



DESIGNING CURRICULUM FOR PRE-SCHOOL TEACHERS WHO WORK IN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM SETTINGS

In-depth Interviews Summary

PERMACULTURA CANTABRIA

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DESIGNING CURRICULUM FOR PRE-SCHOOL TEACHERS WHO WORK IN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM SETTINGS

In-depth Interviews Summary

Parayas Special Education Public School (Colegio Público de Educación Especial Parayas)



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<http://ceeparayas.blogspot.com.es>

The Parayas Special Education Public School is specialized in the development of competences and skills of disadvantaged kids and young persons from 3 to 21 years old, in order to make them more personally and socially independent. The School provides assistance to 78 persons with intellectual and physical disabilities who are not able to go to regular schools. The Parayas Special Education Public School team is composed by the following multidisciplinary staff:

- 28 teachers: therapeutic pedagogy teachers, employment training teachers, etc.
- 6 physiotherapists
- 11 social health workers: In charge of transportation, transfer the students to different areas of the school, food, hygiene.
- 1 nurse: In charge of providing medicines to the students who have regular medication.

The motivation of all the staff is one of their strengths as all of them do their best to improve the students' skills and capacities.

Facilities

- **School:** The school is at the first floor. The classes are from 9:30am to 4:30pm. The classrooms have all the necessary material for the classes.



Picture 1: Parayas's Main Hall and Classroom

- **School Cafeteria:** Each student has his own nutrition plan and the meal is given according to their needs (special food, chopped or grinded food, etc.).



Picture 2: School Cafeteria

- **Residence:** This is a complementary service with the collaboration of the Marqués de Valdecilla Foundation. Some students, who are not able to stay at their homes, stay from Monday to Friday. The residence is composed by 3 units, which each unit has its own TV, toys, videogames, living room, dorms and bathrooms. All of the students have dinner, different workshops and activities.
- **Green Areas**

The Parayas Special Education Public School does not have any architectonic barriers, allowing people with mobility problems to make full use of all spaces and resources. The School has elevators, ramps, toilets, etc.

A weakness factor of the school is they do not have enough budget to have more ICT tools and orthopaedic resources. All the material and tools for this kind of education is very expensive.

Education

The school prepares different education plans for each person in order to develop the skills and capacities according to their real needs. Each student is different from the rest of the students and needs an individual working plan.

The courses are organized in cycles and levels. The school do not teach subjects but Functional learning; for example: Teaching Communication instead of Spanish Language, Knowledge of the environment instead of Science, etc.

In order to provide the best education, each classroom has 5 or 6 students with similar age and special needs. In this way the teachers can use similar materials and sources in the group, according to the students' needs.



Picture 3: School's teaching material and Time Timer for each activity

The Parayas Special Education Public School carries out complementary activities, in which the students have one different activity per day. Some of the complementary activities are theatre, dancing, chorus, music, sports, etc.

To facilitate inclusion and development in their own communities, the school takes the students to the city where they teach them to carry out day-to-day activities such as crossing the street, taking a bus, shopping, etc.

For young students, who are able to start a professional career, the school provides them 4 different workshops:

- Gardening
- Textile
- Pottery
- Home Autonomy

In addition they have 2 Professional Training Programmes that deepens the learning acquired during the previous workshops:

- Textile and laundry: The school looks for different industrial laundries, hotels, etc. for the students' inclusion.
- Gardening: The school looks for different garden maintenance companies, parks, etc. for the students' inclusion.

Communication

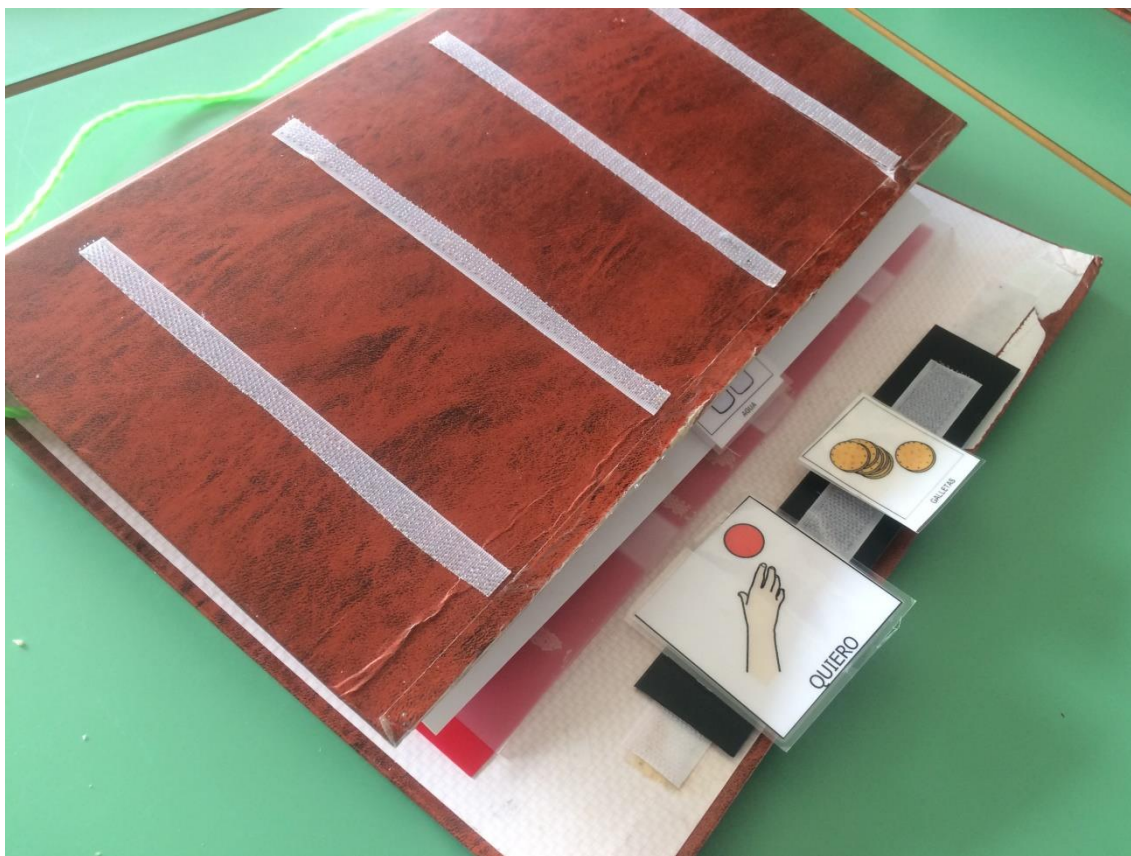
Communication and Interaction students/students and teachers/students

The Parayas Special Education Public School uses different ways of communication according to the students. For example:

- Speaking
- Writing
- Body language and facial expressions
- Signing
- Pictograms Symbols: Pictograms are arranged on communication boards and books so the students can choose the symbol they need to indicate what they want to say. The pictograms have the word written underneath with capital letters, which helps those students who are able to read or identify words. They use capital letters because it is easier for the students to learn the words. They use ARASAAC pictograms and when a word is not in that system, the teachers create their own pictograms. For small kids they use real things pictures as they are not able to conceive the meaning of the drawings.



Picture 4: Pictograms board



Picture 5: Students' book using pictograms

Communication and Interaction teachers/families

The teachers and families communicate through a notebook in which they write comments regarding special activities or incidents happened during the day. For example, the family write down in the notebook when the student does not sleep well so the teacher knows he/she is tired and can have a different kind of behaviour. Another example is that the family write down in the notebook and sends pictures by email when the student visits a nice place during the weekend, so that the teacher can ask more questions about his/her weekend and show the pictures to the rest of the group.

