

The top half of the cover features a photograph of several hands of different skin tones cupping several seashells of various shapes and sizes. The background is a light, textured surface. An orange vertical bar is on the left side, and an orange horizontal bar is at the top right.

PRESCHOOL

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## Curriculum for the Preschool Lpfö 98

Revised 2010

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# 1. Fundamental values and tasks of the preschool

## **Fundamental values**

Democracy forms the foundation of the preschool. The Education Act (2010:800) stipulates that education in the preschool aims at children acquiring and developing knowledge and values. It should promote all children's development and learning, and a lifelong desire to learn. An important task of the preschool is to impart and establish respect for human rights and the fundamental democratic values on which Swedish society is based. Each and every person working in the preschool should promote respect for the intrinsic value of each person as well as respect for our shared environment.

The inviolability of human life, individual freedom and integrity, the equal value of all people, equality between the genders, as well as solidarity with the weak and vulnerable are all values that the preschool should actively promote in its work with children.

The foundation on which these values rests expresses the ethical attitude that should characterise all preschool activity. Care and consideration towards other people, justice and equality and the rights of each individual shall be emphasised and made explicit in all preschool activities. Children assimilate ethical values and norms primarily through their concrete experiences. The attitudes of adults influence the child's understanding and respect for the rights and obligations that apply in a democratic society. For this reason adults serve an important role as models.

Upholding these fundamental values requires that the attitudes from which they are derived are clearly apparent in daily activities. The activities of the preschool should be carried out democratically and thus provide the foundation for a growing responsibility and interest on the part of children to actively participate in society.

## **Understanding and compassion for others**

The preschool should take into account and develop children's ability to take responsibility and develop their social preparedness so that solidarity and tolerance are established at an early stage.

The preschool should encourage and strengthen the child's compassion and empathy for the situations of others. Preschool should be characterised by care for the individual's well-being and development. No child in the preschool should be subjected to discrimination due to gender, ethnic group, religion or other faith, sexual orientation of a family member or functional impairment, or be subjected to other degrading treatment. Preschool should aim to develop the child's sense of empathy and concern for others, as well as an openness and respect for differences in people's views and ways of life. The child's need to reflect on and share their thoughts with others in various ways about questions of life should be supported.

Increasing mobility across national borders creates cultural diversity in the preschool, which provides children with the opportunity to show respect and consideration for each individual irrespective of background.

### **Objectivity and comprehensiveness**

The preschool should be open to different ideas and encourage their expression. Each child should have the opportunity of forming their own opinion and making choices in the light of their personal circumstances. Full participation and belief in their own ability should thus be established and grow. All parents should be able to send their children to the preschool, fully confident that their children will not be prejudiced in favour of any particular view.

All who work in the preschool should uphold the fundamental values that are set out in the Education Act (2010:800) and in this curriculum, and should clearly dissociate themselves from anything that conflicts with these values. The ways in which adults respond to girls and boys, as well as the demands and expectations imposed on children contribute to their appreciation of gender differences. The preschool should counteract traditional gender patterns and gender roles. Girls and boys in the preschool should have the same opportunities to develop and explore their abilities and interests without having limitations imposed by stereotyped gender roles.

The Education Act stipulates that education in the preschool should, irrespective of where it is located, be equivalent. National goals specify the norms for equivalence, and the preschool should strive to achieve these goals. Concern for the individual child's well-being, security, development and learning should characterise the work of the preschool. Account should be taken of the varying conditions and needs of children. This means that the preschool cannot be organised in the same way everywhere, and that the resources of the preschool need not be distributed equally.

### **The tasks of the preschool**

The preschool should lay the foundations for lifelong learning. The preschool should be enjoyable, secure, and rich in learning for all children. The preschool should stimulate children's development and learning and offer secure care. Activities should be based on a holistic view of the child and his or her needs and be designed so that care, socialisation and learning together form a coherent whole. Children's development into responsible persons and members of society should be promoted in partnership with the home.

The preschool should help families by supporting them in their role of bringing up and helping their children to grow and develop. The task of the preschool means working in co-operation with parents so that each child receives the opportunity of developing in accordance with their potential.

Pedagogical activities should be related to the needs of all children in the preschool. Children who occasionally or on a more permanent basis need more support and stimulation than others should receive such support in relation to their needs and circumstances so that they are able to develop as well as possible.

The skills of the staff in understanding and interacting with the child is important, as is gaining the confidence of their parents, so that the time spent in the preschool provides positive support for children in difficulties. All children should be able to experience the satisfaction that comes from making progress, overcoming difficulties, and experiencing themselves as a valued member of the group.

