

## **European School Karlsruhe meets up with schools from all over Europe**

In the last two years we have enjoyed a partnership with a school in Poland (Ilawa) and two schools in Italy (Naples). In November we invited these schools for a working meeting here in Karlsruhe.

The schools are working together on a common theme, which is analysing strengths and weaknesses of students and how to support them individually in their learning process. This project has received support from the European Comenius Programme.

Our school team welcomed 11 students and 20 teachers with a varied programme for their five day visit to Karlsruhe. This included three workshops in which a review of progress up to date and the planning of the next stage of the project were discussed.

In spite of the similar aims of the project the starting points for improvement for each school have proved to be very different. While in Karlsruhe we wish to offer different learning opportunities, the project in Naples has had to concentrate on how to provide students with a sufficient motivation to attend school regularly.

Barbara Lomax (ESK) gave a report on the development of the listening group for which this year 18 teachers have offered their services. This service is for students who wished to share their problems confidentially with a teacher. The special thing about that project is that advice will only be given when requested by the student; the main aim being to provide a secure atmosphere in which the student can talk. We also spoke about the problem of bullying.

Oliver Beisert (ESK) presented the „Learning Gateway“ project. This is an internet learning support programme for students from all 13 European Schools. The Learning Gateway Class Server makes it possible to individualize the programme of studying according to the individual needs of the students and can also be used as a virtual classroom so that students can work at home. To make ourselves perfectly clear, please note that until further notice we expect the students to attend school daily!

Martin Baumgarten (ESK) informed the group of the way plans were going for the project involving the whole of year 6 during the Special Olympics National Games which will be held in Karlsruhe in June 2008. It is very interesting to note that our partner school Vittore Emanuel II in Naples has had the same idea and their students have worked with mentally handicapped people in Special Olympic Games.

All partners agreed on establishing a blog to facilitate future information exchange. In this students can write about the student teacher relationship in general, about the individual learning support they receive or they can exchange personal experiences about what motivates them and doesn't motivate them in school. From our side this blog will be under the guidance of Mrs. Barbara Lomax.

In the morning workshop students from all four participating schools prepared a presentation on the following questions:

- What motivates me in class?
- What makes a good school?

The results of the students work showed us that the four schools have indeed based the project on what the students themselves feel to be the areas for improvement. The students wish to be treated more as individuals and to receive classes from teachers who use modern learning methods.

From the 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> May 2008 students and teachers from ESK will fly to Naples to for the final meeting with the partner schools to work on how the school can be further improved.