



KED

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The Power of Books

Sara is the subject team leader for Swedish at Kunskapsgymnasiet Globen. After returning from her exchange project at Kunskapsskolan Gurgaon, she concluded that reading at her own school needs to increase. To add some power behind this goal, Sara announced that her KED school will become a reading school, and she looks forward to developing this work together with her colleagues in the global KED Network. Read Sara's full story on the next page.

Summer is known as the best time for reading. I have been a frequent visitor to the library myself this summer, and I have explored my grandparents' collection of encyclopedias dating back to the

early 20th century. It was fascinating to explore facts about scientists and statesmen through the lens of researchers who neither owned a smartphone nor were distracted by social media.

The fictional story that I enjoyed the most was about a group of people who live by themselves in the woods in Northern Sweden. This exciting story revealed new perspectives on love, group dynamics and the power we have over other human beings ("The Stack", Annika Norlin, 2023).

Reading increases understanding and the ability to relate to other people's situations. This is a core social emotional

competency, and therefore a prioritized area for KED schools worldwide through our heightened focus on social and emotional learning (SEL).

Promoting the skills to understand oneself and others and handle difficult situations and disagreements in a constructive way is vital to the educational mission of KED. Reading is a powerful tool to get us there - regardless of the season. Every day is the best time for reading. What book are you going to read next? ■

Cecilia Aronsson
Network Director
cecilia.aronsson@kunskapsskolan.com





A Reading School

Sara Silfversten from Kunskaapsgymnasiet Globen reading a Swedish classic to students in Year 3 at Kunskaapsskolan Gurgaon

It is a significant societal problem in Sweden today that reading comprehension among children and young adults is declining, and we ourselves notice that our students find it increasingly difficult to understand what they have read. Therefore, reading has been a prioritized area for us in the subject team this

year, where we have worked on developing our reading instruction in a way that benefits the students more. My KED Team Leader Exchange project with Meenal Bhatia at our sister school Kunskaapsskolan Gurgaon broadened my perspective on how this work can be approached.

Meenal created a schedule for me where I would have the opportunity to observe different forms of teaching and talk to teachers and others at the school about reading. It mainly involved three different teaching situations: closed workshops, English lessons, and the activities in the library.



Sara spent one week at Meenal's school earlier this year



Sara witnessed the importance of reading at Kunskapsskolan Gurgaon

In the closed workshop, the students worked on reading several times a week. They read a book of their choice, where before they started reading, they would choose a strategy to use during that day's closed workshop. The strategies were clearly collected in a template, and the teacher encouraged the students to use a strategy they had not tried before. They then used the strategy and took notes in a notebook designated solely for English.

The school has a large and beautiful library with two librarians. Younger students come here to borrow books, for independent reading, and for storytime. Older students come to the library to borrow books and to have a place to study, and several staff members sit here to work.

They try to keep the noise level down, and sometimes it is completely silent. For the younger students, the library becomes as important as other places in the school, and for the older students, the library is a reminder that

“The library as a whole sends a signal that literature and reading are important and a vital part of their education.”

they can come here to find knowledge, but also to escape into the world of books for a while. The library as a whole sends a signal that literature and reading are important and a vital part of their education.

The school focuses a lot on fostering a love for reading from an early age, as well as establishing a habit of reading books early on. All younger students (grades 1-4) have scheduled time in the library once a week for reading. I led a storytime session for the 3rd grade. I chose to read about when Pippi Longstocking moved into Villa Villekulla. When not coming to the library for storytime, younger students are expected to choose their own book to read.

When it comes to reading strategies, it is clear that a strategy from the teachers' side is to always use reading strategies. Students are introduced to several different strategies, choose which one to use themselves, and are encouraged not to always choose the same one.

All reading and work related to reading is done analogously. Analog books to read, analog books to write in. Computers are only used for short tasks.

