



In press conference today, the Formentera Island Council's councilor of Social Welfare, Equality and Youth, Dolores Fernández, in the company of the president of Pau Mayans Association for the integration of persons with Autism Spectrum Disorders, Núria Alandes, presented the new edition of therapeutic workshops for children with special educational needs. This year's round of courses is structured around an after-school timetable, aiming to complement basic education and put rehabilitation and specific therapeutic treatments within the reach of Formentera families.

The format in use in Pau Mayans Association therapeutic workshops is based on an American technique known as Applied Behavioural Analysis (ABA). Confidence in the ABA format is based on the success of the previous round of workshops, held in 2013 (February to October).

The Pau Mayans Association's ABA-based therapy is conceived for children from ages 3 to 14 with any sort of disability, with group size held firm at a maximum of eight. The workshops will be administered at the Formentera Day Centre.

**New workshop format for the 2013-2014 period:**

the current format is based on the data obtained in the association's previous edition of the workshops. It will focus on scholastic abilities, reading/writing, graphomotor skills, comprehension, memory, attention span, speech, etc., depending on the needs presented by each specific case. Curriculum will be individualised, as will the educational programme used in each case.

Under the new format sessions will be one-on-one, 45-minute sessions to occur twice weekly. The principal objective is the acquisition of certain specific, basic abilities that will assist participants in the completion of normal daily tasks in the educational context.

### **Results of the 2013 round of workshops:**

According to data obtained over the course of individual (one-on-one) work sessions, the average number of educational units studied is 126 per child over the entire period of participation.

The average percent of correct responses, a figure based on daily progress with educational units, is 90%. To wit, students generally maintained this success rate with new units of study, but this success was also generalized in the majority of other units of study as well. In all cases, there were measurable improvements in learning.

In each case, students satisfactorily demonstrated an ability to remain seated at a table and focus on the task at hand during the course of individual study.

### **Non-individual study:**

Introduction into the classroom: this is simulated by introducing other classmates into the group while endeavouring to maintain the therapeutic context. In groups of up to three children, individual participants were able to successfully complete individual and (depending on the case) group tasks, in each case to an extent that was determined by tutors to be satisfactory.

Introduction to the agenda: participants are able to move about the room and participate in numerous learning contexts without necessity of an adult, autonomously.

Introduction to independent work: with adult supervision, for periods upwards of ten minutes, children are given the opportunity to autonomously complete series of linked tasks/games using worksheets or 'manipulatives' (material, such as blocks and flashcards, that can be touched and moved about to assist in the learning of different concepts).

Introduction to the socialising context via rule-based play: in this context, children acquired concepts of rules, social norms, cooperation and conflict resolution.

This course is possible thanks to the initiative of the Pau Mayans Association and the cooperation of Formentera's Office of Social Welfare. The Office of Social Welfare, witnessing

the need on Formentera for therapeutic treatment of this type, has put its full support behind the association's brand of therapy. The office also supports the idea of a Formentera-based association dedicated to this issue, and the financial assistance it affords the Pau Mayans Association is a determining factor keeping prices within the reach of every family.