Communication and Interaction between the staff

One of the most important things and challenges of this school is the good communication and coordination between the staff. The staff always coordinate regarding reactions they need to have according to the special behaviour of some students. In this way all of them can reduce bad behaviour as a team.

Their most important communication tools are Google Drive to share information and documents and Whatsapp for important notifications. Also they use email, announcements board, etc.

Communication and Interaction school/other organisations

For the most effective way of learning, some students combine learning at the Parayas Special Education Public School with other regular schools. As the students attend both schools, the institutions communicate between each other by email or telephone to discuss important matters concerning the students.

ICT Tools

All the classrooms have computer, tablets and smartphones. Tablets and smartphones have become very useful devices, due to the facility of their manipulation and use. The computer is used to show pictures and videos from activities done by the students.

The school has electronic school boards and projectors for visual and hearing stimulation devices. They use different internet and Youtube sources for students who are not able to talk, or write.

They have talking pens which speakers activate when they are passed through magnetic labels.

They adapt buttons to regular toys, so that the toys can talk, move or do something, in order to stimulate the time response of the students.

Training

The school is always looking forward for their continuous improvement through training. The staff have annual training according to specific and real problems at the school. For example, Methodology to teach persons with specific profiles how to read or write; Methodology to control behavioural problems, etc.

“El Molino” Special Education Center (Centro de Educación Especial “El Molino”)



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www.aptacan.com

“El Molino” Special Education Center is a public and private school, which means the government pay one part of the students’ course and the families pay the other part. The school is specialized in children and youngsters from 3 to 25 years old with autism, including Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD is the name for a group of developmental disorders. ASD includes a wide range, “a spectrum,” of symptoms, skills, and levels of disability¹) and Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD is the name for a group of persons who have some but not all characteristics of autism or who have relatively mild symptoms²). It is the only school in Cantabria specialized in autism. The School provides assistance to approximately 40 persons from pre-school, elementary, secondary and professional training. The school team is composed by approximately 19 persons with the following profiles:

- teachers: therapeutic pedagogy teachers, etc.
- social health workers
- persons in charge of the transportation
- persons in charge of the leisure activities
- managers

The motivation and the expertise of all the staff is one of their strengths as all of them do their best to improve the students’ skills and capacities.

A weakness factor of the school is they do not have enough budget, taking into account all the material and sources are expensive.

Facilities

“El Molino” Special Education Center shares main facilities with Vital Alsar Public School. They share common areas and carry out common activities to help the integration of students from both schools.

- **Classrooms:** The classrooms are divided according to the students’ age and similar capacities. Each classroom has maximum 5 students with 2 therapeutic pedagogy teachers. The students have class from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

The pre-school classroom has more play areas and they have more periods of time for relaxing and play.

To foster the inclusion of the students in the society, the students from secondary have their own classroom in a regular school.

- **Nursery School Service:** The school offers nursery service from 9:00 am to 10:00 am to those students whose parents are not able to take them at 10:00 am.
- **School Cafeteria:** All of the students have a daily meal. In addition the school teaches them healthy eating habits, flatware manipulation and hygiene.

¹ National Institute of Mental Health of U.S.A.

² Autism Speaks Organisation

The school has not done additional installations to facilitate their mobility as they do not have students with physical disabilities.

Education

“El Molino” Special Education Center uses the TEACCH Methodology in their classes, enabling them to teach the students in an environment where they can work together as a team or individually. According to the TEACCH Methodology, the teachers carry out the following activities:

Physical Organization

The classrooms’ furniture is organized having enough space for independent and team work. The work areas are clearly marked so the student can independently find their way to different locations within the classroom. The classrooms have play and learning by doing areas. All the areas are well organized with all relevant materials available.



Picture 6: El Molino Classrooms

Scheduling

The students have a daily schedule which is reviewed at the beginning of the day. This schedule helps the students to know the activities they will be doing during the whole day. It includes the teachers who will be helping them during the activities. Also they have information about their daily menu, weather, season of the year and other important information. Also some students have their personal schedule.



Picture 7: Daily classroom schedule

Working

Each student has his/her own education plan, establishing individual objectives and curricular adjustments. All of the teaching activities are adapted according to the specific capacities and skills of each student. The students might have different books and workbooks according to their level, special needs and objectives even if they are at the same classroom. The school teaches them to work in teams but also being independent during the activities.

Some students combine their studies in “El Molino” Special Education Center with another regular school.

To facilitate inclusion and development in their own communities, the school teaches them day-to-day capacities such as:

- Shopping
- Road safety education
- Medical Awareness Programme: A programme carried out by the school which aim is to get the students used to going to doctors and hospitals.

In order to foster their day-to-day capacities, the school takes them to the city to carry out the activities mentioned above.

The school provides a Reprography Course as Professional Training. The school has a classroom where the students are able to produce and print graphic material especially by mechanical, photographic and electronic means. The students learn to create different products such as agendas and notebooks. In addition, they carry out a store simulation where the students also learn how to sell those products and develop some other capacities for their professional development.



Picture 8: Store Simulation

“El Molino” Special Education Center carries out complementary activities such as speech therapy, psychomotor education, therapy with dogs and horses, swimming classes, musical stimulation, artistic expression, surf, trekking, etc.

Communication

Communication and Interaction students/students and teachers/students

“El Molino” Special Education Center uses different ways of communication according to the students. For example:

- Speaking
- Writing
- ARASAAC pictograms
- Alternative Communication through tablets

Also the school teaches them communicative expression in an emotional level and social skills.

Communication and Interaction teachers/families

The school considers important having a constant communication with families, in order to get some feedback from the students.

Communication and Interaction between the staff

The communication between the staff is done through weekly meetings, for coordination purposes.

Communication and Interaction school/other organisations

As some of the students combine their studies in “El Molino” Special Education Center with other regular schools, both schools have a constant communication and interaction for the following purposes:

- Work to reach the same objectives
- Work in the same way
- Work according to their individual education plan

Both schools have at least 2 meetings per year. The first meeting is held at the beginning of the year to define the individual education plans. The second meeting is held at the middle of the year to assess and follow up the education plans and discuss possible issues.

They use telephone and email for important notifications and additional comments.

ICT Tools

The school uses tablets as a way of teaching and communicating to those students who are not able to write with pencils/pens or who are more motivated to learn using tablets.

Some classrooms have a computer for the following purposes:

- The students use it for certain activities.
- Teach some students to surf on the internet and use main applications. They have their own email accounts.
- The teachers download and print new material.
- The teachers do evaluations and reports.

Training

All of the staff constantly have training in different subjects provided by the Ministry of Education, private companies, A.P.T.A.C.A.N. or their own staff. The staff have face to face or online training using e-learning platforms.

Cisneros Public School (Colegio Público Cisneros)



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<http://cpcisneros.es/>

The Cisneros Public School is located in the City Center of Santander. From the 7 schools in that same area, the Cisneros Public School is the one with the most number of students and receives the highest number of inscription requests. The school has approximately 468 students from pre-school and elementary. The Cisneros Public School team is composed by the following staff:

- 38 teachers (speech therapists, therapeutic pedagogy teachers, etc.)
- 3 social health workers
- 1 physiotherapist
- 1 janitor

Although it is a regular school, the Cisneros Public School has been admitting students with special needs since 1986. In the beginning, the school had students with physical disabilities, cerebral palsy, spine injuries, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, spasticity, etc. Now-a-days the

school does not have students with severe mobility impairments, but with autism, Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and other syndromes.

