

Norway

The Rudolf Steiner Upper Secondary School of Oslo

This private Rudolf Steiner (Waldorf) upper secondary school for students aged 16 to 19, emphasizes the significance of creativity, originality and innovation. The in-depth study of subjects is done over intensive periods of three weeks, with 2.5 hours each day, in which students are encouraged to formulate academic questions themselves and reflect upon cognitive associations. The school has six lines: Science, Humanist, Pictorial Art, computer science, music, and media. Each course is taught in a special subject study room. Learning objectives are down-to-earth practical formulation of concepts, creativity, and learning over a longer period of time. There are no exams, only overall achievement is marked.

Main Focus of Innovation: CONTENT, RESOURCES, ORGANISATION

Other Keywords: alternative philosophy, blended/non-formal, technology-rich

General Information

Name of the ILE: The Rudolf Steiner Upper Secondary School of Oslo

Location/Address: Rosenborg gt 17a, 0356 Oslo, +47-41473665

Website: <http://www.oslo-bysteinerskole.no/>

Rationale

Why do you suggest that it should be included in the project? How does it respond to 21st century learning challenges?

- Oslo By Steinerskole's view on learning clearly deviates from the standard model of learning.
- Oslo By Steinerskole's view on learning in several areas harmonises with the thoughts, terminology and goals described as relevant for the knowledge society (Learning Economy) of the 21st century in *Implications of Learning Sciences Research* by Keith Sawyer.
 - The significance of creativity, originality and innovation is highlighted. The learning process in academic subjects is supported by tuition in art, dance and choir for all the students at Oslo by Steinerskole. The students clearly respond positively to this.
 - The learning process at Oslo By Steinerskole includes intensive periods of three weeks with 2, 5 hours each day to support the in-depth study of the subject. The result is that the subject is presented more like a professional situation where the problem areas and questions are allowed to emerge, and that the students to a larger extent may reflect upon correlations and thought structures. The students clearly respond positively to this.
 - The students at Oslo By Steinerskole must formulate relevant academic questions, reflect upon correlations and try to formulate cognitive associations. The students respond positively to this, even though it leads to more work for them compared to reading a text in a book.
 - Oslo By Steinerskole perceives it as especially interesting that the qualitative difference between the consciousness of children and adults receives focus. Children and youths do not think alike, nor do youths and adults. Oslo by Steinerskole has worked systematically with this ever since the school was founded, so that the teachers may face the students in an adequate way. Operative terminology has been formulated for each of the three grades, so that this may function as a background that embraces both the cognitive, emotional and social development. This terminology also functions as a foundation for how the teacher should angle his or her presentation of the material. The teachers have given positive responses to this.
- Oslo By Steinerskole wishes to share its experiences and to create a forum for discussion and exchange of ideas.
- Oslo By Steinerskole wishes to be a part of the development of operative terminology for children's development which can function as structures that help understand children's learning. The Steiner school regards the discussion of a higher understanding of the development within the cognitive, social, emotional, physical (motor skills) and the meta-cognitive field as especially important and necessary.

Evidence

Is there any evidence or indications showing that this initiative achieves the outcomes that it is aiming at?

- Oslo By Steinerskole started with 3 classes in the 1st grade in 2001, altogether 86 students. The school then had four lines, whereof two were academic (Science and Humanist), one was artistic (Pictorial Art) and one vocational (Computer science). In 2010 the school has 14 classes and 403 students. In addition to the original four, the Music line was founded in 2005 and the Media line in 2008. The school has experienced a growing interest, and in the course of a short period of time has become one of the largest private schools in Oslo.
- In the school year 2009-10 the school had 251 applicants to 150 seats distributed on 6 lines.
- The school receives applications from the whole Oslo region, and students from altogether 80 different lower secondary schools apply.
- In the annual quality survey the students emphasise the good social environment. They also highlight
 - skilled teachers who know their subjects and have high demands
 - the fact that the teachers are inspiring
 - the fact that they are allowed to be themselves (little conformity pressure)
- The school has received major attention from other Steiner schools, and has received delegations from Sweden, Denmark, Finland, England and Germany. What has been central for all of them has been to understand what has made the school so popular.
- The Waldof Association applied for an exception from National Tests on behalf of all the Steiner schools due to non-compatible curricula. The application was finally declined in February 2010. Oslo By Steinerskole thus has no data for the students' tests. The Steiner schools are approved as exam free schools with overall achievement marks. These are not listed on the web page of The Directorate for Education and Training.

Learning Aims / Intended Learning Outcomes of the ILE

What are the core learning aims and which knowledge, skills or attitudes are to be acquired? (These may include outcomes related to learners' social, interpersonal, or meta-cognitive development)

The Rudolf Steiner School (OBS) will focus on the following learning goals and objectives:

- Specify what deep-learning implies in practice, based on recognised control methods
- Learning based on down-to-earth and practical formulation of concepts
- Learning based on creativity
- The learning process over a longer period of time
- Leadership and cooperation at school

Learners

Which group(s) of learners is it aiming at? Who is eligible to take part? How many learners are there? What are their ages?

