

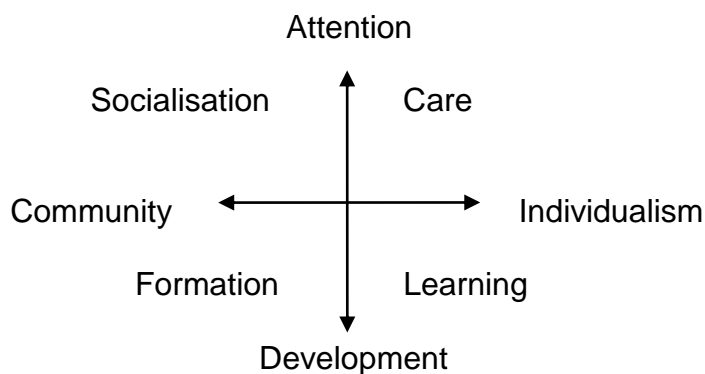
Report from the study visit to Denmark – 12 to 16 April 2010 organised by Children in Scotland.

Background

'Working it Out: help shape the future of children's sector workforce'. This programme is funded by the Scottish Government and was launched in 2008. It follows the publication also in 2008 of 'Working it out: developing the children's sector workforce. The focus of this was to share and discuss views on how the children's sector workforce might be able to work within one system as well as to contribute to what the Minister for Children and Early Years has described 'transformational change' across the sector.

The study visit was instigated by the Minister for Children and Early Years who was very keen to gain information on the education and roles undertaken by pedagogues working in Denmark. Approximately two-thirds of Denmark's pedagogues work with children under the age of ten as well as in youth services, residential childcare, day care services for adults, supporting children with additional support needs and more recently working alongside teachers in the classroom.

The Work of the pedagogues: Roles and Tasks



(Model for pedagogical task in Day Centres – BUPL)

The model depicts the ideas behind the 4 central ideas that shape the pedagogical tasks:

Care – to take care of

Socialisation – to and in communities

Formation – for citizenship and democracy

Learning – development of individual skills

For further information please see the website of the Danish Ministry of Social Affairs, www.ism.dk

Participants

The study visit was made up of ten delegates:

Bronwen Cohen (Leader of the Group)	Chief Executive, Children in Scotland
Nicola Pay	Communications Officer, Children In Scotland
Jill Bourne	Dean of the Faculty of Education, University of Strathclyde
David Bruce	Integrated Children's Services Manager, South Lanarkshire Council
Jennifer Davidson	Director, Scottish Institute for Residential Child Care
Peter Diamond	Assistant Director, Education and Leisure Services. Orkney Islands Council
Dorothy Johnson	Senior Lecturer Education, University of the West of Scotland
Phil Robinson	Chief Executive, Quarriers
Patricia Walls	Learning and Development Coordinator, Kibble
Marie McArthur	Associate Principal, Stevenson College, Edinburgh

Monday 12th April – Introductory meeting BUPL

BUPL (The Danish Federation of Early Childhood Teachers and Youth Educators) is a union with over 4 000 members and also has International contacts i.e has done work with the Childcare Network. There are identified similarities between Denmark and Scotland in early Years and have the same understanding re the needs of children.

Staff may be working in;

Nurseries (children aged 0-3 years)

Kindergartens (children aged 3-6 years)

Age-integrated childcare centres (children aged 6-10 years)

Free time centres/out of school care (children aged 6-10 years)

Free time clubs/Youth clubs (young people ages 14-18 years)

Membership is not mandatory, however nearly 90% of all workers are organised through the unions and approximately 95% of all children attend kindergarten.

Pedagogue students have a special student branch of BUPL called PLS. The education of a pedagogue is 3.5 years and graduate with the title 'Professional Bachelor'. The curriculum/education consists of a broad working field and they are employed both in child care services, in institutions for those with disabilities and also in the sector providing services for the elderly.

