

Integrating Wisdom

- *promoting wellness through the design of an intergenerational preschool* -

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Growing Together

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Thank You

Family & Friends

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Abstract

In early 2019, four per cent of the Swedish population reported feelings of loneliness, and almost four times as many (15 per cent) among those 75 and older (SCB, 2019). In Sweden, most interventions to reduce loneliness among the elderly focus on the individual or connecting with people of similar ages. However, recent studies have highlighted the effectiveness of intergenerational activities in reducing loneliness, as evidenced by successful collaborations between preschools and nursing homes (Kernan & Cortellesi, 2020; Drury et al., 2017).

This master's thesis presents an alternative to the increasingly popular collaborations between preschools and nursing homes that centres around seniors that live at home. The work continues to develop the concept of co-using preschool spaces to encourage intergenerational meetings and consequently improve the health and well-being of communities.

This master thesis highlights the benefits of intergenerational programmes. It explores the potential use of the preschool as a hub for intergenerational meetings through literature reviews, studies of reference projects and interviews with stakeholders. The research focuses on bringing generations together through co-use to support intergenerational learning and promote wellness among preschool children, seniors and staff.

The result of the investigation is a design proposal for a new preschool in Vättersnäs, Jönköping. The proposal includes multifunctional spaces for the community with a core focus on spatial qualities and layout for interactions between generations. Finally, this paper questions the current generational separation made in our society and highlights the benefits of blurring the line between them.

KEYWORDS

intergenerational, preschool, children, elderly, co-use

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INTRODUCTION

The introduction presents the problem statement to provide an outline and purpose for the thesis. Based on the problem statement, the choice of function is described and developed further into the aims and research question. The chapter also includes a description of the chosen research methods, scope and limitations of the work. The last part of the chapter briefly outlines the program to introduce the design proposal and support the understanding of the work.

Definitions

Arts & Culture School

In Sweden, there are different kinds of arts and culture schools that you can participate in depending on your age. The *School of Arts* (Kulturskolan) offers children between the ages 6 and 20 (varies between municipalities) group and individual classes for everything from music to arts and animation. For older people, private actors offer a variety of courses of different lengths and levels for beginners and advanced students. In the thesis, the term *Arts & Culture School* will be used to talk about overall education within arts and culture, for all ages.

Intergenerational

There are different ways to define intergenerational. One is that of Merriam-Webster (n.d.) as *"existing or occurring between generations"* (para. 1) which is a broad definition that does not imply a focus on any specific generation. Another, which is more commonly used in the field of intergenerational studies, and is used in this paper is that of Sally Newman (1997) as a term *"used to describe a social phenomenon that brings together the nation's oldest and youngest generations"*.

Intergenerational Learning (IGL)

Kernan & Cortellesi, authors of the book *Intergenerational Learning in Practice* (2020), define *intergenerational learning* as activities that fulfil the following three criteria;

1. involves more than one generation;
2. planned as a purposeful and progressive, mutually beneficial learning;
3. and promotes greater understanding and respect between generations and community cohesion.

Intergenerational Programme (IGP)

As defined by Sánchez & Kaplan (2019): *"An intergenerational program is a structured set of practices – not just one activity – implemented by people from different generations aimed at facilitating interaction and understanding between these people"* (para. 1). As stated in the definition, an IGP must include multiple activities. However, this include one-off events with structures that consists of multiple activities.

Wellness

The definition of *wellness* that will be used in this paper is: *"the active pursuit of activities, choices and lifestyles that lead to a state of holistic health"* (Global Wellness Institute, 2019, para. 2). In this definition, the emphasis is moved away from the physical and towards a complete view of health, including mental, emotional and social aspects. These aspects are just as important, if not even more so.



Photo: Grandfather and Nephew Fishing in the Lake (Giampieri, 2021)

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Problem Statement

A separated, lonely and ageing society

An increasing gap between generations, loneliness and a growing senior population are all significant issues that have affected the Swedish population since the beginning of the 21st century (Nilsson, 2002; SCB, 2022). Additionally, as we move toward a sustainable future where space in our cities becomes even more limited, the need for specialized areas is replaced by multifunctional ones.

A big part of spaces and activities in society is separated based on function and age. While there is a point in splitting the dog park from the playground to reduce potential harm to either party, why are we separating the playground from the outdoor gym and strictly dividing the education of arts based on age?

In Gothenburg, one strategy from the city to reduce loneliness and encourage chats between people of different ages is the addition of about twenty yellow benches in busy areas around the city (the City of Gothenburg, 2021). One can argue the idea that public benches will lead to conversations. However, the foundation for this concept - that talking can reduce loneliness - has been reported (the National Board of Health and Welfare, 2022; Thelander, 2020).

It is a well-known fact that we live longer lives today than ever before and, as a result, the elderly population is growing. Research also tells us that the senior population and the youth in Sweden are most affected by loneliness (SCB, 2019). Risk factors and causes of loneliness (especially among the elderly) include decreased social networks and physical abilities (the National Board of Health and Welfare, 2022).

Intergenerational programmes (IGPs) combine these aspects to create spaces and activities where people of different ages can interact - spontaneously or in organized activities. It decreases the gap between generations through interaction and conversation, facilitates conversation to reduce loneliness and becomes a space to nurture social and physical abilities.

Another significant benefit of IGPs from an environmental perspective is the opportunity to combine and decrease the required space for shared functions such as kitchens, activity rooms and staff areas.

There is a more extensive list of the benefits of IGPs overall and in relation to the program of the design proposal in the next chapter.

Choice of Function

Why a preschool?

Since the beginning of the 21st century, intergenerational programmes (IGPs) have gained more popularity in Sweden. Many existing preschools and nursing homes are making and/or strengthening connections. In the meantime, many new developments put preschools and nursing homes close to each other or even in the same building. The recent trend may be an outcome of different reasons; the spatial limits of the cities that require more efficient spatial use, the recent increase in studies regarding IGPs in Sweden and the public attention on the concept after the release of the docuseries *The 4-Year-Olds at the Nursing Home* (TV4, 2019).

The efforts already made and those underway have been appreciated by the children, elderly and staff (Melin, 2019; TV4, 2019). However, the focus on conducting IGPs at or in collaboration with nursing homes excludes a big part of the senior population since 97 per cent of people above 60 do not live in nursing homes (SCB, 2022). As a result, the focus of the thesis project shifted towards the preschool as a starting point for the exploration of designing spaces for IG meetings.

It is not uncommon for preschools in Sweden to collaborate with other organizations like the School of Arts to organize activities for the children or to let spaces for art classes after hours, such as the atelier. In addition, as most municipal preschools and schools provide food from the same supplier, it is common for some kitchens to make food for multiple schools/preschools. Working on this concept and the notion that some elderly that live at home are supplied with meals daily (Jönköping Municipality, 2020), expanding the size of the kitchen can benefit the local community. The kitchen can be a new hub in the local area, and people of all ages in the neighbourhood can come by for a hot meal or two throughout the day. Not to mention how it can naturally become a central meeting space in a small community.

Combining these two aspects, the preschool becomes a prominent candidate for the site of a new type of IGP for the elderly who live at home.

Photo: Rainbow Craft (Heery, 2021)

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Thesis Framework

Aim

The aim is to explore intergenerational meeting spaces on the wellness of the children, staff and elderly in an urban area. The thesis studies intergenerational learning (IGL) along with modern implementations of the intergenerational practices in Sweden to guide the design of an intergenerational preschool in Vättersnäs, Jönköping.

Thesis question

Can wellness be promoted by the design of intergenerational spaces in the form of a preschool? What functions could be integrated as part of the design?

Objectives

The thesis will explore IGPs to find the benefits that they produce, the scope of activities that can be part of programmes and any reported concerns to address. It will study the spatial requirements and solutions to determine a layout and significant design features to consider in the spatial design that can promote wellness through IG practices.

Scope and delimitations

The target demographic of the thesis is children, seniors and staff. Even so, the nature of the project (a design proposal for a preschool with additional meeting spaces for seniors and the community) presents two more user groups - caregivers and local visitors. The theory and design of the thesis address all user groups, but the focus of the work will remain on the three target groups.

Since the inception of the first IGL programmes, the initiative has addressed social, economic, and political issues (Sánchez & Kaplan, 2019). Though many programmes have since shown economic and political benefits (Boström, 2009; Newman, 1997), the discussion focuses on the social aspects. Overarching requirements of accessibility and fire safety have been taken into account in the design but are part of the discussion of the thesis. Additionally, there are no discussions regarding the construction, sustainability and detailed solutions.

The thesis intends to develop a design of spaces for children and elders alike. Thereby, the concept and spatial qualities of the indoor environment will be central in the resulting illustrations of the project.

Method

The work presented in this thesis developed through the implementation of a research-based design. The theory behind the design proposal includes literature reviews, a survey, design by research and more. The thorough research process created a stable foundation for implementation, where the findings were examined and implemented in the building proposal. The process began with a comprehensive literature review before moving into an iterative process of design work and studying theory.

Literature studies

Articles, books, and publications on the topic of intergenerational programs and spaces for children and seniors were reviewed to understand the characteristics and limitations of programmes and their spatial needs. Official documents regarding preschools, the site and previous investments were studied to select the location and define the program.

Survey of the community

To include some thoughts from the community, a survey on their wants for the area and connections to previous communal spaces were used. The findings of which are in the theory section.

Interviews with stakeholders

Stakeholders from the School of Arts (Kulturskolan) and the Seniors House (Seniorernas Hus) were interviewed to develop the understanding and needs of these functions and to determine if this kind of collaboration would be plausible.

Reference projects

By studying reference projects, relevant projects were chosen to be a foundational guide for the spatial design and mix of functions.

Study visits

Additional understanding and conditions of the plot and its surrounding area were gathered through multiple study visits at different times during the day and year. Findings from the study visits are in the site section.

Program

The preschool makes up the foundation of the program. To integrate the senior population into the daily activities of the preschool (left) changes to the program are required. Firstly, the kitchen is expanded to fit a dine-in restaurant (right) that can support takeaway and meal delivery services to the local senior

population. Moreover, spaces for intergenerational activities are added in the form of multi-functional spaces to be used by seniors during the day and the School of Arts in the afternoon/evening.



BACKGROUND

This chapter explores the concept of IGPs starting with the history, both nationally and internationally, and landing in the benefits and concerns highlighted by multiple studies and reports to the key aspects to consider for a successful IGP.

This chapter also studies research on the design for different users of IG practices - the similarities and differences and how these can be combined to create inclusive spaces.

The discussion of spatial design is done in relation to the location of the chosen site, though the motivation for the location is explored more in-depth in the following chapter.

Intergenerational Programs

Background

As identified in the previous chapter, IGPs can include a wide range of activities that engage people from different generations with the intention to facilitate interaction and understanding between them (Sánchez & Kaplan, 2019). In the following pages, there's information about the history of IGL and IGPs, the description of a few example projects, different perspectives, concerns and aspects to consider for a successful project.

Intergenerational Programmes Internationally

Intergenerational learning (IGL) is the oldest learning method, where knowledge, skills, values and norms are transferred between generations, typically within a family (Kernan & Cortellesi, 2020). Intergenerational programmes are, in comparison, a newer term that has been used to describe spontaneous IGPs in the United States since before the 1980s (Newman, 1997). According to Newman (1997), IGPs were a solution to the ongoing discussions of geographic separation of families, lack of childcare and a growing senior population.

About a decade later, a new model of IGL - extra-familial IGL - was introduced to include a broader social group to contribute to the socialization and development of relationships of the young (Kernan & Cortellesi, 2020). This new model of learning, being lifelong and life-wide, has continued to be developed into the programmes that are in use today. Lifelong learning and the IGL recognize the value of informal, non-formal and formal education.

One of the first intergenerational learning centres (ILC) to open on a bigger scale in the United States is Mount St. Vincent in Seattle, soon after more ILCs opened up around the States and internationally.

Intergenerational Programmes in Sweden

In the last couple of years, the IGL concept has increased in popularity in Sweden. As cities grow, the incentives of placing preschools and senior housing together increase (Nilsson, 2019). According to Åsa Jernbom, planning secretary at the social services in Umeå Municipality, the benefits of locating the two functions in the same building are many (SVT, 2017). From a financial perspective, there is a possibility of combining kitchens to reduce space and staff, in addition to having full-time maintenance personnel rather than part-time. Some of the social qualities of previous projects that Jernbom highlights in the interview include a square where the old and young can meet and a greenhouse to grow vegetables and plants together.



Photo: Old Man and Child Watering Plants (OPPO, 2022) >



Reference projects

Providence Mount St. Vincent, Seattle

Since its opening in the early 90s, the centre has won an award for its work (Providence, n.d.) caring for more than 1 000 children and more than 3 000 seniors (Flash, 2015). The centre adopts organized and spontaneous activities between participants as part of the learning experience (Providence, n.d.). On their website, Providence Mount St. Vincent emphasizes some of the many benefits to the participants of the programmes including becoming part of an extended family, learning about the ageing process, and the ability to serve as a role model (n.d.).

Nightingale House, London

The first IGP at Nightingale House began almost 30 years ago, through collaboration between the preschool and nursing home located on the same site in the city (Somers, 2019). According to Dr Ali Somers (2019), in 2017, a new model of IGL was introduced that included more regular, organized sessions that the residents and preschool children could partake in any day of the week. Studies on the new model found that the programme impacted all residents and had a lasting effect independent of how often they would partake in activities (Somers, 2019). In addition, they found the literacy and numeracy sessions to be a unique and beneficial kind of cognitive stimulation.

Activities

The two previously mentioned reference projects employed a variety of activities within their programmes, including art, baking, reading, making music, fun exercises and recreational games (Providence, 2018; Flash, 2015). As to not limit the types of activities and ways of conducting IGPs, below is a more extensive list of activities for ongoing programmes or one-off events.

