

Evaluation Report for the Project KID (Kindergartens in Development) – Equal opportunities for pre-school girls and boys

Waldorf Åland
2015–2016

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Introduction

Since January 2015 the Åland Islands Peace Institute has been working on a project called “KID – Equal opportunities for pre-school girls and boys” together with the Waldorf Åland association in Finland, the non-governmental kindergarten Nendre in Vilnius, Lithuania and the Star of Hope organisation in Russia. All the project partners are engaged in running kindergarten activities for children aged three to six. The project, which has been implemented for two years, was made possible thanks to the support of the Nordic Council of Ministers and Emmaus Åland.

The purpose of the project has been to promote a gender-sensitive attitude among the staff of kindergartens and among the children’s parents, and to reduce gender stereotyping in the communication and interaction with children. The project also strived to create equal opportunities for girls and boys to develop their skills and interests without being constrained by gender-stereotypical expectations. This evaluation report presents the results of the project at the Regnbågen (“Rainbow”) Waldorf kindergarten in Åland, Finland.

Chapter 1 explains the background of the project. The chapter describes the role of the supervisor and the objectives of the project. Chapter 2 describes the methods that were applied in evaluating the results of the project, which consist of observations made using a video camera and interviews with the staff and the children’s parents. The efforts to bring about change through the project are analysed and the concrete changes and results of this work are presented in Chapter 3. The fourth and final chapter serves as a summary and conclusion but can also be read separately to obtain a quick overview.

1. Background

The Regnbågen kindergarten is run by the Waldorf Åland association. During the three terms that were covered by the analysis – spring 2015, autumn 2015 and spring 2016 – twelve children in the ages of one to six attended the kindergarten and through them 19 parents were also affected by the project. Four pedagogues have been involved in the project.

The principal ambition of Waldorf pedagogy is to always look at the individual and give each child the opportunity to develop their unique qualities. The work plan (2013-2014) for the Regnbågen Waldorf kindergarten describes the pedagogy in the following quotation: “The heart of Waldorf pedagogy is a view of man as consisting of body, soul and spirit. The mission of kindergartens is to lovingly promote, in collaboration with the home and to the best of their ability, the development of the growing human being into a free and responsible individual in a democratic society. (...) The goal of this nurturing is the freedom of the individual.” (<http://www.waldorf.ax/Dokument-Styrelse/>)

At the start of the project the pedagogues at the Regnbågen kindergarten had a high level of self-confidence. They saw themselves as being gender-sensitive and displayed strong confidence in the work they were doing. A pedagogy with a clear focus on the individual can be both an advantage and a challenge from the perspective of promoting gender equality. The advantage is of course that Waldorf pedagogy and the striving for gender equality have a lot in common. The goal of both perspectives is to see the individual behind the gender and create a context in which each child is able to develop their personality without being guided in a particular direction. Yet, as the goals are similar, there is also a risk, especially in the

initial stage, that there may be a tendency to assume that there is little new to learn from working on gender equality.

Ålandic society has a positive attitude to gender equality, although active efforts to promote gender equality are conducted only at a limited number of local authority-run kindergartens in Åland. The document “Basic principles for pre-school education at child care institutions in the region of Åland” published by the Åland Government, which Waldorf Åland also follows, contains several references to gender equality. It states, for example, that “The adults should be aware of gender issues and have a conscious attitude that actively seeks to promote equality between boys and girls.”

http://www.ls.aland.fi/.composer/upload//socialomiljo/Forundervisningsbroschyr_2013.pdf).

This positive attitude in society at large is also reflected in the commitment shown by the parents. The parents of the children at Regnbågen have had a very positive attitude to the project from the outset. They expressed the view that gender equality issues are important and that projects like this are needed. Already in the first round of interviews many parents explained that gender equality is of the highest priority for them and is something that they had already devoted a lot of thought to.