The level of qualification is the same as primary teachers, nurses and social workers and with the 'Professional Bachelor' qualification pedagogues may continue their studies at Master degree level in, for example, sociology, physiology or pedagogical science at the Danish University of Education

Tuesday 13 April 2010 – Visit to the Nature Kindergarten

This kindergarten is situated in a residential area set off the road in a forested area. The kindergarten can accommodate 19 children and being so popular there is always a long waiting list. The ages of the children are from 3 – 6 years of age.

The children can spend up to 6 hours per day outside and the only time they come in is if it is very wet. It can. However take the children up to 1.5 hours to get ready for outside as they have to do this themselves with little assistance. The parents are told the types of clothes they must provide for this type of facility. Year to year the emphasis may change depending on the children from trying to increase self-confidence to a greater input in knowledge acquisition.

The children can play around the house with no supervision but must stay within sight of the house. The emphasis is on nature, to learn from it, appreciate it and to take care of it. The children learn by doing and the activities fit in with the broad set curriculum e.g. the body so activities around exercise, food, focus on sight when

looking for things. If they find a dead animal in the woods they would place a box over it with a mesh top so that the children could see the process of decomposition.

The children all bring their packed lunch with them and they decide when they eat, the reasoning being that we are conditioned to eat by what time it is as opposed to when we are hungry, the same applies when they are cold or want to go to the toilet. The older children are given the key to the house so that they can go up to the house unassisted to use the toilet, the younger ones are accompanied.

A three minute walk from the house into the woods there is an area where the children can undertake a variety of activities. There is a large central log fire where the children cook their pizzas (unassisted). The children chop the logs for the fires using adult sized axes (they have been shown how to do this safely), they have huts and hammocks and a variety of equipment that they can use as they please. A field next to this allows football and other sports to take place.



Impression

The overall impression was very good in that the children had the ability to learn through exploration and participation offering the children a lot of freedom. There were not the restrictions that would occur in the UK through Health and Safety legislation and guidelines.

What was seen was just a 'snap shot' therefore it was difficult to gauge how achievement of the goals were/are reached for each child.

Being in the Scottish mindset, the children being able to walk unaccompanied through a wood that is a public access gives some cause for concern.

One aspect that came through very clearly is the fact that the children are able to try new things and be given responsibilities, such as, cooking over an open fire and checking and deciding whether their food is ready to eat and even when to eat.

Tuesday 13 April 2010 - 'Free-time Centre' Farm

There were many more of these types of facilities in the recent past where all children had the opportunity to attend and where children had this on their school timetable allowing them a morning or afternoon during the week. The government now places more emphasis on school education therefore these facilities are being used less and only after school. At one time the age range was from babies through school age children but the ages have been separated so now only school age children attend.

The farm has sheep, chickens, goats, a mountain goat, a donkey and the children have the opportunity to select and look after their own rabbit. The facilities also include an extensive play area with a tree house, tree swings, an area for ball games, an open fire for basic cooking and a woodworking shop. The woodwork shop is run by a qualified carpenter who volunteers to pass on knowledge and skills to the children. He has also been working with the children on a project where they are building two storey huts. On the site there is a good sized building where art work, dressing up and indoor toys are available to the children. The children however spend most of the time outdoors.



There are approximately 90 children who use these facilities over the year and many of these are from immigrant families. There is also a class for youngsters with a variety of disabilities. The staff are all pedagogues (apart from the volunteers) with experience in social work and working with families and children and work with a variety of professionals e.g. from social workers and child psychologists. The children have a diverse range of needs so broad staff experience is essential, including the ability to work and care for animals.

The emphasis is on free play, the youngsters choose the activities that they want to be involved in and the staff assist in facilitating this. Some children have behavioural problems and the staff do their best to read the signals which helps them reduce the possibility of an outburst. One of the methods they use is to involve other children to help with improving behaviour. Their training as a pedagogue gives a broader, less biased view in the understanding of children's behaviour and gives them confidence in dealing with difficult situations. The staff and children working as a team offer a structured approach on what they are trying to achieve.

The pedagogues have formal meetings with schools teachers and occasionally have meetings with parents. There is an impression amongst some pedagogues that teachers do not respect or acknowledge the work and training of the pedagogues and feel undervalued. The school comes down for four days per year and this helps the school to understand the work that they do with the children.



