbis.org/pbis/what-is-pbis

Childhood Education International (2017). *Status of ECEC in Cyprus, Childhood Education International, US*. https://ceinternational1892.org/article/status-of-ecec-in-cyprus.

Coco, A., Woodward, I., Shaw, K., Cody, A., Lupton, G., & Peake, A. (2001). Bingo for beginners: A game strategy for facilitating active learning. *Teaching Sociology, 29*(4), 492-503. https://doi.org/10.2307/1318950

Correia, K. (2019). *Metodologia para a promoção de competências em crianças e jovens: Salto de Gigante. Academias Gulbenkian Conhecimento*. Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian. Retrieved from: https://content.gulbenkian.pt/wp-content/uploads/sites/43/2019/02/18135044/SaltoDeGigante_Guia.pdf

Correia, K. S., & Marques-Pinto, A. (2016). Programa "Salto de Gigante": Delineamento e avaliação da eficácia de um programa de aprendizagem socioemocional na transição do pré-escolar para o primeiro ciclo. In A. Marques-Pinto, & R. Raimundo (Eds.), *Avaliação e promoção de competências socioemocionais em Portugal* (pp. 263-290). Coisas de Ler.

Cresham, E. (2021). Aistear: The social context of play and language development. *REACH: Journal of Inclusive Education in Ireland, 34*(2).

Dafermou, H., Koulouri, P., & Mpasagianni, E. (2006). *Preschool educator guide*. Athens: Pedagogical Institute, Ministry of National Education and Religion.

Daly, M. & Forster, A. (2009). The Story of the Framework for Early Learning: Partnership in Action. *An Leanbh Óg, The OMEP Ireland Journal of Early Childhood Studies, 3(*1), 55-72.

Dunlap, G., Kincaid, D., Horner, R. H., Knoster, T., & Bradshaw, C. P. (2014). A comment on the term "positive behavior support." *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 16*, 133–136.

Dunlap, G., Sailor, W., Horner, R., & Sugai, G. (2009). *Overview and history of Positive Behavior Support*. In: W. Sailor, G. Dunlap, G. Sugai, R. Horner (Eds.). Handbook of Positive Behavior Support (pp. 3-16). Boston, MA: Springer.

European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice (2021). Educators in Europe: Careers, Development and Well-being. Eurydice report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

Eurydice (2020). Cyprus: Early Childhood Education and Care. Retrieved from: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/early-childhood-education-and-care-15_en

Filcheck, H. A., & McNeil, C. B. (2004). The use of token economies in preschool classrooms: Practical and philosophical concerns. *Journal of Early and Intensive Behavior Intervention, 1*(1), 94. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0100281

Fox, L., & Little, N. (2001). Starting early: Developing school-wide behavior support in a community preschool. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 3*(4), 251-254.

Freeman, J., Kern, L., Gambino, A. J., Lombardi, A., & Kowitt, J. (2019). Assessing the Relationship between the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports Framework and Student Outcomes in High Schools. *Journal of At-Risk Issues, 22*(2), 1-11.

Frey, A. J., Lee Park, K., Browne-Ferrigno, T., & Korfhage, T. L. (2010). The social validity of program-wide positive behavior support. Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 12(4), 222-235.

Grammatikopoulos, V., Gregoriadis, A., Tsigilis, N., & Zachopoulou, E. (2014). Parental conceptions of quality in Greek early childhood education. European *Early Childhood Education Research Journal, 22*(1), 134-148. https://doi.org/10.1080/1350293X.2012.738868

Greek Ministry of Education - Greek Pedagogical Institute (MoE/Pi), 2002. *Cross-thematic curriculum framework for compulsory education (DEPPS).* Athens: Ministry of National Education and Religion.

