

# The Swedish National Agency for Education supervises and provides support for better schooling





## Mission and role

The Swedish Riksdag and the Government set out the goals and guidelines for the preschool and school through i.a. the Education Act and the Curricula. The mission of the Agency is to actively work for the attainment of the goals.

The municipalities and the independent schools are the principal organisers in the school system, allocate resources and organise activities so that pupils attain the national goals.

The Agency supervises, supports, follows up and evaluates the school in order to improve quality and outcomes. All pupils have the right to an equivalent education.

We focus on the principal organisers of the school, school heads, school leaders and teachers in the preschool, the preschool class, different school forms in compulsory and upper secondary schooling,

and also adult education. Sometimes pupils and parents are the target groups of the Agency.

The Agency's mission can be summarised as follows:

- drawing up clear goals and knowledge requirements
- providing support for the development of preschools and schools
- developing and disseminating new knowledge of benefit to our target groups
- communicate to improve

## **How does the agency work for a better school?**

### **NATIONAL GOALS AND STEERING DOCUMENTS**

We set up the frameworks and guidelines on how education is to be provided and assessed with the aid of syllabuses and subject plans, knowledge requirements and tests, as well as general guidelines. This is of special importance in the light of the ongoing reforms of the preschool, compulsory and upper secondary schools, as well as adult education. Major initiatives will be implemented to provide support for the implementation of the new reforms, covering conferences, web-based information, and different types of informational material.

### **NATIONAL KNOWLEDGE ASSESSMENT**

The Agency is responsible for the national system for assessing knowledge. Together with universities and university colleges, we develop national tests and assessment guides for teachers to ensure pupils receive equivalent assessment.

### **EVALUATION**

By means of in-depth studies and analyses, the Agency evaluates schooling to identify and highlight those areas where national

development is needed. Causes of variations in goal attainment among different principal school organisers and schools are analysed. The Agency takes part in international studies to benchmark our own education system and compare it with other countries. The Agency disseminates the results and outcomes by different means, such as reports and knowledge overviews.

## FOLLOW-UP

The Agency is responsible for statistics in the school system and child-care. The aim is to provide an overall view of schooling and material to follow up and evaluate at the national and local levels. Each year the Agency collects data on children, pupils, school staff, costs and education outcomes. The data is presented in statistical form by type of activity and school. This contributes to comparisons between different principal organisers and types of activities.



## NATIONAL SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT

The Agency provides support to preschools, schools and principal organisers for their development. The support to be given should be nationally prioritised. This may involve general development initiatives, which are justified on the grounds of shortcomings and problems that have been identified by means of different national and international studies, such as in mathematics, languages, and reading and writing skills. It can also deal with other issues such as mobbing and bullying, gender equality, minority languages and the position of newly arrived pupils in Sweden.

Competence development is also an important part of our work. The Agency is responsible for the National School Leadership Training Programme and the initiative for professional supplementary training of preschool teachers and teachers.

Conferences, support and inspirational material, as well as web-based support are common forms for contributing to development. We also disseminate knowledge on research and knowledge-based methods, as well as experiences of importance for school heads and teachers.

The Agency is also responsible for distributing and evaluating government grants to stimulate goal attainment and ensure quality of schooling.

## **Inspection – responsibility of a separate agency**

The Swedish Schools Inspectorate has supervisory responsibility for preschooling, school-age child care, schooling and adult education. This means that the Agency checks that the municipalities or the independent schools comply with the legislation and other provisions applicable to their activities. The goal is good education in a secure environment. In addition, the Schools Inspectorate is responsible for approving applications and grants for independent schools.

The Office of the Child and School Student Representative (BEO) is also a part of the Schools Inspectorate.



**The National Agency for Education** is the central administrative authority for the public school system, publicly organised preschooling, school-age childcare and for adult education.

The National Agency for Education is led by the Director-General, and in order to strengthen quality and acceptance by society, the Government has appointed an Advisory Council.

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