- Recycling of waste materials
- Sewing, creative and functional (e.g. mending clothes)
- Learning how to use the Internet and digital gadgets
- Cooking traditional meals to celebrate the heritage
- Theatre or video creation
- Summer camps
- Sports events/competitions
- Talent show
- Volunteering (e.g. by making sandwiches for the homeless)
- Going on an excursion (e.g. to the nearby park or the local library)
- Watching theatre or movie
- Meeting animals
- Choir

(Kernan & Cortellesi, 2020; Somers, 2019; Drury et al., 2017)

< Photo: Old Woman and Children Reading (Nightingale Hammerson, 2022)

The child perspective



Benefits

The benefits experienced by child participants can be quite different from those experienced by the older participants. They are less likely to suffer from loneliness which is very common among the elderly (SCB, 2022). On the other hand, children are more inclined to shape their attitudes and understanding of the world in these sessions. Below is a more expansive list of the benefits recorded by young participants in studies on IGPs:

- promotes a variety of role models of different ages and abilities;
- gives a positive and realistic portrayal of aging as a normal process that is part of life;
- reduces fear of older adults, abilities and disabilities;
- broadens perspective of family lives;
- make children feel as if they have substitute grandparents close by;
- creates an opportunity to give and feel needed;
- presents an adult "playmate" who is not responsible for the child's behaviour;
- helps eliminate stereotyping and reduces ageism;
- learns about traditions;
- and improves helpful behaviour

(Kernan & Cortellesi, 2020; Drury et al., 2017; Somers, 2019)

The elderly perspective



Benefits

From the perspective of the elderly, the list of benefits from participating in IGPs covers a broad range of areas and can be effective even for people who are near death (Somers, 2019). The practice does not only impact the participants wellness day-to-day but have also been shown to have lasting effects on cognition and aid in the treatment of depression and reduce signs of dementia (Somers, 2019). More benefits that have been reported for the senior participants in the studies on IGPs include:

- the opportunity to be a role model and to be and feel needed;
- becoming reintegrated into family life;
- the rekindling of their sense of wonder and humor;
- renews value for past life experiences;
- increasing sense of purpose and normality;
- reminders of their children and grandchildren when they were little;
- stimulation of the cognitive abilities;
- decreases loneliness;
- comfort and relief by reminiscing;
- increased physical abilities;
- and building relationships and friendships

(Kernan & Cortellesi, 2020; Drury et al., 2017; Somers, 2019)

Recommendations to reduce loneliness

In 2022, the National Board of Social Affairs and Health published a report on involuntary loneliness in the senior population and evidence-based interventions to reduce it. In the report, a range of studies on involuntary loneliness among elderly who still lived at home. Some of the findings that were made include:

- physical activity including a social element is the most effective (e.g. stretching, gardening and walks)
- that the activities that were the most effective were directed toward a specific group of people (e.g. those who are physically inactive) and allowed the participants to be part of the planning

Lastly, the report also advised for collaborations with local associations to increase the number of activities offered.

To conclude, some of the recommendations made by the National Board of Social Affairs and Health (2022) are easily connected with the activities that can occur within the scope of or in connection with IGPs.

The staff perspective



Benefits

A traditional way to set up IGPs is through a collaboration between a local preschool and nursing home. The activities between the two are then often taking place at the assisted living facility. As a result, the recorded benefits of staff is often grouped together and difficult to distinguish between. In the list below, this has been taken somewhat into consideration to exclude benefits that are obvious as to not concern preschool staff which is the target group for this research.

- convenient, high quality child care;
- extra joy and vibrancy;
- inspired to create intergenerational connections in their own families and neighbourhoods;
- more positive attitudes towards other people;
- higher job satisfaction;
- promotes cooperation between staff of different ages;
- and many benefits similar to those of the elderly

(Kernan & Cortellesi, 2020; Drury et al., 2017; Lepičnik Vodopivec et al., 2022)

Considerations

From the perspective of staff that are involved in IGPs (both nursery and nursing home staff) multiple studies have highlighted a few points to consider or do before starting an intergenerational programme.

In a report by Smart & Airey (2015) one area of possible skills enhancement was training. Staff from some programmes reported little to no training outside of their area of expertise (for example nursery staff not receiving any training on aged care). While the amount of training needed might be reduced in programmes for elderly living at home, some training to reduce accidents and promote confidence among staff could be beneficial.

Nursery and nursing home staff, that had been part of IGPs, gave the following advice to people starting similar initiatives:

- build integrated spaces to share more social time,
- plan each session - what you want to achieve, the environment, and the placing of children and elderly, and
- start small and allow the staff team to witness the benefits and build up gradually.

(Somers, 2019)

The community perspective



Benefits

IGL theory emphasizes the role of non-familial relationships with older adults and the transfer of information between generations (Kernan & Cortellesi, 2020). The connection that can be achieved in places where generations are separated can be invaluable for individuals and for the community as a whole. The list below highlight some of the reported benefits that IGPs can have on communities.

- closer ties and friendships with the community
- promotes partnerships among different groups/organisations
- breaks down stereotypes and barriers that exist between generations
- enhances traditions and culture of communities

(Kernan & Cortellesi, 2020)

Considerations

To improve the impact of IGPs in communities, Kernan & Cortellesi (2020) recommended people starting new programmes to establish strong connections between leaders in the community who are committed to the concept. Once initiated, the programmes are able to grow by inviting local schools and nursing homes to visit and engage in planned activities. Kernan & Cortellesi (2020) discussed the inclusion of middle and high school students as participating in the programme or through volunteering efforts to organize different events.

As the term IGP and IGL can be new for many people, it is important that information about the programmes are visible in public places. Explaining the concept and what can be gained from being a participant.



Concerns

Before the initiation of a new IGP, it is only natural that some concerns are raised. According to Kernan & Cortellesi (2020) one common issue for the initiation of IGLs is that they require patience, time, energy and funding. Whereas, concerns regarding the participants are generally limited to ensuring that the participation is optional and that they are able to sit back and watch or leave if they want to (Kernan & Cortellesi, 2020).

In the review of IGPs by Airey & Smart (2015), some of the concerns that was raised by Wegmiller in response to the initiation of an IGP were:

Infection control

The concern was raised in regard to the potential cross-contamination and the risks it may pose to children and elders alike for being 'at risk' for developing complications through illnesses. In practice though, as all participants who feel unwell are mandated to refrain from any activities, this has been effective in controlling the spread of infections.

Hazards of elder aids

The young participants of IGPs are supervised at all times. In the programme that was reviewed children were frequently encouraged to observe their movements and not to run around the elders. The researchers noted that the children were very careful around the equipment and were not afraid to sit with people in wheelchairs or who needed oxygen therapy.

Lack of elderly participants

Some stakeholders and parts of the community questioned why the elderly would want to be around other peoples children after having raised their own. While this was one of the most significant barriers to the programme, by introducing them to another local IGP they were impressed by the high degree of participation in the voluntary programme. They could witness the programmes and engagement from both elders and children.

Additionally, one concern that cropped in discussions about my work throughout this process was the safety of the children. To participate in any activity involving preschool children in Sweden, you are required to provide a copy of your criminal record (The Police, 2023), this will be no different. The activities will take place in spaces that can be supervised by teachers and that are separate from the "regular" activities of the preschool to ensure that the participation is voluntary for both children and elderly.

< Photo: Man in Wheelchair (John, 2021)

Key aspects

The concept of IGPs can, as previously mentioned, involve a wide range of activities. However, reviews of a variety of IGPs have found a few key aspects that can determine the success of an IGP. These key aspects include the following:

Equal status

One aspect many unsuccessful programmes have in common is the potential unequal status between the different groups of participants (Drury et al., 2017). The inequality between participants can impact the behaviours and the resulting attitudes. To ensure equal status of participants; activities should occur on comparable terms. In an environment that is as familiar or unfamiliar to both parties and with a task that does not communicate negative stereotypes (Drury et al., 2017).

Close contact

Another is the lack of opportunities for the participants to engage in close contact with each other (Drury et al., 2017). To improve the chance of close contact between target groups it is vital to ensure that anxieties regarding contact are insignificant and that the chosen activities facilitate communication. The connection should focus on meaningful engagements and the sharing of personal sentiments in addition to enticing participants to look past stereotypes (Drury et al., 2017).

Attitudes versus stereotypes

The review by Drury et al. (2017) also found that programmes tended to be more successful when focused on changing the attitudes toward the elderly participants rather than the stereotypes. The deep roots of stereotypes are likely contributing to the increased difficulty of changing them, compared to attitudes. Fighting against negative stereotypes and keeping an equal status by engaging in activities that can showcase the strengths of both groups can be beneficial.

Contact frequency

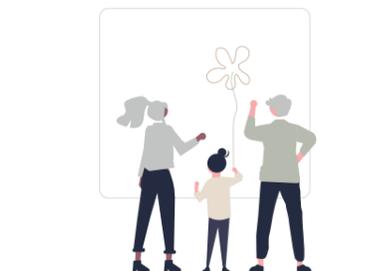
The contact frequency can impact the closeness between participants (Drury et al., 2017). In ideal situations, meetings should occur frequently over a period of time. However, this does not negate the benefits of short programmes, as they can also be successful if they are sufficiently intense. In the report by Drury et al. (2017), one programme that took place over the span of just five hours was successful in strengthening bonds and improving attitudes towards people of different ages.



Equal Status



Attitudes versus stereotypes



Close contact



Contact frequency



Spatial Design

General

The spatial design of intergenerational spaces in the form of a preschool must take into account the recommendations and requirements for three target groups: children, elderly, and staff. Many of the requirements can be very similar while others can differ quite a lot. As stated in the limitations; the overarching requirements of accessibility and fire safety have been taken into account in the design but will not be discussed as part of the thesis work.

The following part of the work will begin with an introduction of the similarities for the different target groups and spaces. Then, the different spaces will be described and the recommendations for different target groups and perspectives of different stakeholders explained.

Common recommendations

The recommendations for the design of public spaces for different age groups are in many ways quite similar. Generally, people of all ages can benefit from spaces that are:

- easy to navigate: through a clear layout of spaces and colours or textures to describe different areas,
- designed to highlight the different parts of the room (for example door placement in glass partitions) to enhance safety and well-being,

- fitted with adjustable lighting for different situations and activities to avoid glare and improve visibility,
- equipped with chairs that allow for children and elderly to be comfortable at the same height to ensure that they are heard and seen,
- designed for easy access of equipment and material for both children and adults, with or without mobility aids, and
- made to let in daylight and allow everyone to view the outside
- neutral in their design, to be inviting for different target groups and for them not to feel displaced in the space,

(Fridell Anter & Klarén, 2014; Körnekull, 2011; Somers, 2019; Kernan & Cortellesi, 2020)

< Illustration: Speech Bubbles (Freepik, n.d.)

< Photo: Kindergarten Design: Blockwall (REEL Studio, 2022)

Arts and Culture School

The grouping of spaces for the arts and culture school include the spaces that are to be used as part of the education, exhibition and down time between classes. These can vary a lot in design with the exhibition spaces being an open space for display of art, classrooms being closed of and of different size with furniture to sit down at and finally the down time area which should encompass space to study/work as well as to hang out with other people.

Target groups

Children

Aspects to take into consideration for the children include the size of furniture to allow them to sit and engage in activities at a table, sill height of windows to allow them to view the outside, having supplies at their level to allow independence and boost creativity. Attention must also be given to the placement of objects in the room to reduce safety hazards of objects falling or can be tripped over. The distance between these spaces and the preschool must also be taken into consideration, as well as the path to them to allow easy access throughout the day.

Elderly

As previously mentioned, the sizes and heights of furniture must be considered, in addition to making space for mobility aids to be used and/or placed to the side depending on the activity.

Older people are more prone to decreased vision and hearing, increasing the importance of good lighting and acoustics in the spaces (Fridell Anter & Klarén, 2014). In larger spaces for gatherings, hörselslingor could be used to ensure the hearing of viewers / participants (Kärnekull, 2011).

Staff

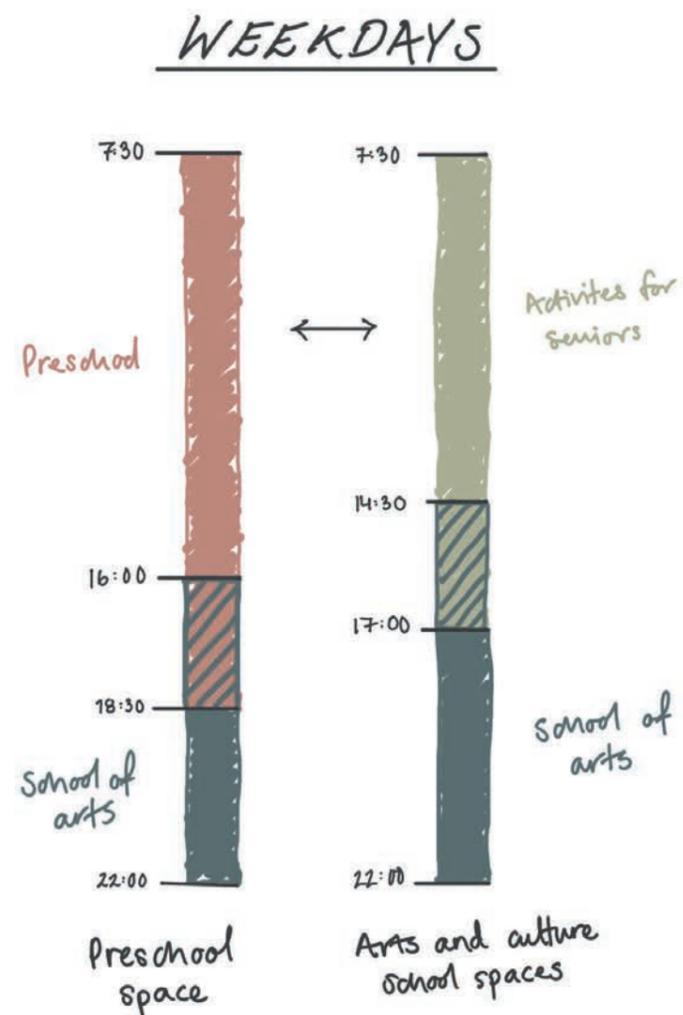
The staff must be able to get a feel for the room easily and find the things that they need, in addition to having an ease to change the layout of rooms for different activities - i.e. using lightweight or flexible furniture.

Part of the recommendations for achieving successful IGPs were the need for planning ahead of time (Somers, 2019). Thus, in connection to activity rooms there should be spaces for staff to plan activities that are available for preschool teachers and staff from the arts and culture school.

It should also be possible to easily reach other personnel in case of an emergency, placing activity rooms close to each other and in connection with other functions (e.g. admin areas).



Photo: A Young Boy Sitting on a Blue Chair in Front of a Painting Photo (Ybañez, 2022) >



Stakeholders

The School of Arts

As the role and supply of classes varies between municipalities and from year to year, an interview with the premises manager at the School of Arts, Jönköping, Fredrik Blomster was conducted.

As the popularity, teacher availability and participants change from one school year to the next, the spatial needs of the school do as well (Blomster, personal communication, February 9, 2023). Fredrik expressed that for new spaces, they look for hybrid spaces that can work for multiple activities similar to the spaces at N3 in Trollhättan. Their ideal rooms would work for everything from arts to dance. In addition, the studios would need to support individual, dual and group education and would preferably be available for rent between classes.

Today, the school of arts in Jönköping exist in 90 different locations, but there is a desire from the school's side to locate their spaces more closely to each other for the safety of children and staff as well as allow for a janitor to easily access and care for the building (Blomster, personal communication, February 9, 2023). Though the emphasis is on making the schools safe for children during the day, they can become eerie as people leave in the evenings.

