

INTERNATIONAL MONTESSORI PRESCHOOL



CURRICULUM 2024-2025

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INTRODUCTION

PRESCHOOL IS A PEDAGOGIC ARENA

Preschool is, in accordance with The Framework for Preschools, an educational institution with a community mandate to:

- safeguard the child's need for care and play
- promote learning and education as a basis for comprehensive development in cooperation and understanding with the child's home.
- provide children under school age with a caring and learning environment.

PRESCHOOLS IN BÆRUM

In Bærum, there is also Barnehemmelding 2015-2025 for all preschools in Bærum. This shall contribute to an equal and uniform offer in preschools in Bærum for all children and parents.

Early intervention, the feeling of achievement, cooperation and interaction should be emphasized in preschools in Bærum. Preschools should be seen as the first step in a child's education and there should be a special focus on play, language and good health.

Quality plans are developed following on from the Barnehemmelding, and these plans shall contribute to an equal and uniform offer in preschools, and ensure early intervention and better learning for children in preschools in Bærum.

From 2019, the quality plan 'Play and learning – the framework for preschools in Bærum' outlines the focus areas as:

- Communication and language
- Psychological health
- Digital competence

In 2019 Bærum commune started a project called 'Tett på – quality in preschools in Bærum'. This project is based on recent research on quality in preschools and establishes a comprehensive system to support the child's development and learning.

THE CURRICULUM

Preschools must have a yearly curriculum. They should also compose plans for shorter and longer periods of time, and for different groups of children as needed. The curriculum is a work tool for all employees in preschool and documents the preschool's choices and reasoning. It can give information on the preschool's pedagogic work to the relevant authorities, offices the preschool collaborates with and other interested parties.

The document contains information about the preschool's work with care, education, play and learning to promote the child's comprehensive development. It provides information on how 'barnehemlovens bestemmelser om innhold' (§2) the child's right to influence (§3) and the framework for preschools is followed, documented and evaluated.³

We follow the Montessori philosophy while also following the Norwegian Framework plan.

OUR VISION AND OBJECTIVES AT INTERNATIONAL MONTESSORI PRESCHOOL

Our mission is to provide a secure, loving environment focused on nurturing each child as an individual. We want every child to experience a sense of belonging, friendship, community, self-worth and self esteem as a foundation for further education and for life.

We desire to instill a love of learning within our rich Montessori prepared environment. Montessori believed that grace and courtesy and respect were an essential part of the prepared environment. In our school we encourage the children to solve their problems through communication and to treat everyone with tolerance and respect.

As an international Preschool we aim to embrace the diversity of cultures, and nurturing the individual child whilst also incorporating the local Norwegian culture and society. Preparing the child to meet the international environment and education expectations.

IMS TRADITIONS AND SCHOOL CULTURE

August get together: this is an informal social event in the outside play area for families to come together and get to know each other and the teachers. Parents bring finger food to share

Birthday celebrations: we have the Montessori birthday walk to signify the passage of each year, and the teacher talks about what happened in the child's life. We make a birthday crown, and the child brings in a treat to share.

Diversity: we welcome any family with different beliefs to come in and share their beliefs and celebrations with the children.

UN day: we invite all families to bring a dish from their home country to share with each other as a way to celebrate being part of an international community.

Advent means waiting, and the build up to the Christmas celebration.

Celebration of light: we invite the families to join us in a parade of lights to mark the winter solstice and the days get brighter again.

Nissefest: the children can dress up as red or blue 'nisse' and we have a visit from Santa (nissen) who plays on our playground and leaves a sack of small treats for the children. We eat the traditional Norwegian rice porridge for lunch.

Valentine's day: children prepare cards to give to their family. We have a Valentine's day party with fruits provided by families.

Easter: we have an Easter breakfast in the morning, and a hunt for a small bag of goodies.

17th May: children parade around the playground and enjoy Norwegian songs. We have games in the playground and hot dogs for lunch. Afternoon coffee and cakes with parents

Teddy bears party: children bring in their favourite teddy bear and we have a party table set with a miniature tea service.

End of term get together: the children get together and sing songs together with the parents at the end of the school year. We share finger food together in the playground.

Leavers photo book: when a child leaves IMS they are presented with a book of photos covering their time and their friends at IMS.

THE MONTESSORI APPROACH

- is based on observing the child and creating new ideas to aid development
- was designed to develop the whole personality of the child at his own natural rate of progress
- basic principles are observation and a prepared environment
- aims at helping the children to help themselves
- ensures that each child is treated with respect and given freedom within carefully prepared limits.
- supports the child to gain self-confidence and self-discipline
- will provide the child with powers of discrimination, observation, awareness, control, co-ordination and judgement.
- Gives the child the foundation to see themselves as part of the classroom community, family community, preschool community and international community

METHODS OF EVALUATION OF PRESCHOOL PEDAGOGIC WORK

- The preschool keeps records of the work carried out by staff to demonstrate how personnel work to fulfil the requirements of the Preschool Act and the Framework Plan.
- Monthly evaluation of the preschool's plans and pedagogical practices
- When necessary ,evaluations of the well-being and all-round development of the children individually and in groups shall be documented in order to give the group of children and individual children adapted provision
- Annual child interviews regarding the child's experience of preschool
- All parents are invited, through Coordination Committee, to provide anonymous written feedback each year

PRESCHOOL VALUES

CHILD AND CHILDHOOD

Preschools must recognize and protect the intrinsic value of childhood. It is fundamental to help all children who go to preschool to have a good childhood characterised by well-being, friendship and play. Preschool is also a preparation for active participation in society and helps lay the foundation for a good life.