The preschool should take account of the fact that children have different living environments and that they try to create context and meaning out of their own experiences. Adults should give children support in developing trust and self-confidence. The child's curiosity, initiative and interests should be encouraged and their will and desire to learn should be stimulated. The task of the preschool involves not only developing the child's ability and cultural creativity, but also passing on a cultural heritage – its values, traditions and history, language and knowledge – from one generation to the next.

The internationalisation of Swedish society imposes high demands on the ability of people to live with and understand values inherent in cultural diversity. The preschool is a social and cultural meeting place, which can reinforce this and prepare children for life in an increasingly internationalised community. Awareness of their own cultural heritage and participating in the culture of others should contribute to children's ability to understand and empathise with the circumstances and values of others. The preschool can help to ensure that children from national minorities and children with a foreign background receive support in developing a multicultural sense of identity.

The preschool should provide children with a secure environment at the same time as it challenges them and encourages play and activity. It should inspire children to explore the surrounding world. Children in the preschool should meet adults who see the potential in each child and who involve themselves in interactions with the individual child and the group of children as a whole.

The ability to communicate, to learn and be able to co-operate are necessary in a society characterised by a huge flow of information and rapid rate of change. The preschool should provide a foundation so that children in the future can acquire the knowledge and skills which make up the common framework that everybody in society needs.

Children should have the opportunity of developing their ability to observe and reflect. The preschool should be a living social and cultural environment that stimulates children into taking initiative and developing their social and communicative competence. Children should also have the opportunity to explore on their own an issue in greater depth and to search for their own answers and solutions.

Play is important for the child's development and learning. Conscious use of play to promote the development and learning of each individual child should always be present in preschool activities. Play and enjoyment in learning in all its various forms stimulate the imagination, insight, communication and the ability to think symbolically, as well as the ability to co-operate and solve problems. Through creative and gestalt play, the child is given opportunities to express and work through his or her experiences and feelings.

The preschool should promote learning, which presupposes active discussion in the work team on the contents of what constitutes learning and knowledge.

Knowledge is a complex concept, which can be expressed in a variety of forms – as facts, understanding, skills, familiarity and experience – all of which presuppose and interact with each other. The starting point for the preschool is the experience children have already gained, their interests, motivation and their drive to acquire knowledge. Children search for knowledge and develop it through play, social interaction, exploration and creativity, as well as through observation, discussion and reflection. A theme-oriented approach can broaden and enrich the child's learning.

Learning should be based, not only on the interaction between adults and children, but also on what children learn from each other. The group of children should be regarded as an important and active part in development and learning. The preschool should give children support to develop a positive picture of themselves as learning and creative individuals. They should be supported in developing confidence in their own ability to think for themselves, to act, to move and to learn i.e. to develop from different perspectives such as the intellectual, linguistic, ethical, practical, sensory and aesthetic.

Children should get stimulation and guidance from adults in order to increase their competence and acquire new knowledge and insights through their own activity. This approach presupposes that both different forms of language and knowledge, as well as different ways of learning are brought into balance and together form a whole.

Language and learning are inseparably linked together, as are language and the development of a personal identity. The preschool should put great emphasis on stimulating each child's language development, and encourage and take advantage of the child's curiosity and interest in the written language. Children with a foreign background who develop their mother tongue create better opportunities for learning Swedish, and developing their knowledge in other areas. The Education Act stipulate that the preschool should help to ensure that children with a mother tongue other than Swedish, receive the opportunity to develop both their Swedish language and their mother tongue.

Creating and communicating by means of different forms of expression, such as pictures, song and music, drama, rhythm, dance and movement, as well as spoken and written language provide both the contents and methods to be used by the preschool in promoting the development and learning of the child. This also involves building,



designing, and using various materials and technologies. Multimedia and information technology can be used in the preschool, both in the development and application of creative processes.

The preschool should put great emphasis on issues concerning the environment and nature conservation. An ecological approach and a positive belief in the future should typify the preschool's activities. The preschool should contribute to ensuring children acquire a caring attitude to nature and the environment, and understand that they are a part of nature's recycling process. The preschool should help children understand that daily reality and work can be organised in such a way such that it contributes to a better environment, both now and in the future.

The preschool should provide children with a well-balanced daily rhythm and environment related to their age and time spent in the preschool. A balance should be attained between care and rest, as well as other activities.

Children should be able to switch activities during the course of the day. Preschool should provide scope for the child's own plans, imagination and creativity in play, and learning, both indoors and outdoors. Time spent outdoors should provide opportunities for play and other activities, both in planned and natural environments.