1.1 The role of the supervisor

All of the three partner kindergartens that took part in the project received support from their own local supervisor. On Åland the role of the supervisor included helping the staff at the Rainbow kindergarten to develop a sustainable and relevant long-term gender equality plan in order to include a gender perspective in the kindergarten’s day-to-day activities. During the project regular meetings have been held between the staff, the supervisor and the project manager at the Åland Islands Peace Institute. The supervisor has also taken part in a study trip for staff and supervisors from the three partner countries with the aim of gaining experience of gender equality work in Finland, Åland and Sweden.

The supervisor has also worked with the parents of the children at the Regnbågen kindergarten with the aim of linking their private everyday lives with that of the kindergarten and of helping staff and parents to acquire a common understanding of what gender equality in interactions with children means in practice. The parents have received information about the project as well as knowledge and inspiration for how to bring up their children in a gender-equal way.

The supervisor has also helped to produce material for new employees as well as information material about how the Regnbågen Waldorf kindergarten promotes gender equality. This has been done in order to establish a long-term foundation for gender equality work and to make it easier to introduce new employees and new parents to thinking in terms of gender equality.

The supervisor has also been tasked with evaluating the results in relation to the defined objectives for the project, which were:

- To develop the staff’s knowledge and establish sustainable procedures for integrating the gender equality perspective in the activities of the kindergarten.
- Raising the awareness of the kindergarten staff and of the parents of how their own attitudes and expectations linked to the gender of the children affects their communication and behaviour patterns.

- To give the kindergarten staff and parents methods for avoiding gender stereotyping in everyday situations, at home and at the kindergarten.
- To create, through conscious and structured gender equality work, wider opportunities for all children to be seen and appreciated while also increasing variety in their choice of activities, playmates and playing objects.

The evaluation is based on observations, interviews, discussions and meetings with staff and parents.

2. Method

This chapter describes the methods that have been used for gathering material in the project and analysing its results.

At the Regnbågen kindergarten the supervisor conducted observations during three observation weeks using a video camera, a method of observation that was chosen in consultation with the staff. The observations were filmed using a camera on a tripod. The film clips were initially shot during undressing and dressing in the hall, when the children arrived at the kindergarten in the morning, during outdoor and indoor assemblies, during free play time and at lunch. The activity that proved most rewarding to analyse was the assembly before lunch, which was less structured than the morning assembly. During the last observation week in spring 2016 the main focus was on the common assemblies and other times when the children were gathered. During other times notes were instead taken as a complement, as it was difficult to get film clips of sufficiently high quality in certain situations.

In the analysis of the video content the main emphasis was placed on how the pedagogues divided their attention and what roles different children took and were expected to take. In the review of the video films notes were taken of how many times each child's name was mentioned in situations where all children were present and of the way in which the name was uttered. A name could, for example, be uttered as a rebuke or in the form of a question that gave the child visibility in the group and space to speak about something. The video clips thus proved extremely valuable in assisting the analysis. The observations captured on video camera were then discussed with the staff at reflection meetings. The staff were eager and had a positive attitude to analysing the clips together with the supervisor and came up with insightful thoughts and observations of their own.

In autumn 2015 internal observations were made by the staff at Regnbågen with the aim of documenting patterns and tendencies in the group of children from a gender equality perspective. The internal observations involved the staff taking turns to observe each other on the basis of a document which they had received from the supervisor with examples of areas that they were to pay particular attention to. These included how the staff relate to girls and boys in different situations, where children and adults place themselves during activities and during free play time, and whether internal spaces have been appropriately planned from a gender equality perspective. The internal observations served as a good complement to the observations made using a video camera, as they were made from the perspective of the staff, who were able to observe different situations during a longer continuous period.

Three rounds of interviews with the staff at Regnbågen and the children's parents were arranged during the project, in spring 2015, autumn 2015 and spring 2016. The first version of the questionnaire was completely revised after the first round and updated again prior to the

third round of interviews. Initially, the idea was to use the same questionnaire throughout the project in order to then be able to compare the answers, but it was decided that the interviews would be more rewarding if the questions were reworked. Different questionnaires were used for the parents and staff (see Annex 1-6). The supervisor recorded the interviews and then transcribed the audio files to text.