Montessori recognised the intrinsic value of childhood and the child's personality. In terms of the child's development, the adult meets them where they are, not where we wish them to be. We place importance on what is best for the child's healthy development.

Each child is met as an individual, with the adult recognising and putting value on the child's own viewpoints and experiences. The physical environment is prepared in a way that enables the child to develop according to his or her own desire for learning and development.

DEMOCRACY

Through participating in the preschool community, children will have the opportunity to develop an understanding of society and the world they are part of. Preschools must promote democracy and be an inclusive community where everyone is given the opportunity to express themselves, be heard and participate. All children should be able to experience democratic participation by contributing to and influencing the preschool content, regardless of communication skills and language skills.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that children have the right to express their opinion on matters that affect them and that their opinions shall be heard. It is important that teachers are aware of both verbal and nonverbal language and help the children to experience a sense of belonging and community.

A Montessori preschool is often referred to as 'the child's house'. Children move freely in the classroom and choose activities that interest them. With freedom, comes responsibility.

With the mixed ages group, the children are given opportunities to help each other, to teach each other by giving lessons and to show empathy.

Each child is greeted in the morning and is recognised as being an important part of the group.

Daily conversations give the child the opportunity to be heard and to express their interests, concerns and feelings. We want the children to feel secure with the adults so that they can come to us with any concern they may have and know that they will find support with us.

In conflict situations, we meet the children where they are emotionally and acknowledge their feelings whilst encouraging them to find a common ground and accept that different people have different opinions and beliefs.

Daily circle time gives all the children an opportunity to share information and experiences which may

then influence decisions about activities both within and outside of the classrooms. In this way, the children experience living in a democratic environment where their interests are heard and respected.

DIVERSITY AND MUTUAL RESPECT

Preschools shall promote respect for human dignity by highlighting, appreciating and promoting diversity and mutual respect. The children shall find that there are many ways to think, act and live.

As an international preschool, we have a wealth of different cultures, nationalities and religious beliefs both amongst the families and staff members.

We draw upon and reflect the cultural diversity of the enrolled children each year by marking the various different holidays they may have.

We highlight the wealth of languages in preschool by listening to and learning songs in different languages. We encourage the children to use their mother tongue and teach us and the other children simple words. (see section on language and communication)

We mark UN day with flags and food from all nationalities represented in preschool.

EQUALITY AND EQUAL WORTH

Preschools shall promote equality and equal worth regardless of gender, functional ability, sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expressions, ethnicity, culture, social status, language, religion and philosophy of life. Preschools must counteract all forms of discrimination and promote love for the fellow human being.

The preschool shall build its foundations on the principle of equality and non-discrimination and help the children meet and create a society of equal value. Everyone should have equal opportunities to be seen, heard and encouraged to participate in all activities in the preschool. The staff must reflect on their own attitudes to best communicate and promote equality and gender equality.

Montessori material and the traditional material available to the children are not gender based. For example, puzzles of various professions depict both genders, both genders are encouraged to engage in practical life activities – pouring, arranging flowers, washing dishes - and in sensorial work - constructing towers and arches.

In conflict situations, we meet the children where they are emotionally and acknowledge their feelings whilst encouraging them to find a common ground and accept that different people have different opinions and beliefs.

When a child wonders about gender roles, families, religions etc, we answer any questions they may have honestly and allow time for discussion and questions. We are in the process of building up a library covering this topic which will be available to the children in the classrooms.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The children shall learn to take care of themselves, each other and nature. The children shall have experiences in nature and become acquainted with nature's diversity, and the preschool shall help the children to experience a feeling of belonging to nature.

Part of the Montessori philosophy is to inspire the child to be curious about the world around them. We encourage the teachers to be knowledgeable about flora and fauna, insect life and land formations so they provide information about nature around us.

Weekly walks in different environments – park, forest, beach, city – provide the children with a variety of experiences. By being in nature, discussing what we can see, where insects or animals are hiding, touching insects and being careful with them we develop a feeling of belonging in nature. In allowing children to observe, wonder and reflect about plants, insects and animals we develop an understanding of our interdependence in the world.

We practice recycling of food, plastics, paper, glass and metal and discuss the negative effects of pollution in our seas and our community. We read books about recycling and have a 'clean our local community' project with the oldest children.

In various ways the children experience the seasonal life cycle of nature, from planting flowers and seeds to harvesting.

HEALTH AND LIFE COPING SKILLS

The preschool shall promote good health, play a preventive role and help reduce social inequalities. Children's physical and mental health should be promoted in preschool. Preschool should contribute to children's well-being, joy of life, coping and sense of self-worth and to prevent insults and bullying.

Preschool should be an arena for daily physical activity and promoting children's love of exercise and motor development. Meals and cooking in preschool shall give children a foundation for developing a love of food and healthy habits.

