TO BE — RESEARCHING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN DRAMA, WELL-BEING AND EDUCATION

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PREFACE

"A culture can be toxic or nourishing,' writes Thom Hartmann. If we wish to take full responsibility for health in our society, we must not only be vigilant guardians of our personal well-being, we must also work to change structures, institutions, and ideologies that keep us mired in a toxic culture."

Dr. Gábor Máté, therapist, author, speaker

The 'To be or not to be well? – Drama and Theatre in Education' project ran from 2019 to 2022, with the support of the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union. During the 29-months-long project, the four organizations of the transnational partnership worked through Drama and Theatre in Education to collaborate with teachers in ways that support their well-being and that of the students, especially those who are at risk of exclusion.

Big Brum TiE from the UK, The Lužánky Leisure Time Activity Centre from the Czech Republic, Nyitott Kör Association from Hungary and the Association of Drama Practitioners STOP-KLATKA from Poland collaborated to create new education resources to foster the well-being of school communities, which are shared and download-able on the tobe.nyitottkor.hu site.

All of the four partners have long lasting and extensive experience in Drama and/or Theatre in Education, which has resulted in meaningful collaborations with schools. Their practices are authentic, and this is intentionally reflected in the To Be projects' outputs. The key events of the project were encounters with teachers, education workers and *their* students in all four European contexts, which took the form of workshops, seminars, performances and follow-up sessions, in which the needs of – and feedback from – these target groups were system-atically taken into account. The project team had created, facilitated and lived out a joint experience of creative training at the beginning of the project, which set out a common ground for the sessions with the target groups in each country.

The idea of focusing not only on students, but also on other members of the school was born around 2018, based on the research results of a previous Nyitott Kör project (Lendvai, Horváth, Dóczi-Vámos, & Jozifek, 2018). From these results we found that in order to reach a long-term and meaningful impact on the students, we need to consider them as part of an organisation and to reach more members of the school community. Simultaneously, Big Brum had been trying to collaborate closely with a group of teachers from a single school, engaging them in Drama, so as to invite them to experience it, and thereby become more equipped to engage students (Ballin, 2019). Drama practitioners at Lužánky and STOP-KLATKA joined us on the journey of exploring the potential of collaborating with teachers and education workers on the long-term, because they also perceived, in their local contexts, a lack of awareness and practices concerning the well-being of teachers, the lack of their communities, and which impacted on students and education itself.

The final results of the To Be project include a Well-being *Curricula*, which consists of four document packages, one from each partner. The Well-being Curricula are schemes to be used by other practitioners, who would like to work on the well-being of their schools, involving Drama, through a process-oriented approach, that targets both teachers and students. The 'To Be – A Living Question: *Guidebook* for Drama & Education practitioners' narrates the story of the project and the story of the encounters that partners had with teachers, students, and with each other in the European partnership. Through the Guidebook we share the key principles that guided the practitioners' work, their (re)search of authentic and creative moments, and ways in which the project coped with the challenging times of the Covid-19 pandemic to reach all the aforementioned objectives.

We considered it important to measure, follow, and *Research* the impact of the process, using the encounters of the Well-being Curricula as core materials for observation. Project partners from the Czech

Republic, from Hungary and from the UK invited academics and professionals to collaborate in the analyses of the results and creation of the studies, which we share through this book.

Ben Ballin took an interpretative and ethnographic approach to qualitative data from teachers participating in the project. This was subsequently analysed by an expert interpretation panel, involving Dr. Gill Brigg, Stacy Brown, and Matt Hinks. The research explored how the Theatre in Education Company Big Brum sought to meet the needs of the 'displaced child' by engaging these teachers in a felt and creative manner.

Dr. Gabriella Dóczi-Vámos and Dr. Lilla Lendvai, with the help of Zsófia Jozifek from Nyitott Kör, conducted an Art Based Participatory Action Research, following and affecting closely the sequence of workshops with teachers, exploring key factors of their professional well-being and the role of Drama and Theatre in Education in working on it.

Hana Cisovská, Eva Janebová and Lenka Polánková, collaborating with Lužánky, carried out a qualitative research that functions as a probe into how selected teachers and school management workers understood well-being, and how this was reflected during project encounters.

We wished to develop evidence-based materials about the impact of the processes throughout the project, to raise awareness about the situation in each place, its challenges, educational problems, and the points of view of different actors. We aimed to articulate why Drama and Theatre in Education are strong stimuli for enabling participants to become agents of change, and how they can support the well-being of teachers, students and that of the school as an organisation. We will be happy to discuss, debate and be questioned about our results, with the aim of fostering a shift that raises awareness about conscious work on the well-being of schools, and the importance of creativity in education.

Zsófia Jozifek
Coordinator of the project

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SOCIALLY CONNECTED:
THE DISPLACED TEACHER AND THE DISPLACED CHILD

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ABSTRACT

This research forms part of an international project that uses drama and theatre to promote the well-being of teachers and young people. The UK-based strand of the research takes an interpretative and ethno-graphic approach to qualitative data from teachers participating in the project at an inner-city primary school. This is subsequently analysed by an expert interpretation panel. The research explores how the Theatre in Education Company Big Brum sought to meet the needs of the 'displaced child' by engaging these teachers in a felt and creative manner. It asks to what extent Big Brum was successful in its stated ambition that *"by working with teachers in affective, creative and colla-borative ways, the Company believes that they will be able to synthesise new forms of authentic educational practice that benefit all children, including those most at risk of school exclusion"*? It further considers what Big Brum, as well as other schools and practitioners, can learn from this experience.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research forms part of an international project that uses drama and theatre to promote the well-being of teachers and young people. The UK-based strand of the research takes an interpretative and ethnographic approach to qualitative data from teachers participating in the project at an inner-city primary school. This is subsequently analysed by an expert interpretation panel. The research explores how the Theatre in Education Company Big Brum sought to meet the needs of the 'displaced child' by engaging these teachers in a felt and creative manner. It asks to what extent Big Brum was successful in its stated ambition that *"by working with teachers in affective, creative and collabo-rative ways, the Company believes that they will be able to synthesise new forms of authentic educational practice that benefit all children, including those most at risk of school exclusion"*? It further considers what Big Brum, as well as other schools and practitioners, can learn from this experience.

The project that the research investigates took place in the context of an endemic crisis of well-being for teachers and young people, further aggravated and made visible by the 2020-21 global coronavirus pandemic.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING

• The project had clear and positive benefits for the well-being of participating children

• The project created a 'safe space' where children could freely and openly share their feelings, experiences and ideas

• There were no exclusions by the school during the project period

• Good attendance in the participating classes was maintained during those times when the school was open and during which the main project activities took place. This was not always the case with other classes at the school.

• Children experiencing disadvantage and/or requiring Early Help appear to have experienced similar benefits from the project to those for other children.

TEACHERS' WELL-BEING

• The project was demonstrably beneficial to the well-being of the participating teachers

• The project created a 'safe space' where adults could freely and openly share their feelings, experiences and ideas

• The teachers were able to assert themselves through the project as active agents in their own authentic professional practice

COLLABORATIVE AND CREATIVE PRACTICE

• Project benefits appear to have been circular: *"healthy well-being for pupils equals healthy well-being for staff equals healthy well-being for pupils"*

• Collaboration itself seems to have been a key element in promoting teachers' (and thus children's) well-being

• Collaborating within 'the crucible paradigm' allowed Big Brum and the teachers to work with considerable freedom

• The project strongly emphasised the affective dimension for both adult and child participants, including providing a space where participants could talk about, rather than repress, their feelings

• Experiencing and processing their own felt/emotional responses to the project appears to have empowered the teachers when it came to their work with the children

• Pedagogies employed by this project could be widely and beneficially applicable beyond it

CONCLUSION

The findings above demonstrate clearly that this project benefited all children, including those identified by the school as being most at risk of school exclusion.

They also demonstrate how creative collaboration helped enable teachers' felt understanding' of the work, thereby giving rise to forms of authentic practice that resulted in these benefits.

This project has taken a significant step forward in terms of using drama to enable significant collaborative work that connects Big Brum's creative practice to the authentic emotional and educational needs of teachers and children.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It raises the potential for the company to go both deeper and wider in terms of further development. This might include more in-depth work with existing partner schools; exploring the transferability of 'the Benson model' to other contexts and settings; the development of a CPD programme that draws on its pedagogies.

This in turn raises questions about whether Big Brum should between work predominantly with schools which appear to be 'compatible' or seek to engage a wider spectrum of schools.

Data collection methods could be developed further, so as to be more sensitive and inclusive to partner needs and so as to restore aspects of research design that it had not been possible to pursue during the conditions in which this research took place.

The further development of Expert Interpretation Panels should be considered and could be beneficial for those involved.

1. INTRODUCTION AND KEY QUESTIONS

"They were able to see themselves in the drama, they could see their parents in the drama, I could see myself in the drama, we were all seeing something in that drama that we could relate to. It allowed us to articulate our feelings through it. That's the beauty of working in a classroom like this. There are no right or wrongs in these situations and everybody's point is valid and right" – Teacher AN, Benson School.

This UK-based research forms a contribution to the 'To Be Project', an international project that uses drama and theatre to promote the well-being of teachers and young people, including children at risk of early school leaving and other forms of disadvantage.

The research takes an interpretative and ethnographic approach to the accounts of teachers participating in the project at Benson Community Primary, an inner-city Birmingham primary school. This qualitative data was subsequently analysed by an Expert Interpretation Panel, whose insights significantly inform its findings.

It explores how the Theatre in Education Company Big Brum sought to meet the needs of the 'displaced child' (Yeoman, 2000) by re-engaging these teachers in a felt and creative manner.

It asks to what extent Big was Brum successful in its stated ambition: *"by working with teachers in affective, creative and collaborative ways, the Company believes that they will be able to synthesise new forms of authentic educational practice that benefit all children, including those most at risk of school exclusion."*

It further considers what Big Brum, as well as other schools and practitioners, can learn from this experience.

1.1.   COVID-19 – A NOTE

The research, and the project it relates to, coincided with the 2020-21 global coronavirus pandemic. Indeed, the pandemic itself became a key context for the ideas and feelings being explored by Big Brum, the teachers and children.

The pandemic also had practical impacts on both the project and the research, including the availability of quantitative data which tracked children at risk of early school leaving and disadvantage. This data had originally formed a part of the research design. However, as a consequence of the pandemic, this data was not available to inform part of the research.

More generally, research processes and outcomes should be read and understood in the light of these exceptional circumstances: the work did not take place during 'normal times.'

1.2.   WHAT THE RESEARCH TESTS – BIG BRUM'S 'THESIS'

Big Brum's thesis in beginning this work was that *"we can best meet the needs of the 'displaced child' by re-engaging teachers in a felt and creative manner. By working with teachers in affective, creative and collaborative ways we believe that we will be able to synthesise new forms of authentic educational practice that benefit all children, including those most at risk of school exclusion."*

1.3.   KEY QUESTIONS

1. How can close collaboration between Big Brum and teachers lead to benefits for the well-being of pupils (aged 10-11) at risk of early school leaving?

2. To what extent can such collaboration also benefit the well-being of teachers?

3. How can Big Brum work together with teachers in a creative and collaborative way that promotes 'felt understanding' and enables professional authenticity and reconnection?

1.4.   BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

This research builds on findings about professional development and inclusion from a previous three-year project, led by Big Brum TIE and supported by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, summarised in the 'Engaging, Exploring, Expressing' report (Ballin et al., 2019). This and the associated 'Human Spaces' case study (Bolton, 2019) raised the need for Big Brum to organise intensive professional development encounters with teachers so as to maximise the benefits of their work for children and young people. The two reports also proposed some of the characteristics of such work, including a strong affective dimension. The reports recognised that teachers – as well as children – are literally and metaphorically 'displaced' in their lives and their work.

In addition, this research seeks to complement other To Be Project outputs, including parallel research into project impacts conducted by Hungarian and Czech partners and two cross-project pedagogical outputs: a multi-media 'Curriculum' and a project Guidebook for practitioners and teachers (To Be Consortium 2021a, & 2021b).

2. PROJECT BACKGROUND

"The focus of this one is completely different ... I think it will really contribute to the welfare of the children. It [the pandemic] *can't really be ignored. For us to give children the time and space for the children to digest it is the way forward. It would be worse if you just put it to one side, went back to a 'normal' focus, what you would have taught a previous Year 6 group. It wouldn't give them a chance to work through it. There will be lots of children that it's really presented a lot of difficulties for."* – Teacher AA, Benson School

2.1.   TEACHER AND PUPIL WELL-BEING

The project that this report investigates had pupil and teacher well-being at its heart. Well-being is in itself a contested and sometimes nebulous term. At an individual level, well-being is experienced simultaneously at a psychological, social, physical and emotional level: what one of the Expert Interpretation Panel members described as 'feeling states.'

For the purposes of this report, we have adopted a social and systemic model for understanding well-being, as eloquently expressed in the following: *"it's how we're all currently working that is making us feel so 'unwell.' Or, to frame it more broadly ... it's how we're all living. The systems within which we are functioning are at odds with our fundamental wellbeing needs: strengthening ourselves up to be strong, resilient and well-enough to head back into the same broken systems that are breaking us down"* (Musson, 2021).

Musson points out that the performative culture of schools can itself be a crucial part of this problem: putting significant pressures on the well-being of both teachers and young people, including what Ball (2003) describes as "a kind of *values schizophrenia"* [italics in original].

Indeed, there have been repeated headlines in recent years, raising concerns about a well-being and mental health 'crisis point' for young people in the UK, coupled with a decline in support (Ballin, McGuire, & Murphy, 2018; Coughlan, 2017; National Education Union, 2019; Patalay & Fitzsimons, 2017; Weale, 2019; Young Minds, 2018).

There have been corresponding concerns about teachers' well-being. This is from 2018.

"75% of all education staff have faced physical or mental health issues in the last two years because of their work and 53% have considered leaving as a result.

Almost one in five (19%) said they had experienced panic attacks

Over half (56%) had suffered from insomnia and difficulties sleeping

Over a third (41%) had experienced difficulty concentrating" (Savill-Smith, 2018).

This is from 2019, one year later …

"Work-related stress in the teaching profession has increased for the third consecutive year, with sharp rises in tearfulness, difficulty sleeping and irritability amongst education professionals across the UK." (Savill-Smith, 2019).

It is not hard to imagine how such conditions will have implications, not only for teachers as human beings and professionals, but also for the children they teach.

2.2.　WELL-BEING AND THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

One year on again, at the time of the project, we can add to all of the above the impact of the 2020-21 global coronavirus pandemic. The already toxic mix for both teachers and young people had become

very potent indeed (Anonymous, 2020; Carpenter & Carpenter, 2020; Young Minds, 2020a, 2020b). Moreover, the pandemic highlighted existing societal fault-lines and inequalities 'like an X-ray on a fracture bone' (Mason, 2020), meaning that those children and adults who were already most vulnerable tended to experience the most acute social and psychological consequences (Attwood, 2020).

"Helen Westerman, safeguarding expert at the NSPCC [National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children]*, has reported seeing increased levels of anxiety, depression, self-harm and suicidal thoughts during the lockdown, especially among the 400,000 children designated 'vulnerable' by the DfE* [Department for Education, England]*, saying that 'there is a potential generation of children that are very vulnerable following this epidemic'"* (Ballin, 2020).

"Half of the UK's school teachers (52%) say their mental health declined during the first stage of the coronavirus pandemic" (Education Support, 2020).

2.3.　PROJECT INTENTIONS

This is an enormously challenging picture, raising structural and systemic issues that are far beyond the scope of one modest project to resolve and which go to the heart of our society, culture and political economy. It certainly goes far beyond what Musson disparages as '*the candyfloss versions of wellbeing*' (op cit). The project that forms the subject of this research has nonetheless persisted in its ambition of making a thoughtful, constructive and worth-while difference to the lives of those teachers and young people directly involved (and, through project outputs, potentially many others).

In engaging in the project, Big Brum Theatre in Education proposed a set of nested but interconnected relationships that would engage with the creative and dramatic work at its heart:

• firstly, teachers would be involved, emotionally and intellectually, in exploring project content with Big Brum;

- then, with and through the teachers and Big Brum, the project would engage three classes of children aged 10-11;

- as a sub-set of those classes, the project would engage those children at risk of early school leaving and disadvantage.

The project centred on a dramatic stimulus for teachers and (in a modified form) for children. The project process included exploratory work before, during and as follow-up to this stimulus (see Section 3).

2.4. EARLY SCHOOL LEAVING AND DISADVANTAGE

Identifying children at risk of early school leaving in a primary school is not always clear-cut. In negotiating the project with Benson School, Big Brum agreed that those children requiring 'Early Help' (the school's preferred term) would be an appropriate proxy. This term includes looked-after children, those with behavioural issues and some others with emotional or additional support needs. In the prior experience of the school, this was the group of children already experiencing elements of disadvantage and most at risk of early school leaving (and/or exclusion). The identity of these children was known by participating teachers but remained confidential to researchers and Big Brum.

The coronavirus pandemic, involving three national lockdowns and partial school closures, significantly disrupted activities at the school, including school attendance. However, good attendance in the three Year 6 classes was 'maintained' during those times when the school was open and during which the main project activities took place. There were no exclusions from the school at that time. Findings in this report in relation to early school leaving and disadvantage should however be understood in the light of its very particular context.

In contrast, it is worth noting reports that England's school inspectorate Ofsted had recorded (perhaps counter-intuitively) an increase in school exclusions in some school academy chains[1] during the pandemic, perhaps in part as a result of temporary competition for very limited places (Harris, 2021).

This should be set alongside a pattern where school exclusions consistently reproduce existing social inequalities. This means for example that black Caribbean children are up to six times, and Roma children up to nine times, more likely to be excluded from schools in parts of England than their white peers (McIntyre, N. et al., 2021). This systemic problem has led to an outright rejection, on anti-racist grounds, of school exclusions as a strategy by some headteachers and educationalists (Searle, 1996; No More Exclusions, 2019).

Researcher Nicholas Treloar points out that there is also a dynamic of class and social disadvantage at play: *"Exclusions essentially criminalise children, and disproportionately impact on the poorest and most vulnerable"* (McIntyre et al., op cit).

Finally, it is also worth noting that the Department for Education in England argued consistently during the pandemic that school attendance was crucial for pupil well-being: *"For the vast majority of children, particularly the most vulnerable, school is the best place to be for their education and wellbeing"* (DfE, 2020). This 'reckless' position was however vigorously contested by teaching unions (National Education Union, 2021).

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[1] 'Academies' in England are state-funded schools or chains of schools, usually administered by Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) as quasi-businesses. They operate independently of local government and are exempt from some state regulation (e.g. an obligation to follow the National Curriculum).

2.5. THE SCHOOL AND THE PARTICULAR CONTEXT OF THIS WORK

For the project, Big Brum worked closely with three parallel classes of Year 6 children (aged 10-11) and their teachers at Benson Primary School in the inner-city Hockley area of Birmingham. The schools inspectorate Ofsted describes the school thus in its 2018 report: *"Almost all pupils come from a wide range of minority ethnic groups with the proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium funding[2] being well above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have SEN* [Special Educational Needs] *and/or disabilities is also above the national average"* (Ofsted, 2018).

Big Brum had worked regularly with the school for a number of years, including in-depth work with both teachers and children as part of the project leading to the 'Engaging, Exploring, Expressing' and 'Human Spaces' reports (see 1.4. above). This project therefore deliberately built on that work and its findings, especially those related to:

- the development of models of practice that engage both teachers and children;

- a focus on affective as well as cognitive learning (thereby supporting 'felt understanding');

- an emphasis on operating in as 'radically inclusive' a manner as possible.

2.6. PROJECT AND RESEARCH – ACADEMIC BACKGROUND

The work described in the two earlier reports (above) built in turn on earlier findings from the DICE Report (DICE Consortium, 2010), which demonstrated that young people who regularly participate in theatre and drama activities experience multiple personal, social and emotional benefits (and *'like going to school more'*). The project work was further informed by ongoing dialogue and exploration with practising Drama teachers as part of the Big Brum / Birmingham City University Drama in Education Hub (where teachers' well-being and authenticity had formed a significant collective area of exploration, as well as the focus of individual teachers' Masters-level research) (BCU/Big Brum, ongoing).

The research itself has also been informed by ongoing dialogue with Big Brum company members, advisory group participants, project partners and with those working in UK research projects related to drama and young people's well-being, before and during the project period (Irwin, 2019; Faull, 2020). It builds on the growing body of international academic research that explores Big Brum's practice, not least its role as a leading exponent of Bondian theatre (e.g. Ada, 2020; Amoiropoulos, 2013; Bethlenfalvy, 2020; Bolton, 2020; DICE Consortium, 2010; Davis, 2005, 2014; Jackson & Vine, 2013; Vierin, 2020; Wooster, 2007).

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[2] England's Department for Education states that *"The pupil premium grant is designed to allow schools to help disadvantaged pupils by improving their progress."* Having a high proportion of such pupils is therefore a broad indicator of high levels of social disadvantage. (DfE, 2021).

3. METHODOLOGY

This research gathered evidence from the teachers about Big Brum's work with teachers and children during the project, so as to test Big Brum's 'thesis' about this work and answer the three research questions.

A key resource to the project was the Monodrama, 'Socially Distant' written for Big Brum by Chris Cooper (2020) as a direct response to the coronavirus pandemic, and filmed as a resource in parallel with the project process. Written text, rehearsal footage and clips from the play were all used as stimulus material with teachers and were adapted for use with children.

The project cycle comprised the following sessions. Because of lockdown restrictions, some sessions with teachers took place wholly or partly online.

A full account of the Sessions is provided in the To Be Project Guide-book, supported by audio-visual material in the To Be Project Curriculum (To Be Consortium 2021a, & 2021b).

Date	Sequence	Purpose and activity	Participants
November 2019 to January 2020	Pilot phase	Testing the ground	Big Brum with children, then teachers
March 2020	Session 1	Setting the scene	Big Brum with teachers
July 2020	Session 2	Exploring social distance	Big Brum with teachers (online)
July 2020	Session 3	Responding to the story – ideas, feelings, images, moments	Big Brum with teachers (online)
September 2020	Session 4	Preparing for the initial work with children	Big Brum with teachers (online)
September 2020	Session 5	Children explore the story	Big Brum with children (teachers observing)
September 2020	Session 6	Planning with the teachers	Big Brum with teachers
September 2020	Session 7	Follow-up work	Teachers with children
November 2020	Session 8	Reviewing the work	Big Brum with teachers (partly online)

3.1. DATA COLLECTION

The data collected was qualitative, comprising:

- audio-visual recordings of teacher feedback from the project (from Session 8);

- audio-visual recordings of teachers at the project school discussing moments during lockdown and initial ideas about planning (from Sessions 2 and 3).

This was supplemented with:

- a slide set created by the teachers and showing children's work in the later stages of the project (from Session 7);

- short audio-visual recordings, where Big Brum company members comment on planning sessions with teachers (Sessions 2 and 4).

Three Year 6 teachers from the school were involved in the principal interviews, with an additional five teachers or Higher Level Teaching Assistants attending occasional sessions. The main project work directly involved approximately 90 children aged 10-11. (A brief pilot cycle involved a similar number of children but does not constitute the focus of this research).

Due to the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic, it proved impossible for the school to collect and share meaningful quantitative tracking data on the behaviour and well-being of pupils requiring 'Early Help', something which had formed part of the initial research proposal (see also 1.1., above).

Interruptions and delays caused by the pandemic also led to the replacement of an initial proposal to gather data from teachers' own action research and reflective journals with formative and reflective activities that took place as part of project group sessions and meetings. This adaptation meant that, as originally intended, data still came out of the sessions and informed the research without an additional tool being required or disproportionate demands being made on the school.

3.2. DATA INTERPRETATION

This data was analysed by an Expert Interpretation Panel which comprised a consultant on Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), a Drama teacher and Big Brum's Education Partnerships Worker. The panel's work was facilitated by the researcher. Panel meetings took place via Zoom and all sessions were recorded and shared with members for approval and further comment.

All panel participants were familiar to some extent with Big Brum's work: most obviously so the researcher and Education Partnerships Worker (both company members). Rather than attempt to maintain an objective distance, the Interpretation Panel therefore sought to draw on a range of engaged perspectives to inform understanding: two from 'insider-outsiders' and one from an 'insider.'

A comparable stance was taken towards the accounts of teachers, whose narratives and testimony were assumed to be based on professional knowledge and reflective understanding. The principal intention was therefore to arrive at rich levels of interpretive understanding of the work that had taken place, drawing on these narratives, rather than any positivist or objectifying judgement. This in turn was intended to inform both participants' and teachers' own continuing understanding and practice: in effect, as a type of formative evaluation. The panel noted that this approach appeared to enhance the collaborative and interpersonal elements of the work.

The panel's findings were fed back to the participating teachers as part of a dialogic and iterative process of clarification and truth-seeking.

A comparable process had been undergone in the production of Big Brum's 2019 Evaluation Report, 'Engaging, Exploring, Expressing: the case for Theatre in Education' (op cit).

The overall process was overseen and quality assured by Big Brum's Advisory Group of drama education specialists, which also advised on how findings could best be communicated.

3.3. ETHICS

All audio-visual and written recordings took place with the informed consent of the participating teachers and the school, including a written explanation of the purposes to which it would be put. Teacher names in draft texts were anonymised in agreement with the individual teachers. Participating teachers saw the audio-visual recordings used for data interpretation and received drafts of pedagogical and research documentation for approval and amendment. We refer further to the question of consent at 5.5.4., below.

Consent was given by the school for Big Brum to document work with the pupils for this project. No images of pupil faces were recorded and, where advised by the school, pupils' names were also anonymised.

Information regarding the pupils requiring Early Help remained confidential to the school throughout the project and research processes. All staff attending sessions with children had appropriate and current Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) documentation.

3.4.   LIMITATIONS OF RESEARCH

The research findings are based upon the accounts of a very small number of teachers (a core sample of 3) and their work with approximately 90 children in a single school. Moreover, the research took place at a time of acute national crisis. In interpreting data, the Expert Interpretation Panel has therefore taken a phenomenological approach: seeing this data as rooted in the 'facticity' of a particular school in a particular city at a particular time and during very exceptional circumstances (Merleau-Ponty, 1962).

This snapshot in time and space is unlikely to be exactly replicable in other circumstances and it is not clear at the time of writing how transferable its specifics can be. The panel believes that it nonetheless throws helpful light on the questions being explored.

The research, like the project, has been based on a high-trust model, and the data provided through the narrative accounts of the teachers has been accepted on face value. No further triangulation has taken place. For example, while there is a record of pupils' outputs from classroom work and teachers were recorded describing this work, there is no direct record of exactly what the teachers and pupils did in the classroom, how they went about it and the extent to which the teachers drew on models of practice provided by Big Brum.

Pupils' accounts, too, are largely absent from the data. The panel noted that young children requiring Early Help might not necessarily be able to articulate their responses to the work without additional support or to serve as strong self-advocates. Whilst the original

research design had intended to incorporate some quantitative data on the children, this had not proved possible in the crisis conditions during which the research took place.

The panel also noted that the use of film (including Zoom recordings) to gather narrative data may have led to more careful or self-conscious responses from teachers than might otherwise have been the case. Panel members suggested that future research of this type might invite participants to self-select their preferred means of recording.

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS

These research findings are based upon the accounts of a small number of teachers in a single school. Moreover, it occurred during the 2020-21 global coronavirus pandemic. All findings should be understood in those contexts: at the time of writing, it is not clear how transferable this research report's specifics can be.

Numbers in brackets refer to the report sections where supporting evidence can be found.

1. How can close collaboration between Big Brum and teachers lead to benefits for the well-being of pupils (aged 10-11) at risk of early school leaving?

- The project had clear and positive benefits for the well-being of participating children (5.3.)

- The project engaged children both intellectually and emotionally (5.3.)

- There were no exclusions by the school during the project period (5.4.1.)

- Good attendance in the participating classes was maintained during those times when the school was open and during which the main project activities took place. This was not always the case with other classes at the school. (5.4.1.)

- Children experiencing disadvantage and/or requiring Early Help appear to have experienced similar benefits from the project to those for other children.

- The project created a 'safe space' where children could freely and openly share their feelings, experiences and ideas (5.3.1.)

- These 'safe' and inclusive spaces were provided in a variety of ways, for example through the paradigm of there being 'no right or wrong answers' (5.3.1.)

- 'The protection of fiction' enabled children to freely explore themselves and the world they found themselves in (5.3.2.)

- Children were able to develop strong empathy for characters in the drama (5.3.2.)

- The project provided a common experience that both children and adults could relate to and which allowed both parties to rapidly open up ideas and feelings up (5.3.2.)

- This included the dramatic fiction serving as an ongoing point of reference (5.3.4.)

- The project enabled children to develop their self-knowledge (5.3.2.)

- The project facilitated social connectedness between all parties (teachers, children, Big Brum) (5.3.2.)

- The project's affective and 'open' qualities appear to have been of particular value for 'disengaged' learners (5.4.2.)

- The project enabled a smooth and speedy 'recovery' process for both teachers and children, on returning from the first national lockdown, which enabled all parties to re-engage with teaching and learning (5.3.3.).

2. To what extent can such collaboration also benefit the well-being of teachers?

- The project was demonstrably beneficial to the well-being of the participating teachers (5.2)

- The project created a 'safe space' where adults could freely and openly share their feelings, experiences and ideas (5.2.1.)

- The teachers were able to assert themselves through the project as active agents in their own authentic professional practice (5.2.1.)

- The project created an environment where such 'teacher authenticity' could flourish (5.2.1.)

- The project prioritised trust-building and offered the 'protection of fiction' to adults as well as children (5.2)

- The project provided opportunities to build and sustain authentic relationships between teachers and children, where they could meet each other 'at a human level' (5.2.3.)

- Teachers appear to have formed a stronger social and emotional - as well as a professional - connection with their colleagues (5.2.3.)

- Because teachers' well-being appears to be closely related to professional identity, it is noteworthy that the pedagogical and curriculum opportunities presented by the project (for Literacy and PSHE) were viewed positively and with great enthusiasm (5.2.4.)

- The timing of the project reinforced a sense of immediacy and necessity, including its close connection to teachers' lives (5.2)

- The project enabled a smooth and speedy 'recovery' process for both teachers and children, on returning from the first national lockdown, which enabled all parties to re-engage with teaching and learning (5.2.2.)

3. How can Big Brum work together with teachers in a creative and collaborative way that promotes 'felt understanding' and enables professional authenticity and reconnection?

- Project benefits appear to have been circular: *"healthy well-being for pupils equals healthy well-being for staff equals healthy well-being for pupils"* (5.5.4.)

- Collaboration itself seems to have been a key element in promoting teachers' (and thus children's) well-being (5.5.1.)

- Collaborating within 'the crucible paradigm' allowed Big Brum and the teachers to work with considerable freedom (5.5.1.)

- The project strongly emphasised the affective dimension for both adult and child participants, including providing a space where participants could talk about, rather than repress, their feelings (5.5.3.)

- In particular, experiencing and processing their own felt/emotional responses to the project appears to have empowered the teachers when it came to their work with the children (5.5.3.)

- The research highlights that pedagogies employed by this project could be widely and beneficially applicable beyond it (5.5.5.)

- Trust building and open-ness between Big Brum and the teachers was an important element, especially in the early stages of the project (5.5.4.)

- The project repeatedly afforded powerful opportunities for both teachers and children to come to know both them-selves, and each other better (5.5.2.)

- This included opportunities for relationship-building – teachers getting to better know the children, their needs and circumstances (5.5.2.)

• Big Brum modelled a number of pedagogical approaches which were then used or adapted by the teachers: the 'no right or wrong' paradigm; the use of time and space; the use of dialogic pedagogies to encourage 'reconnection'; the generation of creative and written work *"from within the drama"* as an enabler of authentic teaching and of empowered responses from the children (5.5.5.)

• The specific circumstances of returning from lockdown allowed time for the project to be prioritised, helping afford sufficient time for project preparation and implementation (also possibly with direct benefits for teacher well-being) (5.5.4.)

• The removal at this time of most 'normal' performative expectations enabled a degree of professional freedom while also aiding teacher well-being (5.5.2.)

To what extent Big Brum was successful in its stated ambition that *"by working with teachers in affective, creative and collaborative ways, the Company believes that they will be able to synthesise new forms of authentic educational practice that benefit all children, including those most at risk of school exclusion"*?

• The findings above demonstrate clearly that this project benefited all children, including those identified by the school as being most at risk of school exclusion.

• They also demonstrate how creative collaboration helped enable teachers' felt understanding' of the work, thereby giving rise to forms of authentic practice that resulted in these benefits.

• The final section of this report notes that *"the same forces affecting children in schools also displace teachers,"* who are *"increasingly being denied spaces where they can be their authentic 'teacher selves'"*. However, by using Theatre in Education to provide spaces and opportunities where these teachers can connect with their authentic selves, in tuning its ear to the Displaced Teacher so that the teacher can tune

their ear better to the Displaced Child, Big Brum in this project has taken a small but significant step for both adults and children to help "replace them in a powerfull sense of self" (5.5.6.)

To see what Big Brum, as well as other schools and practitioners, might learn from this experience, please see Section 5.6., Conclusion and Recommendations.

5. THE EXPERT INTERPRETATION PANEL: UNDERSTANDING THE RESEARCH EVIDENCE

5.1.   METHODOLOGY

The panel began its work by clarifying the parameters of the research and established the need to adopt a phenomenological approach to the data and to recognise its potential limitations (see 3.4., above).

5.2.   TEACHER WELL-BEING

"For us as teachers, this has been really beneficial" – Teacher AN.

While there was no formal baselining of the teachers' well-being, the panel recognised that the relationship between teachers' accounts of 'moments' of themselves and the world in July and then November 2020 would allow for an analysis of how their lives had changed over that difficult time, which included the first return to school following a national lockdown in the UK (see Appendix 1).

In tracing those individual teacher narratives, what struck the panel was not so much that there had been any discernible improvement in teacher well-being over that time, but more that individual teachers showed a continuity of concerns over that period (e.g. for Teacher AA, about post-lockdown reintegration into school life for both adults and children; for Teacher AN (who was self-isolating for health reasons), about social anxiety, isolation and disconnection; for Teacher GR, the developing metaphor of themselves and their partner, contained in a 'box'). These personal concerns and feelings appeared at times to be mirrored in individual teachers' concerns about their students (see 5.3.6., below).

The panel noted that trust-building between teachers and Big Brum was an essential element to the project process, especially as the teachers in many ways appeared 'shellshocked' by the crisis they were facing and were facing huge demands in respect to it. This trust permitted the teachers to voluntarily disclose significantly via project tasks (e.g. describing an image of oneself and the world during lockdown) and frames (e.g. the 'Socially Distant' story). The 'images' task in effect formed a powerful therapeutic model.

This trust-building also appeared to be aided by both teachers and children being able to discuss the issues through the safety of drama and story, which allow *"Living through somebody else: you can say the character feels this, while actually it is you that feels it, you have the pretence of the story as a shield: it is not as confrontational"* (panel member).

This observation chimes strongly with Bethlenfalvy's observations about Bondian practice and 'Living Through Drama': *"Bond believes that drama offers possibilities to understand ourselves and society because 'the audience do this under the protection of fiction.'"* Bethlenfalvy adds that in Bond's work (and by extension Big Brum's Bondian practice), this *"aims at questioning how real is what we consider to be reality"* (Bethlenfalvy, op cit).

'Socially Distant', the drama at the heart of the project, is the story of a teacher experiencing extreme isolation and disconnection during the pandemic. The panel noted that this experience was close enough to be immediately recognisable to teachers, thereby affording them an angle of connection, understood here as ,the connection between the fictional situation and the real-life situation of the participants' (Bethlenfalvy, op cit; see also Appendix 5). As Teacher AN testified, *"You could certainly see yourself in the character ... there was an emotional aspect to it you that you could actually attach yourself to."*

At the same time, the story was sufficiently dramatic, even extreme, as to offer a degree of 'safe' distance. This question of 'safety' is one this report returns to when discussing benefits for children (5.3.1., below).

Despite the ongoing relationship between the school and Big Brum, this was not a self-selecting group of teachers and only one of the three had previously done significant amounts of work with the company. Nonetheless, the panel observed that they were all ready for the research process and 'almost grateful' for the project after a time of being on their own: *"Once the door is open, the teachers are quite hungry to talk about things."*

The panel discerned that there was *"A sense that they too needed the work, it was a direct help to the teachers. None of the usual barriers were in place. They showed that they were quite vulnerable, they showed a level of vulnerability that you wouldn't normally necessarily expect. There was a sense that ... this was exactly what they needed to re-engage their pupils emotionally."*

5.2.1. Teacher authenticity

The question of teacher 'authenticity' is alluded to in the third research question (1.3., above). The Expert Interpretation Panel felt that this was a crucial element to any understanding of teacher well-being.

For the purposes of this discussion, professional 'authenticity' was described by the panel as *"the narrowness of the gap between teachers' imagined selves as professionals – working as the kind of teacher they would like to be ... and the kind of teacher they find themselves having to be within the constraints of the educational system."* The panel observed that the tension between these two 'teacher selves' was therefore a key dynamic in understanding teacher well-being.

The panel noted that the project aimed to create an environment where such authenticity could flourish: *"It is almost as if the programme is not only creating a safe space for students but also a safe space for teachers: to explore their feelings and their reactions to it without the pressure of it being purely target driven, academically driven. The important part is the intrinsic element that they get from it, the development."*

If well-being is significantly about 'feeling states', then such states can prove hard to navigate in a professional context. Taking as an example Teacher AA's desire to do as much as is humanly possible to prepare

for students' return to school, the panel noted the extent to which *"a teachers' identity or value can be wrapped up within what they can provide for the students."* In all three teachers' accounts, the panel noted that *"teachers have almost put their own feelings aside to be able to function and sort things out for the students."* This was revealed in language choices: descriptions of becoming 'robotic' or of setting feelings aside on a box or a shelf in order to function professionally.

However, the panel strongly asserted that *"it is equally important for them to be able to explore their own reactions to the moment."* Panel members noted the common desire by adults – and especially teachers - to 'protect' children by *"putting on a brave face for them so that they don't feel the emotion."* Instead, they asserted that *"it is actually important that they do feel the emotion"* (an assertion supported by numerous research findings on teaching difficult and controversial issues e.g. Alexander, 2010; Davies et al., 2005).

In asserting this, panel members however noted the professional skill that might be needed for teachers to 'close the gate' sensitively and appropriately once such emotions are opened up, and acknowledged the tensions that this might bring to bear on one's teacher identity: *"Needing to feel things and experience your own vulnerability as a human being and a teacher, but also needing to assert your teacher professional face / conceal things."*

This quote seems to be a clear example of what Ball (op cit) describes as *"a potential 'splitting' between the teachers own judgements about 'good practice' and students 'needs' and the rigours of performance."* This too has implications for teachers' well-being (see also Brown, 2020).

Set against this, one of the panel's (and this research's) key findings was about the extent to which the teachers were able to assert themselves through the project as active agents in their authentic professional practice. This resonates with the Cambridge Primary Review's finding that those teachers least worried by top-down pressures assert their *'professional right to go their own way'* over *'resentful compliance'* (Alexander, 2010).

The panel noted that at key points in the project, *"the teachers took ownership of our knowledge"* and made it their own. One of the panel members proposed a schema for the project process (Appendix 2) that builds up, via work directly supported by Big Brum, to a 'handover' point where *"the teachers now take ownership of the process and the project knowledge, asserting they are the ones who know the children and can best their professional demands."*

The panel member notes the significance of this 'handover' to project outcomes: *"In a project that is predicated on the development of teacher well-being, including authentic professional autonomy, it is important to recognise the significance of this moment and to see it as a sign of strength rather than failure. The teachers have been well-prepared and Big Brum learns to trust them, to let them take it on, rather than to keep asserting any need to be involved."* Following the 'handover', the teachers are then empowered to take the work forward independently and embed it within the life and priorities of the school.

One could also adapt Hart's Ladder of Participation (Hart, 1992) to understand this process (see table below), with the teachers increasingly moving from middle to higher degrees of participation as the project progresses.

8	Teacher-initiated, shared decisions with company	Degrees of participation
7	Teacher-initiated, but directed by company	
6	Company-initiated, shared decisions with teachers	
5	Teachers are consulted but informed	
4	Teachers are assigned what to do, but informed	
3	Tokenism	Degrees of non-participation
2	Decoration	
1	Manipulation	

Hart's Ladder of Participation (modified)

5.2.2. Recovery – settling back in
While teachers tended to emphasise the value of the project in terms of children's return to school, it was clear from their testimony that it had related benefits for themselves.

Teacher AA: *"It helped us catch up with them and get back up to speed. We also needed that time. We had not been back long and had also gone through a lot ... I think coming back to school in September after several months off took a little bit of adjustment again, because you have to get used to the routine again and you're coming away from the online world of lots of emails and Zoom calls and whatnot, and actually getting back to what it is you know how to do, which is teaching. So the project allowed us to have something that was not so onerous on us to talk about and have to extensively plan for, because it just felt natural because we were going through it. In a way, it allowed us to talk about the elephant in the room, instead of ignoring it and getting back to academic work straight away, so it fed in quite nicely in that sense."*

Teacher GR, building on their metaphor of being stuck in a box, describes it as '*almost creeping open*' by November in a way it had not been doing in July. However, the benefits here seem to be more about the return to school in itself than the specific project (see Appendix 1). It is striking once more how central to the teachers' well-being their professional identity - and even their professional routines – appear to be.

5.2.3. Building authentic relationships
It is also really striking, throughout all of their testimony, how often the teachers see themselves through the eyes of the children and in terms of what they can do for them ... and how hard it can be for them to simply talk about themselves.

These two aspects appear to come together in the opportunities provided by the project to build and sustain authentic relationships between teachers and children, to meet each other 'at a human level'. The report says more about this later in a discussion of 'the crucible paradigm' (5.5.1., below and Appendix 5).