During the course of the project a total of 32 interviews were conducted with 17 different informants. Of these, four were pedagogues, one was a trainee and twelve were parents. Seven of these took part in one round of interviews. The most common reason why some parents were only interviewed once was that their children either started at or left the kindergarten during the course of the project. Five informants took part in two rounds of interviews and four people were able to take part in all three rounds.

2.1 Limitations

Factors which complicated the evaluation work related mainly to practical arrangements. During the observation weeks an average of only six children of varying ages were present. This is viewed as a limitation for the analysis, as different behaviour patterns would probably have emerged more clearly in a larger group of children. On the other hand, this was a benefit from a practical point of view, as it gave the staff greater opportunities to pay attention to each individual in a small group than if the group had been larger and the work climate more stressful.

A factor that had a significant impact on the structuring of the project was that a new school year began twice during the course of the project. Due to this, the group of children changed, as did the composition of the staff to some extent. In terms of promoting gender equality, this involved restarting the process of change to some extent.

Another potential limitation is that the supervisor assumed a double role as supervisor and evaluator in the project, which could jeopardise impartiality. You develop a close relationship to the group of staff that you then need to observe and whose attitudes need to be examined critically from a gender perspective. However, the supervisor deems it has been possible keep the two roles separate without impairing objectivity.

3. Analysis

This chapter describes how the results of the project were analysed on the basis of the interviews with the staff and the children's parents as well as the observations that were made and the practical implementation of the project at the Regnbågen Waldorf kindergarten. The most interesting evaluation aspect was the pedagogues' awareness and the changes that the gender equality work has led to.

3.2 Results of working with the staff

Working with the staff at the Regnbågen kindergarten has been a very interesting and rewarding experience. As mentioned, the staff had a very high level of self-confidence when the project began and relied heavily on Waldorf pedagogy, which places a strong emphasis on the individual. Because of this, there was a degree of scepticism among the staff about what could be gained by working on gender equality, although they had a positive attitude to it. The big issues that the pedagogues brought up for discussion initially were the children's clothes and how older and younger children cooperate. In the discussion about the children's clothes

the staff considered the question of how to respond to the children when they want to show off their clothes without placing too much emphasis on the external. The other issue concerning significant age differences and cooperative challenges in the group of children the pedagogues considered very important but not directly linked to gender equality.

In the first round of interviews with the supervisor the pedagogues were asked to assess their own gender sensitivity and that of the kindergarten by assigning a symbolic number on a scale of 1 to 10. In the second round of interviews six months later they were once again asked to assign a number for the same thing. Interestingly, the average score in the second round was lower, contrary to the assumption that the level of gender sensitivity would have increased thanks to the project. As these scores represent a subjective assessment and not precise facts, they ultimately reveal a degree of self-criticism. In the first round of interviews the staff were of the opinion that they had a high level of sensitivity. The average score then was 8. In the second round they were more self-critical and the average score therefore came in at 7. When in the second round of interviews they were also asked to describe where they were before the start of the project the average score was 6, two units lower than what they perceived at the time of the first round of interviews.

The symbolic score gives expression to a clear change in attitude among the pedagogues during the course of the project. In their discussions with the supervisor the staff expressed the view that the project had helped them to develop a more gender-sensitive attitude to how they relate to girls and boys, and that they had realised the importance of and started to reflect on how they communicate verbally and through body language in their contacts with children. If, for example, comments on nice clothes, haircuts or gender-stereotypic questions such as “What is mummy going to make for supper tonight?” occurred sporadically before, they have now been further minimised. One member of staff expressed this increased self-awareness as follows:

“Somehow I have acquired a different insight that even if you are aware you are still a part of society. (...) That, I suppose, is also part of the challenge, having the courage to see that you, too, are a part of the society that you want to change.”