Impression

The pedagogues work closely with the children but encourage 'free play and activities' allowing the children to choose what they want to do. The children learn by doing and participating in activities and taking responsibility i.e. by looking after

the animals. The staff get to know the children well and by having contact with the school and others services have a good insight into the needs of each child. The same theme, as with other pedagogues, is that their role is to help the children learn through the activities they are undertaking.

From observing the children they were all fairly industrious and seemed confident in what they were doing. The staff did not organise the children in any structured way, the only activity that was close to this was when the children were cooking their pizza dough in a pan over the open fire.

Tuesday 13 April 2010 – Leisure time club ‘Circus Tvaers’

Circus Tvaers is a service for children at risk located in a social housing neighbourhood. The circus is twenty-five years old and is classed as an institution. The entrance to the building resembles the entrance to ‘the big top’!

The youngsters learn a variety of skills i.e. acrobatics, juggling, plate spinning, high wire etc. Those who run this facility are all pedagogues and their focus is to help the children develop soft skills and self confidence. The focus is on building skills through a stepping stone approach to forge respect, improve communication skills and team work.



The youngsters perform shows and have been to Italy and the UK performing and have connections with Syria where the ideals of the circus are being adopted.



The circus building also has a musician and music studio for the use of the young people that attend. They raises funds by putting on shows.

Impression

The pedagogues were very proficient in the skills that they were teaching the children. The skills themselves required coordination, concentration and teamwork. The pedagogues use their training to support children who are experiencing problems at home or in school, they build positive relationships and work on improving soft skills as well as building confidence and self-reliance. The young people are obviously enjoying what they do there. In Edinburgh there also used to be circus schools, one was based in Niddrie and the philosophy was basically the same which was to engage with youngsters who experienced some deprivation and help raise their confidence and self-esteem through developing skills and by putting on performances.

Wednesday 14 April 2010 – ‘Kilen Residential Home’

Kilen is a residential home situated near a residential area. The home is a bungalow and is like any domestic residence. The emphasis is on a domestic setting where the children can grow up in a family environment. The house can take up to seven children and they can remain there up until the age of twenty-three. The children select their own furniture and colour schemes and this changes and grows with the child, they also have friends for meals and ‘sleep-overs’ as other children would have.

Parents are welcome to visit their children and stay for meals. Contact with the parents is important even although the children are unlikely to return to the parental home.



Two of the staff have been there for many years, one twenty-nine years and the other eleven years offering continuity of care and support and an impact on the children's lives. This is not unusual to this place of work as other similar homes have staff that have also been working in the same home for many years. These staff were previously educated in Kindergarten Education/Social education for children with Disabilities which has now been combined into Social Pedagogy. An opinion offered was that this programme is too broad with less specialisms. One of these staff is updating her qualifications undertaking a Bachelor Degree in Social Pedagogy (Psychology) and the Manager of the home has undertaken Management training. All of those employed are Pedagogues, no Assistant pedagogues are employed within these settings.

The children go on annual holidays and have met children from Poland, Hungary and Germany.

The checking of quality within the homes is carried out by the Municipality sometimes they arrive unannounced and at other times by appointment. They was little further detail in what this involved.

They state that the benefits of pedagogical training is that it helps to promote understanding and build relationships with the children, the need to appreciate each child as an individual, foster trust and raise confidence. They are also trained to think about what is happening in the individual children/young person's life and to support them through successes and difficulties. There is a consistency amongst the professionals in setting teaching goals and there is general agreement that teachers are respectful of the work they do.

Daily records are kept on each of the children that include information on cognitive behaviour, school, family and social life. Staff keep themselves updated with this information. Every fortnight there is a 5 hour staff meeting and once a year all residential staff from other organisations meet for a developmental day and twice per year staff in the individual homes have staff development. From August 2010 2/3 staff from the seven residential homes will undertake training in Cognitive, Resource, Appreciative and Pedagogy (KRAP). This is made of 10 modules and delivered by an external facilitator.

