

Management's report May 2022

Corona - hopefully for the last time

Another school year is now coming to an end. Another very special school year, where we together as a school, have had to experience a school year that once again has not been completely normal.

Also in this school year 2021-2022, Corona had left its impression on our work at the school. In the period from the Christmas holidays up to the month of March, up to 90% of the school's students and staff were affected by Covid-19. Fortunately, it was the Omikron variant that raged through the school, which meant that relatively few students and staff were severely affected by illness. This period, however, demanded something special from all of us. Many classes were drastically reduced and on the staff side, colleagues had to cover for each other so that we could make a school day function. Our test centre was busy with classes that took turns to come by to be regularly tested, and in small homes, families struggled to make everyday life function. As a school leader, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the children, parents and staff for their flexibility and understanding that has been shown throughout this period.

Normal school life again

We are now happily back to a somewhat more normalized everyday life at Kochs. Study trips and school camps have again been able to be run to the great joy of children and teachers. Our larger communal school events have once again been able to take place, likewise our joint days and topic weeks, where we experience important communal activities have once again become a natural part of the school's everyday life. It is of great importance for all of us to be able to get together and share good community-creating experiences.

Most recently, we have held a successful Spring Market, with lots of activities and music, and where the schoolyard formed the setting for a wonderful day for both children and adults. The sun shone from an almost cloudless sky, and there were plenty of visitors at the stalls - both those that sold food and drink, and at the many other activities that characterized this day, and which created a fantastic atmosphere.

On the amphitheatre, the school's classes and music team sang and played, just as the Koch's choir delivered their contribution to a great day. A big thank you from here to the school's caretakers and music school helpers for their work in completing this day. Also, great praise to the 8th graders and their parents for creating a Spring Market in the best Koch's style.

Thank you.

Recently, we have held the school's traditional sports day. All the students were gathered at *Tumlepladsen*, in the nearby forest for a day of play and movement, where they sang, fought, ran, collaborated, threw and played for the Big Gold Medal. Great to experience how

good our children were at taking care of each other, and how everyone participated and helped make the day a good experience for friends and classmates.

Song for Peace

Earlier in the spring, the amphitheatre at the school formed the setting for the Song of Peace. The war in Ukraine has affected us all, and here at Kochs school we have talked about how can be supportive of peace in Ukraine. One of the initiatives that has been taken was in collaboration with Danmarks Radio to arrange and implement "Song for Peace". Song for Peace was an event where all Danish school children sang together for peace in Ukraine. Koch's school gathered in the schoolyard for an incredibly beautiful and respectful event. While broadcasting live from Koch's School, thousands of schoolchildren all over Denmark sang along from their school. The event again showed how we, as a school, can stand together, and within a very short time get such a large event up and running; Teachers and students rehearsed songs, and with Rie our choir leader as the main driving force, we managed to create an amazingly beautiful session, where we sent songs and warm thoughts of peace out to the world around us.

A big thank you to Rie for her tremendous contribution rehearsing the songs with our students. Despite a tragic background, we created a beautiful setting to send the message of peace to all Danes. We showed what Kochs School is made of - communities, creativity and enthusiasm!

See link below to the fine broadcast from Kochs School.

https://www.dr.dk/drtv/se/sang-for-fred_305618

After 5 years with Kochs International - Status - where do we stand now?

At the school, we have taken stock of now almost five years with our international department. The department now has approx. 90 students divided into five classes. This summer, we start up the last new KI class, and we will then have a total of six international classes, which is the goal the board has set for the school five years ago. At that time, a 5-year plan was drawn up with the assumption that the school would evaluate the plan after these 5 years and make any necessary adjustments.

When we decided to establish the international department, it was an important precondition that the development of the international department must not be at the expense of core values of the Danish department.

The international department will, if all places are filled, accommodate 132 students. It is our ambition that the Danish and the international classes interact with each other, in order that we can create good cultural encounters for all the school's children.