To foster and facilitate the inclusion of students with special needs, the school carries out all of the activities with the rest of the students. There are not special activities for these students in order to avoid separating and excluding them from the school environment. In this way, all of the students learn to work in a respectful and tolerance environment, acquiring positive values in their lives.

In addition, the school facilitates the inclusion as it is based in 3 principles:

- Presence: The students with special needs are included in the same activities and classes with the rest of the students.
- Participation: The participation in class and other activities. Interaction with other students and teachers.
- Achievement: Students' performance assessment, achievement of concrete results, etc.

Facilities

- Classrooms: They have 25 students per class including 2 persons maximum with special needs.
- Dining Room: The Cisneros Public School's dining room is one of the healthiest school dining rooms in Spain. The dining room provides the best meals using high quality products and eco products (meat, milk, vegetables). It avoids fried, breaded or any other way of cooking that is bad for the students' health.
- Classroom for 2 years old children: The purpose of this classroom is to facilitate the children's incorporation to school. The classroom has different materials which are combined with different methodologies to provide emotions for an easy and peaceful welcome.
- Library: The library is located in the best place of the Cisneros Public School. All the furniture is ecologic, including the carpet. The library is free of noise which makes the students read and concentrate in a nice and peaceful environment. It has computers, a projector and equipment for radio transmissions. The library has the best books for children, which can be consulted or lent. Now-a-days most of the parents are part of a project which aim is to register the books in a digital platform for a better management and control.



Picture 9: Cisneros Public School's Library

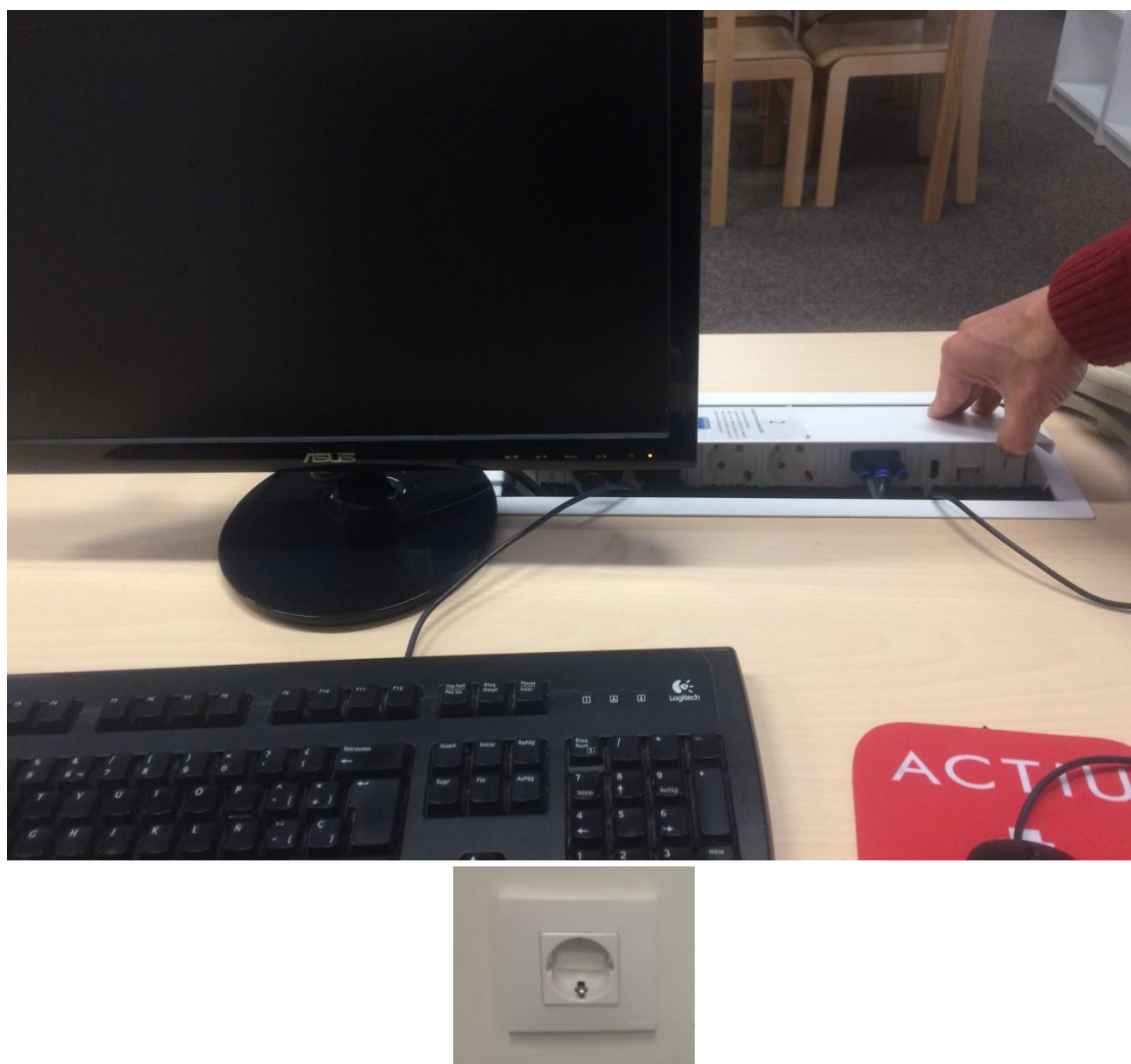


Picture 10: Library's Radio Equipment and computers

- Cisneros Sports Club: The students are allowed to practice sports after school and during weekends. The school organizes matches and tournaments.
- Refuge Area: The school has areas where disadvantaged people can take shelter in case of a fire, earthquake, or other emergency, when evacuation is not possible or safe.
- Auditorium

The school has eliminated barriers by the adaption of the facilities allowing people with mobility problems to make full use of all spaces and resources of the seven floors. The school has ramps, adapted vehicles, wheelchairs, adapted toilets and elevators to ensure and facilitate the access of people with special needs to every corner of the school.

In addition, the school has done adaptations for the students' safety such as stair nosings, door finger protectors, outlet safety covers, etc. to help reducing accidents on stairs.



Picture 11: Outlet Safety Covers

Education

The Cisneros Public School's Educational Project is divided into 5 pillars representing the human body:

Head:

The head represents diversity; each person thinks, feels and acts different. For this reason, diversity is one of the main school's pillars. The school provides assistance to 50 students with special needs such as cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, down syndrome, etc. Each class has 25 students including 1 or 2 persons with special needs, reaching the following benefits:

- Foster inclusion of students with special needs in the social environment.
- Acquisition of new values and virtues such as respect, love and tolerance, while working with companions with special needs.

Legs:

The legs represent sustainability. This pillar is divided into three axis: health, environment and values.

As a matter of awareness, the school considers important not only having awareness workshops, conferences and theory activities, but put more into practice activities in the real environment in order to have a real impact and do positive changes in life. For this reason, the school has been carrying out different activities for more than 10 years, paying special attention to have coherence between their pillars, axis, values and activities. For example:

- Health: As the school teaches healthy habits, they have a healthy dining room with eco products, high quality oil, etc. Also, the school carries out healthy breakfasts with eco products, at least once a year, for the students to learn how to get a nice breakfast that is good for their health, nice with the environment and fair trade. With this breakfast initiative the students get to work with the three axis: health, environment and values.
In order to teach the students healthy habits, it is forbidden to eat candies and junk food. For birthdays, the parents bring homemade desserts.
- Environment: All the furniture is done with sustainable materials and they are changing to LED lights. They use eco paper and free software (Linux). The school uses renewable energy as it has solar panels. The school has agreements with Greenpeace, Diversification and Energy Saving Institute (Instituto para la Diversificación y Ahorro de la Energía) and Santander's City Hall.