Teacher GR: *"This is my first year in Year 6, so I was expecting a step up in the curriculum demands ... the topic has been so relatable to everyone, me and the children, it has allowed us to sort-of get into it together. We could get into each bit at a human level. It allowed me to build really good relationships with the children, which we've now started – as the curriculum has become more and more heavy as we move into the second half term now – to keep that relationship going, knowing that we've got that safe space developing in the class."*

The panel also noted the importance to the project process of the teachers being enabled to form a social and emotional – as well as a professional – connection with their colleagues (e.g. in sharing moments from lockdown with each other).

5.2.4. Professional opportunities
Well-being, rather than curriculum, is the focus of this research. However, because the teachers' well-being appears to be so closely related to their professional identity, it is worth noting here that the teachers testimony overwhelmingly describes the pedagogical and curriculum opportunities presented by the project with enthusiasm and in a positive light.

Teacher AN: *"It also gave us something to look forward to as well. That was one of the barriers that was broken down over the anxiety of coming back to school and teaching in front of children that we hadn't seen for a while or didn't even know. It actually gave us some confidence ourselves as professionals that we knew we were going to be doing, rather than maybe fumbling about in the dark a little bit, trying to pacify and support them."*

Of crucial value to the teachers, given the project's timing, was its role in re-engaging children post lockdown.

Teacher AN: *"It did certainly help us to do that. There was a lot of anxiety on our own personal levels about how we approach these different subjects, because some people are less experienced than others in dealing with situations like this. None of us had been in a situation quite like this one we'd been*

*through, it was unprecedented. Having the performance was really handy, because it allowed us **all** [teacher's emphasis] to share our views and thoughts."*

The same teacher is very open about how the project's pedagogy helped the teachers overcome hurdles at this time: *"We'd struggled to get much from the children, but they really went for it ... Drama is the perfect device to move children on in their thought process and their understanding of the world we are living in: it is just a phenomenal way to do it."* (We say more about this aspect later, when considering benefits for children).

As in previous projects with Big Brum, the school chose to focus on curriculum opportunities in:

Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE), which the school had chosen to prioritise as part of its post-lockdown 'recovery curriculum' (the panel therefore queried whether PSHE was being used by the school to describe a broad social, emotional agenda, rather than as part of a formal PSHE curriculum);

Literacy: *"writing that is not only brilliant for the kids but gets to the heart of what you are exploring"* – Teacher AN.

5.2.5. Teacher well-being: difficulties
However, in the circumstances of a life-threatening global crisis, and in a profession where work-related stress is endemic, it is not surprising that the teachers sometimes found the project to be emotionally challenging, occasionally too much so:

"But it was also very morbid, to be honest. One night, my Teaching Assistant went home feeling like crying" – Teacher AN.

This teacher then goes on to contrast this with the children's response: *"but the children were so resilient: they took it all on board and were strong characters."*

Nonetheless, any future comparable project may need to consider any personal circumstances or needs (e.g. the experience of a recent bereavement) that might make teacher participants particularly vulnerable when invited to engage with project content and challenges.

5.3.   CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING

While demonstrating their own vulnerability as human beings during their recorded accounts, the teachers repeatedly praised (and sometimes contrasted) the children's resilience: an interesting inversion of traditional adult/child power dynamics.

"It's just highlighted how resilient the children are, and have been through the whole process." (Teacher AN)

While it is perhaps encouraging to see such trust in children's ability to cope, the teachers' perceptions should also be read in the context of widespread concerns, supported by strong evidence, about the mental health and well-being of children and young people (as summarised in 2.1., above).

It is perhaps important here to not see 'resilience' as a synonym for 'toughness'. Indeed, the affective dimension of the work was something which teachers also repeatedly alluded to: *"The children got a lot out of it. They liked being in role and they came up with 'really good stuff'. What was most obvious was emotional engagement"* (Teacher AA).

5.3.1.   Creating a 'safe space' for children
In reviewing the teachers' accounts, the Interpretation Panel saw the creation of a 'safe space[3]' for exploring experiences and feelings as a crucial element in the project's benefits for children: *"It seems like they*

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[3]   The use of 'safe spaces' is used broadly here, rather than with the more specific meaning of a physical space "free of bullying and harassment", including oppressive language and behaviours (e.g. Equity, 2018).

had an opportunity to really reflect on the situation now in a safe space, a chance to stop and think about how the pandemic has affected them and to talk about this."

Teacher GR also uses this language, relating it to what was earlier (section 5.2) described as 'the protection of fiction': *"I think it enabled us as a school to create a safe space for the children. I think they really benefited from being able to relate to this character and to talk various experiences through in role as Ayesha. They could embellish some of the moments with some of the more dark things which have happened to Ayesha, but they also managed to weave in some of their own experiences, having been through a lockdown themselves, which enabled them to write a lot more freely and put a lot more emotion into their writing ... it came really naturally this time because it was so pertinent to them and they had experienced almost identical things."*

This teacher also adds a teacher/pupil dynamic to this: *"'Socially Distant' made it a lot easier for them to talk, and for teachers to listen."*

The sense of 'safety' was also enabled by a paradigm established early in the project by Big Brum, and reinforced by the teachers, that there were no right or wrong answers in this project. This is a consistent element in the company's practice. Teacher GU, who attended two project sessions, links this paradigm to the idea of 'safe spaces': *"Children knowing there is no right or wrong response. Us creating a safe space for them to not just explore their ideas, but to share an opinion and know that they're safe to share that opinion."*

It is perhaps useful here to add a nuanced understanding of this paradigm from a primary teacher in a previous project: *"It works against the culture of 'right answers' but <u>with</u> the culture of critical thinking"* (in Ballin, 2019, op cit).

5.3.2.   Children 'meeting' their present and future selves
While the dramatic fiction offered protection to the children, it also liberated them to explore themselves and the world they found themselves in, as the teachers clearly noticed (having experienced it for themselves).

"It gave them a voice so when they were writing about the girl character, they were actually writing about themselves" – Teacher AA.

"They went into role easily because they have lived through it. They know what they are experiencing." – Teacher GR.

Core to the 'magic' of Drama is the phenomenon of metaxis, the ability for children to be '*simultaneously in the fictional context of the drama and the actual social context at the same time'* (Bethlenfalvy, op cit). As Bolton (1998) notes, children experience something similar during imaginative play, so in that sense Drama works with – rather than against – the grain of children's nature and imagination. Bolton's concept of 'self-spectatorship' is also perhaps illuminating in this context: *"being an audience to one's own creation and being an audience to* oneself*"* (original emphasis).

Teacher GU, who attended two project sessions, describes the phenomenon brilliantly: *"The children absolutely love it. It's close up, it's almost like they become part of the story, but they can still stare at it from the outside ... it's almost like peeking into somebody's living room ... [but] they can go away and think about it."*

Another way of expressing the duality enabled by metaxis and self-spectatorship is that in encountering the characters, the children were also 'meeting' their selves. It is therefore not surprising that the teachers noted the degree of empathy that children demonstrated towards the characters in the dramatic story: *"It's been nice for them to have the opportunity to open up about their experiences, because each child is unique and individual in their own circumstances and they have been able to speak freely and felt confident to speak openly amongst their peers about the issues they'd faced during lockdown. They've also been able to empathise with the characters, very much so: some children have commented that's how they felt. They found it very easy to empathise with the characters during the performance."*

The Theatre in Education programme (Session 5) included opportunities for the children to co-create the site of the dramatic story, including some familiar elements from their own lives and world (see also Appendix 5), thereby enabling the children's agency as co-constructors of meaning and investing the site with meaning. For example, they were invited to create the girl Ayesha's bedroom out of masking tape and to place objects in it that they thought would be there. As Teacher AN observed, *"In creating the bedroom, they were creating the story for themselves."*

In section 5.2.3. this report discussed 'authentic relationships' from the teachers' perspective and the value to teachers of working with children 'on a human level.' This also appears to have had value for children.

Teacher AA describes how the pandemic itself was *"something that was a shared experience for the adults that worked in the school, and their families, and the children themselves"* and that having this common experience allowed both parties to open things up very quickly.

Teacher AN reinforces this insight, but this time in relation to the drama: *"They were able to see themselves in the drama, they could see their parents in the drama, I could see myself in the drama, we were all seeing something in that drama that we could relate to."*

In that sense, the children were also able to 'meet' not only their selves through the project but also the teachers, all 'on a human level,' and to recognise that that this crisis was a common human experience.

Meanwhile, in exploring the experience of the Father within the drama, there was a sense in which the children were invited to 'meet' their future selves: an adult struggling with a human crisis that clearly related to their own real-world situation. During Session 5, they did so with a great degree of empathy, even forgiveness, but during follow-up work it became clear that a degree of distance and othering had occurred: *"My class definitely saw him as someone who needed to wake up*

and smell the coffee and realise what damage he was doing to his daughter and how she was desperate to escape from him" – Teacher AN. The report returns to this in 5.3.6., below.

5.3.3.   Recovery – settling back in
Section 5.2.2. discussed how the project helped enable the teachers to feeling their way back into teaching, post-lockdown. Teachers' accounts quite clearly demonstrate that a similar phenomenon happened with the children feeling their way back into learning … and that this happened both smoothly and quite quickly.

Teacher AA: *"It allowed them to feel comfortable straight away, as soon as they came in … I think it allowed them to process some of the differences that they'd gone through in the last couple of months, that they wouldn't have otherwise experienced. It invited them to share their experiences."*

Teacher AN talks about the teachers having 'struggled' for the first few days following their return to school, but once the creative work began, things seem to have moved forward rapidly. To use a metaphor that recurs throughout the project, it 'opened a door.'

The Interpretation Panel related this process to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1954). Assuming, rightly or wrongly, that most children's basic physiological needs were being met (the base of the 'pyramid'), they were nonetheless returning to school at a point which required assurances in relation to safety and security, for example through measures at the school to minimise risks from the Covid-19 (the next level of the 'pyramid').

Children were also having to establish (or re-establish) relationships with peers and adults after a prolonged period of absence (what Maslow describes as 'belongingness and love needs'). This is perhaps the point where the creation of a 'safe space' where children and adults could begin to discuss their experiences and feelings and to listen to each other began to play a crucial role.

The higher points of Maslow's Hierarchy relate to 'esteem needs' (including a sense of accomplishment) and 'self-fulfilment needs' (including creative activities). This seems to be where engaging in Theatre in Education, and then follow-up work such as writing-in-role may have begun to play a significant role.

So, while it would be a definite stretch to argue that children involved in this project achieved 'self-actualisation' or achieved their 'full potential' within a single week, there is a clear sense of both teachers and children coming back to school, feeling uncomfortable and uncertain, and then moving rapidly through some recognisable (and sometimes overlapping) stages where their higher needs begin to be met, until they quite quickly and smoothly attain a degree of relative comfort where they are able to re-engage with teaching and learning.

As the panel observed, *"They feel their way back into things through having a story and doing something together and by the end of the week they are ready to start learning."* However, they caution that *"if those basic things aren't met, barriers addressed, difficult feelings unblocked, 'charges' released, you will never get to depth of knowledge – you won't feel comfortable."*

5.3.4.   An ongoing point of reference
Teacher AN eloquently describes the power of the dramatic fiction in offering a 'safe' common point of reference for both children and teachers during the project itself, and how this released free dialogue about feelings and experiences: *"None of us had been in a situation quite like this one we'd been through, it was unprecedented. Having the performance was really handy, because it allowed us **all** [teacher's emphasis] to share our views and thoughts. Because we were referring to it as something we had seen in the school, it didn't matter then, we lost our inhibitions and we were able to say what we wanted to say, because we were referring to something we had seen, not something that was actually 'real' … in inverted commas. But then the reality of it was there and they were sharing their personal experiences".*

This pattern was sustained during follow-up work, where children continued to stay with (rather than step out of) the story: *"They are often able to refer to things as well from it during conversations: 'that's like Ayesha in the story ... that's how she might have felt about losing her Mum.' So it's been really beneficial"* – Teacher AN.

The panel and some of the teachers suggested that the story could be something that children might come back to over time, post-project. *"The work has come to an end, but we might use Ayesha's story to re-open the conversations and keep on top of the well-being of the children. What about a letter from Ayesha? She was left in such a negative state ... maybe the letter could be telling the children about her year, and how she is now?"* – Teacher GR. This goes beyond the work investigated in this research, so it is not possible for this report to say if it has happened.

5.3.5. Inclusion

The introduction (Section 1) described Big Brum's desire to work as far as possible in a 'radically inclusive way.' The report says more about this in Section 5.4, below, but the Interpretation Panel did identify some activities with children as meeting this ambition.

They especially liked the idea of the 'window on the world' as a well-being tool for pupils, which was one of the ideas that teachers discussed in planning sessions that they eventually used.

Teacher AN describes it thus: *"We began by talking about the children's experiences during lockdown and what impact it had on them, at home and outside. We decided to call it 'window on the world' to start with. The children explored lots of vocabulary and context and shared lots of stories with us about their experiences at home. We explored the contrast outside in the real world and they came up with lots of words and phrases."*

The panel noted that *"the well-being of the pupils will be really served by that device and in those safe professional hands. It is a brilliantly inclusive idea, anybody can do it: they can use words, collages, images, sensory learning ... and it could be a brilliant diagnostic tool for those providing pastoral support."*

5.3.6. Children's well-being – difficulties

Section 5.3.2. noted that children initially 'met' the figure of the Father during the live drama (Session 5) with a great degree of empathy. Later work suggested that he began to be viewed less sympathetically: more as an 'other' than as a potential future self, facing human challenges.

Teacher AN's account suggests that this results from a complex set of intertwined phenomena: a possible element of teacher bias; children's own perceptions; perhaps too how the 'character' was framed within literacy tasks: *"They did take sides rather quickly. Maybe that's because of their youthfulness and they could see the errors of his ways. Maybe it's also about the way that we portrayed it ourselves and the way we unpicked it. After the show, we unpicked the characters and looked at the different characters. One of the great things for us, for writing, was being able to do a bit of dialogue.* [But] *the way the children portrayed the Father was how they saw him."*

The complexity of the teacher's response in itself perhaps illustrates how hard it can be for a teacher to take such work forward effectively (which they did) and still remain 'true' to the intentions of the Drama or TIE programme. It suggests that there is still work to be done between even the most experienced teachers and practitioners when working together within 'the crucible paradigm.' It should be added that this should be seen as very much a responsibility for the TIE company rather than a criticism of the teacher.

The Interpretation Panel briefly discussed the *'authenticity of children's verbal rather than written responses'*, because the demands of formal grammar and literacy assessment can sometimes predominate in written work. Most children's outputs from this project were in written form, so this is noted here as a point for future consideration.

5.4. THE WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN REQUIRING EARLY HELP

5.4.1. Early school leaving

While research data on Early School Leaving at the school was necessarily limited during the lockdown period, there were no exclusions by the school during the project period (c/f national patterns outlined in 2.4., above).

Teacher AN told the researcher that during the project (and when the school was open), *"Attendance has been maintained in Year 6* [the project year group]*, which is interesting, as opposed to other year groups. They are coming in to school."*

5.4.2. Inclusion – children requiring Early Help

In keeping with Big Brum's stated ambition to work in a 'radically inclusive' manner, children experiencing disadvantage, who are 'less heard from' and/or requiring Early Help appear to have experienced similar benefits from the project to those for other children. Based on the following testimony, the open, affective, engaging, social and 'safe' nature of the work appears to have helped in this.

"Those children involved, you wouldn't be able to tell them in the group, because they felt comfortable to contribute and gave their perceptions and their views of what they wanted to share within the confines of the classroom. It certainly enhanced their writing ability, when they were writing: just the freedom of being able to write freely, without any inhibition, from their heart."

Teacher AA notes the benefits of the work for those children who were believed by teachers to be 'disengaged' from their learning. She asserts that some of these children experiences during the lockdown period may have been particularly egregious and highlights the work's affective and 'open' qualities as being of particular value, including the time and space it provided for their needs: *"We don't normally have time to engage the children emotionally, so the ('Socially Distant') work eased children into it, especially the more disengaged. They had six months off, some were bored stiff for ages, so the 'open classroom' was time for them."*

This perhaps resonates with one panel member's speculative observation that *"for some children, especially those with chaotic or difficult home backgrounds, the return to school might be very welcome and the situation with lockdown will have had precedents."*

It should be added that while there may well be some overlapping circumstances, children requiring Early Help are not necessarily the same as children who are 'disengaged', 'bored stiff', or with 'chaotic and difficult home backgrounds.'

5.5. HOW BIG BRUM AND THE TEACHERS WORKED TOGETHER CREATIVELY AND COLLABORATIVELY

Big Brum's 'thesis' in the project was that *"we can best meet the needs of the 'displaced child' by re-engaging teachers in a felt and creative manner. By working with teachers in affective, creative and collaborative ways we believe that we will be able to synthesise new forms of authentic educational practice that benefit all children, including those most at risk of school exclusion."* This is in effect restated in key question 3, (1.3., above), which also asks how the work might promote 'felt understanding' and enable *"professional authenticity and reconnection"*. The following begins to outline some of those 'how's.

5.5.1. Collaborating within 'the crucible paradigm'

The Interpretation Panel identified collaboration itself as a key element in promoting teachers' (and thus children's) well-being. For the purposes of this project, this meant attempting to work together within the 'crucible paradigm' (rather than for example within a knowledge transfer or 'cascade' – see Appendix 4).

The panel noted that if we are 'stirr[ing] our knowledge around together', 'explor[ing] in order to explain to ourselves' (Big Brum, 2011), then there are implicitly no right or wrong answers ... especially as the knowledge being explored belongs to the world of the imagination and

relates to personal and social questions about our own humanity. The panel also noted that this pedagogical freedom feeds into teacher authenticity, offering an opportunity for teachers to narrow the gap between their 'like-to-be' and 'have-to-be' selves (see 5.2.1., above). This in itself is a contribution to well-being and 'reconnection.'

The panel also noted that the 'crucible' is something freely entered into ... and which can therefore be freely left. When it came to devising follow-up work, the project teachers did exactly this: a 'handover' point which panel members perceived as symptomatic of the project's strength: *"If they have set it up right, Big Brum doesn't need to be there to help (or 'rescue') the teachers"* (see also 5.2.1., above and Appendix 2).

The panel suggested that this paradigm allowed Big Brum to work with the teachers and to be *"subversive in a marvellous way, to work against confines of the sort of curriculum teachers have to teach and smash it open in a very gentle way ... The things that teachers find difficult - targets, testing etc."*

The panel noted that *"This will attract a certain kind of teacher and a certain kind of school"* and asked, *"how can you reach out to those schools where they don't present themselves to you?"* They suggested that this may be one of the challenges for the company to take forward.

5.5.2. Knowing the children

It is not accidental that this research report has been titled '*Socially connected: the displaced teacher and the displaced child."* This is in part a play on - and an inversion of - the title of the Monodrama, 'Socially distant,' which sat at the creative heart of the project. Both the Monodrama and the title are also a reflection (and an implicit negation) of the moment that everyone involved has found themself in for most of the project: a moment when social distancing was a quite literal part of everybody's lives.

However, as was made clear in the Project Background (Section 2), the crisis occasioned by the Covid-19 pandemic was to some extent making existing fractures visible, including societal divisions and their

systemic consequences for teachers' and children's well-being. This includes a global crisis of 'loneliness', itself in a dialectical relationship with other social, political and health 'ills' (Hertz, 2020).

The argument about being 'socially connected' is developed further below (see 5.5.6.). In terms of knowing the children (one part of that dynamic), the panel noted how all three main teachers testified that the project had enabled them to listen to children and get to know them better. It pointed out that *"engaging children to work imaginatively and getting them to write about that would help enable a teacher to do so."*

Because the project existed outside many of *"the normal pressures of delivering the curriculum, it allowed teachers to observe the children and see if there were any issues."*

Teachers' testimony about their own well-being (5.2) and children's well-being (5.3) also make it clear that the project repeatedly afforded powerful opportunities for both teachers and children to come to know both them-selves, and each other better: adults with children; children with children; adults with adults. Indeed, the drama itself became a common point of reference (5.3.4.). This social connection forms a significant step towards 'reconnection' with oneself and one's school community: some of the 'belongingness and love needs' described in the discussion of Maslow at 5.3.3., and therefore also a crucial contribution to teachers' and children's well-being.

Teacher AA describes how the project allowed her to better know not only the children but also their social circumstances: *"being able to step back and see how mature they are, or how not mature ... teachers learned a lot more about their family lives, more about their backgrounds. This included the children needing Early Help."*

One of the Interpretation Panel members considered these testimonies through the lens of their own professional teaching experience: *"a key thing is that connection with the students, that the teachers have got to know the students; that it took off the pressure of it having to be a 'learning environment' but instead it could be a 'creative environment' ... it became more free."*

This freedom included the removal of performative expectations (one of those work-related pressures that appeared frequently in documentation on teacher well-being (Savill-Smith, op cit; Ball, op cit): *"being able to focus on the pupils, have having that pressure to perform taken away, respond to their needs and get to know them, rather than meet progress expectations, was freeing: outcomes were valued, whatever they may be and for what they were (rather than being prescribed externally). Ironically, this also got better pieces of work that would have met formally-prescribed outcomes better!"*

Through the lens of their professional experience, the panel member describes the mutual well-being benefits of teachers 'getting to know' young people better, including for young people experiencing social disadvantage: *"From above, looking down at a thousand students, pupils can just be data on a sheet. You need to take time to get to know them ... it gets better outcomes. It's a question of priority ... I would rather look at the student in front of me and have a conversation and find out from them what they need. Being present, in the moment, in the classroom, having that connection, seeing the students for what they are. Them to know they have been seen ... especially in the communities I work in, where maybe nobody has said hello to that pupil that day, having that human connection, you get a lot more from them – and I get a lot more from it ... I am not just teaching robots."*

The panel saw two further challenges emerging here from the teachers' testimony: firstly, how this 'apparent one-off' project might influence other aspects of teaching and teachers' ongoing relationships with their children; secondly, how the approaches taken with generalist teachers in this primary school might translate if transferred to specialist teachers in a secondary setting. With the second challenge in mind, it is worth noting here that the secondary teacher on the panel perceived that *"school institutional pressure has been amplified since Covid, placing even more restraint on myself as a teacher."*

5.5.3. 'Felt understanding' – embracing the affective dimension
Big Brum often describes 'felt understanding' as a significant element in its work: *"Learning takes place through a dramatic situation that matters to the participants, and because it matters the young people experience felt understanding"* (Big Brum, op cit).

In effect, the phrase 'felt understanding' offers a synthesis of the affective and cognitive domains, which since Descartes have often been artificially differentiated in Western thought. However, psychologists and neuroscientists increasingly see affective and cognitive processes as highly interdependent (see for example, The Human Mind Project, 2017). As Oliver Burkeman reminds us (2021), *"Feelings are necessarily conscious; and feelings are essential to human survival,"* not least due to their capacity to enable human beings to process needs and choices without experiencing *"a combinatorial explosion."*

The emphasis on affective learning was something that both the school and the company were interested in. Prior work between Big Brum and Benson School had emphasised Drama as a stimulus for writing, but had also begun to explore its possibilities for building an 'emotionally literate school.'

The Interpretation Panel noted the immediacy of the project's artistic content and how the 'protection of fiction' helped make this and other stories manageable: *"The story is close to this immediate time. The near-dystopian now. There is a risk of it being too close to home and participants shutting off, because it's too raw and there is too much emotion swept up in it. But no matter how close the story is, it will bring out the emotions. For example, if we were doing something about the plague, it would still bring out the same sort of emotions that people are feeling now, because it is the human experience more than where and when it happens. In that sense it adds to it, having this very relevant topic that people will want to talk about."*

Teacher AA also refers to this sense of immediacy, seeing it as 'relatable': *"It really felt real ... all the things he had gone through had been most of our lives the last couple of months. It was really relatable."*

The panel noted that Big Brum *"moved quite quickly to trust-building"* with the teachers and on establishing an angle of emotional and conceptual connection*: "Big Brum really works on creating an angle of connection. In this work the angle of connection that was so direct that they felt compelled to take part."* (See also 5.2., above, and Appendix 5). The teachers sharing images of themselves and the world in July (Appendix 1) appeared to play a key role in establishing this angle of connection: *"bringing a bit of their own lives to the project."*

Panel members stressed the importance of the teachers having a felt/emotional experience of the project before engaging children: *"It was really important for the teachers to have that experience of that drama for themselves first. Whatever emotions come out, feelings and thoughts come out as a response, it is important for them to know where they are in response to it, before they start to work with the children."*

Experiencing and processing their own felt/emotional responses was seen to help empower the teachers when it came to their work with the children: *"giving a teacher an understanding of the emotions you were drawing out of the students, the issues you were raising within the drama … gave the teachers more confidence to raise the issues with students. That shared experience."*

Panel members suggested that exploring their own felt experiences might help teachers allow more room for children's own authentic responses (however, see 5.3.6., above): *"Then they can be clear when they are facilitating that they know what their feelings are, what the students' are, they are not projecting what they feel onto what the students might feel, that there is a clear distinction between the two."*

There was a sense too from the panel that it can be more helpful, not least for one's well-being, to talk through difficult and emotional experiences with others than to repress those feelings. (This chimes with what was said about over-protecting children from the world at 5.2.1., above). *"Everybody has been going through a disturbing time together.*

This is a benefit more than a risk if teachers are open to it. The risk would if the teachers hold back because it is emotive and step through the emotions but without fully experiencing it."

5.5.4.   The influence of the project process
Panel members noted the importance of clear context-setting with the teachers beforehand (e.g. its explicit emphasis from the outset on teacher well-being).

The panel perceived that is was helpful *"to be selective about who you are working with. In this case, the teachers seemed to be willing, perhaps because they saw the importance of the project. It was not just a tick box exercise."* In this instance, the primary agreement to engage with the project had been with the school, although teachers had given their informed consent to participate in the research and to share data. In that sense, the individual teachers were 'assigned but informed', to borrow Hart's expression. This all raises some questions about the role of 'gatekeepers' in agreeing partnership projects (who really holds the power in a school?) as well as about the potential transferability of such work (See also 5.5.2., above).

The panel saw a circularity of project benefits: *"We could describe a circular process where healthy well-being for pupils equals healthy well-being for staff equals healthy well-being for pupils."* This included placing high value on participants, including listening to them and displaying professional trust: *"The first thing I saw from the data was just how magnificent teachers are."*

Pressure on time is in 'normal' circumstances perhaps *the* principal work-related cause of stress for teachers (Savill-Smith, op cit). Taking time to prepare and 'do things properly' was therefore particularly important. The school had a block of time for Year 6 teachers to carry out planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) and this became a key opportunity for project sessions. The teachers also stated in their testimony that online meetings sometimes helped ease time pressures.

The special circumstances of the return from lockdown also permitted the school to prioritise time for the project work, as it was at this point planning to move *"from a recovery curriculum, with an emphasis on PSHE, gradually back into a more formal curriculum."* The benefits for teachers of this are outlined at 5.2.2. and the process for children is analysed in detail at 5.3.3. (Of course, these special circumstances also raise further questions about the project's transferability and that of this report's research findings).

The special circumstances also meant that several project sessions necessarily happened online. While this had benefits for time and convenience (and for permitting the project to practically happen) some panel members raised concerns that being visible on-screen might sometimes have encouraged participants to feel self-conscious. There were technical problems with some online sessions and this did to some extent impair effective communication at that time.

The proposed schema described in Section 5.2.1. (and further developed in Appendix 2) looks at how the initial stages of negotiating the project, building trust and open-ness, and finding time were then built on and impacted on teachers' practice and well-being.

5.5.5. Pedagogy
Early sections of this report describe how this project created *"a safe space for students* [5.3.3.] *but also a safe space for teachers* [5.2.1.]. This included the 'protection of fiction' and the paradigm of there being no right or wrong answer.

The Interpretation Panel noted the power of this paradigm and that its use by Big Brum with teachers appeared to encourage them in turn to use it with children: *"The thing that stuck out for me more than anything was the idea that there is no wrong answer. That is incredibly freeing for young people who are frightened or embarrassed to use their voice or just don't feel empowered to do that. The collaboration between Big Brum and the teachers nurtured the confidence for all parties to work with the idea that there is no right answer."*

The panel also noted that Big Brum modelled how time and space might best be used: *"Big Brum really clearly models a listening frame, a negotiated space ... and takes its time in doing so. It does not demand it. You trust in the awareness that If you give people time to respond, they will do so."*

The panel further noted the dialogic pedagogies (Alexander, 2017) employed by both teacher and company and that this had encouraged 'reconnection': *"Teaching is an exchange: it seems like what this has done for those classes is that it has allowed them to connect, back and forth exchange, after time alone or online, with greater distance between teacher and pupil: one in one world and the other in another. Time to reconnect."*

Panel members were interested in how project work arose *"from within the drama rather than from a distance"* or as something imposed on it. This relates to the 'metaxis effect,' "the sense of being in two worlds at the same time" described earlier (Bethlenfalvy, op cit; see 5.3.2.).

Even the use of speech bubbles and speech marks arose from the demands of the story, rather than an external curriculum. This appears to have permitted both 'authentic teaching' and 'authentic responses' from the children.

One of the panel members saw this expressly in terms of learner empowerment: *"The work helps them understand language and how people express themselves - it gives them more of a voice to explain what is going on ... it gets that clarity ... There is a big difference between starting with the need to teach speech marks and then shoehorning it in or starting with teachers and pupils exploring meaning and feelings and ideas and then arriving at the use of speech marks that will be something to be useful to the learners in order to express themselves more fully. To work out, what is speech and what is not speech."*

This also raised explicit questions about authentic teaching and children's engagement: *"There is a huge difference between going in one may rather than the other. The one way is more authentic or less authentic. It grows out of the story rather than being bussed in from outside. It's like process drama: you might need Maths or SPAG [spelling and grammar] for the*

characters; there is a reason to want to know, a real live situation ... Here, conversations are a real thing and they will need speech marks to allow Dad and Ayesha to communicate with each other. The children have a reason to know.”

Panel members felt that pedagogies employed by this project could be widely and beneficially applicable beyond it: *“It doesn’t just need to be Drama teachers, it could be more of a whole school approach, involve others. While there is the Drama element, the essence of it is the questioning and the facilitation. That is the authenticity and the reconnection, being able to really dive in to what students are thinking and addressing those misconceptions and opinions, that really rich exploration of students and their learning, that is the essence of it and the drama is only the platform for it ... the pedagogy can relate to anything that students are learning, any subject.”*

They therefore recommended the development of *“a CPD programme/ training for teachers than enables them to do that kind of exploration. Having done it for themselves, that would enable them to pass it on to their students.”*

5.5.6.   Connecting the displaced teacher and the displaced child
This report has already noted how the project enabled both the teachers and the children to better know their selves and each other. While there were moments where it gave teachers space to stand back and listen, to observe their own children (e.g. during the TIE programme in Session 5), at the heart of it was an intention (and an opportunity) for teachers and children to draw close, rather than stand back, to enter the crucible of a shared experience that was as much affective as cognitive.

For Big Brum, a key concept behind the project was ‘displacement’, an idea strongly influenced by Ian Yeoman’s SCYPT conference paper ‘Tuning the ear to the displaced child’ (Yeoman, op cit). The idea of the ‘displaced child’ can be taken both literally and metaphorically: migrant children or early school leavers, for example, but also children experiencing loss, grief or other forms of psychological dislocation (e.g. as in Miller, 1990; Seyderman, 2019, Seyderman et al., 2020).

Writing in 2000, Yeoman’s paper described the situation faced by school children: *“In formal education in British schools today children are in a very real sense* a displaced people. *Through the curriculum and the increasing privatisation of education, they are denied access to their historical sense of self and community in the most aggressive manner. The process of education is no longer recognised as the art of living freely in the world as social historical beings”* (original emphasis).

In 2021, in the midst of a pandemic and the sort of well-being crises outlined in Section 2, there are further and ever-more destructive layers and intensifications of physical, social, economic, environmental and psychological displacement at work on children’s lives. The writer Paul Kingsnorth expresses the situation powerfully *“We are as gods but we have failed to get good at it ... We are Loki, killing the beautiful for fun. We are Saturn devouring our children”* (quoted by Watts, 2021).

Through their work with the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and then in this project and with the Big Brum / BCU Drama Hub, Big Brum has also come to recognise that the same forces affecting children in schools also displace teachers, that they too are increasingly and aggressively being denied *‘their historical sense of self and community ... the art of living freely in the world as social historical beings’*. They are also increasingly being denied spaces where they can be their authentic ‘teacher selves’, enabling young people to live freely and socially: the gap between their ‘have-to-be’ and imagined teacher selves becomes ever-harder to close.

However, Yeoman’s paper concludes that *“In TIE, making the world tangible for considered exploration, reflection and abstraction; with the actor teacher listening for the interconnectedness of the particular to the general conditions informing the event, we can replace children in a powerfull sense of self, social and historical continuity.”*

With this project, there is a sense in which Big Brum has tried to make this as true for the teacher as for the child, to ‘tune its ear’ to their needs from the outset . Through inviting them into the crucible together, to meet each other and explore feelings and meanings

together: to connect the displaced teacher to the displaced child and in both cases to "replace them in a powerfull sense of self." (We say more about this in Appendix 3).

Did this happen? The challenge is huge, but the project certainly seems to have taken steps in that direction. Here, the teachers' testimonies speak eloquently about their human connection and reconnection to the world, each other and the children.

Teacher GR: *"It really helped build relationships with them, that the teachers had gone through and were going through the same thing as the children. So they knew that even adults were not seeing their wider family, etc. This enhanced relationship has continued. The children now see the teachers as more like them, as being human!"*

Teacher AA: *"The focus of this one is completely different [to other Drama work we have done] ... I think it will really contribute to the welfare of the children. It can't really be ignored. For us to give children the time and space for the children to digest it is the way forward. It would be worse if you just put it to one side, went back to a 'normal' focus, what you would have taught a previous Year 6 group. It wouldn't give them a chance to work through it. There will be lots of children that it's really presented a lot of difficulties for."*

Teacher AN: *„They were able to see themselves in the drama, they could see their parents in the drama, I could see myself in the drama, we were all seeing something in that drama that we could relate to. It allowed us to articulate our feelings through it.*

5.6.   CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.6.1.   Further development
This project has taken a significant step forward in terms of using drama to enable significant collaborative work that connects Big Brum's creative practice to the authentic emotional and educational needs of teachers and children. It raises the potential to go both deeper and wider in terms of further development.

In terms of depth, there are questions about how this 'apparent one-off' project might influence other aspects of teaching and teachers' ongoing relationships with their children? This would mean going deeper into the collaborative practice and potentially over longer time periods, perhaps too testing aspects of the impact of such work, away from the crisis conditions of the 2020-21 period in which it took place. The Expert Interpretation Panel noted that there is still work to be done between even the most experienced teachers and TIE practitioners when working together within 'the crucible paradigm.'

In terms of breadth, this means on the one hand exploring the transferability of 'the Benson model' to other schools and contexts ... including perhaps at a whole-school scale. On the other hand, it might also be about trialling the model in very different settings: how for example would the approaches taken with the generalist teachers in this primary school translate if transferred to specialist teachers in a secondary setting?

The Expert Interpretation Panel felt that the pedagogies employed by this project could be widely and beneficially applicable beyond it. They therefore proposed the development of a CPD programme for teachers than would enable them to do that kind of exploration: the essence of it being the questioning and the facilitation; pedagogy that can relate to anything that students are learning ... and in any subject.

5.6.2.   Partnership choices
The Expert Interpretation Panel noted that *"This sort of project will attract a certain kind of teacher and a certain kind of school"* and asked, *"how can you reach out to those schools where they don't present themselves to you?"*

They therefore suggested that one of the challenges for Big Brum to take forward is about a choice between working predominantly with schools which appear to be 'compatible' and engaging a wider spectrum of schools.

5.6.3. Research Methodology

Advice from the Data Interpretation Panel mostly focus on the data collection process, including:

- The quantity of data (e.g. would it have been more useful to look at the teachers' images of self and world, before and after, and then go deeper in to that analysis?)

- Returning in a future project to collect data that had formed part of the initial design of this research, but which in the event had not proved obtainable (i.e. meaningful quantitative tracking data on the behaviour and well-being of pupils requiring 'Early Help'; data from teachers' own action research and reflective journals).

- Looking at how material is recorded (e.g. should participants be invited to self-select their preferred means of recording? Should children's verbal as well as written responses be recorded?

- The role of gatekeepers e.g. senior managers) in negotiating a project and the potential implications of this for teacher consent

- How to identify and respond to any personal circumstances or needs (e.g. the experience of a recent bereavement) that might make teacher participants particularly vulnerable when invited to engage with project content and challenges.

5.6.4. Involvement in the Expert Interpretation Panel

Panel members noted that they did not exist outside of the systemic well-being questions being explored by the project and that the experience of being involved in the panel had felt beneficial for their own well-being.

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7. APPENDICES

7.1.   APPENDIX 1. THE TEACHERS' STORIES

A fuller account of these stories can be found in the To Be Project Guidebook and in audio-visual form as part of the Curriculum (To Be Consortium 2021a, 2021b).

Teacher AN
Images of the world during lockdown
Session 2 (July) – Exploring social distance
"The image I've got is of family time, of a cohesive group really close together for a long period of time and exploring our world outside ... in the fields, walking."
Session 8 (November) – Reviewing the work
"It's not the same world as it was in July. Were people being more protective of each other? Were people being more wary? Are we now just coming to terms with Covid and we are just ignoring it? Is the world thinking they are invincible at the moment? It's a worrying place at the moment. With a vaccine perhaps, that might relieve a lot of stress for people. [My image is of] traffic jams: you go to work now and there is more traffic on the road than there was during the last lockdown . Kids at school, which is always a benefit. There's not the silence that there used to be."
Images of myself during lockdown
Session 2 (July) – Exploring social distance
"It's balancing paranoia and reality. When I go out, I'm paranoid about bumping into anybody ... It's that sort of distance ... You're building confidence to live again in the world."
Session 8 (November) – Reviewing the work
"I'm a yoyo. I'm in the class, I'm out of the class. I'm in the class, I'm out of the class. It's bizarre. I'm actually in the same place as I was when we last spoke in July. I'd actually built myself up to going to school, with a view of doing the Big Brum production, enjoying that and moving on from there, building the trust up with the children in the class. With all the Covid going on, when you start to hear about bubbles going down within the school, you start to become more insular in your thoughts and protective over your little group that you think 'we're invincible in here.' And then suddenly you realise that we're not invincible and you have to be removed out of it again. It's a bit odd. It's like the hokey cokey: you're in and out, in and out."

Teacher AN
Where did you witness social distance? (July)
"As they clapped for carers ... as he was looking out of the window ... distancing himself from the world outside"
"I have a shoebox mentality. Certain things happen in your life that goes in a shoebox and goes to the back of the shelf: the ones you don't want to think about go furthest back ... the clap for a carers has become part of his {the man in the story's] shoebox."
"You are told from a very early age not to touch anything ... but then your world opens up ... this now has distanced, you can't do that, embracing, hugging ..."
"The man is trying to get a fresh start. All the blocks are there ... he wants to make the space where everyone feels safe, where he feels safe, but doesn't know how to go about it."

