

Language Development- and Literacy Plan

MÁNALAND 2023-24



In the Preschool Act it states: “Learning through play should be encouraged in a creative environment where children are afforded a variety of opportunities to grow.” (Preschool Act nr.90/2008). Here at Mánaland children are the centerpieces and we place significant emphasis on language development. In doing so we prepare them for further education built around literacy. We nurture individuals as social entities and believe that the key to their well-being lies within diverse approaches to language development and communication, especially with children who have multiple languages, in addition to Icelandic.

Leikskólinn Mánaland – Vík í Mýrdal
Mánabraut 3 - 5, Vík 870
487 - 1241
manaland@manaland.is



Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
Goals:.....	2
Focus and methods:	3
Communication:	3
Positive communication overall –	3
Communication specifically with children -	3
The Freindship Project „Blær“ –.....	4
Basic elements of emergent literacy:.....	4
Máni 15 months to 3 years.....	5
Stjarna 3 – 5 years old	7
Expected third classroom for 5-6-year old’s	9
Vocabulary categories for school year 2023– 2024	12
Education and lifelong learning for staff:.....	13
Staff training days:.....	13
Mother language, parental collaboration and active multilingualism	14
References.....	16

Introduction

Language is the most important tool for human communication. Language is an important part of the culture of nations and ethnic groups. Therefore, emphasis should be placed on language cultivation. At Mánaland, we place great emphasis on language acquisition with special regard to children and families with language other than or in addition to Icelandic. We emphasize learning Icelandic both as a mother tongue and as a second language. Our mission is to support parents with a language other than Icelandic and to encourage children's language stimulation in their mother tongue; i.e. with education, practical information about language stimulation and multilingualism, also through active cooperation between home and school. We work systematically to increase listening, vocabulary, language comprehension, storytelling skills, phonemic awareness and the development of written language. Language stimulation should be top of mind for staff in everything we do and every opportunity used to cultivate Icelandic through play, singing, communication, and in every possible situation where children and adults are together.

Literacy is most often defined in relation to the skills that people need in order to be able to read and transfer their thoughts into written language. In the National Curriculum Guide for Preschools (2011) literacy is described in a broad sense, „ *Preschool literacy includes children's knowledge, skill and competence to read their environment and express their experience, feelings and opinions in different ways.*“ (National Curriculum Guide for Preschools, 2011, bls. 42). Here at Mánaland, emphasis is placed on strengthening the important foundation for developing children and preparing children for learning to read. The term „emergent literacy“ is defined as certain skills, knowledge and attitudes that develop as a precursor to literacy. It refers to a child's reading behavior during preschool age yet before formal reading instruction begins in elementary school. The theory is that young children build up knowledge through discoveries about the written language in their environment and not least through reading books and language-encouraging interactions with adults and other children. The term best reflects through the working methods we apply at Mánaland.

Goals:

- That systemic methods are used from the beginning of preschool to promote children's interest in language and communication.
- That communication between adults and children promotes well-being, social development and language acquisition.
- That the school's environment offers multiple and diverse opportunities for children to interact with language.
- We apply ourselves purposefully to cultivate the children's vocabulary and language comprehension in a diverse way.
- That children's books are visible, accessible and read daily.
- That Mánaland employees use daily communication to promote and strengthen children's vocabulary, language comprehension and narrative skills.
- That the employees at Mánaland are constantly improving their knowledge of language development and literacy with the aim of creating new ways of playing/ teaching methods.

- That systemic work is done to promote the acquisition of Icelandic as a second language in play and with the active participation of multilingual children and staff through preschool activities.
- That parents, employees and children with a language other than Icelandic are met with respect and given support and encouragement to promote Icelandic alongside their mother tongue.
- To promote cooperation with Víkur School and the Music school so that the children experience continuity in their studies.

Focus and methods:

At Mánaland, we place great emphasis on communication, targeted language training, diverse methods in teaching and play, and most importantly, the freedom to create new ways of delivering language to children.

Special emphasis will be placed on increasing access to Icelandic and promoting increased Icelandic language skills among staff with a foreign background by promoting work-related Icelandic teaching and speech training alongside work. Emphasis will be placed on job-related vocabulary in an individualized and flexible manner.

