

Learning for Life

From „Philosophy and Objectives“

Learning for Life: Learning at our school is inspired by critical thinking, creativity and the determination of students to do their best. Teachers employ modern methodologies and thus help their students to acquire the ability to discover their own inner resources and to make use of the external resources available to them.

Our students develop a wide range of skills and knowledge and thereby build a solid foundation for their educational futures. Thanks to the profound character development they experience, students can shape their lives successfully and responsibly.

Comment

"School is a place of learning." – Hardly anyone would object to this statement, whereby school could mean any form of educational facility in this context. There is also widespread agreement that learning in our fast-paced time cannot end after formal education has been completed. However, when it comes to describing this process of life-long learning and – even more challenging – when it comes to initiating it, opinions differ widely.

Very often learning is associated with a clear aim. For our students it means to obtain a much-desired diploma at the end of their school days, a diploma which gives them access to universities and many other professional opportunities. For us teachers reaching learning objectives is central. These comprise elementary skills such as the ability to read a text without making mistakes, or more sophisticated skills such as being able to discuss the current political situation. Even the ability for life-long learning can be defined as an educational objective. But is this goal-oriented learning really identical with life-long learning?

When we look back at a time when we without any doubt learned the most, that is, as young children, it becomes obvious that in those years hardly any set goals were necessary. Discovering new things and exploring one's possibilities was enough to keep us interested for days, even years. This playful learning should not be lost when formal schooling begins or on entering "real life". It seems to me essential to keep up motivation for a learning process which lasts a lifetime.

This should not be understood as a postulate that learning should only be playful and therefore self-directed. Certain things have to be learned for life, whether they seem attractive or not from a student's perspective. To try to "sell" them as a game would appear to be almost a sham.

Nevertheless schools must take care not to neglect or even suppress the instinct to play and to explore –in scientific terms "explorative learning". With our annual motto, we want to make a point of presenting learning as a never-ending process which is enjoyable in its own right.

Matthias Nüssli, Deputy Head of School

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