

It's all in the attitude







NORÐLINGASKÓLI

- In the beginning: a call from school authorities for a team to start a new school and a profile of their professional views and aims
- A new school – “The rural school in Reykjavíkshire!”
- Currently there are about 250 students but expected to be up to 450 once the area is fully settled
- A unique environment for outdoor education
- An adhesive in the community – a forum for inhabitants – socially active

Mission statement

- Our work is based on the belief that each individual should be given tailor-made conditions for personal growth and development so that they complete their primary education as **independent, strong** and most importantly **happy individuals**.
- We are committed to mixed-age grouping, as it improves students' social skills and enables them to pursue their education at their own pace.

Mission statement

- That students feel good and that each student's work and learning corresponds to his or her needs, capabilities and strengths. We ground ourselves on **differentiation** and many types of **co-operative learning**.
- That the school is for all children in the school district , **fully inclusive**, that no child is expendable and everyone is welcome.
- That school staff is dedicated to **teamwork** so that the diversity within the staff benefits the students.

Mission statement

- That the school maintains close ties to its community especially focusing on school-parent collaboration utilizing parents' expert knowledge of their children in tandem with staff's expert knowledge.
- That the school models itself on its cultural and natural environment and promotes a feeling of togetherness and community.

The attitude

Students' „rights“ to have

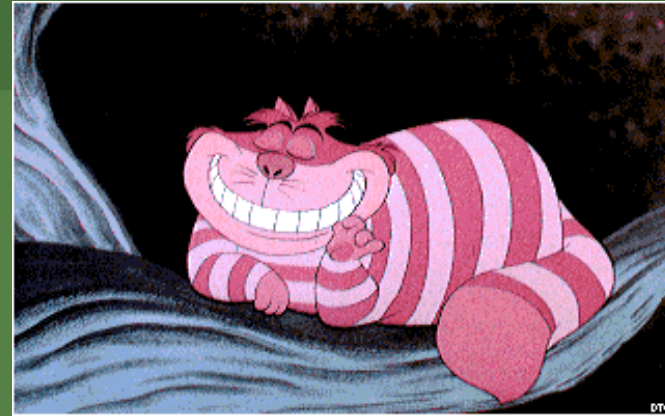
- maximum influence on their education
- emotional well-being, democratic work procedures and freedom of choice
- a school that attends to their needs so that their education is both beneficial and enjoyable
- school staff that have faith in them at all times and believe that everybody can learn

„anyone can make a mistake,
that's how we learn“



Assessment for learning

“Assessment should always have more to do with helping students grow than with cataloging their mistakes.” (CA Tomlinson)



“Assessment is today’s means of understanding how to modify tomorrow’s instruction.”
(CA Tomlinson)

Assessment for learning

Stepping stones on the journey:

- Portfolio
- Student led meetings with teacher and parent
- Targetsetting with students and parents
- Working with the strength of individuals, self assessment of pupils
- Individual planning
- Individualized assessment – test week



NORÐLINGASKÓLI

**Home and school
working together**

Welcoming day

The first day of school

- Takes place in students' homes
- Staff (in pairs) pay a visit and meet students and parents on their home turf to discuss the year ahead.

*„The relationship between the school and the home is pure genius if you ask me, the e-mails, the coffee mornings, information evenings, parents' day and welcoming day – that's something more schools should do“
(mother of a 2nd grader)*

**A choice of words??
ADHD or Gosi**

„problem behaviour“

„Happy behaviour“

Shed or a lodge



Parent – teacher collaboration

- Meetings with parents

CONSULTATIONS: Parents are specialists on their children – staff are specialists on education

- Visits to the school and playschool
- Welcoming day
- Beginning and end of the school day
- Coffee always available
- Evening seminars for parents
- Morning coffee meetings
- Parents participate in setting objectives
- “Parents as students” day
- E-mail – Mentor



working methods



The educational framework

- Schedules (clustering)
- Intentions/goals – weekly individual planning
- Fields of interest – study contracts
- Elective system
- Evaluation, expectations shared goals
- Workshops



