

Education for the future

What education and schools should be for?

Education is a process that leads us to self discovery and to discovering the world around us, encouraging diversity. It gives the skills to solve problems and improve critical thinking. It provides us with general knowledge to contribute to a healthy society and teaches us how to become citizens, givers and not only takers.

Education prepares the students to become tolerant respectful and able to peacefully solve problems, through appropriate knowledge for the real world and for the future.

The student, as a product of education, should be able to apply theoretical knowledge in the society and should be able to make changes.

Our Recommendations

1. Curriculum: System around the students rather than students around the system

- Implementation of subject choice system for each individual student according to their interest.
- Focused syllabus for each subject. Studying in depth, narrowing the focus.
- Introduction of a new subject: a neutral introduction to the political and economic structure of the country.

2. Assessments of subjects

- A specific number of exams should be externally assessed.
- Creation of guidelines of assessment criteria for the teachers to apply.

3. Accountability of teachers

- Teachers should receive students' feedback on a regular basis.
- Internal and external evaluation of teacher performance in class.
- Teachers should be rewarded when his/her performance is distinguished.

4. Relevance of the curricular programme to the outside world

- Promote exchange programmes among schools internationally.
- Encourage voluntary work.
- Incorporate current affairs issues in lessons.

5. Teaching style, methodology:

- Emphasize the importance of critical and logical thinking.
- Teachers' implementation of new creative ways of teaching (more group work and interaction, videos, audios, hands on etc.).
- Stress the importance of students' initiatives.
- Practical experimental work.

6. Management of schools

- Each classroom dedicated for one subject only. Students change classrooms according to subjects. Each classroom will be suitably equipped for the hosting lesson(e.g. scientific labs, video etc).
- Smaller classes (around 15 people).
- Students, teachers and parent councils should have a voice in schools' management.
- School autonomy: individual schools choosing their own teachers. This would promote competition and therefore would raise the teaching quality very quickly.
- Schools should always appoint permanent teachers (minimum on a yearly basis) except in special cases.

7. Aim, statement, transparency

- Create and communicate the school's ideals and principles to unify students, teaching body and staff towards a common aim.

What should the role of students be?

In order to improve the school environment and quality, we believe that students should play a role as well, using our own talents in various areas as best as we can, for example, by having initiatives, by introducing and leading new activities etc.

We, students, should be collaborators, creative and passionate, always ready to support each other (students supporting teachers, older supporting younger, natives supporting foreigners etc) and taking (or being given) responsibility for looking after school facilities.

We should also develop a strong and committed student council through which we could influence the school policy.

We also believe that a better environment would be built through a better, warmer relationship with teachers, through class and individual dialogue, availability for each other and mutual respect.

The students' document "Education for the Future" is the final product of a long group work carried out among 28 student representatives from 15 Central and Eastern European countries.

The work consisted of two main stages: the first one was an on-line exchange of ideas through our students' blog, the second one, the most significant, was a week-end workshop in Duino at which 13 students participated.

During the workshop we students, had the opportunity of appreciating the diversity regarding educational issues in each one's country, but also all the common points we share. Our main goal was in fact to collect those main points, analyze them and write them down: the document "education for the future" is the summary of this process, to which we gave commitment and enthusiasm.