Greek Ministry of Education - Greek Pedagogical Institute (MoE/Pi) (2014). *Curriculum for kindergarten*. Retrieved from: http://www.iep.edu.gr/images/IEP/programmata_spoudon/prosxoliki_elpaideysi/meros_1_paidagogiko_plaisio.pdf

Grupo de Trabalho de Educação para a Cidadania (2017). *Estratégia Nacional de Educação para a Cidadania (National Education Strategy for Citizenship)*. Available at http://dge.mec.pt/sites/default/files/Projetos_Curriculares/Aprendizagens_Essenciais/estrategia_cidadania_original.pdf)

Hayes, N., & O'Neill, S. (2019). Little changes, big results: the impact of simple changes to early years learning environments. *Early Years, 39*(1), 64-79.

Heather, G., Kincaid, D., & Pollard-Sage, J. (2009). *Primary-tier Interventions and Supports*. In: W. Sailor, G. Dunlap, G. Sugai, R. Horner (Eds.). Handbook of Positive Behavior Support (pp. 375-394). Boston, MA: Springer.

Hemmeter, M. L., Fox, L., Jack, S., & Broyles, L. (2007). A program-wide model of positive behavior support in early childhood settings. *Journal of Early Intervention, 29*(4), 337-355.

Horner, R. H. (2000). Positive behavior supports. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities, 15*, 97–105.

Horner, R. H., Dunlap, G., Koegel, R. L., Carr, E. G., Sailor, W., Anderson, J., ... & O'Neill, R. E. (1990). Toward a technology of "no aversive" behavioral support. *Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe handicaps, 15*(3), 125-132.

Kincaid, D., Dunlap, G., Kern, L., Lane, K. L., Bambara, L. M., Brown, F., ... & Knoster, T. P. (2016). Positive behavior support: A proposal for updating and refining the definition. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 18*(2), 69-73.

Lewis, T. J., McIntosh, K., Simonsen, B., Mitchell, B. S., & Hatton, H. L. (2017). Schoolwide systems of positive behavior support: Implications for students at risk and with emotional/behavioral disorders. *AERA Open, 3*(2), 1-11. doi: 10.1177/2332858417711428

Loizou, E. (2007, September). System of early education/care and professionalisation in Cyprus. Report commissioned by the State Institute of Early Childhood Research (IFP). Munich, Germany. Retrieved from http://www.ifp.bayern.de/imperia/md/content/stmas/ifp/commissioned_report_cyprus.pdf

Loizou, E. (2009). In-service early childhood educators reflect on their educator training program: Reconceptualizing the case of Cyprus. *Journal of Early Childhood Educator Education, 30*(3), 195-209. doi:10.1080/10901020903084066

Loizou, E. (2009). In-service early childhood educators reflect on their educator training program: Reconceptualizing the case of Cyprus. *Journal of Early Childhood Educator Education, 30*(3), 195-209. doi:10.1080/10901020903084066

Loizou, E. (2018). Professional Development and Impact of the Early Change Project: Reflections from the Cypriot Example. Professional Development and Quality in Early Childhood Education: Comparative European Perspectives. Cham: Springer International Publishing. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-64212-3_5

Megalonidou, C. (2020). The quality of early childhood education and care services in Greece. *International Journal of Child Care and Education Policy, 14*(1), 1-12. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40723-020-00074-2

Meghir, K., Makadasi, F., Terzidis, A., Vourdouba, A. Bertou, G., Mplesiou, G., Kalpogianni, E., Janikian, M., Zagkas-Tsakiris, M., Kounari, O., Geroulanou, E. & Synanidou, E. (2021). The new framework for early childhood and care for children 0-4 in Greece. Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs.

Mills, M., Präg, P., Tsang, F., Begall, K., Derbyshire, J., Kohle, L., & Hoorens, S. (2013). Use of childcare services in the EU Member States and progress towards the Barcelona targets. Short Statistical Report No. 1. Prepared for the European Commission Directorate-General for Justice. Unpublished manuscript.