In recent years, the international department has moved from an entrepreneurial phase, over to a development phase and towards a developing operational phase. No two years

have been the same and student numbers and class compositions have changed over time. In 2017, approx. 15 students started in the international department, and today we are, as mentioned, approx. 90 students which in terms of number of students, must be said to be a success.

Financially, the department has thus quietly moved in the direction of becoming profitable. The class compositions have changed from being three year-groups in the same class to now, from after summer, to accommodate two year-groups in each class. This rapid development has naturally led to a certain amount of turbulence for students as well as teachers and management, who have constantly had to adjust to new realities.

Based on evaluations made with the employees at the school and the KI parents, the Joint Board has therefore made considerations in relation to how we can best move forward together. It is the Board's overall assessment that there is a need to re-evaluate and adjust the school's offer in the international department, so that it will be more equal and comparable with the schooling in the Danish department.

The goal is to create greater stability, continuity and quality in both the international department and the Danish department for the benefit of the children's learning and well-being.

First and foremost, as mentioned, the board is concerned with creating an equal and comparable school offer for all the school's children. Regardless of whether you are a part of the Danish or the international department, the board's goal is that all the school's children are offered equal terms in a school offer that is based on Koch's School's values and history. In this context, a school course is planned for all the school's children, which is based on a safe and close framework, gradually opening more and more to the rest of the school and the outside world.

In primary school, the focus is creating security and attentiveness for the children to order to provide the right foundation for optimal well-being and learning. In this work, the close and secure relationship between the children, between the children and the teachers and between the teachers and the parents are a prerequisite for success. It is therefore central and important to create the necessary calm and stability around the classes from the beginning, and the focus for us is, therefore, also to make the classes and the collaboration around the classes work, so that trust between children, teachers and parents is established as soon as possible.

We see this as the foundation for all children to be able to thrive from the start and experience a manageable and secure school day. The same manageability and security and is also important for the teachers and can help to create the necessary stability in the teaching staff - a stability that has been challenged in recent years. Over time, as the student progresses through the school, the world opens; They will gradually take part in more joint projects together with the Danish classes. And as they get older, the international classes,

just as the Danish classes, will work together more and more both in relation to the physical framework and in everyday life at the school.

The task of further developing the international department will continue to be a high priority in the future work of the Board of Directors and the Management.

Renovation and construction

The success of our international department now means that there is an immediate need for a better physical environment for the classes. It is a priority to bring together the smallest KI classes and get them closer to the red and yellow floor to promote togetherness between the Danish and the international classes.

In relation to the construction and renovation plans, these are progressing slowly. There is still a dialogue with the authorities about the final location and facade expression of the new building. A dialogue that we, together with the engineer and architect, are well underway with. We still believe that we can achieve our desired project, but the dialogue unfortunately drags on.

A comprehensive plan has now been prepared for the renovation of the school and the establishment of a new building of approx. 650 m². In this plan, the current library will be moved to the villa. The current library building will then be thoroughly renovated in the autumn, and it will be opened to connect with the red floor. Likewise, a passage will be established from the large yard to the small yard via entrance C.

We have already begun with plans for the Villa and the small adjustments are expected to be completed in June. Then the villa is to be decorated and the library moved. This can be done immediately before and after the summer holiday.

Once the present library building has been cleared, the next step will be to convert the library area into 4 KI classes as well as the common rooms for KI and FO that are on the drawing board. In addition, the opening to the red floor as well as the establishment of several toilets and the breakthrough to the small yard via entrance C.

In order not to have to wait too long to be able to activate the library building, the board has decided that the project of renovating the library building will be sent out for tender as soon as possible. Thus, this part of the overall renovation and expansion plan is deducted from the total contract.

It is expected that renovation of the library building will not be delayed by a long case-processing by the local municipality, as it is a renovation of the existing building stock. If we choose to initiate the renovation of the library building, this work will, in all probability, be able to take place over the autumn period, and we will thus, in addition to establishing a better physical framework for the smallest KI classes, also have the opportunity to implement our new FO/Club model in new physical settings.

