

Small projects at a snail's pace – small for whom?

Inclusion of all children is one of the most important goals of kindergartens. Kindergartens shall ensure that children receiving special education support are included in the children's group and general educational service (Norwegian Ministry of Education, 2018, p. 40).

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Solli and Andresen (2017) explain that the staff at kindergartens support the fundamental values of inclusion and that their work aimed at contributing to inclusive processes applies to all children. All children may need some help in taking part in a peer community, but children with multiple disabilities have special needs for support (Heimdahl & Fulland, 2019, Lund et al., 2014). Their needs may be considered so complex that we hear of caregivers and professionals asking whether inclusion is at all possible.

In this chapter, we will look more closely at what the adults' insecurities consist of, and how we can understand and build inclusive communities where children with multiple disabilities are part of the children's group. This contribution is inspired by a kindergarten project where, during the course of the cooperation, we became more enlightened about the possibilities for inclusion (Heimdahl & Fulland, 2019). We will start by describing the children we are concentrating on and present Oleana – a fictive child with multiple disabilities (Point 1). Thereafter, we highlight some specific dilemmas attached to inclusion, which staff at kindergartens and special needs educators have presented to us in various

contexts related to children like Oleana (Point 2). Moreover, we describe why we believe that collective reflection over experienced dilemmas, and how one can understand inclusion, is a good starting point for inclusive practices. Exemplification is provided in the form of stories from the field of practice and assessment logs as a starting point for conversations on inclusion (Point 3). To conclude, we highlight three dimensions of inclusion that show the small and subtle elements that inclusion may contain (Point 4). This type of approach to working with inclusion as a theme could broaden the focus of adults on inclusion and thus encourage them to facilitate an inclusive community.

A fictive story to illustrate the children we are talking about

The following story intends to illustrate the children this chapter concerns. The children's severe health issues necessitate adaptation of both the physical and pedagogical environment. The story also illustrates how the question of inclusion emerges in the daily lives of highly challenged children. We have called the story 'Cauliflower Soup':

Cauliflower Soup

It is nearly lunch time. The children storm in passing Oleana's wheelchair, as they go to the sink to wash their hands. They do this quickly and find their seats waiting for the mealtime song at the table. Cauliflower soup is being served today.

Oleana does not necessarily need to wash her hands. They are clean, since they have mainly been on her lap.

Oleana is ushered into a playroom that is now vacant. Oleana's lunch box contains a syringe and colourless mixture. A PEG button on her stomach, a syringe, a jug of water and a little blueberry jam to put on the pink gripper from Talk Tools makes Oleana's mealtime very different. Oleana hears the lunch sounds. She hears glasses being filled and spoons falling on the floor or being banged on the table. She hears the voices of the other children in the neighbouring room.

When Oleana is finally wheeled to the dining table, most of the children have gone. Only the slow-eaters are still at the table. Oleana is on a special needs upright stander. She has to look down from her high position to see all the mess left on the table and the slow-eater sitting next to her. The slow-eater reaches out his hand and grabs Oleana's hand. The adult sees the tiny outreaching hand and says: "Oleana tastes the cauliflower soup? She likes it. Did you like it?"

Many thoughts may come to mind after reading the story. The story shows that Oleana is included, but also that she is ignored, and that mealtimes are different for her compared to the other children. Most of the time, Oleana sits on an adult's lap or is in her wheelchair or lying down on a mat. Her hands are rarely in contact with sand and sloppy mud. Washing hands with the other children can easily be considered superfluous. Eating through a feeding tube, flushing procedures, special needs upright stander with straps and strap tightening – the many procedures that take up space, time, and equipment. She hears noises from the communal mealtime in the neighbouring room. Is Oleana living a parallel life at the kindergarten? After a while, Oleana is wheeled into the common area. Luckily one of the children is a slow-eater and he and Oleana exchange a moment of

togetherness. Nevertheless, must inclusion of children like Oleana be left to such coincidences?

The parallelism and randomness may both be unavoidable and understandable. Shielding and changes may be sufficiently grounded, but they do not need to form the pattern for everyday planning. In this chapter we look at the possibilities for creating an inclusive community where children like Oleana are participants. For example, creating possibilities through participation in hand washing and sitting at the table at the start of the meal. Possibilities emerge through the attitudes and competence of the adults. A prerequisite for children like Oleana to take part in the children's community is that the adults are continually attentive through the day. In order to be a participant, Oleana needs lifelong assistance. Who is Oleana as an agent in her own life?

