

Breaking the pattern at class level - a practical example

How can we improve the education environment in our classroom?

8.a is a class with 27 pupils - 20 girls and 7 boys all aged between 14 and 15 years; they used to make a lot of disturbance and made it hard for the teachers to teach. This is how we turn it around.

Target: To create the best class in the world for the mutual pleasure of pupils and teachers

Criteria:

- To speak out loud in class without fearing to be “embarrassed/made fun of”
- To keep quiet and listen when someone else is speaking (teacher or class mate)
- To keep up the good spirit in class – to laugh with and at each other in the “good” way
- To leave no one alone – to take care of each other
- To respect oneself and each other
- To be present on time – also when a break has finished
- To be active during education
- To make the teacher meet the pupils in a positive way

Measures/methods:

- Ask the pupils what in their opinion characterizes the best class in the world – ask individually, in groups and in common (formulate sentences)
- Lessons on cooperation in school’s own forest together with social worker at street level, parents’ council arranges night stay e.g. in school’s own forest
- Inform parents
- Inform parent’s council
- Advisor present during some lessons each week and weekly talks with selected pupils
- Point system to reward intended behaviour
- Time on class is spent on common activities – role plays, games, discussions, etc.
- Change seats at least once a month
- Meetings in class once a week administered by pupils in turn
- Take up various themes – here everybody can express their attitudes without others commenting – incl. teacher (time for reflection)
- The team members support each other to stay on the positive track

The point system should promote well-being among the pupils. Therefore, it is important that the rewards support the social environment.

Point system:

- Each criterion will release one point per lesson/subject. E.g.: if all pupils are present on time this will release 10 points.
- At the end of each lesson teacher and pupils will together decide how many points are gained... e.g. 2 pupils will represent the class
- Points gained are fixed and can be turned into rewards – so you build up again or save
- The class will save together
- The points must be visible in class

E.G.:

100 points = Social time on class with cake

500 points = Pizza evening – we make pizzas at school and dine together

1000 points = A trip in agreement with the parent's council (bowling, football golf or?)

5000 points = Class sleepover at school