We use 'circle of security' to provide a caring, safe and nurturing environment. We aim to be sensitive adults who acknowledge the emotional needs of the child. See link below for more information: www.circleofsecurityinternational.com/

We are part of the 'tett på' project in Bærum which sets the goal that all staff must become even better at promoting the child's safety, well-being, learning and language development on a daily basis. Interaction with warm and engaging adults benefits all children and lays a foundation for development and life coping skills.

We use 'Green thoughts happy children'. This method covers various emotions and encourages discussions regarding emotions, how they look visually and physically and coping strategies for dealing with these emotions. It introduces 2 bears, red – negative thoughts - and green – positive thoughts - to represent the internal voice we all have that 'talks' to us through the day affecting how we view ourselves, our situation and those around us. The idea is that a child who learns to treat themselves kindly, learns how to help themselves, can easier help others, and can ask for help if needed.

THE PURPOSE AND CONTENT OF THE PRESCHOOL

The preschool content must be versatile, varied and adapted to the single child and the group. In preschool, the children get to play, to develop & creative enthusiasm, to wonder and develop a desire to explore. Work with care, education, play, learning, social skills, communication and language should be considered collectively and together contribute to the child's all-round development.

The preschool shall be a cultural arena where the children are co-creators of their own culture in an atmosphere characterised by humour and joy.

The preschool's physical environment should be safe and challenging and give children varied physical experiences. The staff shall design the physical environment so that all children have the opportunity to participate actively in play and other activities and so that toys and material are available to the children.

WORKING METHODS:

The International Montessori Preschool is a small, welcoming community which sees each individual child. Our priority is to provide security for the child, from which they can explore, form friendships, play and learn.

The Montessori method is a holistic approach to child development. All aspects of the development of the child are considered when planning the environment and the curriculum. In this way the child's physical, intellectual, emotional and social developmental needs are being met.

Our classroom environment is set up in a way that promotes respect for and cooperation with others. The child learns about social skills thus learning the acceptable behaviour of his own and other cultures. Montessori practical life activities, give the child the opportunity to care for the environment around them and be a part of a community.

THE NEED FOR CARE

Care is a prerequisite for children's confidence and well-being and for developing empathy and compassion.

Preschools shall enable the children to develop trust in themselves and others. All preschool children should feel that they are being seen, heard and respected and that they receive the help and support they need. Preschools shall actively encourage caring relationships between children and staff and between the children themselves in order to foster well-being, happiness and achievement. Staff shall work to create an environment that not only renders the children recipients of care but which also values the children's own acts of caring.

Goals:

- all children shall obtain a sense of trust and belonging to preschool and development of empathy for others
- to provide security for the child, from which they can explore, form friendships, play and learn.
- our goal is for the child to feel understood and supported emotionally by the adults so that the child can successfully manage their own emotions and develop a feeling of self-esteem.

Working methods:

- meet all children with openness, warmth and interest and show consideration for every child support
- encourage the children to both show consideration for others and themselves receive compassion
- build positive caring relationships with children in our preschool
- use Green thoughts - happy children with 4 and 5 year olds as tool to make them aware of their own feelings, and the feelings of others
- recognise behaviours are expression of feeling and give meaning to emotions, use vocabulary that encourage and develop skills for dealing with conflicts

PLAY

Play shall be a key focus in preschool, and the inherent value of play shall be acknowledged. Preschools shall make good provision for play, friendship and the children's own culture. Play shall be an arena for the children's development and learning and for social and linguistic interaction. Preschools shall inspire and make room for different kinds of play both outdoors and indoors. Preschools shall help ensure that all children are able to experience happiness, humour, excitement and involvement through play – alone and together with others.

Montessori believed that "play is the work of the child".

Play is essential to healthy development. Play is spontaneous and fun, and has an intrinsic value in itself. Playful learning spans both free play and guided play.

Goals:

- to ensure that all children shall experience happiness, humour, excitement and involvement through play
- develop positive social and linguistic interactions

Working methods:

- analyse the social environment, give positive feedback, guide and lift social status as necessary and ensure a healthy play experience for everyone. This leads to further discussion within the group about, for example, play experiences, taking turns, including everyone and showing empathy.
- observe, analyse, support, participate in and enrich the play on the children's terms
- work in smaller groups to practice play skills and take those skills into larger groups.
- encourage children to use their imaginations both inside and outside of the classroom, using objects as they imagine, and engage them in discussions about, for example, dinosaurs and trolls. We help them build and expand their imagination through art and construction.
- promote an inclusive environment in which all children can participate in play and experience the joy of playing
- organise space, time and play equipment to inspire different kinds of play

FORMATIVE DEVELOPMENT (DANNING)

Preschools shall support the children in taking a probing and inquisitive approach to the world around them and help lay the foundations for courageous, independent and responsible participation in democratic communities. Preschools shall promote unity and solidarity while also valuing and responding to individual expressions and actions. Preschools shall help the children to understand the shared values and norms that prevail in society. Preschools shall help promote the children's connectedness with society, nature and culture.

Preschools shall use interaction, dialogue, play and exploration to help the children develop critical thinking, ethical judgement and an ability to put up resistance and take action in order to effect change.

Goals:

- provide a good environment for positive formation
- children participate in decision-making processes and develop shared content
- children express their views and create meaning in the world of which they are a part

Working methods:

- facilitate meaningful experiences and encourage identity formation and positive self-awareness in the children
- activities, discussions and choices made in the Montessori classroom provide children with the real-life occurrences that help children develop physically, mentally and emotionally. As the child forms himself, he will learn from consequences, lessons and conversations that appeal to his intellect.
- Our teachers speak about the norms and customs that are relevant to society and provide social situations for the children to practice behaviours, as well as model acceptable behaviours.

