



DUTCH TEACHERS VISITING A SWEDISH KED SCHOOL

KED

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The World Comes Closer with KED

by Cecilia Aronsson
KED Network Director

As we were gearing up for the annual international meeting of our KED Business Buddies in Sweden, I received an email from a teacher in England, joining this amazing project for the first time. She asked me if it would be a problem that her students do not speak Swedish, as they participate in the four-day project with Swedish and English upper secondary students in Norrköping.

"I assume not but I thought I would just check," she wrote.

What we take for granted as a school organization with a global presence in six countries, is not common sense in ordinary schools. Despite apps like Google Earth, and modern social media that let us explore people and places at the press of a button, there are limits to what a local school can teach independently. Students rarely interact with students from other schools, even in



their own neighborhood. Still, these links can provide knowledge, perspectives and personal development that the usual lesson never does. What is more, the experiences from KED Buddies will be remembered by students for a long time.

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Preparing for Life

by Sebastian Storm

Teacher of Social Sciences, Kunskapsskolan Nacka, Sweden

I got the opportunity to spend one week at Kunskapsskolan International, in Gurgaon, also known as KI. It was interesting to see how the concept of Kunskapsskolan takes shape in a different country, in a different school context with another curriculum than in Sweden. Despite the differences between the countries, the goal or objective with the education is the same at KI in India as at Kunskapsskolan in Sweden: Preparing for life. This became obvious as I interviewed students and teachers about how the students experience their possibility to influence their schooling. What they all raised is how the students, via their coaching sessions, learn how to plan and to make decisions, which in turn helps them to evaluate when making decisions. To exercise independence is something that both students and teachers stress as important, since this ability is needed in adult life in a country in change.

A strength of the KED Teacher Exchange Program is the opportunity to stay at a colleague's house and be part of the host's everyday life. By doing so I learned a lot about the country, culture and Indian life in general. The new perspectives gave me a bigger picture than a stay at a hotel probably would. The meetings and discussions taking

place before and after work is something that I value highly. I had the opportunity to meet my host Geetanjali's family and friends on markets in Old Delhi and at restaurants in Gurgaon. Nights spent at home dining and talking about Sweden and India offered insight and perspectives. I am grateful to have expanded my network of contacts, and grateful for the new friendships I have made.

A word of advice, do take the opportunity to see more of India! India is a big country and deserves to be explored; it will expand your impression and experience of India.

After completing my teacher exchange in Gurgaon, I visited Varanasi by the river Ganges, Agra and Taj Mahal. Gurgaon is a new growing suburb to New Delhi, whereas Varanasi is approximately 3,500 years old. Two completely different parts of India.

The impressions and experiences during my stay have enriched me on a personal level, as well as professionally. Leaving India, I am committed to take my experiences and use them to deepen and variegate my teaching in social science.

Thick smog in New Delhi, chai with cardamom, paneer in different ways, loud traffic. Heat, curry, chili, markets in Old Delhi, tandoori in Agra. Holy cows in Varanasi, colors, temples, religions, people. Workshop and coaching sessions at KI in Gurgaon. New friends. Yes, the list gets long when trying to describe my experiences in India. My final tip: Apply for the KED Teacher Exchange Program.



Global Buddies with a Global Goal

by Covenant Omoike

Third-year student, Kunskapsgymnasiet Malmö

Our school has been invited to participate in Global Buddies, an exchange project between Kunskapsskolan Gurgaon and Kunskapsgymnasiet in Malmö together with several other upper secondary KED schools in Sweden. Two students are getting the opportunity to connect their extended essays in social science to a charity-based endeavor in India. We are now in the initial phase of the project where we plan several events to be able to support the non-governmental organization Pratham Delhi, striving to eradicate analphabetism in the Indian slum.

My name is Covenant Omoike. I am a third-year student studying social science at Kunskapsgymnasiet Malmö, and I was chosen to be part of the Global Buddies project. Being chosen to be part of the India project came as a big surprise to me. It is not every day you get the chance to be part of something that makes a difference in the world. This project gives an opportunity to help children in India whose parents cannot afford to give them an education. Before I was informed about the project, I had very little knowledge about the education situation in India. I was shocked how horrible it is. Knowing that I as an individual can help



made me quite enthusiastic, being able to make a difference with very few resources. With help from a fellow student we came up with a plan to sell pastries. The profit would then go to helping children in India get an education. Selling pastries is something anyone can do, and such little effort can make a difference and give a child a bright future. Together with the other Swedish KED schools in the project, I think we can

accomplish a lot. I am looking forward to seeing India and completing the research linked to my extended essay about youth crime.