Picture 12: ECO Umbrella Stand



Picture 13: Recycle Bins made of recycling materials

- **Values:** The school has organized a group of volunteers who help those parents with more needs, through clothes, food, money and homework support. The school is included in the book *Digna Gente- small story of people who do things with other people to have a better society*, as one of the most committed organisations to the society, with more than 30 years carrying out activities for their communities, such as conferences, Saturday afternoons, theatre, expositions, etc.

Hands:**Hand 1: Reading**

The school encourages students to be good readers and to acquire a reading habit through the following strategies:

- Providing students with good books: The school buys the best books for children which can be consulted or lent.
- Give time to students for reading
- Providing students with a nice place to read: The library is located in the best place of the school, it has the proper light and free of noise for the students to concentrate.

The school carries out activities in which the older students read books to younger students.

Hand 2: Digital Competences

One of the most important factors to foster the digital competences is the use of new technologies with new methodologies. Many schools and centers combine new technologies with old pedagogy methods, which is a mistake.

Another important factor is to introduce children with new technologies when they reach a right age. Babies have to develop physical capacities and skills such as eye-hand coordination, space time perception, etc. before the introduction of technologies; otherwise the babies can have sleeping and hyperactive problems. For this reason, the school starts to introduce new technologies in the following way:

- 1st and 2nd grade: correct use of mouse and keyboard
- 3rd to 6th grade:
 - Use of email-The school provides an internal email account using the school domain and having total control of the passwords.
 - The school teaches them how to use different applications for working on spreadsheets, documents, make online presentations, etc.
 - Students from 5th and 6th grade have their own small laptop.

Whole body:

The whole body represents sports and arts. The students are able to practice sports and activities related to arts (music, theatre, etc.) during and after class.

The Cisneros Public School teaches the children different painters, including their styles and they create their own artistic paintings replicating the painters' styles. Also they have workshops with painters to see how they create new paintings.



Picture 14: Collective painting made by all the students and teachers using Yayoi Kusama's style



Picture 15: Paintings done using other painters' style and Clay Humidifiers made by students

Mouth:

The mouth represents the English language. The school carries out a Language immersion project which consists in the following activities:

- The school has split English classes with approximately 12 pre-school students in order to have smaller groups for their English level improvement.
- The school records English material such as videos and audios in flashdrives so the pre-school students can practice at home.
- An English Native Teacher is during the students' recess and leisure time so the pre-school and primary students can be more in touch with the English language.
- Primary students have 1 subject in English Language.

The Cisneros Public School considers that in order to have a good performance, the school has to work with all the students and all the time. This means that all the pillars and strategies have to be implemented by all the staff and students, in a long-term basis, for a real positive change. Due to the constant work according to their philosophy, pillars and values, the school has won many awards, such as:

1st place Drugs Prevention by the Health Counselling

2 Coherence Awards by Nature and Man Foundation (Fundación Naturaleza y Hombre)

1st place in diversity support by the Spanish Committee of Persons with Disabilities Representatives (Comité Español de Representantes de Personas con Discapacidad). This price was given for the school's 20 years of service to people with special needs and is the only school that has won this prize.

Communication

The school pays attention to the human relationships and interaction. They are sure that the pillars and values cannot be shared without warmth as a component of education. For this reason, the school looks forward to having warm relationships between students, families, teachers, other institutions, etc.

Communication and Interaction students/students and teachers/students

One of the main strategies to facilitate the inclusion of the students with special needs in their communities is to create a respectful environment in which the rest of the students and teachers treat them as equal. Having classes including people with and without special needs make students to have a positive and normal interaction and get used to establish good relationships with persons with different profiles.

Communication and Interaction between the staff

Cisneros Public School has realized that a good communication and interaction between the whole team is one of the most important clues for success during the support and attention to people with special needs. One of their main challenges is to have enough time for meetings to discuss and follow up the particular case of each student.

ICT Tools

In the beginning, the school had students with physical disabilities and mobility impairments, cerebral palsy, spine injuries, spasticity, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, etc. For this reason, the school carried out the Key Project (Proyecto Tecla) in which they invented a software and computer that make students communicate like Stephen Hawking's system. With this system, students were able to communicate with an eyebrow, tongue, finger, feet or other part of the body movement.

In addition the school had some other appliances to facilitate the communication and training of these people such as:

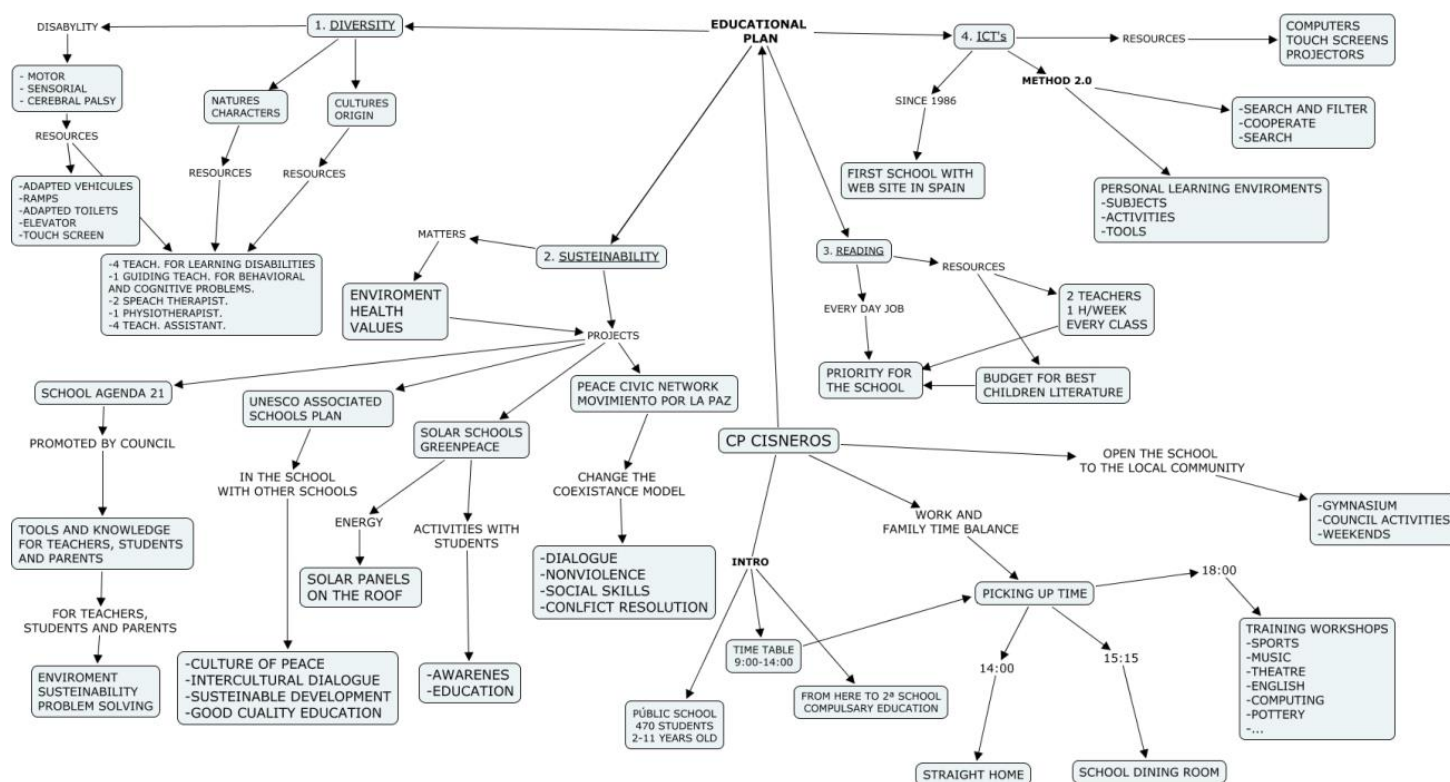
- Ball mouse
- Big concept keyboards
- Small keyboards
- Adapted computers: adapted access or software.

