

Slovenia

Enrichment Programmes

The objective of the enrichment programmes is to complement regular school curriculum with additional contents, thereby increasing student motivation and fostering the students' social skills, learning strategies, independence, and self confidence from grade 4 and onwards. Teachers use alternative forms of assessment, for example, pedagogical dialogues with the students about their individual progress, and students present their results and products at the school level (e.g., in films). Learning can take place outside the classroom, in the nature, camps, etc., where active learning and interactions with parents and community members are stimulated.

Main Focus of Innovation: CONTENT, ORGANISATION

General Information

Name of the ILE: Enrichment Programmes

Location/Address: PRIMARY SCHOOL RODICA, Kettejeva str.13, 1230 Domžale

Rationale

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

The project supports education challenges of the 21st century and follows the realisation of key competences for the global society, society of knowledge and the development of individual potentials for an active lifestyle in the community and for the lifelong learning.

Enrichment programmes have been derived from the contents of the regular curriculum and complement it today in a qualitative and quantitative way. A diverse offer of contents and areas enables pupils to:

- choose programmes according to their own interests,
- create their own process of learning, researching, creating and public performing ... (personalisation of learning processes),
- acquire knowledge and exchange experiences in heterogeneous connections among their contemporaries,
- recognise their own potentials and discover inner motives for learning,
- develop social skills, learning strategies, independence and working responsibility, self confidence (e.g., when promoting achievements, forwarding new ideas, learning needs...).

Enrichment programmes have been introduced recently by the help of pupils and parents. The school has been faced with the new challenges, different educational needs of pupils, with the motivation »crisis« of teachers, new paths to knowledge which can far better activate pupils themselves (like computer technology, other sources of knowledge in the local and wider environment, local and international exchanges among pupils ...).

The philosophy of inclusive school has been understood much wider as it is provided by the basic right of children to the inclusion of children with special formation and education needs. A school which is inclusive follows the needs of each individual and it integrates at the same time the development of key competences into the regular school curricula (school for all). Methods of work in the enrichment programmes have gradually spread to more or less traditional didactic approaches of regular lessons. This way, the school has gradually become pupil oriented and it emphasises active role of pupils and teachers as partners and co-creators of new knowledge, skills and know-how.

Enrichment programmes encourage divergent thinking, constructivist learning, different paths to knowledge; they improve learning motivation, widen interests and enable self confirmation.

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)

Fundamental objective of enrichment programmes is to:

- complement regular school curriculum with additional contents,
- transfer from teaching processes to learning processes,
- increase inner motivation learning incentives of pupils included in activities and achieve an optimal transfer to all the areas of learning,
- to respect initiatives/interests/proposals/ideas of pupils when preparing and implementing the programmes,
- create various possibilities for the promotion of knowledge, creative and research achievements, reporting and understanding in mother tongue and foreign languages...

Teachers evaluate learning results in different ways and above all the evaluation goes beyond the limits of regular school assessment (it complements the latter). The characteristics of evaluation are:

- regular up to date information on separate phases of learning and achievements (during activities and consultation hours),
- enriched pedagogical communication between teachers and pupils (pedagogical dialogue),
- teachers and pupils assess processes with the help of different evaluation approaches (questionnaires, scales, reports, interviews...),
- presentation of results and products at the school level and also wider (public performance, exhibition promotion...), by using modern technical solutions (e.g., films, animated films, research work with multimedia presentation, presentations for teachers' assembly, for parents...) and also with other artistic exhibitions, poetry collections, annual school calendar, independent creation of web pages for activities (e.g., debate club on web page).

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?

According to the programme, the offer and target oriented enriching programmes pupils of all different ages and grades are included (mostly from grade 4 onwards, when the first procedures of identifying talented pupils are finished; however a detected gift is not a condition to be included in the programmes). Usually certain didactic solutions from enriching programmes successfully spread into the implementation of regular school curriculum.

Facilitators

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

Those teachers who started to research their practice, to verify certain theoretical solutions, to search for paths to the knowledge through different ways, and to give priority to processes of learning rather than processes of teaching and who started to put in place the changed role of teachers at schools are included into the implementation of enriching programmes. Teachers of natural sciences responded the first; others followed closely afterwards (teachers of foreign languages, mother tongue...). At the moment there are 15 teachers involved in the enrichment programmes. When implementing the programmes the teachers and the school has links also with outside experts for different areas (e.g., artists, researchers – scientists, secondary school professors...).

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 programmes are usually implemented as an activity along with the regular curriculum (free interest activity, additional lessons, hours of individual and group assistance, and certain solutions gradually become a way of realisation of regular curriculum).

