

ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis is to examine the founding principles and function of two alternative classes in two public schools in small towns. These conditions are analysed in context of differentiation of primary school and potential impact of alternative classes in public schools on equal chances. The first chapter will briefly describe common features of alternative schools, and I will list the characteristics of some alternative movements in the Czech Republic. I will then focus in more detail on the 'Step by Step' programme, which is used in one of the schools I examine, and its bases. The second school in my study follows a programme stemming from this, which is also influenced by 'Natural schools' and other alternative methods. The next chapter of this thesis will look at the differences and unequal access to education.

The empirical section of this thesis presents two case studies of alternative classes in public schools. For the purposes of this study, a qualitative method has been applied. I try to find out the reasons for establishment of these classes and refusal of the classic education by observing the classes during teaching, and through interviews with all participants. I focus on the admission process of pupils to these classes and whether the conditions of the studies in these classes are fair in comparison with classic classes. The research shows that parents interested in education in these alternative classes want their children to enjoy the education and not to be discouraged. They wish for their children the education by means of innovatory methods such as working with mistakes, joining subjects, exploring education, learning in the nature, verbal classification, individual approach etc. They would like the children to be able to adapt to the quickly changing world, learn to communicate well and are able to think critically. That is what they miss in a classic class. I have found out that education in alternative classes differs a lot from that in classic classes. And the approach of parents, children, and teachers differs as well. Unfortunately, it is not possible to satisfy demand of all persons concerned.

KEYWORDS

School choice, equity, alternative education, public school, Step by step