Short term residential care is also available in Aarhus attached to a school. Both children and families are assessed there. There is also Foster Care but demand is higher than the number of Foster Carers available.

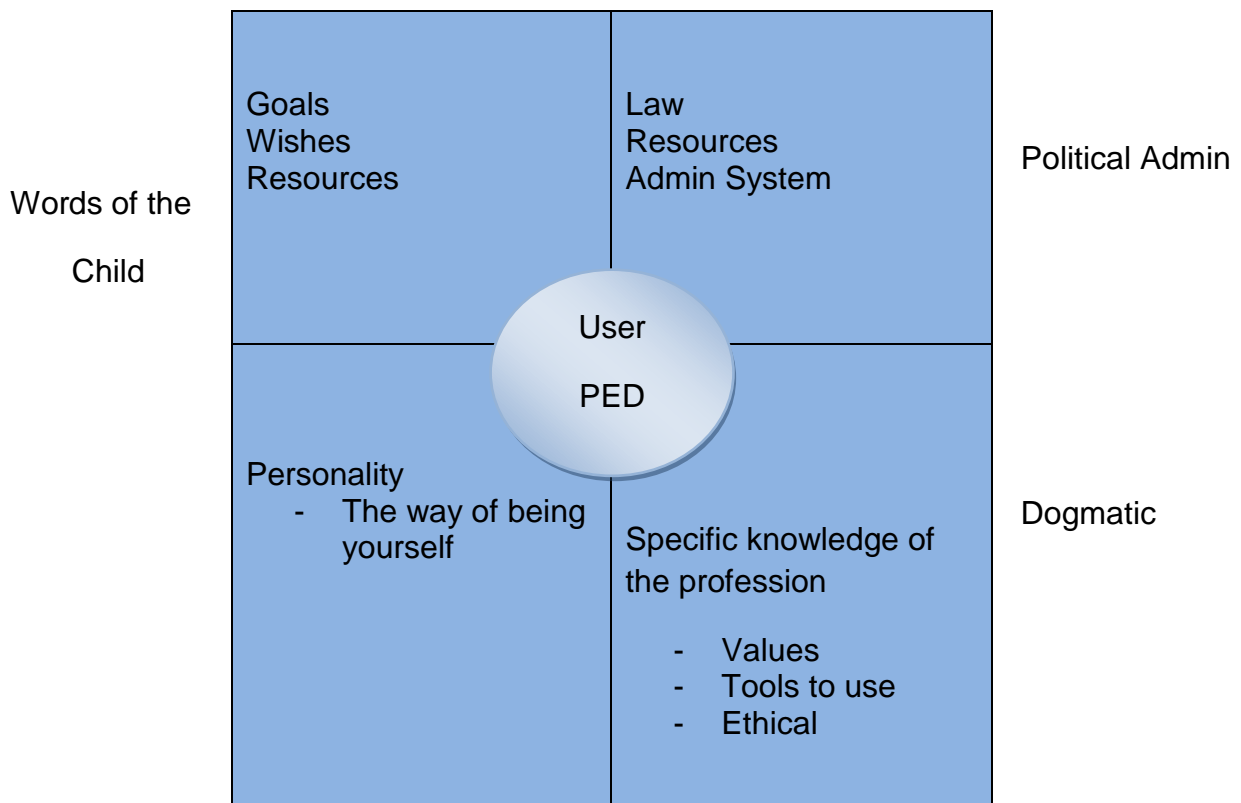
Wednesday 14 April 2010 – VIA University College.

Jyette Juul Jensen is a lecturer and is involved in international work and is a member of the Early Years Network..

The largest number of students in training undertake this course of study and it is a well known profession in Denmark. Since 2002 the number of students undertaking this programme has declined although in the last two years it has begun to increase again. There are almost 100 000 pedagogues working across Denmark and this makes up approximately half of the workforce. VIA takes in 400 students per year, 25% of the students are male and 60% of pedagogues work with young children.

