

VET Study visit Prague, Czech Republic, 12 - 14 October 2011

Visit details

1st day morning

Study visit participants:

- Costas Pistos (expert from Cyprus)
- Berthold Van Leeuwen (Project Advisory Group)
- Lucie Procházková (expert from Czech and host)
- Věra Kovářiková (expert from Czech and host)
- Harald Weber (European Agency staff member)



Berthold and Věra



Lucie and Costas

1st day morning

Aloys Klar's Secondary School (Střední škola Aloyse Klára, Vídeňská 756/28, 142 00 Praha 4)

Guest: PaedDr. Zuzana Kaprová (MŠMT ČR; Ministry of Education)

Practical schools are only for students with mental handicaps and can be implemented as a separate secondary school or as a programme; they provide activities of daily living and part of vocational skills. A sheltered school is a sheltered workshop or with a working assistant. Topics are social competencies, communication, computers. Students receive a certificate and can continue in further education. Some finish without a certificate, or with a partial qualification certificate. All students have an individual learning plan.

Aloys Klar's School is a mixture of different educational programmes (but not a practical school) with about 215 students. It has 10 educational programmes of which 2 are for students with severe mental handicaps, 5 programmes finish with a final exam to continue at a University, and 3 finish with a certificate (2 more years needed with these certificates to reach maturity level). Two follow-up courses after vocational certificate to get the maturity level. Students are aged 15 – 25 years and are enrolled in 2, 3 or 4 years programmes.

Companies can get direct money for providing jobs for people with disabilities. The Czech Republic has a quote system; employers with at least 25 employees have to pay a penalty for each non-filled place for a person with a disability, or to buy products made by people with disabilities. The penalty money goes to the State's budget.

Students have good opportunities after finishing the school. Within the school, students have better chances to be oriented towards different opportunities, which is better for career planning. As students know the school, it is easier for them to change between paths. There are good provisions at school, so the wish to change is not limited by accessibility issues of the educational institution. 2 to 3 students per year change their course.

Teachers employed have first studied their profession, and then continued studying to become a teacher.

For the institution it is a challenge to deal both with the variety of students and the portfolio of programmes. General subjects are taught in all programmes; programmes cover theoretical and practical subjects. The staff also consists of career counsels, psychologists, drug prevention specialists, social worker, and there are offers with regard to prevention and environmental education.

In mainstream, classes have about 30 students, while at this school class size is typically 8-12 students, depending on the particular needs. Also a second teaching assistant is available for some time, but not as a personal assistant. Each class has a class teacher, responsible at first to stay in contact with parents, students etc, to write certificates etc.

Just recently (September) it was stopped that people without SEN can join these schools. Only those at risk of exclusion from mainstream education due to health conditions are still allowed.

The school has cooperation with labour offices, counsellors and also with companies. The school has a network of companies, but it is not the only responsible actor in that process. There are also NPO for supported employment available.

1st day afternoon

Visit in Special educational center for handicapped learners Loretánská ul.

Jaroslav Jezek School, School for Children with Visual Impairment

The school is a practical school, established in 1807, and started with 5 blinds students. Until 1990 there were 3 schools in Prague for blind, residual vision and visual impaired students. Now only 2 schools exist both for students with all types of visual impairments. In this school, usually the students with higher difficulties join. They are aged 3 – 20 years, starting in Kindergarten, primary and practical school. Often they have a combination of visual and mental disabilities. There are currently about 70 students in the school and about 170 outside in mainstream education.

Competencies to be achieved: self-service, cooking, daily activities; aim: to become more independent. All students have an individual learning plan.

From the school's description: "The school includes:

- a nursery for children with visual impairment
- primary department for children with visual impairment
- department for children with complex special needs
- secondary department for children with visual impairment
- after-school care centre and an after-school club
- boarding facilities
- school canteen
- special pedagogical centre for children with visual impairment

This school belongs to the oldest pedagogical institutions educating children with visual impairment in Europe. It was founded in 1807. It was predominantly a German school until 1918. Jaroslav Jezek, a famous Czech composer, attended the school from 1912 to 1919. This originally private school became a state school in 1948.



