



KATHOLISCHE UNIVERSITÄT  
EICHSTÄTT-INGOLSTADT

# Joint Project

## Inclusive Living and Learning at School

### Sectional Project

## Quality Criteria of Inclusive Music Lessons

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# „QUALITY CRITERIA OF INCLUSIVE MUSIC LESSONS“ AN EMPIRICAL STUDY AT BAVARIAN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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## Background and Research Aims

The main focus of this music pedagogical research project is the following initial question: What are the quality characteristics of good music teaching and to what extent do they also apply to inclusive educational settings? So far, there have hardly been any research findings in this area. For this reason, scientific studies on the methodological design of inclusive music teaching and the associated quality of inclusive music lessons have been important research projects for several years. According to current surveys, the introduction of inclusion in the classroom is one of the greatest challenges in everyday school life. Numerous letters of complaint from teachers and headmasters to the responsible Ministries of Education report that the introduction of these additional human rights measures is placing excessive demands on them. One of the consequences is that the fundamentally positive attitude and willingness of teachers to implement inclusion in schools is on the decline. Above all, the uncertainties in planning and designing inclusive lessons, but also the lack of satisfaction with the quality standards of their own teaching are cited by teachers as the main arguments against inclusive teaching. The rejection of inclusive teaching is also on the rise among primary school music teachers, caused by a lack of support and a feeling of being overwhelmed. The question of how good music education in primary schools in general and good inclusive music education in primary schools in particular should be designed appears to be of especially high relevance, since primary schools are the place offering the greatest scope for learner accessibility in musical education. It is here that all pupils are included, regardless of their social context or their parents' level of education and financial resources.

For these reasons, the above-mentioned research project turned its attention to the question of the quality characteristics of music education in primary schools, which has so far only been a marginal issue with a special focus on inclusive aspects. Due to the lack of research in this area, the research project saw its task as conducting basic music pedagogical research on the one hand and at the same time preparing the results for practical application in teaching.

## Research Methods

Since there are currently no findings in the area of Music Education regarding the question of quality characteristics of inclusive music education in primary schools, the research project initially focused on the results from interdisciplinary teaching research. Current findings from the music pedagogical perspective were discussed with respect to the fundamental question of what general quality characteristics have been defined in empirical educational research as providing the basis of good teaching. Subsequently, quality characteristics ranging across different subjects and school types were defined and expanded to include subject-specific characteristics in primary school music teaching. For this purpose, the research project developed a lesson observation sheet especially for music lessons in primary schools based on empirical approaches and based on Andreas Helmke's interdisciplinary research on the quality of teaching. From a professional point of view, the benefit of this observation instrument lies in the resulting possibility of recognising and reflecting on the strengths and weaknesses of teaching in a criteria-oriented, structured and data-based manner, and thereby further developing music lessons. In practice, the teachers' perspectives and repertoires of actions can be extended. In addition, the observation sheet sensitizes the teachers to the very diverse and different learning requirements of primary school children, especially in the area of music. The teachers' awareness of diversity can increase the learning effectiveness of the lessons. The visualisation of strengths with regard to the design of lessons can lead to greater satisfaction and a stronger belief in self-efficacy on the part of the teachers, thereby counteracting insecurities, fears and excessive demands. In addition to the development of this observation instrument, another benefit of the research project is the mapping of the teaching profiles of inclusive and non-inclusive music education. Of the 120 teaching observations carried out, profiles of inclusive and non-inclusive music

education were drawn up and evaluated in equal parts. The evaluation of the lesson profiles made it possible to gain insights into the design of music lessons for regular and inclusive classes for the first time, and to identify similarities and differences in the design features. In addition, the evaluation provided an overview of whether and to what extent: a) there were qualitative differences in the quality of music teaching in regular and inclusive classes in the participating primary schools and b) the fears and anxieties of music teachers would be confirmed that inclusive music instruction would be taught in a qualitatively poorer manner. In a third stage, an expert survey of music teachers was conducted as part of the sub-project in the model region of Inclusion Kempten. The responses provided important cues for inclusive teaching and, in particular, insights into the similarities and differences to music instruction in regular classes; this also applies to interdisciplinary and subject-specific quality characteristics of inclusive music teaching in primary schools. In addition, the results of the teaching profile evaluation were discussed and the research perspective was expanded to include the experiences and opinions of music teachers from the 'Modell Region Inklusion Kempten'.

## Overall Outcome and Sustainable Application of the Results

The sub-project was able to identify similarities and differences in the design features of music lessons for regular and inclusive classes in the synopsis of the data material obtained. In addition, the evaluation showed that high-quality inclusive music education is to be found in the participating region. Those responsible for the project therefore saw great potential in these results to counteract the uncertainty and feeling of being overtaxed among teachers. For this reason, the research results have been and are being communicated and used in further training courses for primary school music teachers, among others. In addition, the research results were implemented in the seminars held by the project leader at the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt to train future primary school music teachers, in order to sensitize students to an inclusive approach to music teaching. In this context, an inclusive cooperation project was developed in cooperation with music students of the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, the St. Pius Caritas nursing home in Ingolstadt and a class of the Christoph Kolumbus Primary School in Ingolstadt. The project was chosen from a total of 200 applications for the 'Miteinanderpreis 2019' of the Bavarian State Ministry for Family,

Labour and Social Affairs and was among the four final nominees from the administrative district of Upper Bavaria. In the spirit of sustainable knowledge transfer and service learning, the students in this cooperation project were able to apply the knowledge conveyed in the seminars in inclusive teaching contexts and thus gain valuable ideas for their own teaching. In addition, the results of the qualitative and quantitative surveys have been and will continue to be processed by the project manager for articles in relevant music education publications as well as for practical teaching publications by textbook publishers. In addition, a continuation and differentiation of the observations in the various learning areas of music teaching is planned. This is expected to lead to profitable insights into the differences in teaching in the learning areas of singing and speaking, playing instruments, listening to music and dancing and moving. These should also be prepared in a practical way and thus offer support to student teachers and music teachers in active service, especially in their work with inclusion classes.

Finally, the research project presented itself intensively to the outside world through publications, lectures and networking (among others, the topic cluster Inclusion University of Siegen; Neubrandenburg University of Applied Sciences; University of Wuppertal, University of Potsdam as well as the working group Music Pedagogy Primary School).

## Further Information

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[For the results documentation of the sectional project \(poster and results documentation in German and English language\)](#)

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