Pupils enrol in upper secondary levels (Vg1-Vg3), from 16 to 19 years of age, and all 400 pupils may in principle participate.

Facilitators

Who are the teachers/facilitators? Who are the leaders? What are their professional backgrounds? What are their roles?

This project is led by Erik Marstrander, B.A. in Fine Arts and B.A. in Natural Sciences. He has taught at a number of different Rudolf Steiner schools for a total of 39 years of teaching, has been the daily leader at two large schools, has had extensive lecturing activity, taught mathematics at Steiner College, led continuing education courses on a national level and written 5 books about the Rudolf Steiner School's educational and pedagogical philosophy.

This project will have approximately 40 teachers involved, all with an education of at least a Bachelor's Degree. In addition to this, all the teachers have participated in a one-year seminar study programme on Steiner education, and about half of all the teachers have many years of teaching experience.

Organization of the ILE

How is learning organised? How do learners and facilitators interact? What kind of pedagogy do they follow? What curriculum is used?

Pupils and teachers will be organised into different groups and classes, depending on which subjects are dealt with. Each pupil shall participate in as many as four different groups.

- Common core subjects are taught in classes for all courses of study. There are about 30 pupils in each of these classes, from six different courses of study, and have Norwegian, basic Natural Sciences, Social Science, History, Physical Education and Choir as common subjects.
- The programme subjects are taught in each specialised subject class. Pupils participate in these subjects from all classes that have the same program subjects.
- Foreign Language is of course taught in the different groups based on languages and competence level.
- The artistic subjects and Eurhythm (rhythm and dance) are taught in separate groups

Pupils at Rudolf Steiner Upper Secondary School have responded positively to this way of organising the school in the school's annual quality assessment survey.

School teaching is based on the National Curriculum for 2007 from the Rudolf Steiner School Association and the Ministry of Education and Research.

Learning Context

In which context does learning take place? What does the physical learning environment look like? Are community resources used to facilitate learning and how?

Each course of study at Steiner School has its own special subject study room, and learning will therefore be very different between the different pupil groups. The studios for Music and their rehearsal rooms, the art studios for Art, the Math and Science laboratory and the writing hall for Humanism studies are all very different. Common for all of these is that all of these spaces give pupils space for in depth study and reflection.

The pupils use cultural institutions in downtown Oslo, such as libraries and art museums.

History of ILE

Who initiated it? For what reasons was it started and with what purpose? Have these changed since?

Rudolf Steiner School was founded by an interim board in 1999 and began teaching in the fall of 2001. Two teachers with experience from Steiner School joined forces to create a purely upper secondary school in downtown Oslo. The school wanted to offer a wide range of courses of study, both to fulfil university admission certification and vocational competence.

Funding of the ILE*How is it funded?*

The Rudolf Steiner Upper Secondary School in Oslo has a budget for 2010 of approximately 51 million kroner. Operating expenses for the learning arenas are financed by the state (85%) and by the parents (15%), while capital costs (approximately 20% of all expenses) must be covered by the teachers' own salaries.

Learning Outcomes*What are the learning outcomes achieved by the ILE, including academic, social, interpersonal and meta-cognitive outcomes? How is learning assessed?*

- As described earlier (see Paragraph 2: Evidence, item 6), OBS keeps no official documentation on learning results. The school still believes it can say pupils make good academic progress. More emphasis is placed on qualitative results, which means the degree of schooling in our own form of thought is a better means of measurement than better grade averages.
- As part of its contract with the Ministry of Education and Research, the school holds an external assessment of pupils' specialised study subjects at level Vg3. One of the programme subjects is chosen, and the examiner expressed that the pupils show a high level of ability in the specific subject. The average grade is 4.7.
- Another way of assessing the school's learning results is to look at dropout rates. Of the school's 403 pupils as of 1/10-09, only 13 pupils have left teaching. All these pupils transferred to other schools, which mean there were no dropouts from our school. During the same period, 15 new pupils enrolled at the school. The school has thus far this year a 0% dropout rate. For school year 2008-09, the dropout rate (pupils that terminated studies at OBS and who did not begin at another school), 3 pupils left school of the 380 enrolled, which means a rate of 0.8%.

Documentation describing or evaluating the ILE*Is there documentation on this learning environment? Is there a website? Films? Research reports or evaluations? Other forms of documentation? (please supply references or links)*

- Url: <http://www.oslo-bysteinerskole.no>
- Film: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xODGNyhh3Lw>
- Film: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b61YcbtUCbE&NR=1>

Other information you consider to be relevant to describe the ILE

The Rudolf Steiner School in Oslo considers this project interesting and relevant, and the school wishes to start a quality assessment programme regardless of whether the school *is chosen or not* from among the many applications received. In this case and as an alternative, Oslo Steiner School wishes to be given permission to participate in the project as an independent collaborator.