Teacher GR
Images of the world during lockdown
Session 2 (July) – Exploring social distance
"I have sort of an abstract image of my partner and I in a bubble and then family and friends outside of that."
Session 8 (November) – Reviewing the work
"It would probably be very US-dominated because they're driving a lot of the social media tensions, and with their election, that's diverted everyone's attention away from a global pandemic to just a simple election between two people who we as Brits don't know anything about, and whilst it will have some impact on Britain, we seem to be getting very hot and heavy over US politics when we're in the middle of a second lockdown where there seems to be a bigger issue on our own shores that we need to deal with first. [My image is of] the American election overshadowing, over the top of the box; the UK being a lot smaller than the US and with the US looming over it."
Images of myself during lockdown
Session 2 (July) – Exploring social distance
N/A
Session 8 (November) – Reviewing the work
"Myself in a box like it was during the lockdown, with my immediate household inside the box and then all the flux and chaotic incidents that are happening around the world; because no-one's on a level playing field any more, some countries are open more than others, the whole situation with social media where it's so ramped up, that we don't really know where we sit any more. Whilst I'm locked down in the box, but not quite so locked down as before because obviously schools are now open again, so it's almost creeping open, because there's a place where I can escape to some normality. It's almost like school is some sort of sanctuary where I know what I do for my job and the only time I can leave my lockdown is to go to school. At least I have that emotional [aspect] and all those relationships with people at school, so it's a slightly more optimistic outlook than the completely closed box during the first lockdown. It's similar but only slightly better."
Where did you witness social distance? (July)
"He [the man in the story] *talks to himself about seeing others not observing social distancing. By condemning them from afar it shows his distance from others, and in the final moment we read he claims how he was the one following the rules even if it has pushed him away from others."*

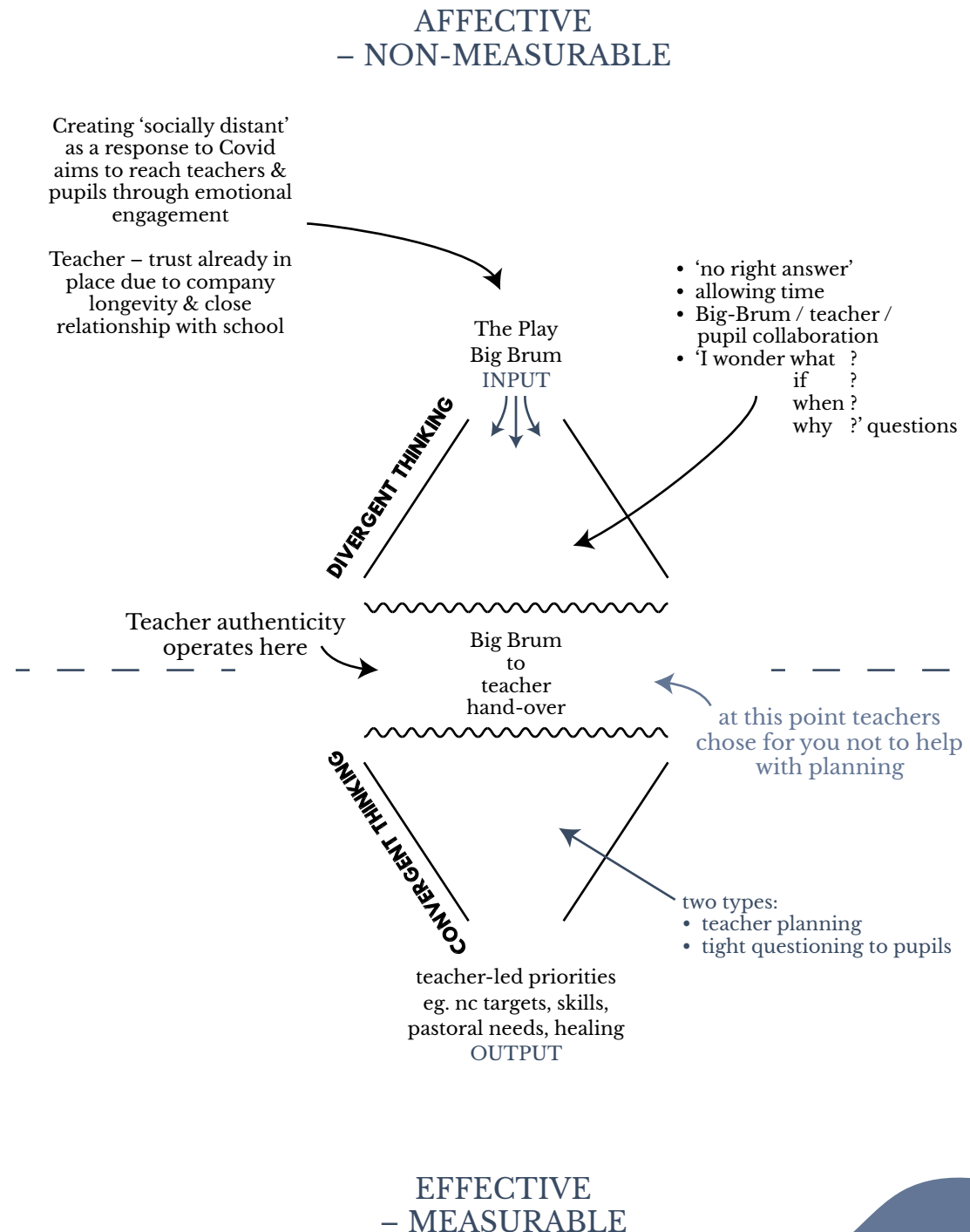| Teacher AA |
|---|
| **Images of the world during lockdown** |
| Session 2 (July) – Exploring social distance |
| *"Spending a lot of time on my own. The majority of my family work for the NHS* [National Health Service], *so I've had to isolate in my own house as well ... it's been a very lonely couple of months, locking myself away in my bedroom while everyone else does the same."* |
| Session 8 (November) – Reviewing the work |
| *"Watching the news and reading stuff, I think it's just a lot the same, so I just focus on getting here in one piece and hoping I can do the best by the children, and organising ahead and limiting the information that goes in and out, which is essentially the same thing, which is lockdown. We still have the virus, it's still quite prevalent, so putting that in a box in a sense: leave Covid to one side and just focus on getting through a teaching day."* |
| **Images of myself during lockdown** |
| Session 2 (July) – Exploring social distance |
| *"A little bit of a worry about getting back into things in September ... work ... You re-evaluate the people in your life, the people you maybe haven't seen for a long time and the value they add to your life ... I have sat and painted and worked through sketchbooks."* |
| Session 8 (November) – Reviewing the work |
| *"It would be somewhat related to being in the classroom, getting things sorted out and focusing on the children, and using that as the constant during all the madness that is going on in the wider world. The image of me would be in the classroom, teaching."* |
| **Where did you witness social distance? (July)** |
| Teacher AA highlighted actions and objects: ripping a letter, holding a suitcase away, *"the fact he was wearing like protective gear – it's not what naturally comes to us ... it comes into emotional distance as well, he's not really present, it's kind of like he's having a moment of solitude ... it's as if the physical distance has created an emotional distance."* |
| *"You can force yourself to be numb ... you can go through the motions of something, sometimes you can stop yourself from feeling, just because this is something that is practical, you have to come into school, you have to make these changes ... it is easier sometimes to turn off the sense of 'how does this make me feel' etcetera."* |
| *"Sometimes, as a means of survival, you do bury things, you put aside what you need so as to function, you just function as a robot ... I think a lot of people in this pandemic have just been functioning as robots, just doing what is necessary, what is practical, and everything else gets put away into a box for another day."* |

7.2. APPENDIX 2. PROCESS SCHEMA

The following schema was created as a response from one of the Expert Interpretation Panel members to the question about collaboration: *(3) How can Big Brum work together with teachers in a creative and collaborative way that promotes ' felt understanding' and enables professional authenticity and reconnection?*

The schema aims to help describe the project process. It moves from left to right through time in three main phases: an initial divergent phase; a handover phase; and then a convergent phase. (Although we have separated out convergent and divergent phases for the purposes of the schema, in reality they react throughout, rather like a double helix).

Initial divergent phase. This is energised by a massive drama stimulus. It begins with the teachers' own stories and experiences, thereby establishing an emotional connection to the work. Big Brum then offers online clips and text extracts from 'Socially Distant', which is the story of a teacher experiencing extreme isolation and disconnection during the pandemic.

As teachers related in their testimony, although the drama pushed this to the extremes, it was something that they and the children 'knew' from their own experiences. This connection meant that it was 'one less journey to make': it felt authentic and helped build trust: involved common experiences such as watching kids from a window, experiences of loss and grief. The power of the dramatic fiction helped them work their way into developing a felt relationship to it.

Following the stimulus, there is an extended collaborative space to explore and process ideas and further engage in divergent thinking: taking and honing ideas, reframing and reworking possibilities, the use of open questioning and modals (*What if ...? Maybe if ...?*). What could we do ideally? Throughout, Big Brum is modelling ways of working. Its confidence in facilitating that process helps the teachers feel they are in good hands.

AFFECTIVE
– NON-MEASURABLE

Creating 'socially distant' as a response to Covid aims to reach teachers & pupils through emotional engagement

Teacher – trust already in place due to company longevity & close relationship with school

The Play
Big Brum
INPUT

- 'no right answer'
- allowing time
- Big-Brum / teacher / pupil collaboration
- 'I wonder what ?
  if ?
  when ?
  why ?' questions

DIVERGENT THINKING

Teacher authenticity operates here

Big Brum
to
teacher
hand-over

at this point teachers chose for you not to help with planning

CONVERGENT THINKING

two types:
- teacher planning
- tight questioning to pupils

teacher-led priorities
eg. nc targets, skills, pastoral needs, healing
OUTPUT

EFFECTIVE
– MEASURABLE

In the background there is therefore also a question of trust, built in part through sharing these personal experiences and strong feelings; through striving together for authentic practice. This is also partly made possible through a pre-existing relationship between Big Brum and the school and as a result of the company's prior reputation and professional experience.

At this point, a version of the dramatic story is offered to children and they too begin to explore it. The teachers observe and listen to the children, recording some of their responses.

Handover phase. The teachers now take ownership of the process and the project knowledge, asserting they are the ones who know the children and can best their professional demands. They recognise the need to take the work forward themselves: "it's our turn now." In a project that is predicated on the development of teacher well-being, including authentic professional autonomy, it is important to recognise the significance of this moment and to see it as a sign of strength rather than failure. The teachers have been well-prepared and Big Brum learns to trust them, to let them take it on, rather than to keep asserting any need to be involved.

Convergent phase. As the teachers take the work forward, they find ways to relate it to the formal curriculum and the professional demands placed on them by the school: here, to re-engage the learners after lockdown, to start working their way back into formal learning (and re-establish their own role as classroom teachers). This process is massively enriched by the 'broth' they have experienced, so that activities and outcomes are all generated by the common dramatic experience and by the convergent and creative process … which continue to influence the work (even finding their way into grammar and punctuation activities).

This leaves the Expert Interpretation Panel members with questions about future work cycles that might build on such an experience: *Does this leave the teachers even more open to comparable ways of working in future? With more knowledge and experience?*

7.3.   APPENDIX 3. TOWARDS OUR-SELVES

The following is extracted from a document written by Big Brum's Artistic Director Richard Holmes and sent to partners and event participants for the project event, 'Drama, Theatre and Education: A Living Question?' which took place on 26th September 2020.

It shares some of Big Brum's thinking in relation to 'Socially Distant', the drama that was used with adults and (in a modified form) with children during the project that this research investigates. This includes the social and political context to the project, as well as observations on children, adults and society, on 'displacement' and on the dramatic centre of 'Socially Distant.'

(For an explanation of how Bondian theatre uses the term 'centre', see Davis, 2005).

The adult world does terrible things to its young, with each new generation of adults finding new ways to do more terrible things to the next generation.

This abuse is endemic and the germ of the abuse stems from the defence of private property, defence of privilege and the defence of the power by those who have it.

Politics over the last twenty years has deepened this attack on the defenceless, especially on the young, while simultaneously strengthening the defensive position of the most powerful in our society. …

The young's nature is to question, to be tender and kind, to be social, to be creative as well as imaginative, but there is a danger that this is being knocked out of them by this ideologic teleology of capitalism which penetrates and permeates every aspect of their lived experience.

The reason Big Brum works with young people is because they are remarkable, they feel profoundly the world and its movement ,and ask the most profound questions about it, but however remarkable young people are, they can't find the answers in their own enthusiasm or needs or even creativity, without a shared space to make them tangible.

At Big Brum we believe that young people have a right to know themselves as historical and social beings, tell their story: after all, they are the most human people on the planet. At Big Brum we work alongside them using theatre and drama to open up these areas that the young people are so aware of, the fundamental aspects in reality that hardly anyone speaks to them about, or more importantly, listens to them …

As teachers and educators, the task must be to enable young people to peel the wallpaper from their faces …

The centre of the day is to work collectively, expressively and be in connection.

The centre of the drama is Isolation, disconnection, and repression.

Living in this world has made us socially distant from ourselves and each other, where lies and greed conceal our true nature. How then can our true selves be revealed in such conditions?

The day will be constructed around the play' Socially Distant 'and follow a simple task-based drama getting at the guts of the above centre. The central task of the day's drama will focus on the suicide of a boy during lockdown but through reflecting on the adult's (the father's) response to the event.

The father is the adult world, he is us.

7.4.   APPENDIX 4. THE CRUCIBLE PARADIGM

The following comes from Big Brum's Artistic Policy (2011) and sets out what the company means by 'the crucible paradigm.' This is the basis on which Big Brum not only aspired to work with teachers during the project in this research report, but also in effect invited the teachers to embrace in their work with children, so that all three parties - company, teachers and children – were all 'in the crucible' together.

Within this paradigm, dealing as it does with human questions and the world of the imagination, there can be 'no right or wrong answers' (something referred to several times in the research report as being liberating, beneficial and offering 'safety' to both teachers and children).

A term that was regularly used by To Be Project partners was 'The Living Question', which as understood by Big Brum is in effect a restatement of the crucible paradigm: a living question is one that people 'stir around' and explore together, not one that begs a simple, single or definitive answer.

Pedagogically, the drama mode of learning is in direct opposition to transmission teaching. In TIE the Actor Teacher and the young people co-operate in learning. This is the means by which we explore in order to explain to ourselves. We refer to this as the 'crucible paradigm' where we stir our knowledge around together. This not only transforms the relationship between teacher and student but it transforms the relationship between student and student, who become collaborators in their learning.

We place the young people in their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)[4]. This is the distance between the actual development level, as determined by independent problem solving, and the level of potential development, as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers. Actual development level characterises mental development retrospectively, while the ZPD characterises mental development prospectively. In the

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4   This term comes from Vygotsky (1986)

drama mode young people are liberated by stepping into the 'otherness' world of the fiction and in doing so shedding many of the inhibitions and obstacles of being the day- to-day 'me'. The 'crucible paradigm' demands that co-learners collaborate in a space where young people are taken seriously by adults and each other, a space where the matter under exploration makes human sense. Thus in drama children stand a head taller than themselves in everyday life.

7.5.   APPENDIX 5. THE ANGLE OF CONNECTION.

The concept of 'angle of connection' was a crucial one in establishing conceptual and emotional links between the dramatic stimulus offered by Big Brum and the lives of the teachers and children involved as project participants.

Through establishing a strong personal emotional connection early in the project (e.g. through sharing the 'moments of self and the world' in Appendix 1), both the drama and the work growing out of it were able to resonate powerfully for project participants, becoming a common experience and point of reference.

The term originates with Gavin Bolton (1979). Bethlenfalvy (2019) explains it as ,the connection between the fictional situation and the real-life situation of the participants.'

Here, Big Brum's Artistic Director, Richard Holmes, says a little more about the term and how it is used in this project.

Bolton first writes about angle of connection, second dimension and secondary symbolism in 'Towards a Theory of Drama.' Both the second dimension and angle of connection relate to the young people's role in the drama and the drama they will be working on .

Second dimension begins by finding a collective relationship to the role or material, one which is central to their site. This gives the young people a social relationship which they share, while also allowing for

their individual site, their self-site, to occur simultaneously. So, the two sites - that of the world of young people and that of the individual child - can be found in the drama.[5]

The angle of connection is similar in that respect: it offers a role in the drama that gives space, as Geoff Gilham[6] would say, for their play to happen.

The company [Big Brum] more often than not asks the children to be themselves and gives them the responsibility to help the adults come to know the world of young people. So the angle of connection and second dimension is often the child in the story or drama we need to help [in the case of the project, the young girl, Ayesha].

Young people know what it's like to need help. The child in the story is second symbolism speaking them.

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[5]   In Bondian drama, '*the site is the self in its total situation'* (Edward Bond in Davis, 2014). Bond identifies four interacting sites in drama: A - social sites, B – the play's specific sites, C – conveying the play to the audience, D – the audience as site of imagination.

[6]   Geoff Gillham was a UK-based playwright and a key international figure in Theatre in Education.

ARE YOU GOOD?

Researching Nyitott Kör's teacher well-being workshops through Arts Based Participatory Action Research

"...[B]ecause we work with people, and we are people, too."

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ABSTRACT

Background and objectives: The Hungarian research conducted by Nyitott Kör was realized as part of a 29-month international Theatre in Education project. The aim of the research was to examine the impact of Drama and Theatre in Education on teachers' well-being, since there had been previous studies underlining the positive influence of drama on health and well-being.

Methods: Our exploratory case study was art-based and can be categorised as participatory action research (PAR). The sample consisted of a teachers' collective working in a primary school in Budapest, Hungary. The survey about the organisation had 33 respondents from the 36 employees working there. Our sessions, which were held for 6-15 people per occasion, were observed and recorded. The information gained from these observations was processed via qualitative content analysis. During the sessions, we also prepared a SWOT-PEST analysis. These were then complemented with six semi-structured in-depth interviews, which were processed with the help of IPA (interpretative phenomenological analysis). At the end of the sequence of workshops, participants also responded to a Flow Questionnaire.

Results: According to the results of the survey, organisational trust and the community seemed to be functioning well; however, the results of further analysis revealed that communication between members of the group is not satisfactory. Due to the lack of trust towards the leader and the low level of organisational communication, building trust became a key element. As a result of the Encounters, in addition to the good relations between colleagues and the sense of community, participants also reflected on the dividedness of the teaching staff. Burnout was also a defining theme during the sessions, as teachers felt that it had been threatening them and that they needed stronger motivation and more training and education. By the end of the series of sessions, they identified that in order to conceive the problems, step up together, and set their common goals they need closer cooperation,

and it would also be important that the headmaster should shift to a more cooperative, democratic, and transparent way of working. The series of encounters influenced teamwork in the community, and participants gained new knowledge related to Drama and Theatre. By the end of the series, participants were able to identify main difficulties and professional challenges and came up with common suggestions for solutions and common goals.

Conclusion: By the end of the sequence of workshops, participants were able to recognise challenging pedagogical situations and reflect on them. They saw systemic-level problems in their complexity, were able to articulate their own difficulties and problems and form a compound picture of them, and identified the strength of the group as a component to resolve these issues. As an outcome of the series, by the end, they were emotionally capable of turning to one another, speaking out on their difficulties and providing emotional support for those in need.

Key words: teachers' well-being, drama, Theatre in Education, burnout, organisation

1. INTRODUCTION

The research was commissioned by Nyitott Kör who was the coordinating partner in a 29-months-long international strategic partnership in the field of drama, focusing on teachers' and students' well-being. The name of the Hungarian organisation Nyitott Kör can be translated as "Open Circle". The main field of work of Nyitott Kör is Theatre in Education (TiE). The field of Theatre in Education in Hungary is hugely influenced by the English practice and has been developing quickly and widely since the 90's, giving birth to various new sub-genres and self-defined terminological solutions (Golden, 2017). Theatre in Education is a practice that is based on methods and tools of Theatre and Drama and represents social and interpersonal phenomena. Participants are invited to experience a social dilemma, which is present in their everyday life, and challenge their views and behaviour. "In the framework of the performance, participants are guided through a sequence of events where they are not only spectators of the story, but creators, directors, actors and critics. [During the sequence] different situations are presented, thought through, analysed, transformed, and edited [together with the participants]" (Horváth, 2009, p. 6).

In general, Nyitott Kör works with one school class at a time and the participants of their core activities are students aged 6-18. The idea of focusing on other members of the school was born around 2018, based on the research results of a previous project of Nyitott Kör (Lendvai, Horváth, Dóczi-Vámos, & Jozifek, 2018). In this we found that in order to reach a long-term and meaningful impact on the students via the practice of Drama and Theatre in Education, we need to consider them as an organisation and reach more members of the school community, to try to target the whole school. In our understanding, in a school community "members are connected by a constantly evolving system of relationships and some common (changing) system of goals and activities" (Rapos, Gaskó, Kálmán, & Mészáros, 2011, p. 117). The community has common narratives, routines and are characterized by a "community space that is open to community members and their

environment, builds on the diversity of relationships and on the force of communities in learning, the living of ethical and democratic values; treats the school as a part of the social network, and makes efforts to identify and interpret its place in the network; for learning and improvement, sees professional support in professional learning communities and networks" (Rapos et al., 2011, pp. 117–118). There are concrete manifestations of this idea in the individual schools and every school has its own unique life. However, there are commonly interpretable dimensions, such as teacher-student relationships, trust, honesty or even taboos, the degree of acceptance, norms or responses to challenging situation, which are accompanied by specific activities, regulatory frameworks and specific solutions in case of problems (Rapos et al., 2011). The school community consists of the students and, in a broad sense, all the employees are included, as well as the parents. Reaching different actors from the same school and work with them intensively during a long period of time with their active participation are the key to any change in the school atmosphere (e.g. Twemlow & Sacco, 2012; Dóczi-Vámos, 2016a; Lendvai et al., 2018), which, in the long run, may appear in the change of routines, in the (re)transformation of structure, or in culture and strategy (Czakó, 2011).

The step Nyitott Kör took in this respect was to work together collaboratively and socially with a group of teachers from the same institution for a significant amount of time, throughout a sequence of events, in which students were also directly and indirectly involved. Previous research proved that Drama has a positive effect on mental health and well-being of participants in educational contexts (see e.g. Wall, Fries, Rowe, Malone, & Österlind, 2020; Gordon, Shenar, & Pendzik, 2018). It is also evident that school climate and its quality, inclusiveness, friendliness and sense of safety play key roles in students' engagement. This led Drama and Theatre in Education practitioners of Nyitott Kör and the project partners to believe that these were important points of connection between the topic, the goals and the method. Drama primarily aims to create a safe space, where the participants feel free enough to express themselves and reflect on the moment and world we live in (Hunter, 2008), which was also an important aspect in the current project. Nyitott Kör offered a human

story through Drama for the teachers and their students and allowed for the observation of the story from different perspectives, which is a key feature of the practice (Bolton, 1995). Different drama techniques were used to think jointly together with teachers about their own well-being and its relation to student engagement in the common work, to look at the school atmosphere from different angles and to equip them with strategies of emotional engagement and stress management (Galazka, 2018). The training created a frame for gaining a commonly lived experience about Drama and partnership. When working with Drama, Nyitott Kör's aim was to empower teachers and students to work creatively and collaboratively, where the teacher could become part of the group "as one of the learners in the drama education situation" (Toivanen, Komulainen, & Ruismäki, 2011). Drama and Theatre in Education improves constructive communication and tolerance towards others' views and behaviour, adaptability, flexibility (DICE Consortium, 2010), which are important factors in teamwork and collaboration, and contributes to the identification of individual strengths and weaknesses, supports a deeper awareness of individual and collective responsibility and enables proactive actions and resilience.

In accordance with these, Nyitott Kör's objectives with the sequence of workshops focusing on well-being were the planning and delivering of a process for and together with a group of teachers from the same institution, as a result of which they consider themselves as a community where the individuals cooperate, help each other and are able to define the needs and expectations they (have to) meet, and their own needs and expectations. Furthermore, they are aware of their professional problems and keep their own professional objectives in mind, and their sense of self-efficacy grows which enables them to support the students more in their learning. Along with these, the facilitators determined the following sub-goals:

During the process and by the end of the sequence of workshops:

1. The participants will be able to identify and reflect on challenging pedagogical situations and explore them deeply.

2. The participants will be able to examine systemic problems in their complexity and see the coherence in them.

3. The participants will be able to express their opinions and their needs in relation to challenging professional situations.

4. In favour of their own well-being and that of their environment, the participants will be able to determine goals in relation to ways of solving the problem situations revealed in Sessions 1–2.

5. The participants learn new methods and apply them in their everyday practice with the aim of fostering their students' engagement.

6. The community becomes important for the participants and they view cooperation as a long-term solution more than before.

7. The participants gain experience about the nature of problem solving and a trustful community in which individuals are paying attention to each other and individuals' needs are taken into consideration.

The sequence of workshops for teachers was shadowed and supported by research. The observations helped to understand and interpret what Nyitott Kör thinks about how Drama and TiE can contribute in action to their goals and how the process of reaching these goals can serve with useful experience in developing a Well-being curriculum for practitioners and teachers or other non-teaching professionals working in the field of education. Drama is process oriented, in which the specialist planning and leading the procedure (Drama teacher, Actor teacher) can help the participants (students, clients) to share, interpret and understand their experiences at personal and social

levels (Novák, 2016). As the participants, facilitators and researchers were equal members of the same team going through the same process, Participatory Action Research (PAR) was an appropriate methodology for our study, by positioning 'dialogue' and 'participation' at the centre of alternative ways of knowledge production. The process was based on theory and previous practical experiences, furthermore, through PAR continuous reflection on the way Nyitott Kör's actions affected what was happening with the participants and with the facilitators themselves could happen. This way, the participants, the research and the Series of workshops could learn from and about each other, and about the world we live in, through Drama. Hence, they had a mutual effect on each other and supported each other in development. Our research has the perspective of educational science.

As the terminology of the field of Drama and Theatre in Education is not unified internationally, we had to reflect on the practice, and find words for the concepts. During the project we used the term 'Encounter' for the events prepared, offered, and done, because we wanted to meet the participants, and support them to meet themselves and each other. Its dimensions are teacher to teacher, teacher to student, student to teacher, teacher to parents, teacher to management, management to teacher, teacher to other school staff (e.g. secretary, school psychologist, SEN specialist etc.). The encounters were sessions, modules, like workshops, and participants often referred to them as a course or training. The Theatre in Education events were often referred to as performances and plays. All these concepts and terms are valid at the same time. We sought to give imaginative titles to the teachers' workshops and found that quotes from participants were way better than anything we could have thought of.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Education plays an important role in shaping societies (Dewey, 1916) and teachers are key actors in it (Barber & Mourshed, 2007; Hattie, 2008). However, drama and TiE have put mainly students and professional work with students in the focus of their attention, both in practice and in research (Takács et al., 2017, p. 157). To our knowledge, until the birth of this report, working on the well-being of teachers and other school staff did not appear in the literature. We know about only one Turkish study which was carried out to determine whether a drama course had any effect on the psychological well-being of 4th grade university students studying Physical Education and Sports Teaching (Gül & Çağlayan, 2017). Nevertheless, teachers' relationship and interaction with students are at the core of educational processes, so their well-being should be a central question. They have a significant role in forming the individual students' lives by expressing a unique influence on their academic and social competences and maintaining their personal well-being (Roorda et al., 2017; Wubbels & Brekelmans, 2005). **It is undisputed that during drama and TiE work, something happens with the children and with those meanings which structure, help and interpret their "presence in the world" and orientation (Horváth, 2009). But can it be stated that drama and TiE can have a similar effect on the adult community of a school, too?**

The teaching profession is more than an occupation, as based on the terminology of Vámos, Kálmán, Bajzáth, Rónay and Rapos (2020, p. 8), the profession is the "identity of the individual". However, to reach this profession and identity, the teacher's well-being, happiness factors must play a significant role along with the ability for continuous professional development (CPD). These factors include for example, efficiency, social relationships, and feedback received on work (Kun & Szabó, 2017).

Job satisfaction also plays a key role in well-being (Hajdu & Hajdu, 2011). According to Seligman (2008), if we can apply our characteristic strengths at work, it can become a profession and thus the individual

can feel accomplishment during work. One very important aspect of work happiness is the presence of flow, which can be experienced when the challenges that arise during work are well matched to the abilities of the person, so their strengths and virtues play an important role in creating the perfect experience (see e.g. Csíkszentmihályi & Csíkszentmihályi, 2011; Holecz & Molnár, 2014). And the more people use their strengths in the course of their work, the more flow experiences they can have, which is further motivating (Csíkszent- mihályi & Csíkszentmihályi, 2011). During this process important criteria are that the task should be clear and that the person should receive direct feedback on the progress made (Csíkszentmihályi, 2007), which connects back to job satisfaction. In the absence of synchrony, so-called anti-flow experiences can occur: anxiety and worries when the challenges are much higher than the skills possessed, and boredom and apathy when competencies are higher than the level of challenge. We have not found research or description in the literature of drama and TiE about how flow is reached with an effect on teachers' well-being, but in relation to children it can be stated that if attention can be raised involvement can start and go on the unique way from working with the task, engaging to it, internalizing it, to interpreting and evaluating it (based on Heathcote, Morgan, & Saxton, 1995). Another element to it is about the feeling of agency, which is born organically, via creative tasks when working through Drama. "TiE does not cure or punish. It does the only moral – and practically useful – thing that can be done to bewilderment and violence. It turns it into creativity. It does not stop at helping the disaffected to understand themselves and others, vital though that is. It gives them the only reward creativity can give – the ability to change. That is something that cure and punishment could never do." (Stuart, 1998, p. 118). Teachers' well-being is important to consider, because teaching is proven to include increased stress (Mihálka & Pikó, 2018). It is one of the most difficult professions in terms of physical health, mental well- being and job satisfaction (Johnson, Cooper, Cartwright, Donald, Taylor, & Millet, 2005), and in the case of uncared dysfunctions it may often lead to burnout (see, e.g. Ádám, 2020; Kricsfalussy, 2020). Multiple overloads with work influence the individual's health status, work performance and achievement (Ádám, 2020). And prolonged,

high levels of stress can lead to emotional emptiness and lack of motivation. The performance of people with burnout is typically of lower quality than that of their former selves or their peers, they are less chargeable, dissatisfied with their job and are often dehumanized with less well-connected work relationships of good quality (Vanden- berghe & Huberman, 1999). Protective factors play an important role, which are for instance the strong social network, collegial and managerial support and recognition can help to avoid burnout (Horváth, 2012), just as the opportunity for professional development can be a preventing factor (see e.g. Kopp, 2016). Besides that learning about new ways of teaching or using new elements in teaching that we are not comfortable with are sources of inspiration, they can be frightening and risky as well. Drama activities or TiE performances demand a certain brave or apt presence from the teacher, who, sometimes – even if they recognise the importance and meaning of the methodology –, are anxious about where the work goes (O'Neill & Lambert, 1995). When it is about burnout, the loss of control is a dominant feeling, so introducing drama with adults slowly in a process of continuously building a safe and trustful atmosphere is essential for achieving the level of engagement. Since it is the "magic, mythologic and rational thinking" (Popper, 1995) of children which – with professional guidance – allows for drama and theatre to engage them quickly and "just play".

The organisation itself has a significant role in the creation of the possibility for the pursuit of continuous professional development (see, e.g. Kopp, 2016; Rapos, 2016) as well as for knowledge sharing within the organisation (Kopp, 2016), since this can help teachers to implement their own ideas (Halász, 2011). Organisational trust is also an important dimension of a school community, which connects to Drama work, the basis and also goal of which is the building of trust. The members generally see the director as merging with the organisational trust itself, and the colleagues prioritize collegial relationships, however, consider managerial support during tasks a crucial element (cf. Sass, 2005). As trust is generally the base of any effective and high-level collaboration, it is of paramount importance in teachers' relationships with their colleagues, since collaboration

involves some degree of risk, and Drama and TiE work is collaborative. According to Deutsch (1973), in groups where a high degree of cooperation is set to be reached, it is a particularly important question whether the members of the group are eligible for cooperation, and trust each other enough to take the risk of cooperation. Research so far has clearly demonstrated (see e.g. Bourdieu, 1997; Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012) that trust and understanding communication in the school community have a positive effect on students' academic achievement. Furthermore, a transparent and trustful school atmosphere plays a key role in shaping teachers' mental health, too, including the avoidance of burnout (Paksi & Schmidt, 2006; Paksi et al., 2015). In addition, it shows a correlation with teachers' career motivations, staying on track and the risk of leaving the profession (Paksi et al., 2015).

The quality of school management is a decisive factor of school efficiency (Lénárd, 2016). The extent to which employees think the leader is fair, determines the level of trust in him/her (Sass, 2005). It is also important for the head of the institution to be consistent, predictable and reliable, and that teachers have a say in decisions, and that their interests are kept in mind (Whitener et al., 1998, as cited in Sass, 2005; Lénárd, 2016). Besides managing the institution demo-cratically and flexibly, managing conflicts empathetically and effectively, fostering the school to be a peaceful place is a noteworthy component, too (Lénárd, 2016). The principal and the management board have a weighty influence on the institution as an organisational unit, and it has a "significant prestige among teachers" (Lénárd, 2016, p. 173), so the headmaster has a serious impact on the whole organisation, on the level of performance of the teaching community. For functioning well in the long run, the teachers' cooperation is necessary, and the leader's role is decisive from this aspect, too (Lénárd, 2016). Close and meaningful relationships and a sense of belonging are essential for mental well-being (cf. Albert & Dávid, 2007; Meyers, Brent, Faherty, & Modafferi, 1993). **However, building trustful relationships with colleagues and cooperating with them is not typical for Hungarian teachers, which, besides the lack of time, can also be connected to the dimension of competition as well** (Fehérvári, 2016).

Teachers' well-being cannot be discussed independently from their relationship with the students, since they have mutual effect on each other. The students' positive emotions contribute to the teachers' well-being, which in (re)turn affects these latter group's relationship with the organisation (N. Kollár & Szabó, 2004). Trust plays a significant role in the teacher-student relationship, as honesty and acceptance between actors in a taboo-free environment are important bases, too (Dóczi-Vámos, 2016b). The teacher's role is substantial in the shaping and functioning of the whole student community, for the development of social relations. And from the aspect of problem-solving methods and attitudes, too, since students behave and act as their teachers behave and act (cf. Lendvai, Pap, & Nguyen, 2019; Lendvai et al., 2018).

During their work, teachers are in a complementary role, as they do not only work with the students, the teaching community, and other institutional staff, but also with the parents' community (Bakos, 2015). "Parental involvement" is decisive in several respects. In relation to parental involvement, the involvement of children in school life has been the subject of studies in the past that have focused on students' school performance. It is a multidimensional concept (Sui-Chu, 1996), of vague and uncertain nature, of varying intensity, just as the family-school relationship is not static in nature, but an ever-changing system of relationships (Catsambis, 1998 cited by Imre, 2015). In a narrower sense, parental involvement refers to school participation as well as home support (e.g. help with homework, talking about what happened at school), and more broadly, all the different and diverse behaviours, practices, parental aspirations, own experiences as a child and also as a parent, their expectations, attitudes and beliefs about education itself, and the learning of the child and their own children, and even about parental involvement (Hendeson & Mapp, 2002; Imre, 2015). Supporting learning at home also indicates interest and participation in the direction of the child and the school, too, which is more efficient, lasting and has a direct effect on classroom performance (Imre, 2015). According to the OECD (2012), parental involvement means the parent's active commitment to school for the global development of their child.

After the change of regime in Hungary, parents became more and more determinants of students' values, which was no longer counterpointed by the principals dictated by the school (cf. Földes, 2005), equality, partnership and shared responsibility became important features in the school's relationships with the families (Torgyik, 2004; Marton, 2019). The degree of parental involvement is determined by several factors (Imre, 2015). The most well-known factor in the Hungarian literature is the socio-economic situation and mainly the level of education of the parents, and it has a significant effect on the parents' participation in their child's school life. Families with higher social status and mothers are more willing to participate (Epstein, 2001). Furthermore, according to Bakker and Denessen (2007), the frequency of certain parental behaviour is not an adequate indicator of the level of involvement, as, for example, the frequency of teacher-parent contact cannot be a predictor of involvement, as its control is not necessarily in the hands of the parent, but often at the school's. Indeed, there are many parents who are daunted from closer participation because of how the teacher treats them, in many cases it is also due to teachers' middle-class attitudes which feels strange to parents of low social status (Lareau, 1987 cited by Imre, 2015) and may result in communication barriers (Vincent, 1996 cited by Imre, 2015). Communication with middle-class parents also has its difficulties, in case if parents are unaware or unwilling to know their children's real abilities and knowledge and typically blame the teacher for the children's failure (Lannert & Szekszárdi, 2015). **Because of the professional competencies, the building of trust would be mainly the responsibility of the teachers (Lannert & Szekszárdi, 2015). Also, when discussing trust, it is essential to consider the broader context, as mistrust is typical in post-socialist countries (Csepeli, 2014). According to research in international comparison, Hungarian society can be characterised with low levels of interpersonal trust, trust in institutions and specifically trust in the educational system (Utasi, 2002; Tóth, 2009). And teachers and parents try to build a trustful relationship in this culturally defined heritage.**

All this may be significant especially in such an unpredictable and difficult period as the Covid-19 pandemic. Communication was needed to be initiated and maintained not only with the student, but also with the families (Mahaffey & Kinard, 2020). In such a situation, the adaptability of the teacher plays a particularly important role. They should adapt to the changed needs of the students, as well as to differentiate further on (N. Tóth, 2015), be open-minded to others' ideas, adapt to uncertainty and unpredictability in changing learning situations and accept the new learning technologies, to be able to change-reflect-learn/innovate (Rapos et al., 2011; Szivák, 2014).

At the time of the Covid-19 pandemic, the teachers with little experience in online education, had to switch to online education at a rapid pace, whilst they had to become familiar with existing digital and online tools (see, e.g. Hulon, Tucker, & Green, 2020). As Hungarian educators had little use of digital technology in their lessons until the pandemic (Czirfusz, Misley, & Horváth, 2020), they would have needed and will need in the future further professional education and regulations encouraging digital pedagogical solutions (Horváth, Misley, Hülber, Papp-Danka, M. Pintér, & Dringó-Horváth, 2020). Significant raise in the collaboration of teachers, knowledge sharing at a more global level was an important step in the period of transition, several Facebook groups were formed to share knowledge (Proháczik, 2020), which type of collaboration is necessary in crisis situations (Wolfe & McCarthy, 2020). During the lockdown, teachers had to find and develop the most appropriate ways to communicate with the parents and the students to support families in home schooling as effectively as possible (see e.g. Wolfe & McCarthy, 2020). Parents – who often have several children in one or different institutions – prefer if a school uses unified teaching solutions (e.g. same platform for all the classes or within one class), unless they get easily lost. Moreover, they appreciate it if they see that teachers pay special attention to maintaining student motivation (Wolfe & McCarthy, 2020). Home-learning is best supported by the teacher with a high degree of flexibility and handling the situation with sufficient sensitivity (Wolfe & McCarthy, 2020; Piccolo, Tipton, & Livers, 2020).

As a summary it can be stated that "respected adults engage in respect-full interactions in which respectful students can blossom" (Beaudoin, 2011, Section 8). As Gillham argues "because such things concern the

processes of social and human interaction, the domain particularly of drama and theatre in education, real understanding is a process of coming to understand: we cannot 'give' someone our understanding. Real understanding is felt. Only if the understanding is felt can it be integrated into children's minds, or anyone's. Resonance is the starting point of the integration process. The resonance of something engages us powerfully; that is, it affects us. But, significantly, it also engages us indirectly with that which it resonates with. Resonance is not authoritarian; yet it's an offer you cannot refuse!" (Gillham, 1994, p. 5). According to the literature (Kaposi, 1995; DICE Consortium, 2010; Horváth & Oblath, 2015; Novák, 2016; Takács et al., 2017; Lendvai et al., 2018; Oblath, 2019; Bethlenfalvy, 2020) this is what Drama and TiE can offer when working with children. The construction, and then keeping of a frame, and inviting participants to activities to work collaboratively and reflectively on everyday human, moral or social dilemmas. As Beaudoin (2011) points out, the building of a respectful school culture for students begins with creating supportive, enriching, constructive school culture for teachers and other school staff members, and at the heart of such an organisational culture lies the professional relationship between the colleagues and school management, where trust is of utmost importance. Since "teachers who feel appreciated, connected and energized by their colleagues bring out the best in their students" (Beaudoin, 2011, Section 8).

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. RESEARCH CONTEXT AND THE SCHOOL IN FOCUS

Our research is a descriptive and exploratory case study (Falus, 1993; Golnhofer, 2001), which is understood both as research design (Buchanan, 2012) and as research strategy (Szokolszky, 2004; Buchanan, 2012). We see it as a complex instrument (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014), also successfully applied in drama (e.g. Horváth, 2009; Oblath, 2019), which makes it possible to undertake the in-depth examination of a single social unit, in our case, the organisation of a school and the communities and individuals in it. Encountering the reality of the concrete case (1) allows getting to know a wide range of actors and viewpoints, (2) reveals information and deep-lying interrelations that would be difficult to uncover, and (3) makes the role of the environment visible in connection with a given phenomenon, behaviour or process, in their context and in the changing dynamics of the action (Hartley, 2004; Dóczi-Vámos, 2016a; Málovics, 2019).

The research wanted to "explain the interaction between artistic and scientific orientation in the art education profession" (Jokela, Hiltunen, & Härkönen, 2015, p. 445). It is an **Art-Based Research (ABR)** (see, e.g. Novák, 2016; Radford, 2020; Chamberlain, McGuigan, Anstiss, & Marshall, 2018) with special emphasis on Drama and Theatre-based research (Norris, 2000, 2009; Leavy, 2015). As a transdisciplinary method, it connects science with art, and it is primarily suitable for exploratory and descriptive research, as ours is, since the focus is on a social phenomenon in a social context (based on Novák, 2016). **The most important statement of this trend is that performative art, politics, pedagogy and research are not at different levels, they are not activities of different quality. But make parts of the same process along which participants discuss, reflect on, criticize, and evaluate a certain dilemma together, and shape the process together in a joint work.** By reflecting on an alternative form of knowledge co-production

through an art-based method, we wanted to exploit the potentials of PAR as a "responsive research praxis" (Zeynep, 2020, p. 87), since "art-based methods have widely been used in research engaging communities through giving access to the worlds of participants. At the intersections of disciplines, benefiting from a range of art forms from photography to theatre, this approach provides the space and tools for the exploration of multiple perspectives about shared problems or questions" (Zeynep, 2020, p. 87). "The focus is not on developing one's own personal artistic expression but on the interaction between co-artists, co-researchers and participants" (Jokela, Hiltunen, & Härkönen, 2015, p. 445). **In our research, from the planning to evaluation, all the actors of the actions and reflections were equal members of the process, as democratization and equal cooperation are important characteristics of PAR as well (see e.g. Bodorkós, 2010; Málovics, 2019), and each subsequent session was designed based on the results revealed by the analysis of the previous sessions (see e.g. Horváth and Oblath, 2015; Vámos, 2013).** According to the meanings and goals of working as a co-researcher, co-artist and as a participatory worker, Creswell (2012) divides action research into two main categories: practical action research and participatory action research. "Participatory action research emphasizes the participation of members of the studied community and looks at the new knowledge and skills in the light of social constructionism" (Jokela, Hiltunen, & Härkönen, 2015, p. 439). With the use of artistic elements in participatory research processes the focus of interest is on empowering the participating teachers, fostering a process of critical reflection, where community members learn to see "private troubles as public issues" (Purcell, 2009). They create ideas for their own lives and the community, which, very often, induces community action and community change (Coemans, Wang, Leysen, & Hannes, 2015). "Using arts in the community is about 'building connectedness', social trust and social cohesion. It is about finding a voice and the expression of ideas to people, negotiating and re-negotiating personal understandings, to find their own sense of reality within a collaborative context" (Thiele & Marsden, 2003, p. 89; as cited in Coemans et al., 2015, pp. 34–35).

3.1.1. The school as an organisation in focus

The primary school in focus is situated in the capital city of Hungary, Budapest. Earlier, the school was in one building, but from then, a new building was given to the Upper Elementary (grades 5–8), and Lower Elementary (grades 1–4) stayed in the "old building", as the participants call it. The training sessions with the teachers were in the "new building", which is spacious with big windows, light, and big common spaces. There are some decorations around, but it can be seen and felt that it needs to be moved in and owned more.