LEARNING

Preschools shall create a stimulating environment that supports the children's desire to play, explore, learn and achieve. Preschools shall introduce new situations, topics, phenomena, materials and tools that promote meaningful interaction. The children's curiosity, creativity and thirst for knowledge shall be acknowledged, stimulated and form the basis for their learning processes.

The children shall be able to explore, discover and understand correlations, broaden their perspectives and gain new insights. The children shall be able to use their entire body and all their senses in their learning processes. Kindergartens shall help create learning communities in which the children are able to contribute to their own learning and that of others.

Goals:

- children are able to explore, discover and understand correlations, broaden their perspectives and gain new insights.
- children use their entire body and all their senses in their learning processes.
- children are active in their own learning.

Working methods:

- Our preschool provides a stimulating environment for play, exploration, learning and mastering. There are a range of materials available to choose from in the Montessori prepared environment grouped into:
 - Practical life
 - Sensorial
 - Mathematics
 - Language
 - Art, history and geography
- weekly walks and planned excursions to connect the classroom to the outside world.
- give short and concise lessons that meet the individual needs of the child.
- It is also important to us that teachers are knowledgeable. That is why we encourage teachers to read, be curious and learn more about culture, nature and everyday life.

FRIENDSHIP AND COMMUNITY

Social competence is key to interacting well with others, and it includes skills, knowledge and attitudes developed through social interaction. In preschool all children shall feel that they are important members of the group and engage in positive interaction with children and adults. The preschool must actively facilitate the development of friendship and social community. The children's sense of self must be supported, while at the same time they must be helped to master the balance between looking after their own needs and considering the needs of others.

Goals:

- develop empathy and the ability to understand the perspective of others
- develop friendships and positive social interactions
- learn to work together toward a common goal
- help children feel secure in their own culture and identity and to be curious about the world around them

Working methods:

- We recognize the differences, and use that as a way to ask questions and explore other cultures, religions, identities and neurodiversity.
- We read books to the children about diversity, inclusiveness, kindness and empathy.
- Discussions in smaller groups focus on books/languages/traditions/religions so all feel represented.
- We focus on friendship, what it means to be a friend, how to be a good friend and actively recognize acts of friendship. Children play freely together across all age groups.
- We take the children in smaller groups to work on friendship and bonding within that group. We aim to create an inclusive environment where all children feel seen, acknowledged and experience friendship and belonging.
- We discuss acceptable and unacceptable behaviours with the children and have an open dialogue with the parents/guardians so that we can work together to guide the child to the appropriate behaviour.
- In case of bullying, we have an action plan
- Talking about feelings in order for the children to be able to recognize what they feel, emotion groups, the adults model the behaviour

LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION

Preschools must be mindful of how communication and language affect all aspects of a child's development. Through dialogue and interaction, the children shall be helped to communicate, participate, listen, understand and create meaning. Preschools shall acknowledge and value the children's different forms of communication and language, including sign language.

All children shall receive appropriate language stimulation in preschool, and all children shall be able to participate in activities that promote communication and comprehensive language development.

Goals:

- develop positive experience with language and enable children to verbally express themselves
- children shall receive appropriate language stimulation in preschool, and all children shall be able to participate in activities that promote communication and comprehensive language development

Working methods:

- stimulate language through play, songs, music, rhymes and social interaction, take time to listen to each individual child and to have conversations in everyday situations and activities
- our classrooms provide an opportunity for introducing and reinforcing a wealth of language and vocabulary through activities that develop linguistic awareness such as games and Montessori activities
- the language environment in our preschool is diverse, with English used as the language of instruction
- ensure that linguistic diversity becomes an enrichment for the entire group of children and encourage multilingual children to use their mother tongue
- Through ongoing observations, we meet the child where they are and support their language development
- Bærum commune has developed a standard for language work that all preschools are obliged to follow. This requires that we work systematically to develop our language environment. The focus is upon raising competence of the staff, mapping and developing the language environment. We have one teacher who is responsible to ensure that this work is carried out

CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION

Children shall be able to actively participate in planning and assessing the preschool's activities on a regular basis. All children shall find themselves having a say in what is happening in preschool. Preschools shall be conscious of the children's different forms of expression and enable their participation in ways suited to the children's age, experience, individual circumstances and needs.

Goals:

- participate in planning and implementing activities
- all children are involved in group discussions
- the children's views shall be taken into consideration

Working methods:

- children in the Montessori classroom influence their own learning as they are free to move about as they please and choose activities, working independently or in groups
- follow the child's interest and wonder with them with whatever fascinates them
- daily discussions and at circle time, the children can contribute and share ideas about that theme and influence any related activity.
- children are encouraged to talk about experiences that they have had outside of preschool such as a trip to the museum, a park or a train ride and we use these experiences to help plan school excursions
- child interviews are held once a year focusing on how the child has experienced his or her time in preschool, likes and dislikes, and whether he/she feels that she has friends

COLLABORATION BETWEEN HOME AND PRESCHOOL

The Preschool shall work in partnership and agreement with the home to meet the children's need for care and play and promote learning and formative development as a basis for all-round development, cf. Preschool Act, Section 1.

