



School-to-School Mentoring Report: *Our experience in MenSI*

Mentor school: ZŠ J. A. Komenského Louny
Pilot school year: 2021/22
Mentor school coordinator: Mgr. Vladimír Hach





1. Composition of the MenSI Pilot School cluster

School Name	Role	Location	Website	Nr students	Nr teachers
ZŠ J. A. Komenského Louny	MENTOR SCHOOL	Louny	https://www.zsjak.cz/	530	33
ZŠ a MŠ Braňany	MENTEE SCHOOL	Braňany	https://www.zsamsbranany.cz/	150	15
ZŠ Lenešice	MENTEE SCHOOL	Lenešice	https://www.zslenešice.cz/	200	22
ZŠ Peruc	MENTEE SCHOOL	Peruc	https://zsperuc.cz/	200	19



2. Priorities and Goals

(Please describe the priority areas and goals of the mentoring activities that were implemented within your school cluster in terms of innovative pedagogical practices and use of digital technologies to improve teaching and learning)

Priorities

Our main priority was to share good practices among the involved schools. We focused on how to use ICT in the classroom, meaningful use of IT tools in school administration and overall IT literacy among students and teachers.

Goals

Our main goal was to analyse the needs of our mentee schools and strengthen their ICT skills by benefitting from the experience of the teachers from the mentor school. We wanted to increase the number of teachers actively using ICT during their lessons so their pupils can benefit from the new tools available.

We chose several tools that we found the best suitable for the needs of our mentee schools and decided to focus on their implementation in the learning process.



3. Mentoring activities

3.1 Preparation

What steps did you undertake in order to initiate dialogue within your cluster of Mentee schools and identify their specific needs (e.g. Describe approximately how many interviews, meetings, questionnaires and surveys, SELFIE tests, etc. did you implement?)

Please add/delete rows as appropriate.

ACTIVITIES	ACHIEVEMENTS	CHALLENGES
<i>What did you do to achieve your goals?</i>	<i>What positive results did you achieve?</i>	<i>What difficulties did you face?</i>
Visiting mentee schools	<i>We saw what equipment our mentee schools use, learned more about the environment and met more people.</i>	<i>none</i>
Talking to teachers from mentee school	<i>It was a simple way to find out what the teachers expect to learn and how they would like to use ICT in their lessons.</i>	<i>Some of the teachers were not sure about the possibilities of ICT usage in their subject, so we had to help them navigate through the tools available for their needs.</i>
Online Expectation check	<i>Meeting with other schools' directors to set up realistic goals for the upcoming year</i>	<i>Some of the schools had very specific needs that were not relevant to others, so we had to find a way to incorporate a good mix in our plan</i>



3.2 Creating a framework for school-to-school networking

What steps did you undertake in order to coordinate mentoring activities and facilitate collaboration within your school cluster? e.g.

- Spaces both physical and virtual (e.g., hubs, online forums, platforms, etc.)
- Human resources (e.g., teams of school leaders, coordinators, experts and teacher trainers, reviewers, students' representatives, etc.)
- Digital infrastructure and resources
- Incentive and reward schemes to offer a tangible return on the schools' additional workload.

ACTIVITIES	ACHIEVEMENTS	CHALLENGES
<i>What did you do to achieve your goals?</i>	<i>What positive results did you achieve?</i>	<i>What difficulties did you face?</i>
MS Teams	<i>We could easily and quickly exchange information, share documents and exchange ideas among all the teachers involved in the project.</i>	<i>Some of the members didn't use this way of communication.</i>
Live meeting at mentor school	<i>We held a meeting for the participants to get to know each other better, learn from each other, exchange and share materials, new knowledge and skills</i>	<i>None, we just found out too late that this was the best way to share and learn and we should have done it sooner.</i>
Webinars	<i>As the project took place during the pandemic, we organized several lectures and workshops in the form of online webinars. We shared new knowledge and skills about the tools we use, and we recorded the webinars so that the participants could watch them later at their own pace.</i>	<i>Some teachers did not join nor watch the recording afterwards.</i>

3.3 Building up a community of practice

What steps did you undertake in order to facilitate dialogue and exchange of best practices within your school cluster (e.g. online sharing / repository / community platforms, regional hubs meetings and forums, blogs, websites, newsletters, cluster diaries, etc.)



ACTIVITIES	ACHIEVEMENTS	CHALLENGES
<i>What did you do to achieve your goals?</i>	<i>What positive results did you achieve?</i>	<i>What difficulties did you face?</i>
Online sharing	<i>We put all materials and resources on our shared MS Teams platform, where all the teachers could access them or add their own</i>	<i>We had to solve some access issues with teachers from one school that do not use MS 365</i>
Live meetings	<i>Live meetings with teachers and school administrators helped us strengthen the bond between our schools and made our further communication easier</i>	<i>Setting up a date is always the most problematic part of meetings</i>
Cluster diary	<i>We recorded all the activities also in the form of diaries, so all the teachers who wanted to learn something new had a way to keep updated about past activities.</i>	<i>Sometimes the administration process was too time consuming</i>

3.4 Creating professional development opportunities for Mentee school teachers

How often did you provide any of the following forms of professional development and support to Mentee schools?

