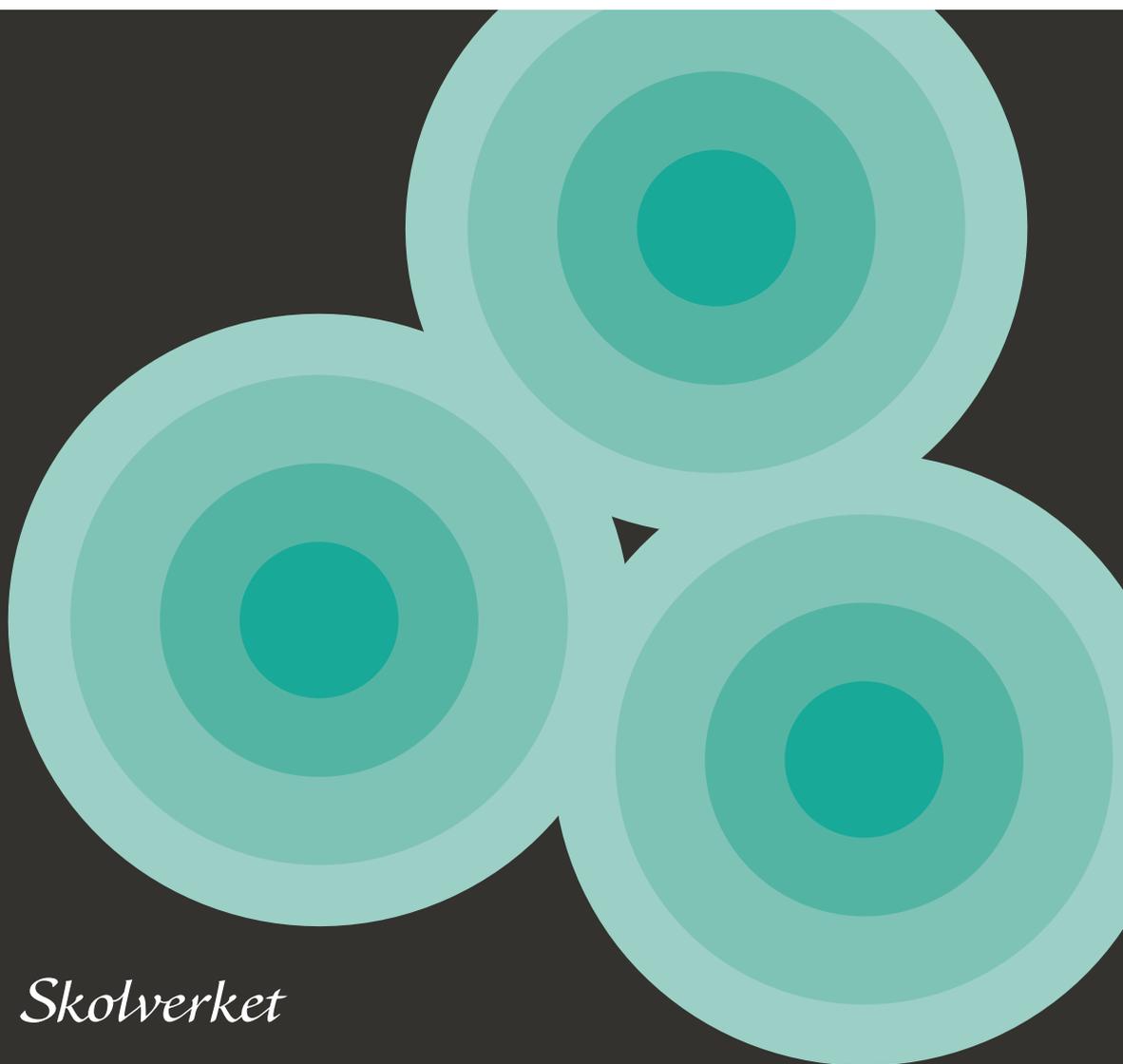


# The National School Leadership Training Programme

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# The aim of the National School Leadership Training Programme

The National School Leadership Training Programme is a state-regulated professional training programme for school heads, preschool managers and people with corresponding leadership positions, and plays a key role in organisations that are state-regulated and governed by the curriculum.