Communication:

When children begin Preschool, they need to feel safe, especially those children who come to us with a mother tongue other than Icelandic. We believe that communication is our strongest tool to meet children and communicate both well-being and language. We place great emphasis on positive and constructive communication between adults and children, and we want to work with full force to support such communication between children as well. It is important to map and define both what we consider to be appropriate and constructive communication as well as unwanted and degrading communication. Here following, is an overview of the points that we believe are in our "cycle of work" to emphasize in communication with children, parents and colleagues.

Positive communication overall –

We use the following concepts and ideas as guiding principles in promoting positive communication at Mánaland: Honesty, openness, respect, listening to an individual, and thinking about what is said. We strive to increase joy in our interactions, along with showing thoughtfulness, being a role model, showing mutual interest, being able to put ourselves in other people's shoes, showing positivity, reactivity, trust, finding solutions, teaching others and learning. When combined thinking twice before uttering words, the fact that everyone's needs are considered and that other people's ideas are listened to we ensure that information flow is maintained. We insist that everyone says good morning and goodbye, are permitted to talk about feelings and emotions, that lightheartedness is a visible value and a clear message. Finally, we believe it must be understood that communication affects the well-being of others, and that we all have values that are reflected in how we communicate with others.

Communication specifically with children -

We use the following concepts and ideas as guidance in promoting positive communication with children at Mánaland. Through displaying trust, respect, open communication, that people have different needs, and good communication with parents we affect how children interpret

communication. We reinforce positive behavior, accept each individual as they are, listen and hear simultaneously, are positive, cheerful, discuss rules/behavior in contextual situations, show interest in what children say and do, show that we listen with intent and praise the children. We do not allow children's behavior to affect our communication with children, we never meet a child with prejudice, we give children the opportunity to express themselves in an understandable way and we do not „take the floor“ from them nor speak for them.

The Freindship Project „Blær“ –

Save the Children´s (Barnaheill) Freindship Project „Blær“ is an important method to ensure good communication. The project is a targeted prevention project against bullying. Friendship Project is based on research about bullying and certain ideology and values that are important to integrate with the other methods within schools when working with bullying. In addition, the Friendship Project is based on realistic projects for children, staff and parents. The idea of everyone participating in this prevention project is the basis for success. It is expected that participants adopt basic values at school and in communication within the school community. Friendship Project consists in preventing bullying by creating a positive school atmosphere, having good communication and positive attitudes towards everyone in the school. Special emphasis is placed on reaching out to children and adults who witness bullying and encouraging them to respond to it. The idea is reflected in the following four values:

Tolerance: Recognizing and understanding the importance and value of diversity and treating all others with respect.

Respect: To recognize and consider all the children in the group, to be a good friend to everyone and to respect diversity within the group.

Caring: Showing interest, empathy, sympathy and helpfulness to all children. To understand the situation of others.

Courage: Dare to speak up and be able to set limits. To be a brave and good partner who responds to injustice.

Basic elements of emergent literacy:

At Mánaland, it is important to us that we work systematically to improve the skills of everyone, by considering that children develop and acquire new skills and knowledge at different rates. The elements that make up emergent literacy are: vocabulary, language comprehension, narrative/communication skills, phonological awareness, knowledge of letters, decoding and writing. We use a professional plan that classroom leaders receive at the beginning of the year. In the professional plan, the work of classroom staff is defined with specific vocabulary focus areas. The professional plan is in many ways a challenge to the staff to work purposefully and with intent regarding language development related to the basic aspects of emergent literacy in a wholistic approach. It is also a framework used to define the role of language-related staff and to promote holistic development in general throughout all that we do. We believe that such a program ensures that the staff demonstrate professional practices and can better assess where each child is in terms of language acquisition and language development.

Máni 15 months to 3 years

In the Máni classroom, the main focus is on developing vocabulary and language comprehension, together with narrative skills. Staff literally work on the floor and at the height of the children to ensure presence and safety. We believe that when an employee is at the height of the children, all opportunities are used to communicate language and well-being. Below are the professional guidelines that the staff in Máni classroom will work according to. Here we would like to point out that language cultivation/stimulation takes place throughout and within all activities, but we also define language stimulation as a focused element throughout the daily schedule.

Targeted subject areas:

Music:

- Deepen work with music, purposefully introduce new songs and implement them in a descriptive and diverse manner so that children add to their vocabulary and develop language comprehension.
- Allow children to have access to instruments to experiment and play with sound.
- Create an opportunity for children to hear and identify the difference between sounds and at the same time to imitate rhythm and sound patterns.