Missouri SWPBI (2018-2019). *Missouri School-wide Positive Behavior Support, Tier I, Team Workbook.* Missouri: Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Murphy, L. (2016). *Evaluating the benefits of the Aistear curriculum on the social interactions of junior infant children*. Dublin Business School.

OECD (2019). Providing Quality Early Childhood Education and Care: Results from the Starting Strong Survey 2018, TALIS. OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/301005d1-en

OECD (2020). Building a High-Quality Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce: Further Results from the Starting Strong. Survey 2018, TALIS, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/b90bba3d-en

OECD (2021). Starting Strong VI. Supporting Meaningful Interactions in Early Childhood Education and Care. https://doi.org/10.1787/f47a06ae-en

Peeters, J., Sharmahd, J., & Budginaitė, I. (2016). Professionalisation of childcare assistants in early childhood education and care (ECEC): Pathways towards qualification. NESET II report. Luxembourg, Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, doi:10.2766/898530

ProW (2022). Training Manual for Pro-W.

Reavis, H. K., Kukic, S. J., Jenson, W. R., & Morgan, D. P. (1993). *Utah's BEST Project: Behavioral and Educational Strategies for Educators: Technical Assistance Manuals.* Utah State Office of Education.

Rentzou, K. (2016). Mapping gender segregation in pre-primary and primary education in Cyprus. *The Journal of Men's Studies*, 1-22. doi:10.1177/1060826516658765

Santos, M. (2017). O impacto do programa Anos Incríveis - Educator Classroom Management nas competências socioemocionais de crianças após a transição para o primeiro ciclo [Master's dissertation]. Universidade de Coimbra, Portugal.

Santos, M., Silveira-Maia, M., & Martins, S. (2021). *Trajetórias para a Educação Inclusiva: análise da legislação portuguesa e das suas implicações nas práticas e na formação de professores com base*

nas tendências europeias. In M. Cruz & C. Pinto (Eds), issueEs'21 Issues in Education. Politécnico do Porto

Simões, C., Santos, A. C., Lebre, P., Daniel, J. R., Branquinho, C., Gaspar, T., & Matos, M. G. de. (2021). Assessing the impact of the European resilience curriculum in preschool, early and late primary school children. *School Psychology International, 42*(5), 539–566. https://doi.org/10.1177/01430343211025075

Steed, E. A., Pomerleau, T., Muscott, H., & Rohde, L. (2013). Program-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports in rural preschools. *Rural Special Education Quarterly, 32*(1), 38-46.

Sugai, G., & Horner, R. H. (2002). The evolution of discipline practices: School-wide positive behavior supports. *Child and Family Behavior Therapy, 24*, 23–50.

Sugai, G., & Horner, R. H. (2009). *Defining and describing schoolwide positive behavior support*. In Handbook of positive behavior support (pp. 307-326). Springer, Boston, MA.

Sugai, G., & Horner, R. R. (2006). A promising approach for expanding and sustaining school-wide positive behavior support. *School psychology review, 35*(2), 245-259.

Tusla. (2018a). Developing Policies, Procedures and Statements in Early Childhood Education and Care Services: A Practical Guide. Dublin: Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla.

Tusla. (2018b). Quality and Regulatory Framework: Full Day Care Service and Part-Time   Day Care Service. Dublin: Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla.

Vrasidas, C. et al. (2021). Systemic change and implementation science: Challenges and possibilities of SWPBS. Paper accepted for presentation at the International School Psychology Association ISPA 2021 conference: Working with Schools and Families to Strengthen Children, Nicosia, Cyprus. http://ispa2021.org/

Walker, H. M., Horner, R. H., Sugai, G., Bullis, M., Sprague, J. R., Bricker, D., et al. (1996). Integrated approaches to preventing antisocial behavior patterns among school-age children and youth. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, 4*, 194–209.

