



Ada - und Theodor - Lessing – ‘Volkshochschule Hannover’

The Phenomenon of Bullying
Montesca, October
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The **'Volkshochschule Hannover'** is a non-profit organisation for adult education.
(It is part of the municipality of Hannover.)

'Volk' means **'people'** or **'folk'** and **'hochschule'** means **'university'**.

If you put these words together you get 'Volkshochschule' which means university for people from all walks of life and every age group.

So we are not a regular school although there are "Volkshochschulen" all over Germany and we are informally recognized as providers of further education, esp. vocational and second-chance education.



We offer a wide range of different courses,
for example 33 different languages, art lessons, vocational
trainings.

With our help students can also receive school-leaving
certificates, which they did not get in the regular school.

Our students are at least 18 years old.



The students

who join our lessons because they failed at a regular school had or still have many problems.

In many cases they had

- been truant
- been ill or pregnant
- been criminal
- been addicted to drugs
- social problems
- learning-problems



A lot of our students

are **children of immigrants** with cultural and linguistical problems (not only problems with the German language).

You see: our students carry many problems with them! **Problems in the social behaviour** are to be expected!



One of our strategies **to avoid bullying** is the conclusion of a contract between students and teachers.

The aim is raise up a school ethos which will be accepted by all.

The contract should contain prescriptions how to behave with each other which must be so clear that

violations of the contract are evident.



There are two kinds of contracts or possibilities to work out a contract:

1. A contract is prepared by a teachers like school rules usually are.
2. Students and teachers create the contract together. They discuss the matters, draft the sentences and with the agreement of all parties the contract will be signed by every student and every teacher.
 - **Advantage:**
 - It is the students' contract!
 - the debate is more intensive
 - the students may identify with the contract.



1. **When we start with a new course**
the students get to know each other. In small groups they talk e.g. about good and bad experiences in school.
2. Then they might have to **continue sentences like these**:
 - “I will feel good and save in class if nobody....”
 - “The atmosphere in class will be good and helpful, if “
3. The results are collected at two pin boards.
4. The teachers arrange similar statements.
5. Debate about the results
6. Concretion of statements



Students and teachers turn the statements into short sentences for the contract.

Then students and teachers sign it. Every student gets a copy and a big one will be hang up in the classroom.

You get some examples now!



- **Our rules to learn together**

- All students are equal, irrespective of sex, ethnic or religion.
- The behaviour of all students and teachers must be respectful.
- Mobile phones are off during the lessons.
- Students have to listen active to the others and they must not interrupt others.
- If someone criticizes another student or his/her opinion he/she has to stick to facts.
- Nobody laugh at someone in case of a wrong answer or a strange question.



- **Our rules to learn together**

- Nobody tells lies and malicious gossip about others.
- Any kind of physical harassment is forbidden (kicking, beating, threatening).
- Students must neither write malign emails or sms nor publishing bad things about a student in the internet.
- Smoking, drinking alcohol or taking drugs is forbidden in school. Students who seem to be drunken or stoned have to leave the class.
- We follow the prohibition of weapons in school!



When any **kind of breach of what was agreed on in the contract takes place**, students or teachers point out, that a class fellow or teacher has broken the signed the contract.

It will be discussed in front of the class if sanctions are necessary.

(For example the exclusion from the next lessons could be a consequence.)



- Surveys show that it is really important for students **to feed-back their teachers and to discuss if the treaty was kept by all or not.**

Otherwise they feel helpless, their dissatisfaction with the quality of teaching or the teacher's behaviour may play a part in harassment against anyone.

- Feed-back is a statement of **openness and acceptance.**
- **We also conduct periodical feed-backs with an anonymous questionnaire.**

Thank you