I have realized that my school can work more systematically with reading. Here, it is not only those of us who teach literature who are important, but all teachers at the school have an important role in developing our students' reading comprehension. Our library needs to transition from being a place where students have breaks

“Our library needs to transition from being a place where students have breaks to a place where literature, reading, and knowledge are the focus.”

to a place where literature, reading, and knowledge are the focus. We have jointly decided that Kunskapsgymnasiet Globen will become a reading school, and I look forward to developing this work together with my colleagues in the global KED Network. ■

Sara Silfversten
Team Leader,
Kunskapsgymnasiet Globen

Embracing New Challenges



Meenal's exchange project was based at upper secondary KED school Kunskapsgymnasiet Globen and she also explored the secondary KED school in Nacka

Little did I realize, this journey would be a profoundly enriching experience, both personally and professionally.

In May this year, I embarked on my first trip to Sweden as part of a Team Lead Exchange Program with Kunskapsgymnasiet Globen. The anticipation and excitement of exploring a new country, immersing oneself in its culture, and learning from its people made this journey particularly thrilling. It was great to see my exchange partner Sara Silfversten again after nearly three months. We both had so much to share. After settling in, Sara shared the plan for the upcoming days with me.

On the following weekdays, I accompanied Sara to Kunskapsgymnasiet Globen. I connected with the teachers and with the Head of School, Christina Becerra, whose leadership approach emphasized consensus and employee well-being. We spent several hours discussing their innovative work-life balance strategies, working environment, and Quality Plan. It was fun to interact



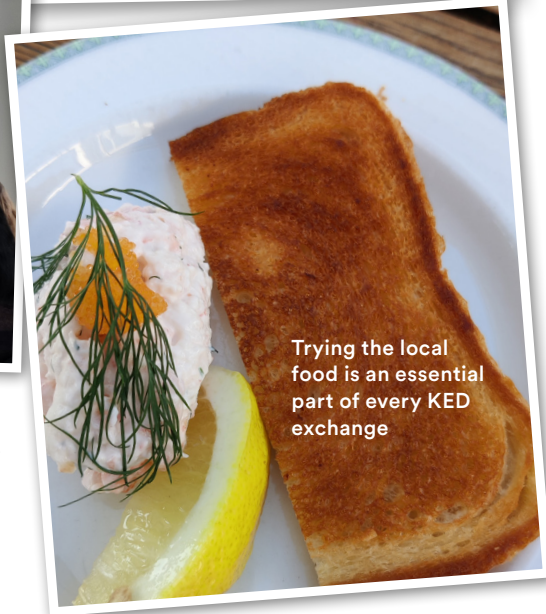
Visiting the prominent museums in Stockholm



Emil Johansson, Cajsa Blekemo and Christina Becerra from the school management team at Kunskapsgymnasiet Globen impressed Meenal with their leadership style



Listening to the Swedish students' presentations provided new insights about the power of open questions



Trying the local food is an essential part of every KED exchange

with the upper secondary students and watch their work and presentations.

My visit to the secondary KED school Kunskapsskolan Nacka was equally enlightening. I observed the same pedagogy during base group sessions, personal coaching, and workshops. The students displayed great ownership in planning workshops using the Workshop Scheduler and were seen actively participating in book discussions during their language learning session.

The use of open-ended questions prompted deep thinking and self-reflection among the students, during coaching as well as learning sessions. Even during presentations, the incorporation of these questions encouraged students to think beyond the surface and expand their boundaries of understanding.

On my last working day, I participated in a joint workshop with the other participants in this year's round of the KED Team Leader Exchange Program to put our learnings in perspective. I was particularly inspired by Dejan Urukalo, Head of School at Kunskapsskolan Fruängen, who shared his personal journey as a leader within Kunskapsskolan and emphasized the importance of KED Network exchanges to enhance leadership skills among his team. By inspiring

and empowering teachers, we can provide the resilience needed to thrive in demanding roles.

