

PROJECT: PROMOTION OF ART EDUCATION FOR EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The project *Support of Art Education for Equal Opportunities* focused on working with pupils with special educational needs (SEN) at art schools (primary art schools, conservatories, secondary art schools) and the teaching of art subjects at primary schools and grammar schools. Especially at art schools, the education of pupils with SEN is not conceptually developed. There is a lack of comprehensive teaching materials. The inclusion is seen by some teachers and managerial staff of primary art schools and conservatories as a risk and threat to their main educational mission. The project was therefore focused on the following three main objectives:

- 1) Creation of methodological and didactic materials and other publications dealing with the topic of teaching pupils with SEN at art schools in the widest possible spectrum of approaches. The project thus attempts to remedy the fact that so far, no complex Czech language material for teaching SEN pupils that would respect the specific environment of art schools has been prepared.
- 2) Testing of the teaching materials by art school teachers and teachers of art subjects at primary and secondary schools. Trying new methods and approaches in respect of pupils with SEN in art education. The testing included extensive action research, which provides an exact reflection of methodological materials and some pilot project activities.
- 3) Promoting the publicity of the above issues. We endeavoured to meet teachers and headmasters on various platforms in order to discuss the issue of co-education (inclusive of listening to concerns of the teachers and headmasters concerning inclusion).

Thanks to the wide scope of the project, the interconnection of the academic sphere with teachers at various levels of schools, as well as the implementation of a large number of pilot activities, we have been able to formulate several basic theses to support joint education at art schools:

A) A general support of inclusion in arts education may only be implemented through a **comprehensive system support** which shall be focused on three levels of the education system:

- **Modification of the system and removal of barriers** – we recommend to strengthen the topic of inclusion in future education plans of the teachers. As part of the project, we carried out an extensive action research, the conclusions of which we offer in a separate final research report. The project also dealt with the SEP of selected conservatories and art schools. Although these were analyses of specific SEPs of two different types of schools, common interfaces can be found in the interconnection – namely the message of possible changes – by possible revisions of the FEP in line with the objectives and direction of the 2030+ Strategy. These interfaces are represented by the fact that binding structures for both types of the education programmes prescribe the stating of information, which is often repeated in different places (school website, annual reports, newsletters, etc.). Therefore, within the framework of education programmes, we recommend to “slim down” the binding structure for SEPs and in the development of school programmes to focus on feasibility of educational strategies, to appropriately structure the educational content, to assess pupils in a sophisticated manner, taking into account their individuality and to focus on an inclusive concept of art education.

- **Support of the school, open school, cooperation between different types of schools** – it was cooperation that was the “driving force” of the project. Academics, teachers of different types of schools and active artists held meetings during the creation of the texts as well as in the course of implementation of the pilot activities. Thanks to this, we have discovered new possibilities in respect of the content as well as the form of teaching, which are described within the teaching units, in the methodological materials and the suggestions for didactics. In the implementation of the project we thought about the methods of communication with pupils, parents of pupils with SEN as well as intact pupils. The project also brought new perspectives on day-to-day teaching to the individual schools and led the teachers and school principals to be more open to new ideas.
- **Support for teachers in the fields of education, arts and inclusion** – we see support for educators as key to the success of inclusion in art education. We offer teachers good practice examples in the publications listed below. We have published methodological and didactic materials which contain teaching units with specific instructions for working with inclusive pupil groups. We also provided teachers with the information by means of two conferences and many seminars, workshops and other educational activities.

B) The aforesaid principle of cooperation has also led to the promotion of networking in respect of various types and levels of schools in different parts of the Czech Republic and cooperation with foreign schools in Europe. Within the project we have networked 138 schools in the Czech Republic. By the end of 2020, we will create a 'map' of this network, inclusive of a description of the different types of cooperation and a more detailed description of what has worked, and therefore is to continue beyond the project conclusion and what therefore would make sense to keep on developing further.

C) The irreplaceability of art education towards inclusion – arts disciplines are, albeit to varying degrees, essentially 'pro-inclusive' in all types of schools because they work with the pupil's individuality. This quality needs to be further strengthened.

D) **Inclusion x exclusion** – if inclusion in artistic education is to be systematically considered, then its issues need to be addressed before this "becomes apparent" at school. It is necessary for the very terms of admission to an art school to be set so as to provide equal access to education to those who are interested in art education and who, in accordance with all the relevant legislation, prove the ability to learn in the given art field. Only in this way – at the very entrance – schools declare their pro-inclusive – and not 'exclusive' approach.