< Illustration: Diagram of spatial use over a day (Author, 2023)

Additionally, when talking about the co-use of spaces for preschools and the school of arts is that the education has to start around 14:30 - 15:00 not to make the days of the educators too long (Blomster, personal communication, February 9, 2023). Fredrik adds why elementary schools and the spaces for the youngest children are most suited for this co-use.

Though combining activities for different age groups is growing in popularity and could be interesting, the school of arts is only allowed to organize activities for young people (until 20 years old). After that, the study association, education for adults (studieförbundet vuxenskolan in Swedish) take over. Nonetheless, the previously mentioned N3 in Trollhättan works with both (Blomster, personal communication, February 9, 2023).

Seniors House

Elder care consultants (Äldrekonsulenter) aim to create conditions for the elderly to meet, through different cultural programs that can lead to a meaningful everyday life (Jönköping Municipality, n.d.). In an interview with Ing-Marie Jonson, she described her work as an elder care consultant in Jönköping and their collaborations with local preschools. The work that she does and However, some cultural programs include children, such as letter writing, singing and holiday celebrations (I.-M. Jonsson, personal communication, February 15, 2023).

Ing-Marie expressed that depending on the location and organiser of events, the difficulties of collaborating with the elderly and preschool children can vary (personal communication, February 15, 2023). Those that do, however, include activities such as letter writing, singing and holiday celebrations. She continued to say that she believed the efforts to combine the elderly and children to be very positive. However, the recent pandemic put a temporary stop to the introduction of new IGL programmes.

Even though we tend to lump the older generations together, the elderly are far from a homogenous group. The difference between a 60 and a 95-year-old is 35 years. The vast age difference will not only affect their interests, but also their capabilities, which the activities should reflect (I.-M. Jonsson, personal communication, February 15, 2023).

From her experience, Ing-Marie said that a majority of the elderly tend to walk to the activities, but some are not able to and need access to other types of transportation (personal communication, February 15, 2023). However, according to Ing-Marie, their lack of permanent spaces means that the activities can mean that different activities take place in various places around the city. This can be viewed as a positive, as it allows the venues to come closer to the people. But it may also make them more difficult to attend if they are suddenly farther away, if the next location is forgotten or inaccessible for people in wheelchairs, hard of hearing or decreased vision, making them less likely to attend.

The goal of the elder care consultants is to make the everyday lives of the elderly more meaningful by trying to reach out to as many as possible. One practical example of this is the implementation of services that drive to the homes of the elderly to take them to activities (I.-M. Jonsson, personal communication, February 15, 2023).

On the topic of the location of activities, Ing-Marie was asked about her views on the site for the design proposal to which she was overwhelmingly positive. She brought up the closeness to nature and Vättern, the links to both Jönköping, Huskvarna, and Österängen where there is a large senior population and the new secure housing (trygghetsboende in Swedish) in Vättersnäs (I.-M. Jonsson, personal communication, February 15, 2023).

Other

Finally, the spatial design of the arts and culture school must take into consideration the main user of rooms as part of the design. Spaces that are part of the daily function of the preschool should be considerate of the children and emphasize that user while not negatively affecting other user experiences.

Pedagogical kitchen & restaurant

In the pedagogical and public restaurant people of different ages can meet, communicate and learn about foods. They are different in ways that the pedagogical kitchen is used by a selected group of people at a time while the restaurant is open for a continuous flow of people. Nonetheless, both spaces must be designed to cater to one or more target groups at once.

Children

Children begin to develop taste preferences as early as in a fetal stage and preferences that are set in early childhood can be preserved for the rest of their lives (Mennella, 2014). Multiple factors can have an impact on preschool children's eating habits and taste preferences including genetics, development and family (Sepp et al., 2016).

The participation in the growth and preparation of foods had a positive impact on children's food intake (Sepp et al., 2016). Emphasizing the use and need of a pedagogical kitchen in preschools that allow for children to be part of the meal preparations. In addition, Sepp et al. (2016) found one common denominator in multiple studies to be that many preschool teachers experienced the meals as routine and stressful due to time constraints yet very positive to the inclusion of nutrition education (måltidspedagogik).

In a review of research regarding children's eating habits it was found that strategies that repeated exposure to foods, active participation in discussions and education while eating and methods to include the family were somewhat effective. However, by

combining a variety of methods, they became more impactful altogether (Sepp et al., 2016). Others argue that inclusion of adult role models, intriguing presentation and proper setting can allow for children to learn to eat almost anything (Sepp et al., 2016). To that end, what aspects make for a "proper setting"?

- Good acoustics, research has found that children eating in noisy environments consume less food
- A school garden that can supply the facility with fresh, locally produced resources that can be accessed by the local community
- Pedagogical kitchens with areas conducive for teaching, presenting and demonstration of cooking that can be viewed and utilized by children
- The serving area should provide space for multiple healthy choices in each food category
- Salad bars positioned away from walls allowing access from any direction
- A variety in seating, not every child is comfortable in a set seating configuration

(Woolner & Hall, 2010; Huang et al., 2013)

Elderly

In the book *Building for Seniors* (Kärnekull, 2011), the author discusses a variety of strategies to create anticipation for a meal, for seniors in particular, through the use of architecture and design. The challenge lies in the vast differences between a "usual" restaurant compared to one designed for the elderly. In the text, Kärnekull describes the process by listing a few points to consider:

- Know and understand the target groups needs and requirements
- Design the functions and flows. How can the logistics be understood? Where to sit and where to place mobility aids?
- A buffet can be a good stimulation for seniors as it can support spontaneity, movement and interest to try a greater variety of foods
- The furniture should support communication and have different characteristics such as being lightweight, sturdy and/or comfortable.
- Colour, light, sounds (acoustics) are important especially in contrasts which can signal boundaries between functions or spaces

In connection with the pedagogical kitchen, the restaurant can provide many different eating opportunities for the elderly in the local community:

- having a meal in the restaurant by themselves or with family/friends,
- getting takeaway to enjoy at home or outside, in nature,
- possibility to participate in an IGP and cook and dine with the children,
- taking a cooking class together with other people in the community, or
- renting the space for events or larger meals with family and friends.

Staff

In the pedagogical kitchen it is important that the staff can feel safe in letting the children participate in the preparation of foods by ensuring that drawers with sharp tools are inaccessible and that appliances are on timers and/or need a key to be supplied by electricity. Secondly, the spaces, like any other must assure that staff can be in a good working position while assisting the children. Finally, the ease of reorganisation and cleaning of spaces should be prioritized.

SITE

The following chapter will introduce the site and the event that initiated the idea of working with a preschool in Vättersnäs, Jönköping. It outlines the need for a preschool in the area and the criterias that was taken into consideration in the selection process. An analysis of the chosen site is also presented with key points on the plot and in the surrounding area are defined.

The Ansgarii Church & Vättersnäs Preschool

In the early morning hours on the third of August, 2021, firefighters were called to a fire in Vättersnäs, Jönköping. A couple of hours later, the fire had been contained and put out. What was left on the site was the shell of what had previously been the Ansgarii church and Vättersnäs preschool.

The fire had a big impact on me as it had been a place I had spent a lot of time throughout my childhood. From the time when I started preschool until the third grade when I switched schools I had spent time there almost everyday, full time or after school.

In the following years, the visits were much less frequent, though it remained a place that felt inviting to me and others in the community. An example being the time I walked home from school with a couple of friends, but since we had walked so slowly they needed a toilet break and went into the church, though it was only about a 10 minute walk home.

As I began thinking of my master thesis, in the autumn of 2022, I couldn't stop thinking of the fire and loss of a church and preschool that had meant so much to me. By then, the church who were the owners of the plot, had already begun the work to create new, temporary, spaces for their daily operations. The preschool has relocated to another site about 3 km away, in Huskvarna (Vättersnäs Preschool, n.d.).

In my communication with the church, I was told that the relocation of the preschool was seen as a loss for the area by residents (J. Johansson, personal communication, 2022). Thus, the opportunity to create new spaces for a preschool had a strong influence on this thesis work.





Jönköping

57° 46' 53.22" N 14° 09' 22.25" E

The ninth biggest city in Sweden, Jönköping is located along the southern shores of lake Vättern. Offering a vibrant city pulse by the water, beach life and nature on its doorstep (Destination Jönköping, 2017). The city is also strategically located between the three largest cities in Sweden which can be easily reached by car, bus or train. The nature is an important part of the city, with beaches in the centre, many hiking trails and numerous parks in and around the city.

East of the city centre, lies the old mill town of Huskvarna that has a rich industrial history as a manufacturer of weapons, appliances and vehicles since the 17th century (Destination Jönköping, 2017). The town centre is located farther from the water but close to Kåvasjön, which is connected to lake Vättern. The centre is closely connected to Jönköping by bus, car, and biking paths that can take you around the whole of Vättern.

Vättersnäs

57° 47' 30" N 14° 15' 0" E

Nestled between Jönköping and Huskvarna, along the shoreline of Vättern, is the residential area Vättersnäs. The area consists largely of single-family homes, though multifamily homes and row houses can be seen in the north western and south eastern parts. In the east, toward Huskvarna, a variety of industries and businesses has been gradually added over time (Jönköping Municipality, n.d.).

Today, the area is framed by the lake in the north, the highway in the south-east and the stream *Skrämmabäcken*, and the event and sports area of Elmia in the west. The development of Vättersnäs today largely follows the cityplan proposed by Per Olof Hallman in 1913 (Jönköping Municipality, n.d.). Hallmans intentions were to develop a cityplan that could achieve an organic emergence and development of the buildings in the area which was virtually achieved.

Within the limits of Vättersnäs, there is a range of functions from parks and churches to hairdressers and two furniture stores. It is also well-connected to surrounding services such as a fast-food restaurant, grocery store, sports arena and indoor swimming pool only a 15-20 minute walk away. On a larger scale, the area is connected via bike paths and a main busline to both Huskvarna & Jönköping which is used by many residents.

The area of Vättersnäs is mostly very calm, with some through-traffic on the larger street, Huskvarnavägen, that connects Jönköping and Huskvarna, though most traffic between Huskvarna and Jönköping utilizes the highway.

Bus 4 / Huskvarnavägen

Highway

Biking / Walking Path

Nature

Bus Stop

Recreation / Sports

Public Services

Commercial Services

Map: Min Karta © Lantmäteriet (n.d.)





Proposed New Developments

In the beginning of 2023, the municipal council in Jönköping adopted a new masterplan for the urban center of Jönköping (Jönköping Municipality, 2023b). The new masterplan is designed to support the expected growth in population and for the city to reach 200 000 inhabitants by the year 2050. In the new masterplan, three areas in Vätternsäs are defined as strategical areas for new development (illustrated on the map to the left). Along the southern shores of Vättern, the location would be fit for possible residential or park developments in the future (Jönköping Municipality, 2023b). The possibility of developing these areas in such way depends on the relocation of the water treatment plan that is located in part of the two areas in the north. Though there are no current active plans to close down or move the water treatment facility (Jönköping Municipality, 2023b), the ongoing discussion about a possible move is foundation enough for these sites to be treated as possible locations for new development as part of this thesis work

In addition to the new masterplan for the urban center of Jönköping that is affecting Vätternsäs,

proposals for a revised detail plan of Utkastet 3 intend to enable a change to the plot from industry to housing (Jönköping Municipality, 2022b). One part of the proposed revisions to the detail plan include an illustration of possible new developments on the site which is illustrated on the map to the left. The new developments are in the shape of multi-family homes of up till 4 floors that would fit approximately 300 - 400 new apartments (Jönköping Municipality, 2022b). According to Jönköping Municipality (2022b), the work of assessing the detail plan is set to start in 2027 at the earliest and to be approved 1,5 - 2 years after that.

The approval and construction of these new multi-family homes, according to the proposed illustration in the revised detail plan (Jönköping Municipality, 2022b) is part of the conditions for the continual work as it is likely to be constructed before the water treatment plan is relocated.

 Expansion Strategy 200 000 Inhabitants

 Proposed Detail plan, Utkastet 3

< Map credit: Min Karta © Lantmäteriet (n.d.)

Criteria for Site Selection

In the beginning, the location for the intergenerational preschool was intended to be the same as it had always been, Huskvarnavägen 86, Jönköping. As the work began the many issues with the site, in regards to it being a site for a preschool, began piling up. The plot is too small, about 3 700 m² (Hitta.se, n.d.), to fit the recommended 3 000 m² outdoor space for a preschool (the Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning, 2021). It is also located too close to the highway for noise (Jönköping Municipality, 2023) and security reasons (Jönköping Municipality, 2016). To reestablish the focus of the thesis on IGPs rather than on the site itself, a search for a new site within Vättersnäs began.

The selection of a site was made based on the criteria stated on the opposite page. These criteria were established based on the list of strategies for ageing communities in the report *Cities Alive - Designing for Ageing Communities* by ARUP (2019) and official documents from the Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning, and Jönköping municipality.

¹ ARUP (2019) >

² The Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning, (2021) >

³ Jönköping Municipality (2016) >

AUTONOMY & INDEPENDENCE



Easy to find¹



Walkable¹



Connected to transport¹
(bike/bus/car)

HEALTH & WELLNESS



Connected to nature¹



Close to recreational areas¹



Large enough²

SECURITY & RESILIENCE



Safe to get to¹



*Outside security distance
from the highway³*

Site Selection

Based on the site criteria presented on the previous spread, and the proposed new developments in the area (removal of industries and expansion of residential areas) three possible locations appear.

Site 1

The site located along the route of the mainline 4 (Huskvarnavägen), with close connections to recreational areas and nature in the north. Nonetheless, the site can be difficult to reach by car, for drop-off and deliveries. It is located 1-2 metres above the road to the south (Huskvarnavägen). In the west, there is a stream and in the east row houses block most potential entry points.

Site 2

The second site is located on a beautiful open field close to the beach, a football field and a playground. Though it is not situated along the main road, it is not far away and only a 5 minute walk from the nearest busstop. This field is very cherished by the residents who has pushed back most attempts to build anything on the field. Nonetheless, in the autumn

of 2022, two volumes in the north-western part of the field stood completed. The volumes contain 35 apartments for people 70 years and older (Kamelia, 2021). By locating a new preschool here, traffic flows would increase and many of the qualities that the field has presented resident will go to waste; views of the water, an extension of the beach and site for kids play in the spring and summer.