Financially, the Joint Board has set aside a total pool for construction / renovation of DKK 28 million. Of these, the school will at present be able to deliver an amount of DKK 6 million. As there are currently uncertainties regarding price increases for building materials and interest rate increases, the joint board considers that it would be appropriate to carry out the renovation of the library for the school's own money. The Joint Board would thus be able to gain time to receive prices for the new construction and other renovations and would thus also be able to put this on hold, should the price exceed the financial framework set by the Board.

A New Recreation Club pedagogical model

Throughout this school year, we have worked on developing a new pedagogical vision for our Recreation Club, based on e.g., the latest Parental Satisfaction Survey, and five inspiring afternoons with consultants from VIA University College, Århus in the autumn. We have discussed how we can, to an even greater extent, offer an after-school club/ Club Green that can best meet the wishes and needs we currently have. The prepared vision has been for review / feedback from the staff and the school's Joint Board, and will now be finally revised, so that we have a point of departure for our work with recreational pedagogy. The vision has the school's values and the children's point of view as its focal point, and in addition there is a special focus on security for the youngest children and more participation opportunities / activities for the older children.

In the new model, the aim is to ensure as much manageability and security around the youngest children as possible. There will be permanent rooms and common rooms reserved for the younger children, just as it will primarily be the regular class teachers who take care of the recreation Club for this age group.

In the coming school year, work will be done to create regular outdoor activities in the small yard that the youngest children can access.

For the slightly older children, the idea is that we will open more activities across the Red, Yellow and KI departments. Here we would like to establish workshops / activities where the children are free to come. This will create a much better opportunity for the children from Red, Yellow and KI to interact together in some joint activities, and thereby make new friendships. It is expected that we will be able to launch our new Recreation Club pedagogical initiatives when the physical framework is in place – most probably during the Autumn.

To sum up

In conclusion, I would like to say thank you for a very special year at Koch's School. First and foremost, to the staff for the huge effort sustained throughout the year. This both in relation to the Corona situation and all the ongoing restrictions and changes that have characterized

our everyday life. As well as in relation to the war in Ukraine and the insecurity it has created for our children. You - and here I am thinking of the teachers - have to a large extent provided peace and security for the children at a time when the world seems chaotic and incomprehensible. As always, you teachers have seen the world through a children's perspective, and in this way tried to create as normal and safe an everyday life for the children as possible.

I have great respect for this. Thank you for the fantastic work I experience every day, at and for this school. You – the parents - must know that the school has a very committed and dedicated staff who want the best for you and your children.

Also a HUGE thank you to the school's TAP staff. Whether it is our caretakers, our administrative staff, our IT staff or our cleaning staff, we always meet great flexibility, high spirits and great professionalism and ambition in your work. You have all worked so hard during the last years. You have all acted professionally, flexibly and constructively in all contexts and in every way.

Thanks also to my management colleagues, Anders, Peter, Kate and Palle. Thank you for another Corona fight - we have had to lean on each other to such an extent in recent times. We have had to find solutions to difficult and sometimes almost impossible situations, we have had to communicate internally and externally, we have had to maintain calm and overview, in addition to, of course, also trying to run a school as normally as possible. In addition, we have worked to further develop the school - especially in relation to our Recreation Club pedagogical package as well as the school process with the international department. In addition, discussions about the school's future physical framework and, in general, everything that has to do with the school's development. You have all done fantastic, and I really appreciate your efforts at and for the school - efforts that have been invaluable to me. You have all been a great support and I wish you all, all the best for the future.

Last but not least, thanks to the Board. Thank you for your great and professional efforts for the school. Thank you for your efforts in evaluating 5 years of work with the international department, your participation in developing a new Recreation Club pedagogical model and your interest in the development of the school's physical framework. Thank you for discussions and debates, thank you for taking responsibility, and that you offer your energy, skill and competences for the school. It is extremely important for a school to have a well-functioning board and I think that is certainly the case here at Kochs.

Thanks

I hereby hand over the management report to the annual meeting for comments and any questions.