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Gladsaxe Skovbørnehave – a 50 years old Forest Kindergarten





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Skovdiget 8 DK-2880 Bagsværd Tlf.: +45 44 98 20 24

History and basic informations







Opening hours:
7 – 17 Monday – Thursday
7 – 16.30 Friday
Weekends closed

- Situated just a short walk from the forest of Hareskoven, next to Skovbrynet S-train station.
- This beautiful old house is the "home" of our Forest Kindergarten
- The kindergarten was started by parents in 1969, as a half-day-care, in the mornings. It was among some of the first Forest Kindergartens in Denmark.
- At that time, the children got picked up by bus in Høje Gladsaxe in the morning and brought back at noon. The bus took all children and adults to the forest, or to wherever they wanted.
- In 1996 we moved in to this house, a former restaurant/inn/bar from 1932-1994 approx.



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27 children aged 3-6, 5 teachers/peadogoges.



Visions and philosopy

Our work builds on the respect of the individual child as a part of the community.

Our purpose and goals are to:

- Give the children experiences in the nature
- Teach them to take care of the nature
- Teach them about the changes of seasons
- Develope curriosity and inquiry
- Develope motor skills, senses, language, fantasy, independence and feeling of belonging in the community.

This development have to take place in the wild/nature, as much as possible, and in the childs own pace.





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Everyday schedule





7.00-8.30 Children arrives, play indoor.

8.30-9.10 Getting dressed, play in garden.

9.10-11.00 Walk to the forest and activities.

11.00-12.30 Lunch, often in the forest. Walk back to the house

12.30-14.00 Adults break, preparing snack, children free play in the garden.

14.00-14.30 Afternoon snack for children

14.30-17.00 In the garden untill parents comes to pick up the children.

The children are getting ready to go outside, dressing themselves, with as little help as possible from the teachers – mainly verbal guidance. During this we talk about weather and proper clothing.



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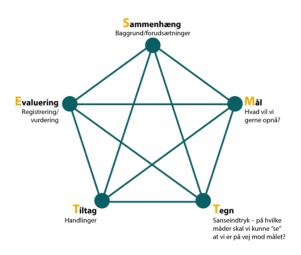
Theme projects

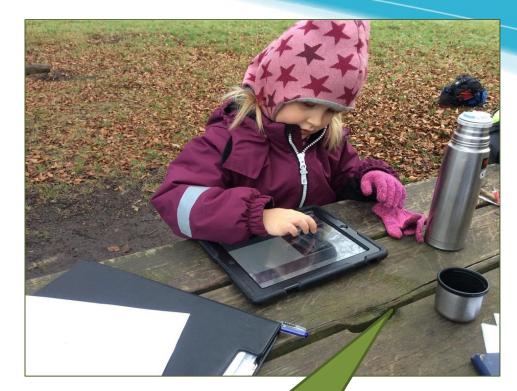
We work with a theme project for about 6-9 months.

Planning; looking for signs in the childrens play, planning activities together with children.

Activities which cover multiple intelligences (Howard Gardner).

Evaluation – on going, both individually with a child, in group, after project finishes. Both evaluation for and with children, and adults.





Using the Ipad for making a "Book Creator" book about her "superpowers" (what she is good at). This will be transfered to her school electronically before she starts school.



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Theme projects - Pirates

Our main theme is PIRATES for August-November 2018

We use our charts 1&2 for the planning, looking on the childrens interests, and combining this with the curriculum skills, they have to learn. We use the individual "Focus Child Chart" for documenting the learning outcome and the proces for the individual child and his/her parents.

How do we build a Pirateship?

Even though our main theme is Pirates, we focus on the skills from the curriculum. Eg. "Social development" or "Comprehensive personal development"













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UN Goals for sustainability

THE GLOBAL GOALS

For Sustainable Development



































We work for sustainable development with the children and teach them to take care of nature and act responsible. This is also expected of us from the Government and from Gladsaxe Municipality.



We collect garbage and sort it for recycling. The children are very focused on litter in nature.