Time passes by and so the special needs at Cisneros Public School. Now-a-days the school does not have students with severe mobility impairments, but with autism, Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and other syndromes. They have ICT tools for therapeutic pedagogy, language and sight.

As it is mentioned above, the school uses Linux as it is done with no profit purposes and looks for the society welfare, which goes in the same direction as the school's pillars.

Training

The Cisneros Public School provides online training to teachers all over Spain to use ICT new tools with new methodologies.



Picture 16: Cisneros Public School Educational Plan, Source: <http://cpcisneros.es/>

Lupasco Center (Centro Lupasco)



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<http://lupasco.com/>

Lupasco Center is a co-operative organisation (40 years of experience) and a public/private school (30 years of experience), which means the studies are paid by the government and families. As they are an educational co-operative they have the following principles:

- Cooperating is a positive way to solve conflicts.
- Cooperating means having more strength.
- Cooperating we are more creative and creative.
- To cooperate we must have confidence in others.
- To cooperate, we must communicate.
- To cooperate we need to help others and receive support.

Is the only center in Cantabria specialized in providing service to people from 6 to 20 years old with personality disorders who are not able to have an effective intelligence management: autism, Asperger syndrome, psychosis, hyperactive, etc. This year the center has 22 students and 11 with the following profiles:

- Teachers: therapeutic pedagogy teachers, etc.
- Psychologist
- Speech Therapists
- Educational technical assistants

The coordination of all the team members and the 40 years of experience providing specific support to people with personality disorders are two of their main strengths. Their biggest challenge is to provide assistance to these people with full motivation as it is a difficult and hard-working job.

Facilities

- Classrooms: The school has 5 classrooms for 3 to 5 persons, which are divided according to similar age, needs, maturity level, etc. In addition, they take in consideration the students' point of view and interest (if they feel comfortable with their classmates and teachers, etc.).



Picture 17: Classroom

- Kitchen: The center has a kitchen to teach students how to cook and develop new skills. The kitchen has oven, stove, washing and dryer machines, etc.

5 years ago, the center had modifications in order to eliminate all the architectonic barriers, even though most of the students do not have any mobility difficulties.

Education

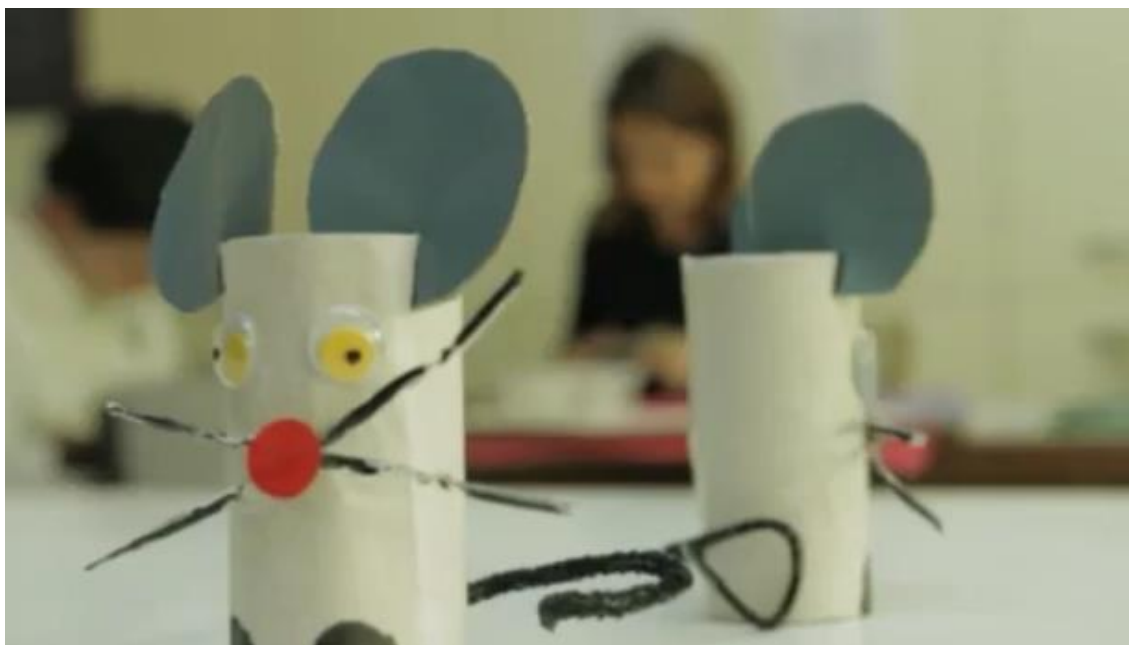
The school has an educational project that includes their main strategies and main activities, and each year they define the programme of all the objectives and specific activities that will be done during the whole year. Also, each class has their own specific programme.

All of the teachers do an initial assessment of each student in order to provide the best teaching methodology according to their needs. For example, some students are studying to get the elementary school degree and the teacher adapts his programme in order to reach his objective; other students are not able to write, so the teacher looks for other activities that help them to communicate and develop other skills.

The school carries out all the normal school activities with flexible classes where the students can switch from one class to another.

Also they have additional activities to foster the development of new skills and facilitate social inclusion in order to be more independent in their lives:

- Activities to develop physical and psychological capacities:
 - Specific psychomotricity
 - Body development therapy
 - Handicrafts



Picture 18: Students' Handicrafts

- Activities to facilitate their social inclusion:

One of the most important objectives of the center is facilitate the students' social inclusion. Get used to the society and the society get to know the students are one of Lupasco Center's aims. For this reason, the center takes the students to the city frequently to have different activities for the development of social skills, such as:

- Take the bus
- Go to the bank and do payments
- shopping

As a regular activity, Lupasco Center's students order by telephone their daily menu to the catering service restaurant, so they can learn how to use the telephone, order food in restaurants and relate to people out of the center.

- Activities to improve students' autonomy

Lupasco Center has a kitchen where the students not only learn cooking, but apply different skills and knowledge during this activity, for example:

- They use math frequently as they have to calculate food portions, ingredients, etc. according to the number of persons.
- They go to the supermarket and learn to look for the ingredients.
- They learn to buy things
- They learn to select the best ingredients according to prices, discounts, country of origin, etc.

The kitchen has turned to be a very useful tool for the development of new skills, as it keeps the students motivation and interest.

- Activities out of the Center

The activities are done by the co-operative out of the regular center schedules. The main activities carried out by the co-operative are:

- Swimming
- Therapy with animals
- Orchard

Communication

Communication and Interaction students/students and teachers/students

Due to the kind of personality disorder the students may have, many of Lupasco Center's students are not interested in trying to communicate. The center carries on activities to foster their communication including the development of communication skills, motivation, etc.

