

HELPING DISABLED CHILDREN

Project environment:

The project will take place in the "Institut pour Infirmes Moteurs Cérébraux (IMC)". The "Institut pour IMC" is a school for physically and mentally disabled children and adolescents, from age 3 to 18, in Luxembourg. It is located in Strassen (near Luxembourg-City) and is specifically designed, staffed and resourced to provide appropriate special education for children and adolescents with additional needs. Our school provides individualised education, addressing their individual differences and specific needs. This process involves the equipment and materials and accessible settings. These interventions are designed to help learners with special needs achieve a higher level of personal self-sufficiency and success in school and their community. It also has other facilities for pupils with special needs, such as soft play areas, sensory rooms, swimming pool, gymnastic room, rhythmic room, room for the airtramp, teaching kitchen, workrooms for painting and pottery.

Most of the 58 pupils are in wheelchairs and they are originary from different countries.

The spoken language in the school is "Lëtzebuergesch" (everyday spoken language; German and French are used in written communication).

The volunteer will cooperate with teachers, social pedagogues, nurses and therapists. He/she will have the role of assistant to help pupils who are not able to work on their own. The general objectives are teaching by different means and activities to train the very basic knowledge of the pupils.

The volunteer will get the opportunity to build up a good relationship with disabled children and the staff as well with the parents. This promotes mutual understanding of different cultures and being.

The volunteers will gain greater insight into different needs and competences. This project will enrich the regular activities of the class on a number of levels. Beyond this, volunteers will bring a fresh perspective, stimulating new ideas and cultural skills.

The volunteer may attend all the meetings of the staff as well as special training courses offered by the school. He/she will have his own mentor for all personal support.

Since 1999 the "Institut pour Infirmes Moteurs Cérébraux" has been hosting more than 30 volunteers from different countries.

Proposed activities for EVS volunteers:

The project for the volunteer will start in september 2018 and end in the last week of july 2019. This project will certainly be a unique experience for the volunteer, the teachers and the children involved. The volunteer will be assisting in the development of pupils with special needs.

The general objectives are teaching by different means and activities to train the very basic knowledge of the pupils. The volunteer will be involved in preparation of seasonal events like Santa Claus, Christmas, Carnival and Easter festivities.

The volunteer's task will start every morning at 8.30 from Monday to Friday, with a weekly amount of 33 hours. There are more hours during a week, but with more holidays it is like a 30 hours week. The school holidays are one week for All Saints in November, two weeks for Christmas, one week for Carnival, two weeks for Easter and one week for Pentecost.

The volunteer will be sustaining disabled pupils to take part in different activities, like cooking activities (like assist to hold the mixer), ceramic workshop (to form the clay), painting workshop (like assist to hold the drawing pencil and paintbrush). He/she will as well assist the physiotherapists in the swimming pool, (there should be one person for each child/youngster), airtramp (big air cushion) and other physical activities, like one-to-one walk-training.

S/he will be assisting some pupils in learning on the computer in the class-room. When the weather is fine, the pupils like to go to the playground with special equipment, like swing and merry-go-round for wheelchairs. Also the volunteer will be involved in helping for all special needs of the pupils, such as feeding, teaching coordination skills, helping them to clean teeth, face and hands, etc.

Maximum number of EVS-volunteers that can be hosted at the same time: 3

The EVS-volunteers will live together in a house in Heffingen, with some other people.

Volunteer profiles and recruitment process:

The project is open for volunteers aged 18 to 30 years. We have no special restrictions concerning gender.

The volunteer should be a responsible person, with easy contact, interested in social work. S/he should be keen and motivated to work with disabled children and young people on a very basic level, which requires patience, initiative and creativity.

Any volunteer's interests and/or skills like music (playing an instrument) or painting are very welcomed.

Understanding German and French will be very helpful.

Each volunteer will be coached and supported by a mentor and a supervisor. The mentor is the first contact person of the volunteer. The mentor, as well as the supervisor, will be available twenty-four by seven for any problems related to administrative, health or conflict matters.

Expected impact on the participants

Living in a foreign country, the volunteers learn social and cultural comprehension. As about 150.000 cross-border commuters from France, Belgium and Germany are travelling every day to the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg for work, the volunteer discovers the importance of verbal communication in a foreign language and understanding diversity.

The project will help the volunteers to widen their personal experiences, to develop European awareness.

The volunteers may profit to travel to the neighbour countries like France, Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands.

The respect of human rights becomes more important to the volunteers as they learn that children (and often older people) are unable to voice themselves. The volunteers may visit the European court of justice on an open-door day.

The volunteers learn to be more tolerant with people with disabilities, and they become aware that tolerance and sensibility for disabled people is not yet a normal situation.

They will gain greater insight and understanding for people with special needs.

Coordinating organisation:

The Coordinating Organisation for the volunteers in the Institut pour IMC is
Gesond Zesummeliwwen Ronderëm d'Schoul (GZLRS)

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