

EDUCATION OF FOREIGNERS AT THE SCHOOL

Private Associated School, Starozagorská 8, Košice consists of 2 organizational units: Private Primary School, Starozagorská 8, Košice (established in 2006) and Private Grammar School, Starozagorská 8, Košice with study branches 7902 J 74 Grammar School – bilingual study (established in 2011) and 7902 J Grammar School - general study (established in 2015).

The school provides a model of European school as integrated education:

- a) **basic education** (primary and lower secondary education)
- b) **secondary education** (currently in the form of an eight-year form of study in Grammar School, in the future according to the ambitions of students also a four-year and five-year form of study in Grammar School)

Private School Club for children and Private Leisure Time Centre are inseparable parts of the school.

Since the beginning of its activity, the school has **actively and successfully participated in preparation and implementation of developmental and educational projects**, achieved success in project activities within the Slovak Republic and on international level and achieved success in competitions within the Slovak Republic.

Since 2008, the school has participated in the **project of experimental verification of CLIL methodology** in education under the auspices of Slovak National Institute for Education in Bratislava. In the scope of the project we have integrated English Language into natural sciences, humanities and educational subjects. Implementation of this methodology enabled us to admit English-speaking students – foreigners and provide education for them at our school.

Thanks to high-quality educational activity, teaching foreign languages and organized after-school activities, our school has become the fourth primary school in the Slovak Republic and first in Košice awarded by the European Language Label. This award was received by the headmistress of the school on 24 September 2010 and we rightly consider this our most valuable award.

Since school year 2016/2017, Private Primary school has been teaching **mathematics according to the methodology of Prof. RNDr. Milan Hejný, CSc.**, who is a Czechoslovak mathematician, a specialist in didactics of mathematics, professor at the Faculty of Pedagogy of Comenius University in Prague.

Since school year 2017/2018, Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic has approved of the **project of experimental verification** in Private Associated School, Starozagorská 8, Košice, named **Effectiveness of Jolly Phonics methodology in English Language** in primary education under the auspices of National Institute for Education in Bratislava.

Further ambition of the school was to develop its profile with the aim of providing **international education** by means of listing itself **among the schools that provide IB education** (International Baccalaureate). **Since school year 2017/2018**, our school has been listed as the second school within the Slovak Republic among candidate schools of the international PYP programme (Primary Years Programme) that is governed by the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) seated in Geneva in Switzerland. PYP education is offered all over the world

- in Europe, Asia and the USA. Thus, our school is going to develop further and provide educational process on a both European and national level.

Due to the specialization of school defined in the School Educational Programme HUMAN and with regard to strategic aims of the school, Private Associated School has since its establishment targeted at education and upbringing individuals who are tolerant towards other cultures and nations. The education of Slovak pupils from 6 years of age in classes attended also by foreigners and the participation in common after-school activities contributes to the fact that they are able to understand various cultures, orientate themselves in the world and perceive foreigners as a natural part of their everyday life. The number of foreigners of various nationality, such as Vietnamese, German, British, Arabic, Ukrainian and American educated at our school has been continuously growing. Due to the development of new work possibilities for foreigners in the region we expect this number to grow further. Private Associated School can provide the children of foreigners with high-quality education, cooperation and support during learning Slovak Language. At the same time, our ambition is to enable Slovak pupils to learn and acquaint themselves with the traditions and culture of other nations, understand and tolerate their differences. By educating foreigners together with Slovak students, we enable Slovak students to improve their English Language skills in a natural form, as the communication language is English. Through various activities our students learn traditions of the countries from which the foreigners are, they enjoy new cultural and aesthetic experiences, develop their communication skills in English Language, improve intercultural skills, support acceptance of other cultures and nationalities with an active interest in their foreign classmates and their lifestyle. Annually in November, our school organizes **Thanksgiving Day** at school that is understood not only as the insight to the traditions of the USA but also of other countries. Students present their own cultural programme and experience. In the **European Club** established at our school, foreign students can attend cultural activities organized by the city, e.g. Košice City Days, and acquaint themselves with the beauty and history of the city and the culture of Slovak Republic.

Apart from the above-mentioned activities, a **Foreign Language Academy** is annually organized by the Private Associated School, where the family and relatives of the students can see the progress of their child and results of creative and educational activity performed by both Slovak and foreign students.

Education of foreigners is personally provided by the primary years' teachers and a secondary Slovak Language teacher who teaches at the lower secondary level of Primary School and at Grammar School. This is a positive thing for a student, as he/she is not confronted with a new teacher. In each class we have at least three foreign students of various nationality. This is a great challenge for the teachers not only in terms of classroom management and correct methodology, but also in terms of multicultural education and education towards tolerance of various cultures and understanding of the world outside the Slovak Republic.

Since 2013, teachers teaching at our school have been providing basic and extended Slovak Language courses for foreign students in accordance with the prescribed documentation approved of by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic, namely: "Educational plan for basic and extended language course of state language for foreign students" and "Curriculum of the basic and extended language course of state language for foreign students". They also follow the principles of "Methodical recommendation for teaching Slovak Language in basic and extended courses of state language for foreign students". These courses are provided in the afternoon in the premises of the school.

Apart from the educational plan and the curriculum, pedagogic documentation to a basic and extended Slovak Language course consists also of a document called "Overview of education of foreign students in a language course of state language" and "personal records" that the school maintains. These two documents provide complex information about each individual child especially to:

- teachers,
- parents,
- school in which the student attends compulsory education,
- supervisory authorities.

District Authority in Košice approaches the education of foreign students in a helpful way, supports organizing basic and extended courses of state language for foreigners at school, provides the school with methodical counselling and thanks to their concurring opinion to the application of school for financing courses of Slovak Language for foreigners, Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Slovak Republic has granted the school with financial means necessary for providing the above courses.

Language courses for foreign students are assessed positively at our school. They help us to fulfil both educational and pedagogic goals. Results of our work are visible during the education itself as well as in the after-school club. When pupils in the class understand each other, each common activity is a joyful experience for them. Our foreign students continue in their education also at home and together with their family members they practise Slovak Language. This approach supports mutual communication between parents and school. Many parents of foreigners do not have the necessary command of Slovak Language to understand complex administrative issues regarding the adaptation of their child into the educational process. From the above reason, the education of their child is also education for themselves and as such is an asset for both parties.

Teachers who have been teaching basic and extended courses of Slovak Language to foreign students at Private Associated School have come to the following conclusions:

- students acquired the basics of Slovak Language during the course on a sufficient level that enabled them education at primary school
- students improved the quality of spoken language, fluency and readiness to speak and extended their vocabulary in all subjects of study
- students obtained positive relationship to Slovak Language
- Slovak Language is the language of instruction in individual subjects of the given Year,
- during lessons of Slovak Language, the students acquired real-life Slovak Language used in standard social situations, speech etiquette,
- during the individual work or in small groups the students were given frequent opportunities to speak in Slovak Language and speak without barriers. Thus, they gained greater confidence, improved skills to react adequately to stimuli (tasks and questions) and learned to help each other
- students acquired positive relationship towards the teachers of state language and in case of need they addressed them any time during the day, not only during the lessons
- students continuously acquired a more comfortable position within the class and presented their skills in various aspects of education (Art, P.E. etc.)
- during breaks and common activities students communicated bilingually which helped to mutual development of communication skills in both Slovak and English Language.

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