The aim of our work is to reach the maximum independence for our students. We want them to be self-confident people who will be the equal of people they meet during their work and lives.

Our students have easy access everywhere in the school premises. A lot of very important construction adaptations have been designed to ensure their safe mobility.

The school offers a broad based curriculum. In addition to the compulsory subjects professional training is also offered, for example two foreign languages for gifted children and music lessons for students talented in music. They have the

opportunity to play a musical instrument, to join a choir or to play in the school orchestra. Some children enjoy working in the ceramics workshop.

At Jaroslav Jezek School we are concerned with the development and rehabilitation of child as a whole and we encourage self reliance and as much independence as the character of particular impairment allows.

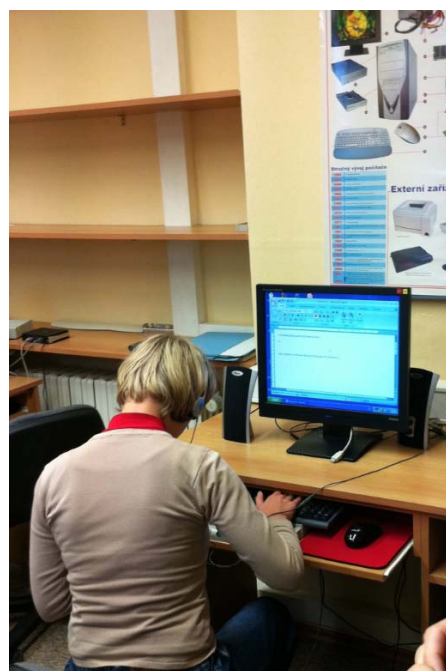
Jaroslav Jeiek School is a teaching school of the Teacher Training College of Charles University. Both Czech and foreign general public are interested in our school - there are teachers, health service workers, architects and students among our visitors. The school is in touch with Czech Blind United.

The members of the multidisciplinary team are SEN specialists, a psychologist and a case worker. They take care of children with visual impairment who attend mainstream schools. The staff members provide an advisory service for pupils and parents.

High quality education is guaranteed by appropriately qualified teaching staff and care staff. In addition there are also skilled mobility and orientation instructors, ICT and applied sports specialists. A lot of useful aids, textbooks and educational projects have been developed by our teachers and care staff. For outstanding work in the field of visual impairment the current Head teacher has been awarded a medal in 1998.”

Transition plans exist for the time after school. School advisor and supervisor recommend what students can do, but it is difficult to get a job. They start about 2 to 3 years before the end to prepare the transition. The last year, students have practical phases in technical, administrative or vocational schools. In that phase there is a close cooperation with parents. The school has no statistics where people went afterwards, but from own knowledge some go to sheltered workshops, day care centres or many at home afterwards. But students from this school could also continue at Aloys Klar school. Currently, 20 students are in the practical school, of which 1 or 2 might continue in VET. Teachers working there have a University degree in education with focus on visual or mental disabilities.

The school offers also services to students outside the school. Parents can contact the special education centre when their children are in Kindergarten or primary school. Parents get counselling which school would be good for the child. The centre then contacts the new school about 6 months in advance so the teacher can go to the centre to be prepared. The centre usually is responsible for a region, but this one is responsible for the whole country as it is financed by the Ministry of Education. Help is given to all types of schools, including VET. External teachers learn how to teach the target group, and they can come as often as they like. They are, however, not obliged to come. The centre prepares a DVD and written recommendations focused on the needs of a particular child. Materials are prepared by the special education centre (2 – 3 persons, including psychologist), but without the support of teachers.



2nd day morning

VET in Aloys Klar's Secondary school

Presentation by Dalimil Vrtal. The school has students from 15 to +20 years of age, and is governed by the Prague Council. In the past it had only students with visual impairments, but today all types of handicaps can be found. He estimates 5 – 10 % of the students having physical disabilities, and 15 – 20 % having social impairments. Most of the students have SEN with regard to learning difficulties, dyslexia, dysgraphia. But up to 20 % of the students have no handicap at all ('reverse inclusion').

