

PROJECT INFORMATION

JORDAN: INTEGRATED SCHOOL FOR BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED CHILDREN

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Many parents in Jordan are ashamed of their blind children and hide them away at home. An integrated school in Irbid gives these children prospects for the future – through elucidation and a decent education.

Just imagine how small the world is when you are confined within four walls. Many blind children in Jordan experience a very lonely world. They are often seen as a disgrace by society and thus their parents hide them away at home. Without school education these girls and boys have no chance to ever live or work on their own. At the „Arab Episcopal School“ integrated school for the blind in Irbid, blind and sighted children learn together.

Braille and talking computers

Blind children receive learning aids in class, such as teaching materials in Braille which are printed at the school on a special Braille printer. Of course the school library also has books in Braille next to books for sighted children. There also are „talking computers“ which the blind and visually impaired children use

through their own voice output. It is hardly surprising that the children feel respected and secure at the school for the blind. The staff is confident that the visually impaired and blind pupils can learn to read and write just like the others and can also attend all the subjects on the curriculum.

Success for the integrated school concept

The integrated concept is unique in the region around Irbid. Two thirds of the pupils can see whereas a third of them are visually impaired or blind. Sitting side by side in class creates a feeling of belonging. Often sighted children help their visually impaired classmates during sports lessons or outings. And the sighted children are surprised by the way their blind friends perceive things and how fast they can read and write Braille. This way, all of them learn social skills such as human sympathy and respect.

Even some of the female and male teachers are blind. They are important role models for their blind protégés since they have succeeded in overcoming the difficulties of learning a profession and living on their own.

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