

Summary

I have in this assignment been working on issues related to how school staff can build good relationships with pupils and parents.

The work has been based on one of Norwegian literature's most famous teacher characters, namely Baard schoolmaster, as we meet him in Bjoernstjerne Bjoernson's novel, "A happy boy" from 1860.

Baard schoolmaster is described as follows, in honor of the annual Baard schoolmaster prize:

Baard schoolmaster is a good-natured, old teacher portrayed in Bjoernstjerne Bjoernson's novel "A happy boy ". This teacher played a big role for Oyvind, the main character in the novel. Baard appears in the book as an experienced judge of character with sincere interest in his pupils, so he became a major supporter for Oyvind and his classmates.¹

The word relationship builder is not used in this presentation. But in the words " ... human knowledge with sincere interest in his pupils ... " you find the foundation for being able to be a good relationship builder.

After a close reading of the schoolmaster, ten values/strategies were set up. These were prominent in his teaching. These ten values/strategies were:

- Courtesy
- Name
- Dialogue
- Distinct teacher
- Respect
- Good and kind words
- Good contact with parents
- Eye contact
- Closeness
- Humour

¹ <http://www.hive.no/aktuelt/baard-skolemester-prisen-til-tydelig-reaktor-article20236-110.html> (13.11.2013)

In turn, these values / strategies were actively adopted by a group of employees at Bogafjell school, to see what effect they had in relation to the question of how employees can build good relationships with pupils and parents in everyday school life.

The famous school researcher John Hattie from New Zealand, has worked with the question of what has the greatest impact on students learning outcomes in schools. Among the more than 150 individual factors he has studied, it is the close relationship between teacher and pupil that is the most important.

Several researchers confirm Hattie's findings. Thomas Nordahl and Jan Spurkeland are appropriate names in this regard. The latter has not long ago released the book *Relational Pedagogy* (2011). This book has been a great help in the present study.

On this basis, it is paramount important to find out how this relationship can be as strong and good as possible.

The conclusion for this action learning study is that the values the Bjoernson-inspired teacher Baard schoolmaster represents, certainly can help to lay the foundation for a durable and sustainable relationship among the various participants in school life.

It is not possible to determine whether a single factor among the ten values/strategies from Baard schoolmaster is more important than others. After trying it all into practice, I could see that the different values/strategies often went hand in hand. This is quite evident in Bjoernson's texts. During a few short moments in Oyvind's first meeting with the school, he got to meet all the values/strategies at once. It was both courtesy, closeness, humour, use of first names, eye contact, interest, dialogue, good contact with parents, respect and distinct teacher, clearly and visibly present from the first moment, and in the first meeting.

Unless it is possible to say that a value /strategy is important, it is important to emphasize the importance of the first meeting, and the basis for the good and strong relationship that will be added here. "What is the name of this body" was the first

Baard schoolmaster asked for in the first meeting. Then fell the good words, which recognized both mother and child: "What a beautiful little boy."