Learning takes place in different ways:

- work in the nature (field work, research work, camps...),
- creating diverse social interactions through which social skills and know how are developed,
- providing active methods of learning (observing, comparing, analytical thinking, the use of knowledge in new situations, cooperative learning, project work...),
- widening social interactions with contemporaries from the same place, with contemporaries from Slovenia, from abroad, learning among generations,...),
- encouraging active multilingualism and learning of different cultures,
- the use of modern technologies as the source of knowledge and tools for the promotion of knowledge.

Elements of experience and adventurous pedagogic have been becoming more and more important.

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?

The programme has mostly been implemented within the school's premises, occasionally also outside (field work, camps, visits to various institutions, museums, institutes, working areas). The school has perfect spatial possibilities for the implementation of activities and also quite a satisfying ICT support (including qualified teachers). Local community as its founder supports the school in an appropriate way by providing funds for regular maintenance, investments and opportunities to buy additional equipment. Parents also offer their help (as donators or help providing the school with materials) as well as entrepreneurs from the local area. Certain activities give the opportunity of active inclusion of parents (for example organisation of visits, presentations) and we can see a lot more opportunities for an active participation of parents (co-organisers, initiators, also as promoters – however, the problem of our families is the full commitment of both parents elsewhere).

Enrichment Programmes - Rodica

The case is a very interesting one developing several innovative features. Learning takes place in different ways and places, including use of ICT, parents are play an active role, and the ILE is designed coherently aiming to increase learner motivation and self-confidence. Formative assessment is used through a very wide range of activities for feedback, going from pedagogical dialogue public performances or even debate club through websites. In question 6, Organisation of Learning, could you please let us know the duration of the different “enrichment programmes” and learning activities – approximately how many hours a day/week – and whether they are supplementary to or an integral part of the curriculum. Could you please develop a little further on question 8 about Learning Outcomes if you have the information.

1. Duration of activity: 1 hour per week, many times also concise in time (in reference to the nature of activity).
2. Activities are an additional part of the school curriculum.
3. Learning results (systematic presentation) are attached.

Knowledge Competitions

Also this year we have encouraged pupils and helped them to participate in all the published knowledge competitions. This year was also for the first time that we had the competition for the Cankar Award for younger pupils from the 2nd to the 7th grade.

Children were preparing themselves for the competitions under the supervision of their mentors in additional classes, in regular classes and in their free interest activities, as well as by special instructions independently at home.

We are satisfied with the results, since our children won 24 silver awards and 5 golden awards, and in addition they obtained very high results in various research assignments. In the system of knowledge competitions each result, which means qualifying for regional and in particular for national competitions, represents a great success.

Besides school competition, our school hosted also national competitions in English language and regional competition of the movement »Science to the young«.

Overview of the participation and the results achieved in individual knowledge competitions:

Type of Competition	Initial number of participants			
CANKAR AWARD	140 (2. – 9. r.)	Silver award	Silver award	Golden award
		57	2	1
STEFAN AWARD	24 (8. – 9. r.)	Silver award	Silver award	Golden award
		9	6	0
PREGEL AWARD	35 (8. – 9. g.)	Silver award	Silver award	Golden award
		9	1	0
VEGA AWARD*	347 (1. – 9. g.)	Silver award	Silver award	Golden award
		117	8	1
PROTEUS AWARD	37 (7. – 9. g.)	Silver award	Silver award	Golden award
		17	2	0
HISTORY	14 (8. – 9. g.)	Silver award	Silver award	Golden award
		2	1	1
ENGLISH	(9. g.)	Silver award	Silver award	Golden award
		9	2	0
GERMAN	0 (9. g.)	Silver award	Silver award	Golden award
		0	0	0
LOGIC	41 (6. – 9. g.)	Silver award	Silver award	Golden award
		17	0	2
GEOGRAPHY	26 (7. – 9. g.)	Silver award	Silver award	Golden award
		8	2	0
TOTAL:		245	24	5

***IMPORTANT:** national competition result in mathematics was one of the best in Slovenia (the pupil was awarded a trip to Salzburg).

RESEARCH WORKS

Title of the research work	Topic	Rank
Hygiene and the diseases of children and adults in Jarše and its neighbourhood since 1941 till today.	Ethnology	Golden award at national union of young researchers (among 17 best research works ranked for the national assembly) Golden award at the national union of young historians of the Slovenian Association of Youth Friends
What kind of water do we drink? Comparison of drinking waters with onion test.	Ecology with the environment protection	Silver award at the national union of young researchers (among 17 best research works ranked for the national assembly)
School penalties of three generations at the Primary School Rodica	Psychology	Bronze award at the national union of young researchers Golden award at the national union of young historians of the Slovenian Association of Youth Friends
Why is the Kamnik Train stil operating nowadays?? The Kamnik Train in difficult times (1968–1978)	History	Award at the regional union of young researchers Silver award at the competition for the best learning poster (School Centre Celje, Secondary electro technical school and chemistry)
Migration of people from Jarše to America at the beginning of 20th century (till 1927)	Ethnology	Awards at the regional union of young researchers Award at the competition for the best learning poster (School Centre Celje, Secondary electro technical school and chemistry)
A soul in two bodies	Biology	Awards at the regional union of young researchers
Storing eggs in old times	Biology	Awards at the regional union of young researchers
Rules for divisibility in non-decimal systems	Mathematics	Awards at the regional union of young researchers
Researching of the watercourse of the river Kamniška Bistrica	Leading detective 2009, I love my river	First prize for the research project at the competition Water detective 2009

