

More than words – language and communication as keys to social belonging and play

September 24–25, 2026

The Steam Hotel in Västerås • thesteamhotel.se



Program

Thursday, September 24

- 8:30–9:00 Registration
- 9:00–9:30 Welcome to Västerås!
Dan in conversation with Åsa Lundkvist, School Chief and Director of Childcare and Education Department
Presentation of the Nordic Steering Group
Film about Västerås
- 9:30–10:15 Karolina Larsson, speech and language pathologist and doctor in medical science, Lund University and Department of Research and Development, Municipality of Halmstad

More than words – Interaction, play and learning in the language environments of preschool

Children's language development is not just about learning words. Through conversation and interaction, children learn to understand the world around them. In interaction, children also build relationships and find their place in social communities. In preschool, language becomes an important tool for thinking, learning and participation, and the preschool language environment creates the conditions and prerequisites for children's language and identity development.

This lecture explores how educators can actively support and stimulate children's language development in everyday preschool activities. Based on research and with concrete examples from early childhood education, the lecture highlights how responsive interaction, rich language environments and playful engagement can strengthen children's opportunities to develop a rich language that carries through school and life.

- 10:15–10:45 Swedish fika and networking around the Nordic countries
- 10:45–12:00 The lecture continues
- 12:00–13:00 Networking lunch outside the Grand Hall
- 13:00–14:00 Presentation of shareshops
- 14:00–16:00 Shareshops and Swedish fika
- 19:30–23:00 Twin town dinner in the Grand Hall

An action-packed evening inspired by the Nordic countries and the world of musicals.

The evening's hosts and entertainers are Anders Stark, Sussie Nordström, and Kajsa Andersson-Berg

Friday, September 25

- 8:30–8:45 Bus or walk to preschools, departing from the hotel
- 8:45–11:30 Visits to various preschools with experience sharing
- 11:30–11:45 Bus or walk back to the hotel
- 12:00–13:00 Networking lunch outside the Power
- 13:00–14:00 Oscar Björk, PhD in Didactics, Mälardalen University

Listening otherwise – on children's meaning-making in preschool

How can we as educators listen to children beyond the spoken word? This lecture introduces the concept of "listening otherwise" as a way to highlight children's meaning-making through body, materials, images, and other forms of expression. From a multimodal and dialogic perspective, it discusses what it means to take children's expressions seriously – and what didactic consequences this can have for teaching in preschool.

14:00–14:30 Evaluation

Summary and thank you!

Handing over to Randers, the next host municipality

Registration and payment

Digital registration, link available at www.norsamby.com

Participation fee: 3,200 Swedish kronor
Registration deadline: May 15, 2026

The network days have a limited number of places. Registration is binding but can be transferred to a colleague if necessary.

The participation fee must be paid by June 18 at the latest to:

Västerås stad
Stadshuset
721 87 Västerås
Sweden

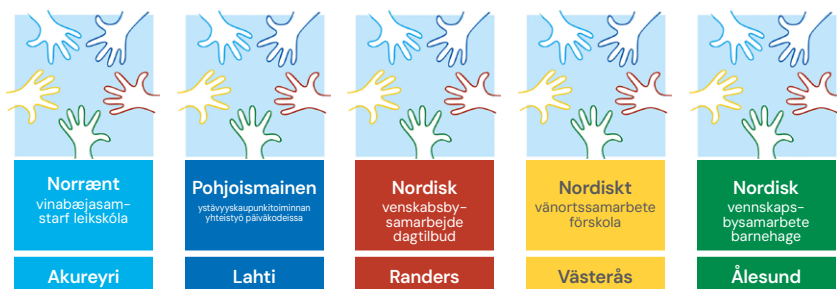
Bankgiro: 5038-0864
Write reference code by657
Bank: Swedbank
IBAN SE 3980 0008 4244 7043 7238 45
SWIFT: SWEDSESS

Information about the network days

Monika Löving Nilssen
Phone: +46 21 39 26 28
monika.loving.nilssen@vasteras.se

Tourist information

visit@vasteras.se
www.visitvasteras.se



Skolverket
www.skolverket.se

Skolinspektionen
www.skolinspektionen.se

Specialpedagogiska skolmyndigheten
www.spsm.se

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www.vasteras.se



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#language #communication
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