

What's up in education
New models for future pre-school services

Job Shadowing Observations



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Section 1

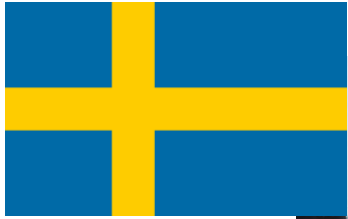
What we observed

- 1 Families involvement
- 2 Service organisation
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Section 2

Ideas and feedback

...during and after the experience



Team in Sweden



Slovenian team in Italy



What we observed

...The observations collected during the Job Shadowing experiences (in Sweden, Italy and Slovenia) divided into 4 focus areas

About...



1

Families involvement



- Communication between parents and educators takes place on a daily basis during the arrival and departure of children in kindergarten.
- At the beginning of the year, they have a meeting with their parents to present their annual work plan. Individual conversations are conducted once or twice a year. In older groups, children may also be present at the interviews.
- Communication is done via e-mail and orally. Some groups of parents also inform about kindergarten activities via social networks (facebook, instagram).
- In spite of invitations, parents are not so responsive. During the New Year and at the end of the year they organize a major event (running with parents, a festive meeting in December), where all groups in the unit are included.



1 Families involvement

How teachers invite, welcome, communicate with parents and families to support children's educational process?



- via bulletin boards (as the sole source of information),
- posters showing activities and processes (pictures, statements of children ...)
- a photo player,
- in some places, there is a special notebook (or portfolio group) in front of the casinos where the teachers write to the parents of the activities,
- parents walk through the rooms, even in the yard,
- a relaxed relationship between parents and educators,
- through parents' representatives (information is their duty).



Are families involved in every day life of children in the preschool? (daily activities) How families' point of view is taken into account?

- parents are invited to present the culture,
- exchange of daily information (in the room, in front of it, on the playground, depending on where the children are located),
- by entering the kindergarten they automatically receive the rules of the kindergarten,
- involve parents in regulating the renovation of the kindergarten and the surrounding area, making plays, cornerboards ...

Are families involved in discussion before proposals are put to them? How teachers share responsibilities with families in the decision-making process concerning children's education?

- Yes, they are, through representatives of parents, workshops, meetings ...
- creating a directory for parents' representatives on the importance of their role,
- parents have the role of participating in parental meetings and related meetings.



Are there planned meetings or workshops for families about educational issues, also with the help of experts?

- They regularly organize meetings, discussions, parents' education,
- their approach is rather soft, as recommendations, do not interfere excessively with families,
- regularly develop their philosophy of work and represent it to parents,
- involve experts,
- arranged documentation for parents (philosophy / curriculum, information leaflet).



Are families organized in a representative bodies? Which ones?

- They have parents' representatives and organize regular meetings, discussions and education (3x / year),
- They have clearly stated what the role of representatives is (informing others),
- Families are involved in various projects (special agent 006).



Does pre school promote a network for families with social-cultural and health services ?

- We did not find this.
- Every Thursday, an organized (outsourced) activity is for the eldest children for one unit,
- a well-arranged escort for children with special needs,
- they help with their peers and other children who can translate,
- cooperation and integration into the local community (library, firefighters, rice factory, reserve ...),
- cooperate with educational institutions (practitioners).



How much access do families have to preschool service? Please give examples (e.g. daily visiting time, individual talk, workshops...)

- parents are strongly involved (workshops, informal meetings, meetings, education, work-related activities ...),
- Two times a year they prepare a common breakfast paid by parents (collection of funds),
- there is no diet in the shortened program, and the kindergarten is free,
- the difference between two times a year (at 3 years old children at the beginning and at the end of the year, and with 4-5 years only at the end of the year) and, if necessary.

How much are the competencies/talents of families utilised? Please give examples.