Besides the above stated competitions and results pupils participated also in some other events: Little gray cells, Cici-happy school (the youngest pupils), Computation is a game, Bistroum – »Smart mind« (one of the girl pupils became national champion in this competition), Tourism can be helped by one's own head, The best learning poster, the award MEPI.

Another specific form of »competition« is also participation in reading or reading badge (rb). We have known for several years besides reading in Slovenian language also reading in foreign languages (English, French reading badge), book moth – reading in English; our pupils have participated for the second year in the eco-reading badge.

The table below shows the shares of pupils involved in reading and the acquired awards for reading (reading badge):

	No. of pupils	Reading badge	Eco reading badge	EPI r.b. gold	EPI r.b. silver	EPI r.b. award	French r. badge	Book moth;Engl.
1.a	23	100	100					
1.b	26	96	0					
1.c	23	100	0					
2.a	24	92	92					
2.b	22	95	100					
2.c	24	100	100					
3.a	23	100	100					
3.b	28	96	100					
4.a	25	96	100	48	36	0		
4.b	25	100	100	20	56	8		
5.a	26	85	100	27	12	0		
5.b	26	100	100	15	19	0		
6.a	24	83	100	46	21	0	8	
6.b	23	74	100	17	9	0	17	
6.c	23	83	100	52	4	0	4	
7.a	21	90		10	24	5	0	
7.b	20	35		10	15	0	10	
7.c	19	58		10	5	0	5	
8.a	26	58		12	19	0	8	
8.b	26	50		8	8	0	0	
8.c	24	54		29	8	0	21	
9.a	27	37		4	15	0	26	11
9.b	27	30		11	11	4	15	0

Both, competitions and reading badges require mentors' encouragements, teachers' leadership as well as an adequate level of pupils' motivation, which according to the involvement and the results seems to be quite high.

History of ILE

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

The programme was conceived by a group of teachers. Initial incentives were above all in learning of more self confident behaviour of pupils in order to better know how to express /present their knowledge, to dare to ask, to develop on their own, to plan processes ... Teachers were looking for the contents which would weaken the interest for new recognitions. At that time Slovenia started a large school reform with certain key elements: introduction of nine year primary school, curricular changes – including new curricula, the integration of children with special needs, realisation of issues, which had been defined by the concept of work with gifted pupils. The school had at the same time developed the alternative development programmes by which the prescribed school programme had become enriched (e.g., the project of Eco School as a way of life, Healthy School, UNESCO School, numerous innovation and development projects). Basic changes had to be introduced for teachers (direct initiators of the project) – with transfers from traditional and transmission role of teachers to the teacher – mentor, director and promoter of learning processes. Indirect initiators of the project were at first pupils and with them also parents through whom it was possible to recognise the key problems of learning and challenges which modern development brings along.

Funding of the ILE

How is it funded?

A larger part of the programme (teaches' work) is being financed from the budget; recently more and more other additional sources are necessary: we manage to get a part of the funds for the implementation of the programme through public calls for tenders (e.g., from local community), and the programmes are also supported by occasional and permanent donators, among them also parents; we provide additional material conditions by renting school premises, and we practice more and more the exchange of knowledge and staff among institutions.

Learning Outcomes

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

There are several documentary sources about the work done so far; they present individual programmes: promotion and publication of research works, photo news, publications on the school's web pages, school newsletter, collection of poems, annual calendar, films, animated films, TV and radio transmissions, publications in the local newspapers, expert discussions – publications of teachers and participants in the scientific magazines, presentations of teachers and pupils at the organised educational meetings of professionals and experts, presentations pupils provide for other pupils, for teachers' assembly, and for the annual public presentation, exhibitions in the school premises as well as in the outside institutions, (library, youth centre...).

For us a special reference is also pupils' excellent yearly response to the additional programmes (the number of participants has been growing) the new ideas of teachers, pupils and parents, and in the long term the spreading of our didactic solutions into the regular curriculum. Modern society brings along many new challenges which we often consider as difficulties since they destruct a certain stability of the system (modern technology, migrations, coexistence of various cultures). The school system has to adjust itself to these challenges and elaborate them to be useful in the context of positive current challenges of the time. The key factor is human resources. For the sake of our own prepress we are gradually developing also a system of self-evaluation, which is going to help to upgrade schools for the needs of the 21st century.