

Austria

Dalton up-to-date

This secondary school (grades 5th – 8th) uses reform pedagogic principles of Daltonplan. Students learn in heterogeneous groups that include children with special needs. The objectives of teaching are that students are active and self-directed in learning and take responsibility for their progress, and that students improve their social skills and time management. Instructional methods include open houses. Performance assessments are based on portfolios and interviews in addition to standard tests. Teachers act as coaches in class, and meet regularly in teams to discuss practice. A monthly council with class representatives evaluates the practice at school.

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

Other Keywords: alternative philosophy, equity

General Information

Name of the ILE: Dalton up-to-date

Location/Address: KMS Hörnesgasse Wien

Website: www.mittelschule.at

Rationale

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

"If only I could go to school on Sunday" this is a quote of one of our students. We are a team of teachers from the KMS Hörnesgasse, which is specialised on dealing with innovative education. Our basis for a modern, high quality school presents the Daltonplan-education. This includes educational commitment, a rich academic and non – academic offer, estimation and acceptance of our students, etc. Effective learning is composed of active, self-acting and stand-alone learning (self-directed learning). Only through this process it is possible, that learning will get self-efficient. Each student needs a multiplicity of basic-competences, which we will further develop and upgrade, so that they get ready for a life after school.

Evidence

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

Students can show their major course assessments through portfolio work, regular expert, reflective and feedback interviews, as well as through normal tests. With a special compulsory subject "Innovation and Strategies of Learning" it is possible to enhance the basic-competences of the students. In the range of the math-class, teachers themselves are right now implementing a so-called "competence profile". The internal evaluation is a result of the monthly Dalton-Council (a meeting with the class representatives) and regular team meetings with the teachers. The implementation of the Dalton-education at the Hörnesgasse, is a pilot project for the secondary schools of Vienna.

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 curriculum of the secondary school asks for developing competences and for the acquirement of key qualifications. So it is very important for us to work with a form of education that supports self-acting and stand-alone learning. Our learning-groups are inhomogeneous because of their different speed of learning or their learning ability. So the individualization and differentiation of education is very important. Learning has to be goal-oriented, performance-oriented and full of actual contents and methods. These facts should be included into a inclusive education. The central objectives in education are divided into 3 pillars: liberty with responsibility, cooperation and time management. The students help to design the form and figure of their class.

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?

The age- and target-group are the 5th till 8th grade of education that means students from ten to fourteen years. At the moment we take care about 100 students during their learning process. For each grade of education we have one class working with the Dalton plan-education. These 4 classes are classes of integration. Each class has a special trained teacher for special needs.

Facilitators

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

Some of our teachers working in these classes have taken an academic course in Dalton plan-education. Each of the teachers is trained in open teaching and self directed learning. One teacher is a computer scientist. Coaching as method of guidance for individual development, and decision support is practiced by the whole team of teachers. Our goal is to reach an inspiring working and learning atmosphere through further development and continuous reflection (including appropriate learning arrangements).

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?

The concept of the daltonplan-education for our students is a symbioses of bonded class-phases and guided free-working. To provide useful functioning each student gets a differentiated offer of exercises (a brochure with the program for the next month). Additionally the teachers coach the students in different age-group levels and in special equipped rooms (i.e. math, biology, geography ...). So they are not bound to the flow or speed of the class and can reach their learning-competences in order to be prepared for the future.

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?

This way to learn from and with each other, offers for example: the option for explanations which are appropriate for children, to merge different levels of learning grade, that groups can work in their first language and to integrate students with the ASO-curriculum (Curriculum for children with special needs). They learn in special equipped rooms. An interesting point is that the student comes to the teacher and not the other way around. For a year all four Dalton-classes are on the same floor, providing 5 class-rooms and one meeting room. So it is possible to learn in little groups. 2 classrooms have a connection to the internet. All together there are 8 computers for the students.

History of ILE

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

In the year of 2000 we started the performance of the project due to a group of elementary school students who attended our school. They have already been taught in an innovative pedagogical way. Hörnesgasse was the first school in Vienna which has implemented the Daltonplan-education for the secondary school level. Over the years the concept was extended step by step and is now an essential element of our school profile.

Funding of the ILE

How is it funded?

Our type of school is being financed by the Viennese local authority and not by the state's ministry. As it is no official school experiment there is also no additional budget available.

Learning Outcomes

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

Study and achievement results are performed in the usual way. Not to forget the competence-profile for mathematics and the open house for our students each term. The only way of foreign evaluation, consists of parents' feedback and teachers' or teacher students' observations. Through indicators which we collect in various team-meetings it is possible to assure the grade of quality.

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)

Constitution in the school-profile

- Homepage Design
- A Dalton-broschure
- Advertisements at official events
- List of Publications:
 - Die Daltonplanpädagogik als innovatives Unterrichtskonzept an der Hörnesgasse
(Skriptum) in: NÖ-Landeslehrer Bezirk Horn, 2005

in: Newsletter des Schulkompetenzzentrums der Kinderfreunde, Wien 2005
 - Dalton aktuell in: Ideen machen Schule. Neun innovative Schulen im Porträt

(Hg. Andrea Fraundorfer, LIT Verlag, Wien 2006)
 - Schule mit Zukunft in: FORMAT, 29.09.2006 (Zeitungsartikel)
 - "Kompetent sein" – Ein Kompetenzprofil für Mathematik auf der SEK 1

in: Schulnews des Österreichischen Schulkompetenzzentrums Nr. 5
 - Inklusiver Unterricht (Good practice)

in: Integration in der SEK I und II, Dr. Marianne Wilhelm u.a., 2009

Other information you consider to be relevant to describe the ILE

The pedagogy of the Dalton plan developed by Helen Parkhurst (USA) in the early twentieth century offers answers to questions about a future oriented school. Individualisation, flexibility and the acquirement of key qualifications are the keywords of today.