To map the community and have a broader picture of the organisation and the individuals working in it, to know more about their attitude towards their workplace and towards Drama and TiE, a Staff Questionnaire was conducted (see Table 1.). Due to initial communication problems with the school management, it proved to be difficult to reach the staff with the Staff Questionnaire, but finally 33 participants out of the total school staff (36 people) filled it. The narrow sample counted 6–15 people, they were those who participated in the workshops, the number of whom varied from session to session with 6 participants being always present, who became the core of the process. All of them were teachers from both Upper and Lower Elementary, teaching main subjects or skills subjects, being experienced and beginner and some of them were form masters.
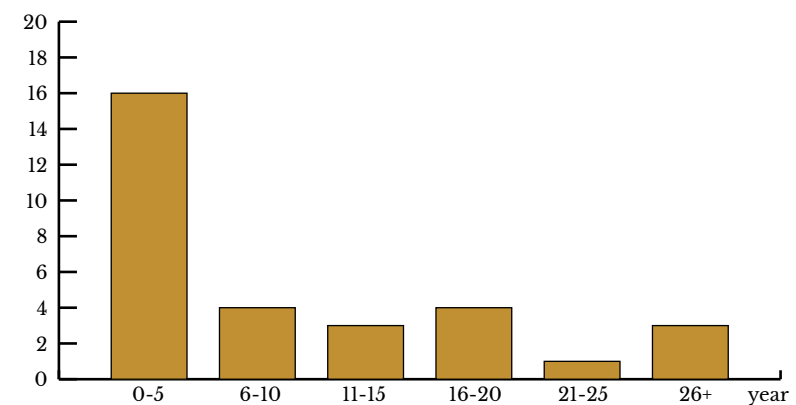

Figure 1.: How long have you been working in this school? (n=31)

More than half of the respondents worked in the school for 0–5 years (Figure 1.), the reason of which may be the school enlargement, when more teachers were hired. Most of the teachers (n=11) had 22 lessons a week and 10 respondents indicated that they were form masters. Out of the 33 respondents 24 answered to at least one open-ended question, one of which was about the tasks they did besides teaching. They listed a variety of activities, which revealed that there is life in the school. Their responses showed that they offer different programs to students, on the one hand, subject-related (sports, preparing for competitions, competitions, talent management, development, tutoring), on the other hand, leisure activities such as "organising concerts, perfor-mances", "organising events e.g. sports, culture, excursions, etc.". In addition to in-school programs, they also "accompany children to an out-of-school program". Additionally, teachers do "substitution, (tutoring/development), on-call (morning, afternoon), decoration, organisation, correction, task planning, compilation of digital curriculum, communication, education", and the role of the form master was also highlighted, which carries extra responsibilities. Many described a wide range of tasks including "continuous communication with parents and children in speaking and in writing, administration", "lunching", "organisational tasks" and "court/corridor duty". The relationship with the parents appeared several times, someone mentioned "disciplining parents – depends on the situation". Cleaning of the classroom seems to be the teacher's role, as well as shaping of the physical environment: "decoration, flower care", "decoration, room arrangement, cleaning", "wrapping", but somebody indicated to have foundation board member tasks, others organise camps, field trips, and there are inventory management tasks, too. Summing up the wide variety of tasks they have to perform, one of the respondents formulated that they are "class teacher, cleaner, psychologist, community organiser, attendant". Among the forms of collaboration between colleagues, they only mention work in the Panel, and "keeping contact, organisation, community building, etc.".

The activities of the administrative staff also appeared: e.g. "administration, handling of calls, posting and related activities, keeping the student register up-to-date". These are not perceptible to the vast majority in everyday practice; however, they are essential to the operation of the organisation and their well-being and integration into the team is equally important.

To the question whether they had already taken part in DiE or TiE workshops of any organisations, 13 respondents indicated yes (17 participants indicated no), and 13 people answered to the related open-ended question to detail their experiences. Most wrote "good," "positive," "great, helpful," "wonderful, uplifting, impulsive, free, profound, important". Two respondents wrote specifically about Drama and Theatre training. One of them about Nyitott Kör –, and indicated that it was a good learning experience both for him/her and for the students: "it was a lively, interactive, good opportunity for the child to play the role "as if", and it was useful for the "formulation and revelation of thoughts and moral judgments". The other participant was not satisfied with what he/she had received at a Drama training – not organised by Nyitott Kör –, since he/she already had a lot of experience in the field of drama, and he/she was mainly expecting methodological learning, which he/she did not receive: "since drama and acting have been a part of my life since I was a child, there were many tasks I knew well. So, it didn't give me as much as I expected". Someone with experience in music therapy wrote: "I was able to gain insight into music therapy, and it was a very good experience". Others reflected on "Happiness hour[1]" training: I have very good memories, I got to know my colleagues better".

11 respondents indicated that they wanted to participate in Nyitott Kör's sequence of workshops focusing on well-being, 3 said that they did not know about it, 2 did not take part because it was "taking place during working hours", more specifically "because of the afternoon session, study room". Someone did not want to participate because "I don't know enough about it, yet". A respondent possibly misunder-stood the aim of the process and put it this way: "unfortunately,

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[1] Boldogságóra: a popular Hungarian training, the title of the training was translated to English by Dóczi-Vámos & Lendvai.

research consumes a lot of time and I hold private lessons at times that I can't give up, because this is the only way I can allow for the luxury of being a teacher. I'm really sorry. Good luck!".

It can be said that nevertheless the headmaster claimed several times to support the training, however, responses from the teachers show that on a practical, logistical level there were barriers at this point. It was mainly because of the flow of information that the well-being workshops lost participants.

3.2.   RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The aim of the research was to proceed together with Nyitott Kör's sequence of workshops focusing on teachers' well-being, and to explore what the training participants in focus think about the effects of the programme on the cooperation within the community, on their methodological development in the field of Drama, on the change in their sense of self-efficacy in relation to their pedagogical work with the students, and on how they identified challenging professional situations, expressed their opinions and needs in relation to them and the ways they looked for solutions to them.

3.3.   RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Along these research objectives four research questions were formulated:

RQ 1. How do participants' opinions and feelings in connection with the identification and the ways of tackling the most challenging pedagogical problems change during the 5+2 sessions of Nyitott Kör's Sequence of workshops focusing on teachers' well-being?

RQ 2. How does the participants' attitude towards drama and TiE change during the Sequence of the 5+2 encounters?

RQ 3. How does drama as an approach and the ability of changing perspectives help maintain motivation in relation to teachers' professional work?

RQ 4. How do participants' need for cooperation with each other change during the 5+2 sessions of the sequence of workshops?

3.4.   RESEARCH TOOLS AND DATA COLLECTION

When planning the action research, we set up a structure with the aim to follow the formation of the well-being training programme for the participating teachers. We included the survey method, observation, SWOT-PEST analysis and documentary analysis to gain data from different points of view and recorded visual images from session to session. We conducted open, qualitative observations at all the training occasions so that we have continuous data collection to follow the possible changes. Two observers recorded all relevant events in writing, as well as each session was sound recorded (based on Szokolszky, 2004; Erickson, 2006). **Data were analysed right after the individual sessions to support the training facilitators in adjusting to the next sessions, and this way research could be applied for development.**

Before starting the Sequence of sessions, a questionnaire was filled by the staff of the school in order to find out about their job satisfaction, organisational engagement, organisational trust, and their sense of self-efficacy. Because according to the literature they are all elements of the teachers' well-being and were important to explore for the purposes of the Sequence of workshops organised by Nyitott Kör, too. Satisfaction and commitment have a mutual effect on each other, satisfaction causes engagement, engagement creates satisfaction, and trust is the connective tissue that holds the organisation together (e.g. Spector, 1997; Sass, 2005; Seligman, 2008; Hajdu & Hajdu, 2011; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Holecz & Molnár, 2014; Horváth, 2019).

In the middle of the training process came the Covid-19 pandemic crisis, the first lockdown in Hungary (16-03-2020) and Nyitott Kör had to suspend the next monthly sessions planned. The organisation was looking for ways to reach the teachers to know about their feelings, opinion and needs, maybe even mental condition, to adapt future meeting possibilities to the given situation. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with six teachers, who were chosen based on their participation in the sessions (were active and usually approached a problem from different perspectives). Also, the aspects of selection were that in the sample there should be at least one form master, someone teaching a main subject, another one teaching a skills subject, a teacher from Upper Elementary, one from Lower Elementary, someone working at the school for 5 + years, someone working there for less than 5 years. Since the participants expressed their openness to online sessions, Nyitott Kör organised two online Zoom sessions, which were recorded and analysed as well as the reflections the teachers gave about these sessions.

The participants received an informative document and a statement of consent prior to the beginning of the research and Sequence of workshops, informing them about the progress of the research. By returning the statement of consent, they had the opportunity to participate in the workshops and approved their participation in the research. Anonymity was ensured in all cases, pseudonyms are in the study, and there is no detail that would be suitable to identify them.

The table below describes the different research tools used, their foci, their relation to the research questions they answer and to the objectives set by Nyitott Kör in the Well-being curriculum (Table 1.). At the beginning of the description of each period there is a Gantt diagram which illustrates the structure in which these research tools are organised in a certain period of time and modified if needed due to any minor or major occurring incidents. The table only includes those tools which were finally used.

Table 1. Research tools in connection with the research Qs and NyK's objectives

Research tool	Staff Questionnaire
Focus	1. Investigating the individual teachers' well-being through the following dimensions: Self-efficacy: ***Általános Énhatékonyság Skála*** Hungarian Adaptation of the General Self-Efficacy Scale (Kopp, Schwarzer, & Jerusalem, 1993) Job satisfaction: ***Munkahelyi elégedettség kérdőív*** (Hungarian adaptation of Job Satisfaction Survey) (Spector, 1985; 1997) Organisational engagement: sections of Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWE) (Schaufeli et al., 2002; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Horváth, 2019) Organisational trust: ***A szervezeti bizalom kérdőív*** (Sass, 2005, 3. version) 2. Teachers giving information about students being at risk for early school leaving. 3. Previous encounters with TIE, anticipations about Nyitott Kör's training. 4. Demographic variables
Research Qs	Before starting the Sequence of sessions, a questionnaire was filled by the staff of the school in order to find out about their job satisfaction, organisational engagement, organisational trust, and their sense of self-efficacy. Because according to the literature they are all elements of the teachers' well-being and were important to explore for the purposes of the Sequence of workshops organised by Nyitott Kör, too. Satisfaction and commitment have a mutual effect on each other, satisfaction causes engagement, engagement creates satisfaction, and trust is the connective tissue that holds the organisation together (e.g. Spector, 1997; Sass, 2005; Seligman, 2008; Hajdu & Hajdu, 2011; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Holecz & Molnár, 2014; Horváth, 2019).
NyK's objective listed p. 99	

Research tool	Observation 1–4.
Focus	Data comes out of the training occasions.
Research Qs	1,2,3,4
NyK's objective listed p. 99	1,2,3,4,5,6

Research tool	Observation 5.: group reflection
Focus	Data comes out of the training occasions.
Research Qs	1,2,3,4
NyK's objective listed p. 99	4,5,6,7

Research tool	6 semi-structured interviews
Focus	In line with the chosen method of analysis (IPA), our research question was open and exploratory, aimed at elaborating the subject of phenomenology (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). Our research question was two-tiered (Smith et al., 2009) and focused on the process, with the aim of exploring how interviewees interpret their own experiences (Rácz, Kassai, & Pintér, 2016)
Research Qs	Extra questions related to both the research and to Nyitott Kör's objectives: • What are the teachers' experiences about online education during the first lockdown of the Covid-19 pandemic? • How did they experience the transition to online education? • How do teachers interpret their relationship with parents and students during this period? • What are/have been the teachers' needs from the organisation during the transition to online education?
NyK's objective listed p. 99	Do teachers need an opportunity for supervision from the part of Nyitott Kör, or it is provided by the school, allowing for sharing the challenges and experiences they face in the new situation?

Research tool	Observation ZOOM 1.
Focus	Getting to know about teachers' well-being during the 2020 spring lockdown, how they were going on physically, emotionally, how they felt about online teaching and how they felt the support of their organisation.
Research Qs	1,2,4
NyK's objective listed p. 99	1,2,3,6,7

Research tool	Observation ZOOM 2.
Focus	Exploring what teachers thought about the students' well-being during the 2020 spring lockdown.
Research Qs	1,2,4
NyK's objective listed p. 99	1,2,3,4,5,7

Research tool	Teachers' narratives 1.
Focus	Reflection on ZOOM 1. sessions
Research Qs	1,2
NyK's objective listed p. 99	3,4

Research tool	Teachers' narratives 2.
Focus	Reflection on how they see the benefits of TiE and DiE in their everyday work with the students.
Research Qs	2,3
NyK's objective listed p. 99	5

Research tool	SWOT-PEST analysis
Focus	Do an analysis and synthesis of the problems, topics, questions, discussions, the participants come up with at the SWOT as well as they have come up with during the previous occasions.
Research Qs	1,4
NyK's objective listed p. 99	1,2,3

Research tool	Flow Questionnaire
Focus	Getting to know how the teachers feel about the group work done.
Research Qs	1,2,3,4
NyK's objective listed p. 99	1,3,4,6,7

3.5. DATA ANALYSIS

The Staff Questionnaire was analysed with SPSS software 23. version and the Flow Questionnaire with Excel. The observations and teachers' narratives were analysed with qualitative content analysis and the interviews with Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). At the qualitative content analysis we created codes and organised them into thematic groups (), as for the IPA, according its rules (based on Braun & Clarke, 2006), we worked with a small number of items and a homogeneous sample during targeted sampling (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009; Oxley, 2016), as the interviewees were teachers from the same school, all of whom participated in Nyitott Kör's well-being workshops. In the analysis of semi-structured interviews, we distinguished interviewees by pseudonyms. However, to ensure anonymity, we do not present the sample of the IPA more accurately, as the material could be suitable for identification for the colleagues and the management of the institution. Therefore, only homogenizing factors corresponding to IPA are presented. Unified context was provided by the institution's approach to the Covid-19 pandemic (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014).
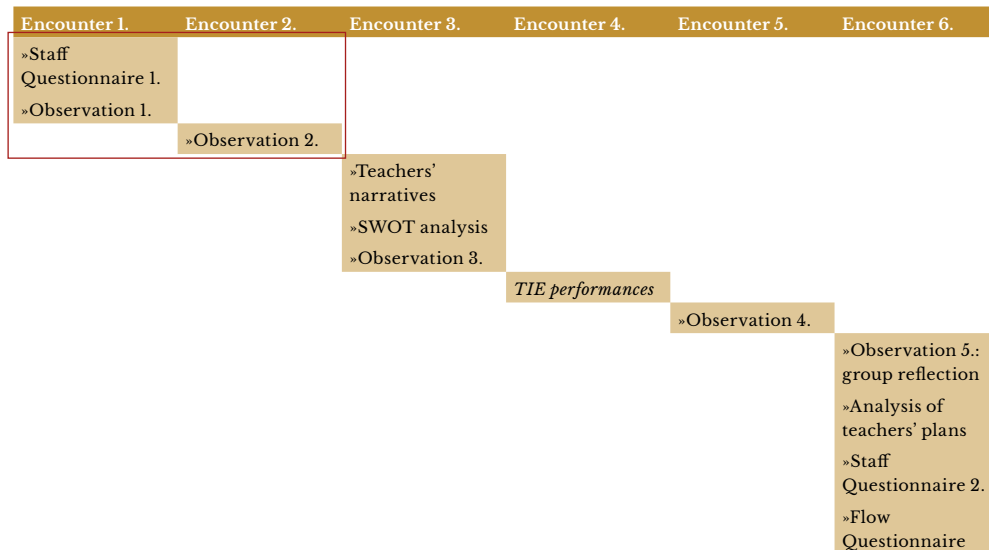
4. RESULTS

In the following, we are going to present data, analyse them and interpret the results at the same time as it has happened throughout the course of the cyclic process of the research. The aim was supporting action, the development of the Sequence of workshops focusing on well-being, the Well-being curriculum. The 7 Encounters of the Sequence of workshops are presented in 3 periods, each of them having key dimensions that emerged during the related workshops, from the participants. A Gantt diagram at the beginning of each period presents the structure of the research at those particular stages, and some explanation of the change. The 1st period covered the first two workshops (February – March 2020). The focus was on mapping the community and the individual teachers from different perspectives, getting to know each other and the most crucial was to reach a certain level of trust, which was previously ruined. From the perspective of Nyitott Kör, the focus was also on teachers becoming participants of Drama and gaining a lived experience about it themselves. Four key areas emerged during this period: a shift from the satisfaction with the job to burnout, trust and mistrust, and the complexity of needs and expectations. The 2nd period (March – June 2020) concentrated on teachers' well-being in the chaos of the pandemic, the complexity of expectations, their needs, motivation and burnout, cooperation in the organisation during the lockdown, teachers' role in students' well-being during lockdown and the role Nyitott Kör played in the teachers' well-being. The 3rd period (August – November 2020) was the last period when meeting in person was possible in Hungary again, before the second wave of Covid-19. The aim was to go deeper in Drama and TiE and facilitate a deeper self-understanding through that both as individuals and as an organisation. During the three periods 12 Theatre in Education performances were carried out with students, reaching all classes of the school in this period. Research was not part of these occasions, however, teachers' experiences connected to them appeared during the workshops, especially at this period of the process. From the expectations, fears and desires, through how the group went through building a common understanding about Drama and the

well-being of the different stakeholders, we arrive at an overall reflection of the whole process of working with Nyitott Kör during the 1,5-year-long period.

4.1. 1ST PERIOD – DEPARTURE

1st workshop: February 2020: "We are robot pilots"

2nd workshop: March 2020: "Need to inspire, awaken, engage kids somehow"

Encounter 1.	Encounter 2.	Encounter 3.	Encounter 4.	Encounter 5.	Encounter 6.
»Staff Questionnaire 1. »Observation 1.					
	»Observation 2.				
		»Teachers' narratives »SWOT analysis »Observation 3.			
			TIE performances		
				»Observation 4.	
					»Observation 5.: group reflection »Analysis of teachers' plans »Staff Questionnaire 2. »Flow Questionnaire

2. Figure: Gantt diagram of the 1st period

4.1.1. From satisfaction and engagement to burnout

The Staff Questionnaire gave an overview for Nyitott Kör at the beginning of the process about the teachers' and other colleagues' attitudes towards the organisation in the dimensions detailed in the table of Research tools (Table 1.). As for job satisfaction and work

engagement, according to the answers given to the questions[2] ranging on a Likert scale from 1[3] to 7[4]. There are 3-4 people who usually indicate a rather negative attitude towards the different dimensions of the organisation. Except for them, the employees were satisfied with their jobs and were engaged in it. Almost 80% of the respondents indicated that they could definitely function autonomously in their jobs, and approximately 87% considered their work important, from a personal and a broader systemic perspective as well, and think that the quality of their work had a significant effect on many people's lives. In general, about 70% of the respondents were satisfied with their jobs and felt a high sense of satisfaction when they performed well in it. A little more than 80% stated that if they performed well, their self-confidence grew and felt rather bad if they got to know that they had not performed well. Typically, their emotions were connected to their performance, too, their mood and feelings depended on it. Most of the employees in general thought that they had a creative, not a simple and repetitive work with diverse activities and the chance to take initiative, be proactive with the freedom to function as they prefer.

As for the teachers' emotional engagement[5] there was a list of 15 questions and the possible answers range on a Likert scale ranging from 1[6] to 7[7]. The frequency in general shows that the respondents were ready to work with a much greater effort than normally expected to help the school to succeed, as well as they thought that they could perform here at an appropriate level. They indicated that they liked to work here and were proud of being part of this organisation and were attached to it. At the first two workshops some of them, who had experience in working in other schools said that they felt this

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[2] Dimension: organisational engagement: sections of Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWE) (Schaufeli et al., 2002; Horváth, 2019)

[3] to a very small extent

[4] to a high extent

[5] Job satisfaction: *Munkahelyi elégedettség kérdőív* [Hungarian adaptation of Job Satisfaction Survey] (Spector, 1997)

[6] completely disagree

[7] completely agree

community was much better, "even good". They indicated that they shared similar values with the school community, which they cared for, for its future, and they would not leave the school. But also, they stated that they would not accept to take any kind of tasks without consideration just to keep their jobs. Although most of the employees felt loyal, there were 1-3 people who did not feel complete loyalty.

In relation to self-efficacy questions[8], participants reported on 10 questions, the answers of which ranged on a Likert scale from 1[9] to 4[10]. The average of their answers indicated that they thought they could solve difficult problems if they wanted to, and that with the adequate efforts they usually find the appropriate solutions for the problems. Not everybody, but many of the respondents felt that they could handle unexpected situations and could stand up for themselves if it was needed and could keep calm in difficult conditions. In general, it was not difficult for them to stick to their goals and intentions and they are full of ideas to solve situations.

As opposed to this, when, at the first workshop, in a Passport exercise, the participating teachers had to draw how they felt about their previous semester and what they were looking forward to in the next one, the feeling of exhaustion and fatigue in connection with the just ended semester was typical. (To Be Consortium, 2021a, pp. 36–36.) Positive situations and life events were more provided by family background, but despite the busy period, they tried to appreciate and highlight the positives of their work. They also showed what made them happy in their pedagogical existence. Typically, more informal programs with children and end-of-year assignments (e.g. certificate distribution) were looked forward to. When they had difficulties in their private lives, it was likely that their teaching performance also deteriorated, so there seemed to be a kind of back-and-forth effect. It turned out at the workshops that feedback and inspiration are of great

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[8] Self-efficacy: Általános Énhatékonyság Skála Hungarian Adaptation of the General Self-Efficacy Scale (Kopp, Schwarzer, & Jerusalem, 1993)

[9] not typical at all

[10] completely typical

importance to the participants, they expressed that otherwise they risk burnout. And, in the Staff Questionnaire most of them (75%<) stated that the processes in their work entail the possibility of getting feedback on their performance. Despite the rather negative previous semester, which seemed to be overloaded and exhausting, they were typically positive about the new challenges, the upcoming months. In other parts of the session, they stated that experiencing joy was important for them, but they associated the pedagogical career, their own work, with the "robot pilot" mode: "you just do what they expect, (…) and nothing more". They agreed that they had no self-time and would spend years in this day-to-day stressful operation. It is also a burden for them that the constant existential threat of low salary with a lot of different tasks and high number of lessons a week also worsens their situation and takes motivation away. Leaving the career also came up as a last resort in several cases.

In a flashback activity of a memorable seminar at university they were looking for metaphors of "the teacher". All the participants (9/9 people) thought the teacher was mostly like a gardener. It was mainly associated with the creation of a need to learn, to acquire knowledge: "to plant knowledge, the desire for knowledge is the students', but it is not the teacher who will reap the fruits. [… Each plant is different…] They all need water, medium, foundations". Some of them were emphasising the selective nature of education: "pulling out weeds, mowing weeds". Despite the previously mentioned robot mode, the factory worker working on the assembly line, or the textbook shop salesperson and the animal trainer did not receive votes. In the explanation, in relation to the salesperson they said that "because it is cold," so a kind of positive, friendlier atmosphere appears in relation to teaching. Regarding the animal trainer, they were joking that "in the morning I always want to be a gardener, but I become an animal trainer by the afternoon", when they ran out of patience. This role was associated with shortened instructions: "Sit down! Stand up!". It could be seen that the participants were aware that some elements of the different roles – that they could not fully identify themselves with – also appear in their functioning. (To Be Consortium, 2021a, pp. 40–43.)

At the 2nd Encounter a dramatized element was introduced by a character (Teacher in a role) sitting in a Hot Seat. Participants listened to Gyuszi [ɟusi] (male) expressing his concerns about Szasza's [sʌsʌ][11], who he is mentoring in the first years, with the aim of helping the new colleague to integrate into the organisation. The Teacher in a role paid attention to describe Szasza's situation as he/she had told him, in a descriptive way, without providing interpretations to it, i.e. the young teacher has changed, his/her motivation is low. This way the participants could form their own interpretations and his questions or comments could trigger a common understanding about what Szasza was experiencing, as Gyuszi sought suggestions from the participants about how he could support Szasza. The responses to the situation started to focus on students' motivation quite soon, typically expressing the lack of it, which they thought may have caused a loss of motivation in the teacher as well. According to them, the growth of online communication is also a challenge, and they do not believe that school curricula can compete with it from the point of view of raising children's interest and engaging them. It has also been agreed that it is possible that the fictional story displayed fits into the natural process of living through a teaching career, maybe heading towards burnout. The participants were able to answer why they thought Szasza had chosen a teaching career, which, in several cases, were the narration of their own life paths, their motivation of their choice of career and the sharing of determining experiences. Career choice was mainly tied to the family background, but there were others for whom teaching was not a childhood dream but was connected to a strong image of a teacher they loved. Their interpretations to why Szasza stayed in the field of teaching, centred mainly around the presence of "a good collegial relationship" or good atmosphere among the teaching staff. Furthermore, the participants reflected on the pedagogical mentoring system as something very important, because their own experiences

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[11] "At this Encounter we chose an absent protagonist, because we wanted the participants to create this character based on their imagination, activating their own *experiences* in an indirect way. We also wished to empower them to step into his/her role during the activity – so he/she became collectively created. This is also why we chose to name him/her Szasza, since it can be a nickname for both male and female." (Guidebook, p. 40)

showed that beginner teachers are typically left alone and must find out everything for themselves and get easily lost. As seen in the previous section, many of the teachers were teaching in this school for less than 5 years, so the experience of being a newcomer was fresh to them. So when reflecting on Szasza's situation, they mentioned the importance of asking for help from each other, and the feeling of being left alone also appeared: "We teachers, we are pretty much left alone, I believe. (…) I can't ask for help in connection with certain things, I have to go after it (…) I feel left alone".

At a flashback activity from Szasza's past, participants talked in the name of his/her "precious objects" to enable participants to express their feelings and thoughts that can be useful for teachers who struggle to find motivation. Teachers articulated that he/she was "burned out", while many expressed frustration, and regretted that he/she had chosen this path. Some of them reflected on their own situations as well, and others were looking at the situation from the solution-seeking point of view (e.g., "I might be doing something wrong. I should change the topics of my lesson", "it's time to look for new tools! I need to move on!"). There was a notebook with notes about burnout. When a participant found it, read it aloud and the others immediately got connected to it, they were carefully listening to it. Although they tried to contribute to this activity actively, it could be felt that they were not at the point of looking for what Szasza could get inspiration from. One of them even expressed that "I can't see a solution to this problem now". (To Be Consortium, 2021a, pp. 38–43.)

4.1.2. Motivation
Among the 33 respondents to the Staff Questionnaire, 24 people gave answers to at least one open-ended question. The question receiving the most answers was the one focusing on the factors that motivated them in their professional lives; some respondents answered only this open-ended question. First, we grouped the items and then we ordered them. In the case of "learning", we created three subgroups, in one of them we listed statements concentrating explicitly and exclusively on the transmission of subject knowledge (subject knowledge: "Teaching my subject; transfer of knowledge, I want to hear it back"). The category

of "personality development" included statements only about emotional and moral education (e.g. "To raise children who are brave, honest, persistent, and able to love and believe"). The statements classified in the third subgroup can be divided into two other subgroups (subject knowledge and personality development: e.g. "The basis of my motivation is to be able to give experience to others, to make knowledge experiential").
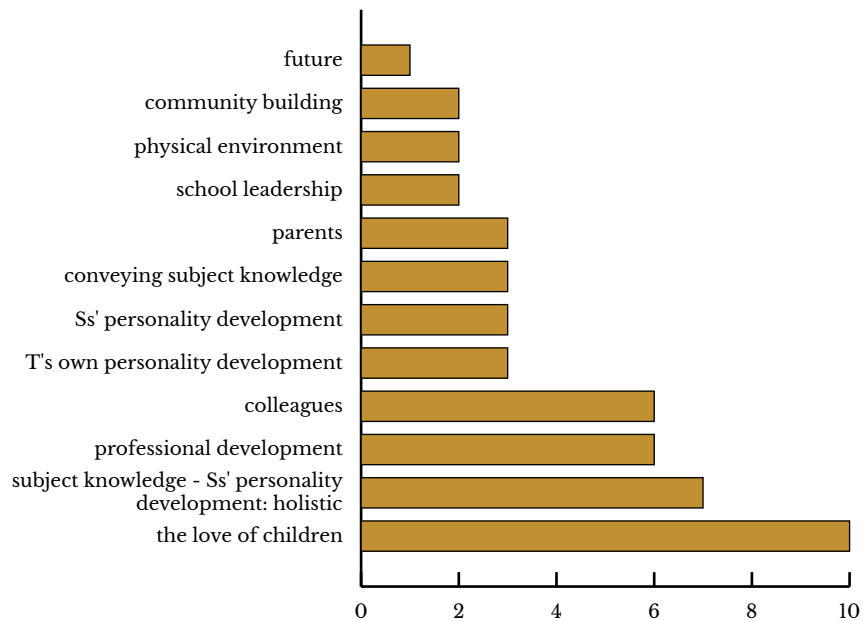

Figure 3.: Teachers' sources of motivation (n=24)

As it can be seen in Figure 3. most of them feel that children are the strongest motivation for them ("I love children"), which some of them see in a holistic way, reflecting on their overall development. Besides this, their own professional development, professionalism, challenges, tasks, acquiring routines are especially important for the teachers, along with the desire to "meet the expectations of my job", and "if there is success in my work". They also expressed that "teaching – makes me stronger, I feel myself successful". They are motivated by their colleagues' people-centredness, the "pleasant atmosphere" and

they also perceive that "it is easier to face daily problems in a community with a good vibe". They also listed that their current work provides an opportunity for "self-identity" and personality development. They consider it important to have a good work schedule, nice conditions, and environment. Parents' positive feedback, trust and helpfulness also have a strengthening effect on the respondents, while two respondents mentioned school management as motivating factors.

4.1.3.   Trust – Mistrust

Organisational trust is the connective tissue in the organisation and the community of the employees[12] was rather heterogeneous in relation to the question. Although, according to the respondents, in general, there is a sense of trust among them, they are not unified in this aspect. The question[13] exploring this aspect can be divided into four main categories with 9 subcategories: 1. Trust towards the manager, 2. Trust towards colleagues, 3. Trust towards organisational functioning, and 4. Trust towards professionalism. The results are analysed in these four categories within the 9 subcategories, the possible answers range on a Likert scale from 1[14] to 7[15]. There are five components constituting the fair, engaging leader category, the focus is on the emotional-based trust side of the relationship with management. The respondents indicated that the headmaster considers individual opinion and personal goals to a certain extent[16], but not everybody feels ample trust. The employees indicated that – not completely –, but they get a free hand in their work and their personal goals are considered when setting organisational goals. As for the questions related to whether the management is supportive and treat colleagues fairly, the average of the answers show that employees are not unified[17]. 19 employees of the 33 indicated that they partly or completely agree, but 6 people were neutral and the rest

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[12] The Questionnaire was filled by all the employees of the school, not just the teachers (see Table 1.: Research tools).

[13] Organisational trust: *A szervezeti bizalom kérdőív* (Sass Judit 3. version)

[14] completely disagree

[15] completely agree

[16] Answers rage: 5,43-5,57

[17] Answers rage: 5,31-5,66

of them did not agree. So, not everybody feels that they are treated fairly, that the management would stand up for them and not everybody senses complete and unquestionable trust. Also, some employees are afraid of sharing their weaknesses or workplace problems (Figure 4.) as well as they are afraid of sharing their weaknesses (Figure 5.), because they feel that these can be turned against them. Some people feel neutral or negative about having confidential discussions with their colleagues (Figure 6.).
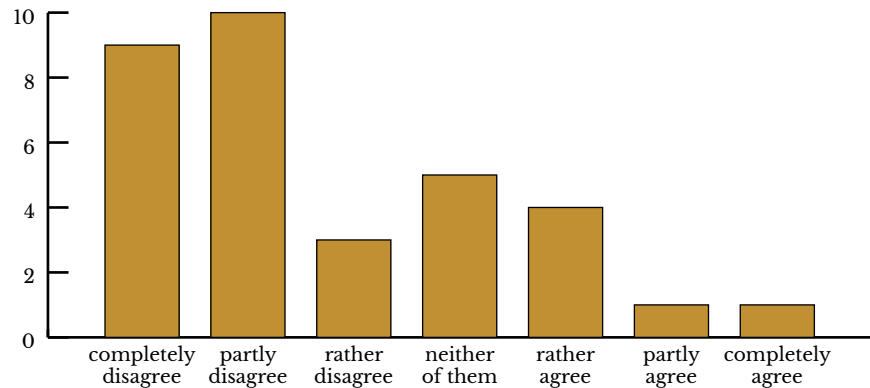
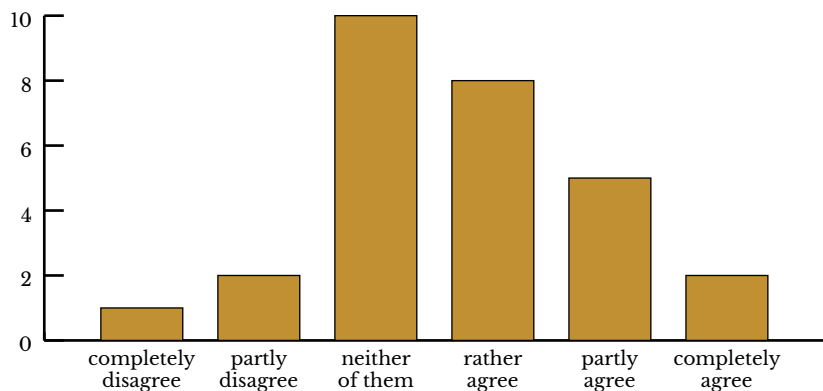Figure 4.: People are afraid that their weaknesses are revealed because they can be turned against them

Figure 5.: People can talk about their workplace problems because they are not turned against them
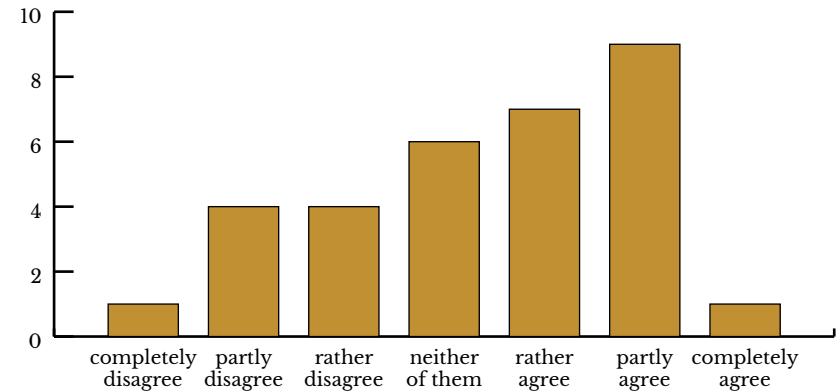
Figure 6.: People can talk about any issues confidentially

From the point of view of Nyitott Kör, the question of trust and mistrust proved to be a crucial point in the beginning of the process, when the participants and the facilitators found themselves in a status quo. Due to the initial communication difficulties with the headmaster and a high degree of uncertainty about the project, an almost touchable mistrust developed between the teachers and Nyitott Kör, but at certain points, it could also be felt between the participants, too. Although five months prior to the first session, Nyitott Kör's facilitators and the director of the institution agreed that the school staff will be informed properly about the programme, the teachers did not have information about the sessions, dates, form of the process and the related research. Therefore, first and foremost the facilitators had to adapt to the situation and establish a trustful atmosphere where people want to take the risk for cooperation and formulate opinions. Throughout the sessions, trust towards Nyitott Kör and the facilitators increased, but research remained a blind spot in the process that they accepted but never understood how it is related to the whole process. Also, the lack of trust could be felt at the first occasion, too, when a common contract for the sequence of workshops was put together. At first, participants wanted to have full confidentiality in connection with what happened at the sessions, but after a group discussion they agreed that it was anonymity that was important and not banning information flow,

knowledge sharing from their non-participating colleagues, which could be one of the positive outcomes and purposes of the sequence of workshops focusing on well-being.
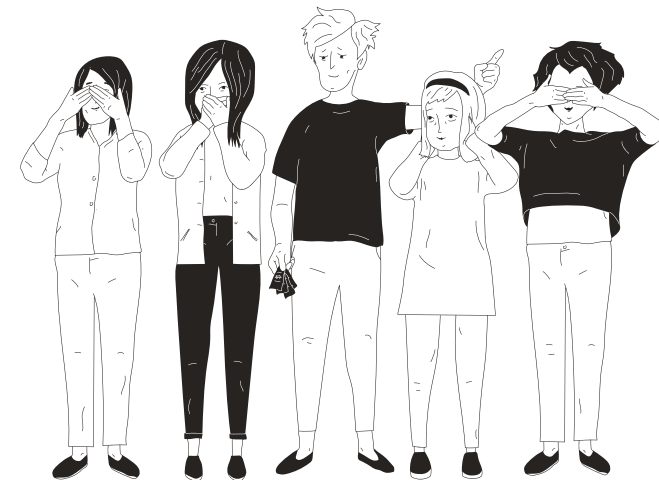
There were three questions in which there were not significant, but salient differences between the answers of Lower Elementary and Upper Elementary teachers. Two were about trust in colleagues and telling them confidential things and one about mutual help and care. Lower Elementary teachers feel less safe in terms of speaking about their workplace problems, because they are rather afraid that these are turned against them. Many of them also feel that they cannot talk confidentially to each other without any risks, while teachers working in Upper Elementary do not feel so. Also, there are differences in the question of mutual care: teachers teaching in Lower Elementary are not perceiving it as positively as their colleagues teaching in Upper Elementary.

4.1.4. The complexity of needs and expectations

Several activities were focusing on mapping the complexity of needs and expectations the teachers were feeling to face. When they could formulate thoughts from Szasza's perspective, teachers also highlighted the role of expectations, on the one hand, the expectations Szasza set for him/herself, and on the other hand, the expectations he/she perceived as assumed by others: "I simply cannot meet so many expectations". When in three groups they created still images about what they thought 1. the maintainer, 2. their colleagues, 3. the parents considered what a good teacher looks like, they worked deeply and engaged on the task. Overall, good teachers for them "protect, pay attention and are kind", "praise" and "love" children, but are consistent and determined. They said that their goal was to influence the students, and that they develop, and they consider teachers' guiding behaviour important as well as that they should stand up for their students when needed (To Be Consortium, 2021a, pp. 33–37).

The participants believed that the maintainer thinks a good teacher "doesn't hear, doesn't see, doesn't speak, and smiles". During the discussion of the still image they expressed dissatisfaction and a lack

of cohesion among teachers, accompanied by the statement: "we are like that, that is a fact and it is true". So, they portrayed their helplessness and their bound position, but on the other hand it also appeared that teachers do not take an active role in standing up for themselves.

Still picture about the maintainer's expectations

As for the institutional level, we were interested in the teachers' and other staff's relation to organisational functioning, predictability, operation in accordance with the accepted rules and non-abuse of trust. The majority of the respondents (n=13) agree partially, seeing the school as a rather predictable working environment, where promises are usually kept.

Teachers considered that their colleagues thought that communication, collaboration and knowledge sharing played key roles in what a good teacher was, and they even formulated specific goals and tools of knowledge sharing. It was suggested that it could be helpful to be able to attend each other's classes, which would be beneficial both for the teacher in action and for the observer. But they closed this discussion with the conclusion that it was impossible, since due to the high number of lessons and tasks they had they did not have the opportunity to visit each other's lessons.
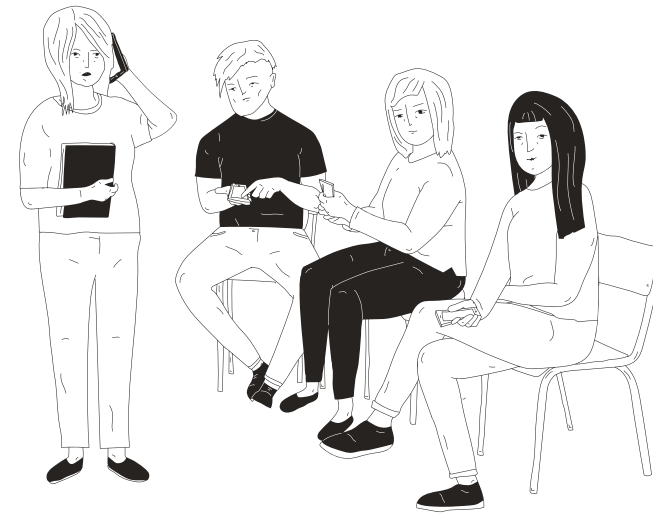
Still picture about the colleague's expectations

As for the mutual care among the employees, the picture painted by the Staff Questionnaire was rather layered. In almost all the related questions respondents indicated that they are rather positive about them, which means that the **cognitive** foundations of a trustful relationship among employees, such as keeping promises, reliability are there, as well as the foundations of **emotional** trust among them, such as selfless help, and the perception of emotional bonds. As opposed to this, they were rather negative (3,7) about the question if colleagues paid attention to each other's worries and problems. There is a sense of lower level of trust and confidentiality in the relationships. Also, lower average (4,2) was given to the question: if people also help each other at the expense of their own effectiveness.

When they were looking for metaphors for "the teacher", the "actor" got many votes (6/9 people), because – as they said – the performer dimension was important as well as the different roles they have to take during a day. They emphasised the communication with parents and playing roles in front of them; the concrete example was exercising self-control and assertive communication. Parents seem to be central for the teachers, mainly the parental reactions, because "the parent is always with his/her child". They believe that children's family

background is a determining factor that can even influence a teacher's decision to leave the profession. But they felt themselves "lucky" because they could "work with families where learning was important", who were mostly partners and supporters in relation to the work of the teacher. But sometimes working with them was felt to be difficult. It was believed that the concept of value and values had changed, education had changed. **They stated that "children's motivation is the key to everything" and it is important to recognize that teacher-student-parent have significant impact on each other. In the still image they represented parents who believed that a good teacher would turn students into "angels in an instant" with a magic wand. They said that parents expected them to "practice magic" while they did not have the tools to do so. They said that each parent expected them to think that their children were "perfect" and that they should hold several roles: "be a psychologist a little, too", "should always be available, 0–24", furthermore, they expect "good relationship" and "care" as well, which can also explains why teachers chose "actor" in a high number as a metaphor.** It is important to note that this is what participating teachers considered to be the parents' expectations, we had not investigated the parents' perspectives.

