

D6.4 E-STEP eTwinning Kit

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Title: E-STEP: Supporting teachers' and parents' partnerships through ICT

Language: English

Age Range of pupil: All pupils at pre-primary, primary and secondary education

Duration of project: The E-STEP intervention can be adjusted to suit your own timeframe for the work you want to undertake

Difficulty (please mark one of these)

Easy

Intermediate x

Advanced

Introduction (*2 sentences to describe your kit, designed to make people read on*)

Do you know what parental engagement is it? Do you know the benefits obtained from parental participation? Do you want to bring your parents closer to your school? Then this is your project: something designed to help teachers to engage parents with the use of social networking tools. Teachers will collaborate with parents in a more innovative and attractive way such as the use of social networking tools in order to address and improve several aspects of schooling, depending on their own context and needs.

Description of the project (not more than 300 words)

The E-STEP aims to give the participants the opportunity to get involved in a proposed action plan based on the findings of a European Comenius project "E-



STEP”, which sets out to explore teachers’ and parents’ needs in terms of developing successful partnerships. In this light, E-STEP (<http://estep-project.eu/>) project addresses schools’ and parents’ collaboration as a key factor for pupils’ and schools’ development. The E-STEP project specifically addresses school staff and is intended to help teachers and school managers acquire and reinforce such attitudes, skills, knowledge and qualifications that would enable them to effectively engage parents in schooling and interact with them through social networking technologies. The intervention of E-STEP aims to give the participants the opportunity to get involved in the process of developing an action plan through which they can design strategies to bring parents closer to school. Its main purpose is to design appropriate activities including the use of social media in order to engage the parents effectively.

The whole idea of this project is based on the concept of parental engagement and its benefits as well as on how the social media could assist and improve pupils’ learning and overall life in school. Moreover, teachers may develop skills for designing activities and evaluating them.

Pedagogical Objectives – *Briefly describe what you want your pupil to learn during this project*

Pupils will be benefited by the parental engagement not only in terms of learning but also in all schooling issues. Various activities may be supported by parents’ involvement in a discrete and immediate way by the use of social media. Students will be the main beneficial target group of activities where parents will be engaged. The close cooperation between teachers and parents will bring great results in several aspects of pupils’ life. According to Epstein there are 6 types of parents’ involvement and it is obvious the advantages that students can obtain.

Epstein's Framework of Six Types of Involvement¹:

¹ https://www.asdk12.org/media/anchorage/globalmedia/documents/parents/SixTypes_ParentInv.pdf



1. Parenting: Help all families establish home environments to support children as students. □

- Parent education and other courses or training for parents (e.g., GED, college credit, family literacy).
- Family support programs to assist families with health, nutrition, and other services.
- Home visits at transition points to elementary, middle, and high school.

2. Communicating: Design effective forms of school-to-home and home-to-school communications about school programs and children's progress.

- Conferences with every parent at least once a year.
- Language translators to assist families as needed.
- Regular schedule of useful notices, memos, phone calls, newsletters, and other communications.

3. Volunteering: Recruit and organize parent help and support.

- School/classroom volunteer program to help teachers, administrators, students, and other parents.
- Parent room or family centre for volunteer work, meetings, and resources for families.
- Annual postcard survey to identify all available talents, times, and locations of volunteers.

4. Learning at home: Provide information and ideas to families about how to help students at home with homework and other curriculum-related activities, decisions, and planning.

- Information for families on skills required for students in all subjects at each grade.
- Information on homework policies and how to monitor and discuss schoolwork at home.
- Family participation in setting student goals each year and in planning for college or work.

5. Decision making: Include parents in school decisions, developing parent leaders and representatives.

- Active PTA/PTO or other parent organizations, advisory councils, or committees for parent leadership and participation.
- Independent advocacy groups to lobby for school reform and improvements.
- Networks to link all families with parent representatives.

6. Collaborating with the community: Identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development.

- Information for students and families on community health, cultural, recreational, social support, and other programs/services.
 - Information on community activities that link to learning skills and talents, including summer programs for students.
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Process – *This area describes the steps taken to carry out the project. It should briefly describe the suggested activities for the 3 main project stages, before the project, during the project, ending the project and after....*

The intervention will be based on the ESTEP framework - a learning programme that aims to support reflective approaches to parental engagement that draw on effective use of social media. The ESTEP framework has been designed for use by any member of the school's professional community including *school leaders, teachers* and *ICT coordinators*. The generative nature of the framework means that the framework user, and their local, strategic priorities, is always the starting point for ESTEP actions. The framework is useful to a wide range of users and can be flexed to achieve a broad spectrum of purposes from micro-interventions at the level of a single class teacher working with their own class and a discrete group of parents to a whole school focus led by the senior leadership team or across school ICT co-ordinator

Forms of Parental Engagement

- Participation in social media is a social practice and requires digital literacy knowledge, expertise and confidence from all participant;
- Teachers' and parents' (and young peoples') knowledge, awareness, understanding and experiences of social media (and other forms of ICT) vary substantially and impact on their attitudes to social media use in school;
- Teachers and parents attitudes towards social media are informed by wider discourses and these might be especially influential where individuals lack direct experience;
- Initial teacher education does not necessarily teach either PE or digital literacy, teachers knowledge and expertise is likely to be tacit and gained through experience and participation;



- The use of technology to support PE is in its infancy and the body of evidence that might inform practice is very much emergent;
- Communication between parents and schools that is mediated by technology will be framed by the existing attitudes, values and cultures of the school or institution;
- Attitudes and values of leaders, teachers, parents and children are crucial in determining the success or otherwise of both a parental engagement strategy and implementation of a work in digital modes.

