

Plus Success Methodologies - Turma Mais (Plus Class) and the Phoenix Project

1. Need/challenge addressed

Mainly related to cognition/learning achievements, but also attendance, behaviour, language/multiculturality and motivation areas.

2. Level of intervention

Selected (targeted at a group of pupils, that are separated into sub-groups according to their learning needs).

3. Intensity of the intervention

This is an ongoing intervention.

4. Target group and age group

The measure is targeted at specific school years according to the pupils' needs in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd cycles of the basic level and the secondary level.

5. Conditions and different steps necessary for the implementation of the measure

1. Involvement of the mid-level leadership to implement strategic change in order to focus on prevention of failure and support all pupils;
2. Teacher training about the implementation of the measure, the monitoring tools, the contracts that are made with pupils (on the learning and behaviour aspects), motivation strategies and formative evaluation;
3. Creation of an empty class, the Plus Class, (with no pupils allocated to it at the beginning of the school year) in the timetable or the "nest" classes;
4. Appointment of the school's project coordinator;
5. Definition of quantitative goals to the pupils transition rate, quality of success and disciplinary problems;
6. Explaining the project and its goals to parents (or guardians) and pupils; Parents' approval is required.

6. Decision makers on the type of support and possible adaptations

The Class Council (composed of all class teachers and the Class Head teacher) and the project coordinator are responsible for the decisions on the type of support and adaptations.

7. Delivery of the measure

The measure is delivered by the teachers.

8. Overall responsibility for implementation

The overall responsibility lies with the School Head Teacher that delegates the main decisions on the project coordinator. The responsibility is shared with the Class Councils (the class teachers).

9. Obstacles

The main obstacle is the lack of acceptance/ involvement in the project by teachers, school leadership and/or parents which may be overcome by providing accurate information about the project and training for teachers and leaderships. Setting goals for the project is also important.

10. Monitoring and assessment

The measure is monitored at several evaluation moments of the school year, using as an indicator the transition rate and the learning achievements in the subjects involved in the measures. The teachers and the Class Head teacher are responsible for monitoring and assessment. The project coordinator and the School Head Teacher are informed and involved if there is a need for adaptations to the measure.

11. Results

The results are very positive. Some results of the Plus Class methodology in 3 school clusters:

Transition rate from one grade to the next				
Grade	Before the measure		During the implementation of the measure	
1 st	98% (2010/11 and 2011/12)		98,9% (2012/13)	
2 nd	90,8% (2005/06 and 2006/07)		95% (2009/10)	

Transition rate from one grade to the next				
Grade	At the school cluster		Comparing to the national average 2005/06 to 2011/12	
	During the 3 years before the measure	During the 5 years of implementation of the measure	National Average	School average
7 th	74% (1999/00 to 2001/02)	85% (2002/03 to 2006/07)	81%	90%
8 th	80% (2001/02 to 2003/04)	90% (2004/05 to 2008/09)	87%	91%
9 th	77% (2002/03 to 2004/05)	91% (2005/06 a 2009/10)	83%	91%

Transition rate from one grade to the next		
Grade	2010/11 e 2012/13 (before the measure)	2013/14 (during the implementation of the measure)
11 th	90,6%	91,5%
12 th	58,6%	83,3%

12. Resources and funding

Funding is needed for hiring the teachers needed for the extra classes and for training courses for teachers and leadership.

13. Current status of the measure

The Plus Class measure started 12 years ago at the Rainha Isabel Secondary School (Estremoz). Nowadays about 50 schools are implementing it. The Phoenix Project has been implemented since 2008/2009 academic year when it was developed at the Campo Aberto-Beiriz school Cluster.