Progress Report from Saudi Arabia

by Johan Beckmann

Chief Operating Officer, Nün Academy, Kunskapsskolan Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

Last year in September 2016 when Nün Academy, Kunskapsskolan Jeddah opened for the first time, we had 70 students. Many brave parents had trusted us to take care of their children although we had no previous experience in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, not even a building to show them, but they trusted what we said we would do. Being part of the KED Network was one reassuring element.

obviously we are also doing something good, so good that our parents are spreading the word and attracting more students and parents to what we call the Nün Family.

When we opened last year, it was a new experience for us. We had done our teacher training and prepared as well as we could, but there was still some uncertainty. The first weeks, if not months, meant a lot of hard

work to get things close to where we wanted them to be. This year we knew what was coming and that we were well prepared for it. Although we had increased the student numbers by almost 150%, there was a sense among our staff that things were under control from the very first day.

Last year, our students were aged 2–7. Basically, we were running a kindergarten with a few classes in lower primary. From this year and as we grow over the coming years, our focus shifts to include primary and later secondary with more focus on learning, development and outcomes. And communicating this to our parents, so they know about all the great things happening in our school.

Currently, the first building in our purpose-built campus is being constructed and will be inaugurated in August/September 2018. The



following years, we will see the construction of the boys' school, the girls' school and the arena/administration building. At full capacity, the school will have more than 2,200 students from kindergarten all the way through high school.

As you know, there are many things changing here in Saudi Arabia. The rulers want to transform the country economically and socially into a modern state. During this year's celebration of National Day on September 23rd, there were fireworks and laser shows in all the major cities, which was unheard of before. Next year, women will be allowed to drive and participate in events at large stadiums, and there are talks about allowing cinemas. All in line with the ambitious Vision 2030 for the country. These are interesting times at Nün Academy and in Saudi Arabia.



This year in September 2017, we started our second year with 170 students and another 170 on the waiting list that we could not cater for in our temporary facility. No longer do we need to depend on the trust of parents; now it is all about the reputation created by what we are doing in the school. Of course, nothing is perfect, but

Discovering the Origins of KED

by Georgina Burdett

Teacher of Product Design, Poynton High School, England

Let me just say thanks again for allowing us to have this opportunity. We thoroughly enjoyed ourselves as well as gaining some very interesting experience of new systems which have potential to work in our school.

My name is Georgina and I did my teacher exchange at Kunskapsskolan Enköping. My colleague, Kellie, did her exchange at Kunskapsskolan Norrköping. Both schools are situated quite close to the Swedish capital Stockholm, where we met up for a sunny day of sightseeing, including the KED headquarters, halfway through our stay.

Upon being selected to participate in a teacher exchange opportunity, Kellie and I were excited about experiencing a different kind of learning in Sweden. As we had some exchange partners already come and visit us last year, we had heard so much about KED schools, yet we could not quite visualize, or understand, how they worked. Consequently, this meant that our entire Monday morning of travelling from Manchester to Stockholm was filled with enthusiastic questions and predictions bouncing between us. With our school in Stockport being a large 11–18 comprehensive with nearly 1,600 students on roll, we were eager to see the differences.

During the exchange week, everyone – staff and students – were amazing at answering my challenging questions to help me gain a full and varied experience over my short stay. When reflecting on my visit, I think I am still unsure about exactly how this system works, but it just does. Students enjoy the workshop style of learning; this was my favorite part of the whole process as they were provided the time, space and support needed to learn and flourish independently. They set themselves goals that were constantly reviewed by caring and dedicated staff that ensured the students could maximize their potential and use their time effectively. Not only did this work brilliantly, it worked with much more freedom and flexibility than our system has. Rules were minimal; we have rules for everything. Everybody is accepted for who they are. I have since questioned the need for uniform, as we believe that a uniform

ensures students are in the right mindset to learn and eradicates bullying about being 'different'. In a KED school, it seems to be that students are in their own clothes and due to the very few rules it minimized bullying! I found this intriguing as it clearly promoted a sense of individuality that the students were proud to promote and celebrate.