A member of staff, May 2016

In 2015 the pedagogues drew up a gender equality plan that has been a priority issue in the discussions that have taken place in meetings with the supervisor. The aim was to produce a long-term plan with general as well as more specific objectives and to specify concrete methods for implementing these. During the course of the project several drafts were revised before the current gender equality plan was arrived at (see Annex 7). The initial draft lacked a clearly defined gender equality perspective and focused on the cooperation between younger and older children. The process gave rise to new ideas among the staff, however. They identified additional situations that present a challenge from a gender equality perspective, such as the children’s groupings and the roles which the children have taken on or been given in the group. The final gender equality plan is carefully thought out, long-term and relevant. The measures are gender-focused and promote gender equality but also counteract the problematic situations that were identified at the outset. It is also intended to update the plan at regular intervals to ensure that it remains a living document and is strongly anchored in the activities.

Apart from the gender equality plan, a set of materials has been produced for new employees, which contains a summary of literature on gender equality at kindergartens. In 2016 a

brochure on the Regnbågen kindergarten has also been produced. The brochure is aimed primarily at new, interested parents and can also be handed out as information material to the public. The brochure describes the activities of the kindergarten and its gender equality work.

The progress that has been made in terms of raising the awareness of the staff in each term in which the project has been ongoing has been considerable. The first term was devoted to identifying current gender equality issues in the activities with a view to starting to challenge the attitudes of the staff in the second term and testing various practical methods for achieving change. In the third term these measures have slowly but surely been integrated in the activities as familiar features for children as well as adults. The pedagogues have continued to introduce new parents and employees to gender equality work – an important aspect that proved difficult initially. The level of awareness among the staff has been raised significantly and discussions about gender equality have gone from initially relating mainly to the children's clothes and age to addressing the staff's own unconscious expectations. Through the project, the general goal of the kindergarten to include all children regardless of gender, age and skin colour has also become more concrete through specific methods.

3.2 Measures to bring about change at the Regnbågen kindergarten

Initially, the pedagogues were convinced that they related to each child as an individual and therefore did not treat girls and boys differently. Here the video observations proved to be an extremely important tool. When the pedagogues and supervisor reviewed the material from the first recording it was noted that boys were used to getting attention and being heard while girls were more used to waiting. The girls did not protest if they were interrupted and were more likely to follow the rules without being asked. It was also noted that the pedagogues to some extent had different expectations about girls' and boys' behaviour. Quiet boys were more likely to be given questions and a chance to speak by the pedagogues while quiet girls received the least attention of all the children. In their internal observations the staff also concluded that boys dominated during assemblies, found it hard to sit still, made more interruptions and received more rebukes. Actually seeing this on film made a very strong impression on the staff:

“It happens quite easily otherwise, if you are not aware, that it is those that make the most noise that get the attention. Either that you get them to be quiet or listen to them, but it is easy to forget the other ones, who are quiet.”

*A member of staff, May
2016*

Having made these insights, the pedagogues introduced a talking stick or circulating object to ensure that their attention was divided as evenly as possible. The talking stick is passed around during joint assemblies, ensuring that all children receive attention for a moment. Even those that don't have much to say get a chance to stand centre stage and be seen and appreciated in the group. This is also an exercise in learning how to make way for others for those children who like to be at the centre of attention.

During the filming and in the internal observations it was noted that girls and boys nearly always form groups based on gender when they are allowed to choose where they sit, who they walk or who they play with. To help the children to get to know each other better and find more friends of different genders and ages, the pedagogues have introduced an activity where the children draw lots when it is tidy-up time. Instead of letting the children choose the

same activity as their best friend, they are asked to draw a picture of a certain activity, watering flowers for example. There are at least two pictures of each activity, and those children who draw the same picture will then do the activity together. This is perceived as fun by the children, and it has become a natural way to divide them into varying groups. The pedagogues have also introduced new methods for dividing the children into different pairs during walks. Previously, the children went two and two, and most often wanted to go with their best friend. Instead, the staff have now started to divide the children into pairs with the help of objects from the playground, such as two stones, two pine cones and two sticks. Those children who draw the same object will walk together. When this was tested for the first time the children enjoyed choosing an object but when they realised that they would not be allowed to go with their friend there were protests. After a while, however, the method started to work and it is now used routinely. An alternative method is for all the children to walk in a row while holding on to a rope.