Even now-a-days all of the students can speak, the center has had persons who were not able to talk. The center has different alternative ways to establish a communication such as body language and facial expressions, signing, pictograms, etc. As some of these students went to regular schools, the center used the same communication alternative way the school was using.

Lupasco Center has used different tools to facilitate interaction between classmates and teachers, they do not have any restrictions or special criteria while choosing one tool from another, as long as it catches the students' attention and works effectively. They have used computers with games and exercises to help them communicate. One of the students had a small computer in which he pressed buttons and the speakers could say what he wanted.

All of the weeks, the center has an assembly in all the groups at the same time. The team members go to all the classrooms where they and the students share the main ideas related to:

- Congratulations
- Good things
- Bad things
- Wishes: Things they would like to happen

Communication and Interaction teachers/families

The communication and interaction for Lupasco Center is essential. Both of them have to work together in the same direction, otherwise the objectives are difficult to be reached. The center has a constant in person or telephone communication in order to have a full coordination.

They have 2 interviews between the teachers, psychologist and all the members of the family. These interviews are done in the middle and end of the year. In addition, the center has individual or group meetings with families when important notifications and comments have to be given.

Communication and Interaction between the staff

As Lupasco Center is an educational co-operative organisation, all the team members work as a group taking new decisions, strategies and solving problems. They have meetings every Wednesday in which all of the staff have to attend.

Communication and Interaction school/other organisations

The communication and interaction between other institutions, specially with those where some students combine their studies, is very important. Lupasco Center tries to have at least 4 meetings per year with each institution, but the number of meetings depends on the other institution.

Also they have a constant communication with external psychologists who give therapy to some students. In this way the center can work together with psychologists for the students' faster improvement.

ICT Tools

All the classrooms have their own computer and projector for math exercises, communication tools, etc. The center uses material sources and new methodologies from internet that are approved by all the team members. Also the center motivates and teaches students to use computers and surf on the internet. The students have a school blog and an art website, in which all of them can publish new posts about recent visits, activities, recipes, etc.

As it is mentioned above, the center has used ICT tools as an alternative communication and interaction with some students. They have also used big keyboards for people with mobility problems.

So far, social networks and personal devices such as smartphones and tablets are forbidden to use in class.

Training

The staff have continuous training courses according to the needs and objectives of the center. Although Lupasco Center does not have a specific training programme and the courses they carry out within the organisation are not mandatory, all of the team members try to attend. The staff have face to face or online training using e-learning platforms.

Also each team member always look forward to having training courses out of the institution.

Father Apolinar School (Colegio Padre Apolinar)



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Father Apolinar School is a public and private school, which means the courses, therapies and activities are paid by the government and families. The school has more than 50 years of experience working with people with all physical and physiological disabilities (cerebral palsy, autism, etc.). Now-a-days the school provides support to 73 students, through a multidisciplinary team composed by the following profiles:

- 12 therapeutic pedagogy teachers
- 2 employment training teachers
- 2 Speech Therapists
- 2 physiotherapists
- 1 social health worker
- 2 Transition to Adult Life Program Teachers
- 1 Basic Professional Training Program Teacher
- 4 Educational technical assistants
- 1 person in charge of the students' orientation

Facilities

- **Classrooms:** The classrooms are divided by stage and according to the students' age and similar needs:
 - 7 classrooms of Basic Stage
 - 2 Transition to Adult Life Program
 - 1 Basic Professional Training Program

The classrooms have from 3 to 5 students with autism and conduct disorder. The classrooms have maximum 6 students with other kind of special needs.

The students have class from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm and 2:30 pm to 4:00 pm.



Picture 19: Classroom

- Basic Professional Training Rooms: Laundry, carpentry, industrial kitchen, hotel room and retirement home room.
- Orchard: The orchard helps the students to develop gardening skills, as well as healthy food habits.



Picture 20: Orchard

- **Library:** The Library won a prize due to their innovative books' classification. The books are classified with a sticker according to the level of difficulty and students profile. The objective of this classification is to provide the students in an easy and faster way the best books according to their skills.



Picture 21: Books Classification

- **School Cafeteria:** The school divides lunch time into two groups, according to their needs.
- **Multi-sensory room:** The Father Apolinar School has a room where the professionals can carry out different stimulation activities and physiotherapy. This room is composed by the following features:
 - **Ball Pool**
 - **Water tubes lights:** The water tube lights have bubbles that provide multi-sensory feedback and stimulate the visual system. They have system composed by coloured buttons that make the lights change colour for the students colour recognition and visual perception.



Picture 22: Water Tube Lights

- Black light: For the students colour recognition and visual perception, the school uses black light as it highlights colours and makes them brighter. Also, some students have done different theatre plays in which they use black lights.



Picture 23: Ghost Play done by students using black light

- Lighting ball: The ball lights according to what the teacher wants to be stimulated.
- Fiber Optic Lighting: This light system provides calming benefits thanks to the sparkle effects.



Picture 24: Lighting Ball and Fiber Optic Lighting

- Projector: They use it to project animals or things, so the students can learn new concepts.



Picture 25: Projector

- Green Areas
- Speech Therapist rooms: The school has 2 speech therapy rooms with different materials, including a touch screen computer for an easier and effective therapy.
- Material Production room: In this room the students can print and laminate different material such as pictograms symbols.
- Football and basketball courts

Father Apolinar School does not have any architectonic barriers, allowing people with mobility problems to make full use of all spaces and resources. The School has elevators, ramps, adapted toilets, etc.

The school is building a new center that will have swimming pool and many other facilities that will help the students develop skills in an easier and faster way.

Education

The 3 education stages at Father Apolinar School are:

Basic Stage

The basic stage is equal to primary and secondary school levels and is addressed to persons from 6 to 16 years old.



Picture 26: Basic Stage Classroom

Transition to Adult Life Program

The Transition to Adult Life Program is addressed to youngsters from 16 to 20 or 21 (depending on the year they were born) years old. The program is divided in 2 groups:

Group 1: There is one classroom for theory lessons in which students can develop in a higher level certain social and pre-employment skills. Students are able to deepen the knowledge acquired during the basic stage. One example is to learn to use maths in daily activities such as shopping or cooking.

Group 2: They have carpentry and plastic arts workshops where pre-employment skills are developed. The students learn to build and repair a vast array of structures made of wood and other materials. They have done chairs, tables, photo calls, etc.

With this program, students will have a deeper understanding about the working environment and will acquire new habits that will be useful in their professional career.



Picture 27: Carpentry Room



Picture 28: Illustration for the Europe Day made by carpentry's students

They have an agreement with Cabarceno's zoo, allowing Father Apolinar Students to go to the Cabarceno's farm to learn and develop pre-employment skills. Working together with staff from the farm, the students learn to take care and respect animals. Also they learn team working and other values like tolerance, cooperation and respect.

Basic Professional Training Program

The Basic Professional Training Program's duration is 2 years and is addressed to persons from 17 to 25 years old. During this program the students learn not only the skills and capacities needed for each professional module, but the most important things about companies, for example, contracts, pay sheets, basic rules, etc. The students do a self-assessment and get a small payment depending on their evaluation, for their motivation and clear understanding about the labour system. The school even has an employee of the week. By the end of the program the students receive a Certificate of Qualifications, which is very useful for the student's resume to find a job.