Warren, J. S., Edmonson, H. M., Griggs, P., Lassen, S. R., McCart, A., & Turnbull, A., et al. (2003). Urban applications of schoolwide positive behavior support: Critical issues and lessons learned. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, 5,* 80–91.

Woods, A., Mannion, A., & Garrity, S. (2021). Implementing Aistear–the Early Childhood   Curriculum Framework Across Varied Settings: Experiences of Early Years Educators and Infant Primary School Educators in the Irish Context. *Child Care in Practice*, 1-20.

ANNEX I

LIST OF LEADERSHIP TEAM (POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT)

Preschool:

School Year:

Leadership Team (Positive Behaviour Support)

	NAME	TELEPHONE NUMBER	EMAIL	ROLE
1				Chairperson/ Coordinator
2				Internal Coach
3				Timekeeper
4				Secretary/ Recorder/ Notetaker
5				Contact person

ANNEX II

EXAMPLE OF BEHAVIOURAL MATRIX

	Classroom	Outside	Hallway	Toilets	All settings
Safety	• Walk slowly • Keep toys and tools inside the play area • Use gentle touch with others. • Ask for help if you have a problem. • Carry heavy toys with a friend	• Listen to directions • Play nice with toys • Play inside the playground space	• Walk on the right side • Pay attention to the educator • Keep hands close to your body to avoid harming others	• Wash hands • Turn off the tap when finished • Take turns	• Walk carefully • Move your arms and feet gently to avoid harming others
Kindness	✔ Share toys ✔ Use kind words ✔ Invite others to play	✔ Take turns ✔ Use kind words ✔ Invite others to play	✔ Use a quiet voice ✔ Smile at others	✔ Flush the toilet ✔ Throw papers in the basket	✔ Share with others ✔ Use nice words ✔ Be gentle to your friends

Respons ibility	❖ Clean up ❖ Wash hands ❖ Enter the classroom when requested	❖ Follow directions ❖ Tidy up toys ❖ Put the garbage in the basket	❖ Stay in line ❖ Keep hands close to your body	❖ Wait your turn ❖ Knock the door and wait	❖ Ask for help if you have a problem. ❖ Push in the chair when done ❖ Put small amounts of food into your mouth and chew thoroughly ❖ Help a friend who needs

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

ANNEX III

TABLE OF DEFINITIONS OF MINOR CHALLENGING BEHAVIOURS

MINOR CHALLENGING BEHAVIOURS	DEFINITION

Annex IV

Table of Definitions of Major Challenging Behaviours

Major challenging behaviours	Definition

ANNEX V

SCHOOL COOPERATION FORM

All individuals who have agreed to have their school and classroom participate in the implementation of the intervention "School Wide Positive Behaviour Support" in Early Childhood need to read and sign this form, indicating that they have been informed of the actions to be planned and implemented by the school staff.

By participating in the project, I understand that:

Trainings - Meetings

I understand that I will participate in the training sessions and meetings related to the implementation of the intervention, for better coordination with the other educators participating in the program. If I need information, guidance and support I will contact my colleagues and my school's external coach.

Responsibility

- I will take part in activities and processes to support implementation in my classroom, such as developing and creating materials and meeting with fellow educators and parents/guardians.
- I will work to develop systematic communication with families about the implementation steps of the Positive Behaviour Support system.
- I will take responsibility for implementing the system in my classroom and seek support and guidance from the external collaborator on related issues.

During the implementation of the Positive Behaviour Promotion system, I will:

- Use behavioural data to guide our decision-making.
- Implement a common curriculum and teach school values and common behaviours.
- Implement a common school-wide recognition/feedback system
- Actively participate in the evaluation of our action plan and take appropriate action to revise it.

Declaration of responsibility

I agree to the above terms and conditions and agree to participate myself and my class in the structured

intervention "School Wide Positive Behaviour Support.

	NAME	POSITION	CLASSROOM	NUMBER OF CHILDREN	SIGNATURE
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					