The preschool shall respect the parents' right to participate and shall work in close co-operation and agreement with the parents, cf. Preschool Act, Sections 1 and 4.

Parents and preschool teachers have a joint responsibility for the child's well being and development. The best interests of the child shall always be the primary consideration in all co-operation between the home and the preschool.

Goals:

- ensure good cooperation and communication between home and preschool.

Working methods:

- facilitate cooperation and good dialogue with the parents.
- sharing of information about the child in a form filled out by parents before the child starts in preschool. Visits before the child starts.
- day to day communication with parents at drop off and pick up.
- Annual parent conferences, and other meetings should the need arise.
- Coordination Committee - made up of two parents and two members of staff, to ensure that the parents have the opportunity to influence the running of the preschool.
- Parent Council - made up of all of the parents and vote on budget and accounts, parent representatives to the board and coordination committee, amendments to bylaws.
- Owners Board - made up of three parents who oversee the financial management of the school, and ensure all applicable laws and regulations. The administrator represents the board.

TRANSITIONS

WHEN THE CHILD BEGINS IN THE PRESCHOOL – SETTLING PERIOD

Working in partnership with the parents, the preschool shall ensure that the child gets a safe and good start in preschool. The preschool shall adapt its routines and make time and space for the child to acclimatise, form relationships and bond with staff and other children. When a child starts preschool, staff must closely monitor the child in the early days to allow the child to feel that they belong and become confident enough to play, explore and learn.

Goals:

- Preschool is often a child's first meeting with others outside of the family - their primary caregivers. It is important that the child is given time to form secure attachments to the adult(s) in order to be able to feel safe enough to explore and develop.

Working methods:

- A visit by each new child with parents in June
- a visit with one or both parents in August. The child is welcomed into the classroom by two of the teachers so that the classrooms and teacher are familiar before the child starts preschool.
- following the visit in August, the child starts by themselves for 1-2 hours, depending on age. The length of time is extended daily as the child becomes more settled and confident.
- a clear routine of saying goodbye at the door defines the preschool as being the child's environment, shows trust between parents and teachers and helps the child feel secure. Wherever possible, the same teacher opens the door and welcomes the child into preschool every day. For the first weeks, as necessary, we ensure that the child meets the same teacher who helps settle them in the classroom.
- If a family wishes to accompany their child for more than one day, we are happy to work with the family to ensure the best for their child. Daily communication between preschool and home is essential during the settling period.

TRANSITION WITHIN THE PRESCHOOL AND BETWEEN PRESCHOOLS

Working in partnership with the parents, the preschool shall ensure that the child and the parents are given time and space to get to know the new children and staff when changing groups.

Working methods:

- As we are a small preschool, children become familiar with all members of staff.
- The under 3s room initially has a different daily routine to the 3-6 classrooms, and eventually come together for outside play.
- In the spring, the under 3s are invited to visit the 3-6 classrooms and start slowly transitioning into the routines.
- Visit with parents in May when moving from Stars to 3-6 rooms
- A form may be filled in when a child is moving to another preschool in Norway. If moving overseas, we complete whatever form is required.

FROM PRESCHOOL TO SCHOOL

Working in partnership with the parents, the preschool shall ensure that the child has a safe and good transition from preschool to school and, where relevant, day care facilities for school children. The preschool and the school should share knowledge and information to enable them to co-operate on provision for the oldest preschool children, their transition to and enrollment in school.

Goals:

- The preschool shall, in cooperation with parents and the school, facilitate a good and smooth transition from preschool to school and, if appropriate, after school care for the child.
- The children at preschool move on to many different school settings, including Norwegian schools, Montessori schools, International schools in Norway, and schools overseas. Ensuring a smooth transition is important for a positive school start. We therefore have to familiarise ourselves with the different expectations and cultures of the schools they will be moving on to.

Working methods:

- Provide the older children with the opportunity to be leaders and role models, with responsibilities such as giving presentations to the younger children, helping with practical tasks
- Completion of the forms provided by Bærum commune for the transition between preschool and school
- Communication with other schools
- The children are invited to visit schools
- Introducing the child to the transitional tools used both in preschools and schools in Norway (for example games, songs, and stories)
- Exposing the child to Norwegian language with the help of stories, songs and one teacher speaking Norwegian at certain times.

PLANNING, EVALUATION AND DOCUMENTATION

PLANNING

Planning allows staff to think and act long-term and systematically with regard to their pedagogical practices. Planning shall help ensure continuity and progression for each child and for the group of children as a whole. Planning shows how the kindergarten interprets and effectuates the Framework Plan and should be used as a starting point for reflection and for developing the kindergarten. Planning must be based on knowledge of the children's well-being and all-round development, individually and as a group. It shall also be based on observation, documentation, reflection, systematic evaluation and conversations with children and parents.

Goals:

- Planning provides the basis for long term, systematic thinking and acting in the educational work.
- Planning contributes to continuity and progression for each child and the group.
- Planning is the basis for reflection and development of the preschool's pedagogical practice.
- Planning is based on knowledge of the child's well-being and development, and is based on observation, documentation, reflection, systematic assessment and conversations with children and parents.