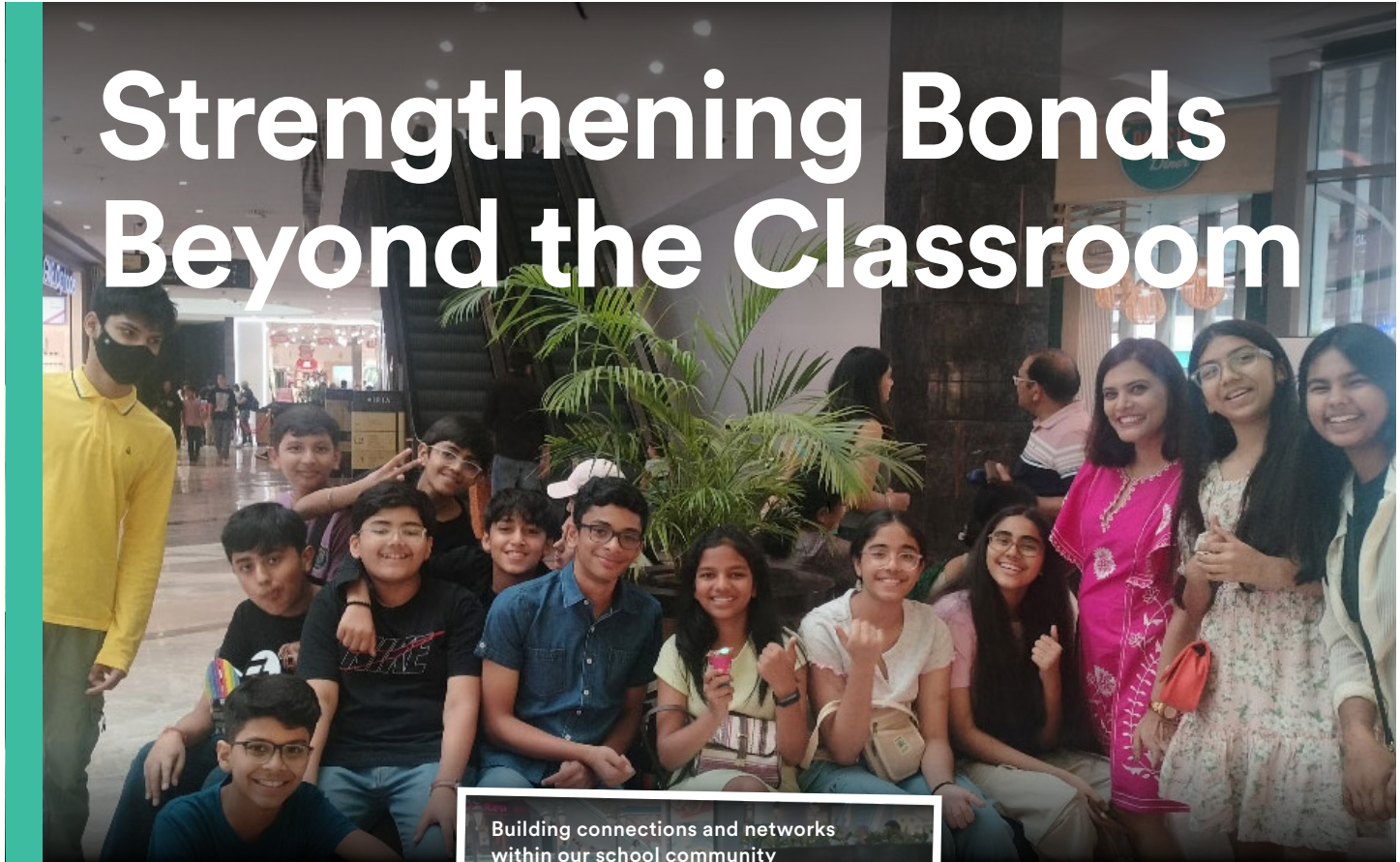
This exchange not only enhanced my leadership skills but also instilled a deeper appreciation of the diversity and unity brought by international collaboration. I feel a renewed sense of purpose and enthusiasm.