- *Face-to-face workshops and courses*
- *Online courses*
- *Learning snacks (or Digital Pills / eTapas)*
- *Webinars and Expert talks*
- *Panel discussions*
- *Teachmeets*
- *School-based study groups along MOOCs*
- *Articles and guides on dedicated blogs and websites*
- *Online mentoring*
- *Video recordings of classroom practice*
- *Other*



ACTIVITIES	ACHIEVEMENTS	CHALLENGES
<i>What did you do to achieve your goals?</i>	<i>What positive results did you achieve?</i>	<i>What difficulties did you face?</i>
Live meetings	<i>We met 3 times with leaders of all the schools</i>	<i>Scheduling difficulties due to different school events</i>
Face-to-face workshops and courses	<i>Because of the pandemic restrictions, we had to do hybrid events where teachers from one school could meet onsite while those from the other schools could follow the streamed meeting online. In the end, we were able to organise only one big afternoon workshop that involved all the teachers from all the schools in our cluster</i>	<i>Pandemic restrictions that made it difficult to meet face to face.</i>
Online courses	<i>We had 3 online courses focused on digital tools that mentee schools wanted to learn about</i>	
Teachmeets	<i>We held a teachmeet, where all the participants were encouraged to share their best practices</i>	<i>Some teachers did not feel like they had something to share</i>
Online sharing	<i>We tried to share some good practice weekly using our team in Teams</i>	

3.5 Monitoring the mentoring process and evaluating progress

How often did you provide any of the following peer reviewing activities in order to evaluate how Mentee schools were progressing?

- *Semi-structured interviews*
- *Face-to-face or online meetings*
- *Surveys & questionnaires*
- *Ongoing SELFIE self-assessment*
- *School visits*
- *Instructional rounds*
- *Job-shadowing & learning walks*
- *Video-based observations*
- *Others*



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<i>What did you do to achieve your goals?</i>	<i>What positive results did you achieve?</i>	<i>What difficulties did you face?</i>
Face-to-face and online meetings	<i>We had a face to face and online meetings at the end of the project to evaluate its outcomes. Everybody had a chance to express themselves and share what their view about it.</i>	<i>It took us a long time at the beginning of the project to find a way to implement it, so we did not have enough time by the end of the year to do proper evaluation.</i>
School visits	<i>It helped us to see the change in the schools and better understand what we could further improve</i>	<i>Some of the planned school visits were not done because of the pandemic restrictions.</i>
Surveys	<i>At the end of each event, we tried to conduct short surveys to find out if the teachers found it helpful or what could be done better next time</i>	

3.6 Documenting outcomes

What initiatives did you undertake in order to document mentoring activities and to share progress, evidence and outcomes with the whole school community (e.g. video interviews, school observations reports, cluster diaries, articles on blogs and/or websites, etc.)

ACTIVITIES	ACHIEVEMENTS	CHALLENGES
<i>What did you do to achieve your goals?</i>	<i>What positive results did you achieve?</i>	<i>What difficulties did you face?</i>
Cluster diaries	<i>We kept cluster diaries to make sure all the outcomes would be briefly described and made accessible to all teachers who wanted to learn more about MenSI</i>	<i>Not many teachers wanted to take part in creating such documents</i>
Video-recordings	<i>Recordings of the webinars and online courses were available to all the teachers involved in the project</i>	<i>None</i>



Website, MS Teams	<i>We kept all the sources and materials in the team and on the website for easy access</i>	<i>none</i>
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4. Lessons learnt in MenSI

4.1 Looking back to one year in MenSI

If you could go back to the beginning of your whole-school mentoring experience in MenSI or if you are planning to continue collaboration in your network, what would you do in a different way?

It would be nice to know in advance what to expect from the project. We would also plan a greater number of face-to-face meetings for all the schools, because as we found out, it was the best way to share and network with teachers from other schools.

4.2 Final considerations / recommendations

What are your lessons learnt through MenSI? What recommendations would you give to schools that are willing to undertake a journey in school-to-school mentoring?

We learned that most teachers are willing to learn how to use new tools and integrate them in their lessons. They just need to be shown the possibilities.

School-to-school mentoring proved helpful to mentee schools as well as to our mentor schools because we all have a space for improvement. Sometimes it was difficult to recognize all the needs of the mentee school and find a way to help them. We were also lucky to have good schools to work with, which helped us throughout the whole process.



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