Sensory Play:

- Integrate sensory play into daily routine and connect language development to it (use concepts such as over - under, hot - cold, small - large, soft - hard, etc.)
- Work with basic unit blocks with the purpose of perceiving how the blocks can be used in play. Staff enter words in the block time and through the play that takes place in the unit blocks.

Huerisitc Play with Objects:

- Strengthen the child's vocabulary and understanding of concepts based on the children's interests. Implement pictorial recording (enhancing children's narrative skills)

Additional targeted language development times: – *In the naptime after lunch or after snack time.*

- Work with books and games in focused language development.
- Choose books according to vocabulary categories.
- Connect vocabulary categories and books to the classroom environment, such as pictures at children's height, felt board stories, songs, toys etc.

Physical Activity (Movement):

- Use purposeful field trips. Emphasis placed on experience, perception, nature, creation, putting words to what we see and experience. All children divided into small groups, at least. 1x a week for a walk outside before noon.
- Set up a development courses in the sports hall where a variety of equipment is offered and materials used (ball, bag of rice, rings, limbo, worm...) Staff are focused on using words to describe on body parts, movements, various concepts and materials. Engage in physical games that require communication between adults/child and between the children themselves, to activate listening and the ability to understand and follow instructions.

Outdoor play:

- Utilize methods that are focused in intent with children in outdoor play. Choose play that demands communication for example that children follow instructions. Talk with children and place emphasis on positive and constructive communication filled with finding solutions through discussion while involved in play. Conflict resolution utilizes explanations and discussion.

Creativity:

- Utilize sensory play to introduce new concepts and words (hot cold soft hard). Work with creativity in diverse methods both outside and inside. Place words on all objects and concepts. It is important to give children the opportunity also to interpret items and concepts under your guidance to support understanding, allowing children to sometimes place their own “words” on things especially children with multiple languages. Use this process to help them bridge between what they currently know and understand and what they need to learn, e.g. new words.
- Use diverse objects and supplies and do not limit yourself to certain areas when it comes to creativity. Allow yourself to think outside of the box and them too.
- Work with intent and purposefully with shapes, numbers, letters, and colors during creativity exercises.

Pretend Play:

- Promote social connections, imagination and language development. Staff members are involved with children in pretend play and are active participants using every opportunity for communication setting words on objects, actions and concepts. Additionally, encouraging children to talk about what they are doing/using/thinking and why.
- Implement focused work with unit blocks – ensure that children learn to use unit blocks with respect for their purpose, they learn the names of blocks and to express what they are building and why. Connect play with vocabulary categories we are focusing on each time period.

Ipad and STEM play:

- Staff begin to introduce children to Ipad use in small groups of 2 -3 children at a time (as few as possible). Staff assist children with learning to hold and utilize the devices, allow them to take pictures, make and view videos of themselves and events that they take part in. Staff can use applications that are recommended for children within their age and developmentally appropriate recommendations. Use applications designed specifically for language development and try to connect content accessed to the vocabulary categories we will be working with.
- There are various devices that support active listening, to enhance concentration skills, and encourage critical thinking or problem solving. It is recommended that we implement focused learning opportunities with such devices and applications. (For example, light tables, targeted applications used in computers or iPad, Makey Make and specialized STEM play objects).

Stjarna 3 – 5 years old

In Stjarna emphasis is placed on continuing to build upon vocabulary development, language comprehension, and communication skills. We take bigger steps towards enhancing phonological awareness and writing skills with concentrated efforts and through creativity. The classroom environment in Stjarna should reflect the word groupings we are working with both in pictures and words. Toys and learning materials in the classroom should also reflect the vocabulary categories providing children with the opportunity to explore and work with language through free play. We intend to create a „letter corner „where children can explore language, letters, writing and reading with assistance of tools and objects designated for reading and writing. Children will have the opportunity to utilize the corner as space for creative exploration and to attempt to using new skills necessary for emergent literacy.