The internal observations also covered the furnishing of the kindergarten and the function performed by the toys. It was established that boys used train sets and building blocks more frequently while girls were more likely to play with dolls. In the sandpit the girls normally baked while the boys played with cars and built tunnels. In order to mix up the various toys, the furnishing has been discussed with the staff on several occasions. At the end of the project the Regnbågen kindergarten moved to new premises and the staff have furnished the internal spaces and mixed up the toys in a way that encourages creative joint playing. The staff are also trying to encourage the children to play in a way that they don't normally do and to view all children as possible playmates.

At the beginning of the project the staff noted that they mostly had phone numbers to the children's mothers and most often called them. During the course of the project the staff have updated their list of phone numbers to the children's parents and actively try to call both mothers and fathers. The initiative has proved effective in terms of increasing the involvement of the fathers:

“My impression is that the fathers are a bit more prominent now than when I started. But I also try to contact them more, thanks to the project.”

A member of staff, May 2016

3.3 Results of working with the children's parents

Already at the initial stage the parents, with varying degrees of commitment, very highly interested in the project and had a positive attitude to gender equality work at kindergartens. At the start of the project many expressed the view that more gender equality work was needed at kindergartens and wished that the society in which their children grow up were more gender-equal. No one has been negative or expressed concern about impact of the project on their children.

The interviews with the parents have been helpful and provided support in structuring the project and evaluating the results. Through the interviews the supervisor has gained an insight into the families' views on gender equality in the bringing-up of children. It has been possible to adapt parent meetings based on expressed wishes and on relevant themes. The interviews have also given the parents a better understanding of the objectives of the project as well as an opportunity to analyse their own situation from a gender equality perspective.

The discussions at the parent meetings have been thought-provoking and contributed to continued reflection. Although many parents considered themselves to be aware of gender equality issues already at the start of the project, they stated in the final interviews that the project had inspired them to look at things from new perspectives. The most important result of working with the parents, however, has been an improvement in communication and a greater openness in contacts between parents and staff.

“(...) good to speak with the staff and other parents. One difference is that you can speak openly about the issues now. There were a lot of opinions expressed at the beginning and it has now been realised that quite a few of the parents had thought a lot about this. But I had the impression that I was perceived as one of those parents who always complain [haha]. That’s how I saw it at the beginning, I questioned it but they didn’t think it was a problem. The hurdle to discussing the issues has been lowered. The way in which the project has been structured has been good, and it was needed.”

Parent, May 2016

At the parent meetings the issue of how the children are addressed has also been discussed, as the staff have more consciously started to use the children’s names rather than “boys” and “girls” so as to draw attention to the person and not their gender, and to avoid generalisations. This has also led to changes on the home front.

“This thing about saying the name, I say the name more often now, it happens easily when they are all of the same gender that you say “boys”, but I have started to react to that now.”

Parent, May 2016

4. Summary and conclusion

This evaluation report has described the results of the two-year project “KID - Equal opportunities for pre-school girls and boys” at the Regnbågen Waldorf kindergarten in Åland, Finland. The aim of the project has been to promote a gender-sensitive attitude among the staff of the kindergarten and the parents of the children and to reduce gender stereotyping in communications with and in the way people relate to children so that both girls and boys are given equal opportunities to develop their skills and interests without being constrained by gender-stereotypic expectations. The supervisor has supported the staff in their work of drawing up a gender equality plan, has made observations using a video camera, interviewed pedagogues and parents, participated in parent meetings and evaluated the results of the project.

