

The Parents' School



Storhamar School



Hamar kommune

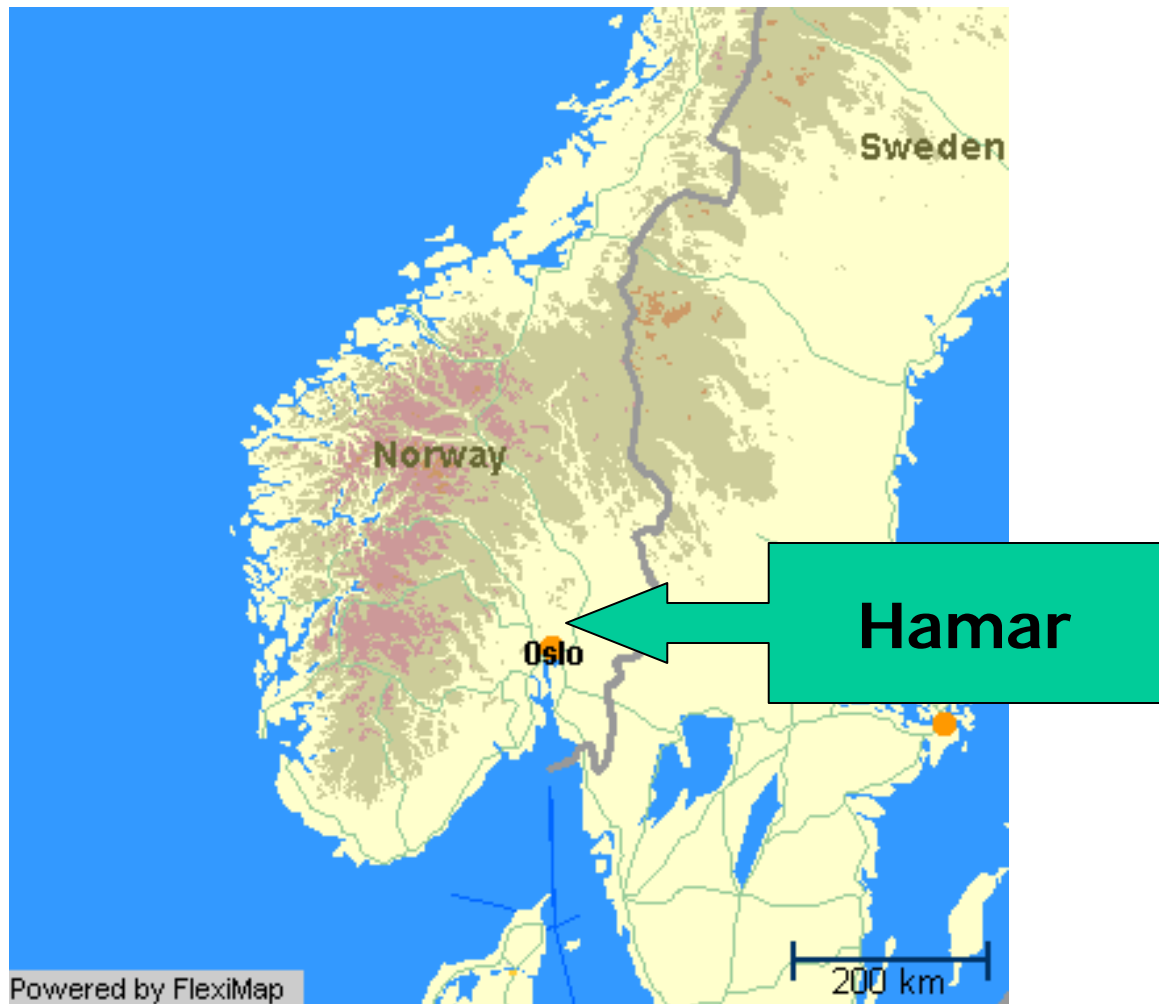
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Here is our town...



Who are we ?

- Founded in 1914
- 330 children
- Only 4 % immigrants
- 45 school employees
- 5 local council employees run after school activities
- Cooperation home / school is regulated by law



“The Joy of Success”

School values:

- *Happy*
- *Challenging*
- *Learning*



Gul

*The three first letters in values,
make a branding...*



Enable parents to take an active part in their children's learning

First Grade :

1 evening for 4 weeks with specific goals:

- Learning possibilities
- Amusing
- Getting to know each other/learning names
- Clear vision of expectations from all involved



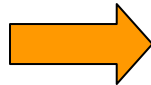
Aims for 2nd -7th grade

- A minimum of **one session** at a parent's meeting giving parents **knowledge, understanding** and **practical competences** in methods used for the relevant grade.
 - **Methods** must be **essential** for the pupil's learning.
- Knowledge and understanding of **how** they as **parents may guide** their child in the method, how to practice guidance correctly according to the children's different needs.
 - Varied practical help and support, if individualised, will reinforce the pupil's skills and abilities. (Vygotsky)
 - The pupil experience the parental power.
 - The parents gain confidence. (Prof. Desforges)
- **Culture for clear expectations, involvement and responsibility**
 - Develop gradually through **practical experience**, not only words.
 - Teachers' interaction with parents is based on belief in the parental power.



To develop a new culture with new practises takes time....

- To increase possibilities for parents to take part in their children's learning takes time!
- The school must have a plan for the content of every grade.



- Children in groups/classes where parents know each other well, do better both academically and socially. (Prof. Nordahl, Norway)
- Develop school-systematic qualitatively for all grades.
- All involved to take responsibility for successful schooling.
- School leaders must take responsibility for
 - the systems used in schools
 - sharing of good practice
 - further development.



Organisation – First Grade

- In total 4 evenings x 2.5 hours
 - Headmaster responsible
 - Chairman of Parents' Committee and headmaster plan, in May
- Compulsory sessions – “morally speaking”
- Secret programme
- Budget

- The 4th evening involves teachers advising on methods in reading and how to guide their own children in developing further.



Will, belief in your own importance and belief in your child's possibilities

- Prof. Charls Desforbes states that Family Learning gives insight into the possibilities of parental power.
- **Be aware and make use of it!**
- Prof. Nordahl has focussed on what parents feel stimulating vs stopping for interacting with the school.
- **If we believe in research, we must act according to it!**
 - Do not continue as if we do not have this wisdom!



Parental evaluation

every year, the new culture is enhanced

First Grade

- Evaluation of the four evenings, Plus/Delta form
- Did we meet the expectations? Plus/Delta



All grades

- Formative evaluation of the school in February using a Plus / Delta form:
 - 1) What is very good this year?
 - 2) Do you have practical suggestions on how the school could improve?



- We choose actions from this to implement in the school.
- *Parents must be taken seriously!*



Parental Power

- My belief in parental power has increased since we started in 2002

Reflection / dilemmas:

- Political belief in homework clubs, but will this reduce the parental power and involvement?
- Is 47-80 school important?



Some experiences

- Madness – at sublime levels?!
- Not more of the same thing, but a little more of something new
- 2 people, an idea and a little money can create innovation
- Culture that allows trials and errors
 - Progress and develop!
 - Courage to try – and to fail
- From vague ideas to a developed organisation takes time
- New methods and approaches!



The Future – Exciting, demanding and scary...

- Stay focussed
- Stimulating 47 – 80
- Good work = energy
- Energy = pride & happiness
- Parents' committee and school board both discusses the results and state their ideas for improvement, to develop further and further
- Parents' School builds on good and true communication – Success criteria!



From Words to Action

- National Programme for School Development just finished...
- Implementing a systematic school practice at every grade
 - Reading guidance
 - Learning strategies
- Parents' School contributes to this work.





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