Still picture about the parent's expectations

At the final reflection of the 2nd workshop thoughts were shared about expectations, and older colleagues as a kind of good advice to their younger colleagues said that they should only have to meet their own expectations, they should not set unrealistic expectations of themselves, and if they feel that they have done everything, they should not worry. A teacher with 30+ years of experience said "I reached a point when I did everything, tried everything, and I even flagellated myself. Then, I realized that I didn't have to flagellate myself. If you did everything, it's not your fault. Then we must move on, we need to let self-flagellating go". "I would put responsiveness here. Primarily only for ourselves. And then we're fine. It is very difficult to learn not to want to be perfectionists. (…) So, I should not want to meet the expectations of many parents. It is not even possible; So, the young colleagues need to learn this. You have to let it go".

4.1.5.   At the end of the first period
The closing circle of the second workshop – and so that of the 1st period – centred around the comment of the participant who was looking for inspiration against burnout: "I don't see a solution to the problem right now". The discussion grouped around five topics: 1. the teacher's and the student's roles in the learning process, 2. complexity of the perceived and/or real expectations, 3. using digital tools in learning or not, 4. individual characteristics and differentiation and 5. family background. Participants articulated that their goal was to **"teach and support children in learning" with "common" solutions in a way that "the child should be an active participant"** as well. In this regard, the question of digital technology was raised and most of them said that "scrolling on the gadget is fine" with which one participant completely disagreed and strongly opposed it. However, participants felt that "this is so part of their lives" that they should not be deprived of the tools but taught (how) to use them. On the issue of adapting and differentiating to individual characteristics, there was a strong opinion from a teacher who had been on the field for a long time that **"this path is not walkable" and others agreed that it was "a bit utopian. We are not paid or appreciated for this extra work"**.

At the end of the first session, participants stated that it was a very useful and important step to talk so much, to think together. They felt that it had a positive effect on them individually and on the group, too, as they were together with colleagues they usually do not talk to or do not even meet because of working in two different buildings. At the end of the second session, participants stated that "more such platforms would be needed" so that all colleagues could recognize that "our problem is not unique" and could help each other.

4.1.6.   Consequences for the next training sessions:
• Building trust between the teachers and Nyitott Kör further was of key importance in the following sessions as well. A SWOT-PEST analysis was planned for the first workshop, but the facilitators decided to postpone it because of the lack of trust.

• Fostering the building of a trustful atmosphere among participants turned out to be important as well, since they highlighted that they were from different "buildings", teaching different grades and they felt that they were "separated".

• Focusing on exploring the relationship between the teachers and the headmaster needed further cognition. The participants formulated that they were disappointed because the headmaster or someone from school management was not present.

• Most of the employees, including non-teaching staff, indicated in the Staff Questionnaire that they were satisfied with their jobs, had a creative, not a simple and repetitive work with diverse activities and the chance to take initiative, be proactive with the freedom to function as they prefer, in a school which they like to work at. In line with that most of the teachers seemed to be motivated, but there were some who admitted that they would need some source of inspiration to get motivated. Burnout emerged to be a key issue for the teachers, one of them even expressed to be close to the point of no return.

- Teachers faced the fact that they "need to inspire, awaken, engage kids somehow", and they knew that they cannot compete with the digital world. Moreover, they said that differentiation and taking individual characteristics into account was utopistic and is not a walkable path in the everyday.

- Results of the Staff Questionnaire and observation analyses reinforced each other by revealing that most of the teachers seemed to perceive institutional and systemic problems, but felt well and positive about the school, but there were 2-4 people who were rather negative about the dimensions explored.

- As opposed to what the majority of the employees stated in the Staff Questionnaire, that is, they considered their work important, from a personal and a broader systemic perspective as well, and thought that the quality of their work had a significant effect on many people's lives. By the end of the 1st and 2nd sessions the teachers in general expressed that they did not feel enough support and respect from the part of the society, the system (District), or the parents, they were "robot pilots" who do not see, do not listen, do not talk but were expected to smile.

- They lived in a web of real and assumed expectations, but they felt the need to discuss those they felt from the part of the parents important.

- The issue of parents was raised many times, mainly through stories about conflicts with students.

- Participants found the workshop engaging and particularly useful in respect to getting to know each other more, and as a forum for thinking collaboratively and socially, constructing common knowledge from individual problems.

4.2.   2ND PERIOD – A DIFFERENT JOURNEY/ CHANGE OF DESTINATION

3rd workshop / 1st online Zoom workshop: May 2020: **"Just to be together"**

4th workshop / 2nd online Zoom workshop: June 2020: **"A close insight into the students' lives"**

4.2.1.   Changes in the research

Due to Covid-19 pandemic the research needed to be modified. Nyitott Kör postponed the next face-to-face meetings with the teachers and thought about the possible ways to continue with the workshops online. For getting familiar with the teachers' situation and needs in the period we included interviews in the process which we processed with Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). Out of the 8 teachers who were asked, 6 immediately undertook the participation in the research, two people and the headmistress did not respond to the message sent by the researchers, therefore, her point of view could not be known. The approximately 1-hour-long semi-structured interviews were recorded between April 14-22, 2020. The aim was to understand how the interviewees interpret their experiences, feelings and needs during the first lockdown due to Covid-19, particularly the transition to online education (based on Smith & Osborn, 2007). We audio recorded the telephone interviews, and we recorded all the verbal elements in the transcript (based on Kassai, Pintér, & Rácz, 2017), and then the transcripts were compared with the audio materials. After reading the transcripts several times, notes were made on the margins of the transcripts with the aim of making explanatory notes for the general understanding of the interviewees (based on Rácz et al., 2016; Kassai et al., 2017). The topics that emerged from the notes were collected, arranged into main topics, and then discussed (see table in Appendix 1.). Besides exploring their current well-being, the questions centred around the role of the organisation and some more aspects of transition into online teaching, such as attitudes towards online education, communications, living with digital tools, the role of support, institution, management and that of the colleagues in the

situation, their experiences with students and parents and their visions for the future. As a reaction to the teachers' needs, Nyitott Kör organised two Zoom sessions, one in May and the other in June. Participants' feedback after the first session included their desire for playing together, so Nyitott Kör reacted to their needs and started to explore more and more possibilities of organising online sessions. The activities used at these sessions were sources for further data collection as they were recorded and analysed along with the reflections the teachers gave on the first session. Due to content limitations, we do not have the possibility to present the course of analysis and the results of the IPA in detail[18]. Therefore, we present the main results of it along the identified main topics. We start this period by describing the **two stages of teachers' well-being during the first lockdown in Hungary and then we go deeper into certain topics in the dimensions of trust and students' dropout, the complexity of expectations in the world of online teaching, motivation and burnout and cooperation in the organisation.**
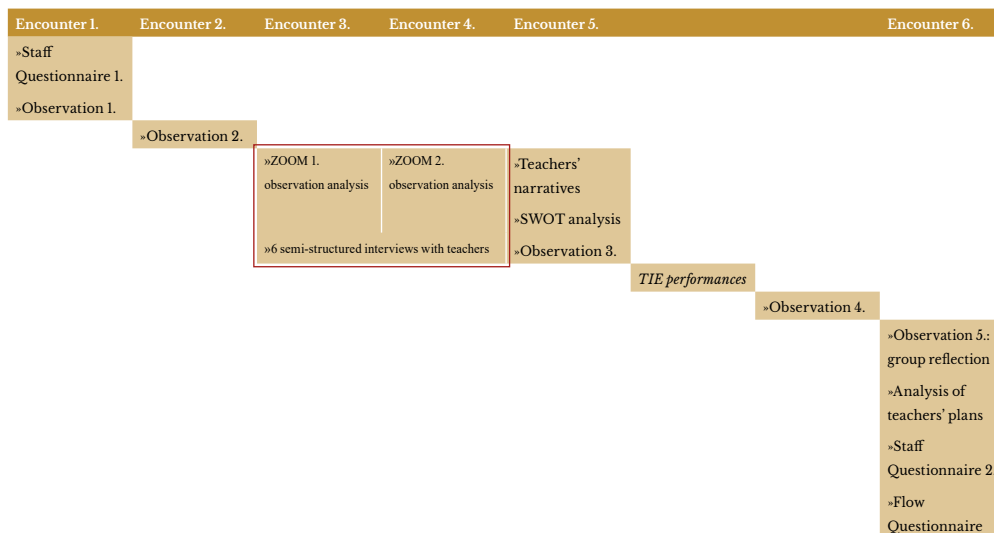

Figure 7.: Gantt diagram of the 2nd period

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[18] A detailed analysis of the 2nd period will be available in Hungarian in the Hungarian volume of the project

4.2.2.   Teachers' well-being during lockdown

Most of the participants stated at the beginning of Zoom 1. session in May that they were in good physical and mental condition and could adapt to the changes caused by Covid-19, reframed their possibilities and processed the events. However, two people stated that emotionally they were not well, they were at a "low point", but they did not want to go into details. From the IPA and teachers' reflections at Zoom 1. session, two periods could be identified in the period of online teaching from March to June 2020. At Zoom 1. session, the participant constructed their individual and collective Timeline with the use of Google Jamboard about how they could cope during the lockdown (To Be Consortium, 2021a, pp. 44–47).

1st stage: The first stage lasted from 16th of March 2020 until the beginning of the spring break, 8th April 2020. School management emphasized that it was not about closing the school but about the transition to online education. The first few days were typically characterized by chaos, despair and uncertainty for everyone: "I fell into nothing, as I felt, because I didn't know what was waiting for me". For some participants, the personal aspects of the pandemic were also sources of significant frustration, as in addition to concerns about their work, they worried about the health of family members, as well as they could not even imagine how they would reconcile teaching from home with helping their own children in learning at home. Some of them had to switch to online teaching both as form masters and as parents of e.g. first graders. The fear from the new, the impersonal, with some teachers being digitally less skilled and competent was initially a constant burden. Soon after the transition, they had to work fast and hard enough to work out "what could be transferred to the online space" from the personal one. Teachers who did not teach main subjects appeared to feel that their subjects were useless and insignificant, which could also lead to insecurity in their own usefulness in the school: "whether *they* [the students] need it now, whether *I am* needed or not?". Uncertainty, being lost, "floating", "turning over" and a sense of loss dominated the feelings in the first stage, during which "the spring break kept the soul within us".

2nd **stage**: The second period lasted from the end of the spring break (15th April 2020) to the date of the Zoom 1. session (19th May 2020). Participants waited for the spring break because this is one of the points for them during the academic year when they have the opportunity to "get out of the squirrel wheel for a while", but this year it was when they had further training of the new online interface they had to use for online teaching. Because of this, they felt that "we couldn't rest even then," but they were even more motivated after the break, and they were confirmed by the positive feedback they received. For them, it was a period of learning and development related to digital education, kind of a flow, during which they were able to acquire many new skills and knowledge. They felt it was a very positive experience, they felt competent. Some of them admitted that they received a lot of negative feedback from the parents in the beginning, too, which led to a "deep crash" in their lives, but eventually, they wanted to meet the expectations and also to survive, which in general motivated them to learn the "new world" and raised the need for further professional learning of the field.

4.2.3. The complexity of expectations

The interviewees had significant expectations of themselves, too. With regard to online education, they expressed that they needed to improve in the use of digital and online tools: "if I really want to find a channel of communication, I simply have to be a little more proficient in this world, otherwise I will lose them" [Petra]. It was interesting to see from the interviews and Zoom session observations how **teachers were learning about online teaching, and initially – as beginner teachers do –, they had a stronger focus on "themselves" and on *how they teach and not on how students learn*.**

The transfer of teaching to online space was challenging from the perspective of communications with the parents, families, since teaching online – mainly in Lower Elementary – means keeping in touch with the parents. Dóra felt that with this transition, the existing frameworks and boundaries disappeared, teachers became constantly available, gave their email addresses to help with the hard-to-start

online education, to "keep in touch somehow" because it was important for her to meet all expectations, that parents and students could count on her as well.

Expectations have also been made to relieve students and parents as effectively as possible, or at least to take into account that in addition to the home office, they might have increased difficulty in educating their children at home without pedagogical knowledge or access to pedagogical tools. According to Petra and Dóra it was important that the teachers did not "overestimate" the relevance of their subjects and did not overload the students by asking more from them and the parents, as it was logically possible in this situation [Petra], or "parents would have gone green". Frida's own experience also showed that flexibility and minimizing assigned tasks was important, but this was also what "my parents asked for". Also they asked for "not to teach them (the students) new things, because they were not teachers and can't explain it in a way that the children understand it". So typically, they were more lenient with both grading and the expectations they set for their students.

However, there were lots of often contradictory expectations from the parents' part. For Dóra, at first, it seemed "hopeless" to teach this way, she believed that "quite a few expectations (had) to be met". Interviewees typically sought to comply with these, but after a while, when they saw that this was not feasible, they started to focus only on what they themselves found to be useful and result oriented. In that situation, the evaluation and weighting of the feedback had also changed. According to Dóra, it was impossible to meet the number of different expectations and "there are parents who usually only notice the negative experiences". Negative feedback made Frida insecure and had doubts about "what do I don't do well, I really don't give a lot of work to do," and "a few days later, there came" the positive feedback. The difficulty for Frida was to muddle through parental expectations and feedback and felt pleased when she received positive thanking letters and messages from the parents. Some of them "really thanked us for getting the most out of her child". It was also interesting for the teachers to see

parents understanding how their children were doing, working, progressing at school "and now they face (...) that their child is advancing very slowly" [Frida].

As for school management, the teachers stated that the headmaster's expectations were not clear and easily understandable. Emese said it let her down that she could not count on management, and later, "such questions came" that were not for their help but rather put extra pressure on her. According to the interviewees, it was difficult for them because they did not have any information on how to make the transition, school management was unavailable, unreachable and disappeared in the first 2-3 weeks. As a result, everyone tried to thrive on their own on different interfaces, which meant parents could no longer keep track of which interface they should use with the different teachers. To solve this situation, one of the interviewees posted the collected information on the school's website, for which he was ran down (anonymously, without naming him) in a letter sent to the whole staff, and he had to remove the entry from the web: "there is no information for quite a few days, and then all of a sudden there is a rumbling letter not to do this or that because many parents have complained that it is not good. But you should find out what to do instead" [Ferenc]. And then, a common surface, Google Classroom, was introduced. Accordingly, the interviewed teachers said that the initial unavailability and the lack of communication from school management was replaced by prohibition, without specific supportive suggestions. Petra also mentioned the "inhibitory, imperative" letter from the headmaster as an example that there was no space for individual attempts. Interviewees complained that the headmaster only got in touch with them to tell if they did something wrong, but they were not shown the possible paths. They felt that they had to control everything: "well, do it, solve it, that is your business, you are the teachers" [Ferenc].

4.2.4.   From burnout to motivation
Typically, the spring break was the period when teachers explicitly needed and took a rest, to stop and get farther from school. In this case, the mastering of the new common online teaching platform was learnt during the break, so teachers could not have full rest. Regardless

of the epidemic, it is common in the lives of the teachers that there are "periods when it is harder for me" [Petra] and it is difficult to recover from the break. Petra compared it directly to "mourning work": "from that freedom, from that joy (...) to jump in suddenly" and then "enduring" until the next break, and until then "I always have a lot of downs" [Petra]. For this reason, they often periodically express the possibility of leaving the profession: "well, I'm done, I won't teach, I'm fed up; I no longer know what more to give of myself, I have been sucked away" [Petra]. She had a sense of shame about burnout, she thought it was pitiful in the eyes of others, because "it doesn't shed good light on me" and therefore "I don't tell it to many colleagues". As opposed to these, the pandemic brought new activities compared to this, it was a different kind of impulse, a "different kind of creative work" [Petra], it started to become a source of motivation to do it well. Emese also stated that "I have already started to lose my motivation over the years", "I felt that I could not develop in/from the teaching profession", "I have no motivation". But due to the rapid digital switchover, the acquisition of related knowledge and skills, and learning about new forms: **"I became damn motivated, and I haven't been preparing so much for my lessons like now. And because I am interested, I care, and I want to do it well, and I want to develop digitally, too."** Emese, the participant who opposed the integration of digital technology into education admitted that she had previously felt that "I will be the same in ten years' time, if... so this is not good. And now at least there is some development, **I am learning something that will be necessary, that is important**".

The colleague who formulated by the end of the 1st period that she was on the verge of burnout participated in the Zoom sessions, but she did not intervene in the conversations. However, at the reflection at the end she said that she felt better, she needed to get farther from the school, from the students. She needed to get some inspiration from outside of the school and not from school-related stuff. When it was about the students she mainly talked about their basic needs, which were similar to her needs: being with their family, eating good food as opposed to school canteen and being in nature, and she felt that it will be difficult for them to get used to school functioning again.

They also emphasised the role of positive feedback, their need for parental recognition: "what should motivate you if not this? So, after all, this…, **this is important in this work, because we work with people, and we are people, too"** [Emese]. As it was described previously, it could be seen that they expected and received parental feedback about "whether this works for them or whether I am doing well" [Frida]. As for Petra, it proved to be extremely motivating if **"both the parent and the child… how do I say… Praise you?".**

4.2.5.　Teachers' needs during the crisis

Teachers expressed different needs in the interviews and at the Zoom sessions regarding what they would need most in relation to the situation caused by the pandemic. Some of them would need emotional support from the colleagues, support and communication from the headmaster and others would need "team building" [Petra]. There were some for whom daily communication played a significant role, while for others – e.g. for Ferenc – these were more of additional burdens. The need for contact and communication with the colleagues played an important role in the lives of the teachers, and it just intensified in the present situation.

In the relationship of teachers and the headmaster, distrust appeared in several respects. All interviewees reported that they did not receive the expected support and help from the management during the transition. Most of them felt let down and said that the principal "did not provide any information to the teachers". "It is very easy to say what is not perfect, but in this case let's help to do it better" [Ferenc]. According to Ferenc, teachers perceive problems, but "basically almost no one sees what is happening above us, (…) it is assigned that it is your job, and goodbye" [Ferenc], but they need to be treated equally, to be considered competent colleagues. Ferenc believed that transparency would also help them to change their perspectives and would help them to understand reasons behind the decisions. Ferenc has the impression that **in many cases they do not have enough control and cannot have a say in what they must do and why they must do it. They had to switch to "quasi-manual control": "there must be a reason, just**

to swallow it, but why to swallow it, is a secret", but – as he said – without proper feedback, neither parties have the opportunity to develop, neither the management nor the teachers.

The lack of supportive involvement and coordination from the part of management also played a role in working with colleagues during the first lockdown. Among others, they stated that they felt left alone [e.g. Kitti, Emese] and lacked proactivity, initiative from the part of the headmaster "from a lot of points of view" [Ferenc]. They admitted that they knew that serious efforts were needed to run a school and were unaware of the pressure that was on the headmaster and management at that point, but also articulated their criticisms. According to Petra, it would have been the headmaster's job to keep staff calm and reassure them, as well as to coordinate the faculty to "somehow keep us together, what didn't happen," and "we flew away in many directions, more than we have been so far". **They missed "human communication, or a certain human attitude," and someone asking them about their well-being with the simple question "How are you?" [Petra].** Unlike the other interviewees, Emese at the beginning of the interview did not feel that "we were left alone", yet by the end she said that "we didn't really get anything… either instruction or advice, and so we were left alone". And this responsibility, the burden that comes with it, the feeling that "now *I* have to solve it and Oh my God how should I solve it?" caused anxiety. Kitti also said that they "worked" without significant help from the headmaster, due to which they created their own methods and found their own platforms. For Emese "talking to each other" on online platforms with the colleagues as bottom-up organisations replaced the proactive action of the principal, since they could open up and "could share things" "with each other" [Dóra]. Digital education took place already for a month, when the first official joint faculty video meeting took place, but it was mainly for expressing their professional, practical and technical thoughts and questions in connection with the digital switchover.

A different kind of coping appeared in the Lower Elementary and in the Upper Elementary teachers' worlds. Since they did not have common tasks and taught students, they did not have joint forums and

they met at all, "the gap had become a little bigger" [Ferenc]. At Lower Elementary within itself there were no online conversations organised neither officially, nor bottom-up in the group of teachers, while Upper Elementary working community communicated a lot, supported each other emotionally, technically, and professionally as well. Typically, teachers teaching Grades 1–4 only cooperate within the individual classes, which is usually a pair working together, within which there is a hierarchy. In this case it narrowed down to mainly the two teachers working together on a daily basis. As opposed to this, Upper Elementary teachers said that besides their own families their colleagues provided them with secure support, they set up their own online groups where they were in daily contact with each other, informally, where informal and formal topics were discussed and jokes were shared. "It helped a lot during this period that we were like that for each other. So, we were able to provide spiritual support, we also tried to solve problems together. So that was very good".

Initially they did not even have the energy to foster cooperation, because they had to "survive" in the initial chaos. The role of the system administrator was found to be huge, without his knowledge, lots of teachers would have been lost and the online interface used by the staff could not have been unified. The role of the school psychologist also emerged, but the teachers were not unified in this question, some of them felt she was reachable, while others not. Information was ambiguous in relation to whether there were or not online or any form of occasions where teachers and other staff could express themselves freely. According to Petra, **the online sessions offered by Nyitott Kör gave this support as well as an example of how and why online sessions could be organised**. "Facing the fact that someone else has problems which are often the same as mine. And again, I realized that I really had no reason to complain!".

4.2.6. Teachers' role in students' well-being during lockdown
At the time of the first lockdown trust played a more decisive role than ever before. It was of great importance in the period of (transition to) online teaching and learning, in a space without physical togetherness never experienced before. Trust in the relationship between student-

teacher and teacher-parent proved to be fundamental in this period of a global insecurity, since nevertheless some teachers started to prepare students for the possibility of online education, they admitted that initially it was very difficult for them that they found themselves suddenly disconnected from the students, without the possibility to say goodbye. It was mostly difficult for those form masters who had graduating classes. Because of this, one important aim of Nyitott Kör was to shift teachers' perspectives to how they perceived students' well-being, and how they could support it online, and additionally to map how teachers prepare for meeting their students personally, minding the aspect of well-being.

Some Teachers said at Zoom 2. session that they found ways to talk to students about the Covid-19 situation and lockdown. They started to make chat groups very soon to reach the children individually as well as the group and begin communication. They wanted to know about how students were: "In almost every class I teach, I asked a question that enhances reflection to the present situation" and also let them to be together freely after the lessons: "I left the window open for them at the end of the class and they could chit-chat a bit". Others let them reflect in groups, in opening circles before the lessons, to discuss what the students needed, and, however the teachers teaching skills subjects found their places with difficulty, this was a field where they could feel their use in the current situation. So, except for one or two teachers who could not get accustomed to relating to their students through online education, and felt it more comfortable and more useful for their own well-being to stay farther from the students, many participants were curious about the students and created the framework to learn something about them.

During a task in Zoom 2. session participants were offered to explore through creative tasks and express their students' wishes, fears and concerns; most of the thoughts were about their fears and anxieties rather than about their desires. They all agreed that "going back from this life situation to the "old one", going into school early, being there until late and then going home can be stressful for them. Many students say they "now have more time for everything". From the point of view of social life, on the one hand they want to get together again, but they

have to "get used to each other again". Those graduating in Lower Elementary were afraid of being the youngest in the Upper Elementary grade and were also afraid that the older ones would poke them. It was also a question for some of them whether they stayed in the old classroom or moved to a new one, or that they would not have so much time with their families, toys and could not go on excursions together and eat good food (as opposed to canteen). The return is at once **"their desire and their fear,"** so they "long for it, but they are also afraid of it", another binary concept. Everyone confirmed that they were very much looking forward to reuniting because they already "lack community", as well as they missed the teachers, because without them, as students said, learning was boring.

The feeling of "hopelessness" was further strengthened by students dropping out, "because some children disappear in space, in the online space. They cannot be reached. So why am I trying?". Teachers said at the interviews that they were frustrated because they were unable to "control" what the students did during the lessons, what they were watching during the online class: "I can see here as well, if you don't pay attention, (…) but who knows what they look at" [Emese]. "We are not face to face with the kids" [Ferenc], and the fact that they were not physically in the same space led to "quiet lessons" "without feedback after a while" [Dóra]. They would also have expected feedback from students, which they were unsure whether "it still made sense" and, in the absence of physical coexistence, felt less that they had control over the students' presence. This may have caused teachers to lose motivation: "if he doesn't want to, why should I make efforts?". The lack of control and influence also contributed to the fact that they typically felt online education was less effective from the aspect of keeping the students in the school. When they are together physically, the students and teachers sense each other, look at each other at least once a day, which belongs to those moments that keep the students in the institution, at the end of the school year, when less learning happens. They felt that students "react hectically" [Dóra] and there were students who were harder or unable to be reached (e.g. 5-6 students in a class of 30), so they did consider dropout to be an issue.

Petra thought that besides the absence of physical conditions, "they might be really overwhelmed. They may not be so interested in, or they may really think that (name of the skills subject she taught) was the last in the line" [Petra]. According to Kitti there were students who remained active with some teachers, while others completely disappeared from online education. She believed that this did not depend on the lack of material conditions in all the cases, but families, parents, students prioritized main subjects and those focusing on skills (e.g. Art, P.E.) were ranked in the back, which was reinforced by the teachers participating in the Zoom sessions.

At a task called "The Pensieve" teachers were asked to remember and share one surprising moment about an experience with a student in relation to online teaching; except for one teacher, everyone reported positive experiences. One of them mentioned an ADHD student, who wrote to her that he was "anxious because his parents lost their jobs" and he was glad to be able to talk to his classmates during the online lessons, "he was always very enthusiastic and behaved collectedly". Despite being "slipped apart at school", "now he always did everything on time". Another teacher said that once her Internet switched off and when she got back to the lesson, the students were waiting for her and were playing with their plush toys and were "talking, living their social lives. They were so cute."

Some teachers expressed their worries about students who for example did not have appropriate learning conditions at home. It was surprising for some teachers that there were 3rd graders who did not have a desk at home: "there are no learning conditions". It could be felt that especially in case of online lessons it was very important for them that the parents create the conditions suitable for learning: "some students were lying on their beds at the lesson, which made me realize that some parents don't have the energy or discipline to educate their children or check on them". Their interpretations of the situations showed that on the one hand they understand the parents' condition, on the other hand, they had ambiguous feelings: "one student signed in to the lesson from the kitchen, while his mother was cooking in the background, which was distracting his attention. The parent was not conscious about the frames

of the online lesson, she did not take it seriously, which affected the presence of the pupil, too". They admitted that earlier they did not have such an insight into their children's and families' lives and were surprised by the signs of parents-children relationship in certain cases: "a parent was constantly interfering in the lesson, solving every task instead of the student, letting him no space and no autonomy. It was surprising for me, I don't usually have this close insight into the students' lives". Also, they realised what it meant for a child of divorced parents to learn online: "one of my students was signing in from different homes on different weeks, because her parents got divorced, and custody is shared. She struggled to have her books and notes collected and kept safe, because she was constantly moved from one apartment to another". Several children's tasks were incomplete, delays were typical, but some teachers acknowledged that many students were "independent" though. A form master said that it also happened that a student was unable to complete the school year because her mother raised four children alone, was working and could not focus on the youngest child, too, and let his/her learning go. They also reported that students solved the tasks creatively and shared very personal experiences with them.

So, relationships and mutual trust with parents were decisive during this sensitive period. Trust also played a role in whether teachers had access to information on the students' and families' states of mind to uncover the underlying causes of possible dropout or active participation, or to explore students' emotions, doubts and fears caused by the pandemic and online education. Teachers typically considered it important to explore these factors, Dóra and Petra, for example, gave tasks specifically to assess the students' feelings, their losses and limitations that the lack of contact and personal relationships caused. From this they could even learn about how students, who initially seemed to be less active and were at risk of dropout, were not well. In relation to a student, they got to know that "she had a hard time making the transition". In addition to reflecting on the situation, teachers also wanted to give "some positive charge" to Petra. According to the interviewees, it was also determining whether the teacher was a form master or not: "it is different for a form master, because I think students are much more open and communicative with them" [Kitti].

The interviewed teachers said they could count on parents, just as they tried to help them, whether it was about technical difficulties to be resolved or giving emotional support: "the parents were down and out. Everyone. Mentally and emotionally" [Emese]. Ferenc also said that the parents were extremely proactive: they invented and "made the system that would have been our responsibility to figure out, where everyone could be found at any time". They felt that the children's mental state was the mirror of that of the parents' mental state. Emese said for example that after her first letter to the students, parents called her "crying that they were touched".

4.2.7. The role of Nyitott Kör in teachers' well-being during lockdown

When the lockdown started, Nyitott Kör sent an email to the headmaster offering support for the teachers if they needed. But it was only followed by a thanking reply, but by no action, since as it turned out later, the message did not reach the staff. At the interviews the teachers complained that the training facilitators disappeared. Despite the newer communication difficulties, Nyitott Kör organised the Zoom sessions to support the teachers, at which those teachers took part who had already participated in the face-to-face sessions. They said they wanted to "give us the chance to finish," so they had a strong need for closure, not leaving the series of sessions unfinished. Also, they felt they had improved and considered the previous occasions as "nice experience", which motivated them to participate further, and by the end of the Zoom 2. session they said that they got some useful ideas: "maybe more good ideas will come!". Many of them also expressed the need for being together: "I was looking forward to the meeting", "live voices, colleagues, you". Because of the limited social contacts and because of the predominance of contact with children over contact with colleagues, this occasion could be recharging for them: "good to see adults and talk to adults". They felt in vain "I have had enough of online meetings, I want to be in a community, and it is better to talk like this than not at all". One of the participants who was always present at the workshops organised face-to-face, did not join the Zoom sessions. He sent a message to the organisers that he felt very disengaged in online education in general.

As for the benefits of the online sessions organised by Nyitott Kör, some participants felt that "these conversations help a lot in keeping things together that have fallen apart a little bit". Since "the team spread after the 16th March and no one held them together, no one asked us how we were or how we managed to get on. The personal part has been left behind. We are soldiers and we serve. **At the three school meetings I felt as if I had to report to strangers. So that's why I didn't feel like taking part in this session either, but I hoped that there was a chance it would be different here. I got the personal part now that I missed. I was not a soldier, it was about us, teachers."** For those who found Zoom 1. session useful, the general feeling was that they had "a sense of community, discussing common problems, a reassuring, compassionate presence. It was good." They appreciated "honesty on the part of colleagues" and felt that for many of them there was "a visible need for such occasions and activities".

The gap between the needs of teachers teaching in Upper and those teaching in Lower Elementary were noticeable at the sessions and in the reflections. Those teaching in Upper Elementary met several times and discussed raising issues, could help each other during online teaching: "in the Upper grades we meet almost every week, so listening for 2 hours to how the others were was a bit lot for me, while I would have had a lot of school task and housework to do". On the other hand, for others it was good to hear about their colleagues teaching in other grades: "I'm glad that I can have a more meaningful meeting with colleagues teaching in Lower Elementary as well", since "due to time constraints, we only meet Upper Elementary colleagues, because there is a greater need for it". Some teachers met the school psychologist, while others did not feel that she was accessible. If yes, then only after a month, but there was no consensus about how reachable she was. Nevertheless, they expressed that "**it would be good to strengthen the sense of collectiveness, that we are a team**", to open up about fears and anxieties about school and about online education. It was important for them that the outcomes of the online meeting were not previously defined, it was a free space for participants to fill in, and it was created to serve for their better lived well-being: "it is very important that there is no task here, that we do not come together for this purpose. I slowly have stomach cramps when it

comes to an email that there will be another school "meet" to talk about the tasks. It wouldn't be like this here". Since there were feedback after the first session about not balanced "talking time": "some people barely got a word or only at the very end", but somebody said "I can imagine that not everybody has the possibility to talk about these issues in other forums, (…) so this is a profit after all". After this we paid much more attention to it in the second session, we tried to call on those who preferred to listen, and a facilitator even called a participant on her phone and helped her in solving the problems with her microphone so that she could join the conversation.

As a summary, they appreciated the "social connection, conversation with colleagues", and despite having to sit in front of the computer, they felt it as a recreation activity "and I prefer to meet you anyway". **When, as a preparation from one online session to the other Nyitott Kör asked the participants about their needs, someone wrote: "the discussions and topics so far have been good. You feel well what we need! I trust you". As a reflection they formulated that the online session "gave a lot from the aspect of our mental health". Although they said that they still felt the detrimental effects of the past two months, "but something has started, and it is good".**

4.2.8. At the end of the 2nd period

In the closing part of the Zoom 2. session the facilitators collected questions that related to what participants expressed or which were raised during the session, and the teachers could choose the one(s) they could relate to. Except for one teacher, they stated that they were tired and had experienced intense stress and were overloaded. The teacher who mentioned that she was on the verge of burnout before the lockdown said that she could not imagine what would have happened to her if nothing would have changed. She admitted that being away from the whole school life regenerated her. The others told that the "expectations stressed them the most" that they felt both from the part of the students and from that of the parents. They wanted to "comply with their expectations" and this put an increased burden on them. And the work to be done was a lot more related to what they had to deal with during face-to-face education, as they always had to reflect

on all the material submitted by all the children, "and I wanted to reply ASAP, you know…. if they send it to me on time…. I have to answer not long after". Besides, they had qualms for not talking enough to their students and spending enough time with their own families, so "fragmentation" was also a determining feeling. They all articulated the need for personal presence in the teaching-learning process and their fears of going back to it. The need for further training in digital education was also voiced. During the two Zoom sessions, they had a positive experience about being able to think about their own well-being and that of their students collaboratively, that they had dedicated space and time for it, and as a closure they said that "I expect from the management and from the colleagues to have more such conversations".

4.2.9. Consequences for the next training sessions:

- The participants we were working with all went through serious individual crises in relation to their families, their work, and their own health and mental well-being due to Covid-19.

- During the first period of transition to online teaching the teachers had a stronger focus on *their* functioning, on what *they* (should) do, than on how *children* learn best online, what are the forms that supported their learning efficiently.

- Initially they paid less attention to the students' emotional needs and problems, but as they got used to online teaching, they could focus more and more on their well-being.

- The majority of teachers saw online education as a possibility to have "a close insight into students' lives", how their parents are involved in their learning and school life, because they had a better understanding of the individual students.

- They sympathised with their students' needs, fears, desires, and the difficulties they might face when going back to school, which were similar to theirs.

- The two stages of the evolution of teachers' well-being during lockdown show that there was a shift in motivation, many teachers who were losing enthusiasm in relation to their everyday work admitted that learning new ways of teaching and getting the most out of the situation pulled them back from a road that could have led to burnout. They feel that "at least there is some development, I am learning something that will be necessary, that is important". For a few of them, getting farther from students, and the school life was what recharged them.

- It also boosted their motivation that they felt that their prestige would grow because people experience what role a teacher plays in their lives on the individual level and what role the education system plays in the life of the whole society.

- Lower Elementary teachers expressed a strong need for cooperation both within their group of teachers and with their Upper Elementary colleagues. They formulated that they missed the emotional support, they missed "Just to be together", talk freely and see each other's situation, problems. However, there was no sign of any occasions organised by them, not even bottom-up.

- Most of the Upper Elementary teachers felt support from their colleagues within their group, they could rely on each other in professional questions and helped each other out in emotionally difficult situations.

- All the participants we got in touch with said that the headmaster was unreachable and did not provide any help in the chaotic first couple of weeks of transition to online education, and the lack of emotional support continued throughout the lockdown.

- The participants of the online sessions expressed their need for playing in the framework of online sessions as well, and formulated that the way Nyitott Kör organised the online sessions were sources

of inspiration for them, both from the aspect of what forms can be used to carry out an online session, both from the aspect of "bravery", i.e. it can be done.

• Trust between Nyitott Kör and the teachers participating in the workshops increased, one of them wrote in a feedback "you feel well what we need! I trust you".

• By the end of the 2nd period it was evident that the participants engaged more into the different forms and activities presented by Nyitott Kör, which promoted reflection, and evoked more and more powerful emotions.

4.3. 3RD PERIOD – BACK TO...?

5th workshop: August 2020 "Yes, we can change things"

Theatre in Education events with students, 3 occasions with 3 different classes: "Freed and encouraged"

6th workshop: October 2020 "It is Drama itself, living through the situation truly and deeply"

7th workshop: November 2020 "We became a community"

4.3.1. Changes in the research

There was a period in Hungary, between the first and the second waves of Covid-19, in autumn 2020 when Nyitott Kör could meet the training participants face-to-face, so the sequence of workshops could be completed. The first session of the 3rd period took place in the school, but due to the strengthening of the second wave of the virus, schools closed again in October, hence the last two workshops were organised at Nyitott Kör's place. At this point of the process Nyitott Kör felt that trust between them and the participant was raised to a high extent which enhanced the quality of common work and set ground for the SWOT-PEST analysis and further collaborative thinking. The teachers

were familiar with the forms and so felt more comfortable in Drama and TiE actions, as well as the facilitators knew that participants were enthusiastic to give long reflections in closing circles. In accordance with these, the facilitators planned activities and time in a way that allowed for deep reflections already during the tasks. Also, we planned to deliver two staff questionnaires, one before starting the sequence of workshops and one at the end of the process. Because of the pandemic we decided to leave out the second questionnaire, since the extreme situation would have distorted the picture and we could not be aware of which factors can be related to the different changes. Furthermore, originally we planned to record teachers' narratives during this period, with focus on two topics: 1. what teachers think about what role Drama and Theatre in Education performances can play in students' well-being, and 2. their considerations about the complexity of the network of their well-being, students' well-being and the well-being of the organisation they work in. We postponed this activity to the final Encounter, since by that point in time, Nyitott Kör offered TiE performances to almost all the classes, (except for one, the 8th graders who already left the school), and made the possibility to watch a video recording of a class participating to a performance accessible for those teachers who could not attend any of those face-to-face occasions. Moreover, reacting to the fact that teachers liked joint reflections, the facilitators in accordance with the researchers decided to record teachers' narratives in the framework of oral reflections rather than written ones. Last, but not least there was no analysis of teachers' plans, because they did not prepare. They were sceptical about how the headmaster would welcome them and they did not want to put energy and time into it with no end.
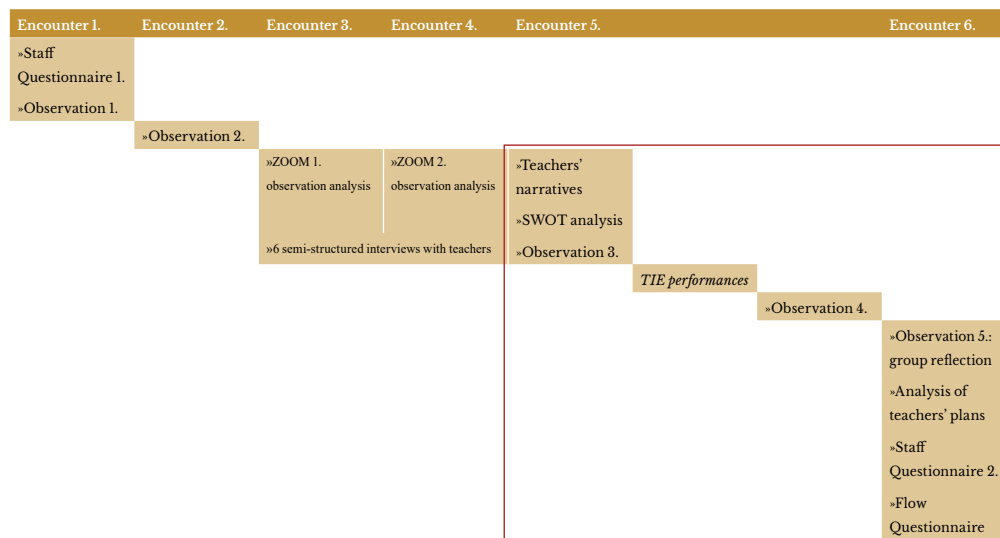
Encounter 1.	Encounter 2.	Encounter 3.	Encounter 4.	Encounter 5.		Encounter 6.

»Staff Questionnaire 1.

»Observation 1.

»Observation 2.

»ZOOM 1. observation analysis

»ZOOM 2. observation analysis

»6 semi-structured interviews with teachers

»Teachers' narratives

»SWOT analysis

»Observation 3.

TIE performances

»Observation 4.

»Observation 5.: group reflection

»Analysis of teachers' plans

»Staff Questionnaire 2.

»Flow Questionnaire

Figure 8.: Gantt diagram of the 3rd period

4.3.2. Reunion – needs, fears and desires

The first minutes of the first in-person meeting after the lockdown in Hungary seemed to be very important. It was before the academic year started, so only the teachers were at the school and were preparing for the upcoming weeks, for reunion with the staff and with the students. A stronger bond between Nyitott Kör and the teachers could be felt. In the opening circle they could express their needs, fears and desires as well as their opinion about the safety protocol there should be applied during the sessions (e.g. mask wearing, sanitizing), which added to the creation of a safer and a more intimate environment.

Many teachers had fears about the virus situation, they experienced strong uncertainty, unpredictability, and insecurity both at the societal level and at school level about how everyday life would work. "I don't know how it will work. (…) Completely unknown times are ahead, no one knows what will happen". In relation to the safety protocol concerns have been expressed about wearing masks in that they cannot imagine how they will be teaching in a mask, whether children would be "sitting in each other's mouths" without a mask, or whether they would have a

mask, as it was compulsory on public transport. They expressed that "there is a need for a unified standpoint in mask wearing, or to come up with an alternative that is acceptable for everyone".

They also admitted that they themselves did not know if they wanted schools to stay closed or not, since it depended so much on individual life situations: "I don't even know what to do. (…) If I don't go to work, I get fired, if I go in, I can take the virus home to my pregnant wife". They feel that "the semester starts quite improvisational, I expect something different every day". "I feel infinite uncertainty in everything. We never get a concrete answer to anything. So, I don't plan ahead". Reflection on having no or little control over their functioning already appeared by the end of the 1st period and enlarged in the 2nd period, but this time it was declared more directly and ironically: "we are so flexible that we can solve anything". **They felt that events happened to them, and they were not active agents, but rather sufferers of situations in a way that they should have always been ready for solving, dealing with situations, to solve what is expected of them at any given time, either at school or at societal level.** There were four participants who were trying to accept the situation caused by the virus: "we have to learn to live together with this, (…) that's not what should determine our conscience, because then we're going to go mad. (…) I'm sure we'll survive that, too, but the fact that it ties up all our thoughts isn't normal. We must pull ourselves out of it. That's what I decided", "I don't want to feed fear. We have to adapt (…)".