## 2. Goals and guidelines

The **goals** specify the orientation of the work of the preschool and thus the quality development expected in the preschool.

The **guidelines** for the staff in the preschool specify not only the responsibility of preschool teachers to ensure that work is carried out in accordance with the goals in the curriculum, but also the responsibility that each and everyone in the work team has in the preschool. All who are working in the preschool are required to follow the norms and values laid down in its curriculum and contribute to the preschool's fulfilment of its task.

### 2.1 NORMS AND VALUES

The preschool should actively and consciously influence and stimulate children into developing their understanding and acceptance of our society's shared democratic values.

#### Goals

**The preschool should strive to ensure that each child develops**

- openness, respect, solidarity and responsibility,
- the ability to take account of and empathise with the situation of others, as well as a willingness to help others,
- the ability to discover, reflect on and work out their position on different ethical dilemmas and fundamental questions of life in daily reality,
- an understanding that all persons have equal value independent of social background and regardless of gender, ethnic affiliation, religion or other belief, sexual orientation or functional impairment, and
- respect for all forms of life, as well as care for their immediate environment.

#### Guidelines

**Preschool teachers are responsible for**

- ensuring that each child's needs are respected and satisfied, and that they are able to experience their own intrinsic value,
- the preschool applying democratic working methods where children actively participate, and
- norms being developed for the work and participation of children in their own groups.

**The work team should**

- show respect for the individual and help in creating a democratic climate in the preschool, where a feeling of belonging and responsibility can develop, and where children have the opportunity of showing solidarity,
- stimulate interaction between children and help them to resolve conflicts, as well as work out misunderstandings, compromise and respect each other,
- emphasise and approach the problems involved in ethical dilemmas and questions of life,
- make children aware that people may have different attitudes and values that determine their views and actions, and
- co-operate with the home concerning the child's upbringing, and discuss with parents the rules and attitudes in the preschool.

**2.2 DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING**

The preschool should be characterised by a pedagogical approach, where care, socialisation and learning together form a coherent whole. The activities should be carried out so that they stimulate and challenge the child's learning and development. The learning environment should be open, enriched by content and attractive. The preschool should promote play, creativity and enjoyment of learning, as well as focus on and strengthen the child's interest in learning and capturing new experiences, knowledge and skills.

The preschool should contribute to children developing an understanding of themselves and their surrounding world. A sense of exploration, curiosity and desire to learn should form the foundations for the preschool activities. These should be based on the child's experiences, interests, needs and views. The flow of the child's thoughts and ideas should be used to create variety in learning.

**Goals****The preschool should strive to ensure that each child**

- develop their identity and feel secure in themselves,
- develop their curiosity and enjoyment, as well as their ability to play and learn,
- develop self-autonomy and confidence in their own ability,
- feel a sense of participation in their own culture and develop a feeling and respect for other cultures,
- develop their ability to function individually and in a group, handle conflicts and understand rights and obligations, as well as take responsibility for common rules,

- develop their motor skills, ability to co-ordinate, awareness of their own body, as well as an understanding of the importance of maintaining their own health and well-being,
- acquire and be able to differentiate shades of meaning in concepts, see interconnections and discover new ways of understanding the surrounding world,
- develop their ability to listen, reflect and express their own views and try to understand the perspectives of others,
- develop their use of spoken language, vocabulary and concepts, as well as the ability to play with words, relate something, express their thoughts, put questions, and put forward their arguments and communicate with others,
- develop an interest in the written language and an understanding of symbols, and their communicative functions,
- develop an interest in pictures, texts and different media, as well as the ability to make use of, interpret and talk about them,
- develop their creative abilities and the ability to convey impressions, thoughts and experiences in many different forms of expression, such as play, pictures, song and music, dance and drama,
- develop their understanding of space, shapes, location and direction, and the basic properties of sets, quantity, order and number concepts, also for measurement, time and change,
- develop their ability to use mathematics to investigate, reflect over and test different solutions to problems raised by themselves and others,
- develop their ability to distinguish, express, examine and use mathematical concepts and their interrelationships,
- develop their mathematical skill in putting forward and following reasoning,
- develop their interest and understanding of the different cycles in nature, and how people, nature and society influence each other,
- develop their understanding of science and relationships in nature, as well as knowledge of plants, animals, and also simple chemical processes and physical phenomena,
- develop their ability to distinguish, explore, document, put questions about and talk about science,
- develop their ability to identify technology in everyday life, and explore how simple technology works,
- develop their ability to build, create and construct using different techniques, materials and tools, and
- with a mother tongue other than Swedish develop their cultural identity and the ability to communicate in both Swedish and their mother tongue.

