



## **Integration of a Differently Abled Pupil, Leading to his Unexpected Graduation from a Science-based High School**

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### **Abstract**

The case presented is that of a pupil suffering from Angelman syndrome (characterized by intellectual deficiency and inability to communicate) who, as a result of his ability to observe and the use of innovative, integrative teaching strategies, succeeded in obtaining a qualification, his experience becoming an exceptional pilot project for the area concerned.

The school previously attended by this pupil confirmed that he passed his leaving certificate, with the help of the Facilitated Communication technique. He approached the Liceo Frassati in the hope that a smaller school would be in a better position to provide support for his integration; in fact his experience of three months in another high school had caused him considerable anxiety.

The teachers involved received the following training: they attended courses on Facilitated Communication (F.C.) held and coordinated by trainers and supervisors of the F.C. technique; they attended more general meetings on the integration of disabled pupils with experts who offered specific classroom advice for the pupil; they met with specialists in child neuropsychiatry.

The classroom methods employed were as follows: observation of the pupil; establishment of a relationship with the pupil and familiarisation with his behaviour; definition of the teaching and testing methods to be employed following advisory meetings with experts; verification of the attempts made regarding both didactic and disciplinary methods; acknowledgement of the methods which worked; structuring of new attempts.

Detailed reports containing progress reports on all aspects of the teaching-learning experience were drawn up on a yearly basis.

Any aspects of the programme which proved unworkable were not simply removed but instead replaced with a carefully thought-out alternative. Staff experimented with teaching methods and study programmes and gradually adapted objectives and tests, with unexpected success, enabling the pupil to pass at the end of each year to the next year, and finally obtain his high school diploma with the help of innovative methods.