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QUALITY EDUCATION



We reuse and upcycle old furniture and toys. A lot of the things we have, we get from the childrens homes or make ourselves.

> We teach the children to save water, not to use too many papertowels, to switch off lights, when not needed

We teach the children about washing hands, sneezing in elbow, being fyscical active, eating healthy food.

RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



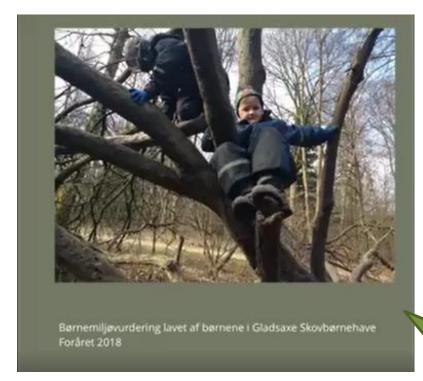








BMV - BørneMiljøVurdering - Childcenteret Environmental Assesment



How did we do it?

- We asked every single child where he/she liked to play and with whom.
- The 5 years olds answered a interview on the internet via I-pad (DCUM – Dansk Center for Undervisningsmidler)
- Every child took photos of their favorite places
- We talked with the children about what was missing in the garden, and what they like to play with.
- In the SWOT analysis with the parents they wrote what they felt could be better for their children.
- Made a priority list about what to do, and made alternations and are still doing this
- The BMV is made in Book Creator, and is on our Face Book profile as a video, for parents etc. to watch.

Where do you like to play? With whom do you play? What would you like to play with? Is there anything you do not like? Do you have any friends? Are the adults nice to you?



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"Zones of learning and playing"



Our project this Summer was to redecorate the "zones of learning and playing" in our garden. Everything made of reused and upcyled materials – and made in cooperation with the children after we made our BMV and after asking the children what they would like.



The children helped making the toys, sawing the boards, painting etc.















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Green Flag – 14 years of documentation to get the diploma and the green flag.

When we recieve the GREEN FLAG and diploma the Mayor comes if invited, and make a speach, wearing her Mayor-chain. She always receive a letter from "Green Sprouts" when we get the green flag.



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To receive the Green flag we document our work in nature with the children. The Green Flag/Green Sprouts is an off-spring of "Friluftsrådet", a nongovernmental "umbrella organisation", who supports knowledge of nature and activism.





Welcoming new parents and the new child

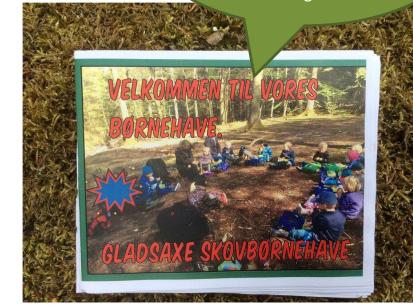
Informations for the parents
One month before the child starts,
the parents receive an e-mail with
informations and we set a date for
a meeting in the home of the
family



At the first meeting in the familys home, the child gets a book, made by the other children showing what we do in the Kindergarten.







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Our many traditions







Music with "Music-Lotte". The Friday with a



The day of Grandparents

Morten, the Lumber Jack

"Fastelavn" -

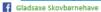


Christmas decorations





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Parents (and grandparents) involvement, in the childs learning



Reuse, recycle with the help of parents



SWOT analysis and parents meetings, Once or twice a year

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Parents Coffee informing and showing things from our theme work etc.







Bakkegården – senior center cooperation

"Jeg ved en lærkerede" - a childrens song, we use together with the elder at Bakkegården. It's a song they remeber from their childhood.











The children learn to respect, accept and take care of other people with difficulties. It's part of their generel learning, and also helps them build confidence and patience.



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Is it possible to get ready for school in the forest?



In short: Yes!

Through the projects we choose, our focus on the skills the children have to learn, and the very close contact with adults the children "learn to learn"; asking questions and being curious and investigate, ("learning by doing" John Dewey). They learn to know the feeling of "flow" (Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi) and beeing concentrated, listening to adults and other children, take turns, sharing and helping each other, etc. etc.