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- Individual planning
- Weekly intentions
- Includes homework

3. OG 4. DEKKUR NORÐLINGASKÓLI

Vikunnar

Markmið

Áform

Skrift

Lestur

Áhugasvið

Markmið

Áform

Stærðfræði

Markmið

Áform

Íþróttir

Markmið

Áform

2005-2006

3. OG 4. DEKKUR NORÐLINGASKÓLI

Talað mál og framsögn

Markmið

Áform

ANNAD

Markmið

Áform

Háttfræði/Samtalsfræði

Markmið

Áform

Íþróttir og vísur

Markmið

Áform

Málfræði

Markmið

Áform

Útivist

We want our school to be a place of learning, not teaching

NORÐLINGASKÓLI

Parental involvement:

- Evaluation
- Expectations
- Shared goals

The image shows three overlapping school forms from Norðlingaskóli. The top form is titled 'Mat' (Food) and '3. OG 4. BEKKUR' (3rd and 4th grades). It has fields for 'Nemandi' (Student), 'Foreldri' (Parent), and 'Kennari' (Teacher), each with a small box for a signature or mark. The middle form is titled 'Væntingar fyrir næsta tímabil' (Expectations for the next period) and has similar fields for 'Nemandi', 'Foreldri', and 'Kennari'. The bottom form is titled 'Sameiginleg markmið' (Shared goals) and has a 'Kvittanir:' (Signature) section with three boxes. At the bottom right of the bottom form, it says 'Nemandi/Foreldri/Kennari' and '2005-2006'.

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- Field of interest
- Allowing students to exploit their strengths
- A study contract

The student and teacher draw up a contract on the project, how it is to be carried out and in what time. The contract also states the final product of the student's work and what resources the teacher must provide.

NORÐLINGASKÓLI

Hvað langar þig að gera í áhugasviðinu?

Námssamningur

Ég _____
ætla að vinna að verkefni sem lýst er hér að neðan:

Markmið - verk lýsing - skil

Skil á verkefni ← **Skiladagur**

Kennarinn ætlar að: _____

Norðlingahóli _____

Kennari _____ Nemandi _____

Skólaárið 2005 - 2006

Outdoor education at Norðlingaskóli



- Objectives:
 - Students come into first-hand contact with nature
 - Students make use of nature in work and play
 - Boosting physical prowess and well-being through outdoor life
 - Teaching all subjects out in the open



We are out in
any kind of
weather!
There's no
bad weather,
just bad
clothing.



Movement and
exercise in the
outdoor
classroom.

Influencing the school culture

- In Norðlingaskóli the atmosphere is based on the belief that it is **normal, even desirable that everyone is unique**. It is considered important that all students are allowed to blossom, according to their abilities, needs, wants, interests and strengths.
- We encourage the **attitude** that our school is a workplace characterised by co-operation, emotional well-being, happiness, a disciplined kind of freedom, students working independently, democracy, a pleasant working environment, diversity and flexibility
- We emphasise staff teamwork, a professional dialogue and a conspicuous desire to innovate – curriculum development is considered an integral part of our work and continuous assessment is considered imperative.
- The school should model itself on the students, rather than expecting the students to fit into a pre-existing mould.
- **The only thing that can eradicate negativity is positivity!!**

All the “problem-free” schools shared positive attitudes towards parents and considerable emphasis was put on involving and working with them



“ This is all about attitudes ...”

This is all about attitudes ... For whom is the school for? It is for the kids. We have to adapt to their needs. We do not throw out the kids that do not fit into the box ... the system ... That is not the case in our school ... we tell them that they are the best ... We are not constantly picking on them for things they can not do ... Everyone can bloom in some area ... We believe that the well-being of the child is at the center. It is this attitude that makes this school the place it is.