

Description of an example of successful national/local VET programmes for learners with SEN in Spain

1) Short abstract

The example takes place in an ordinary secondary school that receives students from 12 to 18 years old with special educational needs. It is located in a small city in Menorca and operates under the educational administration of the Balearic Islands. Being under a regional educational department, it is highlighted that this gives the flexibility in curricula necessary to cope with the great diversity at the school setting. In this school, it does not matter which type of disability learners have. They usually arrive at this school at secondary education level and afterwards, in order to support them in their transition to working life, they continue studying at this school. They can choose a pre-vocational training course or a Vocational Educational Training course, both in the field of Commerce and Marketing or they can get support in the transition to employment. The choice between the first or the second vocational qualification level depends on the disability of the student and their circumstances.

2) Highlights / Uniqueness

It is unique because the school receives students with special educational needs from the secondary education level. When the students finish this educational period, in order to support them in their transition to working life, they continue studying a pre-vocational training course or a Vocational Educational Training course or they get support for transition to employment. In order to practice an inclusive methodology, this school has implemented its own further measures to enrich the curriculum and the socio emotional development of its students. For example, there is an extra period of teaching per teacher in order to decrease the number of pupils per class, co-teaching and task sharing among teachers, peer to peer learning, and practices within the community. Therefore, all teachers are covered and all children are included in classes, this results in the non-existence of integration classes and instead, small groups within a big group. Learners with SEN are an important part of a school community and learners have a big role in making their own decisions in close collaboration with the local authorities, their families and a local non governmental organisation. It offers the pupil an individual approach and as such the school deals with the individual and not with problems. In 2006, they received a prize from the Spanish Ministry of Education for their work in inclusive education. In 2010, they were one of the finalists of a prize awarded by one of the most popular daily newspapers in Spain 'El Pais'. Finally, it is important to mention that the impact of the inclusive programme of this school is not only in this town, but has also been extended to the surrounding villages.

Availability of evaluation data

The school is about 20 years old. At the last course, there were around 450 pupils, 59 teachers and 10 more workers. During 2009/2010, three students with mild mental disorders studied the first course of pre-vocational education training. Alaior is a little town in Menorca Island of 9.453 inhabitants (2006). Since 1991, this centre has received about 45 learners with different types of disabilities.