

SPECIAL CARE FOR SPECIAL NEEDS

A study visit in Receiving organizations working with children/youth with disabilities

As a coordinating organization for EVS volunteers Polska Fundacja im. Roberta Schumana has been cooperating with special kindergartens for children with disabilities and a boarding school for blind children and youth for a few good years now. Involvement of EVS volunteers to these organizations has had a visible influence on their work and development of each organization. Its employees have shared their knowledge with the volunteers and in return they got fresh ideas, knowledge on specific methods used in different countries and new energy for the children/youth. At the same time, the volunteers themselves have gained valuable new experience and became more aware of problems children/youth with disabilities faces as well as learned a lot about special education in Poland.

While we were selecting new volunteers, we decided to go a step further, extend our next project and apart from several individual long-term EVS mobilities organize also a study visit to show how (EVS) volunteering can be integrated in special education. All receiving organizations want to share their knowledge and experience as special educational institutions for disabled children and/or youth and invite educators/volunteers/pedagogues from different countries to share their experience and present good practice examples of their own.

We would like to invite practitioners, special educators, special pedagogues or project coordinators from EVS organizations that would be interested in seeing how special education institutions involve EVS volunteers in their work with disabled children and youth to a study visit.

As project partner – sending organization in this project already, we thought to invite you to participate in the study visit as well. Maybe you as project coordinator would be interested to see how EVS volunteers work in special care so you could prepare the next volunteers even better for their experience. Maybe your organization cooperates with a special care institution/organization in your local community and they might be interested in introducing EVS to their activities? If so, please read on and let us know, if you would be interested in widening our partnership in this project 😊

When?

10-16 April 2016, 7 days altogether (travel included)

Where?

In Poland, specifically **Warsaw and close to Warsaw** (Laski)

What?

Visiting experienced Receiving Organizations, see how they work, meet the children/youth there and learn how EVS volunteers are incorporated in these organizations. Firstly we would focus on visiting our four partner institutions. Participants from abroad will have a chance to observe daily activities, but also get involved into some of their special classes, therapies and workshops, such as music therapy, speech therapy, art therapy, physical therapy, food therapy, orthoptic exercises, fairy tale therapy and polysensory stimulation. There would be some free time to explore Warsaw in the afternoons and evenings as well as one day to meet with representatives of other local organizations (other special education institutions, NGOs, public institutions cooperating with ROs, parents of children/young people under their care). Participants are asked to share their experience as well.

Draft program:

Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrival • Getting to know each other 	
Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Kindergarten No 213 in Warsaw <i>for children and youth (6-25 y.o.) with various physical and mental disabilities as well as children with autism</i> • Guided Tour in Warsaw 	→ Quick presentation of the kindergarten, its children, young pupils and volunteers; observation of group and individual therapeutic and educational activities; participation in group workshops through assisting the children;
Day 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Kindergarten No 393 in Warsaw <i>for children (3-10 y.o.) with severe physical and mental disabilities</i> • A hike in National Park "Kampinos" 	→ Quick presentation of the kindergarten, its children and volunteers; observation and participation in food therapy, Advanced Audio Coding, polysensory stimulation, group speech therapy, physiotherapy;
Day 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Kindergarten No 245 in Warsaw <i>for visually impaired children (3-6 y.o.)</i> • Comparison of special educational systems 	→ Quick presentation of the kindergarten, its children and volunteers; orthoptic exercises and elements of sight rehabilitation; participation in group activities; → Partner organizations, participants and EVS volunteers present special educational systems in their countries and the integration of non-formal education in them;
Day 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Society for the Care for the Blind in Laski – <i>a boarding school for visually impaired and blind children and youth</i> 	→ Tour around the premises of the boarding school – kindergarten, school, dormitory for boys, dormitory for girls, library, physical education facilities and music school; visit at high school, getting to know special tools for the blind; orientation training; games enabling participants to experience visual impairment; tour around dormitories and participation in afternoon activities of students;
Day 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forum on special education and volunteering 	→ Meeting of study visit participants with other local partner organizations and local community interested in the field of special education and social care, e.g. other special institutions, therapists, EVS and local volunteers, parents of children with disabilities. The forum will be an opportunity to summarize activities, further exchange experience and get an insight to local community. The forum day will be perfect also for networking between organizations working with volunteers on different levels (local, European, international) and working with people with different disabilities.
Day 7	Departure	

Who?

Any practitioners, special educators, special pedagogues or project coordinators from EVS organizations that would be interested in seeing how special education institutions involve EVS volunteers in their work with disabled children and youth are welcome to participate in this study visit.

Why?

Because a study tour is a perfect opportunity to see how EVS can improve social care and special education, to experience how non-formal educational methods can replenish formal education and to exchange experience on volunteering, youth work as well as special education in different countries. We aim to enhance cooperation of all organizations/institutions participating in the project, create possibilities for new joint activities and incorporation of volunteering in work with children and youth with disabilities.

According to budgetary rules the Polska Fundacja im. Roberta Schumana as the organizer would provide full board accommodation and local transport for participants. Travel costs would be reimbursed following the official EU calculator, which calculates the distance between Warsaw and home town of the organization/participant in the following way:

500km - 1999 km = 275 EUR per person 2000 km - 2999 km = 360 EUR per person During the study visit we expect all participants to be covered by health insurance, which the

Foundation cannot provide.

How?

By sending us a filled in **application form** as soon as possible, no later than 7th of February.

In case of any questions or further information please contact us.

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