PUBLICATION ACTIVITIES

As part of our publishing activities, we publish printed introductions to methodological materials. These materials in digital form are complemented by 68 teaching units, which process teachers' experiences and offer other pedagogues examples of good practice. These texts are followed by didactic materials, which are devoted to teaching in the field of art in a total of nine primary art school study areas (inclusive of teaching of improvisation and music). The third methodological material is a text, which focuses on working with socially disadvantaged pupils and on teaching children from socially excluded localities. The material is based on the project activity, within the framework of which pupils from a primary art school met with members of the Roma choir

Čhavorenge and members of the Czech Philharmonic. The total range of these three materials is over 1,500 standard pages of text.

In addition to the comprehensive methodological and didactic materials, we have also published further texts. Printed publications included: *Co-Education at Primary Art Schools – Manual for Primary School Directors*; *Examples of good practice – Support of Cooperation between Teachers and Artists*, which are based on cooperation between primary school teachers and teachers-artists from primary art schools; for teachers, we have also published a *Key Activity Manual to Support Cooperation between Teachers and Artists*; material on *Support of School Ensembles*, which presents activities to support involvement of pupils with SEN in school ensembles; *Audiovisual and film education in the curriculum* is based on implementation of courses for teachers and university students on this topic; poster *Path of Inclusion* and booklet on the topic of musical improvisation and material concerning elementary schools and primary art schools entitled *How to Support Musical Creativity of Children?* We also printed brochures for conferences in 2018 and 2020 and five brochures/programmes for concerts held in the years 2018 and 2019.

Further texts are only published in a digital form. These are primarily comprehensive methodological and didactic materials for primary art school and conservatory teachers as well as teachers of art subjects at elementary schools and grammar schools, a publication for the involvement of pupils with social disadvantages in art education, a text on the method of dramatic structuring, methodical materials for primary art school teachers (the publication builds on the *Manual for Primary Art School Directors*), a final report from the action research and other texts describing in closer detail some of the project activities. Another digital format we used in the project are e-learning courses; nine were created in total.

PILOT ACTIVITIES OF THE PROJECT

The above publication activity is based on implementation of the pilot activities. Altogether there were 156 one- or multi-day events + another 20 events carried out in the course of the project preparation. Thanks to the involvement of several hundred coworkers, we were able to implement activities that addressed a wide range of problems related to practical teaching of inclusive pupil groups. This provided us *inter alia* with valuable information on the subject of inclusion and teaching methods from teachers as well as principals. We then “transcribed” these reflections and inspirations into the materials and publications. We organised the project events in a total of 61 cities across the Czech Republic. We have almost three thousand names in the participant database. We have divided the pilot activities into seven key project activities:

Strengthening of cooperation in arts education, supporting school ensembles and sharing experiences

This activity included also ‘student observations’. Pupils of conservatoires had the opportunity to look at the real teaching of the collective subject of music teaching at primary art schools in the form of observation, and thus to obtain a primary idea of real pedagogical practice with all its potential pitfalls that the collective teaching brings. The pupils recorded their observations in the observation protocols and at the same time they could write further observations on the prepared statements. After observing a lesson, they were given an opportunity to confront any of their

further observations with the teacher, while subsequent follow-up interviews at conservatories became an important tool for “collecting” the results obtained from the observations.

In 2017 and 2018 we organised three multi-day camps of school ensembles and a total of six concerts, where pupils with SEN met intact pupils. The experience gained is described in the publication designated *Support for School Ensembles*. We also organised six workshops and one workshop for conductors of school ensembles. To share the experiences, we offered teachers and professionals a web-based discussion forum, e-learning classroom discussions, and webinar chats. We organised several academic meetings of teachers and held two major conferences on art education (November 2018 in Brno and February 2020 in Prague). We also presented the project outputs at other conferences.

Support of cooperation of teachers and artists and creation of methodological materials

The cooperation of teachers and artists was inspired by the concept of creative partnerships. Primary school and primary art school artists-teachers participated in this activity. Each tandem (primary school teacher and artist) jointly created a school project – work with the pupils took place throughout the entire school year 2018/2019. The activity was designated for whole classes with an emphasis on individual approach to pupils, including those with SEN. Through this activity we supported the cooperation of primary schools and primary art schools not only in the teaching of art subjects, but also in many generally-educational subjects. A total of 12 school projects were successfully implemented, which are described in the publication *Examples of good practice – support for cooperation between teachers and artists*.

