

Title: Social Skills and Inclusive Education – The Case Study of the 2nd Primary School of Agia Varvara (West Athens)

Summary

Social skills are considered the learned behaviors that a person exhibits to achieve a goal. The development of social skills in children is of the utmost importance as research has shown that their existence is related to high school ability as well as optimal social, academic and psychological functioning. The systematic cultivation and strengthening of social skills in childhood, which are - initially - acquired through the process of social learning, include specific stable verbal and non-verbal behaviors as well as appropriate and effective initiations and reactions, maximize social reinforcement, influence and are also influenced by the man-made environmental context and, ultimately, contribute crucially to the development of an inclusive education culture by the members of a school community (students, teachers, parents).

Since the 2015-16 school year, a series of social skills development programs have been planned and implemented at the 2nd Primary School of Agia Varvara (a school where the majority of pupils belong to vulnerable social groups, i.e. Roma and immigrants, while at the same time pupils with disabilities also attend it smoothly), programs which have contributed to the development of an inclusive education culture.