

## Schlangenfuß



### What were the conditions and steps taken that have contributed most to the success of the measure?

Students appreciate the individual approach achieved through the small group sizes and the close relationships to their teachers. The students receive full attention from their teachers and are given as much time as they need to understand the material. Teachers concentrate on a student's individual strengths. The courses are project oriented and include elements of experiential pedagogy like group activities outside the formal learning environment (e.g. cooking for each other or outdoor activities like climbing) aimed at raising self-esteem. They feel less under pressure than they did in their former schools and experience less stress in exams. They are highly committed in school, a fact that is reflected in the high attendance rates, low dropout rates, and — in the words of one student — sense of “family-like” atmosphere. For these reasons, learner satisfaction can be considered high.

The close cooperation between *Schlangenfuß* and all other parties involved in a case - especially the relationship to the parents - ensures that students receive any professional support they need, e.g. therapy. The career counselling is a further key success factor, because it prepares students well for the transition into upper secondary schooling or work.

With regard to transferability, there are some key elements which could be adopted in initial schools: The first such element is inter-professionalism, which is one of the key success factors in *Schlangenfuß*. An interdisciplinary team of experts needs to be established in schools, assume responsibility for at risk students and work closely on the different cases. The work of this team should include team meetings, supervisions, interventions and close cooperation with external experts. A close, professional relationship between the parents and the school is also essential. In some cases, home visits could even be very useful.

The next element is the professionalization of teachers. Teachers need to be sensitised to the topic, reflect their own attitudes towards students who suffer from school phobia and be able to respond to their problems. The development of these abilities, attitudes and competencies is essential and should be acquired through education and training.

Some structural conditions need to be improved to accommodate the intensive relationship work (a key success factor). One such condition is a reduction in class size, which *Schlangenfuß* experience shows to be highly relevant. Team based teaching, which has already been implemented in the *Neue Mittelschule* schools should also be fostered. These changes require additional financial, spatial and personnel resources.

### Which stakeholders were involved in identifying needs and in the planning and design of the measure?

*Schlangenfuß* cooperates closely with all parties (persons/institutions) involved in a case, e.g. parents, medical professionals, psychiatric hospitals, youth and family services (MA 11), psychologists and therapists, job coaches and other experts.

### Who was involved in implementing the measure?

*Schlangenfuß* cooperates closely with all parties (persons/institutions) involved in a case, e.g. parents, medical professionals, psychiatric hospitals, youth and family services (MA 11), psychologists and therapists, job coaches and other experts.

### Who has key responsibility for implementation?

*Schlangenfuß* is implemented by the 18. *Inspektionsbezirk* of the city of Vienna, more precisely at the *Heilstättenschule* located at the *Zentrum für Inklusion und Sonderpädagogik (ZIS 11; Centre for Inclusion and Special Education)* in Vienna.

**How are the different people involved in implementation being supported (e.g. do they receive specific training?)**

Prior to joining the *Schlangenfuß* project, the teachers worked as compulsory school teachers and completed the training programme for special education teachers. The work of the interdisciplinary team includes team meetings, supervisions, interventions and close cooperation with external experts.

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**What have been the obstacles to introducing the measure? How have they been addressed?**

There are also some students who are not in a condition to participate in *Schlangenfuß*. These students need clinical care and can then participate in the programme.

Due to some structural changes, the programme is currently facing a new challenge: Formerly, the students remained registered at their former schools during the time in *Schlangenfuß* and even received their certificates from these schools. However, since the beginning of this school year (2017/18), the students are no longer registered at their former schools, which makes it more difficult to reintegrate them into mainstream schooling before they graduate. It is now especially difficult to reintegrate them into schools during the school year.

**Is there a monitoring/evaluation system in place?**

Yes.

**What is monitored?**

Data reflecting on the proportion of students who graduated successfully are collected, which also indicate what further education the students have started after *Schlangenfuß*.

**Who monitors and how?**

The monitoring data are based on a school-internal evaluation, where qualitative and quantitative data are collected every year and summarized in an annual report.

**Are further evaluation planned and when will the results be available?**

Yes, monitoring data are collected every year and summarized in an annual report.

**What has been the impact of the measure?**

Students appreciate the individual approach achieved through the small group sizes and the close relationships to their teachers. The students receive full attention from their teachers and are given as much time as they need to understand the material. Teachers concentrate on a student's individual strengths. The courses are project oriented and include elements of experiential pedagogy like group activities outside the formal learning environment (e.g. cooking for each other or outdoor activities like climbing) aimed at raising self-esteem. They feel less under pressure than they did in their former schools and experience less stress in exams. They are highly committed in school, a fact that is reflected in the high attendance rates, low dropout rates, and — in the words of one student — sense of “family-like” atmosphere. For these reasons, learner satisfaction can be considered high.

The close cooperation between *Schlangenfuß* and all other parties involved in a case - especially the relationship to the parents - ensures that students receive any professional support they need, e.g. therapy. The career counselling is a further key success factor, because it prepares students well for the transition into upper secondary schooling or work. The monitoring data reflects these key success factors: 76% of students graduated successfully from the programme, while 24% left the project early.

Of the students who graduated from the programme, 22% went on to an upper secondary school, 32% started an apprenticeship and 22% participated in further courses and training.

**What resources are involved (material, space, amount of funding)?**

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**Further info (website, contact person e-mail, organisation details)**

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**relevant documents, photos or videos**

<https://spz11.schule.wien.at/fileadmin/s/911023/system/Schlangenfuss2013.pdf>

<https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/575dc3dc-a6fb-4701-94a2-b53d62704567/language-en/format-PDF/source-70239344>

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