The Basic Professional Training Program is divided by the following modules:

- **Hotels and Restaurants Service:** In this module the students learn everything related to housekeeping at hotels and retirement homes. The school has a hotel room simulation and a retirement home room simulation so the students can practice. Also, the school has different agreements with hotels in Santander, where they take the students to practice in a real environment.



Picture 29: School's hotel room simulation

- **Catering Service:** The school has an industrial kitchen where the students learn how to cook and plan a catering service. Every Monday the students provide the school's staff a menu where they can order and buy different food and drinks. According to the staff's order, the students plan a catering service which will be delivered on Wednesdays. The money collected in all the catering services is used for taking the students to a restaurant to have lunch by the end of the year.



Picture 30: Industrial Kitchen

- Laundry: The school has a laundry room, where the students wash every week the staff's coat. Also they learn to get clothes mended.

Each year, the school work together with parents and other institutions for the definition of the new education plan of each student, according to their special needs.

Complementary Activities:

Father Apolinar School carries out complementary activities in the 3 stages for rehab and development of skills and capacities. Some of these activities are:

- Hippotherapy with horses: Horses are essential in hippotherapy improving the posture and coordination of a student with special needs.
- Cognitive therapy with horses: Some other students acquire knowledge such as colours, animals, etc. while they are in contact with horses.
- Hydrotherapy: Students go often to the swimming pool for hydrotherapy in order to develop their senses, coordination, etc. Physiotherapists consider that one hydrotherapy session can have the same results as 3 normal therapy sessions.
- Cognitive therapy at swimming pools: Teachers take different materials to teach them new concepts. For example, they take animal toys so students can find them under the water and learn new species.

- Sea Lions Therapy at Cabarceno's zoo. Sea Lions foster the stimulation of children with special needs.
- Dogs Therapy
- Sports: Within the school they practice paddle and golf. There is an agreement with the Sports Municipal Institute where the students can practice swimming, athletics and golf free of charge.
- Visits to companies: They visit sme's and big enterprises to learn different products manufacturing such as milk, ice cream, etc.
- Social activities: They have activities to develop social skills and values such as good conduct, respect, etc.

Due to the quality of their services, the school has gotten the Healthy Life Stamp, which is a quality certification given by the Ministry of Education to educational centers that carry out healthy living practices fostering an adequate personal and social development.

Father Apolinar School is recognized as a health promotion school as they constantly promote physical welfare.

Communication

Communication and Interaction students/students and teachers/students

The school uses different ways of communication according to the students' needs:

- Speaking
- Writing
- Signing
- Pictograms
- Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS): This system allows students to communicate by exchanging pictures and pictograms. In a first stage students learn single pictures or pictograms. They pass through different stages until they are able to construct simple sentences using an "I want" picture followed by a picture of the item being requested.



Picture 31: Picture Exchange Communication System

In the beginning, teachers, speech therapist and physiotherapist do an evaluation of the students who are not able to speak, in order to choose the best way communication for them. When they have done the selection, the team teach them how to communicate using new materials and methods.

All the team members combine signing with another way of communication at the same time, so the students can learn to communicate in different ways. In addition, they do constant adaptations of those ways in order to facilitate students' comprehension. For example: They have created a big book with the most appropriate pictograms and real pictures of family members and friends for a student with cerebral palsy. This big book with big pictograms allows this student to point at each pictogram in an easier way.



Picture 32: Big book used by a student with cerebral palsy as a communication tool

The students who have acquired more skills print and laminate the pictograms for the rest of the students and teachers.

Communication and Interaction teachers/families

The families participate during the education plan definition. The school consider the parents' point of view and define, in a collaborative way, the education plan of their son/daughter according to the skills the parents want them more to develop. The school creates the education plan including the number and kind of therapies and activities carried out during the whole year. The school and families have 3 meetings at the beginning, middle and end of the year to assess the education plan and objectives reached.

Teachers have a constant communication with families as everyday they see each other when students enter and leave the school. Also, teachers and families can request additional meetings if needed. For students with higher disability problems, their families and teachers have a daily agenda where they can write down important comments and observations.

Communication and Interaction between the staff

All the staff work together as a team. At the beginning of the year, all of them have a meeting to be aware of the education plan of each student. The physiotherapists and speech therapists always pick the students up at their classroom, so all the staff can have daily conversations among each other. In addition, once a week they have coordination meetings.

Communication and Interaction school/other organisations

Now-a-days the school has 17 students who combine their studies with other 13 regular institutions. For this reason it is important to have a good communication and coordination between the family, regular institution and Father Apolinar School in order to work in the same direction and reach the objectives.

At the beginning of the year, both institutions define the education plan and establish important details:

- Objectives
- Number of days the student will be at each institution
- Activities each institution is going to carry
- Methodologies and ways of communication to be used, etc.

Both institutions have the following meetings:

- 1 meeting by the beginning of the year for the definition of the education plan.
- 1 meeting by the middle of the year for the student's performance and evolution assessment.
- 1 meeting by the end of the year to discuss conclusions.

In addition, teachers of both institutions communicate by email on a regular basis in order to get a successful team coordination.

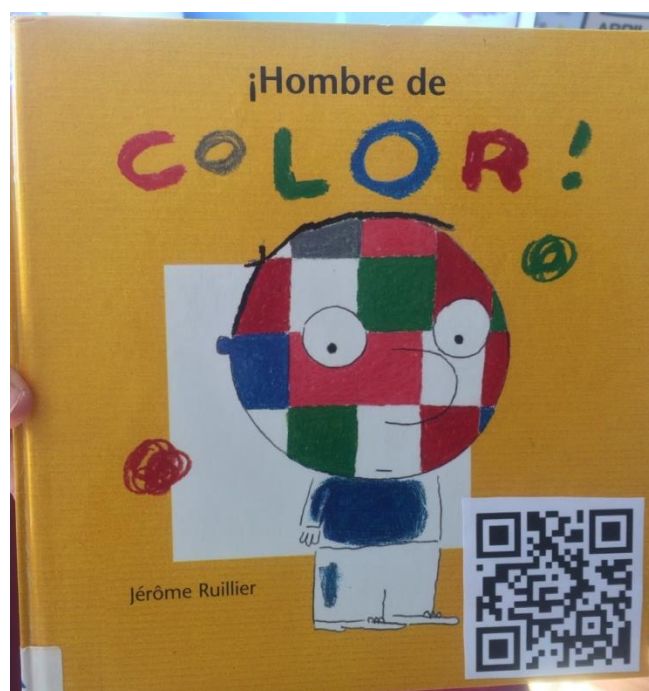
ICT Tools

- Electronic school boards and projectors: Some students, especially the youngest ones need more visual and hearing stimulation. For this reason, the school uses electronic boards and projectors in which they can play different videos or use different tools for stimulation and teaching purposes. Also, electronic school boards are an easy tool for teaching the students new ways of communication.