Meenal Bhatia
Team Leader,
Kunskapsskolan Gurgaon



Joint workshop for the team leaders in the exchange program organized by KED

Strengthening Bonds Beyond the Classroom



Building connections and networks within our school community

In the bustling rhythm of school life, where lessons, assessments, and extra-curricular activities weave the fabric of each day, educators often seek moments that transcend the ordinary. These moments are not just about teaching; they are about connecting, understanding, and nurturing the human spirit within each student. Recently, I had the privilege of experiencing such a moment

during an outing with my students – a day that exemplified the power of bonding and shared aspirations.

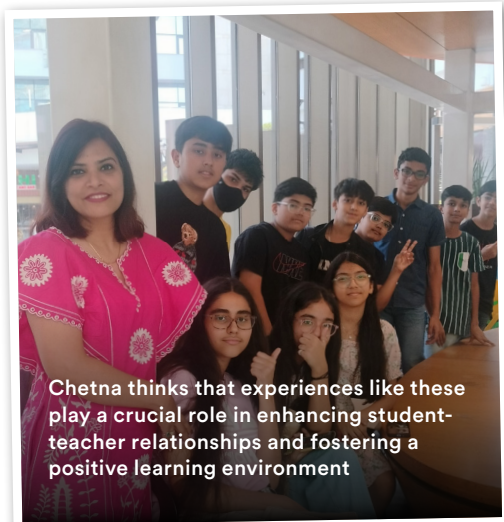
The primary goal was to strengthen our connections and create lasting memories, and it is safe to say that our objectives were more than met.

The excitement was palpable as students indulged in interactive activities followed by delightful treats, moments filled with laughter and camaraderie. It was heartwarming to witness students sharing their thoughts, dreams, and experiences, fostering a deeper sense of understanding and friendship.

We are immensely grateful for the overwhelming support and cooperation from our parents, whose enthusiasm added to the joy of the day. Their trust and encouragement are invaluable in creating such meaningful experiences for our students.

This outing not only provided a refreshing break but also reinforced the importance of building strong relationships beyond the confines of our classroom. As we reflect on this memorable day, we look forward to many more opportunities to bond, learn, and grow together as a close-knit community. ■

Chetna Sharma
Team Leader and Base Group Coach,
Kunskapsskolan International



Chetna thinks that experiences like these play a crucial role in enhancing student-teacher relationships and fostering a positive learning environment

KED Formalizes New Member Base in the UK

Kunskapsskolan and the KED Program have played an important role at Shevington High School since 2017. Now, the school has gained the official status of KED Network Member. This means that they will continue to work with other KED schools in several different ways.

Julian, former Principal at Shevington High School, what is your impression of Kunskapsskolan?

“Kunskapsskolan has made a massive impact on our approach to developing student agency and independence. KED has always encouraged, supported, and advised us as we navigated the complexities of personalization of learning.”

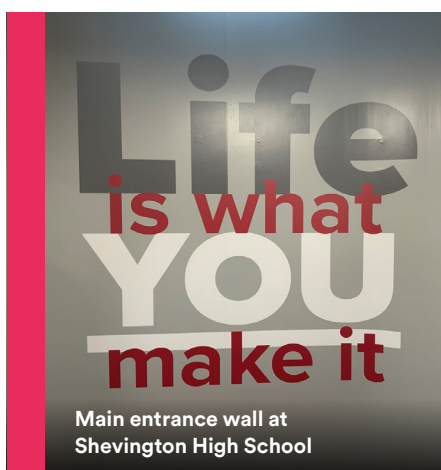
their own and they understood how powerful 1:1 coaching can be. Similarly, we found the KED Teacher Exchange Program valuable. In 2018, a member of the Enköping team came and joined us for a week when we ran our Swedish Week in school. She also helped us to develop our coaching and personalize our version of the logbook.”

Shevington High School has collaborated with Kunskapsskolan in many ways during your time as the Head of School. Please name a few projects with a lasting impression.