At the start of the project the pedagogues had a very high level of self-confidence with regard to gender equality at the Regnbågen kindergarten. They were convinced that they related to all children as individuals and did not treat anyone differently on account of their gender. Waldorf pedagogy was a major factor behind their self-confidence, as it strives to look at the individual and to give each child the opportunity to develop according to the child’s unique qualities. The two biggest issues that the pedagogues at Regnbågen highlighted initially were how to respond to the children’s desire to show off their clothes without emphasising the external and how to improve the cooperation between older and younger children.

After studying the initial results of the video observations, however, the pedagogues became aware that there are more aspects to promoting gender equality that need to be taken into account than they had initially thought.

“We sat in a ring, and it was really like a minor issue but I ignored her throughout this assembly because she didn’t draw much attention to herself. That was an eye-opener for me.”

A member of staff, May 2016

The parents have had a positive attitude to the project and expressed interest in gender equality issues right from the beginning, but a majority of them say that project has still inspired them and given them new ideas. The parent meetings have been highly appreciated and communication has improved, both among the parents and between parents and pedagogues. Increased trust and an open dialogue can pave the way for better collaboration in a conscious striving towards a common goal.

The difference between the situation at the beginning of the project and the current situation is palpable. The pedagogues have developed a much higher degree of positive self-criticism. As they have become more aware and gained new insights a positive spiral has been created in which they continue to critically examine their own work and devise additional measures.

“So you have to begin with yourself, which I suppose is something that one has always been aware of in theory, but now I have understood it in practice also, when you get to see yourself on film and how you relate to the children.”

A member of staff, May 2016

As stated previously, the awareness of the pedagogues has been the most important and most interesting evaluation aspect and it has definitely been raised. It is, as they themselves put it, about working on yourself and realising, sometimes reluctantly, that you are a part of the society that you want to change.

A key factor is that the process of raising awareness, encouraging self-criticism and changing one’s own behaviour has been given plenty of time. It has therefore been vitally important that the project has run over two years. Otherwise, the risk that the efforts to promote gender equality would have run out of steam before achieving their full potential would have been considerably greater.

Looking ahead, it is important to work purposefully to keep gender equality issues on the agenda and not assume that things are automatically gender-equal because certain methods live on. The gender equality plan requires active reflection and follow-up by the staff, who continuously need to be given opportunities for training and knowledge development. Another crucial factor for the continuity of the project ideas is to continue to give priority to introducing new employees and parents to gender equality work. Parent meetings with a gender equality theme once a term are recommended so that parents are given an opportunity to continue discussing those issues which they themselves perceive to be relevant. Going forward, there will also be good opportunities to collaborate with and exchange experiences with other players in the field.

Annexes

Annex 1: Interview questions for staff May 2015

1. To me, gender equality means:

- that children are treated equally regardless of gender.
- taking account of the fact that girls and boys are different and adapting our activities accordingly.
- working to change the children and their behaviour.
- working on the pedagogues' attitudes in their work with the children.

2. Thoughts about promoting gender equality

On a scale of 1 to 10, how far do you feel that you have got in terms of promoting gender equality

- in your organisation;
- in your own process.

3. In your view, what are the most important gender equality issues at kindergartens?

4. Which statement best describes your view of what gender equality at kindergartens can mean?

- A striving to treat everyone equally. The aim is to remove what can be coded as girly or boyish. In practice, this involves not engaging in certain forms of playing or activities and removing certain books in order to create a gender-neutral environment.
- A striving to ensure that all children feel free to choose between different forms of playing, participate equally at assemblies and are equally motivated to learn regardless of gender, gender identity or gender expression.
- A striving to ensure that girls and boys feel confident in being girls and boys and supporting them to choose toys that best suit their gender identity. This may involve assessing the various needs that girls and boys have, and adapting the day-to-day activities of the kindergarten, for example by introducing girls' and boys' groups to ensure that the children feel confident in their gender identity.