New approaches to education and the possible forms of inclusion in art education are described in the methodological materials which contain general and special subject introductions and teaching units.

Teacher training and pilot activities for pupils

We conceived this activity as comprehensively as possible. The following partial activities represented an inherent part of the implementation:

- Purchase of materials and equipment for implementation of the activities – notebooks and software equipment, projector and screen, audio recorder, didactic materials, human skeleton model, gravure press and specialised literature.
- Creation of Didactics Stimuli – these are 10 sets of teaching units and other didactic texts for the art discipline and the following study areas of the music field: playing the brass instruments, playing two-piece wind instruments, harpsichord, guitar and drums; furthermore, suggestions for teaching composition, musical improvisation, musical teaching and for teaching pupils with visual impairment.
- Musical improvisation training, which we organised on the 7th and 8th February 2020, was held in the premises of the Music Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts, Malostranské nám. 13, Prague 1. The event was attended by 47 teachers. The lecturers were organist Pavel Černý, flutist Jaroslav Pelikán and violinist Lukáš Kuta.

- In cooperation with the Czech Philharmonic and the Roma choir Čhavorenge, in 2018 and 2019 we organised a total of 5 multi-day workshops, which were attended by pupils of several primary art schools and members of Čhavorenge. This event also included three concerts.
- On 18.9.2019, in cooperation with *IQ Roma service – the Savore džene community centre*, we organised a concert in Brno, which was intended for residents of a socially excluded locality called Cejl. The Choirchestra, Ivan Herák Band and Drahoslav Bango choirs performed at the concert.
- Experience with work with socially disadvantaged pupils is summarised in a publication created by coordinators and artists involved in the activities of the Čhavorenge choir, pupils of the primary art school and in cooperation with the Czech Philharmonic.
- In cooperation with Ponton, z. s., we organised a workshop for pupils with social disadvantage in Pilsen on 15. January 2020. The workshop was led by student of the Faculty of Education of the University of West Bohemia, Tereza Stupková, jazz singer Mirka Nowak and experienced teacher, Štěpánka Lišková.
- We organised educational activities for teachers from November 2017 to February 2020. We managed to organise a total of 28 meetings (seminars and workshops) of teachers and educationalist from the Faculty of Education of the University of West Bohemia and other lecturers, furthermore 7 seminars for the senior employees of the cooperating schools, a seminar with the Methodological portal RVP.CZ, three seminars on the topic of Teaching pupils with visual impairments at primary art schools, four seminars for teachers on the topic of CLIL Method and four trainings on Videorecording of a School Event.
- In the years 2018 and 2019 a total of 14 two-day courses on audiovisual and film education were held at the Impuls Centre for the Support of Art Activities in Hradec Králové in 2018 and 2019 (three semesters in total). The participants of the courses were acquainted with the complete methodology of film – audiovisual creation and education and development of audiovisual means of expression 7.
- From 14. to 29. July 2018 a module for children with SEN was implemented. The aim of the module was to offer space for pupils with SEN within the framework of the international summer music courses, Ameropa (and their Youth Program). These pupils and their parents received support from the project and the presence of a special pedagogue and assistants ensured a safe procedure of the courses for pupils with SEN and other participants.
- Two summer three-day courses were organised in the form of day camps on 23 to 25 July and 30. July to 1. August 2018. From 5. to 7. August and from 8. to 10. August 2019, two summer three-day courses took place in the form of a camp with accommodation of a part of the participants. Summer art workshops were organised by the Department of Art Education and Culture (KVK) of the Faculty of Arts, University of West Bohemia in Pilsen. Two of the courses were organised in cooperation with Ponton, z. s. for pupils with social disadvantage.
- We have created a total of 9 e-learning courses and 7 webinars for art school teachers and primary and secondary school art teachers.
- We undertook the training of the project lecturers and coworkers by means of 3 courses on the topic of Inclusion.

Support for inclusion at conservatoires, work with SEPs

Cooperation with conservatoires proceeded along two lines. We analyzed SEPs of several conservatoires and based on this, we created an Analysis of Needs in respect of Competencies of Conservatory Graduates. The output are proposals for corrections of SEPs and recommendations for updating FEPs for conservatoires.

We organised a total of seven seminars for students of four conservatoires on the topic of *History and Present of Basic Art Education* and on the topic of *Inclusion in Art Education*.

