

## Norway

### Øyer Lower Secondary School

*This lower secondary school (students aged 13-16) employs weekly development reviews where students participate in planning, implementing and assessing their own learning, educational and occupational counselling, and is engaged in a project to increase student motivation and ambition with various measures. Measures include Open school afternoons where students get assistance with homework, the formulation of frameworks and guidelines for classroom management, student-teacher relations, the use of flexible green teaching hours and practical tasks, teaching outside school, etc. A work group including staff and parents works on a three-year plan to improve parent involvement in school. Øyer Lower Secondary School is a demonstration school for schools in Norway.*

**Main Focus of Innovation:** RESOURCES, ORGANIZATION

#### General Information

**Name of the ILE:** Øyer Lower Secondary School

**Location/Address:** 2636 Oyer

**ILE submitted by:** Stein Eirik Uhlen

**Rationale**

*Why do you suggest that it should be included in the project? How does it respond to 21<sup>st</sup> century learning challenges?*

For several years Øyer lower secondary school has worked to the aim of creating a good learning environment for our pupils. A result of this work was that in the spring of 2006, we were designated a demonstration school for schools in Norway.

"Øyer lower secondary school demonstrates great educational creativity and innovation in fields that directly impact a positive school environment. The school has been able to keep its focus on the strong sides of their pupils. It has developed systematic and holistic thinking that allows all the pupils to be seen, both when it comes to well-being/mental health and academic development.

The school has a high level of pupil empowerment. Weekly development/performance reviews are conducted with each pupil where the pupils participate in planning, implementation and assessment of their own learning. The project "Styrk sterke sider" (Strengthen your strong sides) is an exciting approach to adapted teaching.

Educational and occupational counselling is systematically organized at the school. Øyer lower secondary school is at the forefront of the new subject curricula and is well prepared to use them and give them a local flavour in the autumn. The requirements for the results attained generally depend on clear and skilled management. The school has developed a large and good network, and is good at using external and in-house resource persons.

They are very much at the forefront when it comes to using ICT as a basic skill."

We are now engaged in the project "LÆRELYST – KUNNSKAPStørst og læreLØFT" (Motivation to learn - thirsting for knowledge and promoting knowledge) and the idea is to create greater motivation and ambition in our pupils for learning. We are working to increase pupil motivation and ambition levels, and through this achieve greater social levelling. Professor Thomas Nordahl is the principal supervisor for the project

Through the project "LÆRELYST – KUNNSKAPStørst og læreLØFT" the school wishes to review some measures we already have implemented and initiate new measures focusing directly on increasing pupil motivation to learn. Examples of such measures and focal areas include:

- Classroom management
  - ✓ General class management
  - ✓ The transition from primary school to lower secondary school, a good start to school
  - ✓ Consequences if pupils break the rules
- Relations between teachers and pupils
- Boys and learning
- Practical assignments in the teaching
- Draw up three-year plan for cooperation between the home and school
- Study techniques, draw up three-year plan
- Basic skills in the Knowledge Promotion curriculum
- The school's development/performance reviews with pupils
- Designing the school's work plan for pupils and using green teaching periods

Targets focusing on pupils:

Through the project "LÆRELYST – KUNNSKAPStørst og læreLØFT" the school wishes to

- work to achieve clear classroom management focusing on common frameworks and structures, creating confidence and safety for the pupils and motivation for learning
- prepare guidelines for how to carry out the start of a new school year, particularly for Year 8, where we focus on giving the pupils good work habits, making them confident and focus on classroom management
- facilitate for good relations between teachers and pupils in the day-to-day teaching situations, in the development/performance reviews and by having a common framework for the school
- prepare proposals for the reactions Øyer lower secondary school will have if pupils break school rules.