Working methods:

- evaluating and setting up the classroom to appeal to the child
- ensuring that the materials are available and ready to use and that the materials reflect the themes in the classrooms. The teacher must also be flexible and follow and reflect the child's interest in the classroom
- setting a yearly and monthly calendar which shows themes, outings and events that are planned for the year. Themes follow the child's interest and can extend into the following month, some themes overlap, and some are seasonal
- involving the parents to ensure we reflect the cultures and festivals in our monthly calendar
- taking time to observe the classrooms. Observations can be of the classroom in general, group interaction, teacher-child interaction, behaviours and interests. Observations are then shared with all staff members in a monthly meeting and provide valuable information from which any necessary measures can be taken
- Organising monthly meetings that have a set format which includes planning the month ahead and evaluating the month gone. It also has an academic theme that is relevant to our children, staff members and our preschool
- Scheduling planning days that provide a forum for more in depth discussions and work on the Rammeplan, curriculum and Internal Control

EVALUATION

Preschools shall evaluate their pedagogical practices on a regular basis. This means that they must describe, analyse and interpret their pedagogical practices in light of their plans, the Preschool Act and the Framework Plan. The main purpose of these evaluations is to ensure that all children are provided for in accordance with the Preschool Act and the Framework Plan.

Goals:

- provide staff with a starting point for further planning and implementation.
- give rise to an open discussion about the preschool's objectives, content and duties
- staff learn from their own practices and help develop the preschool
- give all teachers a chance for reflection and evaluation and to further develop their understanding and competence within that field. This will be documented for future reference.
- Every child's well-being and all-round development shall therefore be monitored and assessed continuously on the basis of the child's individual circumstances and knowledge of children's development and needs.

Working methods:

- The preschool shall regularly assess the educational work. This work must be described, analysed and evaluated in relationship to the curriculum, the Child care Act and the framework plan.
- Evaluations are made at staff meetings. Parents are invited to share their experience of our work at parents' meetings and through evaluations done by the Coordination Committee. The children are asked about their thoughts and experiences of the school content through child interviews.
- At the end of the year, staff evaluate the year we have had and any additional activities that may have been added throughout the year. In this way we decide what should be carried forward into the next year's curriculum.
- "Tett På" CLASS(Classroom Assessment Scoring System) : We use this as a tool for measuring and improving the quality at IMS. The following areas for developing quality in our pre- school: Emotional Support, Classroom Management and Instructional Support.

DOCUMENTATION

Records of the work carried out by staff demonstrate how we work to fulfil the requirements of the Preschool Act and Framework Plan.

Goals:

- Documentation shows how the preschool works to comply with the requirements of the Child Care Act and the Framework Plan
- Using documentation helps develop the following years' curriculum
- Records of pedagogical practices can provide parents and Bærum commune information about what the children experience, learn and do at IMS

Working methods:

- The children's work shows what they have been doing, the photographs show what they are busy with during their day, the books we make show the activities they are involved in, the white board gives the parents a summary of the day.
- Documentation of the planned themes for the month are sent to the parents in advance of each month. The month is evaluated at the next staff meeting, and information is sent to all parents in an IMS newsletter.
- Documentation relating to the individual child's happiness and development includes written observations, evaluations, actions plans, "TRAS" and "ALLEMED" forms, along with child interviews, teacher-parents conferences and any paperwork with external parties.
- Documentation is shared with teachers at staff meetings, individual parents in private meetings and with external parties as appropriate. All papers are kept on the child's file and locked in the office. The file is kept for one year after the child leaves in case their new school has any queries and is then shredded.
- Documentation and evaluation of the curriculum is done both by the staff, the parents at parents meetings, and the children during their interviews. This information is kept on file.

PRESCHOOL WORKING METHODS

A preschool's working methods shall meet the children's need for care and play, promote learning and enable the children to contribute. Staff shall apply varied working methods adapted for individual children, the group of children and the local community. The choice of working methods can help make preschool content exciting and varied. The chosen working methods can help create enthusiasm, interest and motivation and make for new experiences.

Working methods:

- The Montessori philosophy invites the children to learn through all their senses – seeing, touching, tasting and smelling – both inside and outside of the classroom. This is an integral part of our preschool.
- Teachers work with the individual child, children in smaller groups, and the entire group together. When divided into smaller groups, the children work on a chosen theme or project.
- Children and families are encouraged to share ideas regarding their own interests and experiences, and thus contribute towards classroom themes.

PROGRESSION

Progression in preschool means that all children shall develop, learn and experience progress. All children shall be able to experience progression in terms of preschool content, and preschools shall give children in all age groups varied opportunities for play, activity and learning. Staff shall broaden and continue to build on the children's interests and give the children varied experiences. Preschools shall enable progression through their selection of pedagogical content, working methods, toys, materials and design of the physical environment. Children shall be set challenges suited to their experience, interests, knowledge and skills.

Goals:

- children experience progression (development) socially, emotionally, physically and academically.

Working methods:

- The Montessori classroom is designed to provide the child with an environment which caters to their current development and provides challenges for a natural progression. The child follows their own interests, self-corrects (it's ok to make mistakes) and sees their own development. They engage with the material, building self-confidence, providing a feeling of accomplishment and ownership and developing a love of learning.
- Adults are emotionally open and available to the children, modelling appropriate behaviour.
- We help children with conflict resolution and support their emotions by helping them recognise what they are feeling, acknowledging their feelings and recognising the feelings of others.