There is tension within the health professions as care of the elderly (non clinical) was traditionally the role of the nurse but this is now being done by pedagogues. They have a number of international students from different ethnic backgrounds who undertake a pre-course and then apply to study on the pedagogue programme. . The age range of the students is between 20-50 years. The qualification is a Bachelor degree in Social Education and takes 3.5 years to complete. Those with other qualifications e.g. nurses can gain direct entry into pedagogical education.

The basis of the education is to view every person as a unique individual, to value their goals and to build strong relationships.



They do not focus on one theorist but study many. The students undertake 15 months of placements over the duration of their course, 3 months in the first year, 6 months in both the second and third years and whilst on placement they get paid by the employer. They can choose from kindergarten, children with disabilities, residential and adults with disabilities.

The basic subjects and subject modules of the programme are:

- Educational theory
- Danish culture and communication
- The individual and society
- One of the following main subjects:
 - Health, Body and Movement
 - Expression, Movement and Drama
 - Handicrafts, Nature and Technology
- Practical training
- Specialisation in one of the following areas:
 - Children and young people
 - Persons with handicaps
 - Persons with social problems
- The programme includes a Bachelor project
- The programme also includes an Inter-professional module

Pedagogues are paid lower than other professionals i.e. social workers, nurses, teachers etc.

Thursday 15 April 2010 – Municipality of Arhus – Peter Lilleheden (Educational Anthropologist) – Resource Centre for Educational Development

There are four other resource centres for:

- Integration
- Health and Well-being
- Counselling and Special Pedagogues

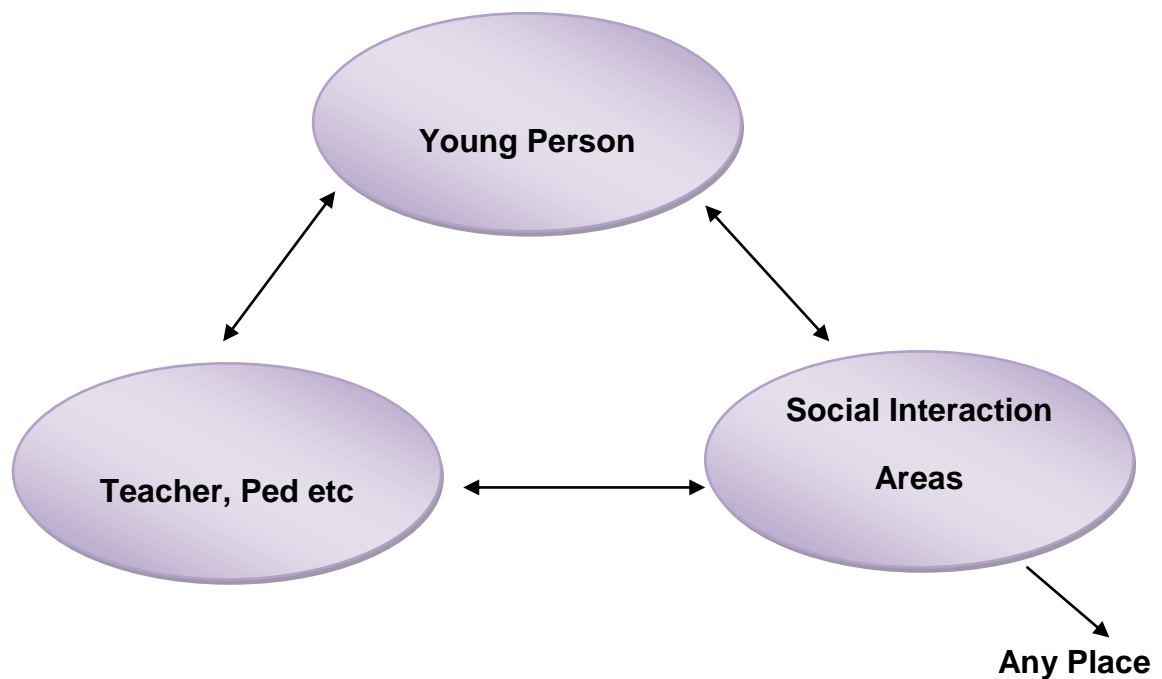
There are 13 administrative districts with each district being run by a senior manager.

