

## **Welcome to SPZ 10 !**

“**SPZ 10**” (short for “**Sonderpädagogisches Zentrum 10**”) is a Special Educational Needs school for slow learners in grades 1-8, serving the 10<sup>th</sup> municipal district of Vienna, Austria. This working class area, also known as “**Favoriten**”, is home to a growing number of immigrants and their children who presently represent over 20% of the district population. School hours are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 1 or 2 p.m., with physical education, art and cooking classes once or twice a week in the afternoon.

The school year starts in September and ends in June, with scheduled breaks in between.

**Our Pupils** are 8 to 15 years old and come from fourteen different countries. Including our Austrian pupils, we currently teach 85 pupils, most of whom are fluent in German. Teachers with command of a Slavic language, Turkish or Kurdish as well as of German lend added support to pupils and their parents in school matters. Our pupils are divided up into seven classes, taught by 20 teachers.

**Our School Campus** consists of the main school building with seven regular classrooms, a computer room, a training kitchen, a physical education gym, shops for handicrafts and industrial arts, and two all-purpose classrooms for parties and celebrations, exhibitions, language courses and such. Further rooms are used for religious education and speech therapy lessons. Our playground is suitable for sports activities and other events.

## **Our Activities**

**Sport and Fun:** Each pupil gets three hours of physical education every week, in poor weather in the gym, in fair weather on the playground. Twice a year, all our pupils get to visit a larger, more well-equipped gym with a wider selection of leisure and sports activities. On these mornings they are introduced to new sports, cost covered by the Parents Association. Our athletic coach also lines up soccer matches, light athletics and running meets, rock climbing contests and so on with other schools. The SPZ 10 soccer team trains soccer at least once a week while the rest get to participate in other ball games.

**Field Trips:** Excursions and field trips with whole classes enhance the normal school term. We visit exhibitions, museums, famous places and buildings and historical sites together to learn more about our city, our country and our past, and to get new ideas for the future.

**Indoor & Open-Air Projects:** To brighten up our lessons, we run several extracurricular projects, either in the classrooms or out in the open. Some projects are done by individual classes, others involve the whole school. Last year, for instance, we managed “**Healthy Nourishment**”, “**Our Water**”, “**Manners and Etiquette**”, “**Fresh Fruit and Farm Vegetables**”, and a big theater project together with two other schools in Vienna, besides other, smaller

theater projects. The big theater project developed into quite a success, drawing important education policy makers to the first of three performances. The Austrian Federal Minister of Education, Arts and Culture graced the audience amid members of the Vienna Board of Education, guaranteeing photo and news coverage for the young actresses and actors in the local and regional press and wider interest for the performances that followed.

The project "Healthy Nourishment" was developed in cooperation with a nearby institute of nursing and resumes in mid-February, 2014.

**Hands-On Experience** on the Labor Market:

Thrice a year, our 8<sup>th</sup> Graders try out working in shops, companies or factories for three days in a row. Depending on their own interests, they usually pick out their jobs on their own, getting a taste of real-life employment, often finding out, "Life isn't all beer and skittles!" so to speak. Most look into retailing or supermarket work, but we encourage them to consider trades and professions like cooking, baking, hairdressing, floral design, auto mechanics, Kindergarten teaching, nursing and so forth as well.

**Festivals and School Celebrations:** Along with high holidays such as Christmas and Easter, we also arrange a number of other festivals. When school starts up in September, we launch a warm welcome for all the pupils with an emphasis on joy and fun, especially for newcomers. Every pupil can earn points for his or her new class together with other classmates by actively visiting various information displays on campus. Then comes Apple Day, Hallowe'en, Carnival, and the International Day of Roma Peoples, and we finish off by celebrating a big Farewell Party at the end of school in June.