“Seeing our students develop and grow as a result of the exchange projects with Kunskapsskolan Enköping has been amazing. Many of our students have forged lifelong friendships. I think the immersion in Swedish life for our students helped them to contextualize

How is the collaboration with Kunskapsskolan visible in Shevington High School’s operations as a school today?

“The Kunskapsskolan DNA is in the heart of all that we do. As you walk around the school, you will see student coaching and goal setting in lessons. We work with themes and our missions are big school events where students get to show mastery of subjects and knowledge and demonstrate how they have used their future skills.”



Have you identified any measurable values/outcomes on the student level from being in the KED Network?

“From being part of the KED Network and developing our KED inspired approach to learning, our student outcomes continue to be strong and improve year on year. We can clearly see that students that fully participate in coaching will meet their targets and goals. But also, they develop into great learners who can articulate clear goals and ambitions for the future and as a result are more resilient and ready for the next stage ahead of them.”

John Bennett is the new Headteacher at Shevington High School, beginning in September 2024. He has been working here for just under 2 years, as a Deputy Headteacher. Previously, John worked in schools in Liverpool and London as a senior leader and Chemistry specialist.

John, please tell us a little about yourself and your school.

“I am extremely excited to begin work as the leader of such a fantastic educational environment with an amazing staff. Our school is unique in many ways, as we have taken what we have learned through our partnerships with KED and others and put personalized learning at the very heart of everything we do. We are proud that we are different from most schools in the UK, and we truly believe the reason we are so popular as a school is because we fully commit to the shared values.”

What do you aim to achieve through a membership in the KED Network?

“Our aim is to continue to improve our understanding of a personalized education, and I hope that through this membership, more of our staff can be exposed to the successes it can bring. It is a fantastic opportunity for Shevington’s staff to be outward looking and learn from others within the network.”

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Replacing Bells with Fika

by Julian Grant
Headteacher, KED Inspired Shevington High School, England

This year at Shevington High School, we started to deliver a KED inspired curriculum to Year 7 students, that included coaching and working on steps and themes. As a school, we had a strategy to immerse ourselves as much as possible into the KED philosophy. We have participated in study visits to several Swedish KED Schools, one member of staff had the fantastic opportunity to be involved in the Teacher Exchange Program, we hosted 20 exchange students from Kungäppskolan Enköping in December and then we visited them.



After a few days in Kungäppskolan Enköping, it was quite clear we really needed to trail some of the strategies we had seen there before implementing them fully in September. This is when the concept of Swedish Week came about.

The idea was to trail for a week some KED influenced practices to see if they worked within our UK context. Susanna Wahlqvist from Kungäppskolan Enköping came here to support our efforts. We changed the timetable for Year 7 and 8 so they had a workshop session every day. In that time, they had three tasks to complete by the end

of the week. We decided for Swedish week all students would hand in their mobile phones as we had seen it done so successfully in Enköping. It seemed to be one of the biggest challenges of the week.

We put on a Swedish inspired menu in school and staff were encouraged to eat together with students, which reduced the need for the usual supervision. This really made the atmosphere in the canteen so much calmer.

Another thing we tried was to turn the school bells off. We usually have a bell ring every hour to indicate a change of lesson. For Swedish week we had no bells at all. The movement around school was much calmer and relaxed as the students did not exit classes all at the same time. Punctuality was not affected; students were still quick to get to lessons.

The final but very successful approach adopted during the week was Fika. Every day at break time, we provided tea and coffee plus a range of refreshments, i.e. fika. The purpose was explained to all staff – to get them together and talk about anything other than school.

Swedish Week was an excellent way to fully embrace the KED principles; most staff participated in the workshop sessions and



more students than ever had the opportunity to lead their learning. Now we are excited about planning for September. Fika Friday is already permanently in place due to the popular demand.

Julian Grant
presenting Shevington
High School's Swedish
Week six years ago

What kind of exchanges are you looking for?

“We are particularly excited to be involved in student, teacher and leadership exchanges. We hope that other schools will enjoy the opportunity to come to Shevington and see what we do so well in our school. Ultimately, we hope to increase our expertise as a team and evolve our strategies.”