Meanwhile, most of them were looking forward to "face-to-face, live education", "I'm not looking forward to digital distance learning. I look forward to the face-to-face one". Those teachers who had kids showed the families' perspectives, too: "I also want live education as a parent, my kids lack community". But fears about the feeling of being reunited with the students also rose: "I held two camps in the summer, it was good to smell the kids again. But a long time has passed since the summer. (…) I don't feel the feeling". Someone else added that "I have a hard time getting used to the kids, we met a long time ago". Some teachers were thinking about ways and methods of organising work "what can be applied, which is also good for them, what makes sense.

I'm trying to tune in. Things change from day to day and it's hard to put this together". Teachers also admitted that they were afraid that parents would not take illnesses seriously "the parent stuffs the child with nurofen[19] and sends them in". They articulated the need to "trust each other with the parent", so as teachers should not "have to find out what's wrong" with the child. They said that they felt pressure from parents' that they want to send their children to school: "my experience in the summer was that the most important thing for parents is to send their children to school and not see them all day". It could be seen that the teachers had a judging, defensive attitude towards the parents, with a lower level of trust which would be the key for cooperation. In relation to the students, the question of resocialisation also arose: "but I also see that we will have plenty of work with socialisation. Anyone we've had a problem with so far is unlikely to have changed, but they hooked on their phones and we'll get such little zombies back. For me, this is the biggest fear. And that there is a child who has watched all the tales in 3 months and cannot be rewarded by watching something together". They need to be taught again to adapt to each other, to the community "so that it is not anymore only he/she".

4.3.3.   SWOT-PEST: "the picture has come together"
Besides going into the organisation even deeper and providing frames and forum for the teachers to reflect on their everyday functioning, the facilitators' aim was to help the teachers to get attuned to face-to-face teaching, the students, colleagues, management, the next academic year. The first session of the 3rd period took place in the school and a logistic difficulty was that one of the facilitators was ill and did not attend the session when the SWOT-PEST analysis happened. This did not cause any methodological problem, but raised the attention to the global situation, which by this point was inevitable to consider when reflecting on the topics of the training. The procedure for recording SWOT-PEST data was the following:

1. Participants were divided into two groups, one group worked on the strengths of the school, the characteristics in which they are good at, what they are proud of, and what they can build on. The other group worked with the weaknesses, that is, the characteristics they would like to change, develop, improve because they set them back from improving. Their task was to compile a poster in each group.

2. The groups exchanged topics and looked at what the other group put together. They added to it, reflected on it, argued, and so on.

3. Common whole group discussion.

4. Break

5. The teachers discussed together in a large group what were the external opportunities that surround the school, and which can be built on along the strengths-weaknesses. Additionally, they accounted for the threats that threaten the institution.

6. They identified 3 problem areas that they considered to be addressed as soon as possible, because change would be important.

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[19]   Antipyretic for kids used in Hungary

FINANCIAL
SUPPORT
Foundation ⟶ Parents

• Extracurricular activities
• Emotional safety of students

Nice, calm
environment ⟶

Friendly
atmosphere
+ traditions!

S
T
R
E
N
G
T
H
S

excursions / sport
RICH METHODOLOGY

? FAMILIAR
• social, family-friendly programmes
• parent-teacher-student

TEACHERS' COMMUNITY

professionally well-prepared ⟶ further training

smaller groups
professional freedom
FLEXIBLE MANAGEMENT / GOOD WILL

W
E
A
K
N
E
S
S
E
S

• contact with parents   50% / 50%
• extracurricular activities /lack of time – problem of capacity/ ✓
• general atmosphere in the school   OLD?
• functioning of the website   ?
• need for further professional training ✓
• collaboration between colleagues   ? — LOWER / UPPER GRADES

• technical equipment ✓
• equipment in the classroom   ✓
• there are no sanctions in our hands ✓

• FLOW OF INFORMATION!!! / LACK...
• FEELING OF INSECURITY

• LACK OF SPECIAL EDUCATION SPECIALIST
• PSYCHOLOGIST ?
• LIBRARY ?
• LACK OF SPACE   new building
• SPECIALISED CLASSROOMS — YARD

Original Hungarian figure translated to English by the authors of this report.

The organisation received a detailed analysis of data, however due to content limitations only a summary of the analysis could make part of this report.

Apparently, members of both groups worked enthusiastically and developed lively dialogues in a good mood, and were interested in the task, but there was one person in both groups who, according to the observers' reports, was outside the task, and did not make comments. One of the teachers "sits far enough away from the circle as if her thoughts were elsewhere, then tries to lean closer for a few seconds" "she's in more of an observer status, leaning back in her chair several times, then later getting up and going to her bag, fully withdrawn from the task. The other colleague is "a little more passive, reading the assigned worksheet. She is not involved." Overall, it can be stated that except for two people, the teachers had a vivid discussion with each other.

There were issues that emerged in almost every dimension, which seemed to be important for the community to address: 1. the separation of the school into two buildings resulted in the loss of the feeling of homeliness, sense of belonging and allowing new feelings to come in; 2. cooperation and communications with parents, the trustful teacher-parent relationship arose as a rather problematic area; 3. the "flow of information, lack of information and uncertainty" in the daily functioning of the school, the fact that many things changed in the last minute and the feeling that school management did "not communicate about almost nothing with/towards them" (not only in relation to Covid-19, but in general) were admitted to make teachers' work more difficult. Because as a consequence, teachers could not communicate coherently towards the children and the families, which created internal tension and even conflicts among them; 4. the participants emphasised the importance of assigning people to tasks, who were responsible for them, who monitored and controlled if they were completed or not and found their dysfunctions if there were any.

They see threats realistically. The main external constraints that the teachers mentioned were the low societal respect of the teachers – also appearing in the teachers' salary –, the strongly centralized system

itself that had an effect on all the aspects of their work. They mainly highlighted the lack of support from the School District: a complete lack of information (flow), lack of the necessary equipment that made their everyday functioning and class work with students difficult, which they could not get themselves because it was forbidden, so they felt helpless and did not see a solution. They also mentioned the lack of financial support for further professional training, in a system where teachers have to complete different levels of a Teacher Career Model. Although, one of their strengths they were proud of was that more people expressed their need for further professional development.

The teachers listed their opportunities, they apparently perceived them, mainly the most accessible ones (e.g. foreign exchange program with students, applying for grants, finding sponsors and supporters), but they immediately justified why they "gave up" several times (e.g. "But monitoring grants and applications is now a profession"). It was interesting to see that despite several initial project orientations by Nyitott Kör before the launching of the sequence of the workshops, some teachers were still not conscious about the fact that the one-and-a-half-year-long program happened within the framework of a European grant that the school joined as an associate partner. It was another example of the problems with information flow and the headmaster's communication towards the teachers. It is also a proof of the force of one's own experiences, through which awareness can be raised and the background of such a process can become real. On this occasion, one of the teachers emphasized this characteristic of the programme, so the awareness was created about the Erasmus+ support for good.

They considered the physical environment as an important strength, both the buildings themselves and the natural environment where they are located. The functioning of the Parental Foundation (emphasising that they receive financial support from the parents and not from the School District), the wide range of extracurricular activities they offer to the students and the emotional support they feel can ensure for them were also listed: "they are absolutely fine, there is no such problem as exclusion, no physical abuse". Contrary to this, one teacher said at the Zoom 2. session that there is a class which was afraid of another one.

Furthermore, they were proud of the students' successful further education, since students typically enrol into high schools that they mark in first or second places. Parent-student-teacher collaboration was classified as a strength, but it was also highlighted that they felt that the parents were no longer partners in case of a problem with their child. As they said, when it comes to accompanying kids to programs, there is always a parent who goes with them, but "if their child is stupid, they may no longer be so active". They considered their professional preparedness and rich methodology as their strength and uniformly articulated their need for learning and further professional development pointing out the online education as a very recent experience. After listing their strengths, they started to connect them to their weaknesses (e.g. no helper in the institution) and to external threats (because they are not available due to external factors). They started to think about what alternative solutions they could come up with in order to start to solve the problems.

At the end, and as a consequence of the SWOT-PEST analysis, the participants were offered to walk around and watch created materials, and perceive stimuli in the room from a different, magical point of view, as Sages (To Be Consortium, 2021a, pp. 52–56). Having experienced their wisdom, they shifted back to the personal point of view and identified together 3 problem areas that could be improved for the well-being of the students at the school, and which they considered the most burning, and perceived that they could achieve (experience) with the fastest success:

1. **Development of task sharing protocol and development of information flow.**

2. **Development of the teachers' community**.

3. **The lack of supporting staff** (e.g. development teacher, social worker, school psychologist): they wanted to deal with this problem, but they felt that nothing depended on them. When they were asked by the facilitators to think about alternatives, they started to think collaboratively and creatively about how to solve the situation and

two of them mentioned students-mentoring-students programme as an example. It was important that the Drama teacher, who was a key participant to the process, felt competent to support alternative solutions.
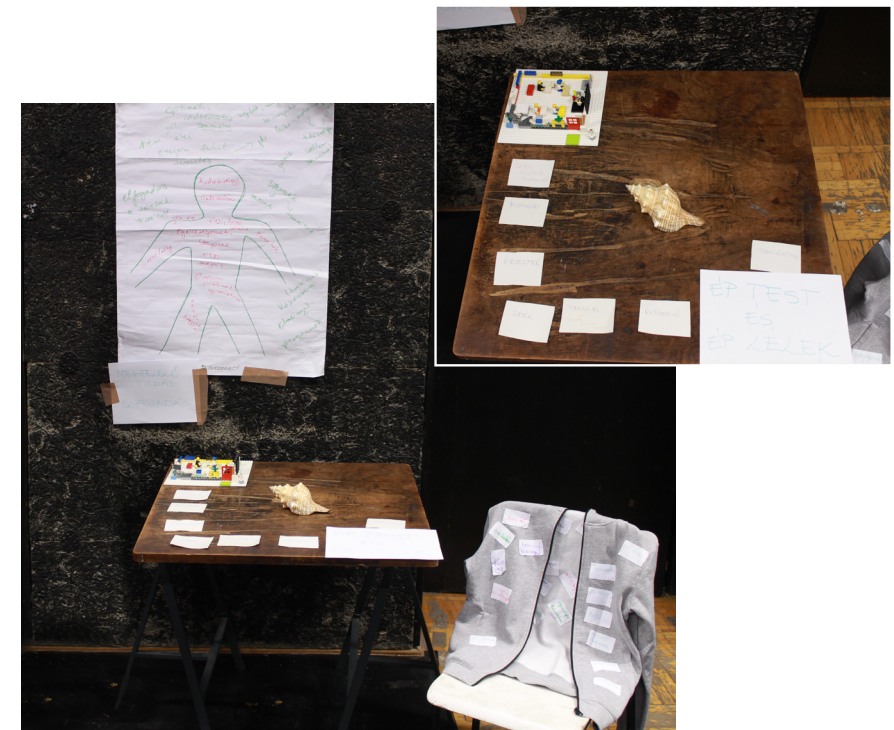
After circumscribing the problem areas each participant had to choose a problem based on their interest and motivation, with which they wanted, or felt more comfortable to work. They were asked to write plans for the next semester about how they would like to achieve results (goals, subgoals, activities, parties at fault, etc.), with the initial period of action described in a more detailed way. At the end of the session they formulated that they were afraid of what the reception will be like if they give a plan to the management, or if they put in the time and energy and nothing happens afterwards. They said that it is not about the lack of ideas or creativity, as "we have ideas", but – as opposed to what they indicated in the Staff Questionnaire – it is about the lack of receptivity of the principal, which is a real difficulty. Participants admitted that their suggestions and ideas were rejected because they were said not to be feasible without justification, and they could not ask why not. It broke their enthusiasm and motivation since they did not have support when they took initiative. They changed perspective and started to think collaboratively about what might be in the background of this attitude. They came to the conclusion that it could also be traced back to organisational difficulties, because substitution could not be solved due to a lack of teachers. They mentioned the situation that they even must go to work when they are ill ever since, but at the time of the pandemic it especially increased the feeling of insecurity.

4.3.4. Drama and well-being: Road and crossroad

The feelings, thoughts and experiences triggered from teachers during the first workshops, and during the first wave of Covid-19 and the first national lockdown with the two Zoom sessions seemed to unite as learning until or during this period. As a result, this was the period when more intensive and conscious drama learning could happen and mature. One of the goals of the research was to explore what role Drama and TiE played in these, and how Nyitott Kör interpreted its role in the process of working with teachers' well-being.

4.3.4.1. Students' well-being

At the beginning of the 3rd period, at a Role on the Wall task, the teachers reflected on the role and position of a teacher in the school, in relation to the well-being of the pupils. They observed what factors affected the well-being of a pupil, and analysed these in their complexity, along external influences and internal characteristics. This was a stimulus for the session, as an orientation point for the whole sequence of workshops. As a participant said at the end of the SWOT-PEST analysis "the well-being of the child has been formulated as a goal", therefore, it can be stated that by the beginning of the 3rd period of the sequence of workshops focusing on teachers' well-being, the participants had it in mind as a clear goal of their work. And apparently, they were aware of the fact that their well-being was a key element in fostering it.

Installation about the journey of the students' well-being through the Encounters.

By that time all the form masters hosted or visited TiE performances with their classes[20], so, 4 teachers out of the 6 who were present at that workshop, could add their thoughts to discussing how Drama and TiE can contribute to the well-being of the students and classes. Everyone reported that the TiE performance was a positive and determining experience on the students' part both individually and as groups, and on their own part, too: "when the 8th graders came back to school, I asked one of the boys (about the Cyber performance) (…) what was it like? He looked at me very seriously, how I very rarely see that boy, and said that Ms Dóra, it was not good, but helpful. It was such a deep thought from him, I saw that something… was crawling in for him…. and he had something on the brain, and I was happy about that". According to a class teacher, "it contributed a lot. Not for everyone, but for many, yes. We did follow-up work with Petra (…) and it was complete this way. Because I also wrote that the closure was missing". **So, the follow-up work session had been done in collaboration between the form master and the Drama teacher, and because they had felt the need for it.** Regarding the content of their follow-up lesson, they reported to feel good to perceive that their students assumed that they had responsibility in the evolution of cyberbullying, but they had pointed out other actors as well, such as parents and teachers. Teachers had noticed the victim-blaming attitude and had considered it important to talk about it openly and show their own positions. They had also heard that students had stated that it was difficult for the victim to undertake his/her situation, since shame and guilt were connected to his/her experiences. It was a perceptibly positive experience for the teachers, because they had deep conversations with the children about important topics. They felt that the performances contributed to open communication between the teacher and the students (To Be Consortium, 2021a, pp. 57–62).

The group also discussed how the teacher contributed to the students' well-being, and how a TiE performance could engage students and teachers, and tackle well-being. The participants said that for the students it was good that they could "deal with things (…) that they are occupied with, that are from their world, so it definitely gives them a sense of security I think (…). I think it's good for them that we are there as a background and that they know we try to process". Then a form master mentioned a bullying story that happened in her class a couple of years before and that she was shocked as it turned out after the TiE performance that strong feelings and hurt were still connected to the events for some students. Perceiving it, the form master reacted to the situation and decided to get back to the problem with those who feel it to be important. It shows that the TiE performance encouraged the teacher to focus on the students, **and to add more to the work and cooperate with a colleague who is more competent in the field (Drama teacher).**

The drama teacher who submitted the application for the programme from the part of the school said it was a very important and good opportunity for her that each class received a TiE performance during the Well-being project. She said – and was reinforced by the facilitators – that one teacher alone cannot achieve such an impact as if it was supported by a TiE session. With the students who she had regular drama lessons with, she always dealt with the topics raised at the TiE events at her regular Drama lessons. She admitted that "it's just not too much". She appreciated that the form master asked her to do a follow-up lesson together. Her opinion is that Drama, by its nature, holds long-term opportunities, and if a class would receive TiE performances every semester from grades 2 to 8, "it's such a long-term investment (…) Alone, as a drama teacher, in this, I feel helpless". "I'm thinking specifically of bullying or cyberbullying now."

One form master worded that "it is also probably community forging, if it is discussed afterwards". She liked that "you tipped them out of their comfort zones, that is, I think it also threw a lot at them to make it even better… Absolutely useful, very much". One teacher was a beginner form master and he reflected on getting to know the students

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[20]   Out of 12 classes attending the school, 11 participated in a TiE performance during the two school years of the project. One class of 8th grade was "left out" because of the lockdown, they were supposed to participate during the spring of 2020, and then graduated, so Nyitott Kör could not meet them during the autumn of 2020.

deeper as individuals and as a group, too. The teachers could not state it uniformly that those students, who in other cases are less involved in classroom work would have engaged more: "I don't necessarily think so, but they also start to think a little bit". As a long-term impact of the TiE sessions, the Drama teacher admitted that since the Erasmus+ grant began at the school and the performances had been coming for one year, she had a much better relationship with the students, and even deeper topics emerged: "even more... that the teacher..., yet... teacher is an adult for the student, but by being interested in them in situations like these, it seems... that they trust more in us. (...) even those of whom we would say... is not that they were bad students, but more difficult cases..., my relationship with them is even better".

At a final activity of the sequence of workshops, the participants were invited to compile an Exhibition, which was at the heart of the session. The facilitators thought that teachers were comfortable to become artists and create installations, and that this task would support an experiential reflection about the journey of the participants, thus facilitating creative engagement. All visual materials, objects used, handouts and resources compiled previously by/with the group were collated and prepared. These tangible results of the sessions (see "A table" in Guidebook) were installed in a chronological order around the room. The task was to make three groups and work on three thematic installations, and then to guide others as exhibition guides through the installation: 1) the journey of the teachers' well-being through the Encounters, 2) the journey of the students' well-being through the Encounters, 3) the journey of the organisation and its well-being through the Encounters. After preparing the installations using anything they thought to be useful in representing the topic chosen, the participants had to present it to the others in a guided tour. As for the students' well-being the teachers set three stages: initial state, centre, and endpoint. In the initial state, the participants reflected on the predominance of subject knowledge acquisition over the satisfaction of students' emotional needs: "the basic premise is that it is good for the child if they leave school with the adequate knowledge... If they get the right teaching and acceptance, too", and added "but it's not enough". The Lego symbolizes subject knowledge and represents

the situation when everyone sits in a disciplined way during frontal classroom work. And they added to it that "we're trying to bring some life into this. Play. Act. Explore." (Smiles and points to the facilitators). They considered it good to incorporate "other methods" (To Be Consortium, 2021a, pp. 68–76).

The shell is placed in the middle between the "starting point and end point" and **symbolizes that they should pay even more attention to the students' needs and hear them. They considered this to be the central element of their installation. They formulated it as a goal that they wanted to involve and engage them more in all subjects.** "Their knowledge will also be better if they can grow up in a sound state of mind and body. It's not only knowledge that they should have, but that they can move on as a relatively harmonious person". They declared that attention should be paid to the students' emotions, and they admit that they play an important part in it: **"it's important that we examine ourselves from time to time to see what we are doing for their well-being". And it can happen that a change in approach is needed, if necessary.**

"Our other favourite object" was the well-being pullover (Role on the wall), said the presenter. It symbolized the end point: *What is important for a student?* they asked the question to themselves. **The installation was introduced by one of the pair that worked together on it, and at that point the other one added: "we can take the perspective of others and we understand each other better. This is what this symbolized... for me...". The other colleague pointed at the pullover and added "practically this is well-being". The latter participant then put on the pullover and stayed like that until the end of the session. This same participant who struggled with the feeling of demotivation, emptiness and burnout in the beginning of the Sequence of workshops** (To Be Consortium, 2021a, pp. 68–76; 2021b).

4.3.4.2. Teachers' well-being
The pair working on the teachers' well-being at the Exhibition activity began their presentation by the thesis sentence: "students can only be well, if the teachers are well". They presented how they got closer to a

more conscious thinking about the teachers' well-being through the change of their feelings during the sequence of workshops. They also divided the period into three stages, the starting point, the intermediate period and the final state, and used three different emoticons that are used here as well.

🙁 When they got to know that one of the colleagues had submitted this grant application, they thought that it was very good, but "just we knew nothing about it. The first time was a big surprise for both parties (Nyitott Kör and the teachers), and the whole thing came to a halt, what the hell is it going to be like, everyone had a bad feeling". It turned out that it was about the involvement of the management as well, (…) we could not imagine how engagement would happen".

😐 "We are forming" was the title given to this period. At the second workshop "there were a lot of us, we were starting to feel the taste of it" but it still wasn't entirely clear for them what was going on, "the curving mouth here is already straight". At the occasion before lockdown "you pushed us into a situation", into the story of Szasza, a burnt out teacher, and "at this point everyone has become a little involved", as well as they considered the activity of a memorable seminar at university useful, the metaphor activity, when they had to think about what a good teacher meant. "Things started to become awesome and then came the lockdown".

At the online session "it was about our souls", which they found very useful and "because everyone got a little – very (added with humour) – lethargic". They felt that these occasions helped a lot. "We spent more time together and were able to talk to each other". They appreciated that they could reflect on the time spent since lockdown started, to recall who felt what when, what they did or did differently, and what they couldn't do. After the spring break they felt that "it was already good, this story was about our spiritual, emotional well-being". These two sessions were good, but "then there was a pretty big gap left, there was nothing for 3-4 months" (It meant the period between June 9 and August 28, which was the summer break).

☺ The teachers admitted that it was at the SWOT-PEST analysis when "the whole picture has come together, when the whole meaning peaked out" of how the students' well-being, the teachers' well-being are connected and how the whole school functions. They said that they knew all this before, but became conscious about, and had become aware of that "this was in the focus all along". **They said that learning about TiE and Drama brought some freshness into their work, and they considered it to be a cathartic moment when after deepening into the new method and trying some strategies out one participant had an emotional outburst in a forum theatre activity. They also saw this moment as a kind of community forging situation. They believed to have thrived with thought-provoking plays, games that "are food for our thought".** "Thank You. It has been very useful".

4.3.4.3.   The well-being of the organisation
What the participating teachers consider to be strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the organisation were already explored and detailed previously. At the Exhibition activity, the participants presented how they perceived the process from the aspect of presence at the workshops, especially that of school management. They introduce the space by saying **imagine as if we were going through four different rooms. To illustrate this, we rearrange the space five times".** As an initial condition, they put 10 chairs in a round, it was **Room 1**. They placed sheets on the chairs with 'F' indicating teachers from Upper Elementary and the letter 'A' representing teachers from Lower Elementary. Management is represented by a ladder with a red question mark and a blue exclamation mark on it, displayed outside the circle. "We want to show the beginnings, when we were there, still under external, managerial pressure, many of us from Upper and Lower Elementary mixed".

By rearranging the space, taking some chairs out of the circle (more from the 'A's), the participants entered **Room 2**. They reflected on that nor the headmaster, nor others from school management were there. There were less colleagues present, and those who were there were mainly teachers from Upper Elementary.

At the next rearrangement – **Room 3**. – they did not take out chairs but put them closely next to each other with one in the middle. They articulated that this was **"albeit only a few us, but this is how we got closer".** They said that the colleagues allowed for others to see them deeper. We also formed a kind of retention net around each other. The chair in the middle of the circle symbolized the teacher who manifested himself/herself and the others got close to him/her, this is the retaining force". Trust and personal care were seen to be strengthened among the participants, as well as cooperation, not only in relation to the subjects, but emotionally as well, in the form of turning towards each other.

In **Room 4.**, they formulated their need for the headmaster to be present: "it would be good if we could live the same experience together with the management". The ladder was placed in the circle. And then they expressed the ideal future: the ladder is in the circle among the chairs and other chairs around were returned into the circle symbolizing the entire teaching staff: "this is the future. All miracles can happen... once...". A participant watching the installation added a reinforcing closing sentence that "It speaks for itself".
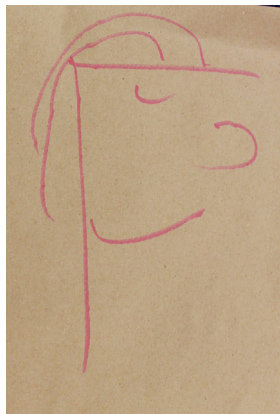
At the different reflective activities and moments of the last workshop, the participants verbalized conclusively that they were happy in this organisation ("I know that I am at a good place"). They understood that they "cannot do it alone", they needed their colleagues to perform successfully and reach their goals. They added that they felt a great need for such training but it would be ideal if it could happen "at faculty level", in a way that "everyone is there", because "that would make sense". **They consider themselves a good community and said that "we could be an even better one, if they allowed".** They said that it used to be an exceptionally good community, and now they should not allow it to be "separated".

And nonetheless they consider themselves a good community, they felt the need for turning towards each other emotionally more and listen to each other, for sharing tasks and responsibilities more, and – very importantly – for putting faith in the headmaster as a key figure
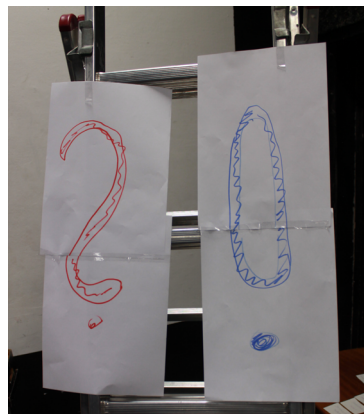
to participate in the process, and they were disappointed that it did not happen. They were sceptic about how the headmaster would welcome the plans of the three problematic areas identified at the SWOT-PEST. It turned out that one group had an attempt. One of their colleagues, having an appropriate degree for the task, offered her help, presented a concrete plan for the headmaster, who did not support this initiative because the school "cannot afford to take this teacher out of work for that few hours" due to the lack of professionals. Also, the teachers did not understand why their community was let to disintegrate, and they were not unified and sure about whether to share their needs and problems with the management. Such as the need for cooperation with her, need for information flow, or the need for partnership, need for such community building training, for the whole staff focusing on individual and group well-being. One of them stated that "no common goals were formulated, the chariot is running around". It shows that there was a need for setting common goals and working dedicatedly to achieve it, as it was formulated several times during the discussions and reflections. But they felt that they were left alone, there were communication barriers and a widening gap between the teachers and the headmaster. They looked at their relationship as something they wanted to restore.

Lower elementary teacher

Upper elementary teacher

Management

Room 1

Room 2

Room 3

Room 4

Ideal state

4.3.5.   Final Consequences: teachers' overall reflection on the Sequence of Nyitott Kör's workshops

The goal of the research was to follow Nyitott Kör's Sequence of workshop focusing on teachers' well-being and explore what the training participants think about what effects it had on the community in focus, along the objectives set by Nyitott Kör detailed in the introduction of the paper and the competencies defined when planning (see Appendix 2.). It can be stated that these goals were achieved, and teachers expressed that they became more conscious about the well-being of the different parties, and how they were organised into a complex system. However, the whole process was loaded with difficulties due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Due to the first lockdown in Hungary the initial plans about the structure of the workshops had to be revoked and adapted to the new situation, which might have an effect, at certain more, and, at some less evident points.

As for this section, data is gathered from the relevant observation analyses throughout the 5+2 workshops and the Flow questionnaire. The 28-item measure questionnaire was adapted to the sequence of workshops, by keeping the original five well-interpreted factors related to the flow experience of the motivational and coordination (task and relationship oriented) aspects of the solution of a joint task: 1. Efficiency and synchrony with the partners (12 items); 2. Involvement experience and concentration (5 items); 3. Motivation and positive impact on the partners (3 items); 4. Motivation and learning of the respondent (4 items); 5. Coordination with the partners during the activities (4 items). The answers ranged on a Likert-scale from 1[21] to 5[22]. It was filled by 10 participants, 3 of whom were present at all the 5 in-person sessions, 5 of them at 4 sessions and 1 person was present 3 times. 7 people attended both Zoom sessions, one person only one and one person did not attend any of them[23]. As it can be seen in Figure 9., the respondents in general all felt positively about the common work done

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[21]   not at all

[22]   completely

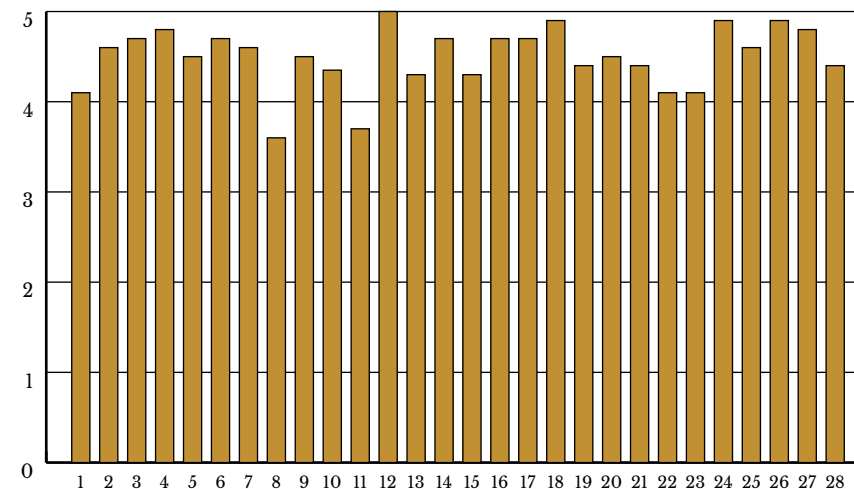[23]   9 out of 10 answered these two questions.

Figure 9.: Feeling flow during the common work

at the workshops. **The statements with the highest mean (4,6-5) all referred to the cooperation with the partners and getting energy from the workshops. They got attuned to each other, felt rapport during the activities and accepted each other's competencies. They indicated that they could rely on and learn from each other and that they would happily work together in the future, too.** They reflected that they could communicate well during the activities. The meaning of "We were able to cooperate automatically with the group" is 4,4, as they stated that they got more motivated because of the partners' presence during the common work. However, they only gave a 4 (="to some degree") when it was about the way they felt about the quality of their presence for the others: "I felt that I had a positive effect on my peers' tasks". This contradiction may be related to self-efficacy, which seems to be on the positive side, but needs further reinforcement. "I felt like a reflection of each other with my colleagues" received low scores and they indicated that they did not concentrate only on the common work (3,6-3,7). This latter can be interpreted in a way that they concentrated on each other as well. As for the atmosphere of the workshops, the participants felt trust, felt more energetic by the end of each workshop than at their beginning, and indicated that they were completely relaxed. **They emphasised at the last session that this training "is a sensationally**

good thing, it is very, very important to strengthen the faculty in this way, to open it towards each other". It would be good if "another door would open", and if "the whole faculty" would participate in the training together. The community evidently became more important for the participants, and they regarded cooperation as a long-term solution more than before. Through different Drama and Theatre in Education activities offered by Nyitott Kör participants could gain experience about an alternative type of problem solving, about how a trustful community works, in which individuals are paying attention to each other and individuals' needs are taken into consideration. This can be seen at the Exhibition activity, when the pair formulates how they got closer to each other and started to turn to and listen to the person who needed it. Also, and as an ultimate proof, this statement became alive at the very last session, when an older colleague who was present at all the face-to-face workshops enthusiastically considered it useful, admitted that by that time he had communication problems with students and colleagues. He said that he knew it had an emotional background, admitting that because of the virus, "I set off a bit towards burnout". Last year, his class graduated, due to what he already had fewer tasks, and together with the limitations that the virus situation poses on him, there was no organisational task, which was his essence: "now I'm falling down, notice it... (telling to the other while laughing), (...) don't send me into substitution... I'm fed up...". The colleagues immediately turned to him and a discussion started to evolve. It turned out that they asked him to substitute others because he has fewer lessons, so for completely objective reasons, what the teacher in focus understood, but said that "the burn is still burning and that's why I'm burning out". He ended up saying "oh well done, no more about myself". The other colleagues immediately stood by him and made him feel that they were there for him. He can turn to them any time, and they felt sorry that so far they had not noticed it. They agreed that it was a very important and good decision for him to bring this issue into the community at that point. As a reflection to this teacher's case, the importance of mentalhygienic supervision was also emphasised, and they raised the question: "can I be down?" in the sea of expectations. This question was raised at the very first workshop, too.

The teachers' reflections at all the sessions and in the SWOT-PEST analysis proved that participants were more and more willing to or able to express their opinions and their needs in relation to challenging professional situations, as well as they started to examine systemic problems in their complexity, from different perspectives, and started to see the coherence in them more consciously. As a reflection to the collaborative work on the institutional SWOT-PEST, the teachers were asked the question: *What do you think the relationship is between all that we have mapped out here and the well-being of a child at school? They stated that the analysis helped them to identify problem areas and raise awareness in connection with them. To rethink where they stand in the complex system in which they operate and which also operates independently of them, and the aim of which is enhancing the students' well-being. According to several participants they took a big and important step forward and "now it would be great to do something with that". Some teachers said they felt well at the end of the session because they realized "I can do things, I'm not completely helpless".* They said that "90% of the faculty was missing" but then they added: "see if they get into thinking, too". At the last but one session, already in the beginning, they regretted that they were a few, because these occasions became a kind of "forum" for them, where they could get to know each other "a little more", talk about their problems and difficulties together and think about possible solutions creatively, collaboratively and socially. Seemingly, their need for wider cooperation within the staff got stronger from session to session.

Moreover, they felt that they started to use reflection more consciously both with the students and when they thought through situations. They also admitted that they got professional knowledge in how to work on their own well-being and that of their environment, how to determine goals in relation to ways of solving problematic situations. A participant at the end of the SWOT-PEST started to think at a strategic level and summed up the common work by saying that "the well-being of the child has been formulated as a goal, (...) the methodology is there (referring to the SWOT-PEST analysis), we can start something to ameliorate the situation". In her view, if a small group should start doing things, and if several small initiatives happen, they

can come together. At a reflective task ("Spatial evaluation") at the final workshop they said that they "became more of these occasions" (To Be Consortium, 2021a, pp. 68–76).

The research explored whether participants learned new methods and could apply them in their everyday practice with the aim of fostering their students' involvement and engagement. The participants reflected several times on for example the aims, importance, efficiency or effects of Drama and TiE, so the conclusion can be drawn that they felt its relevance. However, it was also important to investigate if they were able to use some strategies in their practice. At the 5th workshop the topic was Drama and Theatre in Education, through getting closer to how Nyitott Kör approaches the topic, the participants became familiar with strategies, forms and could try themselves out in different forms if they wanted. They discussed how they could bring them into their practice, they tried to think about how different "objects with a life" could be used at their lessons. Participants said that they think that theatre and acting are within Nyitott Kör's competencies, and that their task was to "play with the zones with the students", i.e. learning, panic and comfort zone and involvement. They also formulated that they should do something with experiences, emotions, contracting/setting the framework, with the out of box opportunities and stimulus in relation to their own classroom activities and school tasks. They could sense the essence of Drama, the force of changing perspective when at a Theatre of the oppressed activity one of the acting participants had a strong emotional outburst. The colleagues turned towards her and tried to understand the situation and her feelings, and tried to calm her down by reinforcing her. The participant playing the role wanted to go out, but a facilitator said: "I didn't feel that you wanted to make fun of someone. But you helped us to understand what the situation was", "we tried to get closer to something important together". The teachers also reinforced the participants by saying: "you conveyed reality brilliantly". A participant highlighted that "I think it's fantastic", that "it caused such a catharsis in you, such a sincere manifestation... **I think it's Drama itself, that living through the situation truly and deeply**".

On the other hand, they also emphasised the drawbacks. In their view, **the current educational system does not serve flexibility and creativity, so they try to find valid and working solutions by themselves**. Collaborations that they heard from teaching colleagues in other institutions were brought into the conversation and they said that **"kids would feel a lot better that it is a damn good thing"**. There was one direct question in relation to learning new methods and applying them into practice in the Flow Questionnaire and in a reflection activity at the final workshop. These indicated that they feel that they learned new skills to some extent. According to a teacher's reflection this method can be applied anywhere within her field of expertise. Now she has a lot of ideas, but because of her exhaustion she said she needed time, her thoughts were currently "disordered", and it was going to "get settled" when "there will be silence" around her. **She said she was constantly looking for a connection between Drama and her subject, because this method was "far away from me" and her colleague teaching Drama was able to bring it closer to her. She was very concerned with this topic, how it could help her teaching. It could be seen that the Drama teacher's role and the relevance and importance of her job increased in the community.** One young teacher in his first year said that he wanted to use it and asked for ideas on how to include it into his everyday work. The influential more experienced colleague, who admitted to arrive at the verge of burnout due to the pandemic, put it this way: "my palette is a little more colourful, I can relate a little differently to myself and others", "I got to know others better", "I see certain things more nuanced than before". He felt that he had received "a lot of new things", was very inspired by the Drama session (Encounter 5.), and recommended his colleagues to take part in a 120 hours drama pedagogy training[24]. As he said, it would have had a significant impact on his teaching, if he had met Nyitott Kör earlier in his career.

The Zoom sessions were organised based on the participants' needs, which on the one hand, showed openness from and towards both parties. Which, together with the atmosphere of the sessions increased trust between Nyitott Kör and the teachers, and prepared the participants for

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[24]   Reference to drama.hu MDPT Drama pedagogy Course led by Laszlo Kaposi

thinking about the next academic year. Also, the teachers formulated that the session with the "Role on the wall" and the SWOT-PEST analysis was timely, it was very useful for starting the school year. Several of them mentioned that it helped them tune in to the academic year, to the children. After such a long absence, it is evidently also a difficult situation for the teachers, as they had also said it at the Zoom 2. session, too: "I was anxious from this day, thank you for being able to switch, to be better attuned to the school". It was also at this session that one of the participants said that they feel that with this "the picture has come together", although she admitted that a little late. As for the changes in the structure of the workshops, several forced decisions proved to be ideal and more beneficial. In the first and second workshops, they learned about themselves and each other through Drama, and this knowledge summed up a little late because of the lockdown. If there had been a reflection on the Szasza-story 3–4 weeks after it, along with carrying out the SWOT-PEST, it could have come together much sooner, and maybe, faster. But at the online sessions we chose not to reflect on it as it would have seemed completely absurd to talk about those experiences at that point, which, in August, came together automatically. So, we can draw the conclusion that Drama worked, the different activities evoked more and more emotions, which led to deeper and deeper reflections throughout the process. Nyitott Kör got reinforcement that it was necessary that teachers reflect on their experiences a few weeks later, where they could deduce the learning outcomes for themselves.

As a general reflection to the form Nyitott Kör used to organise its workshops they stated that they were tired from school, but now they were recharged, and they were enthusiastic because of "learning a new method". They feel well as they can take away what they have learned here. They feel that there is a great need for this type of professional training, because so far, they have taken part in professional training which was "managed frontally" most of the time. They were delighted to be able to attend the Sequence of workshops. **Someone stated "I had a lot of positive experiences" and "we learned a lot". Though, somebody claimed that "we don't have a vision, we don't put it in its path,... I'm a little sceptical... that doesn't sound like a critique, it's not up to you", but she declared that now it was their turn to keep up with the work.**

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The way Nyitott Kör was working with the teachers had an impact on their well-being, which participants and facilitators reflected on together, and their knowledge in Drama and TiE increased. Several components of the participating teachers' well-being were revealed, such as their need for stronger cooperation between the colleagues, or their need to articulate problems, and their need that these should be listened to. The sense of competency, the need for recognition, and the need for acquiring new skills in teaching were relevant for the participating teachers. During the workshops it became evident that they perceived their identity as a teacher was highly significant to them (Vámos et al., 2020), and through Theatre and Drama activities, they were able to raise awareness and articulate their attitudes and feelings about their profession and other members of the organisation. During the session, participants explained that they think a good teacher is careful, attentive, kind, praises and loves students, and as a reflection on the roles, they stated that students' well-being is their main objective, to help them learn, arise and maintain their interest and motivation, and feel emotionally and physically safe in the institution. By the end of the sequence of workshops, they became aware that students' and their own well-being and motivation were interrelated, students' well-being was a key element of their well-being (N. Kollár & Szabó, 2004). They tried to build a deep and trusting relationship with them, as it is of great importance in students' lives (Fehérvári, 2016; Dóczi-Vámos, 2016b).

The first thing they mentioned in relation to the difficulties of raising and maintaining students' motivation was that they could not compete with the rise of the stimuli-rich digital devices. They found it difficult to attract and sustain students' attention in the "traditional" way, though they considered it essential. Before the first lockdown, they were less educated in the online and digital forms of work (Czirfusz, Misley, & Horváth, 2020), and initially they saw it as a threat. However, during and after the first lockdown they saw it as an opportunity for development, re-motivation and for fighting against burnout.

Participating teachers got closer to their students through the TiE performances. They could have in-depth conversations with their students about topics important for them, and through these students felt that they were interested in their lives and their problems, which deepened their relationship. Additionally, these sessions contributed to seeing and getting to know the students both individually and in groups, in unusual situations, which sometimes were typically hidden from adults (Szitó, 2004).

Participants considered their work important because they were aware that it had an impact on others lives, although they often stated that they perceived teachers' societal and financial esteem to be low (Ádám, 2020; Kricsfalussy, 2020). They were typically satisfied with their work, however, during the sessions, they stated that they were specifically overwhelmed by the high number of lessons and other extracurricular tasks. In addition, they formulated that their work was stressful (Mihálka & Pikó, 2018; Johnson et al., 2005) already at the first two sessions. Besides being aware of the positive aspects of their work, they said that they were exhausted, working in "robot pilot mode", which is typically relieved by longer breaks and their own private lives. Along with the problems and difficulties the participants raised, the facilitators placed increasing emphasis on planning tasks that reflected on burnout, since teachers reflected on their own situation and condition in relation to it (Ádám, 2020; Kricsfalussy, 2020). At each dramatic stage (e.g. Szasza, the story of the younger teacher), the feeling of the complexity of the expectations intensified (e.g. they believed that they should also stand up as a psychologist). They were striving to meet them, although some of them expressed that it was impossible to meet all the expectations. Also, because – according to the teachers –, parents see their children as perfect, so formulating a helpful, constructive critique may have a negative consequence for the teacher. Often both the school management and the School District are on the parents' side. As a result of this, they typically feel vulnerable and, to some extent, play a role before parents, as they have described it through metaphors in connection with their profession. Participants, however, felt lucky that they worked with families where learning was important and valued, who supported the teachers' work in general,

and provided significant help with funding out-of-school programs. Along with all its difficulties, participants said parent-teacher-student collaboration worked well, especially during a pandemic.