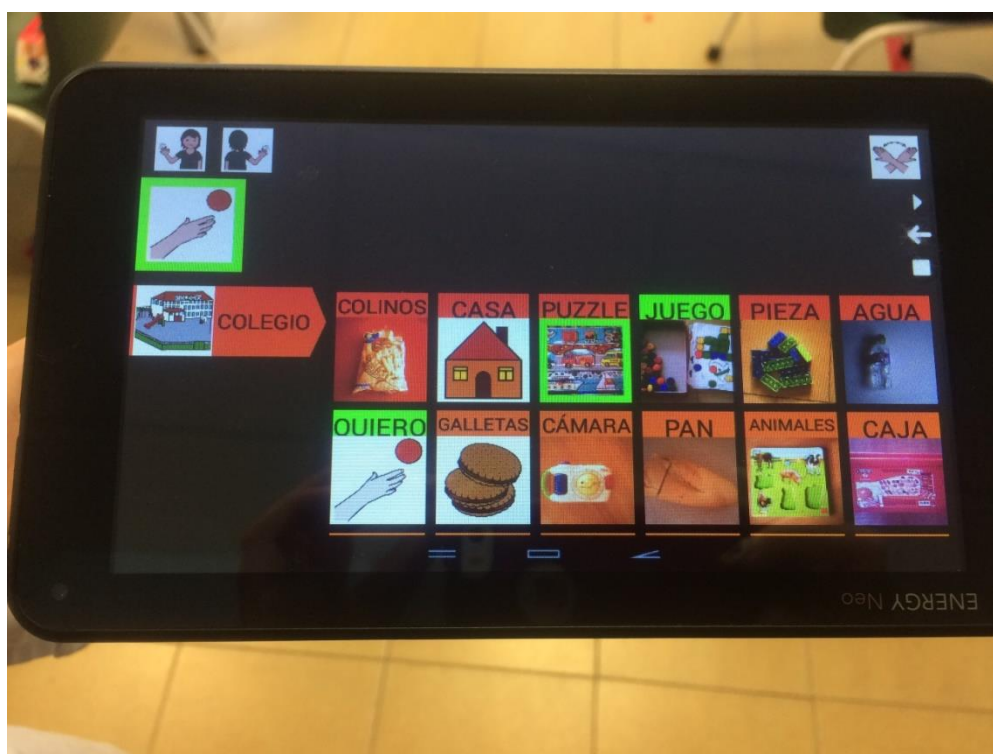
Picture 33: Electronic school board

- Computers: Students can have different activities in computers such as puzzles, creation of new material, etc.
- Augmented Reality System: The school has designed an augmented reality system to explain different subjects. The school assigns a QR code to different things, so students can scan them with their tablets and smartphones to watch a video and get further information, instructions, etc. Some examples are:
 - The school put QR codes at main spots of the Cabarceno's Zoo, where the students can have information about some animals.
 - There are QR codes at the school's toilets, where they can watch a video of how to wash their teeth.
 - There are QR codes in the school's books where students who are not able to read can hear and watch the video of the book.



Picture 34: Augmented Reality where students can scan the book's QR code to hear and watch the video of the story

- Tablets: Students can use tablets as a way of communication so they do not have to carry a big book full of pictograms to communicate with people from their communities. Also, some students are more interested in using tablets to learn and communicate. They have special software programs according to the skills the teachers want to teach.



Picture 35: Tablet application used by students for communication purposes

- **Wii Therapy:** Father Apolinar School uses Wii for physiotherapy which has brought student different results:
 - Coordination and equilibrium improvement
 - Learn Ergonomic postures
 - More body control
 - Eye-body control
 - Acquisition of values such as respect and sharing. Students consider this therapy more like playing a game and they have learned to share the Wii with the rest of their companions and to respect when others are “playing”.
- **Power Point:** For augmentative and alternative communication the teachers also use Power Point where they include sounds, pictograms and words.

Training

The team members of Father Apolinar School always look for new training courses during the year:

Within the institution: The school chooses 1 or 2 training courses each year where all of the team members are invited: conduct modification, emotional skills, social skills, sign language, etc.

CEP Courses: The CEP is an institution that provides teachers training courses and is part from the Education Council from the Government of Cantabria. The Father Apolinar’s teachers are able to take all the free courses they want after work. Some of the courses they have taken are ICT teaching tools, special education methodologies, etc.

Botin Foundation: Is a private foundation in Santander in charge of the social development and they have given different courses to Father Apolinar School such as emotional management.

AMICA



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www.amica.es

AMICA is a non-profit organization established in 1984 whose mission is to discover the capabilities that exist in every person and their limitations in supporting, encouraging the greatest possible autonomy, enjoyment of basic rights and citizenship responsibilities and participation in the community.

As a vision, Amica aims to support people to develop their projects within the community through innovative actions.

Declared of public interest on March 26, 1993, is maintained by public funds through grants and concerts, and donations from private entities, in addition to the contributions of 1110 associated persons.

AMICA consists of families, persons with disabilities and professionals. It represents a model of direct involvement of management and stakeholders.

State level, by mainly operates in the autonomous community of Cantabria. The Association has two Especial Employment Centres: SOEMCA EMPLOYMENT SL dedicated to the business of garment manufacturing and industrial washing and SAEMA EMPLOYMENT SL allocated to environmental activities. It has 26 cores and activity centers.



Picture 36: Garment Manufacturing Building



Picture 37: Industrial Laundry Building



Picture 38: Waste Sorting Building

In 2015, it has supported 1493 people with disabilities through the following types of support: social care, multidisciplinary assessment, rehabilitation, personal support and home, day care, accommodation and support for independent living, training, employment and leisure. The team consist of 110 professionals.



Picture 39: Day Care Center

In May 2008 achieves Level +400 stamp issued by AENOR according to the criteria of the EFQM Excellence Model, which is renewed in 2010,2013 ,2015.

Amica has extensive experience working with persons with disabilities.

AMICA develops the program INICIA, for the social and occupational integration of people with mental illness, along with two other entities, Hospital Padre Menni and ASCASAM (Cantabrian Association of Mental Health), since 1998.

Since 1990 AMICA has received numerous awards for its work with these persons, some of them of great international prestige as in 2001 when the WHO (World Health Organization) recognized the participation of AMICA in the development of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF).

Other international projects related to training have been and focused on persons with disabilities have been for example, in 2003 AMICA received the First Prize for Quality in Mobility under the Leonardo Da Vinci Program in recognition of the work AMICA performed as a promoter of "Training in environmental protection".

AMICA has also received several national awards for their participation in development projects and improving supports and quality of life of people with disabilities, among others we can highlight the once received in July 2006, when AMICA was awarded with the “Discovering abilities: Experience of independent living for people with severe disabilities”.

Since 2009, AMICA is part of the Expert Group for Quality of Life IMSERSO, in order to develop proposals for the implementation of quality of life paradigm applied to the care of people in situations of dependency. In 2010, AMICA participated in an exchange program under the Grundtving Programme, alone with the University of Oviedo, for methodology, training and implementation of the “Active Support Person Centered” with British organizations.

Participation in the programme for the promotion of the occupation INCORPORA from 2006 until 2010, sponsored by the Obra Social La Caixa, together with Cantabria ACOGE and Brumas youth workshops, participating again from 2013.

AMICA founded in 2011 with other 7 entities the “European Network against the poverty and social exclusion of Cantabria” (EAPN). In 2012, AMICA creates, along the Catholic University of Valencia, the Capacitas-Amica Institute, whose main objective is the planning, promotion, implementation and dissemination of research, development and innovation in the areas of care for people with disabilities and promotion of personal autonomy.

In February 2014, Tomás Castillo (Managing Director of AMICA) was awarded with the “social entrepreneur” prize given by Ernest&Young, in a ceremony presided by the Minister of Industry, Energy and Tourism, José Manuel Soria.

Since 2014, Amica is participation in the Erasmus Program+, as beneficiary partner of the IDIPOWER Project: Empowering disabled persons through collaborative learning, based on the development of an innovative, collaborative and participatory methodology focused in overcoming limiting factors though the learning and joint training of families, professionals and persons with disabilities, considering of the person as the focus of the intervention.