## Guidelines

### **Preschool teachers are responsible**

- for work in the group of children taking place so that children
  - are provided with the opportunities for learning and development and at the same time are encouraged to use the whole range of their abilities,
  - experience a sense of enjoyment and meaningfulness in learning what is new,
  - receive new challenges that stimulate enjoyment in learning new skills, experiences and knowledge,
  - receive support and stimulation in their social development,
  - are provided with good conditions for building up relationships and feel a sense of security in the group,
  - are stimulated and challenged in their language and communicational development,
  - are stimulated and challenged in their mathematical development,
  - are stimulated and challenged to develop their interest in science and technology,
  - receive support and stimulation for their motor development and
  - are provided with good care and a well-balanced daily rhythm.

### **The work team should**

- co-operate to provide a good environment for development, play and learning, and pay particular attention to and help children who for different reasons need support in their development,
- take account of children's eagerness, desire and enjoyment to learn, as well as strengthen confidence in their own ability,
- provide stimulation and special support to those children who experience difficulties of various kinds,
- challenge the curiosity of children and their growing understanding of language and communication, mathematics, as well as science and technology,
- give children the opportunity to develop their ability to communicate, document and describe their impressions, experiences, ideas and thinking processes by means of words, concrete materials and pictures, as well as aesthetic and other forms of expression,
- give children the opportunity of understanding how their own actions can have an effect on the environment, and
- give children the opportunity to become familiar with their own immediate environment, and those functions which are important in daily life, as well as become familiar with local cultural life.

## 2.3 INFLUENCE OF THE CHILD

The preschool provides the foundations for children to understand what democracy is. The social development of the child presupposes that in relation to their capacity, they are able to take responsibility for their own actions and for the environment in the preschool. The needs and interests which children themselves express in different ways should provide the foundation for shaping the environment and planning activities.

### Goals

#### **The preschool should strive to ensure that each child**

- develop the ability to express their thoughts and views, and thus have the opportunity of influencing their own situation,
- develop the ability to accept responsibility for their own actions and the environment of the preschool, and
- develop the ability to understand and act in accordance with democratic principles by participating in different kinds of cooperation and decision-making.

### Guidelines

#### **Preschool teachers are responsible**

- for all children having real influence over working methods and contents of the preschool.

#### **The work team should**

- work towards ensuring that the individual child develops the ability and willingness to take responsibility and exercise influence in the preschool,
- work towards ensuring that the opinions and views of each child are respected,
- take advantage of each child's ability and desire to take greater responsibility for themselves and their participation in the group of children,
- work towards ensuring that both girls and boys have an equal measure of influence over and scope for participating in activities, and
- prepare the children for participating in and sharing the responsibilities, rights and obligations that apply in a democratic society.

## 2.4 PRESCHOOL AND HOME

The guardian is responsible for their child's upbringing and development. The preschool should supplement the home by creating the best possible preconditions for ensuring that each child's development is rich and varied. The preschool's work with children should thus take place in close and confidential co-operation with the home. Parents should have the opportunity within the framework of the national goals to be involved and influence activities in the preschool. A prerequisite for children and parents to have the opportunity of exercising influence is that the preschool is clear about its goals and what its work involves.

### Guidelines

#### **Preschool teachers are responsible for**

- each child, together with their parents, receiving a good introduction to the preschool,
- for ensuring that parents receive opportunities to participate and exercise influence over how goals can be made concrete in pedagogical planning,
- for the content of the development dialogue, its structure and how it is carried out, and
- for involving guardians in assessing the work of the preschool.

#### **The work team should**

- show respect for parents and be responsible for developing good relationships between staff of the preschool and the children's families,
- maintaining an on-going dialogue with guardians on the child's well-being, development and learning, both inside and outside the preschool, and holding development talks at least once a year, and
- take due account of parents viewpoints when planning and carrying out activities.

## 2.5 CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE PRESCHOOL CLASS, THE SCHOOL AND THE LEISURE-TIME CENTRE

In order to support the all-round development of children for the future, the preschool should strive to establish good working co-operation with the preschool class, the school and the leisure-time centre. Co-operation should be based on national and local goals, and the guidelines applicable to the different activities.

As the time approaches for the child to transfer to the preschool, the school and the leisure-time centre, the preschool has the special task of facilitating the transition and completing the preschool period. In the transition special attention should be given to those children needing special support.

## Guidelines

### **Preschool teachers are responsible**

- for ensuring that co-operation takes place with the staff of the preschool class, the school and the leisure-time centre in order to support the child's transition to these forms.

