



SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
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Children's mental health and learning in Swedish preschool

The preschool environment as a promotive factor for
children's engagement and protective factor against
mental illness?



Madeleine writes...

The efforts to strengthen the health of young children have been shown to have positive effects on children's mental health later in their lives.

Preschool has been highlighted both as an environment in which children's mental health problems can be detected but also as an environment that promote good mental health and protect against mental illness.



Participation, Communication and Learning

*The opportunity for participation
in a community of friends*

*The opportunity for real participation
in one's own learning process*

A number of factors are essential...e.g.

- The core – a functioning interaction and communication with one's teachers
- To be heard and to understand is fundamental for functioning communication, regardless of in what context the student is.





The study indicates a need of adaptations and changes of different levels... (individual, group, organisational and social) to create better prerequisites and conditions for learning.

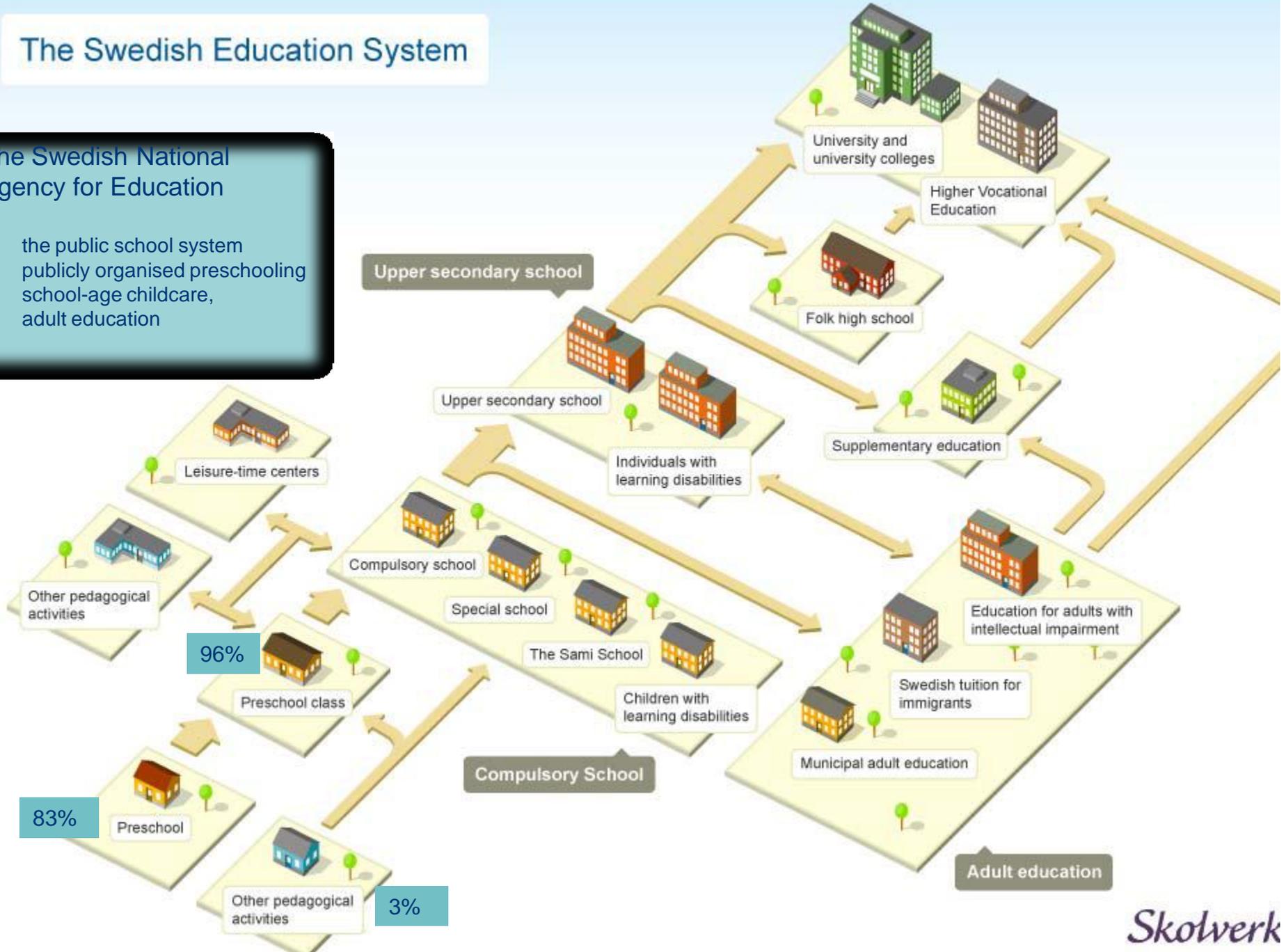
The student's narratives facilitate reflections about...