Targeted subject areas:

Language Development:

- We will work with targeted aims regarding vocabulary, language comprehension and communication skills in small group time with creativity, books, games and other objects we are able to connect with our vocabulary categories.
- Use the word-chat method in daily routine for each 4-week rotation that words are worked with implementing.
- Use the lærum og leikum með hljóðin products in circle time with.
- Staff increase use of diverse boardgames with children. Immense opportunity lie within using boardgames in small groups as a method to teach language. We stimulate language development in all categories active listing, vocabulary, comprehension and communication additionally children learn certain rules of communication such as taking turns, waiting, helping each other. Children learn to follow instructions and rules in addition to giving explanations if they feel things should be different or they have a different understanding of the rules. Additionally, it is really fun and encourages opportunity for social bonding.
- In circle time and small group time we use the following language development teaching materials: Markvissa málörvun, Orð af orði, Sögugrunn, Tölum saman, Orðagull, Lærum og leikum með hljóðum, Lubbi finnr málbein and books of all sizes and shapes.

Music:

- Implement new songs related to the vocabulary categories we are working with each time period.
- Encourage children to play with rhymes and rhyming. (silly singing with words that rhyme)
- Work with focused effort on sound synthesis through song (creating sounds related to letters and in words) .
- Make focused efforts to use instruments. (Not just random noises connected rather to song)

Physical Activity (Movement):

- Field trips - should be large part of the daily schedule at Stjarna, and emphasis is placed on going on field trips in group time and designated outdoor times. The local environment of the preschool is used a big part of our field trips, where we play games, experience and perceive nature, using it as a source for creativity. During field trips, the children learn to beware of dangers in traffic. In outdoor education, there are many opportunities to teach children new words, but we also want the staff to work on developing children's storytelling skills through being able to tell parents about what happens on the field trips when they get home, e.g. by expressing their experiences with pictures and words. Take pictures during the trip and project them on the screen inside the hall and give the children the opportunity to describe what is happening in the pictures and videos.
- Sports – Create opportunity for children to play games with rules where they are required to follow instructions, both simple and more complex. Enter words related to body movement, in the gymnasium, and give the children clear instructions that they follow through exercise and competitive games. Which also promotes positive and constructive communication, for example when children face challenges that may arise in sports-related games and competitions.
- Outdoors – (free play outdoors) be purposeful with children in play and outdoor games, use games with rules on the playground just like we do in the gymnasium as they have the same value and opportunity for learning and development.

Unit Blocks:

- Work is done systematically with unit blocks in relation to vocabulary categories, in small group time and free play. Employees are actively playing with the children. In Stjarna, all types of blocks are available, and it is important that staff use every opportunity to teach children the names of blocks and that they introduce various concepts related to size, shape, adaptation, and possible function/ use of blocks.

Creativity:

- We work with creativity in small group time, throughout the daily schedule, and on field trips. It is necessary that we work with creativity in a diverse way both inside and outside. The challenge for staff is to find a way to work with language stimulation in relation to creativity. Staff are encouraged to remember that the goal is always to create new ways of working with children. We begin to emphasize writing in connection with art and offer children the "letter hook" for the first time.
- The alphabet corner is a place where children can learn and play with written language. In the alphabet corner there are stationery, papers, a marker board, booklets, names of all children, blocks with letters, letters to thread with, magnetic letters and various other implementations of letters and writing. The alphabet corner is designed as an area for children to discover and adopt their own ideas and try their hand at writing. The employees are not directing what the children do outside, but they are setting rules for the use of stationery and other materials available to children.

Ipad and STEM:

- Staff use Ipads in small groups of 2 -3 children at a time (as few as possible). Staff use designated applications recommended for children within the age range and developmentally appropriate both in Icelandic and if possible mother languages. Use applications designed specifically for language development and try to connect content accessed to the vocabulary categories we will be working with.
 - There are various devices that support active listening, to enhance concentration skills, and encourage critical thinking or problem solving. It is recommended that we implement focused learning opportunities with such devices and applications. (For example, light tables, targeted applications used in computers or iPad, Makey Make and specialized STEM play objects).
- **Science:**
 - In small group time it is best to work with science. Working with things like light and shadow, weights and balance, environmental elements, magnets and taking things apart to learn how they work are all suggested. Staff are encouraged to support children's native curiosities and need to explore. Staff are encouraged to use as much natural materials and things found around the classroom as possible to encourage language development and utilization of vocabulary words in different contexts. Through science projects staff are responsible for introducing children to new words and concepts related to materials and subject matter.

Expected third classroom for 5-6-year old's

Today, the activities of 5-6-year-old children are supervised by teachers at Víkur School. This autumn, efforts will be made to connect pre-schools more strongly with kindergarten activities due to preparations for the expected move to a new kindergarten in December.

