



A Different Way to Learn in School

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Abstract

“Each Student by Horizon: an innovating methodology of learning” is a project that focuses on each student’s individuality and respects his rights and obligations, values the freedom of action and thinking. It intends to form autonomous, responsible, critical and supportive citizens, capable of implementing changes for the construction of a progressively better world.

This methodology allows each student to be gradually more autonomous on his learning; provides skills to students to become critical, responsible citizens, solidarity, with entrepreneurial skills; It provides students with the necessary tools so that they build their learning, effectively respecting the pace of each student’s learning and promoting the taste for learning.

It is also our aim to allow the students to have access to real experiences of society, both at a national and European level. This will ensure that each student builds the foundations of their own lives, in a safe and effective way, so he learns how to behave, to be, to know and to act.

Our goal:

- Democracy and Social cohesion
- Learning process
- Evaluation system where no one is excluded
- Our scientific and pedagogical work is based on the idea that all students can be successful if adequate techniques are used
- Students must be involved in an interesting and significant learning process
- Respect the different learning styles and different cognitive functioning
- Work on team: Tutor/Students/Teachers/Parents/Community

How?

- We “rebuilt” the school organization.
- The student plans his own week schedule, choosing what, when, how to do the learning process, using an Agenda to plan and re-plan all work: the freedom to choose what to work allows the individuals to seek questions for which they are intrinsically motivated to develop.
- We organize the school taking into account the activities and not the school subjects. Therefore the classrooms/spaces of the school are the “mirror” of the specific work. Example: Da Vinci’s room - it is a room dedicated to the autonomous work. Each student has a Work Plan for each subject. This Work Plan, made by the teacher, has a set of objectives to be achieved and the tasks to achieve those objectives. Completed each task, the student asks the teacher for evaluation. In the teaching-learning process the student goes through three different steps: discover, learn and assess.
- We have created a tutorial system where a tutor is responsible for a small group of pupils having a closer relationship with each student, monitoring his work. It is the student who chooses his tutor.
- The students work during the week in different kinds of groups, according to the task they are doing. They don’t “belong” to a specific class.
- The rhythm of each student is respected, diversifying the learning situations.
- Students are responsible for managing their own learning.
- Cooperative learning / sharing of power.

We can say that the project of our school, Colégio Vizela, “Each Student by Horizon”, is based on Aristotle’s idea: “There’s nothing harder than becoming equal what is different”.