A starting point for considering inclusion for children like Oleana is the understanding that the adult will always function as an extension of the child. The adult will represent the child, which inherently carries great responsibility. Conscious decisions require reflection and knowledge.

The responsibility for accomplishing this may cause insecurity, a guilty conscience, and feelings of inadequacy (Heimdaal & Fulland, 2019). In the next part, we will highlight dilemmas of inclusion that the staff at kindergartens and special needs advisers have presented to us in various contexts.

The dilemmas of adults in relation to inclusion

We chose to categorise the challenges that are often highlighted in connection with inclusion of children like Oleana into four dilemmas. These issues are presented as dilemmas of inclusion because the adults in charge find that the dilemmas hinder inclusion.

Child's great need for care

One of the experienced dilemmas is related to Oleana's *great need for care* and assistance during most of her activities at the kindergarten. It takes time to move, dress and wash her, and to facilitate eating and sleeping. Assistive devices must be adapted by an occupational therapist and her muscles must be trained by a physiotherapist. The necessary health-promoting routines are linked to care which takes up a lot of time. Adults can perceive this as an obstacle for inclusion. In relation to the rest of the children's group, she has an asymmetrical life.

Adult's need to protect the child

Another dilemma concerns *the need to protect* Oleana. Oleana needs peace and quiet. She may vomit or make loud noises and abrupt movements. This can be perceived as unpleasant. It is easy to think that Oleana needs shielding so she will eat or rest better.

However, this considerate way of thinking may contribute to exclusion. The voices and touches of the other children vanish from her world and the outreaching child's hand is lost.

Maintaining children's interest over time

Children's groups are naturally characterised as being highly mobile. Some leave and others come in; the community is constructed and deconstructed. It may be difficult to 'hold on to' the interest of the other children over time. How can Oleana join in when she is 'stuck in a wheelchair'? Must there always be a 'fun' aspect each time to make it interesting for everyone? Or is it fine to just be together? What creates a community in changeable group compositions? And what is considered a suitable duration of interaction to say that Oleana joined in?

Many adults around the child

A fourth dilemma is the *number of adults* around Oleana. Because there are many special tasks, there is more staff around her. Responsibility for Oleana can be delegated to those with special responsibility for her, for example, user-controlled personal assistant (BPA) or special needs educator. It is reassuring that those who know Oleana well are very good with her. The staff, however, might also gradually live parallel lives and in the next moment feel like intruders. Can we say "hello" to Oleana or will we disturb her? Can we suggest something or is it the wrong time right now? How many questions can we ask? Increased staffing around children with a great need for support can make other staff feel insecure, which may be perceived as an obstacle for spontaneous contact.

Consequences of all the dilemmas

In combination these dilemmas can help create insecurities in relation to who Oleana could be in the wider children's community. It is important that the staff and team around the child take the dilemmas seriously and

look at them as joint challenges rather than individual problems. The dilemmas must be seen in light of the fundamental value that the work of kindergartens around inclusive processes applies to all children (Solli & Andresen, 2017). Collective reflection may be a way to address the dilemmas. Collective reflection is ingrained locally. The staff can therefore understand and reinterpret the dilemmas in a specific context. In the next section, we will look more closely at collective reflection as support for achieving good inclusive practices.

Collective reflection as a starting point for good inclusive practices

In this section we further explain the value of collective reflection and suggest two starting points for reflection that we have used when supervising kindergartens in inclusion: stories from the field of practice and observation tools.

Qualities of collective reflection

We have used Gulbrandsen, Fallang and Skjær Ulvik (2014) as a basis for drafting an understanding of what it entails to put into practice professional knowledge in kindergartens. This understanding places emphasis on collective reflection as a tool in supervision work. Gulbrandsen et al. (2014) writes that knowledge-based professional practices are *both theoretically reflected and analytically oriented, and systematic and flexible* (p. 207). The authors further argue for the perspective of knowledge-based professionalism to be changed from regular procedures to exploratory questions:

Any type of practice or method contains theoretical premises, albeit often implicit. However, they are still based on a given view on knowledge. We ask [...] questions about whether any established methods are missing in the fields of practice or whether it merely concerns the development of tools in order to see and understand? We will refer

to the latter as theoretical or conceptual knowledge [...], tools to shift the direction of professional focus. (Gulbrandsen et al., p. 207, our translation)

Co-creation

The participants in collective reflection may often be a mixture of employees close to the child from various professions (early childhood education teacher, assistant, user-controlled personal assistant (BPA), special needs educator) and external advisers (the Educational and Psychological Counselling Service (PPT), Statped). Collective reflection incorporates a combination of three elements: 1) the experiences and knowledge around each child and the specific lifeworld the child is a part of, 2) the possibilities to ask exploratory questions—including those which are difficult—and 3) the addition of new knowledge. In combination these elements contribute to broadening the participants' conceptual understanding of inclusion. The participants develop tools to see and understand inclusion. This results in the development of what Gulbrandsen and her colleagues (2014) refer to as co-creation of knowledge and meaning: how to collectively create inclusion for and with the children.