- We recognise success when the child learns to deal with their emotions appropriately.
- Physically the children are challenged through walks in the forest, the local community, outside play and climbing, and games/activities in the gym.

DIGITAL PRACTICE

Digital practices in preschool shall encourage the children to play, be creative and learn. The use of digital tools must support the children's learning processes and help implement the principles of the Framework Plan on creating a rich and varied learning environment for all children. Staff shall be actively involved with the children when using digital tools. Digital tools must be used with care and not become a dominant practice. Preschools shall exercise sound digital judgement and help the children develop an early ethical understanding of digital media.

Goals:

- to encourage the children to play, be creative and learn
- to support the children's learning processes and help implement the principles of the Framework Plan on creating a rich and varied learning environment for all children
- as a tool for research in the classrooms
- for language enrichment and for creativity.

Working methods:

- iPads are always used with a teacher in 1-1 lessons or small group lessons. Teachers are actively involved with the children when using digital tools.
- Children use technology (with teachers) to do research for the outgoing classroom projects. Digital microscopes and child-friendly cameras are also used as tools for digital practices.

PRESCHOOL LEARNING AREAS

Learning areas in preschool reflect topics of interest and intrinsic value to children of preschool age and shall help promote well-being, all-round development and good health. Preschools shall view the learning areas in context, and all learning areas shall be recurring themes in the preschool content. **The children shall develop knowledge and skills in all subject areas through wonder, exploration and creative activities**

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND TEXT

See language and communication above

Working methods:

- working individually, in small and large groups we stimulate the child's interest and enrich their vocabulary.
- expanding their knowledge and lexis and wondering with them during everyday spontaneous conversations,
- making materials which will pique curiosity and then provide supporting books and information so the child can wonder and learn.
- a variety of books are available to the children in the classrooms throughout the day.
- choose a book which we read daily for two weeks in circle time so the child knows the book, can ask questions and can create games and role play around that book.

BODY, MOVEMENT, FOOD AND HEALTH

Preschools shall enable all the children to discover the joy of movement, an appreciation for food and food culture, emotional and social well-being and good physical and mental health. The children shall be included in activities in which they can engage in physical activity, play and social interaction and experience motivation and achievement according to their abilities. Kindergartens shall help the children get to know their bodies and develop an awareness of their own limits and those of others.

Working methods:

The children:

- are outside in the play area every day – temperature dependent
- have regular walks in the local community
- are offered swimming, skiing and nature school
- have access to the indoor space to work on developing core muscles, balance and coordination while working in small groups
- are introduced to the “care of self” exercises including how to wash hands, wash faces after eating (using a mirror), use a tissue and dispose of it, washing hands afterwards.
- use meal times as an opportunity to sit as a group, practice table manners, and interact socially. We work to give the child a positive experience of mealtimes and relationship to food. Children are introduced to the basic food groups and the importance of eating a balanced, healthy diet.
- Mid morning snacks are the healthy option of fresh fruits, raw vegetables, egg and crisp bread. The children are involved in the preparation of their own snack.
- External caterer provides warm lunch on certain days. They focus on healthy and varied foods

ART, CULTURE AND CREATIVITY

The children shall be encouraged to be active and create their own artistic and cultural expressions. Preschools shall foster togetherness and creativity by enabling the children to come together to experience and create artistic and cultural expressions. The learning area covers genres such as visual art and arts and crafts, music, dance, drama, language, literature, film, architecture and design.

Goals:

- Experiences involving art and culture in preschool encourage a sense of belonging, participation and the children's own creative processes.
- Children shall be given aesthetic experiences involving art and culture in various forms, organised in ways that give the children opportunities for exploration, immersion and progression.

Working methods:

- The children have freedom to explore their imagination in a variety of mediums used for expression. The process is important, and not the end product.
- We have a teacher who does art lessons every week and introduces the children to various different forms of art media.
- Maria Montessori wrote 'His environment is such that it can arouse in him a feeling for, and an understanding of music.' (The Discovery of the Child p 286.) We sing during circle time and have song cards and objects available to the children in the classrooms. We have a basket of various musical instruments that the children are able to explore.

NATURE, ENVIRONMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

Preschools shall enable the children to enjoy a variety of outdoor experiences and discover nature as an arena for play and learning. Preschools shall stimulate the children to remain curious about natural phenomena, feel connected to nature and gain experience of using technology and tools.

Working methods:

- **Physical Geography** - We draw upon our experience of our local environment through our walks and trips and incorporate this into the classroom discussions. We stop and observe the natural landscape around us which creates wonder and excitement within the children. In the classrooms, we have large wooden puzzle maps of each continent and the common land formations such as islands and lakes.
- **History** - As an introduction to the idea of history, children have a timeline of their own lives, starting with their baby pictures. Each child does the "birthday walk" on its birthday during circle time. The child holds the globe and walks around the "sun" – one circuit represents one year- whilst we talk about the special events that happened in that year in that child's life. We are developing factual stories on known Norwegian historical figures which inspire the children to learn more about that topic and ask questions.