*“The goal of the training programme is to give participants the knowledge necessary to*

- 1. ensure that all pupils and children receive an education that is of equal value and consistent with the law,*
- 2. create conditions in which targets can be achieved at both individual and organisational level, and*
- 3. take responsibility for ensuring the development of the organisation as a whole.” (Ordinance (2011:183) on professional training for school heads and other staff with corresponding leadership positions in schools, preschools and after-school recreation centres as well as continuing professional development for school heads, Chapter 2, Section 2, second paragraph)*

In order for school heads and preschool managers to be able to implement the national mandate, the National School Leadership Training Programme shall provide good knowledge of their responsibilities pursuant to the Education Act (2010:800), the curricula and other regulations. The school head or preschool manager shall, through the training programme, develop the knowledge and skills required to relate their organisation’s results to the national and local goals. Furthermore, the school head or preschool manager shall develop the ability to critically review their own practice and formulate strategies for development and change based on this analysis.

The National School Leadership Training Programme shall contribute to school heads and preschool managers taking responsibility for ensuring that children and pupils are handled in a way that is consistent with the law. School heads and preschool managers shall also develop the skills and tools required to create an organisation in which the focus is on the children and pupils’ learning and the quality of the teaching. The National School Leadership Training Programme shall be linked to the professional practice of the individual participants, and provide the opportunity to develop this by placing this in context and creating a deeper understanding of the role.



## **The role and responsibilities of school heads and preschool managers**

By leading and governing the educational organisation and being in charge of the teachers or preschool teachers, the school head or preschool manager has overall responsibility for the organisation and its development, in accordance with the Education Act and the curricula. Based on policy documents and the preconditions that are provided by the state and education provider, the school head or preschool manager shall interpret and convey an understanding of the mission, organise work and, along with teachers and other staff, develop the content and working methods.

The school head or preschool manager shall lead and coordinate the pedagogical work and be responsible for children and pupils' education being equal and consistent with the law. They shall also be responsible for children and pupils developing the skills, abilities, norms and values that are stated in the national goals and that they experience the learning as meaningful and stimulating in a secure environment.

In order to be able to fulfil the national mandate, the school head or preschool manager require good knowledge and understanding of the responsibilities their position entails pursuant to the Education Act, the curricula and other regulations of significance. The same applies to their knowledge and understanding of the rights and obligations of the children, pupils and legal guardians.



School heads and preschool managers are responsible for ensuring that the results of their organisation are monitored and evaluated in relation to the national targets and knowledge requirements. By surveying, critically assessing and analysing their organisation, the school head or preschool manager shall create the basis from which to instigate development and change processes that lead to improved goal attainment.

One of the duties of school heads or preschool managers is tying together the national mandate with the demands of the principal organiser and the demands placed by the organisational prerequisites and conditions. Based on their understanding of their own role and that of their organisation, as well as on research and proven experience, the school head or preschool manager shall put into practice the fundamental values on which the organisation is to be based. This should be done in a way that focuses on the children and pupils' learning. The school head or preschool manager leadership also involves working together with the local, national and global community.

The school head or preschool manager has a specific responsibility to ensure that the working methods used in their organisation are developed in such a way as to promote the active influence of children and pupils. The school head shall also be responsible for ensuring that the allocation of resources and support measures are adapted to the development and needs of the pupils. Furthermore, the school head or preschool manager is responsible for ensuring that staff receives the competence development they need to carry out their duties in a professional way.

## **The programme's target group**

The National School Leadership Training Programme is aimed at all school heads and preschool managers, deputy heads and other people with corresponding leadership roles in curricula-governed organisations and who have not previously completed state-regulated professional training for school heads.

## **A compulsory training programme**

The National School Leadership Training Programme is compulsory for newly employed school heads as of March 2010 (Chapter 2, Section 12 of the Education Act). This means that public and private education providers are responsible for ensuring that newly appointed school heads are enrolled in and take part in the National School Leadership Training Programme or an equivalent training programme. The training programme is to begin as soon as possible after the person has begun their employment and should be completed within four years.

This obligation does not include school heads that have previously completed the state-regulated professional training programme for school heads. This requirement does not apply to preschool managers or assistant preschool managers.