Emil wrote his name with pine cones. You can work with numbers, figures and letters in many ways – it does not have to be inside at a desk.

The last month in Kindergarten the children visits their school with a treasure box full of games.

On the last day, the children gets a diploma, a knife, and makes icecream cones for their friends





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What is so special about Forest Kindergartens compared to "normal Kindergartens"?

What do we know – scientific evidence and what do we see ourselves?

- 1. Comprehensive Personal development
- More creative and innovative children, who uses their imagination.
- Anxiety and couragesness. Knowledge of what you can do with your body, and how much you dare to do.
- Less stressed children
- More persistent, keep on trying.
- 2. Social development
- Working together and helping each other
- 3. Language and communication
- Have a wide vocabulary of pre-mathematical and pre-scientific terms
- 4. Body, sense, motion
- Better gross motor skills due to uneven "floor"
- Better development of muscles and ligaments.
- Better coordination of eye/hand/foot
- More use of senses, more different kind of smells/feelings (wind, temperature, texture etc)
- Not as often sick
- 5. Nature, outdoor life/recreation, science
- Better knowledge of the nature
- **Environmental conciousness**
- 6. Aesthetics, Culture and Unison/Coexistence
- Being creative with nature materials

(The numbers correspond to the Curriculum Skills we have to work with in Denmark – some skills are easily and well integrated in Forest Kindergartens everyday. And maybe even better in Forest Kindergartens than in "normal" Kindergartens)



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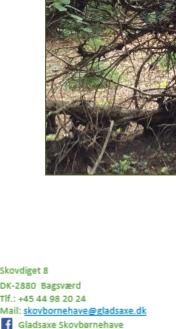


Scientific Evidence of which skills etc. are better developed in a Forest Kindergarten.

- Better gross and fine motor skills.
- Better concentration; not as easily distracted.
- Better fantasy; more creative/innovative.
- More persistent.
- Eminent knowledge of nature.
- Environmentalconsiousness, (knowledge of sustainability.)
- The children are not as often sick as in normal "indoor"kindergarten.

(projekt Børn & Udeliv, lektor Vita Nielsen og lektor Bent Vigsø fra CVU Vest)











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Why "dangerous" and "risky play" in the forest?







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What is risky play?

According to Ellen Sandsetter there are 6 categories of risky play, all seen in the forest in activities or free play:

- 1. Climbing as high as you dare.
- 2. Running down a hill as fast as you can.
- 3. Using knives and axes.
- 4. Fire and lake.
- 5. Wrestling and fighting games.
- 6. Walking alone and almost get lost.

Point 6 is a low risk point, even though the child might feel left, the adults feel secure because they look after the children and do not leave them.

The first five points are slighty higher risk because we as staff know something can happen, but we guide the children and do not help them to do something they are not ready for. We find that the children are not always as aware of the risk.

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Understanding what is dangerous and risky.

For Children risky play is both exciting and dangerous. They are often in "Flow" when playing in the forest.

It is important for the children to understand their own ability, and their limits. Children show joy when overcoming and having succes in what they try to do. They try it again and again; helps and explains to others how they did it.

Risky play helps children understand danger, and if you take their possibility to play dangerously away, they might develop anxiety of e.g. heights or not daring to use tools.



Ellen Beate Sandseter, Norwegian researcher





Safety Precautions

- an issue we discuss and an issue we inform the parents about





We inform the parents about our safety rules and how we work with the children in the forest, before they start Kindergarten. The parents join us in the forest the first day, where we explain how we teach the children the rules of safety.

The parents have to take into consideration how they dress the children, and what clothes to bring.

They have to check the children for ticks – a bug which can lead to the brain disease "Borrelia".

The teachers follow the rules, we have made together, and are telling the children what to do, and not to do.

If a new teacher is employed, they are informed about our safety regulations, and are shown how we work.



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