### **The work team should**

- exchange knowledge and experiences with the staff of the preschool class, the school and leisure-time centre and co-operate with them, and
- together with staff in the preschool class, the school and leisure-time centre, pay due attention to each child's need for stimulation and support.

## **2.6 FOLLOW-UP, EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

The quality of the preschool shall be regularly and systematically documented, followed up, evaluated and developed. Evaluating the quality of the preschool and creating good conditions for learning requires that the child's learning and development be monitored, documented and analysed. Supporting and challenging children in their learning entails knowledge of each child's experiences, knowledge and participation, as well as influence over and interest in the different goal areas. This also requires knowledge of how the child's exploration, questions, experiences and involvement are used in the preschool, how the child's knowledge changes and when they experience the preschool as interesting, fun and meaningful.

The aim of evaluation is to obtain knowledge of how the quality of the preschool i.e. its organisation, content and actions can be developed so that each child receives the best possible conditions for learning and development. Ultimately this involves developing better work processes, being able to determine whether the work takes place in accordance with the goals, as well as investigating what measures need to be taken in order to improve the conditions for children to learn, develop, feel secure and have fun in the preschool. Analyses of the results of evaluation indicate areas that are critical for development. All forms of evaluation should take the perspective of the child as the starting point. Children and parents should participate in evaluation and their views are to be given prominence.

## Guidelines

### **Preschool teachers are responsible**

- that each child's learning and development is regularly and systematically documented, followed up and analysed so that it is possible to evaluate how the preschool provides opportunities for children to develop and learn in accordance with the goals and intentions of the curriculum,



- that documentation, follow-up, evaluation and analysis covers how the goals of the curriculum are integrated with each other in pedagogical work,
- that the preschool as a whole i.e. its conditions, organisation, structure, contents, activities and pedagogical processes are documented, followed up and evaluated,
- that documentation, follow-up and analysis covers how the abilities and knowledge of children change over time in the goal areas in relation to the preconditions for learning and development provided by the preschool,
- that evaluation methods, how documentation and evaluation are used and influence the contents and working methods of the preschool, as well as the child's opportunities for development and learning in all goal areas are critically examined, and
- that the results of documentation, follow-up and evaluation in systematic work on quality are used to develop the quality of the preschool and thus the child's opportunities for learning and development.

### **The work team should**

- regularly and systematically document, follow up and analyse each child's learning and development, as well as evaluate how the preschool provides the child with opportunities for learning and development in accordance with the goals and intentions of the curriculum,
- use different forms of documentation and evaluation to provide knowledge of the conditions for the child's learning and development in the preschool, as well as making it possible to monitor the child's acquisition of knowledge in different goal areas,
- document, follow up and analyse
  - communication and interaction with and between children, their participation and influence, as well as the occasions when children experience preschool as interesting, meaningful and fun,
  - how the child's skills and knowledge change continuously over time in the goal areas in relation to the preconditions for learning and development provided by the preschool,
- document, follow up, evaluate and develop
  - the child's participation and influence in documentation and evaluations, where and how the child can exercise influence, and how their perspective, explorations, questions and ideas are used, and
  - influence of parents in the evaluations, where and how they can exercise influence, and how their perspectives can be used.

## **2.7 RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HEAD OF THE PRESCHOOL**

As the pedagogical leader and head of the preschool teachers, child minders and other staff in the preschool, the head of the preschool has overall responsibility for ensuring that the preschool is run in accordance with the goals of the curriculum and its overall task. The head of the preschool is responsible for the quality of the preschool, and within given constraints, has specific responsibility for:

- systematically and continuously planning, following up, evaluating and developing the preschool,
- carrying out systematic work on quality together with preschool teachers, child minders and other staff, as well as providing the child's guardian with opportunities to participate in work on quality,
- developing working forms for the preschool so that the child's active influence is encouraged,
- structuring the learning environment of the preschool so that the child has access to a good environment and material for development and learning,
- organising the preschool so that children receive the special support, help and challenges they need,
- establishing, carrying out, following up and evaluating the preschool's action programmes for preventing and counteracting all forms of discrimination and degrading treatment, such as bullying and racist behaviour amongst children and employees,
- developing forms of cooperation between the preschool and the home, and that parents receive information about the goals of the preschool and its methods of working,
- developing forms of cooperation with the preschool class, the school and the leisure-time centre, and that coordination takes place to create conditions for a shared view, in close and trusting cooperation, and
- the staff regularly obtain the competence development required to be able to carry out their tasks in a professional manner.

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