## **Scope and methods**

The training takes place over the course of three years. It includes study periods with residential courses, seminar days, an investigative task at the school head's own school and literature studies. In order to complete the training programme in an expedient way, the school head or preschool manager is required to have the opportunity to devote approximately 20 per cent of their working hours to their studies.

## **Cost**

The State pays the universities' costs related to the training programme, while the education provider pays the participant's salary while they are studying. The education provider also pays for travel to residential courses and seminar days, as well as the cost of overnight stays and course literature.



# Content and goals

The National School Leadership Training Programme comprises a total of 30 higher education credits at second-cycle level. The training programme consists of the following three main areas of knowledge, each comprising 10 credits:

- School legislation and exercising public authority 10 credits
- Management by goals and objectives 10 credits
- School leadership 10 credits

The work of the school head or preschool manager, as expressed in the curricula and the Education Act, is multifaceted and complex. The three areas above are central to the practical implementation of leadership, and are closely related. The National School Leadership Training Programme shall provide support for the school head or preschool manager in managing this advanced role.

Upon completion of the National School Leadership Training Programme, school head or preschool manager of preschool shall have demonstrated their knowledge and understanding of the goals of the programme as well as have the ability to lead the work in accordance with them. During the training programme, theory and practice shall meet and the school head or preschool manager shall be given the opportunity to critically assess and reflect on their organisation. In this way, the training programme shall contribute to the development of each participant's organisation.

The National School Leadership Training Programme as a whole shall connect the impact of laws and regulations on the opportunities of leadership and how systematic knowledge of their own leadership role, the organisational prerequisites, processes and results can be used to challenge and develop its working methods, organisational structure and activities with a focus on children and pupils' development, learning and the quality of the teaching.

KNOWLEDGE AREA

## **School legislation and the exercise of public authority**

This area deals with the prerequisites for the organisation as specified in the Education Act, educational ordinances and other legislation of relevance for the organisation.

As part of the exercise of public authority, school head or preschool manager shall be prepared to make and argue in favour of decisions that are in accordance with the applicable legislation and supported by legal methodology.

The emphasis in the area is on how the duties of the organisation are formulated in the Education Act and curricula, and how they should be interpreted and applied.

The duties of schools to instil fundamental values and convey knowledge are highlighted as integral aspects of an overall mission. This knowledge area shall contribute to the school head or preschool manager developing the knowledge and abilities required to work to ensure children and pupils' rights, safety, peaceful study environment and access to equal education.

This area also problematises the issue of working in a politically governed organisation, the double governance of the State and the education provider, the school's compensatory role, and the way in which these circumstances can affect the implementation of leadership and governance.



**Following completion of the training programme  
the school head or preschool manager shall:**

- demonstrate good knowledge of the system by which schools and pre-schools are governed and its structure, the educational system's structure and fundamental values, as well as the school head/preschool manager's official responsibilities pursuant to the applicable statutes,
- demonstrate good knowledge of the structure of the legal system, sources of law and legal methodology and good ability to use sources of law in order to solve legal problems in their organisation,
- demonstrate good knowledge of the constitutional and administrative legal principles of relevance to their role,
- demonstrate good ability to review and assess how well their own organisation is fulfilling that which is stipulated in the educational statutes,
- demonstrate good ability to convey, firmly establish and apply knowledge of the statutes that affect the rights of all children and pupils, and the responsibility of the school head or preschool manager to ensure these rights.
- Pupils in need of special support, and children and pupils living with activity limitations shall be specifically highlighted,
- demonstrate good ability to weigh up issues and make judgements in their work, taking into account the rights of the pupils, as well as academic, social and ethical aspects of relevance to the individual case and
- demonstrate knowledge of the statutes relevant to their role, in addition to the educational statutes, and the international agreements of significance to their role.



## Management by targets and results

This area primarily deals with the systematic quality management that has to be carried out as part of the role. Quality management is necessary in order to achieve the national targets for the work of instilling fundamental values and conveying knowledge, and to create the conditions for integration and development.

The area includes both theoretical and practical methods and models for how leaders, through monitoring and evaluation, can create a good overview of the state of their organisation as well as the quality and implementation of the teaching. It is also concerned with how, based on an analytical approach, continuous and sustainable efforts to promote change and development are planned and implemented.