In the oldest classroom at Mánaland, emphasis continues to be placed on developing vocabulary and language comprehension. We take a step further in language development and focus even more on narrative skills with a targeted focus on sentence structure, phonological awareness and decoding, we systematically work with written language and letter recognition. Staff in the oldest classroom here use every opportunity to work with the elements listed above both in organized group activities and free play. When we talk about organized group activities, we are talking about when staff have a target goal and work to ensure progress and guidance in development, which the child then carries out in his own way and with his own ideas. Great emphasis is placed on cooperation with Víkur School in order for the children to experience continuous learning and start school as strong individuals

Targeted subject areas:

Music:

- Choose songs to work with directly linked to vocabulary categories for each time period – connect this with Project Approach (or Reggio Emilia project-based methods) e.g. criss cross songs and art projects within a subject/ project manager provides support and counseling.

Targeted language development:

- Small group time/ Project Approach - Use the word chat method for focused language development. We work with all of the main curricula areas related to emergent literacy

mentioned above. It is important that staff in the eldest classroom document what they are doing and all progress made with children in their language development. The eldest classroom will have increased collaboration with Víkur school, utilizing the opportunity to learn from the teachers and the methods used there, for example in terms of letter knowledge, writing skills, decoding and phonological awareness. Subjects that are most often worked with in the elderly classroom are: Markviss málörvun, Orð af orði, Sögugrunnur, Lubbi, various and diverse books, more complex boardgames that require positive communication and cooperation, poetry and story-making, pretend play and other targeted areas of language that will produce tangible results.

Unit blocks:

- Build on the skills children have already developed through the years. Continue to enhance creativity and writing skills through play with the unit blocks. Unit blocks work should be worked with a minimum of 2 -3 times a week.

Ipads:

- Use In the elderly classroom continue of course with methods used in younger classrooms with attention to age and development appropriate methods, we would like to see further work with projects on tablets related to children's stories and creativity. Examples include programs such as Puppet Pals or Little Book Maker, where children create sentences and stories in relation to pictures.

Collaboration with Víkur School:

- We will design a targeted plan for collaboration from the beginning of the year which will include projects through to the end of the year when children “graduate” from Mánaland. It is important that we understand the bridging process works in two directions and children who have left Mánaland to start compulsory school also need the opportunity to visit preschool and connect with children who will attend school the following year.

Proposal for collaboration initiatives:

- *Children take part in diverse opportunities to visit classroom activities in Víkur school as well as after school programs. Additionally, we will welcome children from 1st grade in Víkur school into Mánaland regularly throughout the school year.*
- *Day for the Icelandic Language celebrated at Víkur School with shared program allowing for presentation from Mánaland.*
- *Head teacher for Mánaland and teacher responsible for 1st grade at Víkur School conduct regular meetings where they discuss methods to increase collaborations and align teaching methods. They could spend time in each other's classrooms to observe and develop an understanding for how learning and development is conducted in each school as well as support each other.*

- *Create a shared song-book together with songs and rhymes utilized to support language development and create a shared harmony between schools. The book would be used by students when they visit creating a platform for shared objects and opportunities.*
- *The Graduation from Preschool ceremony will be held in the celebratory hall at Víkur School.*

Physical Activities (Movement):

- Organized sports in the local gymnasium.
- Outdoor play – have objective oriented play and games while in outdoor play to stimulate communication and opportunity for language development.
- Field trips are an important element in daily life in with elderly children in the preschool. It is important that they be connected to Project Approach implementation and staff utilize vocabulary categories in relation to them.

Mathematics and Science:

- Numerical Value – Shapes – Spatial intelligence: It is important to develop vocabulary related to mathematics, concepts used in mathematics, and to work with it systematically in order to develop language comprehension in relation to numerical values, shapes and spatial intelligence. Since the oldest children at Mánaland start studying these subjects from the beginning of 1st grade.
- In small group time it is best to work with science. Working with things like light and shadow, weights and balance, environmental elements, magnets and taking things apart to learn how they work are all suggested. At this age for example it is interesting to work with volcanoes and in relation to being located under Katla Volcano there is great opportunity. Staff are encouraged to support children's native curiosities and need to explore. Staff are encouraged to use as much natural materials and things found around the classroom as possible to encourage language development and utilization of vocabulary words in different contexts. Through science projects staff are responsible for introducing children to new words and concepts related to materials and subject matter.