During the first wave of Covid-19 pandemic, participants felt that their role could gain social, societal and parental appreciation, since families got a deeper insight into the teachers' tasks and roles and how their children were performing. The contradiction of the parents' expectations expressed in previous sessions also prevailed during this period, but teachers admitted that they received significantly more positive feedback and recognition from them than in their daily work. Parents' help and reinforcement fostered teachers' well-being, who – being worn out by the physical absence of the students and of the lack of farewell – tried to focus on students' well-being and that of the families, too. They tried to handle their complex needs and expectations flexibly and empathetically (e.g. N. Tóth, 2015; Rapos et al., 2011; Wolfe & Mccarthy, 2020; Piccolo, Tipton, & Livers, 2020), and they tried to find the best ways to relieve the stress of home education on parents (Wolfe & McCarthy, 2020; Piccolo et al., 2020). They tried to cooperate with them (Bakos, 2015), which was sometimes more of a burden for them (Lannert & Szekszárdi, 2015), because besides their job, which they lost or not, had to help their children in learning without pedagogical tools, skills or knowledge (Mahaffey & Kinard, 2020).

During the pandemic, the online sessions offered by Nyitott Kör provided support for the participating teachers by being interested in their personal, mental, emotional well-being, and took a step forward to keep together an otherwise dispersing community. It might have had an effect on the way teachers tried to help students in processing the crisis situation, e.g. using an opening circle at the beginning of the online lessons, or the tasks focusing on their well-being. The results of the Flow questionnaire also show that during the sequence of workshops, the participants learned new catches from the facilitators.

They also increasingly reflected on the role of the headmaster, which was not emphasized at the beginning of the sequence of workshops, but became a strongly echoed dimension by the end. It was stated that

the relationship and communication with parents and students could also improve if the information (flow) between the headmaster and the teachers was more transparent, predictable, smoother and clearer. They see that running the institution is a very difficult and responsible task, but, despite the fact that the employees who filled in the questionnaire initially indicated that the principal takes into account the individual opinions and personal goals to a certain extent, later the opposite emerged. They consider it a serious problem for them that the management does not accept their ideas, even though they would like to work with the principal to think together about their common and individual aims, in relation to their professional work, as well as emotional work, to support each other and to cooperate with each other. Possible reasons for the inconsistency between the questionnaire and the observation analysis and interviews are: 1. because of the preliminary mistrust between Nyitott Kör and the school organisation, 2. the teachers could not separate Nyitott Kör from school management, 3. the respondents of the questionnaire and the participants of the workshops did not overlap completely, and 4. the Drama and TiE sessions influenced critical thinking about this question. And as participants were able to articulate and share their positive and negative experiences, explore their feelings and opinions about the organisation more deeply, it raised their awareness. The lack of transparency in the decisions and in general functioning explicitly reinforced their feeling that the management left them alone. Organisational trust emerged as an important dimension during the sessions and at the interviews. Lack of trust is common in the Hungarian society (Csepeli, 2014), it has a protective role in maintaining career motivation and preventing burnout (see e.g. Paksi & Schmidt, 2006; Paksi et al., 2015). However, through the different Drama and TiE activities, by the end of the workshops, the teachers could formulate it appropriately that they needed that collegial relations and the headmaster played a decisive role in their everyday functioning (see e.g. Fehérvári, 2016; Sass, 2005).

Reflections on the state of the community appeared in almost every task, and in each case it was emphasized that they were a well-functioning teaching staff, but as a result of the Drama and TiE sessions,

they also formulated that they could be a better community, if certain conditions were met. Cooperation with colleagues involves a certain degree of risk (cf. Deutsch, 1973), but social support, task support (Sass, 2005), professional and human assistance to each other are significant components of teachers' well-being (cf. Meyers et al., 1993; Albert & Dávid, 2007). According to the participants, good collegial relationships are protective factors that prevent them from leaving the profession (Barth, 1990), and which is a characteristic of their teaching community. Their need for the democratic functioning of the management and for the headmaster's supportive attitude towards the community, community building and non-formal, out-of-school programs were defined. The most emerging problem seemed to be the separation of the Lower Elementary and Upper Elementary departments, which was enlarged by the online teaching in the lockdown and the gap between them grew. Good collegial relationships also have a positive influence on emptiness and lack of motivation (Barth, 1990; Horváth, 2012), about which they expressed their feelings several times during the session. At the beginning of the process, except for one or two people, they typically felt emotional exhaustion, professional empti-ness, and frustration due to lack of esteem and underpayment. While by the last session, due to activities fostering empathy and the change of perspective, one colleague reflected on his burnout and the others turned to him (Lendvai et al., 2021).

The teachers highlighted the role of other factors in their well-being, such as meeting ongoing professional challenges, opportunities for professional development, and making their work feel efficient (Kun & Szabó, 2017). Job satisfaction is one of the most important elements of their well-being (Hajdu & Hajdu, 2011). Dlow is also a significant factor of it (Csíkszentmihályi, 2007; Holecz & Molnár, 2014; Csíkszentmihályi & Csíkszentmihályi, 2011), which they felt to increase during the lockdown and online teaching, when after the initial difficulties (lack of knowledge and technical skills) (Hulon, Tucker, & Green, 2020; Czirfusz, Misley, & Horváth, 2020), they felt successful in it. Their motivation raised, they moved away from burnout and their need for further professional education in the topic emerged (Horváth et al., 2020).

As a summary it can be said that the Sequence of workshops focusing on well-being provided, on the one hand, an opportunity for teachers to be together and to get to know those colleagues (better) with whom they otherwise would not have come into contact. On the other hand, participants became able to identify and articulate their problems and work together to develop solutions collaboratively, socially and creatively. Thus, working together in a Drama and TiE education context was a significant step both at an individual and at group level. It allowed them to recognize that their problems were not unique, and his feeling reinforced them during the workshops, until they finally realized that they could find common formulations and solutions to common problems, and joint action could be taken. They enjoyed participating in new, non-frontal forms, which induced deeper and deeper reflections. Last but not least, this sequence of workshops was able to strengthen the role of the Drama teacher in the school, and the relevance of this form of art in education.

6. OUTLOOK

Parallelly with our research, a research report was issued, which concluded that professionals working in different areas of child protection needed the dramatic processing of professional and emotional experiences during their work (Oblath, 2019). It can be stated that the Arts-Based Participatory Action Research following the Sequence of workshops focusing on well-being, helped to describe the aims and the impact of the **Well-being curriculum** developed within the framework of the To Be partnership. Based on these, it can be stated that:

6.1. THE WELL-BEING CURRICULUM

- Reinforces the role of the Drama teacher in the school.

- Opens the collaboration between the Drama teacher and other teachers in education.

- Inspires the collaboration of teachers of different age groups and subjects both from a professional and from informal aspect.

- Helps to place the topic of well-being in the work of the form master, it gives forms and an approach with introducing Drama and Theatre in Education to the community.

- Has a positive effect on the well-being of the organisation, increasing awareness about it.

- Helps the faculty to think of itself as a community, and thus as a proactive actor in promoting change in the organisation.

6.2. TEACHERS' NEEDS AS MEMBERS OF THE ORGANISATION

6.2.1. On the behalf of the colleagues

- Knowledge sharing (e.g. visiting each other's lessons; professional workshops and forums).

- Mentoring system.

- Relieving on the separation of the two departments.

- Turn to each other more emotionally.

- Improvement of the teachers' community (e.g. joint programs, such as excursions), trainings).

- Involve everyone in community building events (including management).

- Formulation of common aims.

- Maintaining their own motivation.

- Professional development, participation to professional further education.

- Development in the use of digital tools, and online teaching and learning.

6.2.2. On the behalf of the students and parents

- Pay more attention to the students' emotional and mental well-being than earlier.

- Maintaining students' motivation.

- Feedback from the members of the organisation (e.g. parents).

- Improving trust between the teachers and the parents.

6.2.3. Globally and on the behalf of the school management

- Better, more open communication and partnership with management (equal cooperation).

- Better information flow between school management and the teachers.

- Predictable operation from the part of the management.

- The management listens to and manages their problems.

- Ending the growing gap between management and teachers.

- Address the shortage of supporting professionals (e.g. SEN teacher).

- Keep their health in mind as well.

- Less centralized system, more freedom.

- Providing the necessary materials and conditions for teaching.

- An education system that supports flexibility and creativity.

- Higher societal and financial respect.

7. LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

One main limitation of case studies is usually said to be that they are not comparable to other units. The answer to this is that the aim is not to compare this organisation to another one, but to get to know this one deeply, which in itself is a value, and an advantage that cannot be reached by big data studies, which for other objectives than ours, is completely valid and very useful. The Participatory Action Research-like nature of the research has shown itself already in the beginning of the field work, since due to initial mistrust and communication difficulties we had to make alterations related to the structure of the research process and to the research tools, too. Originally, we planned to apply sociometry in the beginning and at the end of the sequence of workshops to see if there were some changes in the relationship between the teachers. The most important criterion for this method is that every teacher of the school fills it, which did not occur, not even after several calls. Therefore, we decided to leave sociometry out of the research, already in the beginning. Furthermore, despite what had been discussed, the Headmaster did not attend the workshops. He/she did not participate in the interview, so his/her point of view could not be known, and it was difficult for Nyitott Kör and the researchers to reach the staff through him/her. The participants of the workshops did not allow video recordings, so information is based on sound recordings, which proved to be a well applicable source for data collection. The results of the observations and semi-structured interviews described the experiences and interpretations of the teachers involved in the study, so we did not intend to present universally objective facts and generalize our result.. In parallel with the Sequence of workshops, TiE performances took place with the classes (10 occasions). At these encounters there was not data collection since we perceived that it would raise the degree of mistrust to an even higher extent and hence would risk the success of the entire program.

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9. APPENDICES

9.1.   APPENDIX 1. THE CATEGORIES OF IPA

Master themes	Emergent themes
A, Development of communication with students – "looking for other ways to communicate with them"	A1, Farewell and lack of personal contact – "Give them and myself a closure"
	A2, Dropout – "grace period"
	A3, Communication about the pandemic in the classroom – "the world has changed"
	A4, Changes in online communication – "there was no such connection with the children"
B, Communication with parents – "the parents were upset"	B1, Relief – "parents get stuck too"
	B2, The role of positive parental feedback – "it felt really good in the everyday chaos"
	B3, The importance of understanding teacher attitudes – "[We] will succeed!"
C, Colleagues – "we kept each other in sane and grounded"	C1, Collaboration and fragmentation with teaching colleagues – "lack of unity"
	C2, Non-teaching colleagues – "there is someone who has a clear overview and has put energy into it"
D, Communication with school management – "There were not one or two comforting words."	D1, Difficulties at the beginning of the transition – "We didn't get anything. Nothing at all."
	D2, School management – "Lack of communication, that's the biggest problem"
	D3, Consequences of lack of managerial communication – "My God, how do I solve it?"
	D4, Supposed communication between the school district and the management of the institution – "almost no one sees what is happening above us"

9.2.   APPENDIX 2.

Attitude: By the end of the 6 encounters the participants/teachers:

- emphasize **the connection between the students' emotional condition and the efficiency of their learning process**, and they consider emotional involvement more important during lesson planning than earlier.
- understand better why it is good for teachers to **work as a community**, their need to **cooperate with their colleagues in teaching activities increases**, as well as planning and organising events, which contributes to the students' well-being and engagement. Their need for „communal health" appears. They understand the positive effects of the series of the sessions/encounters.
- put more emphasis on the **quantity and quality of reflection** – applied both for themselves and for the students.
- **perceive their own responsibility** regarding their own and their colleagues' well-being as teachers, they are *thinking about burn-out*.
- pay more attention to **the student's and their own needs** (in the classroom, school and in collective work).
- **their need for learning and for further training increases.**
- in relation to **"surviving"** they see **"living"** more in teaching.
- are more conscious and recognize:
- the oppression within their own system more
- burn-out/fatigue/survival-mode in everyday life more
- injustice more
- know and understand the relevance of leadership from the point of view of the functioning of an organisation.
- consider it important that they can integrate the experiences they gained during the Encounters in planning their own learning process in an implicit or/and explicit ways (ex. methods of drama pedagogy, spatial organisation etc.)

Skills: The participants are able:

- take the **emotional involvement/condition of the students into account as an aspect** already when planning their work with students.
- to **maintain the communal health of** teachers, to cooperate more frequently with each other in their teaching activities.
- to emphasize **the quantity and quality of reflection** – applied for themselves for the students.
- to **identify burn-out** as a threat and to **recognize** if one of their colleagues becomes **demotivated.**
- to be aware of **their own needs** and to handle their needs consciously.
- (to give **assertive feedback** to each other and to school management).
- to use certain **methods of Drama** (ex. still image, use of objects etc.) in order to strengthen the engagement of the students.

Knowledge: The participants are able to recognize/identify:

- the elements of the **students' well-being.**
- the forms and methods of **cooperation among the teachers** in the teaching activities and in the teachers' **community development.**
- **how to approach colleagues** who are threatened by lack of motivation, how to start a conversation with them.
- if they are at risk from the aspect of **burnout.**
- (the characteristics of **assertive communication**).
- (formulation of their own needs).
- (feedback to the colleagues).
- (feedback to the headmaster).
- how/why to use certain **methods of Drama**

THE WELL-BEING OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS AND MANAGEMENT WORKERS IN THE CONTEXT OF DRAMA IN EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

The realised qualitative research, which falls under the international Erasmus + project, *To be or not to be well? - Drama and theatre in education* (further simply as To Be) uses drama and theatre methods in education for the development of wellbeing of pupils and teachers in schools. The research functions as a probe into how selected teachers and school management workers understand wellbeing. The research subjects from three different primary schools have attended a seminar on Drama in Education in the The Lužánky Leisure Time Activity Centre as part of the aforementioned project. Through the use of the IPA (Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis) method, we have analysed fourteen semi-structured interviews with six research informants to answer these questions:

How do primary school teachers and management workers who took part in the To Be project reflect on the well-being in their schools?

According to the primary school teachers and management workers who took part in the To Be project, how can Drama in Education aid in the development of the well-being of teachers and pupils?

The research accentuates the function of Drama in Education in the curricular documents of the Czech educational system and the possibilities for its application in schools in connection with one of the current challenges of the Czech educational policy - facilitating well-being in schools.

The seminary on Drama in Education, which supplemented the research, took place largely during the worldwide coronavirus pandemic (February to November 2020). These events had a direct effect on the way research informants experienced their well-being.

Keywords: well-being, drama in education, primary school, teachers, school management, interpretative phenomenological analysis

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. CONTEMPORARY APPROACHES TO EDUCATION IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

The Czech educational system is divided into three categories, primary (lower-level primary school), secondary (higher-level primary school/ lower secondary school and secondary school) and tertiary (colleges and universities). Primary schools, which were the focus of our research, are attended by pupils aged between 6 and 15. Years 1 to 5 constitute the lower level that the pupils spend mostly under their homeroom teacher's supervision. The higher level of primary education spans the years 6 to 9. Here the pupils encounter more new teachers within different subjects.

The current curricular principles in Czech education were defined in 2004 with the publishing of one of the primary curricular documents, titled The Framework Education Programme (Rámcový vzdělávací program). This document re-defined the structure of pupils' education between the ages 3 and 19, oriented towards developing critical skills using the educational material. These skills encompass learning, problem-solving, communication, as well as social and personal, civic and occupational skills (MŠMT, 2021).

The curriculum is created on two levels which are both followed by the schools. The first one, issued by the state, is the Framework Education Programme (FEP), the second School Education Programme (SEP) is issued by the schools. In practice, this allows the schools and teachers to have the freedom to choose their own path towards fulfilling the milestones defined by the FEP.

Drama in Education, the focus of our research, is categorised under the FEP for primary schools in the educational sector of Arts and Culture as an optional - supplementary subject. This allows schools to introduce Drama in Education as a standalone subject into their SEP

or use the option of including Drama in Education within the curriculum in the form of a project, a short course or as a teaching strategy for other subjects.

The need for transformation of the Czech educational system is highlighted by the new Strategies of Educational Politics in the Czech Republic by 2030+ (further only as Strategies 2030+) passed in 2020. This document prompts a significant transformation of school management. A project titled Partnership for education 2030+ (further only as Partnership 2030+) is currently under development in the Czech Republic, connecting seven key educational platforms whose aim is to collectively design, pilot and implement into practice:

> A system of measures for healthy physical and psychosocial development of children and young people, and for the application of their full potential in their personal, professional and civic life („well-being" – with focus on coordinating support for vulnerable children). (SKAV, 2021)

1.2. WELL-BEING IN THE CONTEXT OF CZECH EDUCATION

Well-being is therefore becoming one of the central themes of the Czech educational system. The Partnership 2030+'s Well-being working group is currently taking on the task to increase awareness about the significance of well-being in education. In connection to Strategies 2030+, the group members have advocated for the discussion on defining the term well-being in Czech education. The complex understanding of the term by the working group Well-being (project Partership 2030+), which stems from the definitions of the international organisations WHO, UNICEF, OECD, was very inspiring for our research: well-being is "a state in which we can fully develop our physical, cognitive, emotional, social and mental potential while in a supportive and stimulating environment, and thus live a full and content life together with others." (Presentation of partial outputs of the Well-being workgroup, Felcmanová, 2021).

Our research shows that the term well-being is currently not commonly recognised. So far, it has been understood primarily in connection to pupils, less through the point of view of others operating in education.

In connection to the coronavirus crisis, the topic of well-being is progressively becoming more of a focus. Even though well-being has only become a widely discussed topic in recent years, it does not mean that its principles have been ignored in Czech education before now. Teachers and schools also work with the issues connected to well-being individually. For example, since 1992/93 Czech Republic has been a member of the WHO Schools for Health in Europe programme. Well-being is also a long-term focus of some organisations (to name a few - Stálá konference asociací ve vzdělávání (SKAV), Pomáháme školám k úspěchu, Česká odborná společnost pro inkluzivní vzdělávání, E-clinic, Česká rada pro šetrné budovy or Národní ústav duševního zdraví).

1.3. RESEARCHING WELL-BEING IN THE CONTEXT OF CZECH EDUCATION

The specialist discourse considers the term well-being through several interdisciplinary perspectives. The connected broader conceptualisation and research can be encountered in several specialist contexts: pedagogy, psychology, sociology, etc.

For example, in personal-social education, the term represents accomplishment in **personal and career goals, mental and physical health and general welfare.** It is rarely translated into Czech (see, e.g. Pacholíková, 2017, p. 14). According to Valenta (2006, p. 44), personal-social education aims to help each pupil find their way towards **a content life built on healthy relationships towards oneself, others, and the world.**

In the psychological-pedagogical discourse, well-being can be encountered, for example, in the context of the school classroom environment (Mareš & Křivohlavý, 1995) or in inclusive learning (see above: working group Strategies 2030+). From a psychological

perspective, well-being can be understood as **personal welfare** and its development through one's life. One of the advocates of the term in Czech psychology is prof. M. Blatný, who has worked on introducing it in its complexity based on its use in foreign publications. For example, the term "subjective personal well-being" has been used since the 50s. In 1989 Carol Ryff designed a model of Personal Well-being (PWB), as an antithesis to the persisting hedonistic understanding of personal welfare, focusing on personal engagement in tackling existential challenges and vital queries (see Hřebíčková, Blatný, & Jelínek, 2010, p. 31). One can build their well-being through finding fulfilment in six areas of their mental welfare: - self-acceptance, positive relationships with others, autonomy, control of their surroundings, the meaning of life and personal growth (Blatný, 2006). Psychological research focused on the correlation between happiness and satisfaction, and personal attributes have become a widely explored topic in the past decades. The results of a series of studies within the Czech sphere, e.g. Blatný (2001), Hřebíčková, Blatný and Jelínek (2010) have shown that one's contentment with life is affected, to a certain extent, by their personality traits and the stage of life they find themselves at Blatný (2001) This is further affirmed in the newest publication by M. Blatný (2020) *Personal well-being and personality through a lifetime perspective.* Along with the development in sociological research into the quality of life, attention has also been drawn to life satisfaction, happiness and subjective well-being in relation to sociodemographic factors (gender, age, education, marital status and cohabitation) and the extent to which overall life satisfaction is affected by family satisfaction and job satisfaction. For example, Hamplová (2004) has discovered that gender does not significantly affect life satisfaction and men and women are approximately equally satisfied with their lives. Popelková (2011) focused on the area of health satisfaction among teachers in her study. The author compares three professional groups, namely the afore-mentioned teachers, healthcare workers and bank employees. The results show the lowest level of health-related welfare among teachers and the highest among individuals working in banking. The author lists the possible causes of these findings: highly stressful conditions and the overall complexity of the teaching profession, overwork, pupils' problematic behaviour, and more. A probe into the lives of the

students of special education at Masaryk University carried out by Táňa Novotná in her master's thesis combined a life satisfaction questionnaire (see Fahrenberg, 2001) and the NEO five-factor personality inventory "Big-Five". The author discovered that the strongest predictors of satisfaction were the categories 'relationship to oneself', 'financial situation' and 'health', the least relevant category was housing. Research in Drama in Education has not yet focused explicitly on its role within the concept of well-being; however, some have engaged with its specific components (e.g. teacher education, Drama in Education for at-risk groups, etc.). Interesting results were offered by international research with the participation of a representative from the Czech Republic (DICE Consortium, 2010), which aimed to examine the effects of theater and drama on five of the eight key Lisbon competencies of students aged thirteen to sixteen. In the context of well-being, the positive effects of drama on the area of social competences (interpersonal, intercultural and social compe-tences, civic competence) and some other components of well-being in relation to school were found. Compared to the control group, they are more pleased going to school, more happy with school activities, and get better scores at school evaluation.

There is a significant amount of research focusing on the impact of Drama in Education on teaching in correspondence to the requirements of FEP for primary education that is also related to the topic of pupils' well-being – empathy, problem-solving, moral awareness, communi-cation and cooperation. Research surveys (Draberová, 2010; Zoubková, 2018; Svozilová, 2005) point out the positive influence of Drama in Education on these areas, but at the same time reveal the limits of research in this field, specifically the small number of respondents, soft data and the influence of other variables. More extensive research has focused on how selected artistic activities help form a child's personality during the compulsory schooling period. In Drama in Education, this impact has manifested through cultural enrichment and the development of communication skills, social skills and creative thinking (namely the ability to be fluent, flexible and sensible) (see further Marušák et al., 2019).

1.4. DEFINING THE TERM WELL-BEING IN THE CONTEXT OF THE TO BE PROJECT

The studies mentioned above prove the interdisciplinarity of research perspectives as well as the multi-layered and branching nature of the concepts connected to the topic of well-being. The English term "well-being" has no direct terminological equivalent in the Czech language and is usually translated as "personal welfare and life satisfaction". This translation fails to fully express this term's complex understanding, encompassing all physical, emotional, mental and cognitive, personal and social dimensions.

In our project, we worked with the concept of well-being as professional (and life) satisfaction of teachers in the schools where they work, specifically satisfaction they experience in the teaching profession. We approached the term well-being as broadly and openly as possible to include physical, emotional, spiritual and cognitive areas. Our intention was not to present the teachers our understanding of the term well-being but to examine how the participants perceive it themselves.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP IN THE FIELD OF DRAMA IN EDUCATION AS CONTEXT FOR RESEARCH

As part of a strategic partnership project titled *To be or not to be well? - Drama and theatre in education* running under the Erasmus+ project (further only as To Be), the project team of The Lužánky Leisure Time Activity Centre created a Drama in Education workshop for primary school pedagogical staff. This workshop examined the pedagogical staff's professional and life satisfaction through the use of drama methods and techniques. The goal of the workshop was to introduce the pedagogical staff to "methods of working with a group, using drama and theatre in education for learning purposes and for fulfilling the pupils' needs in the area of personal and social development (namely well-being and resilience)" (Lužánky, 2021). As a part of the course, the homeroom teachers were also given the option to attend one of the model Drama in Education programmes with their class. The interviews we conducted with the informants within the research thus followed up on their experience with the analysis of the topics listed below through the methods of (not only) Drama in Education during the seminars (To Be Consortium, 2021a, & 2021b).

The educational seminar was attended irregularly by four to fifteen participants from the original fifteen-member group of teachers and primary school management. The series of workshops included six meetings, the format of which was influenced by the coronavirus pandemic. Four three-hour sessions took place in person at the Lužánky facility, Labyrint. Two of them took place in February and March 2020, before the influence of the pandemic. Two meetings took place online in October and November 2020. The pupils, along with their teachers, visited the model educational programmes during September and October 2020.

The individual meetings of the educational seminar were devoted to the following topics and methods (Lužánky, 2021):

- During the first meeting, the participants explored their experiences with education through themed living tableaus. In groups, they further discussed their understanding of the concepts of life and professional satisfaction, living and survival in general.

- In the second meeting, through creating living tableaus, the participants examined the question: *When does a teacher find life in their school, and when are they only surviving?*

- The third meeting answered the participants' need to focus on the school climate and communication within the facility. The topic was explored through the framework of narrative drama

- In the fourth meeting, which focused on pupils' well-being, the participants answered questions through creative discussion methods. Examples of the questions were: How can Drama in Education influence the atmosphere in the classroom? How does Drama in Education develop pupils' skills, knowledge and attitudes?

- Between the fourth and fifth meeting, four workshop participants took part, along with their class, in the model Drama in Education programmes.

- The fifth online meeting reflected on the educators' experiences with the class participation in the model Drama in Education programmes. They shared their impressions of the programme's effect on the class collective, feelings, and realisations.

- The sixth meeting was dedicated to reflection. The participants used a timeline to mark and share moments in their lives that have affected their personal and professional satisfaction during the educational workshop. They further shared: *How, based on their experiences with the educational seminar, has their understanding of the*

pupils' needs and satisfaction developed and which concrete steps they want to undertake in the coming period towards their own professional and personal satisfaction?

2.2. RESEARCH GOALS

We have set two main research goals for this project:

- to analyse the research informants' experiences with the phenomenon of well-being in primary schools.

- to analyse the research informants' experiences with the benefits of Drama in Education towards teachers and pupils' well-being in primary schools.

The research informants are teachers and school management workers who took part in the To Be project.

2.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How do selected teachers and primary school management workers who participated in the To Be project reflect their professional and life satisfaction (their well-being) at their school?

- What potential do selected teachers and primary school management workers involved in the To Be project see in Drama in Education to foster the well-being of teachers and pupils in their schools?

2.4. RESEARCH TARGET GROUP

The research target group comprises three participant couples from three different primary schools who took part in the educational workshop on Drama in Education as part of the To Be project.

The couples were composed of one teacher and one teacher who was also part of the school management. There were five women and one man among the participants. The participants' age ranges between 30 and 52 years. Their experiences with Drama in Education varied.

The target group can also be described through the lens of the involved schools' varying characteristics. This reflects in the informants' answers, as well as the interpretation of the research data. These three schools can be described as a small suburban nursery, a small nursery and primary school located in a housing estate, and a large small-town primary school. Names of the informants and schools were anonymized.

Small suburban nursery and primary school Z

Zuzana - lower-level primary school homeroom teacher

Zdenek - principal, lower-level primary school Maths teacher, responsible for school-based prevention programme (primary prevention of bullying, substance use and antisocial behavior)

Small housing-estate nursery and primary school P

Petra - lower-level primary school homeroom teacher

Pavla - principal, higher-level primary school Czech and Art teacher

Large small-town primary school A

Anna - higher-level primary school English teacher

Agáta - Deputy for inclusion and special education

2.5.   DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The data were collected using semi-structured interviews. The individual semi-structured interviews were further supplemented with the informants' relevant statements during group discussions as part of the Drama in Education workshop. Three (in one case, two) semi-structured interviews were conducted with the teachers who took part in the model drama programme at Labyrint with their class. Two semi-structured interviews were conducted with the teachers who are members of the school management. The individual interviews ranged from 60 to 90 minutes.

All of the research informants took part in the first interview. Its focus was on the informants' experiences with their personal and professional satisfaction within their workplaces. After the third meeting of the educational workshop (during September 2020), the interview took place. The informants have already taken part in group discussion and explored the topic of teachers' well-being and lives through drama techniques. The interview was driven by printed photographs taken during previous meetings. The photos portrayed participants using various drama techniques and mind-maps focusing on teachers' well-being that they collectively created and discussed during the workshop.

The second interview took place during September 2020 and was conducted only with two informants who personally took part in the model educational programme at The Lužánky Leisure Time Activity Centre. The interview focused on describing the informants' experiences with observing their class during the programme.

The third interview was conducted with all of the research informants after the educational workshop's conclusion (November 2020 – February 2021). The interview focused on the informants' overall experience with the workshop and expanded on the workshop's final evaluation meeting.

2.6.   DATA ANALYSIS METHOD

The data were analysed through the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) according to Smith and Osborne (2008). The goal of the IPA method is to reconstruct the informant's interpretation, to interpret the meaning of what the informant conveyed and to try to capture the subjective understanding of their lived experience (Šuráňová, 2013).

The analysis was conducted by two researchers who both have a long-standing experience with Drama in Education. One of the researchers worked on processing the interviews with teachers from two schools, and the other worked on processing the other school's interviews. Both researchers were in contact through the duration of the analysis process and consulted each other on their approach. After composing their reflections on the research topic, the researchers carried out a step-by-step analysis of each story. The length of individual stories was approximately twenty pages of text. The stories that emerged from the analysis were consulted with the research informants and amended according to demands.

Afterwards, common themes corresponding with the research questions were identified among the stories, and a complex narrative based on the extracted topics was created.

3. RESULTS

3.1.   INTRODUCING SCHOOLS AND RESEARCH INFORMANTS

3.1.1.   Small suburban nursery and primary school Z

Zuzana and Zdenek work at a small suburban nursery and primary school. The primary school where they teach contains only five classrooms within the lower level with an overall number of circa 100 pupils attending. Their education is facilitated by a 15 member pedagogical team and an external psychologist. The school's building, as well as the garden, went through reconstruction ten years ago. The school's architecture focuses on creating harmony with nature and ecology. The facility is materially well-equipped and provides an option for after-school daycare for the pupils. The school lunches are delivered. The school is active in realising projects focusing on raising the quality of education and the local amenities. There is also a significant focus on collaboration with various organisations. It is a 'faculty school', meaning it provides a space for teaching students to develop their practice under primary school pedagogues' guidance.

It is a so-called catchment school, meaning both the pupils and their parents are closely connected to the local area. For that reason, one of the school's main goals is to foster the pupils' relationship towards their community and place of residence. The school also tries to develop a bond with nature. The school pioneers verbal assessments, Sfumato reading, and Hejný's maths teaching method.

Zuzana: I love my job, but I don't want it to take over my life. Zuzana is 47 years old and currently works as a homeroom teacher of a Year 5 class with 13 pupils. She has twenty years of teaching experience and arrived at her current primary school four years ago after leaving her former workplace due to a lack of professional development support. After completing her studies in the Czech language and social sciences, she spent three years teaching at a multi-level gymnasium (grammar

school) focused on integrating disabled pupils. Later, she left for the United States and, after her return, worked in a travel agency. When she returned from maternity leave, she took a job as a teacher in a so-called small-class or combined-class school - a school, usually remote, which combines several years into one classroom due to a low number of pupils in the area. She remained at this post for ten years and eventually completed her studies of special education, among many other courses aiding her professional development. All of her teaching posts are distinctly different from a common perception of what a school is, whether it's because of their size, low number of pupils, small teaching body or innovative methods and visions pioneered by the schools.

Before starting the project, Zuzana had no former experience with Drama in Education and was motivated by her colleagues to join. She attended the 2nd to 5th meeting of the educational workshop. She accompanied her class in the Prehistory programme focusing on introducing children to the lives of hunters and gatherers through the use of living tableaus.

Zdenek: Change is a part of life, and it's great to look for the good things it brings. Zdenek is 39 years old. Formerly he worked as a maths teacher at a different primary school but felt the need to move along professionally. At his current school, he has been working as a principal for the past 11 years. For ten years, Zdenek worked simultaneously as a principal and a homeroom teacher. He sees himself primarily as a teacher and recently also as a preventative methodist. He enjoys his work greatly and pays great care to shape the school's character and openness towards the local community. Zdenek places great importance on everyone feeling good within the school, and both pupils and teachers find it a stimulating space for learning. It can be said that his approach to people and leadership fosters well-being in his workplace.

Zdenek is an experienced practitioner of the Global Storylines approach, which extensively works with drama methods. He has attended all of the educational programme meetings.

3.1.2. Small housing-estate nursery and primary school P

The school's tradition reaches back to the end of the 19th century. It's one of the two schools founded in this area and has a humble, residential character. It is a catchment school. Its familial character is mainly preserved thanks to its size and the close relationships between the parents and teachers who all reside in this area and therefore know each other. This original village atmosphere has changed somewhat after the construction of the new housing estate which directly neighbours the school and the consequent arrival of new pupils who moved into the residence. Despite this, the school still manages to maintain its closeness with the parents and a personal approach towards the pupils, which is one of its priorities.

At the end of the 90s, the school underwent reconstruction with a focus on accessibility. Currently, new classrooms are being constructed as an addition to the building. The school kitchen is on the premises.

At the moment, the school's nursery consists of two classrooms, while the primary school contains nine classrooms. Roughly 200 pupils attend the primary school with 17 members of the teaching body, including three teaching assistants. The school takes an active part in projects focusing on developing its environment as well as educational development projects. It is a so-called faculty school and cooperates with a university in training teaching students for their future positions.

Petra: Relationships built on trust and respect are what matters. Petra is 53 and works as a year three teacher in a classroom with 23 pupils. Her pedagogical practice has always been connected with one school over her entire 30-year career. Due to organisational changes, she now works in a different building than when she started her job. She works primarily on the youngest children between years 1 and 3 of primary school and focuses on introducing them to the school environment. She has a close relationship and a shared history with her workplace.

Petra has attended all of the project meetings and took part in the Prehistory programme with her class.

She had no extensive former experience with Drama in Education. However, she likes to make theatre with her pupils through adapting books of an influential children's author with whom she has built a long-term partnership. The need to teach pupils skills connected to theatre led her to join the project.

Pavla: I am a happy person because I want to be. Pavla is 52 years old and has 28 years of teaching under her belt, the most recent nine working as a principal and Czech and Art teacher for her school's higher-level. She has experience teaching at several previous schools. She tries to be a motivating principal and has a close personal attachment to her school since she lives in its vicinity. This has its positives as well as negatives. On the one hand, she considers it a plus that she has the opportunity to get to know her pupils and their parents personally outside of school and to spend some time with them as part of a community. On the other, she feels to be under constant scrutiny from the rest of the village.

Pavla is a great believer in Drama in Education, even though her experience is limited. She enjoys theatre and organises an annual summer workshop with assistance from professional artists for her pupils. For her, taking part in the project's educational workshop was an opportunity to momentarily shed her role as a school principal and meet interesting people and encounter new, inspiring methods.

3.1.3.　Large small-town primary school A

Anna and Agáta's school is situated in a beautiful area a small ways away from their town's centre. The school has been recently renovated and this year received a new addition in the form of a pavilion for the primary school's lower-level. Its facilities include a swimming pool, cinema, a workout facility, gym hall and a ceramics workshop. The school rents these amenities to the public outside of hours. There is a canteen on the premises.

The school is the only one of its kind in town, and its higher-level is attended by pupils from nearby villages. There are circa thousand pupils and over a hundred pedagogical staff members divided into the

lower-level with twenty-two homeroom and six other teachers and the higher-level with twenty-one homeroom and eighteen unattached teachers. Each Year has five classes running in parallel, on average. The afterschool daycare has ten employees.

The school is highly inclusion-focused and has a Deputy for inclusion in charge of four special educators and twenty-one teaching assistants.

The school also employs one social pedagog and two psychologists.

Anna: I like to be creative and to teach creatively. Anna is 45 years old and has worked as an English teacher at the higher primary school level for almost twenty years. She has been in her current position for four years and is a Year 8 homeroom teacher. Her class includes three pupils with specific learning requirements.

Anna is a fan of the theatre and has discovered a desire to perform. She had previously encountered different Drama in Education methods during various workshops but had never experienced it to any significant extent.

Anna missed out on the fourth meeting. Her class attended a storytelling programme based on Ray Bradbury's story, titled *What's it like to be an outsider?* Due to Anna being on sick leave, the workshop was supervised by a substitute teacher who later provided Anna with feedback on the programme.

Agáta: I want everyone in the school to feel good. Agáta is 34 years old. She has ties to theatre both professionally and in her free time. Amateur theatre is one of her hobbies. She also studied drama therapy and worked as a social worker at a centre for people with mental illnesses, where she, among other activities, also led a drama group. After returning from maternity leave, she got a job as a member of her current school's special education staff. She has been working there for the past three years.

During the project, Agáta's professional role changed - she is now a Deputy for inclusion and specialised pedagogy. Thanks to the project, she has become aware of the topics of well-being and how they connect to her own feelings regarding her profession and the school. From her position as an employee, Agáta is well aware of which areas could be developed to foster well-being within the school. Agáta has had a long-lasting relationship with the schools since she attended it as a child and both of her sons currently attend classes at the primary school lower-level.

Agáta attended the 1st, 4th and 6th meeting of the workshop.

3.2. HOW DO TEACHERS AND PRIMARY SCHOOL MANAGEMENT STAFF, WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE TO BE PROJECT, REFLECT ON THEIR WELL-BEING WITHIN THEIR SCHOOLS?

3.2.1. To Be passionate
The optional educational seminar focusing on drama methods and cooperating on the To Be project (and its research goals) attracted teachers and school management staff passionate about their work. They like their job and feel the need to keep developing, educating themselves and share their experiences.

3.2.1.1. Using one's interests for education
Anna, Petra and Zdenek enjoy the freedom their teaching job offers. They like that they can include their interests in the teaching material and shape the curriculum so they can enjoy it as well.

3.2.1.2. Teaching creatively
All of the research informants are open to using new methods in education. They feel the need to use them to enliven the curriculum and approach teaching creatively. Anna and Petra organise extra-curricular events for pupils, parents and teachers in their schools.

3.2.2. To Be involved with the school
All of the research informants agree that the relationship to their schools is a major factor in their professional satisfaction. All of the research informants have a positive relationship with their schools despite occasional reservations with the school leadership. Each informant experiences their involvement differently; however, their stories sometimes intersect in certain topics.

3.2.2.1. My school
The shared topics that help the informants find fulfilling involvement with their school are: having a personal history with the school, a place of residence and the local community, or the informants' children attending the school.

3.2.2.2. Pleasant school environment
The informants think that a pleasant school environment also fosters unity in the school. Such an environment may look like new classroom amenities, architecture focused on natural harmony and ecology, sports facilities, swimming pools and school gardens available to the employees outside of teaching hours.

3.2.2.3. Happy teachers are the school's foundation
The feeling of belonging with the school can also be improved by the school management's direct focus on the teachers' satisfaction - their well-being. Zdenek considers satisfied teachers to be the school's foundation and, as a principal, feels the need to do his best for his staff's professional satisfaction. Based on her experience from the To Be project, Agáta also aims to promote the quality of care for pedagogical staff to their school within her competencies as deputy principal. While Peter's school functions on open mutual communication, Agáta's experience at her school is that the employees are not used to talking about their needs with the management or partaking in fostering their professional well-being.

3.2.2.4. Engaging with the school's vision

Pavla and Zdenek are both school principals and work on selecting pedagogs who share their school's vision into their team. According to both, engaging with this vision is an important prerequisite for good teamwork. Zdenek places importance on creating his school's vision together with the pedagogical team.

3.2.3. Relationships within the team

This theme strongly influences the well-being of all of our informants. The quality of relationship within the pedagogical body and between the management and staff can be significantly affected by the size of the team and leadership approach.

3.2.3.1. The need for good relationships

Anna and Agáta both work in a large school often feel tensions among the near hundred-member staff. They both arrived in a somewhat functioning environment when they joined four and three years ago (respectively). Anna thinks that the teaching body is divided into smaller groups of interest. After she began her new job, she felt the need to get to know all her colleagues. At first, she felt upset by the lack of interest from certain colleagues and by the insular nature of some groups but eventually, she made peace with the situation. Instead, she decided to foster relationships with colleagues who displayed openness towards her. Agáta feels that the teaching staff is divided into two main groups with different needs and opposing views. She is troubled by this situation. She is aware that there are people in both groups that she shares a mutual understanding with and that if she chose to join one of the two groups, the other would renounce her. Agáta feels a professional as well as a human need to get along with all of her colleagues. Therefore she works to maintain neutrality in her professional relationships and doesn't align herself with either group. She wished for the relations within her school to get better, and so she used her position as a deputy principal to implement closer supervision over the teaching staff. She was disappointed at the lack of interest from her colleagues in the procedure. One of the reasons was their apprehensions and a desire not to intervene with the existing relationships. Agáta is aware that transforming the relationships

within their collective is a long-term task that relies on everyone's willingness (or at least the majority) of the staff. Agáta feels the most comfortable in the small collective of special educators with whom she shares a great professional dynamic. They are linked by the shared interest in their work and their need to improve their school's inclusivity, and by creating and carrying out shared projects.

Pavla finds the school's staff's attitude important, and she pays a lot of attention when choosing her colleagues. Petra sees the school as a place that offers her the necessary infrastructure and a space for sharing with coworkers. She focuses primarily on collaborating with those she trusts and where the process brings mutual satisfaction. Both Petra and Pavla place importance on positive and empowering teamwork, sharing and fostering support both with their colleagues as well as teachers and principals from different schools that they create during meetings and comparative visits.

