

OCTOBER WORKSHOPS MOVE TO ONLINE FORMAT



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Dear Learned Colleagues,

Due to continued COVID-19 restrictions, we have no choice but to deliver the October Empathy for Children workshops online.

As soon as we have finalised the precise format, dates and times, we will inform all participants by email.

Reasons for the Changes

- Following discussions with Slovak Ministry of Health, we understand that the travel COVID-19 traffic lights may change in the coming weeks and there may be more restriction for those wishing to travel to Bratislava from other countries
- It is recommended that there be no organised international meetings
- Interior meetings require participants to maintain a personal distance of 2 metres which would require a huge venue to accommodate everyone
- Participants would be required to wear face masks for long periods of time which carries its own health risks
- Some teachers from partner countries are reluctant to attend as they cannot be sure that they will not have to quarantine when they return home
- There are concerns as to who should be held liable in the unlikely event that participants fall ill with Covid-19

We hope the above points make it clear as to why we felt it necessary to move to an online format.

At present, we are looking to use Zoom as our online platform, although we remain open to suggestions at this point.

Proposed Changes

- A short questionnaire will be sent to participants to help agree the times, dates and online platform
- All participants will be sent a login to the agreed online platform through which to access Iben Sandahl's lectures and collaborative workshops
- Workshops will be significantly reduced in time as we recognise that most people are unable to concentrate for long periods of time while online
- All participants will attend daily online presentations (Monday to Friday) which will be followed by small group activities, feedback and question and answer sessions
- Participants will be divided into smaller groups and meet in online group rooms where they will complete directed tasks and discussions
- Teachers may be asked to return to the main lecture room to provide feedback.
- Lectures will be recorded so that teachers can review them at any time

Possible Implications

- Daily online attendance will be significantly shorter than the 5 hours originally planned for the face-to-face meetings
- Schools will have to ensure that their teachers have access to computers, cameras, audio and an adequate internet connection
- Schools should try to make time for their teachers to attend the lectures and group activities
- Teachers and schools will be awarded their attendance certificates via email
- As the workshops are to be online, there is room for additional participants and all attendees will take part in the complete teacher-trainer programme.

Possible Structure

Below is a proposed programme as suggested by Iben Sandahl. It is intended to give schools some idea of what to expect and begin planning accordingly. However, it is important to note that this is simply a proposal and therefore may be subject to change.

Monday 5 to 9 October

8.30-9.00

Open room for all participants to socialize and discuss freely.

9:00-9:15

Iben Sandahl sums up on the day before (from day two).

9.15-10:00

Key Presentation guided exercise.

10.00-10.15

Clarifying questions from participants answered in relation to the presentation.

10:15-11:15

Participants are given exercises or questions to consider and work in virtual groups. Iben Sandahl will assist the groups in seeing them in action, supervising, and answering questions, depending on what each group needs.

11:15 – 12:00

Reflections and an exercise will be handed out to use with students.

12:00-16:00

Individual work.

As soon as COVID-19 restrictions ease, Iben Sandahl will make one-day visits to each participating country to support teacher trainers and pilot schools in adopting the new empathic approach.

We believe that these alternative arrangements will still provide for an extremely rewarding experience for all attendees and an excellent contribution to teachers' professional development.



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