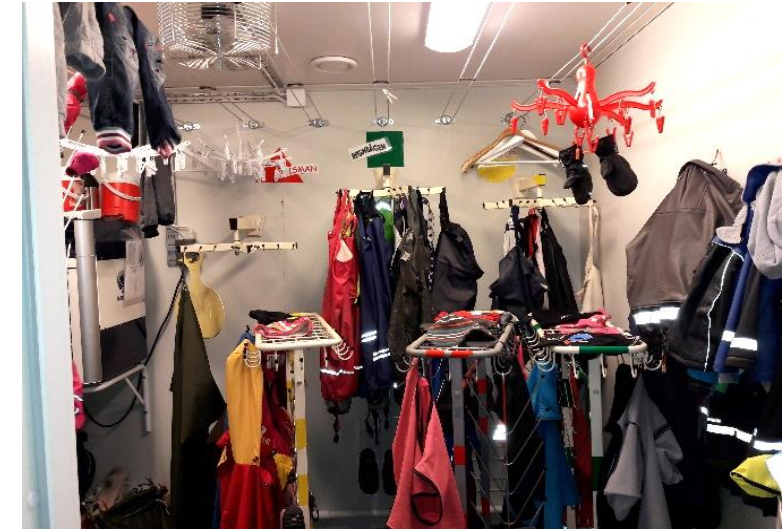
- they take into account the competences of parents and regularly invite them to various activities (working campaigns, planting flowers, preparing plays ...). Invite them as needed.

2 Service organisation



Spaces

- The rooms are „super“ uper standard.
- The playroom is made up of several rooms designed for playing, feeding and resting.
- They usually have one central space leading to thematic rooms (art studio, room home, water corner, corner with constructors, corner for calm and reading ...).
- Corners also use space in the hallway, as the wardrobes are separated. Each casino has a small kitchenette.
- The dispenser has a dryer,
- the kitchen is distributed,
- the educational staff is planning in rooms with computers, and they also have a room for rest.
- In the playground, toys are wooden pantry.





2 Service organisation

How indoor spaces and materials are organized and set up?
How they support and promote the autonomy, relationships and children's learning?

- spaces are large, not over-saturated with materials,
- various additional spaces for creative work, for creating, exploring, (children have cabinets!),
- have a lot of natural and unstructured material (shells, sand, branches, pipes ...),
- they can bring natural material from the playground to the room, and also some things out (pins, scissors),
- there are more games with other children than with toys,
- flowers on the lower shelves (accessible to children),
- several corners are arranged in the room with tables and less in the space they give to sleep,
- the windows in the younger ones are low enough to allow the children to see out. A lot of glass surfaces
Eyebrows adapted for the youngest (stools that can rotate in all directions).





Outdoor

- Children spend a lot of time outdoors at any time.
- They have large playgrounds with lots of grass and greenery, and forests and water surfaces are in the immediate vicinity.
- A rich natural environment is beneficial. All children have waterproof and warm clothes in kindergarten, suitable for all weather conditions. They play freely on the court, they do not have many toys (drivers, balls, kangles, bats ...); use sandpit, playgrounds and climbing trees.
- Educators are attentive to them, but not in terms of constant control. They only mediate in case of rare conflicts.



How outdoor spaces and materials are organized and set up? How they support and promote the autonomy, relation-ships and children's learning?

- a lot of space for movement (mostly grass surfaces),
- planted have huge shrubs and fruit trees, and shrubs in which children can play,
- a lot of natural material (branches, trunks, stones, rocks ...) with which children can play freely,
- quite free experimentation where children can discover the environment,
- some played (among other things, kitchens and houses made by parents),
- they work in a kindergarten 'project house', where they take into account in particular the wishes of children,
- there is a questionable control over children, since some people trust them fairly.



Service organisation

- There are three adults in each department. All educators do not work full-time, so there are four different people in the department (in some places).
- The planning is intended for one hour, which some take advantage of before or after entering the department or after lunch. All full-time employees have eight hour work hours and work all hours (opening, closing). The tasks of the work have been accurately distributed and time-bound for each day. Hours worked every week. Educators usually meet once a week and have a meeting where they are evaluating and planning their work. Once a month, all heads of units have a meeting with their superiors.
- The goals of the activities are global at the level of kindergarten, followed by the operational goals that follow them in monthly, weekly and daily activities.



- All activities are offered in corners where children are free to cross.
- The playing corners are arranged in different rooms.
- Planned activities run by educators are either after breakfast or before lunch.
- There are not a lot of toys, they occasionally replace them. There is little unstructured material. Everything is adapted to the reach of children. In day-to-day games, children are provided with modern technology (such as a tablets).
- The ratio of educators to children is calm, which is reflected in the game and the atmosphere in the playroom. Conflicts are resolved through mediation.

Rest and sleep

Child's resting time is adjusted according to the wishes of the parents. There are special rooms for them, where there is theme and soothing music. Children sleep on soft cushions on the ground, and some younger ones outdoors in trolleys, regardless of weather conditions. Older children do not sleep.