What do you hope that students and teams will learn from these exchanges?

“This will allow them to share experiences, talk to students from other countries and education systems and be able to compare how they each navigate through their challenges. We hope that these interactions lead to further

discussion in our school about the student experience and how we can still improve our approach. For teachers and leaders, it is a fantastic opportunity for continued professional development. By sharing expertise across the network we believe we can impact others as well as taking away strategies that can help develop our school.”

If you are interested in an exchange with Shevington High School, please contact Cecilia Aronsson to get you matched and equipped to get going. ■

Cecilia Aronsson
Network Director

We Host the Next Teachers' Research Conference

As a partner school in Stockholm Teaching and Learning Studies (STLS), Kunskapsskolan Sweden is honored to host the annual Teachers' Research Conference on 29 October 2024 at Kunskapsgymnasiet Globen in Stockholm. Teachers and researchers have submitted papers, which after a peer-review process resulted in the selection of 62 presentations from ongoing or completed didactic research projects. Cecilia Carnefeldt, President & CEO of Kunskapsskolan Education, will welcome everyone and provide an overview of the KED context.

STLS, established in 2010, is a collaborative research environment where teachers and researchers work symmetrically and complementary with shared research objectives. This approach means that teachers and researchers work together through the research process, combining their

"Kunskapsskolan being a user of research and a partner in the production of new research are equally important in ensuring the best learning opportunities for the next generation of graduates."



Sebastian Björnhammer leads Kunskapsskolan Sweden's use and production of new research

expertise. The main aim is to develop new knowledge that contributes to the shared professional knowledge base on teaching and learning. STLS is organized into networks based on different school subjects, with each network including one or more senior lecturer or associate professor and several PhD students. Three dedicated professors supervise the research and support the networks.

Each year, teachers from STLS partner schools can apply to join these networks, and this year, 73 teachers from STLS partner schools will be participating. From Kunskapsskolan, we will have 12 teachers working on research projects within STLS. Three examples of their projects are listed here:

- "AI as a Tool for Subject Learning"
- "Interdisciplinary Sustainable Development Issues"
- "Re-creating Fiction within Transmedial Worlds"

Previous projects at STLS have resulted in research articles published in both national and international peer-reviewed journals. We then spread the findings through podcasts, teacher magazines, and conferences.

Kunskapsskolan hosted the Teachers' Research Conference in 2019 as well



When STLS was first established, there were few conferences focused on teacher-driven research. As a result, STLS began organizing the Teachers' Research Conference, annually attracting 400 educators and researchers. This year, with Kunskapsskolan as the host, Jenny Rosengren serves as the Conference General. Jenny is a part-time teacher at Kunskapsgymnasiet Malmö and a part-time PhD student in social sciences education at Stockholm University. By being able to work both as a teacher and a researcher, she bridges the gap between practice and research, synergistically making school practice more scientific and research more authentic and meaningful.

Kunskapsskolan's role as an STLS partner school allows us to be both users

and producers of research. Building on the KED Program, educators from Kunskapsskolan have much to contribute to research on teaching and learning. At the same time, we are always eager to engage with new research. Both aspects, Kunskapsskolan being a user of research and a partner in the production of new research, are equally important in ensuring the best learning opportunities for the next generation of graduates.

At the Teachers' Research Conference 2024, participants can look forward to engaging with and collaborating on ongoing and completed research, all aimed at deepening our understanding of teaching and learning. The conference is free of charge. After eight years of involvement in the STLS network, I feel proud of Kunskapsskolan's role as

both a user and producer of research. This year, our commitment will be highlighted through our role as hosts, the active participation of our educators, and the presentation of their research projects.

[You can read more about STLS by clicking here.](#) ■

Sebastian Björnhammer

Project and development leader at the Pedagogical Department of Kunskapsskolan Sweden

Ph.D. student in science education at Stockholm University

Research coordinator at Stockholm Teaching & Learning Studies

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