Exploration

Input for reflection over inclusion could involve the challenging dichotomous thinking, for example, looking at children as included or excluded, participants or non-participants, language users or languageless. Moen writes (2018, p. 10) that "when someone is understood as either one or the other, there may soon be little room for nuances, intermediate solutions or both/and perspectives." (our translation). Instead of using an either-or approach, it may be fruitful to explore other forms of inclusion and participation (Heimdaal & Fulland, 2019), for example, the value of the quiet, yet attentive presence or voices of the children that form the daily ambience.

Or the outreaching hand from the slow-eater at the table, which may leave an impression on both Oleana and the boy who stretched out his hand. Do these small moments constitute inclusion? How can care and inclusion go hand in hand? And how is the child a supplier of premises for the community of which she is a part? The term *community* does not represent a given size either. Part of conceptual knowledge of inclusion might involve unfurling the community the child is part of (see chapter 1).

An emotional buffer

Collective reflection may also function as an emotional buffer for those bearing the responsibility for practices. Sharing and unfolding dilemmas, insecurities, and the feeling of not being able to cope during tasks, can help people overcome feelings of inadequacy and relieve a potential guilty conscience of all the things they believe they will not get done. Broader analytical focus may lead to the discovery of new ways to carry out their practices. Likewise, with a broader understanding the person may discover that what they are already doing is good enough and look at their own contribution with fresh eyes.

Awareness raising

Reflection meetings may also contribute to the participants looking upon themselves to a larger extent as inclusion agents. We will return to this in Point 4, where we highlight the adult's role as a facilitator for inclusive moments. This concerns the adult entering the child's world and inviting more children into that world. Those who are with Oleana, hear, see and understand the other children's projects. It is therefore important to reflect over what Oleana's world looks like when what she sees, hears, and feels must be structured in order to be meaningful. Reflection meetings may help the adults to become skilled interpreters of what they see and experience.

Several potential starting points can be used for collective reflection. The analysis of video recordings of interactional situations is particularly suitable for such reflection (the use of videos is comprehensively described by, for example Heimdahl & Serrano, 2020; Heimdahl et al., 2019). Here we describe two approaches targeting the experiences of the adults, which we believe contribute to the analysis of the uniqueness of each child and pedagogical situations: stories from the field of practice and observation tools.

Stories from the field of practice

The kindergarten's own stories from the field of practice have proven to be an exciting starting point for conversations about inclusion (Heimdahl & Fulland, 2019). Telling stories when exchanging experiences is something we do all the time (Lundby, 1998). Nevertheless, during an ongoing conversation between adults, there is often not enough time to dwell on the stories. At least, there is not enough time to write them down. In a report from 2019, we describe how we systematically used stories from the field of practice as a starting point for reflection with the kindergartens we supervised (Heimdahl & Fulland, 2019). The employees wrote down and sent minor events from the kindergarten that they believed illustrated inclusion.

When staff talk of children like Oleana, the stories are often short. Not much happens with Oleana. She sits, waits, becomes tense and coughs very loudly. She doesn't run off. She doesn't take crayons off other children. An example of a story of inclusion might be: *"When Oleana arrived at the kindergarten, two girls ran up to greet her and gave her a flower."* During supervision, we can make short (thin) stories larger and richer (thicker) (Lundby, 1998). When we read stories out loud to the group, the stories become communal and the group can expand the stories together.

This is done to draw attention to experiential elements that are important to highlight in the collective consciousness:

Through self-experienced events, one works with inclusion that in a way is similar to a bottom-up process, where the development of knowledge and new professional awareness occurs in close approximation to one's own practices. One event is told and elaborated upon. This results in more events being recognised in daily life, which others can then retell. The staff's stories create knowledge in a field where little literature is found. (Heimdahl & Fulland, 2019, p. 13, our translation)

Observation tools

Experientially it has proven difficult to observe and systematise observations focusing on inclusion. This could be due to the fact that there is a lot of parallelism, the presence of many children, and there is often high mobility in the children's groups. It could also be the case that it is difficult to know what to look for. Consequently, it might be useful to have an observation aid that helps the adult to take a step back during their own practices and guide their attention.