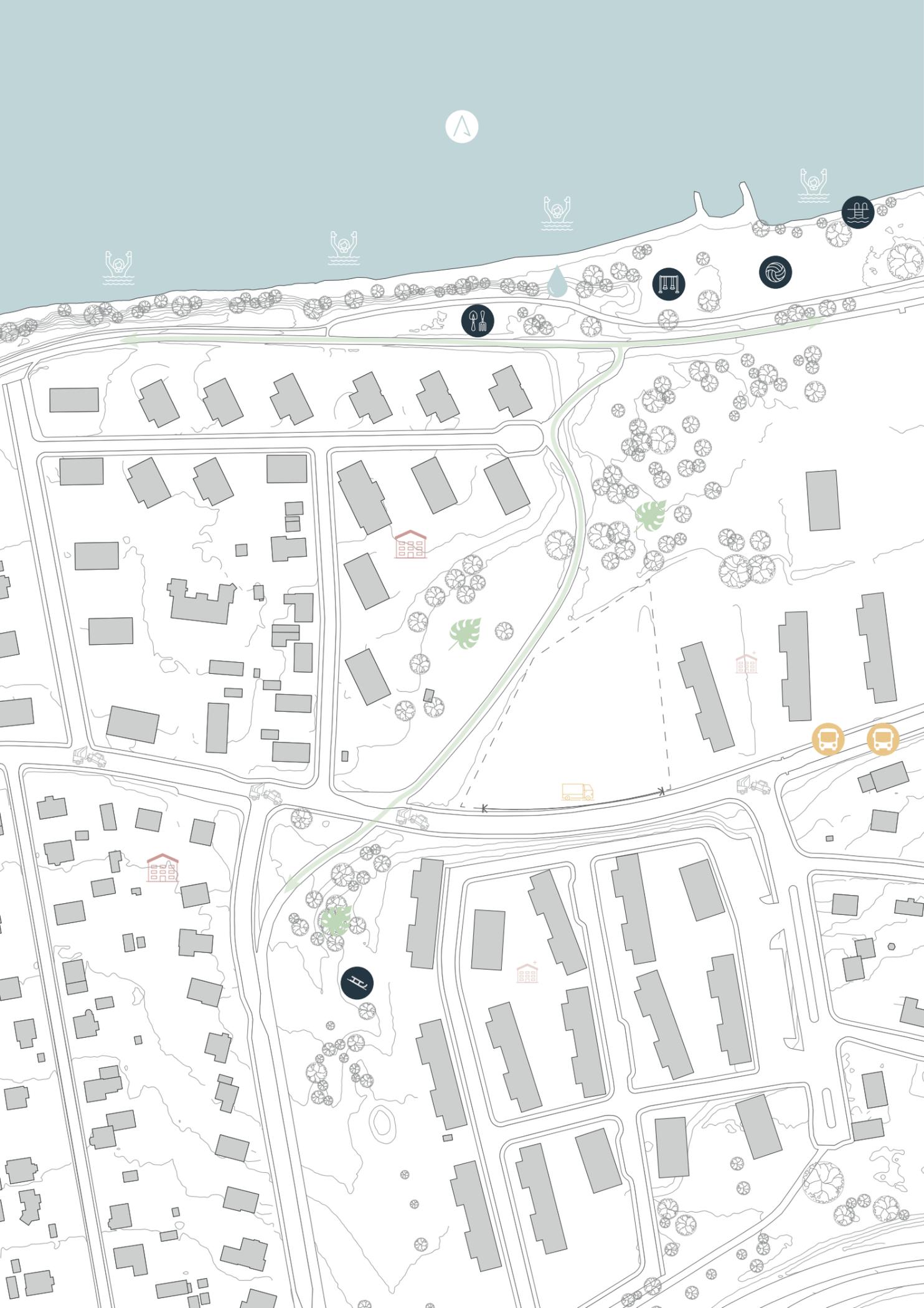
Site 3

The last of the three possible sites is located next to a bus stop and along the paths that lead cyclists and pedestrians to Jönköping in the west, Huskvarna in the east and Österängen in the south. It is located close to the potential new developments, nature and recreational areas. Working with the conditions presented previously, the site is has very few drawbacks. It is located close to the mainroad but nearby pedestrian crossings permit a safe path for pedestrians and cyclists. Thus, the third site was chosen as the location of the new preschool that will be presented in the next chapter.

- Bus 4 / Huskvarnavägen
- Highway
- Biking / Walking Path
- Proposed Detail plan, Utkastet 3
- Expansion Strategy 200 000 Inhabitants
- Bus Stop
- Recreation / Sports
- Public Services
- Commercial Services

Map credit: Min Karta © Lantmäteriet (n.d.) >





Site Analysis

Views & Risk Assessment

The northern and western sides of the plot is surrounded by greenery following the path for pedestrians and cyclists that connect the trail around Vättern (going west to east along the shoreline) to Österängen, Ekshagen and Öxnehaga. Beyond the nature in the west are multifamily homes placed 20 degrees towards the west. In the west, the elevation of the small grove 2 m above the site obstructs view of the water on certain places on the ground.

Along the eastern border of the plot the previous industries are replaced by new, multi-family residential buildings (illustrated as copies of the blocks proposed south of the plot).

In the south, the main road (Huskvarnavägen) is located which can be assessed as a risk, though the multiple safe pedestrian crossings, reduced speed limits and varying width of the road reduces the risk. Nonetheless, it is a risk that needs to be considered in the design and placement of the preschool on site as to reduce any risk of accidents involving cars.

As the plot is connected to the road network only in the south, deliveries and drop offs must occur here as well. The current detail plan however, restricts exits to be placed in the center of the plot, only allowing car access in the south-west and south-east.

The attractive placement, close to the water, also comes with some risks as it is possible for people to drown and while the ice may look firm in the winter, it is rarely thick enough to permit people walking or skating on it (Bäckhed, 2010).

Finally, for the design of a preschool with additional IG spaces open to the local community it is important to consider the possible access points for the visitors. As previously stated, cars and deliveries must enter from the south. Pedestrians and cyclists are likely to use the main road where the bus stop is located or pass by on the path in the west.

- | | | | |
|-------|---|---------|---|
| VIEWS |  Nature | THREATS |  Recreation / Sports |
| |  Existing Housing | |  Water |
| |  New Residential Development | |  Car Accident |
| |  Delivery Trucks | | |
| |  Exit Ban (Utkörningsförbud) | | |
| |  Bus Stop | | |
| |  Water | | |
| |  Drowning | | |

Questionnaire for residents of Vätternäs

To understand the wants and needs of the current residents of Vätternäs and their engagement in previous activities organized by the Ansgarii Church, a questionnaire was sent out in late January, 2023. The format was a digital form that was published in a closed Facebook group for residents living in Vätternäs, though some previous members are still part of the group. Out of the approximately 600 group members, 54 responded to the questionnaire.

Limitations

In 2021, the reported number of residents in Vätternäs was 1 681 (Jönköping Municipality, 2022a). A sample of 3% of the population is not enough to represent the whole area. However, the experiences and opinions of the sample group can highlight and indicate that of many.

In addition, the choice media to conduct the research through could eliminate part of the population that is not using technology and/or are not part of the facebook group. However, initial questions regarding background show that a wide and balanced spread of people between the ages of 16-75.

Findings

Through the questionnaire it was possible to deduce that few respondents are active in any religion, and of those all are practicing christianity. Thus, it was no surprise to see many people state that they had not taken part in activities organized by the church due to them not being christian or not being aware of what activities that they were organizing. Some even expressed a loss for the preschool as the church decided not to have it be part of their new spaces.

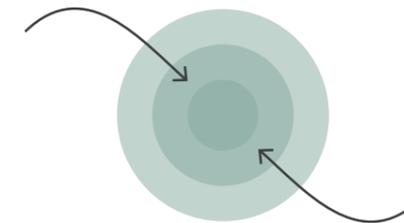
The people also asked for more communal spaces/ assembly hall, a store, baker/café and outdoor spaces for football fields and a sauna. While emphasizing their appreciation for the beaches and fields in and around the area.



Neutral space for gatherings



Café/bakery - preferably close to the water



Potentially a central point to inform about happenings in the area

SWOT-analysis of site



Attractive location - close to nature and water, connections to main road and pedestrian paths, bus stop nearby

Close to people - as part of the residential area, the site is close to families and seniors to visit throughout the week and, in turn, improves safety through the closeness to other people after hours

Neutral space - only other preschool in the area is located in a church, the new preschool would be neutral space for children and adults to meet

Increased needs - with a reduction of preschools in the area after the fire there is already a need, one that is elevated as proposals of new developments are made



Less attractive for the school of arts - current efforts from their side is focused on more segregated and low income areas to improve integration, none of which apply to the area of Vättersnäs

Closeness to the Huskarnavägen - the road can become quite busy as a result of events at the event center and hockey arena west of the area which can produce noise and be a safety hazard. The events normally take place during weekends and evenings.

Restrictions in exits - the detail plans restrictions on the placement of entrances and exits to the the plot restricts the design of outdoor areas and possible placements of parking and entrance.



Connections to surrounding area - the location can also benefit the addition of a restaurant/café for locals as it is connected to many nearby areas

Collaboration with specialized housing facilities - the newly constructed apartments for people above 70 west of the area and the two nursing homes located within a 15 minute walk of the area open up for many possible collaborations



Distance from elementary schools - as many schools of arts are conducted in or around elementary schools, the placement could decrease the ability for children to get there independently. However, there are three elementary schools within a 15-20 minute walking distance.

Too small population - with the inclusion of additional spaces for arts and culture education and a restaurant one could argue that the current population insufficient to maintain them.

Views of Vättersnäs



View of a residential street in the surrounding area.



View of the site from the bike & pedestrian path.



View from the pedestrian & bike path south-west of the site.



View of the bike & pedestrian path west of the site.



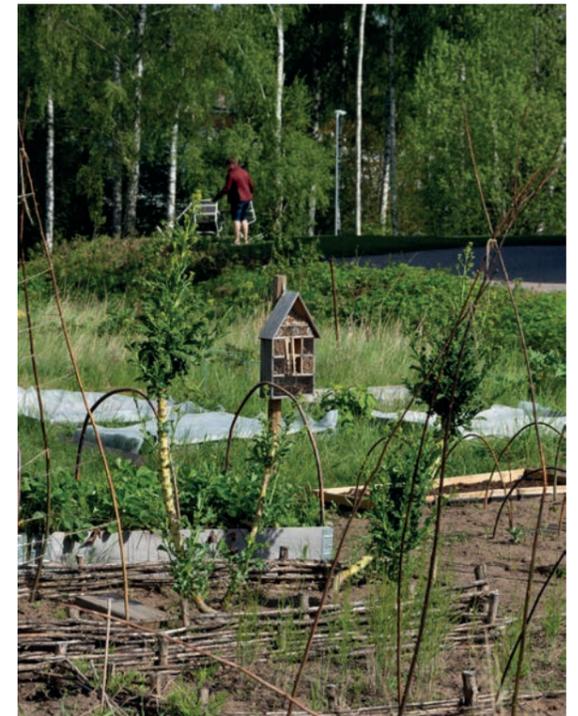
View from the site toward the grove and water in the north.



View from a pedestrian path by the water of a nearby garden and the multi-family housing west of the site.

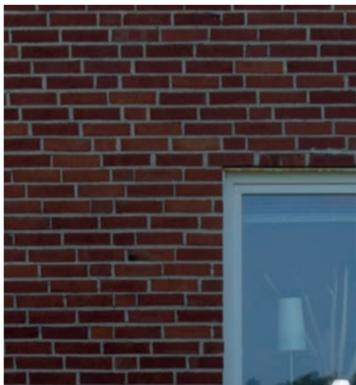
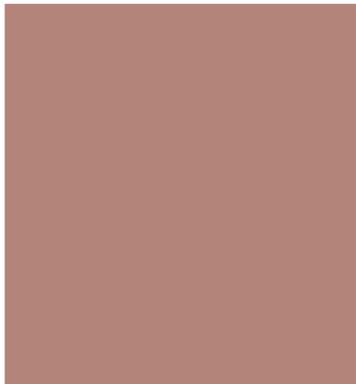


View from the bike & pedestrian path in the north along the water.



Views of the nearby garden.

Colours / Textures of Vättersnäs



DESIGN PROPOSAL

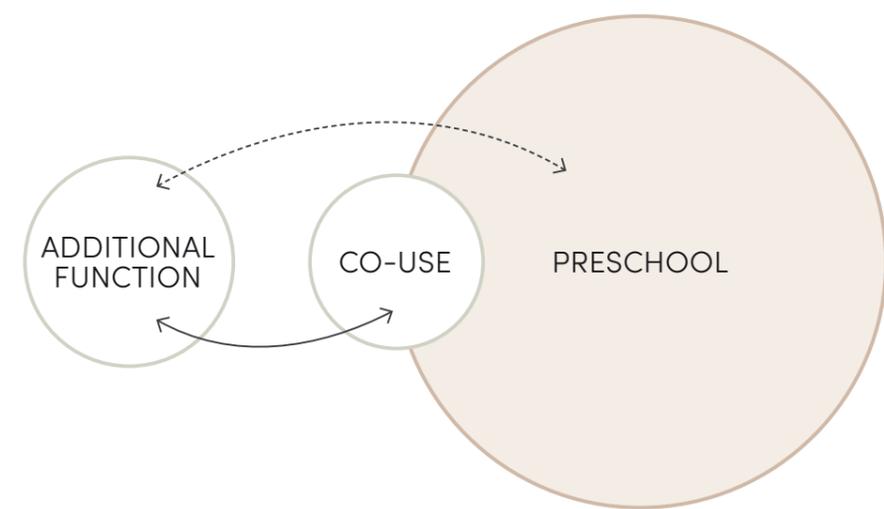
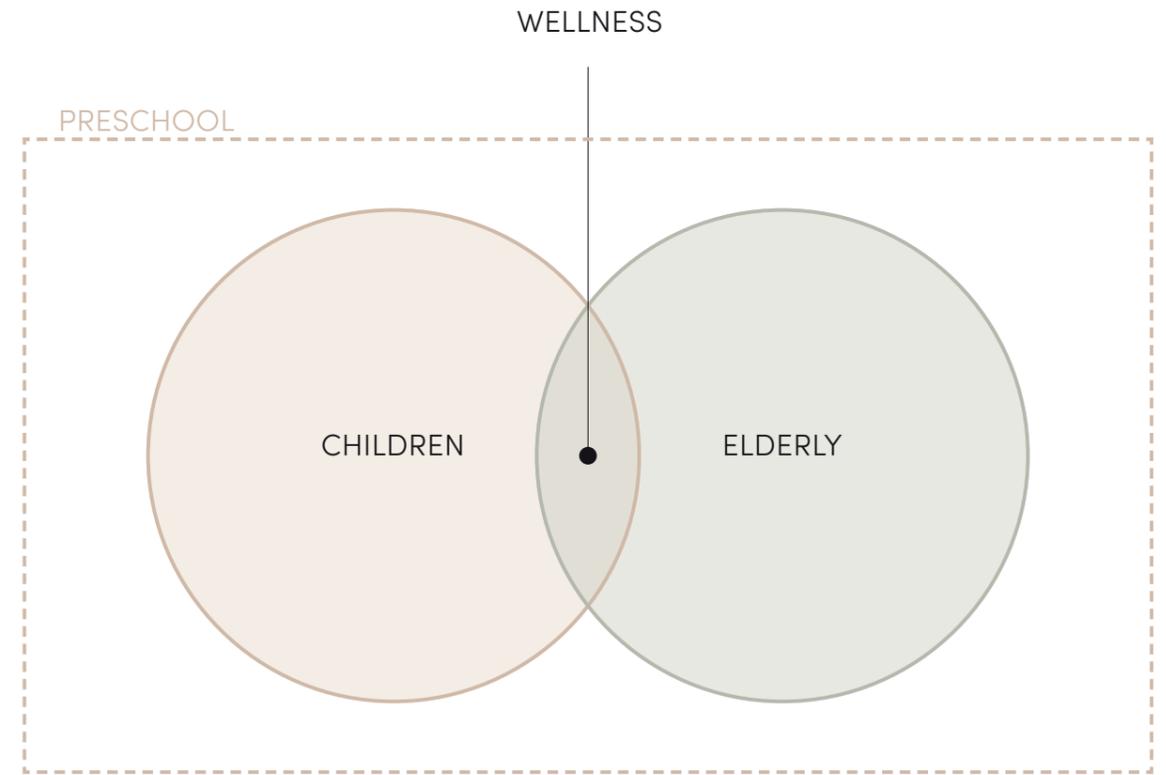
The chapters begin by presenting the concept for the design and programme of the design proposal. The programme identifies what spaces are part of the spatial programme for preschools by Jönköpings Municipality. The size and type of the additional IG spaces are also discussed.

