

USING A TELEPRESENCE SYSTEM COULD FEEL LIKE A LOT OF EXTRA WORK

Situation

Using telepresence systems, especially if you are doing it for the very first time, could feel quite overwhelming due to the additional workload and the need to familiarise yourself with new technology and teaching methods.

Reflective questions

1. What are your specific concerns raised by using telepresence systems? Where can you get more information about the systems' possibilities and support with using them?

2. What could be the educational and social benefits of using telepresence systems for pupils with chronic illnesses?

3. What are the challenges (including technical challenges) or privacy concerns related to using the telepresence systems? What measures could you take to ensure the privacy and comfort of both teachers and pupils?

4. How could the use of telepresence systems align with the overall goals and values of the school? What arguments can be made to demonstrate that implementing such systems is in line with providing quality education and fostering inclusion?

Possible approaches

1. Open Dialogue: It could be a good idea to initiate conversations with teachers using or considering the use of telepresence systems. Everybody should have the opportunity to express their concerns and listen to others' perspectives. Share experiences to illustrate how these systems could contribute to the educational and social well-being of pupils. This kind of dialogue could help to broaden the views on using the telepresence systems.
2. Collaboration with the Principal of the School: Seek the principal's support in organising the extra work that could arise from implementing telepresence systems. In collaboration with supportive colleagues and the principal initiate a teacher conference/workshop to raise awareness for the teachers working in the school.
3. Technical Support: If technical challenges are a concern, you could look for information and opportunities for technical support. Get to know the resources made available through the school (including the know-how of the colleagues) and the ones made available through collaboration partners.

Approaches according to the eHandbook

Teachers significantly influence pupils' social perceptions and the sense of belonging in school. Positive teacher behaviours, like promoting interaction and respect, boost motivation. Emotional support correlates with autonomy and positive peer experiences. Creating a supportive classroom is crucial, especially for pupils with chronic illnesses participating remotely. Positive teacher and peer interactions enhance pupils' well-being and encourage active participation in learning. The importance of supportive teachers is described in the handbook.¹

You are stronger united. Together address the challenges teachers could face when working with a telepresence system. Keeping in mind that seeking support through supervision, or from professionals, psychologists, and in-school staff could be helpful. Collaboration with colleagues and establishing a collegial shared vision can help overcome challenges collectively. Make plans together. These can include lesson planning, advising the family on organising the study space at home, providing study materials, and introducing special activities for creative engagement. The handbook outlines some support for teachers and offers ideas for planning.²

¹ ABILITI Teacher eHandbook, pp. 14-15.

² ABILITI Teacher eHandbook, pp. 44-47.