The focus for children is on social skills and building healthy and fulfilling lives. The target is that by 2015 95% of all young people will complete basic education, currently the completion rate stands at 84%. The work being carried out is to increase young people's motivation and to engage with them to improve their educational achievements.

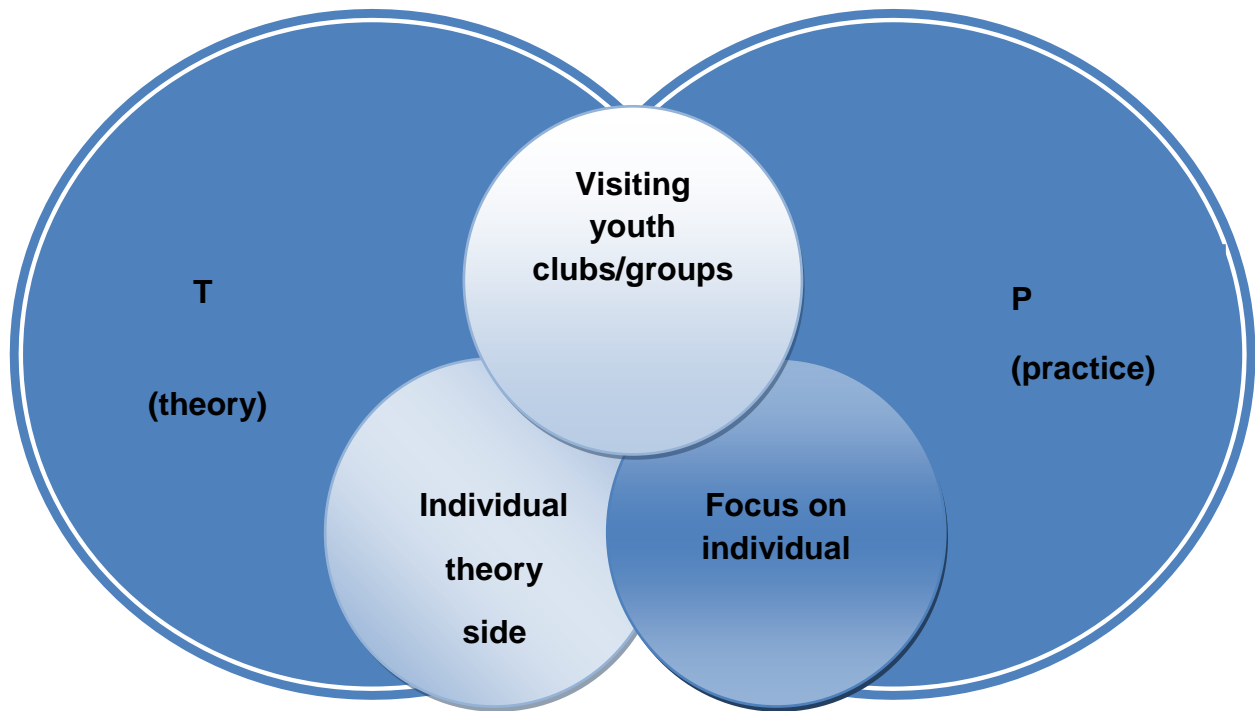
All are committed to shared values, not as a legal requirement but contributing to shared goals and how the youth are supported through school, youth clubs and their leisure time. Young people meet many different educationalists and educational approaches, the challenge is to be able to fill the gaps.

Peter is involved in a study; Places vs Non-places. It hopes to gain better understanding on where children/youth 'hang out' and why they choose these places i.e . in stairwells, parks or it could be clubs. Where is home? - Neighbourhood vs Locality. This includes looking at the construction of social identity i.e. how you perceive yourself and how you are perceived.

An example of trying to bring this together is where a school has converted the basement into a youth club. The young people were engaged in the process by asking them what it is they wanted. The staff working there are youth workers and teachers. The youth workers have more time to listen and build relationships with the youngsters.