In order to fulfil these objectives, the following steps are proposed:

STEP #1: Understanding Parental Engagement in Context

Teachers should discuss key contemporary concepts, issues and debates in the field of parental engagement and develop a working definition of parental engagement for their institution. Teachers can make use of enquiry orientated practitioner researcher approaches to explore existing attitudes, values and cultures to parental engagement in their setting and, to understand the role and potential role of social media in developing practice.

STEP #2: Planning context specific parental engagement

In this phase there is need to agree what the school wants to achieve through the intervention and describing in detail what success might look like for different groups of stakeholders and beneficiaries. Teachers have to identify interim milestones – what will the stepping stones towards success look like as well. At the end of this phase participants will have: (a) clearly articulated strategic priorities and aspirations for both parental engagement and the use of digitally mediated environments to support parental engagement in their context; (b) constructed a co-produced and community owned 'road map' for change



STEP #3 Implementation of action plan

Teachers should implement the proposed action plan in order to achieve their goals. They have to explore a range of potential approaches to achieving maximum impact for a wide range of stake-holders and beneficiaries too.

STEP #4 Evaluation of project outcomes

This phase will provide a step-by-step approach to evaluating the processes, experience and impacts (planned and unexpected) of the proposed action plan. It will explore approaches to designing impact and strategies for effective sharing, dissemination and sustainability of outcomes.

Evaluation – *Describes how you could evaluate your own and your pupil input to the project: how do you measure achievement of objectives and outcomes?*

In order to evaluate the outcomes of the intervention teachers should

- Define from the beginning qualitative and quantitative metrics.
- Define when the activity will be successful.
- Define how the social networking tools could be used as metrics for the success of the activity.

Moreover, specific questionnaires about crucial aspects of the project should be designed for teachers, parents and pupils.

Follow up – *Suggestions for extra activities maybe for school colleagues of parents etc.:*

Creation of a social media dissemination plan that identifies:

- key stories
- audiences
- best social media platforms and tools to utilize



Construct a dissemination plan that makes effective use of social media to ensure that the process and outcomes of change are shared with local, regional audiences.

Links *Any useful resource links:*

1. <http://www.estep-project.eu/>
2. <http://portal.opendiscovery.space.eu/community/teachers-and-parents-collaborative-community-669875>
3. http://www.estep-project.eu/?page_id=257
4. http://hermes.westgate.gr/estep/wp-includes/document/D1.1_Report%20on%20European%20State%20of%20Art%20and%20Use%20cases.pdf
5. <http://hermes.westgate.gr/estep/wp-includes/document/D2.1%20Training%20Framework%20Design.pdf>
6. <https://www.facebook.com/estepproject>
7. https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbGjXQ5PVKP5iAFIRGuCb0q?view_as=public
8. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hPAF_3O6ZOc
9. <https://workingwithestep.wordpress.com/>
10. http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/DCSF-Parental_Involvement.pdf
11. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/182508/DFE-RR156.pdf
12. <http://www.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/research/pdf/Innovation-and-Governance/Banaji-Selwyn-Platform-for-Parents-2011.pdf>

Subject Areas: *What subject areas are involved in the project?*

It depends on the action plans that will be developed by pupils and teachers.

- Art
- Astronomy
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Citizenship
- Classical languages
- Cross curricular
- Design and technology
- Drama
- Economics
- Environment
- Ethics
- European Studies
- Foreign languages
- Geography
- Geology
- Health
- History



History of culture

Home economics

X Informatics/ ICT

Language and literature

Law

Mathematics/ geometry

Media education

Music

Natural Sciences

Philosophy

Physical education

Physics

Politics

Pre-school subjects

Psychology

Religion

Social studies/ sociology

Special needs

X Technology

**Key competence(s) covered:****X communication in the mother tongue**

communication in foreign languages

mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology

X digital competence

learning to learn

X social and civic competences

sense of initiative and entrepreneurship

cultural awareness and expression

Have you used a module? If yes which one?

ICT Tools to be used: *Describe what tools could be used*

X video conference (skype)forum**X other software (powerpoint, video, pictures, drawing)**

virtual learning environment (communities, virtual classes)

chat

MP3

X Project diary

TwinSpace

X Web publishing (blog)**X Email**



An Image or Logo we can use. *(if you have one available. It is not a problem if you don't)*





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