In the next part, the design proposal is presented. As part of the drawings, key design features and potential uses of different spaces are highlighted. The chapter also includes diagrams showing the use of spaces by different user groups throughout the day.

Concept

The concept core is to promote wellness by bringing children and the elderly together in a preschool environment.

The concept works by implementing co-use and expanding the preschool's environments to promote IG activities and meetings. The setting, a preschool, makes the spaces accessible for one target group. By implementing additional functions that benefit the community, the number of visitors can increase and improve the chances of reaching the senior population that lives at home.



Spatial Programme

Preschool

The number, size and function of spaces related to the preschool are determined based on the spatial programme for preschools in Jönköping municipality (2019) with additions from the spatial programme for preschools used by the City of Gothenburg (2017). The estimated number of preschool departments, or spots, was extracted from the proposed new detail plan for the site across the road (Jönköping municipality, 2022b). The calculations consider the recent fire and subsequent reduction in preschools in the area, arriving at four departments (66 spots).

Co-use of preschool spaces

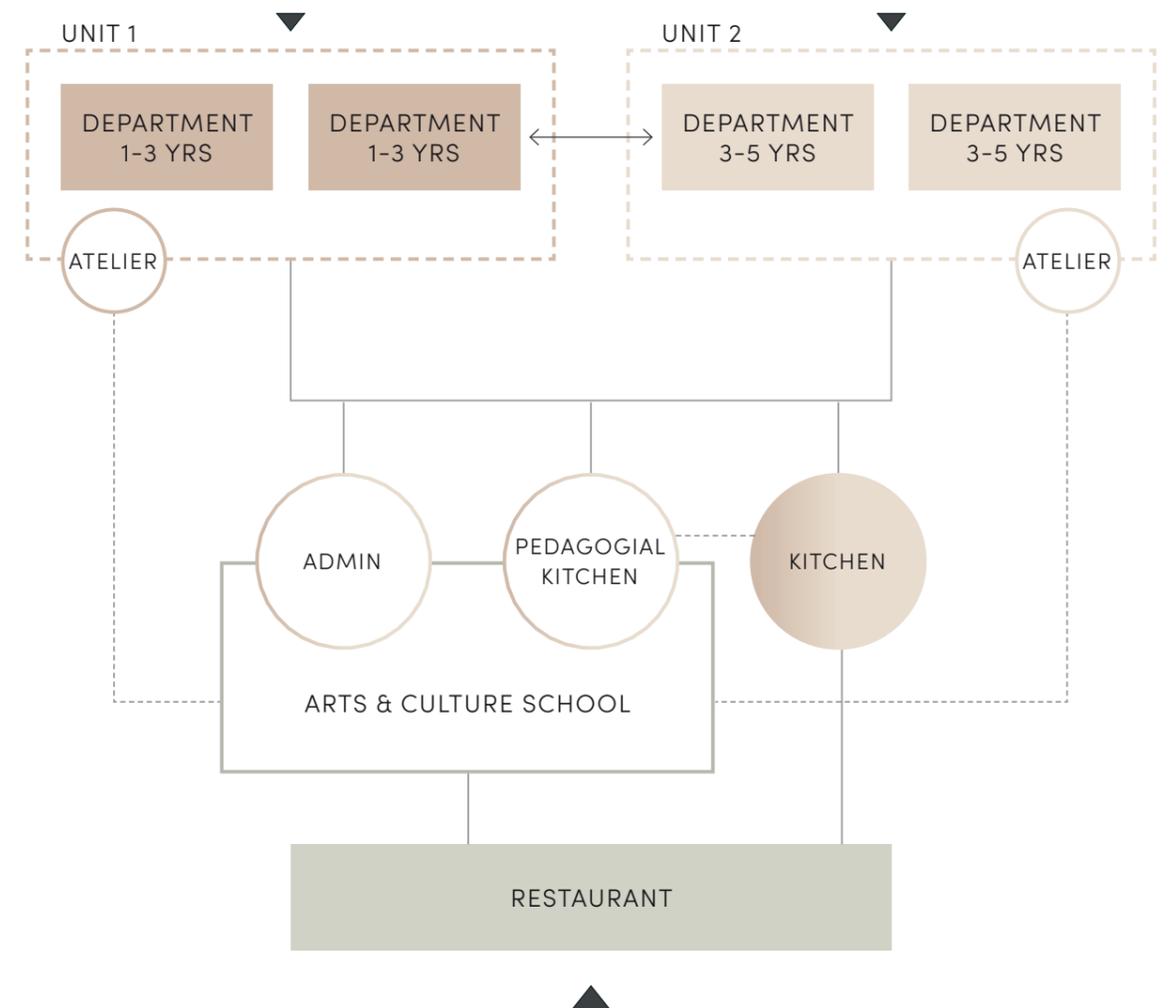
Areas of the preschool that could support co-use by external users are ateliers and admin areas. The adjustments necessary to allow co-use of areas are few. For example, to implement a flexible office policy and supply lockable storage areas for personal belongings and work supplies. The ateliers are optimal for co-use as they are specialized rooms that are useable for many other user groups (unlike the resting room and play areas). With few adjustments to the height of tables and storage for different size chairs, the spaces are accessible to many more people. By pushing for co-use of external organizations, the space use can become more efficient, and additional collaborations can flourish.

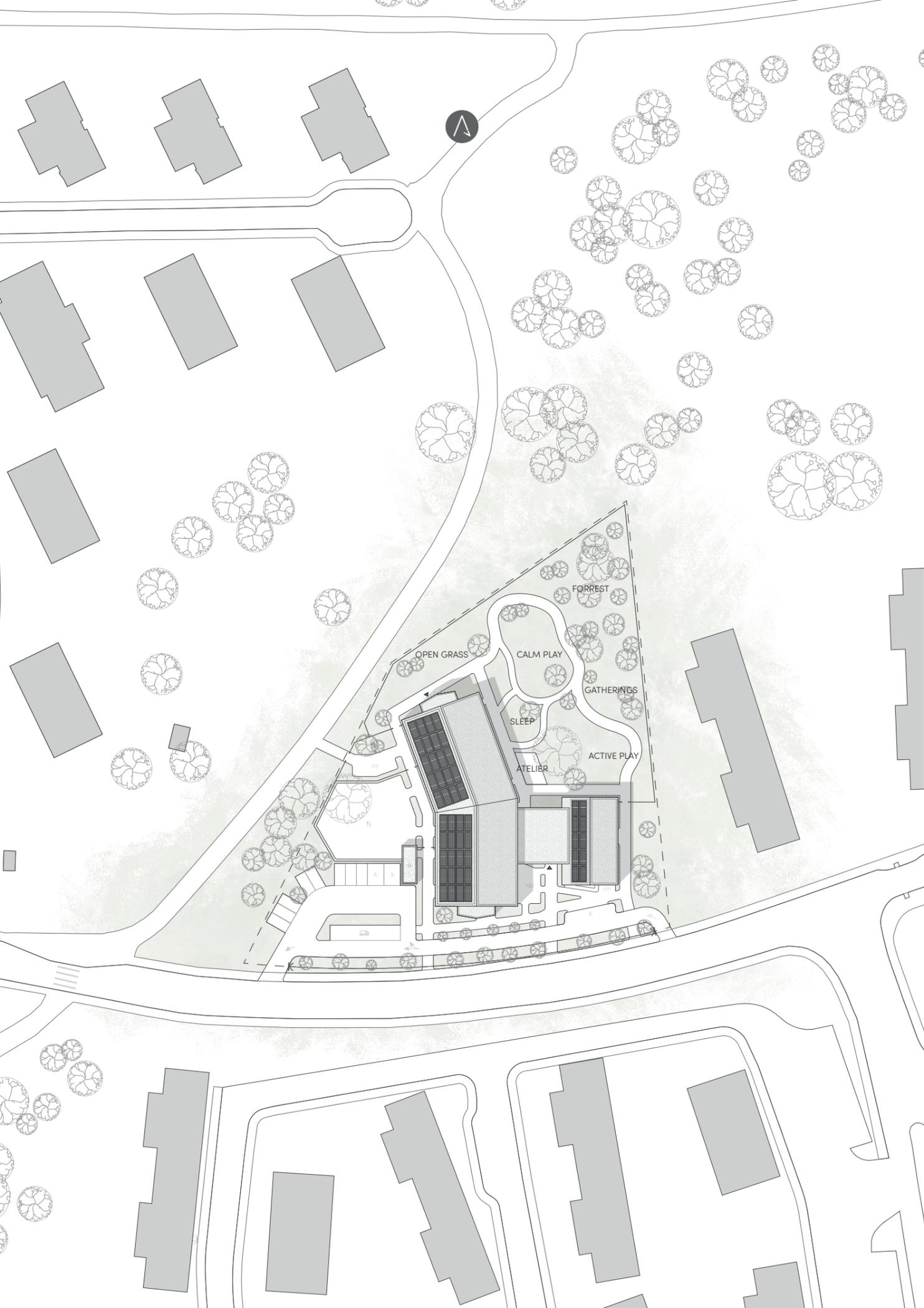
Additions to preschool spaces

The desire from locals to have a place to eat (café or bakery) combined with the need from the preschool to have a kitchen on-site resulted in the expansion of the kitchen. Including the need for people needing a meal service or who would like the option to get local takeaway meals now and then, the expanded kitchen is dimensioned to supply up to 400 portions/day. In connection with the kitchen, there is a pedagogical kitchen to improve nutritional education for preschool children and aid the exchange of culture through food.

Additional functions

The location of the site and nearby multiple sports venues (hockey, swimming and tennis, to mention a few) removed any potential of including similar functions in the programme. Many other proposed activities for IGPs listed previously involve arts and culture. The thesis focus on children and the elderly led to contact with the School of Arts and elderly consultants at Jönköping municipality. From there, the expansion of the programme continues. The additions include four studios for individual or dual education in film, animation and/or music are available for rent between classes, one multi-room for class education in film and animation, smaller lectures and smaller orchestras that is divisible into two and one assembly hall for dance, larger gatherings and theatre that is also divisible in two.





Siteplan / Outdoor Environment

In the south, a row of trees and bushes blocks the view of traffic. By the main entrance, there is a drop-off zone, bike parking, accessible parking and a variety of areas to sit. To enjoy a meal from the restaurant or read in the sun.

Cars and delivery trucks enter from the south-east corner and drive past the public entrance on their way to the parking. From here, paths lead back around the building to the public entrance, or through the garden to the preschool entrance.

Pedestrians and cyclists approaching from the path in the west can park their bikes by the garden and use the same paths as previously mentioned to reach either of the two entrances.

The preschool's outdoor environment is zoned. Toward the grove in the north, another grouping of trees mimics the landscape. There are also areas for calm and active play, open grass areas and sites that allow the ateliers to expand into the garden. The size of the outdoor area is about 3 000 m².

Preschool Entrance



Ground Floor

The location of the main entrance is between two larger volumes. To the left, the smaller building houses the assembly hall. To the right, the main building encompasses the preschool, kitchen and school of arts. Between the two volumes, an open area with tables and chairs seats restaurant guests and visitors to the arts and culture school.

Assembly Hall

The assembly hall (1) is close to the entrance to fit many visitors on opening night or in an attempt to gather the community. The connection to the seating area and restaurant promotes collaboration between the two and allows participants and relatives of participants to sit down before, during or after activities. Behind the seating area (2), two changing rooms, including two toilets and showers, are located. The space can be used by people attending dance classes or as dressing rooms for actors and actresses to change into characters.