How teachers use daily routines to promote children's self-regulation and independence?

- The routine differs greatly from the educator to the educator,
- encourage some children to be autonomous in preparing meals, loading food, cleaning, dressing, personal hygiene ... others do everything instead of children,
- The daily routine is determined, but quite relaxed with very soft passages.



Gender issues

We have observed that both organisations are organized in way that are not promoting gender differences.

Inclusion

A social pedagogue is mostly present in departments. Weekly visits all units and departments. It has individual hours for children with special needs.

Social pedagogue also helps in integrating and communicating with foreigners or migrants when they come to kindergarten. It is always available for professional help to parents and educators.

Parents and children from abroad are trying to come closer to the following activities:

- individual conversations with parents;
- sign language (such language);
- maps of the world in casinos, flags ...;
- emphasis on language activities;
- a pleasant attitude, which gives a sense of acceptance.



How children with disability or in disadvantage situation (family, behavioral...) are accommodated in the preschool service? Which strategies, educational planning, cooperation with medical experts?

- children with special needs have an assigned companion,
- when planning and observing, the entire kindergarten is included, the program is designed and conscientiously implemented,
- the companion is there for all children, but should prepare one activity for this child and some others,
- one girl (Arcobaleno) has a special room for activities in kindergarten,
- the kindergarten includes also workers with special needs (use in the kitchen)

Inclusion

- many children of different cultures are involved, most of them children are Italians,
- they are trying to prepare these children / parents a safe environment in which they feel well,
- families are invited to present culture, what they cook ...
- introduce the parents in a soft way into a local culture (the example of darkened dark-skinned)

How teachers help children understand, accept and appreciate diversity?

- strongly respect the diversity and uniqueness of children,
- pre-school children do not have problems and do not perceive mutual differences (stereotypes are derived from adults),
- respect religious diets (also bring a doctor's certificate)



Other observations about interesting aspects or curiosities

- They choose one project and process it. They take the time. They have a head and tail.
- Parents have a certain time when they can bring and take a baby.
- When introducing, parents wait in kindergarten (room for parents).
- Inside, they are sutured in shoes (except in crèche sections). For outdoor play, they often get into boots.
- They support diets, religious beliefs, vegetarianism.
- At lunch they use a deep and shallow plate. Acropal, hard plastic.
- For other installments, use a lot of plastic and waste material (plastic pots ...).
- They completely dim the room during rest. Mandatory rest for two hours.
- A bed for a nurse who also rests. In some places, children are themselves.
- They bring bedding from home. Elderly children are taken off during the rest in warm periods.



Ideas and feedback

...during and after the experience

Thank You!

Mateja

I saw and observed a good two-way climate child, parent – educator.

Borut

Thanks for the nice reception, professionalism, discourse space, expression and sharing of pedagogical practices.

Tanja

You were great hosts. Everything was smooth, calm. Nevertheless, our wishes were heard, as they were constantly on the horizon and perceived our desires. The kindergarten staff was friendly and communicative. Everywhere you felt accepted. An insight into the functioning of their kindergartens has contributed to professional growth. At the same time, during the exchange, I met great people who made the whole experience fantastic.

Mirja

I would like to thank you for your kind welcome, your willingness to help and cooperation, providing all possible information, ideas and guidelines, ...

Good will and relaxation and help finding answers to questions were a guide for good cooperation, the observed trusting of children and their abilities was an incentive, with which I returned to my own department and successfully integrated certain changes into it (both the organization of space and time, as well as in the pedagogical work itself)

Matjaž

I would like to thank them for accepting us so nicely that they were always ready to talk and that everything was organized so well. I want them to continue to work so well and stay in touch with nature.

Matic

Thank you very much for the hospitality. We felt warmly welcomed and welcomed. The purpose and objectives of the exchange were achieved mainly because all the departments in kindergartens opened the doors, we were everywhere welcome, you took your time and answered all our curious questions. Discussions about the characteristics, diversity of our cultures outside of our professional framework of pre-school education were also interesting.

Laura

Thanks for the warm reception and plenty of information and rich experience.

Tomaž

I was positively surprised, warm welcomed and it was a very pleasant experience.

Karolina

You were excellent hosts, both on a professional and personal level. I envy you good space conditions, which can be even better used.

Loti

Partners make very bog effort for our wellbeing. They took good care of the expert part of the visit as well of relax atmosphere and also social activities.

Darja