Based on our experiences, Statped has developed an assessment log for use in this context. This log refers to important main categories in the observation: What is the child you are focusing on doing? What are the other children doing? What are the adults who are present doing? Furthermore, what are the qualities of the activity in which and around the interaction is taking place? (See Heimdahl & Fulland, 2019, for access to the log). A log can be filled in along the way, during a video observation or following an activity. The log can be filled in by one employee or several collectively.

When the log has been filled in, it represents a specific experienced situation that is owned by those who have experienced

it. It can then be used to look at minor everyday events with renewed enthusiasm, to share the experiences with others, and to support a change in practices or team development.

The analysis of video recordings, stories and observation logs are possible ways to highlight practices. As we mentioned earlier, one of the important ingredients in competence enhancement via collective reflection is that the specific and practice-related experiences are supplemented with professional knowledge that can contribute to broader focus on the same experiences. To conclude this chapter, we will therefore highlight three dimensions that are relevant to incorporate into collective reflection with the aim of obtaining a better understanding of what inclusion might be and how we can achieve it.

Three dimensions on the way to inclusive practices

In the following section we explore three dimensions of inclusive practices, which illustrate the professional competence that should be incorporated into the staff's reflection and co-creation sessions. The goal of these sessions is to elaborate upon the small events and strengthen the sense of coping with the work on getting all children to become members of an inclusive community. The three dimensions are: 1) facilitation so the other children can understand Oleana through *learning and teaching her language*, 2) *inclusive positions* that contribute to communication in Oleana's surroundings: proximity and nesting, and 3) the importance of understanding the concept of time that we use as a basis for our practices: *folded time*. We start with a fictive story that takes us into the three dimensions that are fundamental to the understanding of inclusion for children like Oleana. We have titled the story 'The Pinecone Boy'.

The Pinecone Boy

Oleane is sitting on the lap of one of the adults. A child comes up to her with a pinecone. “Wow, what a lovely pinecone!,” says the adult and helps Oleane open her hand. The Pinecone Boy looks at the adult and then to Oleane. Oleane opens up a little finger and touches the pinecone. The Pinecone Boy smiles and suddenly disappears. He returns with a new and bigger pinecone. “Oh my goodness! What a big pinecone!” says the adult loudly. The adult helps Oleane to touch the pinecone. Oleane stretches, and as she stretches her arm, she makes a noise. “Oleane is really happy now,” says the adult. The Pinecone Boy says: “Oleane loves pinecones. I’ll go and find some more.”

Learning and teaching Oleane’s language

Oleane is a child who expresses how she is feeling through her body. We choose to call Oleane’s way of expressing herself as her communication form; however, we have also used the term language. This is because we want to give Oleane’s bodily expressions the status assigned to conventional expressions. Her language includes a good mixture of vocalisation, facial and bodily expressions, and gestures. We can combine all these components under the term body language. “Body language is a broad church of subtle communication techniques that accompany the big brothers of auditory and visual communication. Non-verbal communication, eye contact, and facial expressions are the most common cues” (Complex Needs and Advanced Training, 2016, module 3.1).

Oleane’s bodily expressions do not, however, represent conventional body language. The potential for the expressions to develop into sign language or words is very small. They are difficult to read, as they can significantly deviate from what we usually consider non-verbal language (see the natural ways that toddlers express themselves). This may be due to spasms and other bodily cues, especially pain. Nevertheless, Oleane’s non-verbal language must be understood by those around her so she can participate. She relies on communication partners to understand what is going on and to express herself. Oleane’s

communication partners must know her so well that they are capable of understanding Oleane’s different idiosyncratic expressions. The term idiosyncrasy is used in linguistics to refer to a linguistic phenomenon that involves the creation of expressions that are only understood in certain linguistic environments or that are typical for an individual. For example, it is necessary to learn how Oleane smiles to know that she is smiling. It is precisely for these expressions that Oleane needs interpreters.