Main Users

 Preschool

 Commercial Kitchen / Restaurant

Restaurant

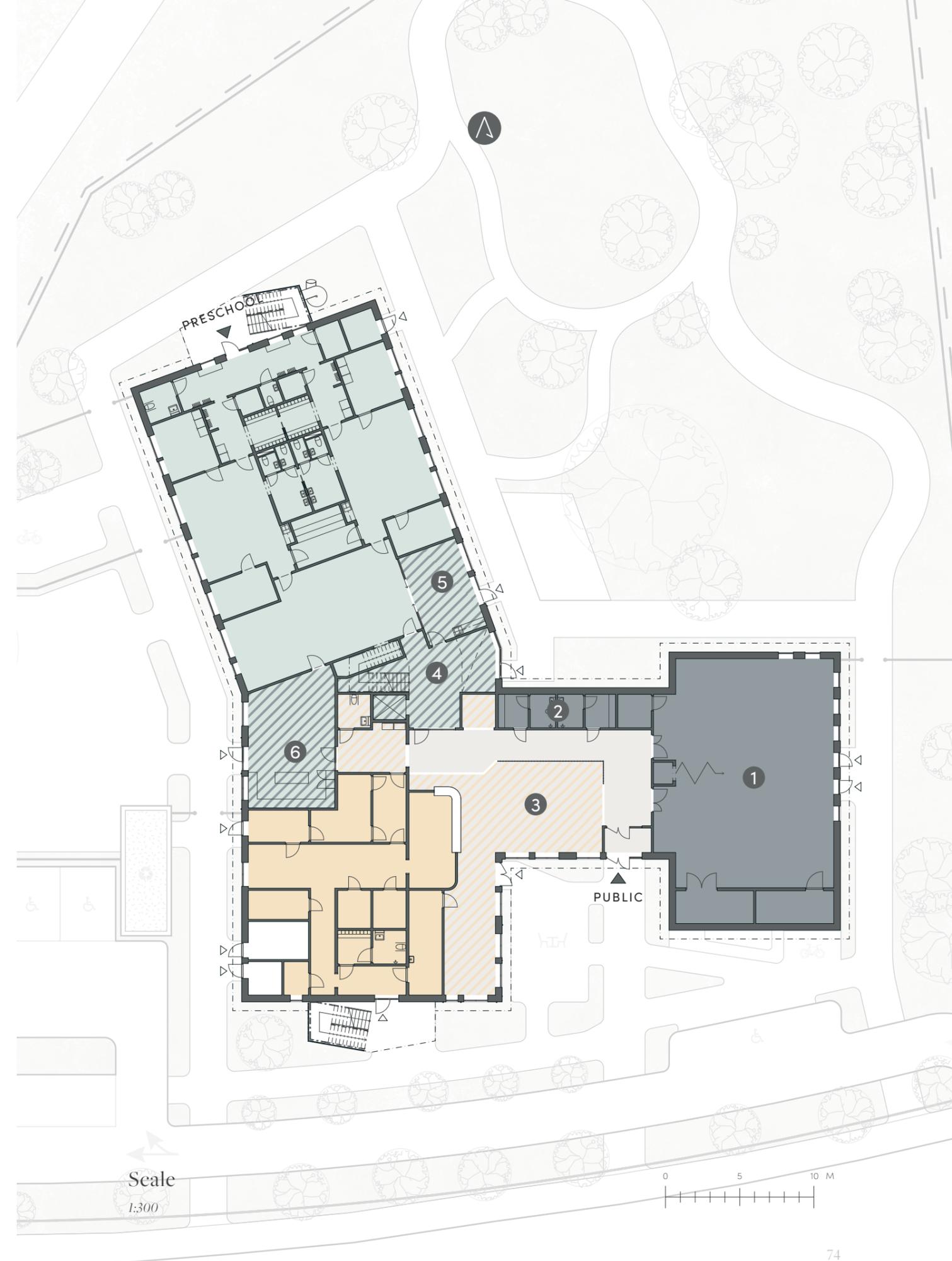
The striped areas (3) are part of the spaces required for the kitchen to function as a public restaurant. However, the space intends to seat caregivers who wait while their children partake in activities, informal book circles or children who do homework between school and art school classes.

Arts and culture school

To enter the main parts of the arts and culture school is through the exhibition space (4), where student works are displayed. From here, there is an entrance to the preschool atelier (5) suitable for children and adults. Past the entrance to the arts and culture school, you find the pedagogical kitchen (6) used to cook larger meals, cooking classes and teaching people about gardening utilizing the gardening space just outside.

 Arts and Culture School

 Public



Assembly Hall

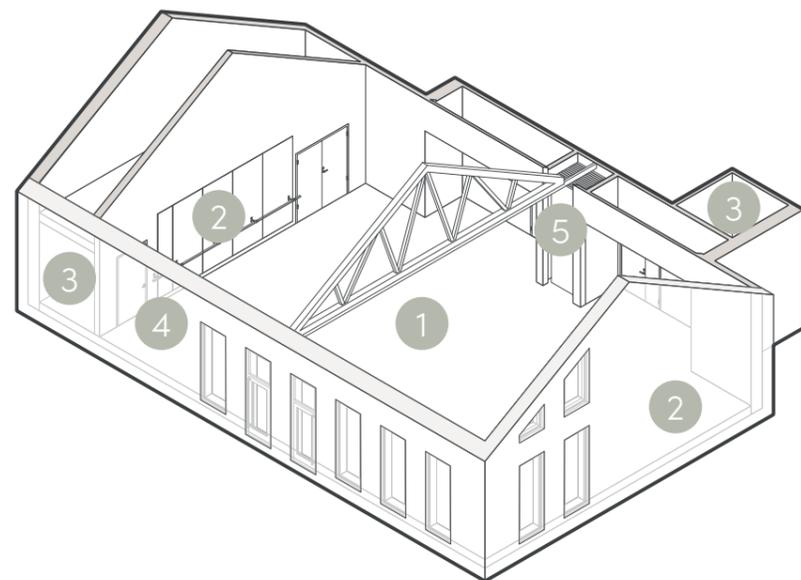
Located to the right, just inside the public entrance, the assembly hall can host a variety of activities; from yoga to theatre and lecture series for the community. It is fit with storage for equipment and moveable risers for audiences up to 100 people.

Features

- Dance floor (1)
- Mirrors with barres (2)
- Storage for equipment and risers (3)
- Ribs for light exercise (4)
- Folding wall to split into two halves (5)
- Possibilities to make dark
- Space for 100 seated people

Activities

- Theatre
- Dance
- Culture-mix
- Light exercise (e.g. yoga & aerobics)
- Gatherings
- Movie nights
- Lectures



View of the full assembly hall as a group of people of different ages performs.



View of the northern half of the assembly hall as a theatre group prepare a performance.



View of the southern half of the assembly hall as a yoga session is about to start.

Ground Floor

Restaurant

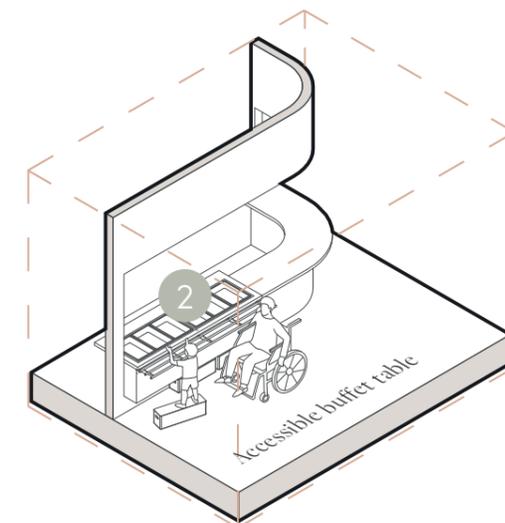
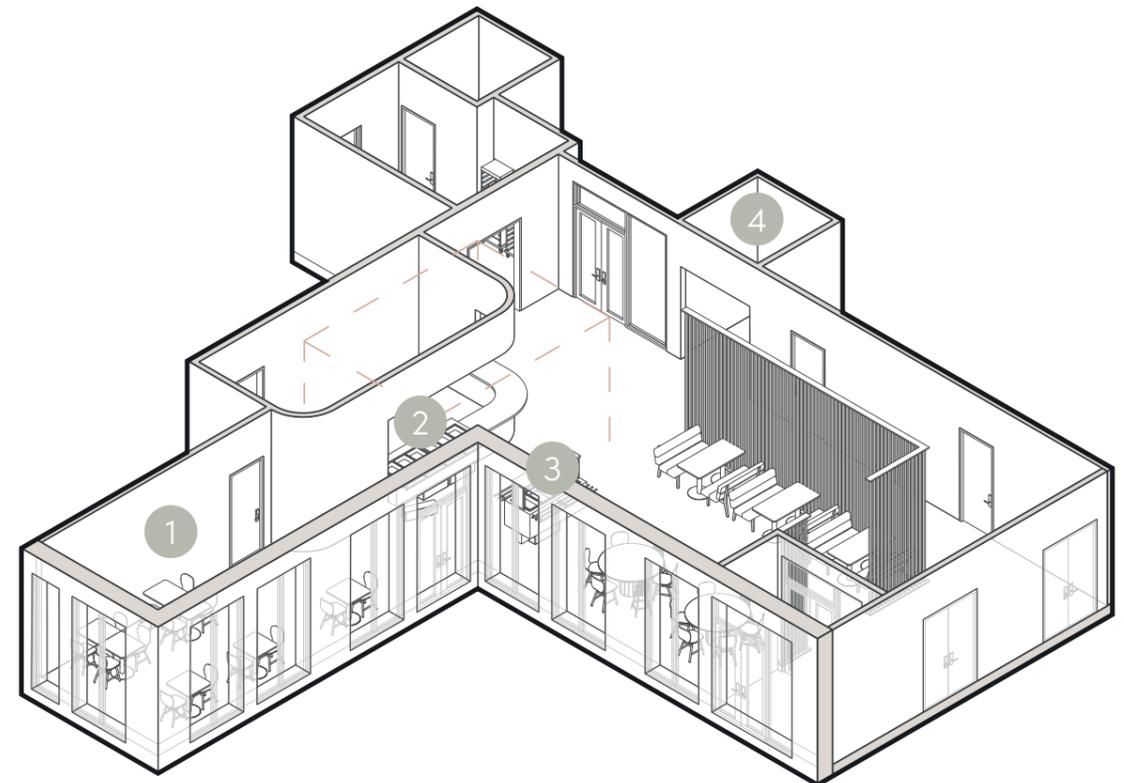
On the left side just inside the public entrance is the restaurant. It is fitted with a variety of seating options for people to dine, have a coffee or work at. The serving area is accessible for children and the elderly alike using moveable block for the children to view the food. There is also a 360-salad table to entice all visitors to eat more greens.

Features

- Options to block off one part for special events (1)
- Buffet to entice children and the elderly to try more foods (2)
- Open 360 salad buffet (3)
- Design that allow wheelchair users and children to view the buffet tables.
- A variety in seating options and storage for unused chairs/tables (4)
- Moveable furniture

Activities

- Lunch or fika with family and/or friends
- Hang out before, during and after classes/activities
- Quiznights, bingo, community flea market



Ground Floor

Atelier

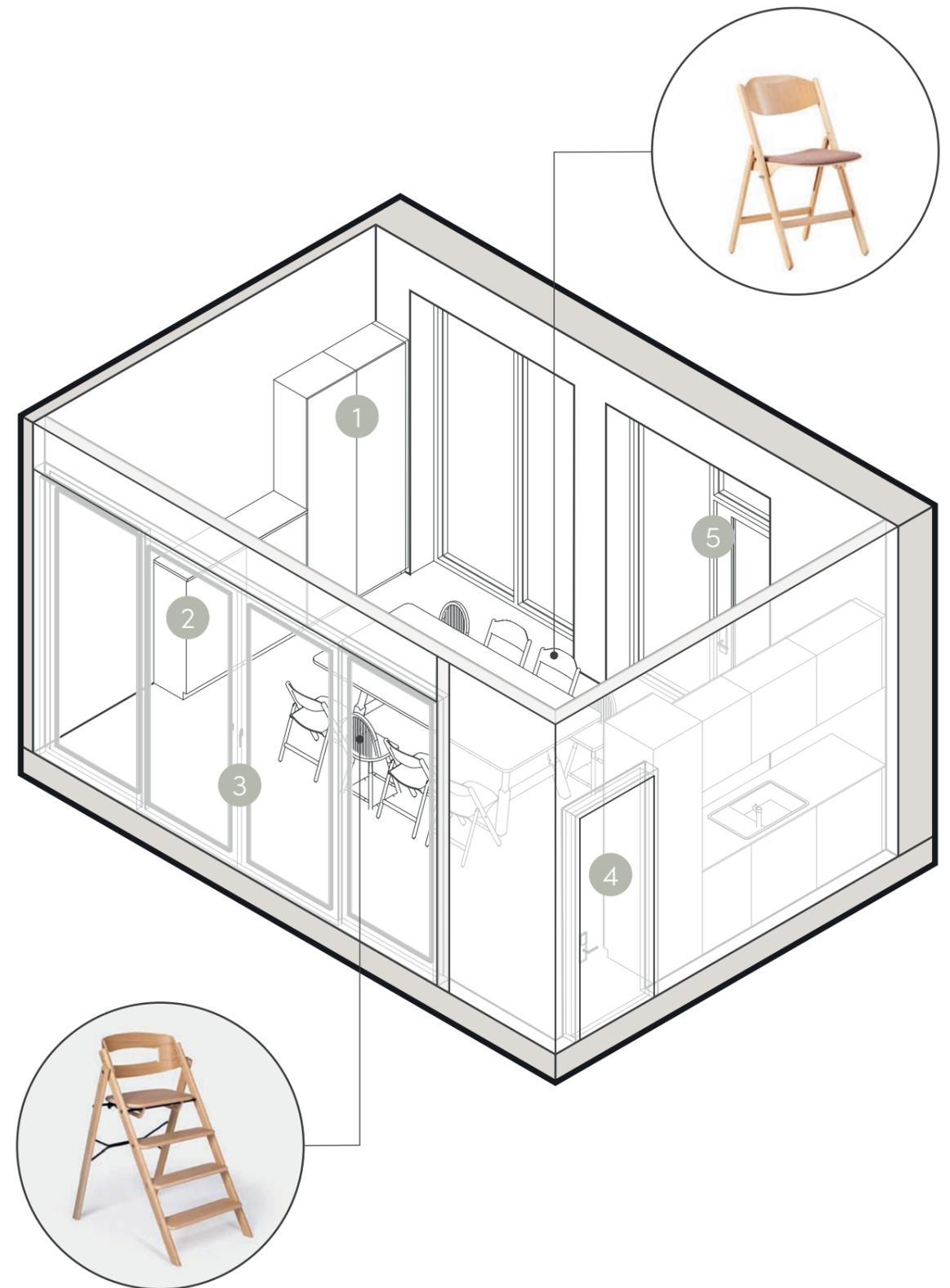
The atelier is a space that is part of the framework for preschools in Jönköping but designed for an extended list of users over a longer period of time.