5. What is your view of the role of the parents in the work of promoting gender equality?

6. Why is it important to work on gender equality at kindergartens?

- It provides tools for how to break gender-stereotypic activities.
- Kindergartens don't really need to work on gender equality; it is at school that the problems arise.
- It is too late to try to promote gender equality at kindergarten; this needs to be done already when the parents bring up the children.

7. At our kindergarten

- boys and girls are given the same room to speak in the group;
- boys and girls are given the same amount of attention by the pedagogues;
- I encourage boys and girls to take part in all types of activity;
- it is important that the children learn that girls and boys are different;
- we call the children “girls” and “boys”;
- you hear from other pedagogues that girls are like this and boys are like that;
- I think there is a bigger difference between individuals in the group than between genders.

8. Routines linked to gender

- If there is a lot of noise at the morning assembly or at mealtimes I normally make the children sit girl-boy, girl-boy to calm down the group.
- If you have routines where the children are divided into girls and boys, what is the reason?

9. What other thoughts does gender equality linked to kindergarten activities bring to your mind?

Annex 2: Interview questions for parents May 2015

1. To me, gender equality means:

- that children are treated equally regardless of gender;
- taking account of the fact that girls and boys are different and adapting your behaviour accordingly;
- that in bringing up your children you should change the children and their behaviour so that they are more similar;
- that you need to be critical of how you relate to your children and whether there is a gender difference in how you relate to them.

2. Which statement best describes the situation in your family?

- We try to remove things that can be perceived as girly or boyish so that the child will be free from different gender roles.
- We strive to ensure that the child feels free to choose anything. This means that we actively encourage different types of playing, we buy different types of toys (both girls' and boys' things) so that the child has an opportunity to try everything.
- We strive to ensure that the children feel confident in being a girl/boy by supporting them in choosing those toys, clothes and leisure activities that best suit their gender identity.
- We strive to ensure that the child is always able to make their own choice and we try not to influence their choice of clothes or toys. Nor do we encourage anything in particular but it is done on the child's terms.

3. What is the division of responsibility over the household and children like in your family? How do you think the child is affected by this?

4. What is your view of the efforts to promote gender equality at Waldorf Åland?

- I want to acquire more knowledge about gender equality-promoting measures at Waldorf Åland so that I can support their work.
- We do not get involved in the pedagogy of the kindergarten and follow our own values at home.
- We have no information about the kindergarten's pedagogical activities.
- I have no opinion on this.

5. What other thoughts does gender equality linked to the family and the bringing-up of children bring to your mind?

Annex 3: Interview questions for staff October 2015

1. How would you describe the current group of children? Can you see any difference between the boys and the girls?
2. What does gender equality at kindergartens mean for you?
3. What are the challenges in gender equality work at kindergartens?
4. Are the children themselves particular about which group they belong to, girls or boys? Do you hear them discuss what girls/boys are like, what is girly/boyish? Where do you think they learn this?
5. Has anything changed here as a result of your gender equality work? Have you become more aware of any particular aspect of how you relate to the children?
6. Have you noticed any change in the parents since you started working actively on gender equality issues?
7. On a scale of 1 to 10, how far do you feel that you have got in terms of promoting gender equality
 - in your organisation;
 - in your own process.
8. Do you have any other thoughts or reflections about gender equality at kindergartens or specifically about this project?

Annex 4: Interview questions for parents October 2015

- 1.** When you were expecting a child, did many people ask you “is it a boy or a girl?” Do you normally ask parents of newborns the same question?
- 2.** Do you think that you would communicate with and relate to your child differently if it was of the opposite gender?
- 3.** Has it happened that you and your child have had different views of what is appropriate behaviour for girls or boys?
- 4.** Have you ever commented on your children’s choice of clothes/activities/accessories because you have been afraid that it could be misunderstood by other people? Do you adapt your child’s clothing because you get negative reactions from other people?
- 5.** Do you notice if it is important for your child to be a girl/boy or what is girly/boyish? In what way? From where (kindergarten/home/society) do you think those views come?
- 6.** What do you think when you can’t tell what gender an unknown child is? Is it important for you to make sure that one can tell whether your own child is a girl or a boy?
- 7.** Have you started to reflect more on gender equality in relation to your child as a result of this project? In what way?
- 8.** What does gender equality in the bringing-up of children mean to you?
- 9.** Do you have any other thoughts or reflections about gender equality at kindergartens or specifically about this project?