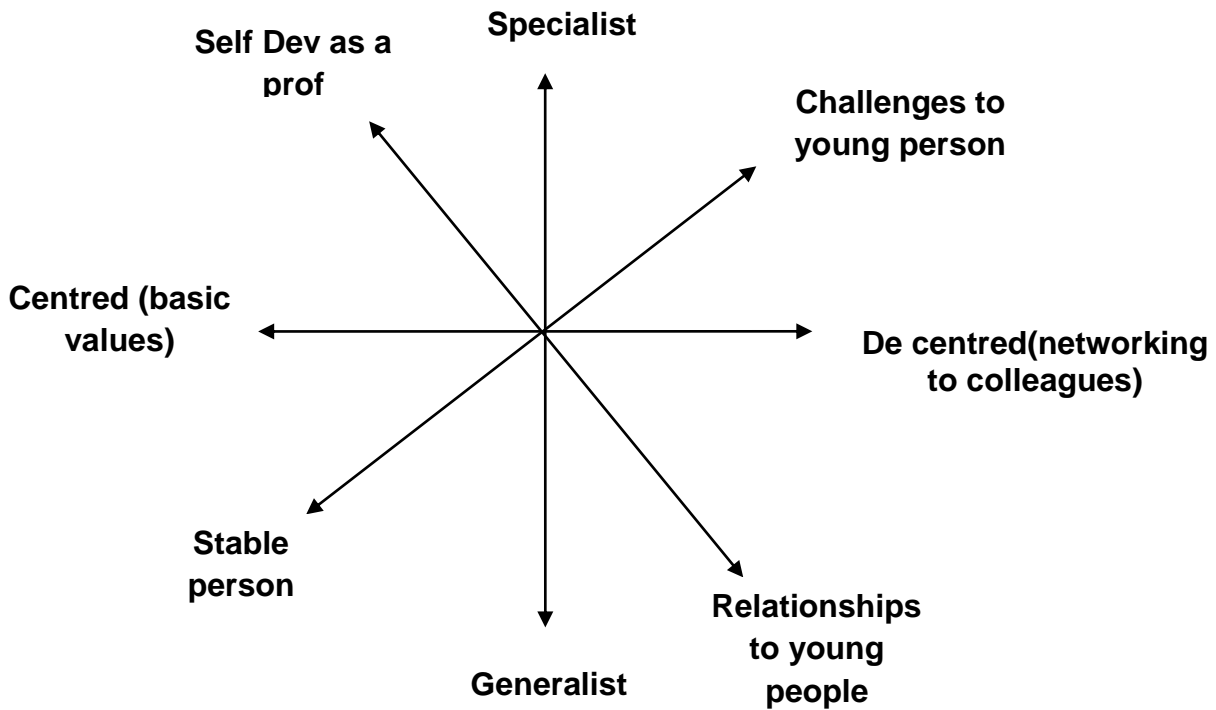
Competency



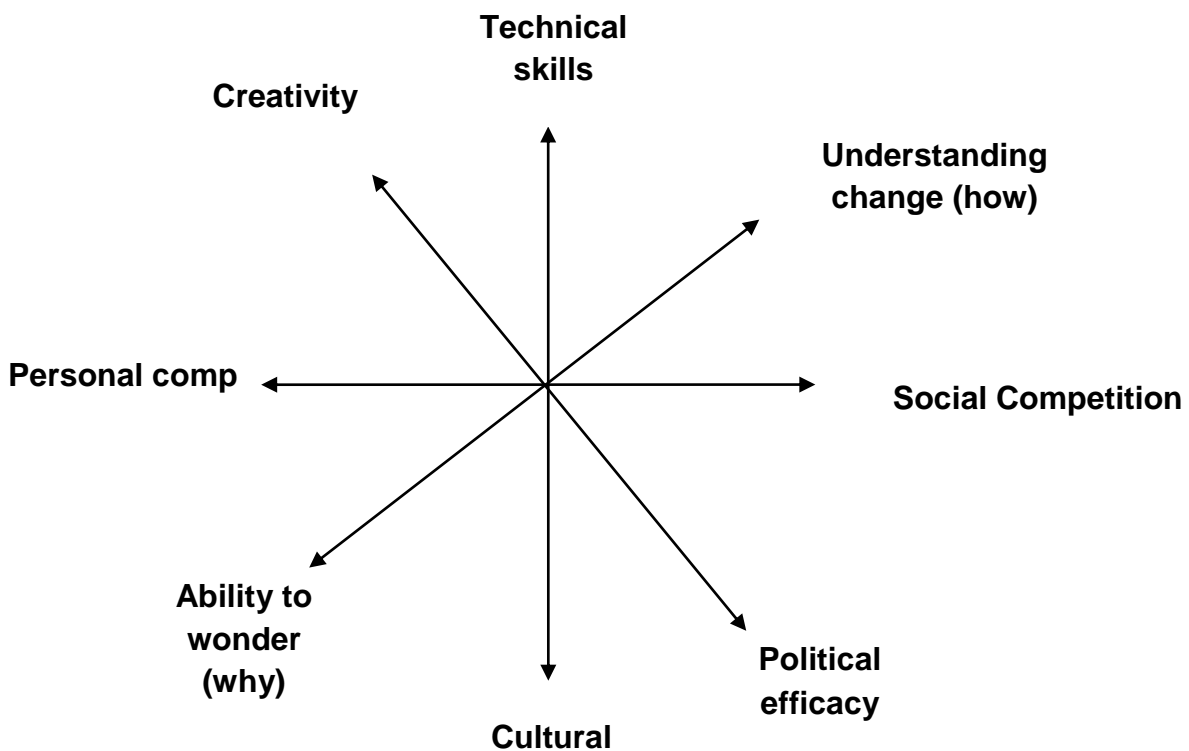
What do young people need and what skills do the Pedagogues need assist with this. More focus is placed on schools and early years but youth clubs are not so well organised and this is an area for development.

Peters view is that the education and training is becoming too general and the specialisms are being lost.

Competence Profile



Youth Profile



Friday 16 April 2010 – Marthahjemmet

This large institution in Copenhagen has been in existence as a nursery/kindergarten since 1886 having been founded by two religious women working with the poor.

There are currently 211 children that attend with 45 employees and a Michelin star chef who uses food as a medium to address other issues. There are ten similar institutions who have the function of working with children who need greater care owing to their home circumstances. These children would have previously have had to leave owing to their behavioural problems. Although the staff have to work with the families the focus is on the child not the family. The staff gauge how learning is progressing. A contract is agreed and signed by the parents and the staff visit the homes of the children. The parents are always welcome at the institution.

Having a positive environment is very important and they base this on having 'good intentions' the staff promote this, this parents see this and the children have 'good intentions' that require support and channelling.