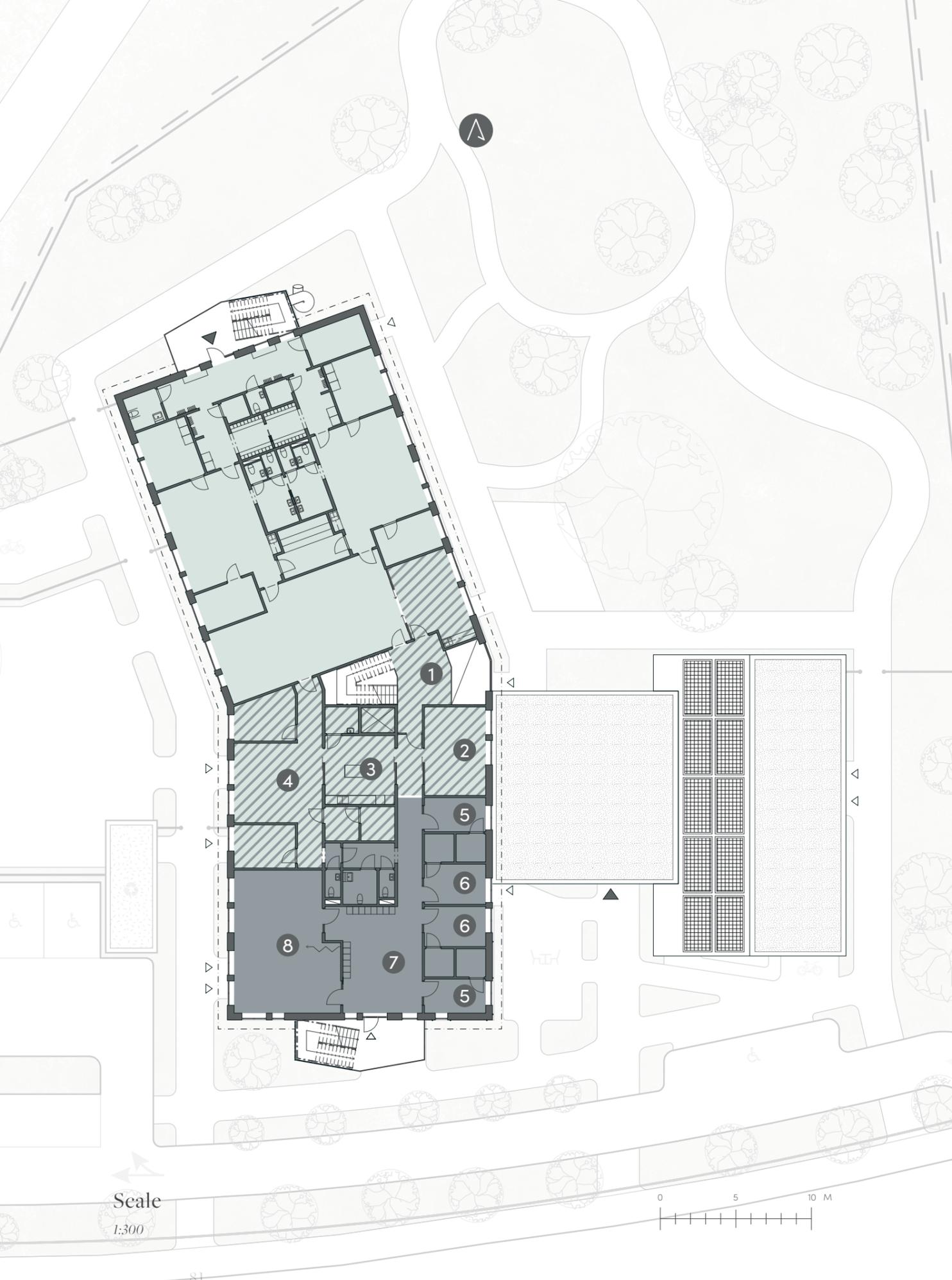
Features

- "Adult" size tables where children use taller chairs to access
- Space for storage and easy access of chairs (1 & 2)
- Multiple doors to allow different users to enter without needing to go through public or preschool spaces (3 & 4)
- Door to the outside to find flowers, leaves and dirt for the artworks (5)
- Exhibition space just outside to showcase art

Activities

- Painting
- Crafting
- Sculpting
- Model-making
- Basic sewing / crochet





First Floor

The layout of the preschool is identical to the floor below, with a covered external exit in the north. The staircase connecting the two entrances has a slide for the children to use going down or as part of their outdoor play.

Entrance

As a visitor to the arts and culture school, you enter the first floor using the staircase in the middle of the building (1). The entrance bathes in daylight from the large windows toward the east. An opening between the two floors allows views of the exhibition from above. To the left are the preschool and atelier, and to the right are the admin and main areas for the arts and culture school.

Staff Areas

From the exhibition space and through the door to the right, the first room to the left (2) is a flex room mainly used by staff for meetings, planning and eating. On the opposite side of the corridor, the staff kitchen (3) has large, glass sliding doors toward the flex room and office (4).

Main Users

■ Preschool

■ Arts and Culture School

Arts & Culture School

In the southeast, four studios (5 & 6) that fit individual and dual music education are available for hire between classes. The two middle studios hold additional equipment for film and animation (for example, a computer, microphone and green screen) to make space for individuals to be creative and for use by students during class.

At the end of the corridor is an open space (7) where people can wait between classes and lockers for students to store instruments if they can only practice in the studios between lessons. In the southwest, a multiroom for students (8) is available for larger music classes, smaller lectures, animation courses and private book circles. The space can be divided into two to fit even smaller groups.

Scale
1:300

0 5 10 M

First Floor

Studio

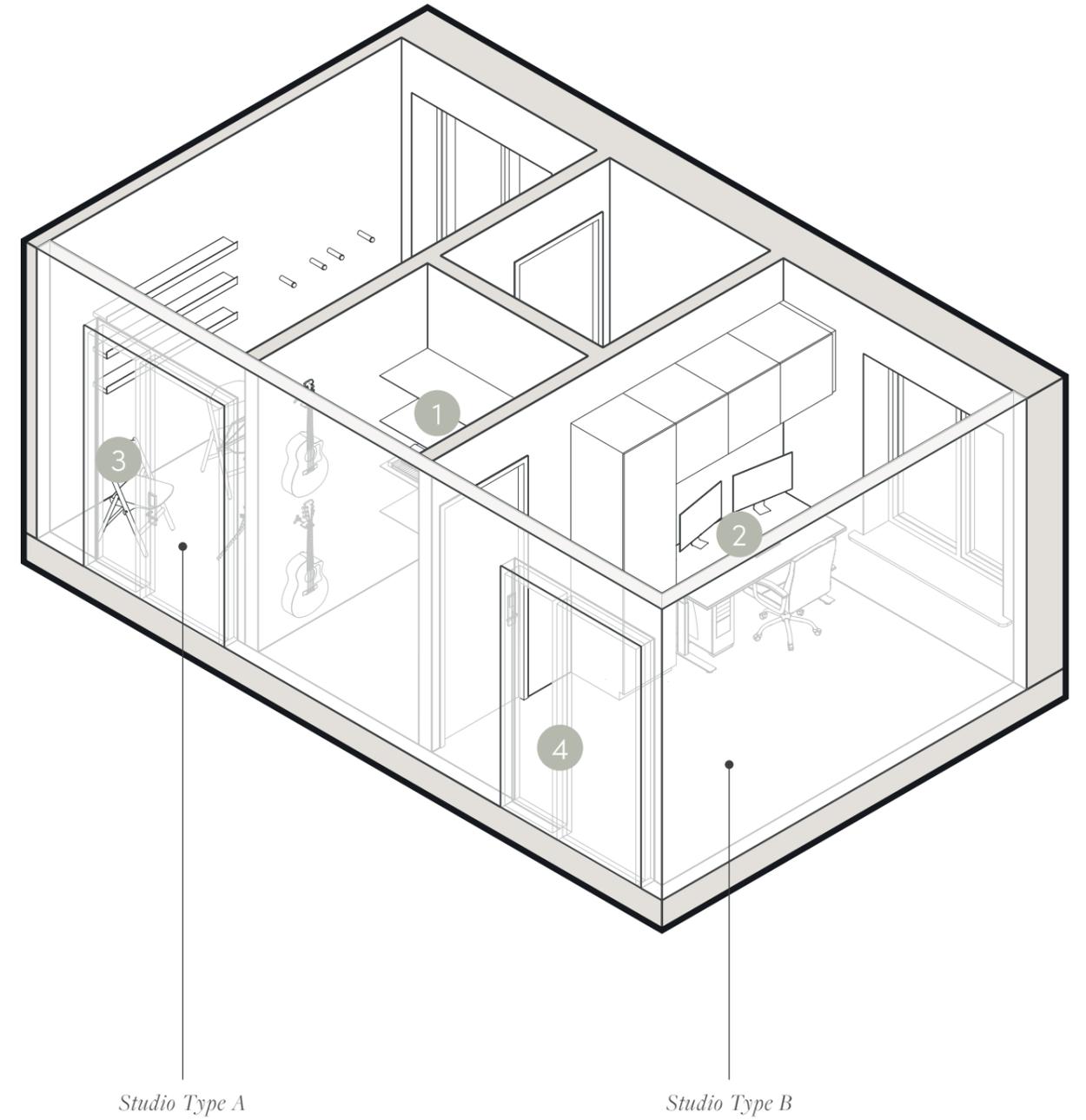
On the first floor, there are four studios for students of any age at the school of arts to attend classes or rent to practice between sessions.

Features

- Digital booking system that allow students at the arts and culture school to rent spaces between classes
- Storage for musical instruments (1)
- Equipment for digital production (2) in half of the rooms (Type B)
- Chairs and tables whose heights can be adjusted (3)
- Sound proof walls and windows to reduce transfer of noises
- Windows to enable easy view to see if someone is inside or if someone is waiting outside (4)

Activities

- Music classes/production
- Film/animation education



First Floor

Multi-room

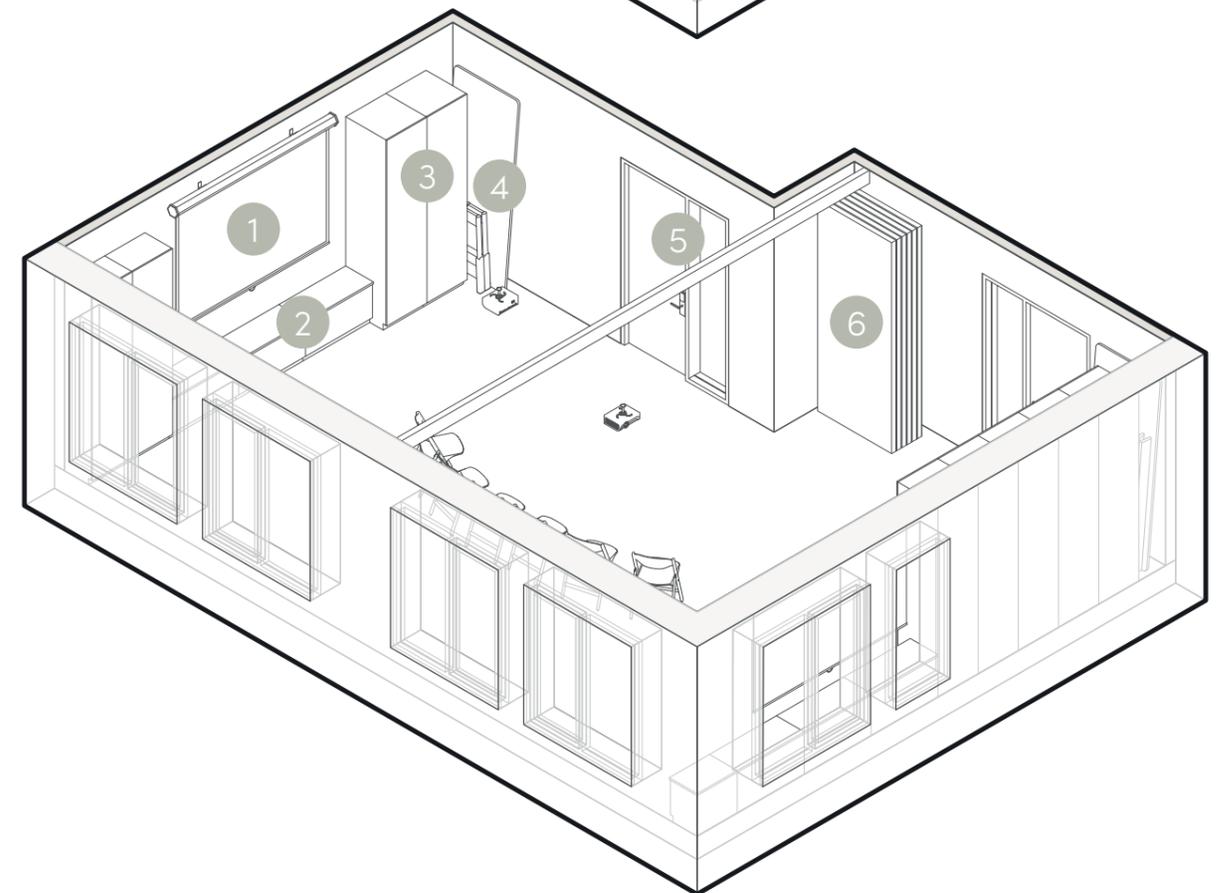
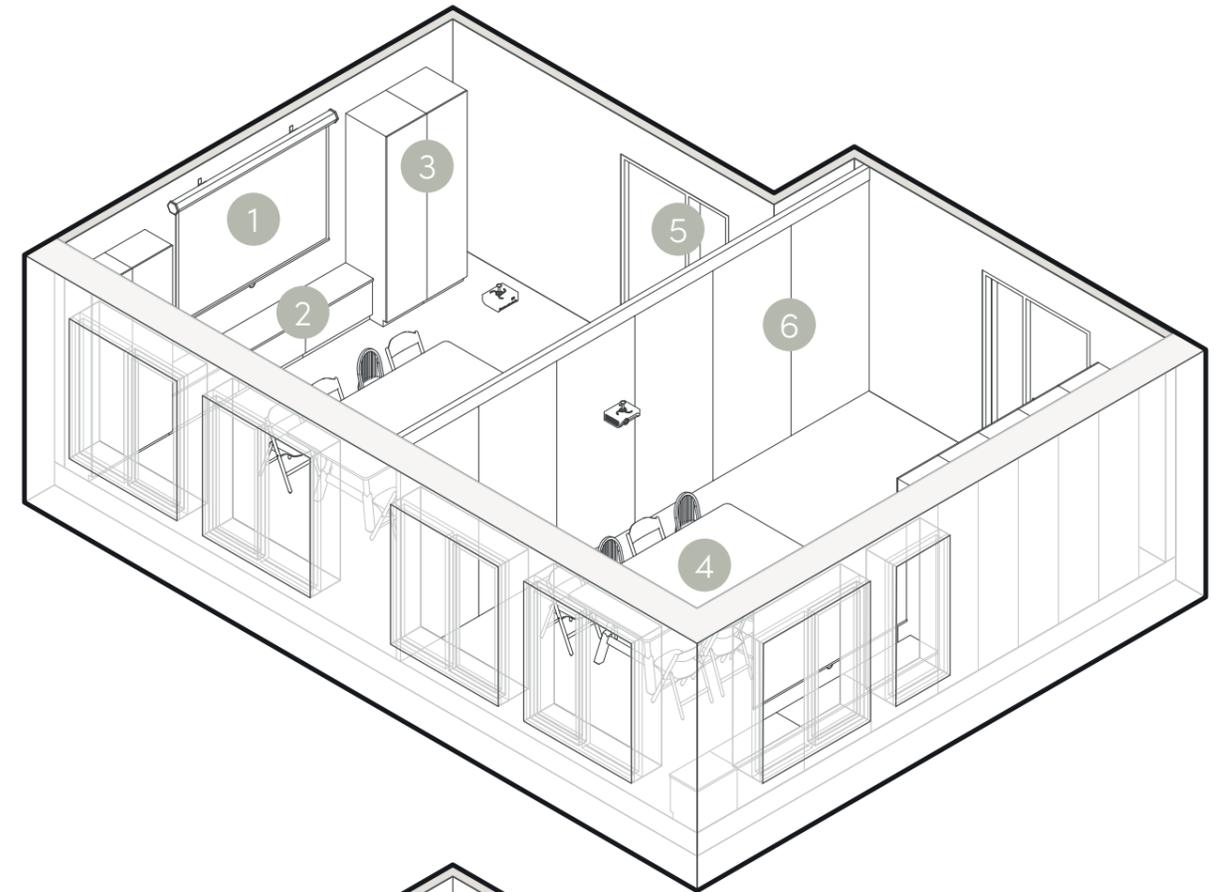
The multi-room is a large space for various types of classes including film, animation, ensemble and choir. The room can be split into two smaller spaces.