At first, I was doubtful that secondary students could plan and organize their own learning. However, the coaching time each morning is obviously vital in guiding each student individually. This was something that I really enjoyed being a part of as it was so clearly valued by all students and staff members. This then led to workshop time being focused as students were studying, completing different tasks, and presenting to a range of supportive teachers to further their own development and reach their individual goals.

I do believe there is a place in our system for KED Inspired education. Workshops could work and in turn instill independence within learning to return, as our system seems to have lost it a little due to the demands of linear, external examinations.

The students, and staff, should be proud to be in a KED school.



Calling All KED SAILers

by Andrea Atkinson
Consultant Principal, Kunskapsskolan UK

A growing number of schools in the UK want to work with personalized education like we do in the KED Program. Kunskapsskolan in the UK supports British schools in this process through a project called SAIL. SAIL stands for Student Agency In Learning. There are already close to 20 SAIL schools in the UK, and they are part of the global KED Network.

Now, the partnership between the SAIL schools and KED has inspired a truly amazing opportunity for students in SAIL schools in the UK and Kunskapsskolan schools in Sweden. With the support of two organizations called Whole Education and Extreme Classrooms, we invite our students to take part in a challenge called

“The Wettest Classroom on Earth”.

The challenge consists of nine sailing legs from Liverpool to Stockholm via Milford Haven, Bristol, Padstow, Weymouth, Ipswich, Whitby, Kristiansand, Gothenburg, Copenhagen and finally, sailing in to Stockholm in time for Midsummer in 2019. The yachts will put in to port each night and each leg will cover about 50 miles.

Students will have the opportunity to apply for a place to take part in the expedition team on one of the yachts for one of the sailing legs of the challenge. Up to 140 students will be selected to undertake an assessment camp and selection process in Snowdonia, in northwest Wales, in July 2018. This is when the final participants will be decided. All students who reach the assessment camp stage will be automatically included in the support crews for each leg. For the longer legs between Whitby and Kristiansand in Southern Norway, only



Year 12 and 13 students will be selected.

The formal launch for the project will be in January 2018 with full details about the challenge and how to apply to be shared with all colleagues and students in SAIL and Kunskapsskolan Sweden schools. In the meantime, you can learn more about this amazing project by watching this video:

<http://www.venturersacademy.org/492/news-blog/post/449/the-wettest-classroom-on-earth-2019>

The Value of Visitors

by Marcus Brunberg
Principal, Kunskapsskolan Katrineholm, KED Academic Director

Following several years of great interest from the Netherlands in our model for personalized education, the KED Program, Kunskapsskolan started working with several state-funded schools in the Netherlands two years ago.

This school year – 2017/18 – the number of Dutch schools associated with KED has grown to 40. Approximately 6,000 students now use the Dutch version of the Learning Portal. In addition, KED’s Dutch organization Kunskapsskolan Nederland delivers teacher training and consultancy support for schools that want to develop to work in a more personalized manner as KED Inspired schools.

One important way for schools to learn more about Kunskapsskolan and the KED Program is to make study trips to our schools in Sweden. These visits are now professionally arranged as group tours with about 20 participants making a two-day visit to

Sweden, going to two KED schools. Demand for these tours is continuously high. Some trips are regular, and posted on our website for anyone in the Netherlands to join, whereas some visits are tailored personally for schools that want to bring several colleagues and take this opportunity to catalyze their transformation to become KED Inspired.

The principals of the Swedish KED schools act as hosts for the visits. Together with Kunskapsskolan Nederland, we create an agenda that will match the visiting group’s request. The visiting group pays a fee, some of which is allocated to the hosting schools. When meeting people from other schools, the hosting Swedish KED schools are also rewarded with the opportunity to reflect on their own way of doing things.

I am impressed by our students and teachers taking care of their guests. The things that we tell visitors about the KED Program before they arrive prove right for every school we come to. The students who guide the visitors around their school get a chance to practice their English, and get a boost of their self-confidence by seeing what they are capable of.

My best example is from Kunskapsskolan Landskrona a little while ago. The students had never guided any visitor in English



before, still they did such a good work. Better ambassadors for our schools are hard to find. If you are looking for international connections and ways to increase your students’ global exposure, helping with the Dutch visits is a great starting point. Tell your principal that you are willing to conduct your base group session, and perhaps also some of your personal coaching sessions, in English to show the visitors. This is good practice for everyone to try, while making our visitors understand how the KED Program works. I look forward to seeing you next time I am bringing a group of Dutch visitors to find KED Inspiration at your school.