The newest programme offered is textile designer. Participants often continue to study applied arts at the university.

From the school's flyer:



“At present, the school is governed by the Prague Council. The school curriculum follows contemporary pedagogical and psychological trends in educating people with various handicaps, especially physical and social. Education is focused in youth with special educational needs and prefers cooperation in small groups. There are up to 14 pupils in one class and this number allows teachers to have an individual approach to their pupils. The school accepts graduates of primary, practical primary and special primary schools for three or four-year branches of education - the three-year ones are completed with a leaving examination and pupils receive a certificate of vocational training; the four-year ones are completed with a final school leaving

examination (maturita). Graduates with a certificate of vocational training can be accepted for a follow-up study (two-year branches of education), which is completed with a final school leaving examination.

Education provided by Aloys Klar's Secondary School is - in a priority way - meant for the pupils with special educational needs, i. e.:

- pupils with medical and social handicaps
- pupils with visual and hearing impairment
- pupils with physical handicaps
- pupils with mental handicaps and autism
- pupils with disturbed communication ability
- pupils with behaviour disorder
- pupils with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- pupils with long-term or chronic illnesses
- pupils with combined impairment



Healthy pupils can study at Aloys Klar's Secondary School, too.

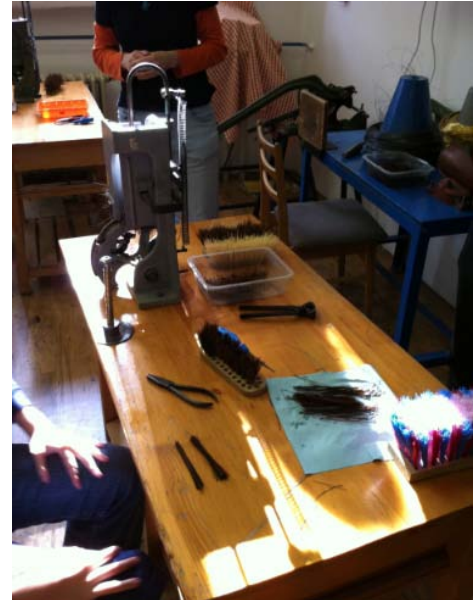
Special methods, procedures, forms and means are used during special teaching and various aids are used: compensatory, rehabilitation and didactic, as well as special text

books and didactic materials. There are minimum 6, maximum 14 pupils in a class. The service of teacher's assistants takes advantage in an educational process.”

Programmes include:

- Upholster
- Ceramist and decorator of ceramic
- Production of ceramic
- Bookbinder
- Processer of natural wattle
- Reconditional and sports masseur
- Sports and reconditional masseur
- Textile designer
- Business (follow-up study)
- Sports and reconditional masseur (follow-up)

Students stay 9 years in primary education, then they have to choose a school for secondary education. Education counsellors inform them about the different offers in educational programmes.



Every year, about 4 – 5 students are dropping out. There is also the opportunity to interrupt studies (e.g. during pregnancy). A prolongation of studies up to 2 years is possible, but a statement from a psychologist and an individual study programme is needed. About 10% of the students make use of this prolongation offer.

The school offers (like every secondary school) specialists on prevention, i.e. they have preventive programmes on drugs, conflicts with law, cigarettes, early pregnancy, AIDS, partnership problems.

The school also offers various sports activities, some even with non-disabled students. They have established co-operations with similar schools in Slovakia, Poland, Germany, Hungary and France, and they join European projects as well. They also participate in qualification programmes for adults, supported by the ESF, to raise the level of employability.



2nd day afternoon

Visiting of a working place of a school leaver with disability – Česká televize [Czech television]

The afternoon was dedicated to visit the workplace of a former student, who presented to us his area of work in Czech television. Also his direct boss provided feedback. It was very interesting to listen to an individual biography of a former student and to see him working in a mainstream environment without problems. It was highlighted that his father was very important in the process to get this particular job.



Czech television building layout



Stage setup in a studio



Upholstering workshop



Studio at Czech television