Zuzana and Zdenek's school's atmosphere and quality of relationships are influenced by Zdenek's communication and leadership approach, the school's principal. He takes care that the school maintains open communication and teamwork in all directions. Zuzana cherishes her colleagues and believes that their teaching staff has above-standard teamwork. According to her, the fact that the team is small aids significantly to the quality of teamwork development. She is aware that her satisfaction with her relationships within the workplace is a significant factor in her professional well-being.

3.2.3.2. Friendship and teamwork among staff members

Teachers Zuzana, Petra and Anna's workplace satisfaction is enhanced by the presence of at least one close colleague they can rely on and who they genuinely like. Zuzana describes this professional friendship as an "absolute connection", "teamwork on a higher level". She found such a friendship at her current school with a younger colleague, who left on maternity leave during the To Be project. Zuzana perceived her absence as a great loss. Petra also places high value on friendship among colleagues. She likes attending school trips in the company of one of her colleagues. She describes their teamwork as a well-oiled

mechanism, where they both feel strongly connected and often don't even need to communicate much to work well. When Anna joined her current workplace, she already had friends among the teaching staff. She had also built a professional friendship with one of the teaching assistants with whom she shares a professional understanding and a friendship. Anna enjoys the fact that she has colleagues among the teaching staff she values strongly and enjoys their company.

3.2.3.3. Professional relations between school management and teachers

All the research informants agree that it's important to keep relationships between the school management and staff professional for everyone to feel good in their workplace. Even though Zdenek recently introduced the first-name basis to the staff, he still insists on using formal pronoun forms in Czech. He wants to be close to his employees and communicate well while remaining professional. For that reason, he kept using the formal pronoun form with his colleagues during the workshop even while other participants spoke informally with each other. Zdenek finds it important that the relationships within the school remain transparent and that no tensions arise from suspicions that he, as principal, could be keeping favourites. For that reason, he intentionally doesn't hire relatives or friends from the industry. Agáta has recently been promoted to the position of deputy principal. For that reason, she reflects positively on her decision to remain impartial and not join any of the groups within her school. Thanks to this, she managed to gain the employee's trust and became the person they turn to with their issues and requirements. Pavla, who is also a school principal, sees the importance of good teamwork among the teaching staff while keeping in line with the school's vision. She tries to motivate her colleagues towards these goals.

Anna, who is closely acquainted with the principal, finds his familial behaviour in the workplace unprofessional. For that reason, she tries her best to keep a distance while at work. At her former school, Zuzana also experienced a close friendship with the headmaster. Their relationship prevented her from expressing thoughts regarding the school's management and her needs as an employee. Petra sees no

issue with having a close relationship with the principal. In her opinion, the school management is impartial when handling tasks and allows her space to fulfil her obligations according to her ideas.

3.2.4. The need for validation

3.2.4.1. Receiving feedback and validation from the management

As a principal, Zdenek is deeply aware of how feedback can boost the pedagogical staff's effectiveness and has implemented it into daily operations. Zuzana finds the fact that Zdenek validates her work very motivating both through verbal feedback and financial remuneration. Although for her, it is the verbal praise that gives her further incentive and feelings of satisfaction. Zuzana also appreciates Zdenek's approach because of her former experience from another school. Even though both the workplace and the staff were much smaller, she never received any praise or financial bonuses for her work.

Agáta and Anna feel the lack of feedback from the school management impacting their work. Agáta sees its cause with the size of the school and the pedagogical body. Being large as it is, it would require extraordinary effort to provide the staff with feedback. She sees this form of assessment is important for building up teachers' motivation. Since her recent promotion to Deputy for inclusivity, she has taken extra time to perform visitations for teaching assistants and speciality pedagogical staff and uses feedback methods with the team in her charge. Anna has developed her own strategy for self-assessment. Whenever she receives any financial bonus from the school, she attaches it to a specific job she wants to be validated.

Marina would also be grateful for more validation from her school's management. She would like to receive thanks for her work more often.

3.2.4.2. Finding acknowledgement of the teaching profession in society

Pavla feels that both her work and the school itself are under constant scrutiny from society while not receiving adequate validation and respect. In her opinion, everyone, even those without any educational background, has the right to express their views regarding the school's management. However, she also believes that the public image lies in the teachers' hands and is informed by the quality of their work. She has a negative experience with teaching in high schools from when her children reached attendance age.

Petra finds it important that the public is aware of her hard work and sees its worth. She is upset by how little society values its teachers and compares it with her visits abroad, where they are held in higher esteem.

3.2.5. Supporting inclusion

3.2.5.1. Specialist work within the classroom

Anna has been working long-term with students with specific needs. She actively collaborates and fosters friendships with the teaching assistants. She places great importance on the quality of cooperation on both professional and personal level. However, she still feels a certain level of scepticism when it comes to manifesting inclusivity in practice. She wants her pupils to feel good within the class and struggles with the knowledge that individual pupils with specific needs receive a different kind of treatment within the collective. Even though she tries to foster a friendly climate within the class and create opportunities for the pupils to communicate and get to know each other better, she is aware that when she's not directly supervising the group, one of the pupils is often excluded from the rest. Anna thinks that the child's challenging behaviour, which his classmates struggle to accept, is the reason. She points out the need for regular specialist assistance; however, the school psychologist only manages to engage with her class roughly once every six months. Despite her efforts, she feels ill-

equipped for this kind of work and sporadic programmes provided by professionals are, in her opinion, unsatisfactory, since they only have a temporary effect on the pupils in the class.

In her class, Petra successfully works with pupils with physical or sensory handicaps. However, including pupils with other kinds of disabilities is, despite her efforts, a difficult task for both her and the class. She feels that it's difficult to understand such a child's inner world and create a connection with them. She realised how difficult the inclusion process of a pupil who needed support in behaviour management was for both her and the class only when the child stopped attending the school, and she felt relieved. She feels that she lacks experience with this type of inclusion and is not provided with enough support for successfully including such pupils.

Pavla argues that it's a mistake to assume that a teacher can work with a group including children with varying diagnoses without any professional help.

3.2.5.2. Supporting teaching assistants

As a deputy for inclusivity, Agáta feels that more support for teaching assistants is needed in schools. She points out the complicated position that teaching assistants find themselves in at her school, where they still struggle with being accepted by some teachers. She finds it essential that both teaching assistants and teachers feel satisfied with the teamwork. She tries to define the teaching assistants' job as possible and communicate those obligations to the teachers. Agáta tries to motivate the teaching assistants to actively determine and solve specific issues and topics they encounter in the school.

Agáta takes joy in small achievements as a Deputy for inclusion, such as relocating the teaching assistants' office into the schools' centre of activity and creating more dignified conditions for their work, visitations and intervision meetings with the teaching assistants, and supporting the development of skills for distance teaching. Agáta

places importance on the teaching assistants feeling good at her school. She appreciates the mutual trust they have managed to foster during their professional relationship.

Pavla believes it is crucial to boost the quality of education teaching assistants receive. In her experience, not all teaching assistant courses offer good quality education and equip the teaching assistants with the necessary skills. She puts a lot of effort into hiring new assistants for her school and tries to find those who have suitable qualifications.

3.2.5.3. School inclusion administrative work and its demands on time

Agáta is a special educator in charge of the administration connected to the pupils' education with specific educational requirements. She feels a vast workload increase every September that is linked to this kind of administration. She would be grateful for more flexible cooperation among her colleagues whom she has to repeatedly remind to submit the necessary paperwork, which further increases her workload.

3.2.6. A close relationship with the pupils

All of the research informants stated that they have a close affinity towards their students. The happiness of their pupils plays a large part in their professional fulfilment. Zuzana, Anna and Marina, who all work as homeroom teachers, are deeply invested in their individual pupils' future and their current place within the collective. They all share the experience that the pupils mirror their family's situation and behaviour patterns, which can affect the well-being of both themselves and the entire class.

During the To Be project, all three experienced positive feelings from interacting with their pupils and feelings of failure from their inability to work with the class to be inclusive of all of the children. Through Drama in Education, Zuzana and her class observed a repeated success in the class' teamwork which aided the children's, and therefore Zuzana's, well-being. Different circumstances and moments help the pupils' and teachers' wellbeing. Here are several examples. Petra feels

very close to her pupils. This closeness is also fostered outside of school hours, such as during school trips, where they all get to experience new things together. Zuzana likes to tell stories with her class, listen to them and is often in awe of their ideas which she helps them realise, and enjoys spending time with her pupils outside of the school building where she has the opportunity to perceive the children in a new light. Anna, a teacher at the higher-level of primary school, feels that she doesn't get enough time with her class. She tries to foster a good, friendly atmosphere within her class by using games in her lessons.

Pavla believes that their school's size and character aids good relationships among teachers and pupils.

Pavla and Zdenek share their approach to education. The children's current and future lives are much more important than the amount of knowledge they accumulate. Agáta and Zdenek feel the need to remain in touch with their pupils in order to carry out their duties well. Zdenek places importance on knowing all the pupils of his school. He enjoys having a close relationship with the pupils, which manifests, for example, through high-fiving in the school corridor. He perceives them as real partners and enjoys performing for them and bringing humour into both the curriculum and their mutual relationships. He finds it important to know how his pupils are doing even after departing from the school. Through her kind approach, Agáta managed to gain the sympathies of a pupil who is learning with her individually, not attending the class together with other pupils at all, due to his specific educational needs. She was pleased to know that the pupil evaluates her positively and feels good during the classes and wants to keep coming.

3.2.7. Communicating with parents

Communicating with parents may have a crucial effect on the teachers' and management workers' wellbeing in their schools. The informants consider parents to be essential partners of the school. They all agree that they manage to maintain good relationships with their pupils' parents, even though they hold opposing views in certain areas. Sadly, outside of parent-teacher meetings and school events, their interactions

are usually limited to conflict resolution. Therefore, the way parents communicate is crucial to how the teachers experience well-being and their feelings during the conflict resolution process.

3.2.7.1. Detachment

Anna and Agáta feel that they need to give themselves enough time to process how these conflicts affect them personally, detach themselves, and think through their words not to hurt or offend the parents. As a teacher, Zuzana struggled with trying to repeatedly and unsuccessfully persuade the parents of two of her pupils to seek out psychological aid for their children. Their struggles were presenting themselves strongly in the class, and she knew she could not help them on her own. Pavla communicates with the parents often, dealing with complaints and discrepancies. She feels that the issues are often trivial. It upsets her that the unhappy parents are often colleagues teaching at other schools who fail to show professional understanding and solidarity.

3.2.7.2. Setting boundaries

Anna believes it's important to set one's boundaries when sorting out a conflict. She found it particularly hard when she had to confront a parent's aggressive behaviour towards a pupil with **specific needs**. She's proud of the fact that she managed to communicate well and permanently calmed the situation down. Anna gets stressed by situations where solving particular conflicts (such as parents disagreeing with pupils being marked as absent during online classes or with their marks) spills over into her private life and takes up her free time or even vacation. Agáta is good at being assertive when communicating her needs to her pupils' parents while also listening to theirs. Sadly, during distanced learning, despite a mutual desire to be accommodating, the agreed boundaries of their individual roles were not maintained. Agáta, therefore, experienced distanced learning through intense stress and pressure.

3.2.7.3. Mutual respect

Petra believes it's essential to create a good relationship with the parents built on respect and trust. With the first graders' parents, she tries to forge these relationships while the children are still attending nursery school. She considers collaborating with parents to be a vital part of being successful at her job. Sometimes, communication can be difficult, though, especially in connection to different opinions of raising and educating children. She is content with how distanced learning shaped the way she communicates with parents and sees their presence in class as a positive.

3.2.7.4. Managerial support for communicating with parents

Zdenek's main task is to share the aims, teaching methods and evaluation at his school with the parents. Being a catchment school, this was initially a challenging role to carry out since the school defies everyday expectations in many ways. He feels that during his ten-year presence at the school, the community and parents have learned to accept the school and its vision. Zdenek is open to communicating with the parents in case they decide to withdraw from the school. He tries to find solutions with the parents, such as individual learning plans or inter-year learning for pupils whose parents want a more performance-focused school. However, he admits that his school has reached its limits in what it can offer in the case of one of the gifted pupils.

Zuzana finds it helpful that Zdenek and the school management communicate well with the parents about the aims and running of the school, and she can then focus on interacting on a personal level.

Pavla spent the early stages of distanced learning managing the parents' expectations and ideas of how the education is carried out. Since Pavla lives in the same area as the school, she encounters the pupils' parents even outside the school, and she finds this erasure of boundaries unpleasant. On the other hand, she appreciates the information she receives through this "informal" approach. When dealing with parents, she encourages the teachers to focus not only on the pupils' shortcomings but also on the positives.

3.2.8. The intersections of personal and professional life

3.2.8.1. The profession's demands
Zuzana, Petra, Anna and Pavla experience the demands of the teaching job, especially through the constant activity in classes and during breaks. Pavla dislikes that instead of spending break-time preparing for the following class, relocating to a different part of the school or resting, the teachers must invigilate the corridors. Zuzana barely finds enough time to drink something and go to the restroom in between classes. After the classes are over for the day and she manages to switch off, she feels exhausted. Each one of them reflects that the exhaustion increases with the end of the academic year.

As a director, Pavla finds her profession demanding, especially because of the heavy responsibility for the school's daily operations, for other employees and pupils and the loneliness associated with her position. She voiced her need for support from people in a similar position - other school directors. She also finds it challenging to meet the requirements of the overseeing governmental bodies, some of which she considers nonsensical or difficult to carry out. Zdenek's positive approach to life is reflected in his work, which he approaches with an air of effortlessness. According to him, the Czech school system works since it allows him maximum freedom of approach towards the role of a director and a teacher. Zdenek likes challenges, and he views thing that may seem difficult as an inseparable part of life, from which he can extract positive experiences.

3.2.8.2. Losing strength
Zuzana and Anna reflect on their exhaustion in relation to their age, where they feel that they are losing their strength and cannot manage as many things as before.

3.2.8.3. High expectations
The experiences with the profession's demands are also affected by the high expectations that the research informants place on themselves regarding their work. They want to be good teachers and directors, they want to educate themselves further, and they put a lot of effort into preparing the teaching materials for their pupils. However, they have different experiences of setting boundaries between their work and personal lives.

3.2.8.4. At the expense of family
The thing that Zuzana enjoys the most in her professional life, having the opportunity to develop, simultaneously negatively affects her personal life. Zuzana dedicates a lot of her time to her work and professional development, even at the expense of her family. If Zuzana can invest the time into her professional development, it reflects positively on her professional well-being. Simultaneously, it requires a large amount of understanding from her family, which, as she points out, isn't infinite. Agáta also spends every September sacrificing time with her family to work on administration. She sees this as necessary since a large amount of this work needs to be completed in a limited time. She's exhausted and unhappy because she feels a need to focus on her two young sons, which she cannot fulfil.

3.2.8.5. Healthy boundaries
Apart from this exception, similarly to the other informants, Agáta feels the need to maintain healthy boundaries with her work, which positively affects her well-being. Agáta divides her time fairly between her job, family and personal hobbies she finds fulfilling. Zdenek maintains healthy boundaries to his work by switching through various activities and people he likes. This keeps him calm, level-headed and inspired for further work in the school. Anna also guards her boundaries meticulously. Outside of school, she doesn't talk about her job and pupils with their parents. As a mother, she then similarly avoids talking about her children, who attend the same school where she works, during work hours with her colleagues. Since Anna's husband is the municipal deputy, she faces relentless attempts by some of her colleagues to make her an intermediary of the school's dealings with the city. She often has to refer her coworkers to professional communication procedures. Like Anna, Pavla also lives in the same area as her school and frequently sees her pupils and their parents outside class hours. They shop in the same supermarket, attend the same events and have intersecting lives within the community. She

finds herself encountering the same people, one day in the role of a school director, other times as a regular citizen and a neighbour, which she finds uncomfortable. Therefore, she often chooses to avoid these situations. Pavla maintains her boundaries also by "allowing" herself a vacation, rest, and meeting with friends. She feels she needs her personal space, space for herself. Petra tries to steer a middle course when balancing school responsibilities and free time for herself and her family. She tries to separate things by importance. She is aware that self-care allows her to be a better teacher and tries not to exhaust all her energy at work.

3.2.9.   Exercise as well-being

Exercise plays an essential role in the informants' personal lives. It brings structure and relaxation. Zuzana and Anna see sport as a crucial part of their well-being. Zuzana likes to go cycling in nature and mountain hiking with her husband. When Anna feels stressed, she likes to go for a run. Being able to train regularly always makes her feel much better. She sees exercise also as a form of rehabilitation. Meeting friends for exercise is a way for Anna to recharge.

Petra exercises to keep active and maintain a good disposition; she enjoys walks with her husband. She likes the regularity and structure that exercise offers; this helped her, especially during distanced learning when she couldn't find another form of release. Agáta also enjoys spending her free time together with her husband and children being active outdoors.

Zdenek is also a fan of sports. He likes to run long distances, which he found to be especially rewarding during distanced learning periods when his other activities were difficult to maintain.

Pavla likes swimming and aqua aerobic. Since the pools and sports centres have been closed under government restrictions, she has missed these activities. She tries to compensate through creative endeavours, such as preparing for Christmas and focusing on her friends and family.

3.2.10.   Transformations through distanced learning

3.2.10.1.   High demands of distanced learning
Agáta and Anna experienced extreme stress during the distanced learning period since both of them have children who require their help during their own classes. Anna and Zuzana, who didn't manage to mediate the high expectations they were placing on themselves while preparing and facilitating distanced learning, have reached burnout.

3.2.10.2.   Re-thinking one's well-being
The informants found the distanced learning experience transformative. Agáta, who struggled to clarify mutual responsibilities between her and a pupil's mother, felt that she was losing her autonomy while teaching. As a result of burnout, Anna and Zuzana were led to re-evaluate their relationship to work and distanced learning. Zuzana realised that although she likes her job, she doesn't want it to be the sole calling in her life. Anna decided that she doesn't want to sacrifice her health to her career and that she can loosen up her overly dutiful approach to her pupils. They allowed themselves to slow down and focus on their well-being. While the distanced learning period continues, the absence of direct contact with the pupils has lead Anna to experience a personal identity crisis as a teacher. If the situation of distanced learning continues for an extended period or the role of the teacher would result in changing further in this direction, Anna would lose purpose in her job.

3.2.10.3.   Structure and well-being
Petra, Zdenek and Pavla managed to nurture and sustain their well-being from the start of the distanced-learning period. They found security in the structure they introduced into their lives, which helps them active and in good spirits. During the second wave of distanced learning, Zuzana and Anna were able to reflect on their previous experience and re-evaluate their approach towards teaching in these conditions. The strategies the informants used to help foster their well-being were: shrinking the scope of the learning material, introducing communication with and among the pupils as part of the online classes, the choice in teaching methods which don't affect the

time spent using the computer, purposefully maintaining a positive attitude during online classes and in daily life, spending free time actively through exercise, contact with friends and nature, joy from small and ordinary things, creative work, such as cooking, sewing or renovating.

3.2.10.4. The joys of a regular regime
Agáta is aware of how lucky she was and how much easier her life was when she and her sons, unlike others, maintained a regular daily regime during the second wave of distanced learning, thanks to the exceptions in government measures. The option to function "normally" brought a lot of joy into her life.

3.2.10.5. Teaching live
Distanced learning highlighted Zuzana, Anna, Petra and Agáta's need to interact with the pupils live during classes, which they find crucial and irreplaceable. Especially in terms of fostering relationships and being able to react to the pupils' needs. Especially Agáta, as a specialised pedagog, needs to perceive her pupils' personalities as a whole while teaching, observe their reactions, their verbal and nonverbal expression. These provide an essential source of feedback for the way she should lead and adapt her teaching.

3.2.10.6. Directors' approach
Pavla and Zdenek reflect on their experience running the school and as directors during the pandemic differently. Pavla tested her skills as a "crisis manager" while she had to facilitate the material elements for distanced learning and forward general information from overseeing bodies. She felt the need to be more controlling of her employees to clarify the demands placed on the pupils during distanced learning. Pavla also became more aware of the pupils' need for social contact provided by the school during normal circumstances. Zdenek only reflects on what he finds important - how the situation aided the development of the Czech education system (and his own) in the areas of distanced learning. He views the crisis as an opportunity. He considers running the school during the Covid-19 pandemic as a natural part of his job, which he feels no need to put special focus on.

3.3. WHAT POTENTIAL DO THE TEACHERS AND PRIMARY SCHOOL MANAGEMENT WORKERS INVOLVED IN THE TO BE PROJECT SEE IN DRAMA IN EDUCATION IN TERMS OF SUPPORTING THE WELL-BEING OF TEACHERS AND PUPILS IN THEIR SCHOOLS?

3.3.1. Proximity between theatre and education

3.3.1.1. Theatre as an element of well-being in private life and in schools
At the beginning of the To Be project, those who had no former experience with Drama in Education, unlike Agáta, who had studied drama therapy and Zdenek, who had previously encountered the Global Storylines approach, had all shared a preconception that it simply meant making amateur theatre.

The informants consider theatre as an art form that is an important part of their personal and professional well-being. Some take an active interest in theatre; Agáta and Zdenek are long-time members of amateur theatre companies. Others are more passive, like Pavla, who has a close relationship to the art form as an audience member.

The informants also bring their theatrical interests into the school environment. Outside of the desire to "make theatre" the critical part of the play is presenting one's work to the public. Zdenek likes to organise weekend theatre workshops for his pupils culminating in performances for parents. He associates these events with the Labyrint centre where the To Be project took place. Anna has also discovered a passion for acting. She enjoys being a part of a theatre group organised by her colleagues who create and perform shows for their school's primary-level pupils. She is interested in the transformations she experiences performing different roles. Petra works with the children on adapting poems and plays by a Czech author, with whom she has a

long-term collaboration. Pavla organises an annual theatre project for her school, led by professional artists, culminating in a musical theatre performance. She finds this activity fulfilling.

3.3.1.2.   The teacher as an actor

Zdenek, Petra, Agáta, Anna and Pavla see a correlation between teaching and acting. To them, a teacher is also an actor performing for the class, giving their best, trying to captivate and create a connection with the audience - pupils. The idea that they're "entering a character" makes their profession's demands easier to bear. Developing skills with Drama in Education also helps develop the skills required for their job as teachers.

Zdenek mentions performing for the pupils and engaging them with jokes, movement and facial expressions. He needs to be captivating as well as entertaining. Anna often finds herself consciously entering the role of a teacher who herself doesn't have any trouble or health issues. She plays this easy-going part to prevent transferring her negative emotions onto pupils. She intentionally performs being overly optimistic. Sometimes, when she finds it necessary, she can switch roles and become an angry teacher who shouts instead. While she used to feel anger and agitation in difficult teaching situations in the past, she learned how to rise above the problem, and nowadays, she only 'performs' those emotions.

Pavla believes that Drama in Education can help teachers act naturally in their role, be more open, and get over the awkwardness. However, she also admits that activities within Drama in Education often require stepping out of one's comfort zone, which may not be easy for some teachers.

3.3.2.   The benefits of Drama in Education and theatre activities to personal and social development

3.3.2.1.   Theatre and Drama in Education as a space for cooperation

The informants see Drama in Education as a space for developing teamwork between both pupils and colleagues, and they perceive it to be directly connected to pupils' and teachers' well-being. Pavla's sees Drama in Education and other drama activities as an opportunity to foster collaboration since theatre drives participants to work together under the common goal of creating a good show. It also aids in erasing differences among the children. Even those who otherwise struggle to engage with the class can join in and work together with others on a common task. Pavla has observed the cooperation between pupils both within the class as well as across classes during their work on a theatre project. Petra finds it important that each child has their part in the show and that everybody shares creative responsibilities. She finds that collaboration and children's good feelings from the communal activity are of equal importance.

Zuzana's class has had long-term issues with conflicts between pupils stemming from the class's dynamic and clashes between their strong personalities. Zuzana thinks that Drama in Education directly encourages the pupils' cooperation. It offers a space free of the pressures of productivity and competitiveness, a space where the pupils can become a team. Zuzana observed the transformation of the pupils' teamwork during their first encounter with Drama in Education while taking part in the educational project Pravěk (Prehistory). Following the pupils' requests to continue working with Drama in Education methods, Zuzana decided to use the Global Storylines approach with her class. After a prolonged period of working this way, the pupils themselves were able to reflect on the changes in the relationships functioning in the collective. For example, they expressed joy that they didn't argue while choosing a name for their imaginary village. The collaboration's success has positively reflected on the class team as

well as Zuzana's well-being. She can relax from everyday stress and not worry about what disagreements among the pupils' she will have to resolve next.

Zdenek has experience teaching with the Global Storylines approach, which relies significantly on working with drama techniques. In his opinion, Drama in Education's strengths lie in the safer space for play and playing in roles that allow the pupils to explore other relationships and modes of communication than what they usually experience in the class. According to him, roles help lay down the framework for mutual exchange; for example, the pupils speak to each other using the Czech formal speech form, or become important village members who may disagree. Still, those disagreements stay within the boundaries of the play. After they step out of their roles, they can then reflect on those experiences.

Pavla sees working on school theatre projects as an opportunity for the pupils and teachers to collaborate. She likes to join in, making the show's visuals.

3.3.2.2. Drama in Education as an opportunity for self-expression
Drama in Education has the potential to foster pupils' and teachers emotional well-being. Pavla observes that children often lack space, are unable or even afraid to express their emotions in their everyday lives. According to Pavla, Petra, and Anna, Drama in Education helps create a space where children can examine and deal with their own emotions and functions as a path towards their self-expression.

Petra also sees its potential in supporting children to be themselves and discover their unique identity. Here, the pupils are not afraid to "step out of the line" and don't feel the need to be the same as everybody else. According to Petra, the reason lies with a different way of perceiving productivity and mistakes, or rather the absence of such judgements, which eliminates the fear of failure. She was happy to see her pupils, some of whom are usually shy and distant, relax during the class. Zdenek also sees Drama in Education's potential, specifically performing in roles, to foster personal growth in children who often

struggle to find their voice in the collective. He has witnessed this occurrence on multiple occasions. During our meetings, Pavla also confirmed the importance of using an individual approach towards pupils since "everyone is different" and therefore has their specific demands for space and treatment.

The topic of self-expression concerns not only the pupils but the teachers as well. Thanks to her encounters with Drama in Education and performing in character, Anna has started to explore her self-expression's potential. While playing, she can try out different emotions and act as a way of processing and vent out feelings she usually has no space for in her day-to-day life. She enjoys the transformation that she goes through while playing in character. For example, when she becomes a manipulative headmistress instead of being Anna. As a result, she has decided to further work on connecting her external expression with inner feelings. Especially during online classes, Anna noticed that she often looks different than she feels and that her facial expressions don't reflect what's going on on the inside. She started working on visibly expressing her joy and positive emotions. Zuzana has found expressing herself through her body challenging. She felt self-conscious when it came to showing off in front of others. However, when she overcame these fears, she started to gain confidence in her abilities, and now she considers working with the use of drama techniques quite instinctive.

3.3.3. Using Drama in Education to facilitate other subjects
The informants prefer including Drama in Education in other subjects rather than as a standalone class within the curriculum. According to them, Drama in Education is beneficial for their pupils' comfort and facilitating teaching, especially because it is based on playing and participation.

3.3.3.1. What you experience is what you remember
For the pupils to succeed in their school assessments, remembering information is still essential. Memory and memorisation are still being emphasised. Petra and Zuzana appreciate that after visiting the learning project Prehistory, the information and facts which the

children learned there remained in their long-term memory. Even though the children worked with a fairly tricky text, they managed to experience the information first-hand by transforming it into living tableaus. Pavla, who has always had issues remembering things, shares her thoughts on the significance of experience on memory development. Participating in the game has aided her in remembering the names of her colleagues.

3.3.3.2. Drama in Education in individual subjects and throughout the curriculum

Anna likes to include performing "scenes" in her English language classes. She sees their potential when it comes to the development of communication skills in a second language. Zuzana can now imagine that she would use Drama in Education while teaching Czech, history or art classes. Petra sees Drama in Education as a way to access the syllabus in Czech lessons, especially Czech literature, and to bolster and clarify communication.

She also sees the possibilities of using drama to solve communication issues among the children. If they experience some kind of block that prevents them from expressing freely, Drama in Education can help them overcome this. Zdenek sees Drama in Education as an inherent part of a teacher's skill-set to be used freely when working with pupils. He encourages his colleagues to work with the Global Storylines[1] approach, which he considers to be enriching for teaching methods in many ways beyond just frontal. He considers the connection between Drama in Education and critical thinking and the opportunity to examine life situations and possibilities of dialogue to be its most significant potential.

Anna considers different options to how including Drama in Education in schools may lead to its use as a method across subjects. Both she and Zdenek see this as difficult to achieve since it would put even greater demands on cooperation among teachers. Thanks to Zdenek's support, Zuzana can now also imagine Drama in Education as a method whose narrative could connect multiple subjects. Pavla can imagine how including Drama in Education in the curricular subjects and its use as an overarching connector and a platform for "trying out" certain life situations. She is aware of the importance of stories and the effect that their use in the curriculum may have on the children.

3.3.3.3. Drama in Education – its effect on the future as well as on current experience

The informants see the benefits of Drama in Education as a method of future teaching and as a way to enhance the quality of life for children at school. Petra considers the potential of Drama in Education as a way to revitalise the curriculum. The pupils enjoy taking part in Drama in Education and are captivated by the method's novelty and attractiveness.

Anna thinks that using Drama in Education (and others) as part of the curriculum will attract the pupils to learning. She wants them to find the process enjoyable.

According to Petra, Drama in Education offers a platform to share and solve issues that the pupils are dealing with and, therefore, can enhance the class' well-being. She also appreciates the space she is given as a teacher to "go easy" on her charges. Drama in Education doesn't force her to be so strict and offers her freedom to often do more work with more significant lasting effect.

3.3.4. The teachers' change in perception of their pupils thanks to Drama in Education

Zuzana, Petra and Pavla were surprised that while working with Drama in Education methods, especially during the educational programmes their class took part in, they were able to observe their pupils' work

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[1]	Global Storylines pedagogical approach uses narrative and drama as a means of learning on topics of global education. The story provides a framework for long-term teaching, in which elements of project teaching, Drama in Education, cross-curricular teaching and the active role of the pupil are intertwined. (see more in McNaughton, 2012).

and thus see them in a new light. Zuzana was surprised not only by her class' ability to cooperate but also by individual pupils and their behaviour which they usually did not show in other circumstances. For example, by exhibiting their motivation to present their tasked dramatic situation to others, by the creativity of their ideas, or their courage to perform. On the other hand, she was also taken aback by one pupil who did not seem engaged during the workshop, show excitement during group reflection and profess a desire to continue working with such methods.

Petra was surprised by the span of knowledge her pupils exhibited during the Prehistory educational programme. She also noticed how the children experience given moments during the Drama in Education process. During the workshop, she also had the opportunity to note how the pupils cooperate within the group. A group of boys appeared to her in a new light. Petra appreciated how they managed to harness their existing skills and knowledge during the workshop.

Pavla was surprised that Drama in Education allows students to open up and show their emotions, to present themselves differently than usually. This way, children can show their qualities or skills, that were hidden before.

4. DISCUSSION

The To Be project and attached research were attended by both teachers and school management staff passionate about their work. Their primary motivation was the opportunity to grow and develop their teaching skills through Drama in Education methods. The theme of well-being was not that prominent among the attendants but became a topic of focus in connection with the Coronavirus pandemic and distanced learning which challenged both their professional and personal welfare. Therefore, the presented issues refer to the experiences of this specific group. The presence of school management workers in the To Be project is also of great value to us since, as our research shows, they substantially influence well-being within schools. One of the most interesting stories connected to this topic is Agata's transformation from a special educators's role into a deputy for inclusion. During the project, she became more aware of the issues connected with the topic and, within her new role, also found herself in a unique position to help facilitate well-being in her school.

The research includes interviews connected between September 2020 and February 2021. It, therefore, contains the informants' experience with the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on their pedagogical practice or work as managerial staff. The reality of the pandemic also reflects in the research content where the potential of using Drama in Education in the informants' teaching practice had not reached its full span. Zuzana's story shows an interesting development in connection to Drama in Education. Thanks to the support she received from the project and later from her colleague Zdenek, she discovered how the principles of Drama in Education fostered cooperation among her pupils, which until then had been a long-time struggle. This change was observed both by Zuzana and her pupils.

4.1. DISCUSSING THE RESEARCH QUESTION: HOW DO TEACHERS AND MANAGEMENT STAFF EXPERIENCE WELL-BEING AT THEIR SCHOOL?

All of the informants are satisfied within their respective workplaces. However, a few of them still perceive areas that require improvement. Through the project's duration, some have taken it upon themselves to work towards changing specific issues.

The informants experienced a high level of **fulfilment** in connection to these topics: **being passionate about their work, involvement with the school, close relationship with the pupils, movement as well-being.**

The informants' **passion for their work** and their internal motivation positively impact satisfaction with their schools. They strongly value freedom and space for creativity. The love for their jobs and positive relationships with children reflect favourably on the connection with their pupils. The schools' small size, a low number of pupils and their young age also aid the informants' **close relationships with the children**. The daily contact between teachers and pupils common at primary school lower-level also helps foster these connections.

According to Anna, the primary school upper-level allows for less contact between the teacher and pupils. Even though she still feels close to her class, their relationship is not as intensive. The research informants also feel **a considerable involvement** with their school. They are connected to the institution by their internal motivation given their history with the school, their place of residence and the local community, or their own children attending the school; or motivating factors provided by the principal and managerial staff, such as caring for the well-being of teachers, a shared vision for the school and opportunities to participate in its development, the upkeep of the school's various facilities, or cooperating with various organisations focusing on increasing the quality of teaching or

providing further education for the pedagogical staff. The informants working at the large small-town school also stated that their professional well-being is positively affected by the local sports facilities which they can use in their free time. Although smaller schools offer the principal the opportunity to care for their staff's well-being more closely, even a large school where this is not the norm can foster the teachers' passion and desire for involvement and professional fulfilment through other motivating factors. All the research informants enjoy exercising and physical activities which helps them maintain their well-being and manage work-related stress.

Topics marked as ambivalent to the research informants' professional well-being are **personal and professional life intersections**, **switching to distanced teaching**, and **communicating with parents**.

Some informants consider the teaching **profession** demanding, and this **reflects on their personal life**. The job's challenges primarily lie with the need for the teachers' constant activity during lessons and the time they have to dedicate to preparation outside of work hours, which may impact their personal and familial life. The informants' ability to establish boundaries between their professional and personal life has a positive impact on their well-being.

Distanced teaching caused some informants to feel exhausted who found themselves struggling with practising self-care and paying attention to their well-being. These feelings of exhaustion led them to re-evaluate their attitude towards themselves and their jobs and place themselves before their work. According to the informants, several approaches helped maintain their well-being, such as regularity and organisation, cutting back on the size of study material, including communication within the class into the online lessons, specific teaching methods focusing on working without computers and maintaining a positive atmosphere during lessons. Outside of work, the informants considered active free time, exercise, contact with friends and nature, creative work (such as cooking, sewing or refurbishing) to be also very helpful. Some informants brought up topics related to the demands of distanced teaching, such as mastering

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4. Discussion

new technologies or a lack of motivation among the older students to study during online lessons. According to Anna's story, the growing loss of contact with her class and among the pupils themselves led her to question the job's impact and whether to even continue teaching. Pavla and Zdenek's assessments of their experiences managing schools during the pandemic vary. Pavla considers primarily the challenges she faced as a "crisis manager". Zdenek takes into account only how the situation contributes to the development of the Czech educational system, especially distanced learning. He sees managing a school during the pandemic only as another part of his job.

Communicating with parents may strongly affect how comfortable do the teachers and managerial staff feel within their school. From the informants' point of view, parents are essential partners for the schools, and they all maintain good relationships with their pupils' parents, even though their opinions often diverge. Despite this, outside of evaluation meetings and school events, interactions between teachers and parents are limited to settling conflicts. The way the parents communicate during these situations impacts the teachers' experience of their well-being and their feelings. They find it helpful to distance themselves from the issue and to establish their boundaries.

Some informants are disappointed with the way their schools handle issues, such as **workplace relationships, validating staff**, and **providing wider support for inclusion in schools.**

According to the research informants, establishing good relationships among colleagues and professional conduct between school manage-ment and employees are important factors for improving workplace satisfaction. The principal's attitude towards leadership and the size of the teaching body play a key role. Informants working at smaller schools feel more satisfied in their workplace since they consider their relationships with the rest of the staff to be of better quality. They believe that having a close colleague with whom they work directly improves their workplace satisfaction. The principals' role seems lonely in comparison. Pavla would, for that reason, welcome an opportunity to engage more with other school principals.

The research informants lack feedback, especially verbal assessments, and praise for a work well done. They feel they don't receive enough validation from either the school management (in teachers' case) or the public. Only Zuzana, who works at a school that incorporates feedback into its operations, feels fulfilled in this area of professional validation. Thanks to the principal's praise, she feels a growing motivation for continued work and professional performance.

Informants who have experience working with pupils with specific educational and behavioural management requirements highlight the need for regular support from professionals experienced in mediating dysfunctional relationships within the class collective and discussing these complex topics with the pupils. As a deputy for inclusion, Agáta tries to offer support to the teaching assistants at her school in areas they have collectively identified as unsatisfactory. These are, specifically, developing teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants, creating a workspace for the teaching assistants, and supporting professional growth.

For the context of our research, we may assume that the pupils in danger of dropping out early are ones with specific educational requirements who feel excluded out of the class collective. Czech schools working with inclusion have the option to establish cooperation between homeroom teachers and school counselling team whose members are, or can be, part of the school. These include school psychologists, special educators, education counsellors, teachers responsible for school-based prevention programme, career counsellors, and teaching assistants who provide a support network for pupils and teachers during the teaching/learning process.

We believe that to include pupils with specific educational requirements successfully, the school counsellors and teachers' teamwork needs to be fully functional. As our research shows, teaching assistants are not yet fully accepted by some teachers. That is why we perceive teaching assistants as a group endangered by the phenomenon of early school leaving. Furthermore, this group is threatened by the drop out rates since teaching assistants' jobs and contracts are tied to supporting

specific pupils. Thus, even though their employment contracts are not fixed-time, the teaching assistants may become redundant after the pupil leaves school or no longer needs extensive support. We believe that uncertain job stability and teaching assistants' challenging position in schools negatively impact their workplace satisfaction.

Based on our research, we recommend supporting class collectives and homeroom teachers through regular, specialised aid when establishing relationships within the class. We recommend providing further support and stability for teaching assistants in schools since they play an irreplaceable role in encouraging inclusion.

We also advise that additional assistance is given to school management staff in workplace leadership, communication, and feedback. This way, they will be able to better lead their pedagogical team towards creating a better professional and cooperative relationship, which, according to our research informants, has a critical effect on workplace satisfaction.

We also suggest collective education of school directors and pedagogical staff, which we have discovered to be significant on several levels during our research and the project's overall duration. Partially for building relationships in the work team, and further for the development of topics surrounding well-being in schools and promoting Drama in Education as an available tool with the potential to aid the pupils' and teachers' well-being.

4.2. DISCUSSING THE RESEARCH QUESTION: WHAT POTENTIAL DO THE TEACHERS AND PRIMARY SCHOOL MANAGEMENT WORKERS INVOLVED IN THE TO BE PROJECT SEE IN DRAMA IN EDUCATION IN TERMS OF SUPPORTING THE WELL-BEING OF TEACHERS AND PUPILS IN THEIR SCHOOLS?

The informants perceive Drama in Education's potential primarily in the **cognitive, social and emotional** area of the teachers' and pupils' well-being.

Their testimonies show that Drama in Education allows pupils and teachers to explore their emotions and safely express them. Thanks to the specific processes of Drama in Education, the teachers observed their pupils in a different light than during regular classes and saw them as individual, independent personalities. According to the results of the OECD PISA survey (Memorandum o Partnerství o vzdělávání 2030+), individuality leads to lowering anxiety in pupils and is connected with their well-being and life satisfaction. Drama in Education affects emotional intelligence development and reinforces pupils' and teachers' experience and well-being in schools. One of the reasons for this is the absence of stress around performance and competitiveness. For teachers, Drama in Education works as an inspiration for dealing with the emotional challenges of their profession. The informants discovered a parallel between the acting and teaching professions where entering a role helps protect one's emotional well-being.

Drama in Education helps foster social development given its potential to build cooperation skills both among pupils and teachers. Those pupils who might find themselves excluded from the collective

otherwise are given an opportunity to join in. According to the PISA results, collaboration ties into building positive relationships, equating to higher life satisfaction.

Within the cognitive sphere of well-being, Drama in Education works as a tool for making learning more accessible and attractive. As pupils solve problems and situations in their roles, they cultivate their critical thinking, creativity and originality. The lived experience, which is an inherent element of Drama in Education, anchors gained knowledge in the pupils' long-term memory.

The perception of Drama in Education is often linked to theatre activities within the school. The informants see it as an essential approach to self-realisation, benefiting their well-being.

To use Drama in Education, teachers need a specific kind of support. Primarily, this support lies in providing methodical leadership and space for including Drama in Education within the curriculum and the courage to withstand the pressure coming from the curricular boards, parents, and colleagues.

The informants' testimonies show that they think that Drama in Education can foster well-being within schools. The subject of Drama in Education derives from theatre and drama practices overlapping with personality and social development. The subject facilitates pupils' personality development with a focus on psychological functions, skills and personality traits, mindset and values, as well as fostering social skills, specifically communication and cooperation. Using theatre and drama principles, the pupils also get to work with topics and stories that help them understand various areas of interpersonal coexistence and communication, society, interpersonal relationships, and global issues.

In the field of Drama in Education, we suggest providing the teachers with support in the areas of methodical leadership, so they may include Drama in Education into their curriculum.

We also suggest improving the school directors' and teachers' knowledge about the benefits of Drama in Education for the teachers' and pupils' well-being through the exchange of valuable practice between schools and providing support to schools in including Drama in Education as a stand-alone subject. We suggest focusing on the options of fostering the well-being of teachers through Drama in Education, providing access to educational events, and workshops.

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