Annex 5: Interview questions for staff May 2016

- 1.** Have any changes been made as a result of this project? What has happened? Can you give examples? Is there something that you wished had happened that has not happened?
- 2.** What does gender equality at kindergartens mean for you? How would you explain what you are doing if a new, interested parent were to ask?
- 3.** Has your own view on gender equality work changed? How?
- 4.** What do you think is the most important thing about gender equality at kindergartens? Why?
- 5.** On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate your gender sensitivity today? How do you view your kindergarten when comparing it with others? How gender-sensitive do you think they are? Why do you think that?
- 6.** How do you want to continue working on gender equality after the project? What will it look like here one year from now?
- 7.** What impressions have you received from working on norm criticism, how does it seem?
- 8.** According to you, what are the biggest challenges for the effort to promote gender equality? Please give examples.

Annex 6: Interview questions for parents May 2016

- 1.** Which TV programmes/films/toys does your child like? Have you thought about these from a gender perspective? What do you think about children's culture (e.g. toys/TV/films/advertising or commercials aimed at children) today? Do you make conscious choices with regard to what your child takes part in? Please give examples.
- 2.** Is your child particular about what colours they like or not? Can you give examples of such situations?
- 3.** Generally speaking, what do you think could pose challenges to bringing up children in a gender-equal way in today's society? What has become easier and what has become harder compared with previously?
- 4.** How do you perceive boundaries between what is viewed as "normally" boyish or girly? Do you feel that you have a boundary somewhere, for example with regard to the clothes that you put on your children? Or do you notice that other people in your surroundings have boundaries? Is it as easy for boys or girls to step over boundaries?
- 5.** What does gender equality in the bringing-up of children mean for you and your family? Are you doing anything in particular to bring up your child in a gender-equal way? What does gender equality look like in your family? Can you give an example?
- 6.** Have you received more ideas about gender equality in the bringing-up of children in connection with this project? What has been good and less good in the way the project has been structured? Have you had enough of an insight into the project?
- 7.** Any other reflections?

Annex 7: Gender equality plan for the Regnbågen kindergarten

Goal	Current situation	Measures
The children see all children as friends	Many of the children prefer to play with the same friend and sometimes favour or exclude other children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Try in new playful ways to divide them up randomly when going on an excursion, for example by using different objects (leaves, stones, etc.) - Divide the children into twos by task using notes with pictures of the various tasks - Prepare a bag of surprises with different games so that the children can sometimes be divided into different playing groups/types of game - Let the children practice assuming the main role when playing - Confirm positively on a continuous basis that the children are working together or playing with new friends - The staff engage in role playing on relevant bullying themes in front of the children
Give all children positive confirmation as individuals – all children can both assert themselves and make way for others	The children sometimes all speak at the same time, compete for the right to speak and don't listen to each other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Let the children practice assuming the main role - Practice using a "talking stick" - The pre-school children practice assembling the group by using the xylophone
Be aware of and avoid gender-stereotypic comments, patterns and behaviours	<p>The children sometimes seek to attract attention through their choice of clothing</p> <p>We generally have more contact with the mothers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Become aware of how we relate to the children - Take note of the children's clothing based on whether the child feels happy in them rather than in terms of appearance - Treat the parents equally and inform both parents of matters relating to their child
The children show respect for each other. All children are proud of their abilities and the older ones have a desire to help the younger ones	The children are not always respectful of each other and the older children sometimes make negative comments about the younger children because of something they can't do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Give attention to respectful comments - The older children help the younger ones, for example at mealtimes - Activities in small groups with age-adapted programmes - Responsible tasks for the older children, especially pre-school children - Include cooperation exercises in day-to-day activities