

The school in interaction with its environment

In order to talk about the school's interaction with the surrounding environment, we have to establish the definition of interaction as such. In short we can say that interaction is the reciprocal action of two or more individuals or social groups and the mutual influence they have on one another's behaviour, which in turn leads to moderations, reorganization of previous values, held beliefs and attitudes. The joint effort of particular local communities engaged in such cooperation should be directed at these changes, so they develop in accordance with established goals and values, and bring about sufficient outcomes. If all of these parameters are involved, we can talk about social integration.

The first important element of integration is a meeting and a dialogue – a constructive exchange of ideas or experiences which develops mutual understanding and communication. Another important factor of integration is the equal status of those participating in the dialogue conducted without any pressure effected or superiority on the part of either participant. Thus the parties engaged in a dialogue must accept an identical or similar value system, which constitutes the last parameter of integration.

No school exists in isolation. Its existence not only depends on the socio-economic structure of the region where it operates in, but it also depends on the cultural history of a community, as well as on the local and national traditions or currently existing educational policy. Therefore, in order to fulfill its goals – educating and raising its pupils, the school should take full advantage of its location, create and strengthen lasting bonds with the surrounding environment. In consequence, it must search for partners interested in the promotion of common values. Who are these partners, where can they be found and how to recognise these common values which are to be cultivated?

The state school must keep in mind that it operates under certain legal norms, one of which is the Educational Act of 7 Sept 1991 and we also mustn't forget about the Curriculum Basis for General Education together with other documents outlined by the Ministry of Education. However, the key goals are found in the curriculum basis, which states that a school must provide its students with suitable conditions for a comprehensive/ multi-dimensional personal development that is intellectual, mental, social, health, aesthetic, moral and even spiritual development. It should cultivate attitudes or traits such as team work, communication and social skills, responsibility for oneself and others as well as promote self-awareness and independence.

As we can see, the goals set forth for schools these days are quite ambitious and extensive. In fact, the school has to help its students to understand the problems of modern civilization and to teach them how to function in today's complicated global society, at the same time taking advantage of its cultural, scientific or artistic achievements.

Now, it is obvious that such difficult tasks cannot be successfully completed without the support of the surrounding environment. Therefore, the school must gradually establish successful cooperation not only with parents but also with the local government, youth and

social organisations, associations, religious groups, cultural centres, future employers and even with the media.

The teachers and authorities of the Grammar School nr 3 established in 1999, which has grown out of the former primary school nr 5, have become aware of the fact that changes are inextricably linked with modern civilisation, and that the school must strengthen its identity within the local environment and introduce its own authorial educational offer.

We thus turned to sports and arts as fields of great creative potential. At first, it was very hard to create sufficient conditions for development due to lack of facilities and poor infrastructure, but we've established successful cooperation with entities operating in our neighbourhood. Moreover, the first significant achievements of our students during sport championships and cultural events have also played a major role in establishing long-term interaction with the local environment.

Why searching for educational success in sports and using this tool out of all others at hand to activate our youth often reluctant to traditional forms of education?

Undeniably, active participation in individual and team sports encompassing an element of rivalry strengthen our character and personality. Systematic practice during training requires endurance, diligence, independence and team work skills – traits outlined in the aforementioned curriculum basis. It also creates the so called higher social capital – an important factor in modern psychology and economy.

The list of entities with which the school cooperates in terms of sports is very long. One of the most important partners is the Tarnobrzeg City Office – the organiser of many sports events where our students can show their talents and exercises their skills i. e. the Summer Grammar School Youth Championships,, volleyball and handball tournaments together with events held by the Poviast School Sports Union. For years The students have been supporting the local sports and recreation centre in hosting miscellaneous recreational events – the most famous one being The Freyer Run or the Siarkowiec Run co-organised by Witar Club. Of course Grammar school nr 3 closely co-operates with other similar schools in the region by organising various tournaments i.e. the HEADMASTER Cup Championships. Other partners include the Social Care Centre, the Oyanma Carate Club and the local Health Protection Agency interested in the realization of the project entitled “Keep Fit”.

The school does not aim at breeding renown sports celebrities but it wants to raise pupils who understand the need for leading a physically active and healthy lifestyle, and who can find something for themselves in the many sport disciplines as a form of spending one's free time. Therefore, following these objectives and also striving to cultivate a proper code of conduct of a sports fan, our physical education teachers organize student outings to watch the local Siarka Sports Club players perform during a volleyball, basketball or a table tennis match .

Being aware of the fact that nowadays, in the fast-developing society, one cannot just stick to one form of interaction, the school constantly seeks new forms of co-operation and one of the most recent outcomes of such search is the school being involved in joint activities with the Kotwica Club, which shares similar educational policy and ideological values. We decided to co-operate within the Socrates Comenius Regio project, co-financed by the Foundation for the Development of the Education System –“ the National Agency for Lifelong Learning Programme”, which requires the involvement of educational institutions from other European

countries. Consequently, our co-operation has been developing not only on a local but also on an international level.

The educational project initiated by Grammar School no. 3 in Tarnobrzeg entitled “Sports and Arts as Instigators of Educational Development” will give an opportunity of establishing long-term partnership of 4 partner institutions from Poland including: Tarnobrzeg Municipality, Kotwica Yacht club in TBG, TBG Cultural Centre and Grammar School no. 3 with 4 other educational partners from Romania such as Inspectoratul Scolar Al Judetului Olt, Liceul Cu Program Sportiv Slatina City Hall Slatina Palatul Copiilor “Adrian Baran” Slatina.

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