Creativity:

- Creativity is a large part of activities in the oldest classroom at Mánaland. Children at this level of kindergarten have been systematically building their vocabulary for 3-4 years. Through creativity, children get the opportunity to express their feelings, experiences and thoughts, and thus language comprehension also increases through the tasks that the children carry out. In this way, we evaluate progress in language acquisition. Staff are encouraged to incorporate creativity into the Project Approach.
- Creativity is collectively implemented into small group work, field trips and daily routine.

- Great emphasis is placed on the basic elements of writing and is connected to creativity so that children do not feel "pressured" to learn to write their name more that they are exploring and creating there for having ownership. Children experience a natural process related to visual and written language.

Vocabulary categories for school year 2023- 2024

At Mánalandi we have decided to work with eight vocabulary categories across the year. It is important for children to build a solid base of vocabulary, we believe that through working with targeted vocabulary categories staff at Mánaland are able to ensure progress. Vocabulary categories are incorporated with children’s lives (things they see or connect with in their lives) and are constructive. Our objective is for children “to swim in a word sea” and adults use diverse methods and teaching approaches to mediate words to children. It is possible to relate this methodology with traditional “thematic work” where teachers choose projects, books, songs, games and other material to work with in relation to the vocabulary categories. The aim is always to focus on increasing language development and linguistic skills through emphasizing words within each category. We begin with words closest to the children and continue then to move further out into words they might recognize from the world they live in but don’t yet have access to. Within each category are different choices of subject areas to work with. For example, at the beginning of the year the youngest children work with the category about themselves (e.g. body parts, adjectives about themselves, hair color, eyes, my name). Children who have the base words work with words about themselves related to family, family types, cousins, friends’ people and places connected to their lives. Those children that have an even deeper base would work with words related to home life and the world connected to home (often the oldest children). It is important to understand that children learn at different paces and in different manners. Working with the diverse areas within a category allows for children with larger vocabularies and smaller bases to learn from each other, connect in project work and for teachers to have space to be creative in meeting the needs and learning styles of all children in the classroom. If children are worked with individually or in small groups in order to target learning we are still able to sustain a theme throughout the classroom.

4. sept-13.oct.	16.oct.-24.nov.	27.nov.- 22.dec.	8. jan.-15.feb
Me myself and I	Emotions	Creativity	Health
Family	Senses	Christmas	Movement
Home and homelife	Method of communicating	Christmas gifts and decorations	Food and nutrition
	Friends	Christmas songs	Dental Hygiene
		Christmas stories	Dentalcare week

19. feb.- 27. march	April ←	May →	June
Children’s culture	Environment	Animals	Swimming??
Adventure - fables	Nature	Farm	Field trips
Play and toys		Farm trip	

Heads teachers will take care of preparatory work for each classroom such as working out a monthly plan, choosing songs (approved by the preschool director), connecting subjects to creativity, field trips, unit blocks, physical activity, language stimulation.

Education and lifelong learning for staff:

Preschool methods live on even though employees come and go, the groups of children are constantly changing and the developmental needs of children associated with these changes too. Additionally, there are always developments in the education system, a new policy from the Ministry of Education, the educational institution and the municipality where emphasis is placed on new teaching methods and ways of educating children. It is important to keep employees informed, educated and even enthusiastic about language development and language acquisition. The management of Mánaland wants to ensure that the school is progressive and in a state of fluid development. We also want to ensure that our employees are secure and understand their role and the demands placed on them. In order to do so, every year a plan is drawn up to determine what education will best support such development and current slate of staff. Below is a proposal for lifelong learning that we intend to implement for the year 2023-24.

Staff training days:

- Team building, definition of work for the next school year, focus areas and subject plan presented.
- Positive and constructive communication with children, review of friendship projects and methods organized by Barnaheilla (Blær).
- First aid courses and e.h. Positive discipline and organizational activities.
- Language stimulation.
- Language stimulation through the use of games and word conversation methods, language stimulation through books and stories.
- Icelandic language lessons for Mánaland staff and a comprehensive approach to the Icelandic environment developed.

