



CAMBRIDGE
International Education

Cambridge International School

**FRAM International
Primary School**

SIBIU,
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Service Learning Policy

At FRAM School we believe that giving back to the community is an important part of education. Our Service-Learning program provides opportunities for students to connect their classroom learning to real-world issues. Through service learning, students learn the importance of civic engagement and social responsibility.

1. What does “Service-Learning Pedagogy” mean?

“Tell me and I will forget. Involve me and I will remember.” (Benjamin Franklin)

Service-Learning pedagogy is based on the concept that community and civic involvement can be innovative in a school environment, changing attitudes and developing a wide range of skills for students and teachers alike.

“Service-Learning is a way of thinking about education and teaching with corresponding teaching tools and strategies that requires students to learn and develop through active participation in service activities, to achieve objectives defined by community organizations” (Osman y Petersen, 2013) – a school, in our case.

The application of the Service – Learning principles across all curricular areas offers extraordinary opportunities to:

- Meet all individual students’ needs.
- Support differentiation.
- Support the gifted & talented students.
- Support collaboration, motivation, and challenge.
- Consistently improve students’ response to curriculum demands.
- Develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills.



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- Develop cross-curricular learning and skills.
 - Develop personal skills of students.
 - Develop the students' understanding and perspective of society and the world.
 - Develop the civic engagement of students.
 - Develop connections between communities and institutions.
 - Promote diversity and respect for others.

FRAM School is committed to adopt the Service - Learning pedagogy as a fundamental pillar of its educational vision and philosophy.

Service - Learning is part of one of the 3 pillars of FRAM School, alongside The Academic Strand and Pastoral and Wellbeing Strand.

Important note: Volunteers vs. Partners

Is the involvement in a Service-Learning project volunteering in a community service project? Or does it mean the construction of a partnership between the school community and a specific organization active in the community?

A Service-Learning project builds a **PARTNERSHIP** between the school community and the beneficiary organization.

Through service-learning, our students will:

- share rather than "help" ;
- learn from others;
- build reciprocal, egalitarian relationships;
- acknowledge the equal dignity of all participants in the project, regardless of background and socio-economic status;



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- develop a sense of fraternity;
- share the protagonist role in project design and implementation;
- encourage those with fewer resources (economic, educational, or otherwise) to consider themselves capable of developing solidarity initiatives.

2. How does FRAM School apply the Service-Learning methodology?

Starting from our school's vision, we encourage the active learning of students through discovery, constant research, collaboration, and permanent inquiry. That is why, all year-groups are expected to build research projects starting from the principles of the Project Based Learning (PBL) methodology. Once this practice is fixed in the practice of our teachers and students, we are ready to make a step further, moving towards developing learning through community involvement projects – following the Service Learning (SL) method.

Learning through SL projects and through PBL have a lot in common:

- students are asked to solve a real need starting from a curricular area;
- students are invited to explore their own interests;
- Students are expected to ask relevant questions;
- Students are expected to engage in surveys / research / reflections / evaluation / feedback;
- Students are expected to share the solutions found with a genuine audience.

Differences:

- PBL can be only a simulation, or a theoretical experience modeled by the teachers;
- Service-Learning projects (SLP) require direct, planned and student-led action; SLPs involve students' direct experience that is brought back into classrooms and developed into learning objectives.



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The stages of a SL project are:

STAGE 1: MOTIVATION

- Personal and institutional motivation to develop the project
- Knowledge and understanding of the service-learning concept
- Awareness of the importance of students playing a prominent role

STAGE 2: DIAGNOSIS

- Identification of needs/problems/challenges, working jointly with the recipient community
- Analysis of the viability of getting a response from the educational institution

STAGE 3: PROJECT DESIGN AND PLANNING

- Objectives of service and learning. Learning contents
- Activities. Schedule and timing (planning)
- Locations for project development
- People in charge and active participants
- Resources
- Reflection and evaluation of stage 3

STAGE 4: IMPLEMENTATION

- Partnerships. Contract agreements. Use of resources
- Implementation and management of the project & development of associated learning contents
- Recording. Reflection and evaluation of the entire process
- Adjustments, revisions, new implementations



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STAGE 5: CLOSURE AND MULTIPLICATION

- Final evaluation and systematization
- Celebration and recognition of active participants
- Continuity and multiplication of service-learning projects in the larger community

Key characteristics of a successful Service-Learning project:

- the project is intentionally and relevantly linked to Academic content - curricular learning, reflection, skills development, and attitudes;
- active involvement of students - Leadership - at all stages of the project, from diagnosis and design to evaluation and celebration, even multiplication;
- emphasis on effectively addressing the needs of a Community, together with its members, not just for that community.

or

In order to have a successful SL project, we must maintain a permanent link between all the school's PILLARS:

- intentional connection to the curricular area – cross curricular approach;
- student leadership - awareness and identification of students' qualities and strengths; acknowledging the needs for their development/growth needs; choosing students' roles according to their strengths and conditions for personal development;
- work for and with the community - correlating the needs identified in the community with the activities proposed in the project.