Support for inclusion at primary schools, work with SEPs

Cooperation with primary art schools focused on the following areas:

We analysed the SEP of 13 primary art schools. Based on this, we have prepared a *General SEP analysis*, which summarises the findings and provides recommendations for other primary art schools in the Czech Republic. As a “by-product”, there was also a proposal for possible amendments of the FEP of primary art schools in the course of any revisions of the curriculum.

We created the poster *Path of Inclusion*, which translates the findings of the project into a graphic form. The aim is to initiate a discussion among primary art school teachers and to inspire primary school principals to think about inclusion.

Within the framework of this activity we also issued two publications. *Coeducation at Primary Art Schools – Manual for School Principals* was created as a supporting material for principals of primary art schools, who decide to focus more closely and systematically on the topic of inclusion in art education. The individual chapters are not designed to direct the principals only to individual managerial steps, so that they could fulfill the legal obligations associated with joint education. The Manual is followed up by methodological materials for teachers composed to include reflections of teachers and principals who have experience in teaching pupils with SEN at primary schools.

Action research

We carried out the action research of the project in the years of 2018, 2019 and 2020. The research set consisted of tested model lessons, where each testing teacher tested 3 selected teaching lessons. The design of the research was built on a model based on a comparison of the Coghlan and Brannick (2001) and Elliott (1991) models. For the purposes of our research, the model was subsequently modified (Sochor, 2014).

The following research methods were used to fulfill the research objective: didactic analysis of the forms completed by teachers; didactic and special pedagogical analysis of written, semi-structured teacher reflections; individual semi-structured interviews with teachers; conceptual analysis of further outputs in the form of pupils' works and works or photographs acquired by teachers; video recording analysis based on a 3A video-recorded observation methodology.

The research results are summarised in a separate detailed action research report.

Pilot activities for mainstream education pupils

In the project, we also focused on mainstream pupils, who were offered a total of six sub-activities:

The music workshops were led by Jaroslav Raušer, an experienced lecturer, over the course of 4 half-year school terms. Three cycles of the workshops were held at Korunovační primary school in Prague 7, the fourth cycle was held at the Scout Institute in Prague 1. One-day workshops of the Velvary primary school were organised by Jana Vörošová at the Velvary primary art school.

Younger primary school pupils attended workshops of musical improvisation. These were held in two primary art schools in Brno during the 2017/2018 school year. The workshops were followed by a summer camp of musical improvisation at the primary art school in Jihlava. The workshops were led by an excellent pedagogue, Marcela Slaná. Two one-day workshops were organised by Robert Mimra. The experience from music workshops and improvisation workshops is summarized in the publication *How to Promote Children's Music Creativity?*

Pilot lessons of dramatic structuring were led in April and May of 2019 by lecturer Barbora Sklenáková at the Staňkov primary school, where she organised a total of 8 pilot lessons. Her experience and detailed description of this method is encompassed in the publication *Structured Drama in Teaching at Primary Art Schools, and Primary and Secondary Schools*.

In September 2018 to January 2019, in cooperation with the Music Grammar School of the Capital City of Prague, the Primary Art School and the Duncan Centre Dance Conservatory, we organised courses of contemporary dance in five consecutive lessons. Two visually impaired pupils also joined the inclusive group. The courses were led by an experienced lecturer Veronika Šimková in cooperation with special pedagogue Renata Bártová.

In cooperation with the primary school 28. října in Příbram, we organised art workshops for students of this school. The event took place in November 2017 in a beautiful and inspiring nature in Černá v Pošumaví, where the participants were staying at Hotel Racek.

In the school year 2018/2019 we organised preparatory courses in music theory at the Grammar and Music School of the Capital City of Prague. The aim of the courses of music theory was to teach pupils at the age of 4th grade of the primary school the basics of music theory subjects to the extent to enable the pupils to pass the entrance exams at the eight-year grammar school specialising in music. The courses were held from October 2018 to June 2019 in an inclusive group of 20 pupils, two of whom were pupils with SEN.

PROJECT PUBLICITY

The project results were published on the website Kreativnibudoucnost.cz. The project managers have been publishing articles since 2018 in the Special for Primary Art Schools (supplement of the School Management magazine), in the ATYP magazine and other printed materials and on-line information sources. We created a discussion space on a web forum, where a discussion platform is part of every e-learning course; a discussion was part of every activity we organised for teachers and senior school staff. We presented the project at several conferences, and we also organised two conferences within the framework of the project. Selected printed outputs from activities were delivered to all primary art schools in the Czech Republic.