Furthermore, the communication in Oleane’s surroundings is characterised by phatic communication (Everett, 2008). Phatic communication points out the universal need to be socially connected. The children around Oleane use words, such as “hi”, “thank you” and “you’re welcome.” All these are phatic expressions to gain contact with others. Apart from words, this can be achieved through other channels and conventional symbol systems we recognise in language. It could be the exchange of sounds/vocalisations, breathing, whispering, actions, objects, and physical contact. By paying attention to Oleane’s communication, her caregivers have a better chance of finding the different ways in which Oleane expresses herself. This is what they need to do to learn and teach Oleane’s language, so that Oleane and the other children can gain contact. Oleane’s language needs the best interpreters.

When the children approach Oleane, they use social language. They want to communicate with her. Additionally, they use language to give information. They want to show her things they have found and are excited about her response. Children intuitively understand that the tactile-bodily channel is the best way to reach Oleane. If they use the tactile channel, the children get a response. With the help and support of the adult, who is with Oleane, her response will be converted to one of the fundamental elements of dialogue: turn-taking. When objects from the children are placed in Oleane’s hand, they become symbols for the desired involvement of Oleane in the group. Objects are turned into words and sentences. They are touched, explained, and recognised. They can be talked about. Oleane’s exploration with her hands make her visible to the children’s group. The children exaggerate their own body language by being more specific and exaggerating mimicry. They repeat themselves, talk slower, laugh loudly, and wrinkle their foreheads. They speak clearly in a high-toned voice and become overly clear. They simplify and shorten the length of sentences. They believe in Oleane. They keep their eyes on Oleane and the adult, whilst scanning the surroundings to make sure they are on the right track.

Simply put, this is exactly the quality that idiosyncratic language requires: calibration of what we believe we feel/hear/see in an attempt to understand/respond. Children who play with Oleane are sharp observers of the job the adults do. They absorb it and transfer it to their own method – to new contributions and new heights.

Inclusive positions

Everything we do in the world; we do through our bodies. Movements are expressions that drag thoughts and words with them. “Words and reflections are added or as Merleau-Ponty (1994) would have said: They are an

extension of the movement that starts in the body” (as cited in Nome, 2019, p. 103, our translation).

Furthermore, the human body is always in different parts of the room: under the table, under a pile of cushions, on a chair or mat, in a wheelchair, at the table, against a wall holding a cup of coffee, on the sofa. The position of human bodies in relation to each other impacts communication. Where the adult positions him or herself in relation to Oleane to help her communicate is therefore important for the inclusion of her. We have chosen to highlight two of the elements of inclusive positions: one is *proximity* and the other is *nesting*.

The term *proximity* has been taken from Complex Needs and Advanced Training, (2016). Proximity “concerns the experiential preconditions required for the Other to function in the role of secure base for exploration” (Nafstad & Rødbroe, 2015, p. 122). The adult needs to position themselves near the child in order to be a secure base and help the child out into the world. Nearness is often considered a sign of caring, but nearness is also part of Oleane’s communication. That is, nearness turns a space into a sphere where communication takes place.

Proximity allows the adult to guide, for example, Oleane’s hand so she can listen and participate. Ulla (2017) writes that the “Staff (at the kindergarten) also practise their field in the way they move, and the way they relate to the room and individuals around them solely through their bodies” (p. 187, our translation). For Oleane, it is critical that the adults position themselves nearby with a pleasant and friendly attitude in order for her to understand and be understood. This is closely interwoven with the second dimension: nesting.

The term *nesting* has been taken from Ochs et al. (2005). Nesting emphasises conscious positioning of the adult with the

aim of stabilising Oleana's body in order for her to use energy for communication. Because of frequent spasms, Oleana relies on being helped into a good position, so she can remain communicatively present. In the field of combined vision and hearing impairments, this is essential. Lindström (2019) writes "The nested position could support stabilization for the child and enhances the partner's focus on the child's movements or vibrations in the chest" (p. 59).

The adult accompanying Oleana, frequently and unconsciously adjusts their body. These adjustments turn into friendly body positions. This is because it is important to sense/feel each other's bodies to draw Oleana's attention to her surroundings. By doing this, she uses as little energy as possible to adjust her own body when communicating with the children around her.

The adult's position in relation to Oleana invites the other children in in different ways. For example, the face-to-face position can accentuate the dyad formed by Oleana and the adult. This position can exclude interaction with the group if the adult is not sufficiently aware of the signal being sent out. Other positions for communication are at the side of or behind Oleana or with Oleana sitting on the adult's lap. These open up towards the group. All the positions can be consciously used in daily life. Staff juggle between the positions for adaptation to play and activities. The position of the adult could be an important anchor.