This approach ensures the gradual implementation of the concept of PBL and gradually connects with SL.



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3. Teams, implementation and monitorization

Once the PBL methodology is consistently applied, the school is ready to make the steps towards the community. The next stage is the identification of the specific need that will be then translated and developed into a whole school SL project.

The community need that we want to meet through a SL project is identified through the actions of specific teams. Once a specific community need is identified, the SL coordinator, in cooperation with the SL teams of students and parents, chooses the local or national NGO or organization that becomes the beneficiary of the project. During the project implementation of activities, the organization becomes a partner in the project. This will also ensure the future sustainability of the project.

Once a project is selected, it becomes a **whole school project**, supported by **all the year-groups across all key-stages**. The specific actions are then registered in the **School Calendar Linked to the School Pillars**, thus integrating them in the general flow of academic and non-academic activities.

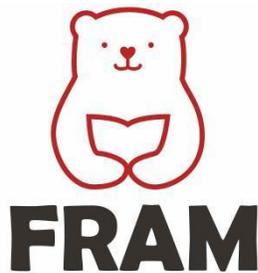
The duration of a SL project is MINIMUM 6 months.

In the school, the implementation of a SL project is led by:

- A SL team of students – which is one of the Student Leadership Teams of the school – see the Leadership Policy;
- A SL team of teachers – trained in the SL principles and methodology;
- A SL team of parents from the school's PTO (Parent-Teacher Organization);
- All the activities are supervised by the Coordinator of the Service-Learning Pillar of the school.
- The SL teams will cooperate closely with the other leadership teams in the school.

All year-groups are expected to be part of the service learning project. The practical involvement in out of school activities are to be planned by the class teachers and the form tutors in direct contact with the Service Learning Coordinator.

All out of school activities are to be planned according to the approved school Trips Policy, following all the requirements of risk assessment.



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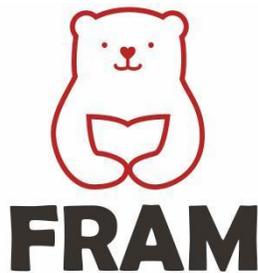
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The curriculum topics will be linked to the activities of the project, helping teachers and students to formulate Learning Objectives that will lead to learning activities that have relevance to the real and direct experiences of the students.

Links to the Service Learning activities are expected to be visible in teachers' planning.

The students' involvement in the SL projects deepens as their understanding of the entire process is constantly improved. To illustrate the different levels of student involvement, one can refer to the "ladder of participation" scale:

Typology	Content
Manipulation:	Students do not understand the project in which they participate or what they do.
Decoration:	Students' participation is used in a decorative way. They do not understand their participation.
Symbolic participation:	Students participate but their opinions have no impact and are not considered.
Assigned but informed participation:	Students do not participate in the planning, but they understand and are aware of the actions proposed to them.
Consulted and informed participation:	Students are consulted about their participation in a given project. Their ideas are taken into account.
Participation in projects initiated by Adults, and their	Students participate in decision making of projects



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decisions are shared with the students:	initiated by adults.
Participation in projects initiated and directed by the students themselves:	Students initiate and lead the projects, whereas adults participate facilitating the process.
Participation in projects initiated by students in which decisions are shared with adults:	Students decide to involve adults in the decision - making process.

In conclusion, in a Service Learning project, students should not only be informed and consulted with, but they should also establish project ownership at the early planning stage.

Teacher related expectations:

- Understanding of the 3 pillars structure of the school and the way they interconnect for a more effective accomplishment of the aims expressed in the school's vision and mission;
- A deep understanding of the PBL structure promoted by the school and illustrated in this policy;
- Understanding of Service Learning concepts and methodology;
- Constant and consistent links made between the learning objectives formulated for the lessons with the outcomes of the activities and experiences of the students had during the implementation of the SL project – this is visible in the teachers' planning and it is constantly reviewed by the Heads of Departments and the Heads of Divisions; the Coordinator of the Service Learning Pillar offers guidance and support;
- A better understanding of teachers of the importance of assigning a leading role to each child based on his or her identified qualities and developmental needs.

Fundraising:



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Fundraising for the whole school Service Learning project is to be organized by the Service Learning Teams of students and parents - representatives from the PTO.

The activities are to be organized on special days scheduled in the calendar.

The students, parents and other donors will contribute with small amounts per activity.

The raised funds will be used according to the activity plan related to the implementation of the project, under the monitorization of the Service Learning Coordinator and the Parent Service Learning Team Coordinator.

Document outlined by: Florentina Maria Ghisa Issued on: 22.07.2025			
Reviewed by	Raluca Cardos. 08.08.2025		
Approved by	SLT	Next Review	01-20.08.2026