- **Science And Nature** - In science the children's natural curiosity is stimulated through discovery projects and experiments, helping the children draw their own conclusions. Seasons are followed in the classroom. The plant and animal kingdom are studied to foster a love and appreciation for living things and the environment, including activities such as sorting trash and conserving natural resources.
- **School Garden** - Children play an active role in our garden area by preparing the area, planting watering, and general maintenance. The first-hand experience of working in the garden gives the children a link between the lesson in the classroom and the real practice and experience of gardening. Through this activity, children learn how to appreciate, use and look after nature and the environment. It also gives the children an experience of how plants, insect life and humans are interdependent.
- **Nature School** - This is an activity offered by a Norwegian organisation where the oldest children are outside in the forest learning about nature, flora and fauna, and the changes in the seasons. They also challenge themselves physically by doing an obstacle course, orienteering, climbing and playing games in the forest.

MATHEMATICS - quantities, spaces and shapes

Preschools shall highlight relationships and enable the children to explore and discover mathematics in everyday life, technology, nature, art and culture and by being creative and imaginative. The learning area shall stimulate the children's sense of wonder, curiosity and motivation for problem-solving. It covers play and investigation involving comparison, sorting, placement, orientation, visualisation, shapes, patterns, numbers, counting and measuring. It also involves asking questions, reasoning, argumentation and seeking solutions.

'Teaching arithmetic starts with the sense perceptions and is based on knowledge of concrete objects.' Maria Montessori.

Working methods:

- **Sensorial materials** The sensorial materials in the Montessori classroom help the children to distinguish, categorise and to relate new information to what they already know. The material isolates a specific quality such as size (length and width), shape, volume and weight. The children are given the correct and comparative language – small, smaller, smallest etc. They are invited to explore, test and measure which helps develop and refine their sensory organs. The material helps the child to see more clearly the details of the world around them. The child develops an ability to judge similarities and differences, as well as an acute sense of discrimination.
- **Mathematic materials.** Dr. Montessori designed concrete materials to represent all types of quantities. She observed that children became interested in counting and enjoyed touching or moving the items as they counted them. By combining this equipment, separating it, sharing it, counting it and comparing it, they can demonstrate to themselves the basic operations of mathematics. Dr. Montessori demonstrated that if children have access to mathematical equipment in their early years they can easily assimilate many facts and skills of arithmetic.

"When playing with the material, a child forms a visual image of the arrangements of the objects and can thus remember their quantity and order" Discovery of the Child p.27.

The mathematics equipment goes from simple to complex. We start with basic exercises including sandpaper numerals and materials that introduce the concept of quantity – for example ‘zero’. We then go on to learn about the decimal system using the golden beads. The materials cover addition, subtraction, multiplication, division and fractions which are introduced when a child shows that they are interested and ready.

ETHICS, RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY

Preschools shall introduce the children to the stories, traditions, values and holidays of different religions and world views and to discover how cultural expressions are valuable in their own right. Preschools shall create an interest in the diversity of our society and an understanding of other people’s lifeworlds and ways of life. By talking about and wondering at existential, ethical and philosophical questions, the children shall be enabled to formulate questions, listen to others, reflect and find answers.

Working methods:

- The Montessori approach encompasses morals and ethics that are represented in many different religions, such as treating others with respect, kindness and love, and resolving differences through communication.
- The children gain an awareness of the world around them by exploring other countries, their customs, food, music, religion, climate, language, and animals. This helps to raise their consciousness about other people. They gain an understanding, tolerance and compassion for all the people in the world.
- As we are an international school, we are lucky to have families from various parts of the world. Parents are invited in to talk about their country of birth and often bring in examples of clothing, food and photographs.
- We draw on the cultural mix of the enrolled children each year, and have, for example, talked about Hanukkah, Diwali, Eid, Chinese New Year, and Christmas etc.

LOCAL COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY

Through exploration, discoveries and experiences, preschools shall help the children familiarise themselves with their local community, society and the wider world.

Preschools shall give them knowledge and experience of local traditions, institutions and vocations so that the children feel they belong in their local community. Cultural diversity, different ways of living and different family structures are important aspects of this learning area. Through play and varied activities, the children shall gain experience of listening, negotiation and discussion and acquire early knowledge of human rights.

Working methods:

- We have walks in the local community and experience the diversity of Norwegian nature
- We focus on and participate in Norwegian traditions and culture, for example 17th May, advent, skiing, the Christmas walk, Norwegian language and Sami culture.
- UN day is marked in preschool, and we plan incorporate human rights and the child convention. The Convention on the rights of the Child is the first international human rights convention that gives children special legal status. It reaffirms that children have human rights and the right to protection. This is a topic that will be discussed with the oldest children.
- Traffic Safety - Bærum commune is aiming to be a 'traffic safe commune' and we are therefore focusing on traffic safety in our preschool.
- We take public transport to activities wherever possible.
- Different way of living and family structures – see page 8

TEACHER DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Through various developmental measures, employees can strengthen their competence and pedagogic work in line with the framework plan.

This is done through staff meetings, practice stories, group reflection, sharing of individual professional development on monthly basis.

Courses through the commune and through the Montessori society are open to all employees. Anyone attending a course must then share the information at the next staff meeting.

Professional development in house is given through guidance and training in the classrooms and can be on Montessori materials, themes for the month, topics within the framework for daycare.

Research is ongoing into online Montessori refresher courses in English which could be held at staff meetings.