The area shall contribute to the school head or preschool manager developing knowledge in a basic repertoire of methods for surveying, critically reviewing and developing their organisation in relation to the national targets. The school head or preschool manager shall also develop their ability to put this into practice. Quality management shall be seen as a necessary tool with which to determine which processes and events in the organisation contribute to helping staff, children and pupils to learn and develop. The school head or preschool manager shall also develop an understanding of the importance of promoting the participation of staff, children and pupils in the assessment of the organisation, and an ability to involve them in this work. This provides the school head or preschool manager with the prerequisites required to communicate as well as jointly formulate and firmly establish the need for development as part of their daily work.

**Following completion of the training programme  
the school head or preschool manager shall:**

- demonstrate knowledge of the structure of the school system, the system of governance used for schools and preschools and its fundamental values, as well as the school head or preschool manager’s educational role pursuant to the applicable legislation,
- demonstrate good ability to explain and clarify the school system’s targets as well as to translate these into concrete actions,
- demonstrate knowledge of the academic basis of monitoring and evaluation, and the ability to relate the organisation’s results to the national and local targets,
- demonstrate good ability to critically review and reflect on how different methods of organisational monitoring and evaluation can both enrich and limit their own organisation,
- demonstrate good ability to formulate and communicate strategies for promoting development and change based on an analysis of their organisation, where the organisation’s internal organisational structure and allocation of resources are central aspects,
- demonstrate good knowledge of the prerequisites that affect the development and learning processes of all children and pupils as well as strategies for promoting the development of all children and pupils, and
- demonstrate good ability to establish a culture where the quality of the teaching and children and pupils’ learning and development are central aspects, and where quality management is part of the day-to-day work of the organisation.

## School leadership

This area deals with how the organisation can be managed and led based on the national mandate and the principles of the system of governance. This helps ensure that the development and changes that take place within the organisation lead to more targets being achieved.

Various theoretical perspectives are applied in this area, and these provide a basis on which the school head or preschool manager has the opportunity to improve their knowledge concerning the importance of leadership for the development of the organisation, group or individual. The area aims to strengthen the ability to critically reflect on how the participant's own leadership is affected by the context they are in and, in this way, contribute to improved self-awareness and security in their professional role.

As a school head or preschool manager, it is vital to be able to communicate, manage and lead the organisation with a focus on the knowledge targets, the quality of the teaching and the work of instilling fundamental values. Accordingly, the area shall contribute to the school head or preschool manager developing their ability to lead and take responsibility for the organisation's results based on a research and proven experience, as well as on an understanding of learning environments, teacher competence and the knowledge development of the students.

The area shall contribute to developing the ability to motivate, initiate, organise and lead the change and development processes of the organisation so that children, pupils and staff are better able to learn and have more desire to develop.

The area should also help create a readiness to manage the way in which laws, regulations and other governance rationales affect how leadership is exercised. The school head or preschool manager shall also be given the opportunity to develop an understanding of how a systematised understanding of their own leadership role and the prerequisites, processes and results of their organisation can be used in development work. This can give the school head or preschool manager the confidence to challenge teachers and preschool teachers to develop their working methods, organisational structure and implementation with a focus on children and pupils' learning, the quality of the teaching, the attainment of goals and results.



**Following completion of the training programme  
the school head or preschool manager shall:**

- demonstrate good knowledge of various theories about the development of organisations, groups and individuals, and about various leadership strategies and their effects on the actions of colleagues, thereby promoting development at an individual and group level,
- demonstrate good ability to lead and plan activities based on knowledge of both the activities' contextual conditions and the organisational culture's significance on change processes so that the pupils' learning and development is maximised,
- demonstrate good ability to create a communicative climate and an environment for collegial learning in which the exchange of experiences between staff members is based on the quality of the teaching and the learning and development of the children and pupils.
- demonstrate good ability to initiate, organise and lead the change and development processes of the organisation and deal with different types of conflicts, and
- demonstrate an ability to communicate and uphold the equal value of all people and the organisation's role, targets and results with respect to its target groups.

## Examination

The three knowledge areas shall be examined in a way that contributes to attainment of the goals. The universities that offer the training programme are responsible for the design and execution of examinations.







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