

TOGETHER IN THE FUTURE

(COMENIUS PROJECT)

Introduction

Recent regulations have made us reflect further on didactic character-forming orientation and its flexibility, which scholastic autonomy provides placing particular attention on the pupils at risk of dispersion and those with different abilities. The school's aim is to activate ways in its orientation to allow them their own identity as well as the necessary competence in operating specific choices.

PREFACE

The rapid changes in this society, fast-moving ideas and contents, the need for new ways of thinking, behaving, relating to others and communicating always highlighting the importance of orientation, through socialization, with the school in first place offering greater possibilities of action.

The school's role in orientating the pupils towards the right choice must however give information, but above all give form, according to legislative precepts.

This allows for a hypothetical multi-dimensional orientation; no longer only regarding choices related to school and work, but also to life, a continuous formation of personal projects with the capacity of choosing, fully aware of reality, but above all oneself. Acquiring the capacity to communicate, to find the necessary information, continue to form oneself, knowing how to use one's own knowledge seems at present more important than having a lot of knowledge or making, at all costs, the perfect choice, still a common stereotype even though there has been much debate over this.

In fact in the world of work nowadays, there no longer exists a correspondence between studies and professions, this is also because over the last years they have become more varied, articulated and specialized compared to the proposed preparation at school.

Furthermore, the continuous transformations in the world of work contrast with the choice in the line of studies "made once and for life", made when one is very young, because they require resilience, willingness to change, basic ability and personalized knowledge.

To orientate no longer means just finding the right answer for those who don't know what to do, but becomes a further possibility to get to know oneself, find out and strengthen one's capacities and face up to one's own problems.

The more one has a greater awareness of oneself, the more active he/she will become, to self-orientate and outline, with the collaboration of an adult, a personal sufficiently defined project, which will need to foresee moments of examination and correction.

ORIENTATION AS SELF-ORIENTATION

Self-orientation may be developed directly by the pupil, but the results will have a greater effect if guided by the teacher.

The pupils will be guided towards an initial awareness of their own individuality, to help them reflect on themselves, their own characteristics and interests, to discover and practice their potentialities.

It's all about offering the pupils a new dimension to the project, putting them in the position of experimenting and seeing straightaway the effectiveness of what they are doing today and not only tomorrow.

The process of orientation therefore becomes a wall for the character-forming project including proposals for methods and contents regarding discipline and education.

AIMS

- To make changing schools less traumatic.
- To introduce the territory in relation to the possibilities of exploration and research.
- To orientate by not only reading, speaking, but performing: finding information, achieving clear communication, working with others, prearranging material for others, strengthening personal characteristics and abilities.

GENERAL DIDACTIC OBJECTIVES OF THE THREE-YEAR PROJECT

To know, to know oneself, to plan, to decide

To know means a way of using, expanding and linking knowledge, strengthening and discovering one's own abilities. Many of the contents are provided for in the obligatory and optional activities in the laboratories, therefore the method for using such knowledge is needed. More specifically the three-year objectives are:

- knowing how to identify one's own aptitudes
- to be aware of one's own interests and capacities
- knowing how to consult sources
- knowing how to select required information
- expressing oneself in personal terms
- knowing how to synthesize
- knowing how to use different forms of communication (oral, written, mimical-gestural, visual, theatrical)
- knowing how to find significant material
- knowing how to deal with information

- knowing how to work in groups
- knowing how to communicate
- knowing how to use specific language

To know oneself means focalizing on personal dimension and helping the pupils to pass from having a confused image of themselves to having a more defined one.

The method is self-reflection (on themselves and on their personal work)

The objectives are mainly:

- Analysing their own developmental characteristics
- Analysing some aspects of their personality
- Analysing their talents and skills
- Comparing the idea of themselves with the others

Planning means getting used to acting, proposing, communicating, choosing, reflecting on oneself, being aware of the resources and environmental limitations, as well as personal ones.

Deciding means being aware that people and situations change and that if necessary, a decision can be reviewed as every individual has many dimensions: attachment, friendship and interests.

FROM NURSERY SCHOOL, TO PRIMARY SCHOOL, TO JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Changing schools leads to situations of a psychological, social transition (entering a new environment, interrupting significant relationships, confronting oneself with new organizational rules, adapting study habits...) and this can create a significant disorientation in carrying on the character-forming course for the pupils.

With this in mind relations between schools are of significant importance.

Frequent didactic contacts between teachers, assemblies with parents and individual meetings between the headmaster/mistress and the families make the changing of schools more serene.

A tight link with this project in this important didactic field would therefore seem vital to enable a gradual change but also involving the pupil in a stimulating, non repetitive programme, as the current Autonomy provides individual tuition for those behind in their studies.

THE EFFECTIVE PHASE OF THE PROJECT

In the light of the afore- mentioned general reflections, a character-forming orientation scheme has been formulated.

1. Socialization with a new scholastic context
2. Exploration of personal resources to be invested in the new scholastic experience
3. Promotion of self-monitoring capacities based on the their own character-forming activity progress.
4. Acquaintance with their native territory (city, province, region)
5. Development of their exploratory capacities regarding relations between their reality and their national and European area.

This process will be under the constant guidance of the teachers also on an individual level.

METHODOLOGY AND MATERIALS

The following are used:

- Prepared cards from specialized books and magazines;
- Audiovisual backing;
- Cooperative learning;
- Theatrical laboratories;
- Computer laboratories;
- School magazine laboratories;
- Cartoon laboratories;
- Etc.

The work group responsible, fully aware that they have provided a mainly character-forming methodological course and appreciating the complexity of such matter, will make developments and definitions where necessary in the effective phase.

ASSISTANCE

The school works on the basis of the Character-forming Scheme offered for the integration of disabled pupils, deliberated by the College of Teachers, and on the basis of Individual Projects from H Operating Groups for individual pupils.

Above all it is concerned with making the change from Nursey School, to Primary School and to Junior High School easier and more pleasant through meetings with the families, the School teachers, the pupils themselves and the Institutions involved (Area, AUSL, specialists, operators, etc.).

The H operative Group has put the following strategies into action to improve educational and didactic activities:

- An accurate reading of the documentation relative to pupils with handicaps;
- a constant and systematic observation confronting and verifying within the Group;
- meetings with the educational psychologists to verify the agreed itineraries;
- programmed use of educational personnel and assistants from the Local Institution;
- use of all materials and resources to enable, facilitate and strengthen acquiring knowledge;
- activating specific laboratories.

ADDRESSEES

- The Primary School pupils of the 1° Circolo in San Salvo and its partner schools
- Teachers of the partner schools
- The families
- Rehabilitation centres
- The local Institution
- The Associations of the territory

ORGANIZATION

- Meetings between the teachers from the partner schools to elaborate a common project with the aim of agreeing on objectives, strategies and contents to activate during the three-year period 2005 – 2008
- Guided visits in the scholastic reality of the partner Countries
- Mobility of teachers
- Setting-up of a web site to share experiences and to monitor and show results