

Austria

Adalbert Stifter Praxisschule der 10-bis 14-Jährigen PH Linz

This private secondary comprehensive school is a practice school in which innovative forms of learning are developed in cooperation with a university college of teacher education. It features student-centered open learning environments, variable mixed-ability groups and internal differentiation, team teaching, a special focus on “social learning”, peer mediation projects, a project to develop ICT teaching, and alternative forms of assessment (oral examinations, extra report at the end of the year). Pedagogy is based on principles by Adalbert Stifter, with the objective to support the students’ personality development, enabling them to contribute individual strengths in the classroom, cope with failures and understand that learning is work-intensive but rewarding.

Main Focus of Innovation: LEARNERS, TEACHERS, CONTENT, ORGANISATION

Other keywords: alternative philosophy

General Information

Name of the ILE: Adalbert Stifter Praxisschule der 10-bis 14-Jährigen PH Linz

Location/Address: 4020 Linz Salesianumweg 5

Website: www.stifterschule.at

ILE submitted by: Forschungsinstitut PH Linz (research institute of the University College of Teacher Education in Linz)

Rationale

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

Mixed-ability groups, pupil-centred open learning environments, internal differentiation, special focus on “social learning“, developing interests and talents, team teaching, didactic-methodological developments in the area of ICT teaching (project CLASS 21), peer mediation project.

Evidence

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

Comparison of achievements with an academic secondary school in the area of Linz (Professor F. Eder)
 Scientific monitoring of the project CLASS 21 (TIMSS, SLSCR...) (Professor F. Eder)
 Evaluation of a long-term survey among graduates (Professor F. Eder)
 Survey on class and school climate and motivation (Ernst Nausner and Dr. Alfred Weinberger)

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)

Curriculum for general secondary schools: <http://www.bmukk.gv.at/medienpool/865/hs1.pdf>

Pedagogical aims of the school:

In the spirit of Adalbert Stifter, we do not only want to convey knowledge, but form the entire personality.

Intended aims:

- Role of the teacher:
- Helps to discover personal skills
- Enables individual support
- Gives students the opportunity to contribute their particular strengths to classroom teaching
- Helps students facing difficulties
- Empowers them to cope with failures
- Challenges and encourages highly-gifted students in particular

Experiences students should gather:

- Teachers facilitate my own development process
- Further development is a process that is work intensive.
- Achievements that are attained through hard work are highly rewarding.

Working on an issue independently

- gives me an opportunity to discover things on my own,
- is a precondition for ongoing work.

It is interesting to

- share one's own ideas with fellow students,
- learn what others think about an issue.

With the help of media, I can acquire knowhow independently or solve problems on my own.
 Readiness to explain things to fellow students.

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?

192 girls and boys evenly spread over 8 classes, aged 10-14, mixed-ability groups.

Facilitators

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

Teachers hold teaching diplomas for primary and general secondary school, a “teacher trainer” course, ECHA diplomas, university studies, BINE training course (*translator’s note: BINE is an initiative for education for sustainable development*), training, mediator and supervisor training, certified energy counsellors, qualified experts of subject didactics at the University College of Teacher Education in Linz; Teachers support students by giving professional advice, suggesting different development paths depending on the heterogeneity of talents, they encourage and challenge students

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?

According to the comprehensive school (“*Gesamtschule*”) model with mixed-ability groups, interests and talents are developed by team teaching and in variable groups, open learning environment in classes and group areas.

Educational work is based on the Dalton plan, on weekly schedules,

Special curricula apply for elective compulsory subjects.

Formative assessment is given orally by teachers, peers and student teachers.

Achievement through hard work is also rewarded in an extra report at the end of year.

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?

Every class has their own room with a group room annexed to it in order to facilitate work in small groups. There is a separate room for activities and recreation during lunch breaks and spare time; and an outdoor area designed by students (school garden, playgrounds, and a themed “sensory” trail)

Library for pupils, dedicated rooms at the University College of Teacher Education in Linz, school theatre of the city of Linz, “Let’s Move it“, a joint project of the University College of Teacher Education in Linz and the Linz 2009 culture capital.

History of ILE

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

We are a practice school catering to pupils 10-14 and want to develop innovative forms of learning which we convey to students of the University College of Teacher Education in Linz. The concept of “internal differentiation” was initiated in 1985 by university professor R. Vierlinger. The school sees itself as a learning organisation.

Funding of the ILE*How is it funded?*

The school is funded by the Linz diocese.

Additional sources of funding: School Award of the Chamber of Labour 2009; Teachers Award of the Federation of Austrian Industries; Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management: waste management plan; school award of the Energy Saving Association; Education Highway and "CLASS 21" project of the Ministry of Education, "Saving Energy – Yes, we can", "Take a seat", Ministry of Science: "Sparkling Science".

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

Kangaroo competition

Seminars on transition to secondary higher schools – comparison of demands and expectations

Evaluation: see Evidence.

An evaluation study with Linz University is being planned for the spring and an evaluation of teaching quality in autumn.

How to successfully lead a class and how does knowledge become skill? - An evaluative study as part of a doctoral thesis at Klagenfurt University.

Formative assessment is given in class context and school assemblies. Feedback is given to parents. Achievements through hard work are rewarded in homepage entries and articles in the annual book.

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)*

Website: www.stifterschule.at; flyer, annual report, research report on the CLASS 21 project, documented school development workshops, reports on school projects conducted.