

Beda Hallberg in Kungsbacka– New School with an Alternative Format

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Information about the school

Beda Hallberg Upper Secondary School – a new school with flexible arrangements based on students' individual courses of study. The idea is to start a school based on many of the “school success factors” where the staff are working to meet the individual needs of students:

- **A positive approach** to make the students feel comfortable and able to benefit from their education. We believe in the ability of the student and treat them with respect as unique, equal individuals.
- **Clear targets** – emphasis on results and constant feedback from the subject teacher.
- **Access to qualified study and careers guidance** help students to find the right study path.
- **Quality through cooperation and participation** – staff learn from one another and involve students in development work.
- **The ability to identify and meet student needs.** Procedures guarantee close follow-up on student's results, while at the same time effective use is made of the skills of staff in the student health service.

Target group

The school is targeting two groups of students, those who are looking for a small, municipal alternative coming straight from lower secondary school and those aged 16-20 who wants to return to their studies again.

Innovative approach

Beda Hallberg is a **homework-free school** in which we strive to achieve a balance between studies and leisure time. The school day is cohesive and teacher-led, with communal starting and ending times.

We focus not only on the student, but also on **the whole human being** and his/her well-being. We think that trust-based relationships with students have a major impact on the students' educational performance. The relationship between teacher and student is crucial. At Beda we try to work actively on approaches and attitudes towards students .It is a question of encouraging them to feel that the staff at the school want the best for them and have the desire and the knowledge to help them. Displaying active commitment to each student's success in achieving their objectives increases their motivation. (According to inspections students emphasise that good adult contacts are of major value in terms of their motivation and attendance at school. Staff who are committed, have high expectations, are receptive to individual needs and who have faith in their student's abilities are the basis for the schools to succeed in the education.) We want to have the attitude of viewing the students as competent and involved individuals and strive to adopt a holistic view of the students' situations.

A basic view at Beda is that school must adapt to the student, not the other way around. It is up to the school how well it can **meet individual conditions and needs**. Our obligation is to create the best possible conditions for the students to succeed their education. (The traditional approach is based on the fact that the upper secondary school is voluntary and that it is up to the students whether they want to put an effort into their education.)

The importance of **competent mentorship** based on a coaching approach. It is about creating faith in the students, adopting a positive approach for challenges and supporting them to see opportunities instead of obstacles.

As a student at Beda you are never anonymous. By being a small and homely school setting we **prevent the feeling of anonymity**. We try to achieve an atmosphere of familiarity in which staff and students get to know one another and where staff can have a complete picture of each student's situation. At Beda teachers are being able to build good relationships with students and to get them to feel a sense of affinity and significance. A simple example is that we eat breakfast and arrange lunch together each day.

Values relating to treatment are communicated regularly. We work actively on issues relating to values and give consideration to what constitutes good treatment. A clear value base cannot be taken for granted, but requires a regular dialogue between adults and between adults and students. We always try to "practise what we preach" as regards to everyone having equal value, and show respect for and interest in students as unique individuals. At Beda the staff try to conduct a structured dialogue with students about how they want to be treated and how they themselves are expected to treat others. The students are trained to stand up for their views, to listen to others and to work together. Right now we are looking forward to create the equal treatment plan together with our students.

We **represent a mixture** of municipal security (with student health care, pedagogy for special needs and careers advisors) and pedagogical free-thinking when it comes to structure, pedagogical matters and organisation.

- Student/individually focussed measures (individual programme of study, schedule, course work, support for different learning styles, etc.) **The ability to identify and satisfy student's needs**. At Beda we always search for the flexible solutions to allow the student to perform to the best of his or her full ability. Some need to study in a low pace, some from home, some want a working-space of their own, some wants to study with music in their ears or on a cosy coach. We try to be curious in every student's individual learning style and make the best effort to adept the education to the circumstances. We are also experimenting with measures like streaming lessons, access to summaries and notes from lessons via digital platform, flipped classroom, different apps on the i-pad for the ones with special needs etc.
- Focus on learning (not curriculum content) – Focus on skills and competences, individual objectives, holistic view of students, support of skills related to key competences needed for everyday life, and life-long learning **Clear targets and an emphasis on results** - At Beda we try to create procedures and work-methods to make students aware on a regular basis of where they are in relation to course targets. Students are given control over how their own priorities work, and how they themselves can influence their results. We also provide regular feedback about what they need help with in order to manage their studies.
- **An induction process** with among others focus on "10 good habits" (nutrition, physical education, positive thoughts, to keep out of stress, to learn new things, repetition, variation, decision-making, friends and to laugh often) and the training of different skills, analysis, communication, empathy, study techniques, self knowledge, criticism of the sources, creativity, problem solving and co-operation. The induction process serves to create a secure, positive working climate within the programme.
- Beda is a place where **student health and occupational guidance are integral elements** of our operations (for example teachers and career advisor work together to cross-reference the two professions). We want the student to be well, feel needed and know where you're heading. We help the students recognizing their own strengths and weakness and what they have an aptitude for.

- **Collaboration with the out-side world raises status and increases motivation.** At Beda we really have the desire to collaborate with companies and organisations in the nearest future. Right now we are part of a research project focused on entrepreneurial learning and the skills committed to that. We strongly believe that collaboration with society and the labour market contributes to students feeling motivated in their studies. A small thing that we started out with is "the hot chair" every Friday where we invite interesting people from the labour market. The students are then given the opportunity to ask questions and get to know more about "the outside world".

Strong involvement:

As we start from scratch **we build the school together with students and staff.** We have a fantastic opportunity to build a school that we want to have and which we believe in. To be involved in practically everything from furniture and equipment to educational solutions creates motivation among both staff and students. Everyone needs to be flexible and think creatively. To create a brand new school requires involvement from everyone.

The staff at Beda create together a **consensus on educational base values and leadership.** We cooperate to improve results – we help one another to reflect on the challenges and dilemmas involved in individual cases as well as pedagogical leadership in general. The head teacher works closely with the workgroup and has regular contact with both staff and students.

Staff learn from one another and give students influence. Teachers have close cooperation and are accessible at school, not only to students but also to one another. This enables them to become aware of each other's abilities and competences, to share experiences and to work more effectively to provide students with an individually adapted education. Coming together to take action, reflect and learn new lessons is an important part of the job.

Quality control - We constantly think about how work can be improved and also involve the students in the discussions.

- Beda has created an alternative learning context that includes interventions at many levels:
- They include: student-focussed - counselling, mentoring, learning style, programme of study
- School level (organization): Skill-based teaching not simply curriculum, schedules, programmes of study, order of courses etc.

The success of Beda Hallberg Upper Secondary School will be determined by how well we succeed in inspiring students to learn and in adapting our courses to the outside world and to the individual needs of students.

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Frida Fogelmark, Head master - currently on parental leave