First of all, we believe that documentation is the best way to perform a "regular assessment" in the work, as the staff should be constantly reflecting on what is happening between them and the children. Progress in terms of language development and development is constantly assessed and reviewed. We want to adapt this type of methodology at Mánaland where the staff is always literally on the floor with the children in order to have good communication and recognize if the children are acquiring the Icelandic language. If we become aware that a child has problems with language acquisition, appropriate measures are taken.

Language development tests as such are not used in Mánaland except when we notice that little progress has been made in a child, and then we rely on screening tests and contact school services for a professional diagnosis. When we prepare parent conversations in the spring, department heads assess children's vocabulary, language comprehension, listening and phonological awareness.

As for the literacy program itself, it is our intention to evaluate it every year, both in the fall and in the spring. At the beginning of the school year in the fall, goals and focus areas in the work, material and subjects are reviewed. Then in the spring semester, we will evaluate the policy more closely, seeing what went well and what didn't and why it did or didn't go well, then a draft is presented that includes ways to improve the results.

Mother language, parental collaboration and active multilingualism

Research has shown and proven that when the acquisition of one language begins after the acquisition of the other language, in children who do not have a good foundation in their mother tongue and therefore do not maintain it, it has a negative effect on the development of language development and especially the development of literacy, which in turn leads to difficulties in learning. We want to do everything we can to ensure that children in Mánaland with a mother tongue other than Icelandic are given the support they need to learn both languages. Speaking two languages at the same time leads to bilingualism. Definitions of bilingualism are as varied as they are many, but the definition we choose to work with is to use the word multilingual children for those children who have two or more languages at their command. But the skills in each language can be different. If a child learns two or more languages simultaneously, but only if the languages are used regularly and sufficient input comes from the language environment, we speak of active bilingualism.

Targeted work with multilingual children in Mánaland will consider the "Efficiency framework in Icelandic for multilingual children in kindergarten" published by the Icelandic Education Agency in 2021. The competence framework is primarily intended to be a source of diverse preschool work that supports children's progress in Icelandic as a second language. The competency frameworks were prepared in parallel with the revision of the main curriculum of kindergartens for the Ministry of Education and Culture, which was carried out with regard to the learning needs of children. It takes into account the formation of education policies until the year 2030, but there is an emphasis on providing excellent education guided by knowledge, courage and happiness in an environment where everyone matters and can learn" (Halldóra Sigtryggsdóttir, Saga Stephensen, Þorbjörg Halldórsdóttir, Sigríður Olafsdóttir, 2021). Since we have limited access and knowledge of most of the issues that are discussed among the children in Mánaland, we believe that our strongest opportunity is cooperation with parents. We support their role as role models and mediators. We also want to encourage parents to be active themselves in terms of bilingualism and support them to have the opportunity to acquire better Icelandic skills while their children stay with us. It will be done with:

- Education, guidance and conversations with parents both about the importance of the mother tongue and with practical methods of language stimulation in daily communication with children.
- Targeted use of the competency framework in Icelandic for multilingual children in our preschool.
- The use of interpreters for both parents and children when needed, to ensure that there are no misunderstandings about disclosure and to respect everyone's right to conversations that benefit both parties.
- Icelandic course for parents organized by the preschool if possible.
- Implement a language stimulation backpack that goes between home and school to ensure good language stimulation habits at home and continuous language stimulation between home and school.
- Translation of as much information as possible.
- "Manual" and vocabulary for employees with preschool activities, children's development, parent communication and other things in mind that concern daily communication in Icelandic.
- Children are allowed to speak their mother tongue in most situations. Staff need to be active in supporting children with mediating or bridging between mother tongue and

Icelandic. Therefore, utilizing the preschool staff who speak the same mother tongue as the children to work purposefully with their mother tongue alongside Icelandic.

- To look for ways to use IT tools in the kindergarten in connection with mother tongue stimulation.

Nichole Leigh Mosty, leikskólastjóri

Vík í Mýrdal, júní 2023

References

Lög um leikskóla nr. 90/2008

Mennta- og menningarmálaráðuneyti. (2011). Aðalnámskrá leikskóla 2011. Sótt af <http://www.menntamalaraduneyti.is/utgefid-efni/namskrar/adalnamskra-leikskola>

Mennamálastofnun. (2021). *Hæfnirammur í íslensku fyrir fjölyngd börn í leikskóla*. Sótt af <https://mms.is/frettir/haefnirammur-i-islensku-fyrir-fjolyngd-born-i-leikskola>