Features

- Digital booking system that allow students at the arts and culture school to rent spaces between classes
- Projectorscreen (1)
- Storage for chairs of different sizes (2)
- Storage for instruments and other supplies (3)
- Table that can be disassembled (4)
- Opaque door with side window (5)
- Folding wall to split the space (6)

Activities

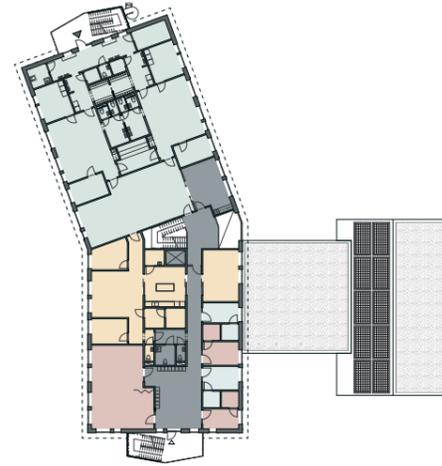
- Film/animation classes
- Choir
- Classes in history, culture and digitalization
- Reading aloud
- Ensemble
- Smaller lectures
- Sewing workshops



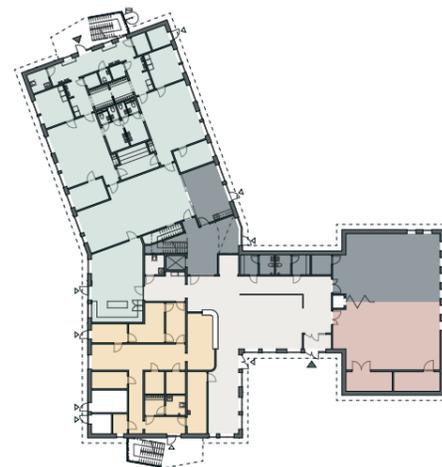
Daily Use

Morning ~ 08:00

At around eight in the morning, the first IG activities of the day begin, with some participating in arts and crafts and others dancing in one part of the assembly hall. On the other side of the partition, some elderly partake in a morning yoga class before joining others who are in the middle of a course on sewing on the upper floor for breakfast in the restaurant. Next to the sewing workshop, a teenager whose first class doesn't start until eleven and some seniors practice their instruments or work on the finishing touches to their film projects.



First floor



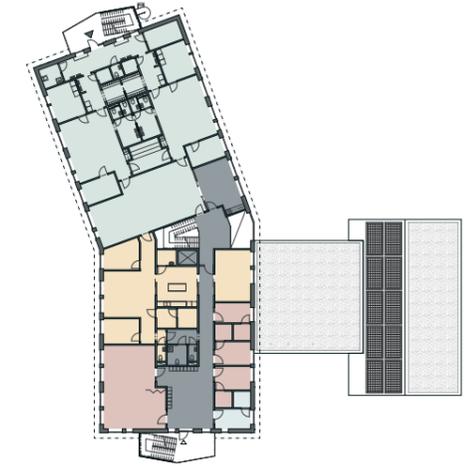
Ground floor

- | | |
|---|---|
| Preschool | Mixed |
| Elderly | Staff |
| Arts Culture | Public |

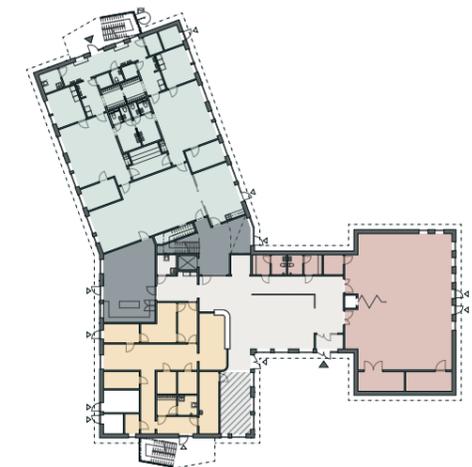
Lunch ~ 11:00

By the time 11 rolls around, some seniors have joined the preschool children in the kitchen to prepare a healthy meal of chilli sin carne with rice and a fresh salad from the garden. Another group of children and elderly participating in IG activities are treated to a meal in the cafeteria to celebrate Anita's 73rd and Emir's 4th birthday.

In the assembly hall, the senior's house hosts a lecture on the design of crossword puzzles. In the meantime, the sewing workshop, filming and music playing continue upstairs.



First floor



Ground floor

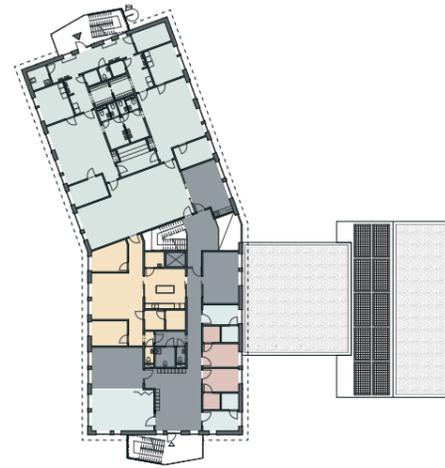
- | | |
|---|---|
| Preschool | Mixed |
| Elderly | Staff |
| Arts Culture | Public |

Afternoon ~ 15:00

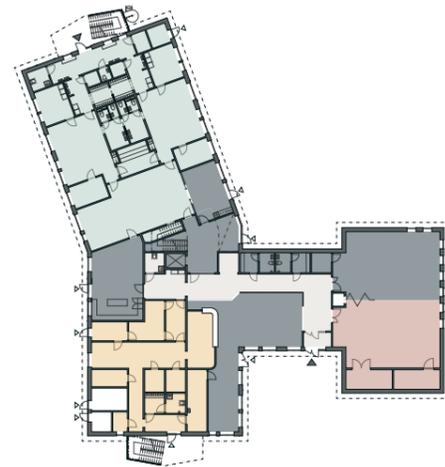
As the time starts to near 15, more IG activities occur in the ateliers but with a focus on the outdoors - what objects outside can you find to draw with? In the pedagogical kitchen, the elderly and children learn how to plant flowers that attract insects.

The assembly hall is once again split, with one group of elementary school children and the elderly practising a dance routine on one side and a group of elderly working on the core strength on the other.

Upstairs, the school of arts teachers has arrived. Some are preparing lessons while others have begun their first lessons of the day.



First floor



Ground floor

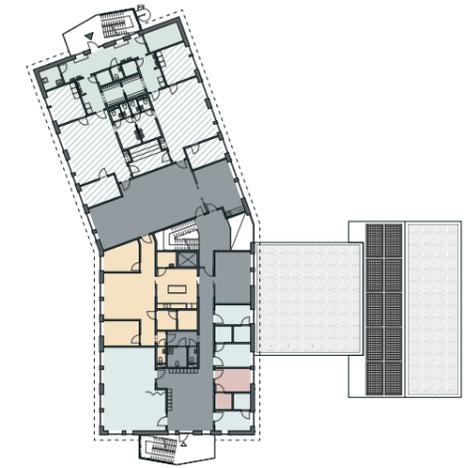
- | | |
|---|---|
| Preschool | Mixed |
| Elderly | Staff |
| Arts Culture | Public |

Evening ~ 18:00

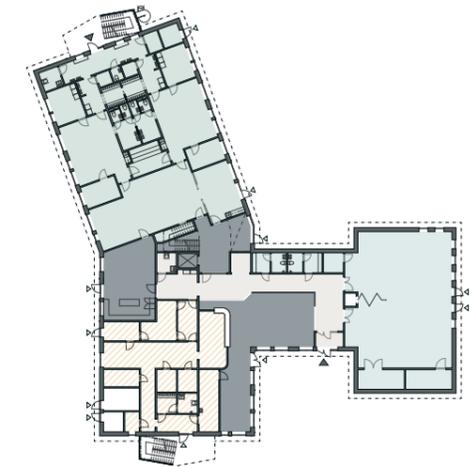
As the preschool nears closing, the children are gathered on the same floor to allow the arts and culture school to use more preschool spaces.

In the assembly hall, a group of children practice singing and dancing for a big upcoming showcase. Outside, some parents work, help with their children's homework or draw together as another kid attends a gardening class.

On the first floor, an animation course utilizes the multiroom and one of the digital studios, while individual piano and flute classes take place in others.



First floor



Ground floor

- | | |
|---|---|
| Preschool | Mixed |
| Elderly | Staff |
| Arts Culture | Public |

Facade Materials

The facades and load-bearing structure are wooden. As visible in the drawing below, the exterior consists of three types of cladding made from oil-processed pinewood. To the left, a vertical board-on-board panel that preserves the colour from the wood covers large parts of the main building. Framing the large windows that emphasize the open space inside are sections of the red, wide and vertical board-on-batten panelling. The contrasting colour also hints at the public entrance around the corner from the west. Lastly, the assembly hall has a red, vertical board-on-board panel, similar to the main and connecting building.

Southern Facade

1:300



DISCUSSION / CONCLUSION

This chapter discusses the design proposal and the thesis process in relation to the aim and the research question. The discussion structure uses subheaders highlighting the research question, reflection and conclusion.

The thesis explores the effects of IG meeting spaces on the wellness of the children, preschool staff and elderly in an urban area. The work achieves this through research on the history and modern implementations of IGPs and studies of the design and function of spaces that can be part of the programmes. The result of the explorations is a design proposal of a preschool with areas for IG meetings, planned or spontaneous, through art, culture, light exercise and food in Jönköping, Sweden.

Can wellness be promoted by the design of intergenerational spaces in the form of a preschool?

The literary review highlighted many benefits directly related to the wellness of participants, leaders and community. These include: improving helpful behaviours, helping to eliminate attitudes and stereotypes, increasing cooperation between staff of different ages and creating connections for other collaborations in the community.

As much of our society is age-segregated, IG connections can be challenging to make and maintain. By creating spaces that facilitate collaborations between different stakeholders through the co-use of admin and activity spaces, the interaction between users and generations is more likely to occur. Here, the design, layout and spatial qualities are influential.

One concern reported by multiple sources was integrating one generation into spaces that fit only the needs of another age group. For example, children stand on chairs to partake in activities. The lack of accommodations for users can lead to a negative experience and decrease the likelihood of them returning.

As previously discussed, the preschool and requirements for a kitchen and spaces such as an atelier and admin are perfect to be expanded and include locations to facilitate IG meetings. Children in Sweden spend much of their time at preschool, where they can benefit from interacting with people of different ages (as supported by the preschool curriculum). Studies of the layout and functionality of the building and its users were highly prioritized in this project and should be in similar projects. The design and set up of spaces are also crucial as furniture design, light and acoustics, and ease of changing the layout for different users and activities will determine the useability.

To conclude, the design of IG spaces in the form of a preschool can promote wellness as they facilitate meetings by bringing users of different ages together in a shared space that encourages interactions through co-use.

What functions could be integrated as part of the design?

The nature of IG activities allows them to occur in many different ways and settings. Some examples listed in the background section are recycling, sewing, painting, dancing and cooking. As a result, the activities can transpire in combination with many different functions in society. Another aspect is the relation to the main function of the design proposal, a preschool. What functions related to IGPs can be integrated as part of a preschool?

The integration with a preschool decreases the possible functions slightly as safety and function requirements of preschools push for activities that can allow for a co-use of spaces in either direction. Potentially, removing functions such as pools, wood/textile workshops and digital cafés as they are not as suited for preschool children, could be safety hazards and would be more challenging to utilize spaces as part of the co-use.

What is found in the research was that many activities centre around arts & culture (painting, theatre and dance, among others) in addition to some more focused on physical activities. This would allow for functions such as theatres, independent art studios, and sports centres to become part of the design of a preschool with additional IG meeting spaces.

Concerning the size of the selected site and its location, close to a variety of different sports venues and no significant interest in studio spaces - the design proposal was guided towards theatre and more general arts & culture spaces to be integrated as part of the design.

Process

Initially, the thesis work intention is to investigate the spatial design in more detail, especially the outdoor environment as part of the space for education and connection between generations. Later on, it became evident that the scope of the work would not allow such investigations to take place, a reduction of scope was made to focus more on the interior space and layout as a whole rather than details in the design.

In the investigation, much literature details the spatial design and requirements of spaces for a specific user group (e.g. elderly, preschool children or elementary school children), but not much on the design of spaces for both. Those that do, focus mainly on making public space available for the ageing population or made more enjoyable for small children. However, this may be because designs that are accessible for one part of the population (e.g. the elderly) are generally more inviting to other parts of the rest of the population as well.

Throughout the design process, the safety of the children at the preschool became a very important aspect that guided many design choices. The children (and staff) needed to feel like they had their space at the preschool where no unauthorized people could enter. That they were able to decide for themselves if they wanted to be part of activities with the elderly, and the children were able to leave and not be forced to view people that were part of the programmes if they decided to opt-out. Lastly, though the outdoor environments are open and can be viewed by the public, the layout of the ground floor removes any possibility of people looking out on the children from the public areas.

Conclusion

The investigation showed the potential of improving wellness among children, the elderly and staff in an urban area through the design of a preschool with integrated IG meeting spaces. It introduces a fairly new concept of IG meetings that focuses on the elderly that still live at home and utilize the preschool as a basepoint for these types of meetings.

The concept of working with preschools as the basis for intergenerational meetings for seniors still living at home could be implemented in different settings. Though parts of the discussion are anchored in the context, for example, the choice of functions to include. The proposal and further research on the topic could begin to tackle the decrease in space in cities. We

need new typologies that can answer the issues we face regarding the growing elderly population, the generational gap and increased loneliness. To achieve that we should not be afraid of mixing age groups, but rather aim to do so.

Student Background

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