Pedagogical philosophy promotes the notion that you draw on what has been learnt in life and from experience. It is important to discuss issues with the child even when they are angry and frustrated. Thirty-two different languages are spoken within the institution and there are ten Pedagogues that come from Turkey, Pakistan, Brazil and Spain. This is a positive thing as it is good to have different cultural influences. The staff work with the children in small groups. The staff need to be able to work independently with the children and the children must be included and communicated with positively.

Two trained Pedagogue staff have a Diploma in Family Work. All staff participate in CPD – life long learning is encouraged. Self-evaluation plays a key role in the work of the Pedagogues. The role of the Pedagogue has changed from that of only promoting learning through play to having a more interventionist approach.

The mission/vision of the institution is to be curious what is happening with the children and parents and for staff to be reflective and evaluative.

The parents are encouraged to be involved in the activities going on including going on outings and coming for meals.

A tour of the building gave the opportunity to see the facilities for the children. The building is large and has been divided into different sections relating to the ages of the children. The areas have facilities for art work, basic cooking, dressing-up and so on. Although is a residential area there is a large outdoor space where the children can play on climbing frames, ride an assortment of bikes, play in sandpits and on swings.

The kitchen for preparing food for the children is impressive and nutrition plays an important part in the life and work of the institution. A cook book has been written by the chef that includes nutrition for children.