**SV5 case study report**

**Introduction**

The main purpose of my visit in an Icelandic school was the continuation of searching for an answer to the question: “What can I do to improve the quality of teaching and working in my school?” Observation of good practices and exchanging experiences with the teachers from partner schools and universities and gaining information (just like during my first study visit in Wales) enriched my knowledge and inspired me to think and reflect on the school work. They also inspired me to think about our (teachers) role in the system of education. During the visit I had the opportunity to learn ways of developing students’ writing, reading and numeracy skills and also learn how different institutions in Iceland support the school in improving the quality of its work. While observing the lessons I focused on the organization of the teaching process. I noticed that students have a lot of autonomy during classes and as a result I introduced some of observed methodological solutions in my own lessons. My greatest interest was attracted by the way of shaping students’ attitude. The way of influencing young people teaching them cooperation, responsibility both for themselves and the others and trust which are the most important values in Aslandsskoli. An extremely important element combining all of the actions is the conviction that to make a better school you have to create a nice atmosphere in it. Reinforcing positive behavior we reduce the negative one. This system is based on clear rules, rewards and setting the limits which behaviors are not accepted in the school, constant monitoring and the visual way of presenting the results.

**Research questions**

I asked myself the following questions: how do we in my school develop students’ attitude? What in our actions can be improved to ensure pedagogical success?

**Project: plan and methods of collecting data**

I prepared a plan of the following actions, using quality and quantity methods, which should have gave me an answer to the research questions.

1. Data analysis – school documents (the school statute, the prevention and pedagogical programme, topics of the lessons with tutors from the registers from the previous school year).
2. Visual assessment – where in a school and in what graphic form are the school rules presented.
3. Survey for 4th and 8th grade students (the youngest and the oldest in the second education stage) which contained two parts. In the first part, students had to mark 3 out of 8 given rules, which according to them are the fundamental rules in our school. The second part was an open question. Students had to define what responsibility, truthfulness and respect are.
4. Interviews – individual discussions with people employed in the school. The main topic of those conversations was their opinions on the school’s pedagogical system.
5. Preparing the report and presenting its results to the teachers.
6. Discussion and planning further actions.

**Results/analysis**

The analysis of the school documents showed that in both school statute and prevention and pedagogical programme, records specifying school actions and tasks which shape students’ attitude and make them aware of some modern world issues appear. We have a certain aim, which is: “*Creating conditions which support comprehensive evolution of each student, taking into account their skills and capabilities, supporting their aware and autonomous process of learning in nice and safe atmosphere which is based on fundamental moral principles (truthfulness, responsibility and respect for the others) including their national identity.”*

During the whole schoolyear issues stated in the prevention and pedagogical programme were implemented in the school life during lessons, tutor’s hours, workshops with psychologists and in the day care. They involved all the areas marked in the school programme. Lessons subjects in the registers showed that students were familiarized with school rules and they created their own class rules based on the school regulations. In most of the classrooms these class regulations are displayed in the graphic form as posters (tab. 1). They are not in a few classrooms and in the hallway.

**Tab. 1. Graphic presentation of school regulations.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Classroom number** | **rules** | **posters** |
| **1st floor** | | |
| **15** | yes | 2a and 3a |
| **16** | yes | 1a and 1b |
| **18** | yes | 3b |
| **19** | yes | 2a |
| **20** | yes | 4b and 4a |
| **2nd floor** | | |
| **25** | yes | 6a |
| **26** | yes | 8a – only trip rules |
| **27** | no | 7a |
| **29** | yes | 5d and 5a |
| **30** | yes | laboratory regulations |
| **Library** | | |
| **3rd floor** | | |
| **36** | yes | 7c |
| **37** | yes | 6c |
| **38** | no | 4c and 7b |
| **40** | no | 5b |
| **42** | yes | 6b |
| **44** | no |  |

Survey results showed that fundamental values and rules included in the school’s mission are known to students (both the younger ones and the older ones, but to a various degree). Most students (about 75%) understand the terms: responsibility, truthfulness and respect for other people. They can also give real life examples.

**Tab. 2. Students survey results – question 1**

**Students had to mark 3 out of 8 values that in their opinion are fundamental in our school.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **class** | **4a** | **4b** | **4c** | **8a** | **8b** | **8c** |
| **Number of students** | **23** | **22** | **24** | **15** | **17** | **12** |
| punctuality | 11 | 15 | 9 | 7 | 8 | 5 |
| % | **48** | **68** | **37** | **47** | **47** | **42** |
| **truthfulness** | 13 | 8 | 12 | 3 | 10 | 4 |
| **%** | **57** | **36** | **50** | **20** | **59** | **33** |
| **responsibility** | 11 | 5 | 13 | 8 | 9 | 8 |
| % | **48** | **23** | **54** | **53** | **53** | **67** |
| resourcefulness | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| % | **13** | **9** | **8** | **20** | **18** | **33** |
| care for cleanliness | 6 | 10 | 5 | 7 | 3 | 0 |
| % | **26** | **45** | **21** | **47** | **18** | **0** |
| autonomy | 6 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 4 | 6 |
| % | **26** | **9** | **29** | **6** | **24** | **50** |
| patriotism | 1 | 9 | 5 | 5 | 7 | 2 |
| % | **4** | **41** | **21** | **30** | **41** | **17** |
| **respect for other people** | 17 | 15 | 19 | 10 | 7 | 6 |
| **%** | **74** | **68** | **79** | **67** | **41** | **50** |

**Tab. 3. Students survey results – question 2**

**Students define the rules (understanding the terms). They give examples of behavior reflecting these values.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **class** | **4a** | **4b** | **4c** | **8a** | **8b** | **8c** |
| **Number of students** | **23** | **22** | **24** | **15** | **17** | **12** |
| responsibility | 10 | 9 | 7 | 12 | 13(1+/-) | 8 |
| % | **43** | **39** | **29** | **80** | **76(4)** | **67** |
| truthfulness | 20 | 20 | 23 | 12 | 16 | 9 |
| % | **87** | **91** | **96** | **80** | **94** | **75** |
| respect for other people | 11(5+/-) | 11(2+/-) | 14 | 13 | 9 (4+/-) | 6 |
| % | **48(22)** | **50(9)** | **58** | **87** | **53(24)** | **50** |

We discuss students’ attitude with them at the beginning of a schoolyear, at the end of the first and second term while assessing their behavior and according to the situation and various incidents during the schoolyear. We do not have systematic and consequent actions. According to my observations and other employees’ opinions we can form a thesis that students theoretically know how they are supposed to behave, what kind of attitude they should present but they have difficulties in using this knowledge in everyday situations. This is the reason why some discipline problems e.g. during breaks appear. Maybe it is so because we do not have enough pedagogical actions and we lack consequence. We should think about homogenous actions and a solution that would involve the whole school community. The results of this research will be the starting point for the work of teachers teams. We are going to search for methods that can make our pedagogical actions more effective.

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