The adult's body is the permanent holding point on the floor or around the table that enables the children to repeatedly return to the activity around Oleana.

Folded time

The third dimension is what the title fore-shadows for the reader. Those which may seem like small projects, like micro-goals, are large projects for Oleana. Such projects require a different perception of time.

What seems like a snail's pace to adults, is a pace that gives meaning to Oleana.

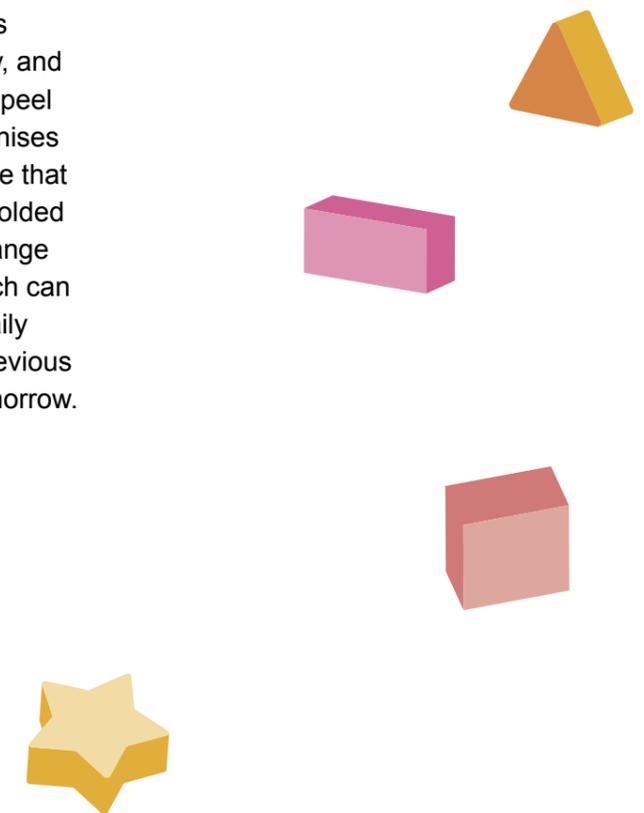
Many of Oleana's daily activities visualise the dimension of time. These activities begin, something happens and then they end. Time moves from A to B. This linearity emerges in the way Oleana's activities are structured. This is a key principle in all special and general pedagogical work. The problem with linearity is that it can make us blind to any immediate non-verbal expressions that may have resulted in a different outcome for the event. It is unusual to allow body language to guide what will happen. With a linear perception of time, where the process develops from A to B, there is often no room for uncertainty, stops, interruptions or insecurities. Often, we do not have enough time. Someone is waiting for the child to be finished with nappy changing or eating or washing. And we have to hurry up. There are so many things that HAVE to be done. These are the things we hear during supervision.

Breaking away from the linear perspective can be challenging for the staff at kindergartens. The linearity connects us to a way of being together, where we have the outcome in our minds before it happens. This can create stress for the child and us because we always need to get things done. When we break away from such linearity, we become aware of the dialogue and pleasure of being together, and the experience of the here and now becomes significantly more enriched. Perhaps the reader remembers the slow-eater in the cauliflower soup story? A routine-filled daily life may soon overshadow the slow-eater's attempt to make any contact. *The slow-eater stretched out a hand.* Do we see his intentions behind the act? Or do we see that he should finish eating? *"Don't you want to go out to play? The others have finished."* The adult in the cauliflower soup story paused just enough to say "Oleana tastes the cauliflower soup.

She likes it. Do you like it?" The prerequisite for the linearity is that we are aiming for something, so what perception of time do we need to help us be more present in the here and now?

The latter is difficult to imagine, but we could call it time that *folds* or folded time. Like the folds in a skirt or an accordion that produces new tones as we unfold it. Serres (1995) writes: "Time is paradoxical; it folds or twists; it is as various as the dance of flames in a brazier – here interrupted, there vertical, mobile, and unexpected" (p. 58). Gibson (2015) writes of an understanding of time where the past is interwoven with the present and expectations for the future. In linear time, an orange with its peel is an orange without its peel and is ready to eat. In folded time, an orange is a whole project where squirts of juice from the peel make a child scramble, smile, and perhaps squeal. It was a memory from yesterday but is part of today's project. It is expanded, rested, and becomes new. The peeled peel is brought out again, it is pressed gently, and fingers become trapped between the peel and piece of orange. The body recognises and remembers under the prerequisite that the experience is folded and then unfolded again. In this time perspective, an orange turns into an orange experience, which can be talked about and remembered. Daily routines are designed to recall the previous day today and they point towards tomorrow.