These must be of such a nature that it is possible for us to follow them up

- prepare a proposal laying down the content of the development/performance reviews at Øyer lower secondary school and how they should be conducted. The development/performance reviews should be based on central features of the Motivation to Learn project to create a general motivation to learn more for our pupils and the need to give some pupils better structures. We also emphasize progression from Year 8 to Year 10
- propose how work plans for Øyer lower secondary school should be designed based on central features of the Motivation to Learn project to create the general motivation to learn in our pupils and the need to give some pupils better structures. We also put extra effort into matters connected to weekly homework, homework for the next day and having progression from Year 8 to Year 10
- propose how our green teaching hours should be used, based on central features of the Motivation to Learn project to create the general motivation to learn in our pupils and the need to give some pupils better structures. We emphasize the flexibility these green hours allow and the need we have for cooperation with the all the pupils at this level. We also discuss matters connected to theme and project activities, work with the a-plan and having progression from Year 8 to Year 10
- focus on and familiarize teachers with various aspects that are important for boys and learning and how to implement these
- discuss in the various subject sections the importance of having practical tasks in school
- work with how to undertake alternative teaching outside school based on the aim of creating the motivation to learn in our pupils, including working with
  - how we can arrange to borrow a mountain dairy farm and what we can achieve through this by using it in our teaching for some pupils, groups of pupils and in some cases all the pupils from a level/year
  - whether we should carry on with our outdoor group or other alternative activities placed in the district, and how these can best be run best to achieve the intentions of the Motivation to Learn project
- draw up a three-year plan for closer cooperation and increased involvement between parents and school. A work group has been appointed with representatives of schools and parents to work on this three-year plan. Parent meetings and evening get-togethers will be arranged according to a fixed pattern, with importance attached to making parents familiar with central aspects of the school, such as curricula, the parental role, expectations for the various years, the "It's learning" learning platform, networks, substance abuse, education choices, spring party. It is important to facilitate for parents to follow up their children's school work more closely

- draw up a three-year plan for how Øyer lower secondary school will work with study techniques. The aim is that:
  - the school should improve at teaching or demonstrating different ways the pupils can acquire knowledge
  - the pupils should become more aware of different ways of working with their subject material
  - the study techniques must be interdisciplinary
  - effective, varied, interesting and good learning!

The work with study techniques will be integrated in the subjects in accordance with a fixed plan. One aim is that the various methods should be automated for the pupils, and that these will result in more varied teaching and that the pupils will feel they master more. We start with the five basic skills.

The greatest focus on this is in Year 8 with repetition in Year 9 and Year 10. An overview or “bank” of the different study techniques will be prepared

- arrange Open School two afternoons a week where we offer assistance with homework and access to computers for the pupils, focus on the motivation to learn and create a good social arena for the pupils
- use ICT to utilize pupil motivation for learning using a computer, utilizing the computer's facilities for adapted teaching, for example using the electronic learning platform It's learning, and using other software
- include an overview of basic skills in accordance with the Knowledge Promotion curriculum in the school's three-year plans for each subject
- take the initiative to establish municipal cooperation with all schools on which basic skills pupils in our municipality should work on each year.

Targets focusing on teachers and assistants and the organization so that teachers can be involved in and committed to their subjects and their teaching, and work based on the objectives in the Motivation to Learn project with a genuine aim of helping the pupils:

- implement competence-raising measures for the staff, including more common ways of doing things and staff seminars
- the school administration, all the teachers and assistants should be active participants in work groups and measures working on themes in the Motivation to Learn project
- implement measures to create common attitudes for the staff
- use the school as a learning arena for teachers and assistants, learning from the day-to-day work activities.

### **Evidence**

*Is there any evidence or indications showing that this initiative achieves the outcomes that it is aiming at?*

It is very difficult to provide documentation for our project "LÆRELYST – KUNNSKAPStørst og læreLØFT" that satisfies research standards, but we hope that our work will give the good results we are expecting. The project is running now, so results will probably become clearer as the project progresses. We are doing well in the pupil survey and national tests. Our examination results vary, but we generally do well.

Øyer lower secondary school has participated in the project "Kvalitet i opplæringa (KIO)" (Quality in teaching) for adapted teaching. This research project has been carried out by Volda University College and was funded by the college and the Norwegian Research Council, the programme "Praksisrettet FoU for barnehage, grunnpplæring og lærerutdanning – PRAKSISFOU" (R&D with a practical focus for day-care centres, basic education and training and teacher training). See a review of the project on <http://www.hivolda.no/kio>. Øyer lower secondary school scores highly in this survey.

**Learning Aims / Intended Learning Outcomes of the ILE**

*What are the core learning aims and which knowledge, skills or attitudes are to be acquired? (These may include outcomes related to learners' social, interpersonal, or meta-cognitive development)*

We refer to the above.

**Learners**

*Which group(s) of learners is it aiming at? Who is eligible to take part? How many learners are there? What are their ages?*

All our pupils are in the target group. We have pupils from 13 to 16 years of age.

**Facilitators**

*Who are the teachers/facilitators? Who are the leaders? What are their professional backgrounds? What are their roles?*

The head of school is the project manager. The entire staff is involved.

**Organization of the ILE**

*How is learning organised? How do learners and facilitators interact? What kind of pedagogy do they follow? What curriculum is used?*

We follow the Knowledge Promotion plan. The school is organized in years – classes and groups. We have very little teaching of individual pupils.