- ... what has happened before in their lives
- ... what is going on in current situations
- ... experiences affecting their actions
- ... their understanding and experience of inter- and intra-personal participation

The Swedish Education System

The Swedish National Agency for Education

- the public school system
- publicly organised preschooling
- school-age childcare,
- adult education





Swedish Preschool

- 83% of all children aged 1-5 years old (2011)
 - 48% of 1 year olds,
 - 88% and 93% respectively of 2 and 3 year olds
 - 94% of all 4 and 5 year olds
- municipally-run preschools
- independently-managed preschools (parent- or staff co-operatives or run by a foundation or a company)
 - 19% of all children enrolled in preschool
- fees - a system of maximum fees
- regulated by
 - the Education Act
 - the curriculum "*Curriculum for the Preschool Lpfö 98*"
(revised 2010)



Preschool

- A separate school form
- Municipalities should provide preschooling for children from the age of one:
 - when parents are working or studying
 - when parents are unemployed or on leave of absence (at least 3 hours a day, or 15 hours a week)
- Municipalities should provide preschooling to:
 - all children from the autumn term when the child reach the age of 3 and up to the time when school starts (at least 525 hours per year free of charge)
 - children in need of special support



Staff and Group sizes

- an average of about 17 children/group
- 21 children (or more) in 18% of the groups
- groups for the youngest children (1-2 years old)
 - 10 children ... about 16% of the groups
 - 11-13 children ... 25% of the groups
 - 14-16 children ... 45% of the groups
 - 17- children ...about 13% of the groups
- nearly 40% of children have a mother tongue other than Swedish
- an average of 5.3 children/staff
- an average of 10.1 children/preschool teacher



The tasks of the preschool

The preschool should

lay the foundations for lifelong learning

be enjoyable, secure, and rich in learning for all children

stimulate children's development and learning and offer secure care

Care, socialisation and learning together should 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.

Curriculum for the Preschool Lpfö 98(revised 2010), p 5



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.

Curriculum for the Preschool Lpfö 98(revised 2010), p 5



Norway

- The Kindergarten Act
 - Care and play
 - Promote learning, develop basic knowledge and skills
 - Allround development
 - Children´s participation
 - Contribution to well-being and joy in play and learning
- Framework Plan for the Content and Tasks of Kindergartens
- Public (46%) and private kindergartens (54%)
- Children from the age of one
- Children with disabilities – priority
- Pedagogical leaders – trained preschool teachers
- Nearly 90% of all children aged 1-5 years (1-2 years about 80%)





Germany

Kindertagesstätte – 3 types of "Kitas"

1. Kinderkrippe – up to 3 years, not free, cost varies
2. Kindergarten – between 3 and 6 years
not a part of the regular school system
not mandatory, not free
space often limited
a majority of children attend kindergarten
- (3. Daycare services)





United Kingdom



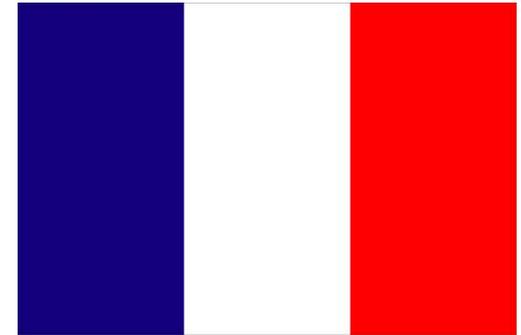
- Nurseries – 0-5 years
- Preschool – children 3 years old (The child starts school 4 or 5 years old)
- Publicly funded nurseries and preschools
- Limited number of hours a week (usually 3 h/day)
- Teaching – (often done) through play
- The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)
 - assessments - when a child is aged between 2 and 3 years
 - at the end of the academic year when children turn 5
- ‘SEN coordinator’

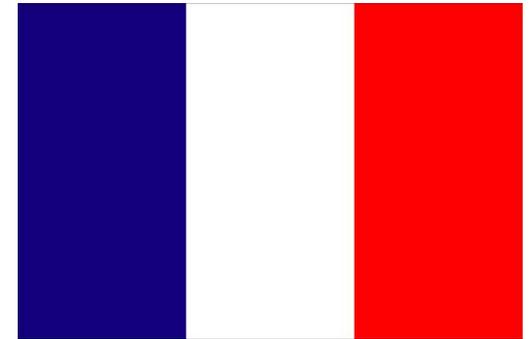


France

Kindergarten (Nursery school)

- available to children ages 3 and upward
 - Children - not required to attend formal schooling until the age of 6
- free of charge
- public and private
- the typical school week is 24 hours
- the objective - help a child to become independent, to gain knowledge and skills to interact with other children and the world around them
- children's progression is monitored according to objective standards
- children with learning difficulties can avail of some individual assistance from teachers or in small groups.





- Understanding others;
- Asking questions and expressing their point of view;
- Identifying the main features of writing and understanding texts read to them;
- Writing simple words using cursive script;
- Cooperating with other students and understanding adult roles;
- Expressing emotions through gestures and movements;
- Recognising objects including the human body, animals and plant life
- Making simple plans;
- Memorising and interpreting songs and rhymes.



Well-being...
Concern for the individual child's well-being, security, development and learning should characterise the work of the preschool.

(Curriculum, Lpfö 98/2010 p 4)