What does this have to do with inclusion? The adults, who are with Oleana, need the opportunity to absorb the importance of folded time. It allows inclusive communities to be built, because the outcome is not the most important thing, it is the road there. On Oleana's territory, all children can learn more, slow down their pace and become immersed in their projects provided that the adult has control, expands the theme, and engages them in a safe and low-key manner. The linear timeline gives security in knowing that something starts and ends. The folded time enriches it. We are in the folds together, present, and attentive. Many children choose to be with Oleana precisely because it feels good to slow down and be in the folds.



The Pinecone Boy story told with a broader focus

In daily life, the various dimensions that the staff must be aware of will be intertwined with each other. We have chosen to separate them for the sake of presentation and to draw attention to the individual nuances that are difficult to recognise in daily life.

The story about the Pinecone Boy that was presented to the reader at the beginning of the section, will now be retold to the reader with formulations that make the story thicker and linked to the competence the kindergarten has now acquired after collective reflection.

The Pinecone Boy retold

Oleane is sitting closely to the adult. Although, she is not merely sitting on the adult's lap. They are nested. She has a safe starting point for receiving the pinecone the child presents. The adult's body language shows in its entirety that Oleane needs time to place a finger on the pinecone, to feel the rough surface and to recall any impression that was received the day before. They are in folded time together, where the impressions from the day before may also reappear today. The child with the pinecone knows that he must wait. The adult interprets Oleane's body language so the Pinecone Boy can be happy that Oleane is happy. The Pinecone Boy disappears and shows up again with a new and larger pinecone. The individuals who make up this meeting are proximate to each other. The entire process happens again with a larger pinecone. Because the pinecone is larger, the adult's voice also becomes louder. The auditory picture becomes 'bigger'. Oleane's attention becomes more pronounced – she opens her eyes and sees more widely. The Pinecone Boy's feeling of mastery is clear by the proud look, and the new activity level that is necessary for collecting more and larger pinecones. It is a golden moment of inclusion for everyone. To summarise, we can say that the adult's competence consists of being a sensitive interpreter of Oleane's idiosyncratic expressions, and facilitator of proximity and nesting with a time perspective that does not aim for a specific outcome.

Conclusion: Is this about Oleane?

No, not really. It's about, as Hjelmbrekke writes, promoting diversity in early childhood. Working with inclusion could also be called the promotion of diversity in early childhood. A contact teacher once expressed it this way: "It appears that diversity is good for us all" (Hjelmbrekke, 2014", our translation).

In this chapter, we have used the stories about the cauliflower soup and Pinecone Boy to highlight dilemmas linked to inclusion and have argued that collective reflection is one key for tackling challenges and understanding inclusive practices – especially when there are many dilemmas

and adaptation is greatly needed. By stepping back, and taking time to tell and retell the story, the small projects turn bigger and the snail's pace becomes an oasis in which to step back and take a break. The dynamic, random, unplanned, and contextual nature of inclusion has now emerged. Common behaviour—sitting down, sitting close, adapting, and responding—are highlighted and put into a bigger context. Learning and teaching Oleane's language, and inclusive positions and comprehension of folded time, become important pieces of the jigsaw in an inclusive community.

Our wish? That every kindergarten will have the competence to seize the story, elaborate it, fold and unfold it, knead it and give it back to the storyteller like it was a jewel. That all children can take part in the small, unfinished, slow projects. That the parents of all children will hear about the small projects that have unravelled at a snail's pace during the course of the day and that society will recognise that inclusion in the early childhood years is extremely important for children with complex disabilities:

For CWD (Children with Disabilities), inclusion during the preschool years is critically important at this stage, because children have yet to develop biases about others, minimizing the possibility of rejection, whereas the chance that CWD have interactions with their peers makes it easier for them to be accepted in later years. (Sucuoğlu et al., 2019, p. 77)

Essentially, it is about the type of society and citizens that we would like to constitute the bigger 'we'.

