

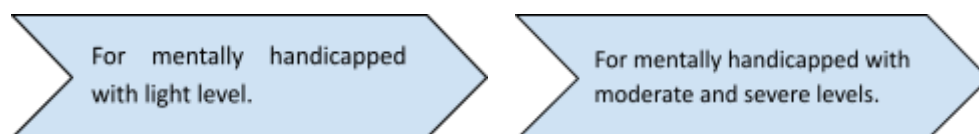
## **Special Educational School Centre Waldemar Kikolski in Bialystok**

### ☐ **Description**

The Special Educational School Centre Waldemar Kikolski in Bialystok, is a public educational school for mentally handicapped at different levels: light, moderate, severe and profound. The educational Centre has a jurisdiction of the Podlaski Voivodeship. The headquarters is located in Bialystok, at number 40 Antoniuk Fabryczny Street in the former boarding school, which is modernized and adapted for every student.

The Educational Center for the Disabled receives children with special educational needs and who have a certificate of disability and permission from the Bialystok municipality. At the moment there are 132 handicapped children, 15 of these children (with profound levels of mental handicap) are attending daily. The aim of the center is to prepare these mentally handicapped children to integrate with society and the ability to act self-sufficient. Our school has many interesting projects for it, for instance: sport projects, like football or athletics, some cultural projects, like theater, painting, ceramics, etc.

The structure of the Center:



### ☐ **SOSW as ESC Host organization**

The children with special needs often feel isolated and lonely. The European Solidarity Corps is an opportunity to bring someone who could share their time and attention with our children. By taking part in the special educational school center's tasks volunteers face the problems of this group of children and shape their own attitude. They have an opportunity to form their competence in cooperating with other organizations, which are our partners in the local environment (schools, universities, music and theatrical groups). EKS is an important part of the school's life. Working with children with disabilities is a challenge and most of our children need constant care. Thanks to collaboration with volunteers we are able to provide better service to the children and also give an opportunity for learning for young people. Daily interaction with a foreigner helps for our team to keep open minded and increase language level since we communicate with volunteers mostly in english.

The school (SOSW) has close collaboration with ANAWOJ Association - coordinating organizations with long time experience in EVS projects. SOSW is the host organization of EVS in the program Youth in Action / Erasmus + (EVS) - since September 2007. During this period the school hosted more than 15 volunteers. The Institution implements a big number of projects, also on international and European level.

The school organizes different projects that help in successful work on EVS, for example some of them are:

- I am European - The "*I am a European and it sounds proud*" is addressed to pupils. It aims to foster children's sense of identity formation and shape their consciousness as citizens of the region, country and Europe. It consists three thematic blocks:
  - a. Cooking - know the dishes typical for other European countries.
  - b. Recreational- we play games liked by children from other countries.
  - c. Plastic - we know beautiful places, specific to the European state and we try to capture the various artistic techniques.

The main executor of educational activities are volunteers from the European Voluntary Service, educators and educational groups. The summary of the project is "*European Day*", during which a tasting of dishes prepared by pupils takes place. There is also a *quiz* about Europe and Poland as a European country.

- The facility also carries out projects with other projects like "*Joy cooperation*" - edition of 2014. The objectives of the activities envisaged are as follows:
  - Creating a positive image and acceptance of children with disabilities.
  - Stimulating the overall development of children through activities with parents.
  - Guidance related to social services for the disabled.

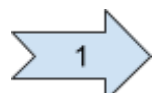

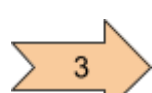




→ Volunteer profile:

We would like someone who is a responsible, open and "warm" person, who doesn't have any problems making new friends. Some artistic skills would be helpful (arts, crafts, music, etc.). And at the end, we would like to have someone who is creative, who would like to improve the school with his or her knowledge and is eager to share the knowledge of his or her country/region –culture, tradition, customs. Talented volunteers are very welcome (playing musical instruments, knowing some new art's methods, etc. It will be very interesting and needed in working with children). We are sure that very often the volunteers have great ideas, which is very precious in the work of our organization. So, don't be afraid of sharing ideas!

- Main tasks

At the beginning, the volunteer will be introduced to the activities of the facility, after which he or she will be able to choose the activities that prefers and would like to work. The volunteer will receive instructions and guidance for work from the entire Volunteer Services team. After a few weeks of observing the center's work, the volunteer will be assigned certain tasks. A precise schedule of activities will be created after meeting with the volunteer and discussing their expectations, interests and skills. Working with people with intellectual disabilities is difficult and demanding, so coordinators will watch over the volunteer while he or she carries out the tasks. In addition, they will help, advise and support in daily work. Several times a year, there will be an evaluation of the volunteer's work and check if any changes need to be made.

Some important tasks:

-  1 Assisting during excursions (sightseeing, cinema, museum, during school events, walks and shopping).
-  2 Supporting teachers in their daily work (art classes, sports, during English lessons).
-  3 Assisting in social and recreational programs.
-  4 Assisting instructors during the swimming course (individual work with the student).
-  5 Helping students while eating and dressing up.
-  6 Working on an individual project (related to the needs and skills of the center's alumni).
-  7 At the boarding school: helping students with homework and organizing leisure time - assisting with art activities, watching movies together, during games, quizzes, organizing joint gatherings such as "afternoon tea parties", birthday parties, participating in various evening activities, etc.

Additionally, the volunteer will be able to help teachers during kindergarten classes. Also, together with another teacher, he will be able to conduct language classes for students, parents and school staff. Volunteers will be able to learn unique methods of working with children with special educational needs. Working at the center can help develop professional skills that volunteers can use in future work.

☐ **Previous volunteer experience:**

Last year we had the opportunity to host two volunteers, Gemma from Spain and Ilda from Georgia. They have taken part in many of the activities that have taken place at the school, such as:

1. An overview activity to expand knowledge of the concept of disability and its classification, the type of developmental deficits and the educational system in Poland.



2. Preparing informational posters about their country and placing them on the information board.
3. Taking care of the center's wards during outings outside the facility, e.g. shopping in the store, trips to the city center.
4. Supporting the wards at the kindergarten, school, boarding school in their daily activities. Organizing leisure time for alumni.
5. Active participation in sports activities at the swimming pool conducted according to the Halliwick Concept.
6. Supporting alumni of the boarding school during art therapy classes conducted in cooperation with the Association for Creators with Disabilities NIKE.
7. Participation in the pedagogical innovation "Multiculturalism - unites, not divides". Preparation of multimedia presentations on Christmas and Easter celebrated in Georgia. Sharing their traditions and culture during meetings in classrooms and educational groups. Preparing traditional dishes during cooking workshops with students.



8. Joining in the "Postcard to Grandma" campaign to make Christmas cards, Christmas tree ornaments and gifts given to residents of the "Our Home" nursing home.

9. Supporting students in learning English.

10. Participating in the performance and environmental workshops carried out as part of the "Green Day" event in cooperation with volunteers from the "European Solidarity Corps".

If you want to know a little more about our school, what we do, our previous volunteers, visit our facebook: [Europejski Korpus Solidarności w SOSW | Białystok | Facebook](#) or our school website: [Specjalny Ośrodek Szkolno-Wychowawczy im. Waldemara Kikolskiego w Białymstoku \(sosw.bialystok.pl\)](#)