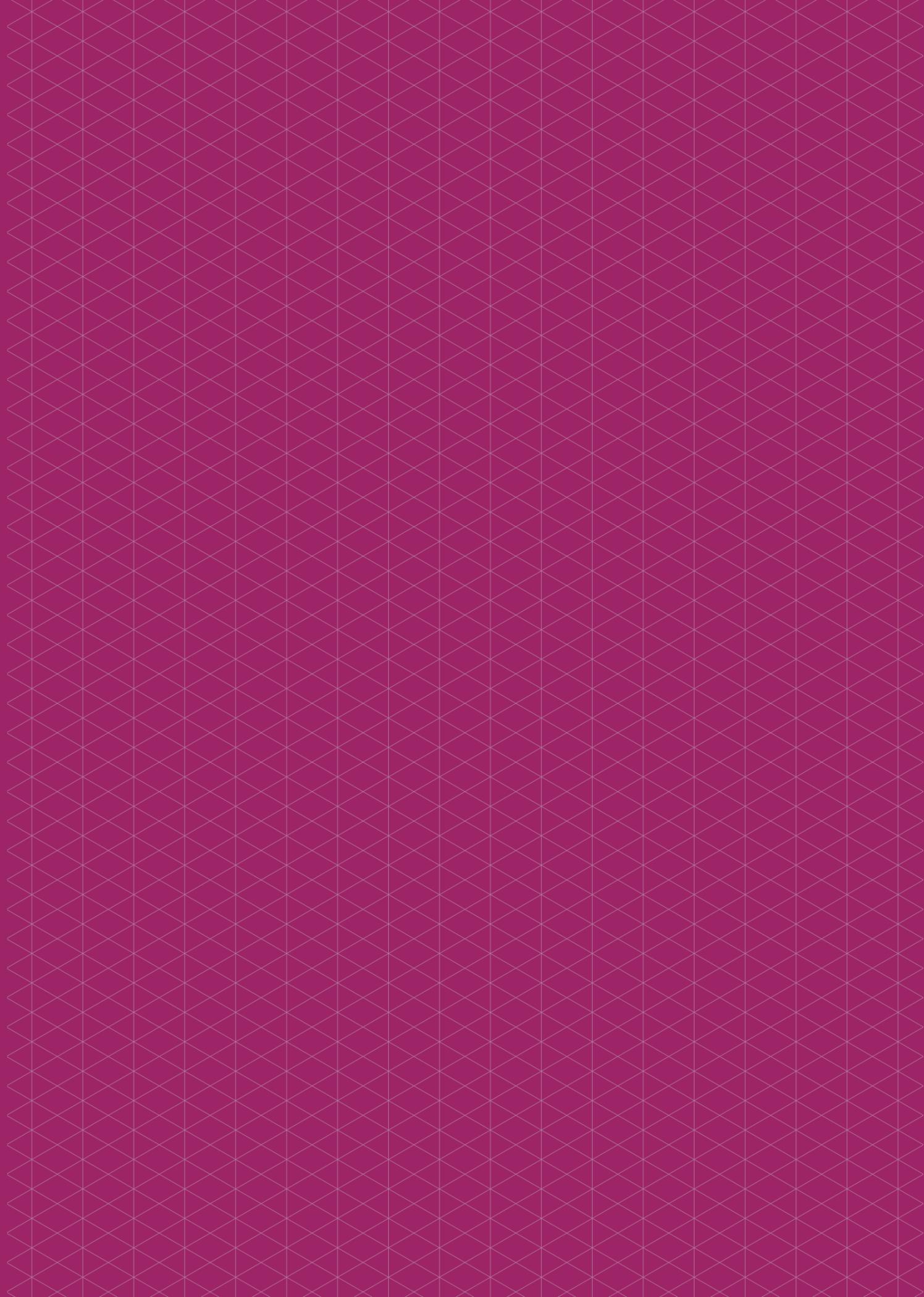


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Editorial staff: Siv Hillesøy, Eli Marie Killi, Ann-Elise Kristoffersen
Design and illustrations: Miksmaster Creative · www.miksmaster.no
Publisher: © Statped, Oslo 2020
www.statped.no

ISBN 978-82-323-0355-7 (printed version)
ISBN 978-82-323-0356-4 (digital version)



From a sociocultural perspective, children’s learning and development occurs through participation in social communities – where community with peers is of particular importance. Children’s participation in learning communities with other children, or facilitation of such participation, is a recurring theme in this anthology. The contributors to this anthology are advisers at Statped with experience from a variety of fields. They account for various approaches founded on experienced-based and research-based knowledge. What they all have in common is that they, through their adviser roles, have worked closely with the field of practice. This anthology shares the experiences from collaborations with kindergartens and schools in the efforts to develop a knowledge-based practice.

The anthology is primarily directed at students and professionals who work in kindergartens and schools but may also be of interest to others.

