



# KED

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# A Million Voices

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**This Newsletter is a time capsule** that tells a very important story. Teachers from all countries in the global KED Network give voice to their experience and emotions as educators since the pandemic started. How would these stories be perceived in 50 years? Probably no less thought-provoking than a walk among monuments from Ancient Greece.

Their voices make you laugh and cry and fill you with determination to go

on. Among the personal accounts of snapchat Spanish and grannies in pj's, there is a common idea – however isolated we have been, the lockdowns and physical distance have resulted in stronger interpersonal bonds – between team members and between teachers and students. United against a common threat, we appreciate our shared community more than ever. Now we know the real value of having access to each other.

Before this time capsule is used by future historians, let it inspire you and remind you of how well you have dealt with the pandemic. The Parthenon temple is one of the most representative symbols of the ancient Greeks, dedicated to the goddess Athena. KED dedicates this Newsletter to all heroic teachers – a million voices over Zoom and Meet that keep generating healthy power against any virus.

# Dear Colleagues

**Catrine Petersson**  
English Teacher,  
Kunskapsgymnasiet Norrköping



**My name is Catrine Petersson**, and I am a teacher at Kunskapsgymnasiet Norrköping, Sweden. My students are 15-19 years old and I teach Swedish and English. I live in an adjacent town called Linköping, which means I commute to work by bus every day.

This last year has, as for everyone, been quite different and challenging. In March 2020, our government advised all upper secondary education to be converted into remote education. This meant that we sent our students home the same day and re-planned our lessons, lectures, tests etc. to be held remotely. Teachers were also allowed, within a few weeks, to teach from home. I know I am fortunate in all of this, as I have the possibility to work from home with a strong internet connection, a home office, and a quiet house where I can focus on my job. Our students were, thankfully, well prepared for this type of situation as they know how to structure their days and work with a set routine. We were, even before the pandemic, using many of Google's apps in our everyday communication, which made it easier to construct new routines for becoming completely digital. I am proud of and impressed by both students and colleagues who have adjusted to a new reality and who work so well together to make it work.

With that said, it has not been without its challenges. Replanning and restructuring lesson plans and work plans according to new restrictions and with short notice, trying to reach students who are not doing very well on their own and at the same time keeping up with other everyday work tasks, has been different and sometimes quite a struggle.

I have noticed that one of the greatest struggles for me, personally, is the lack of social interaction. This job is simply not the same when I do not get to have a spontaneous discussion in a classroom or a deep conversation with a student about the essentials in life. I miss being stopped in the corridor on

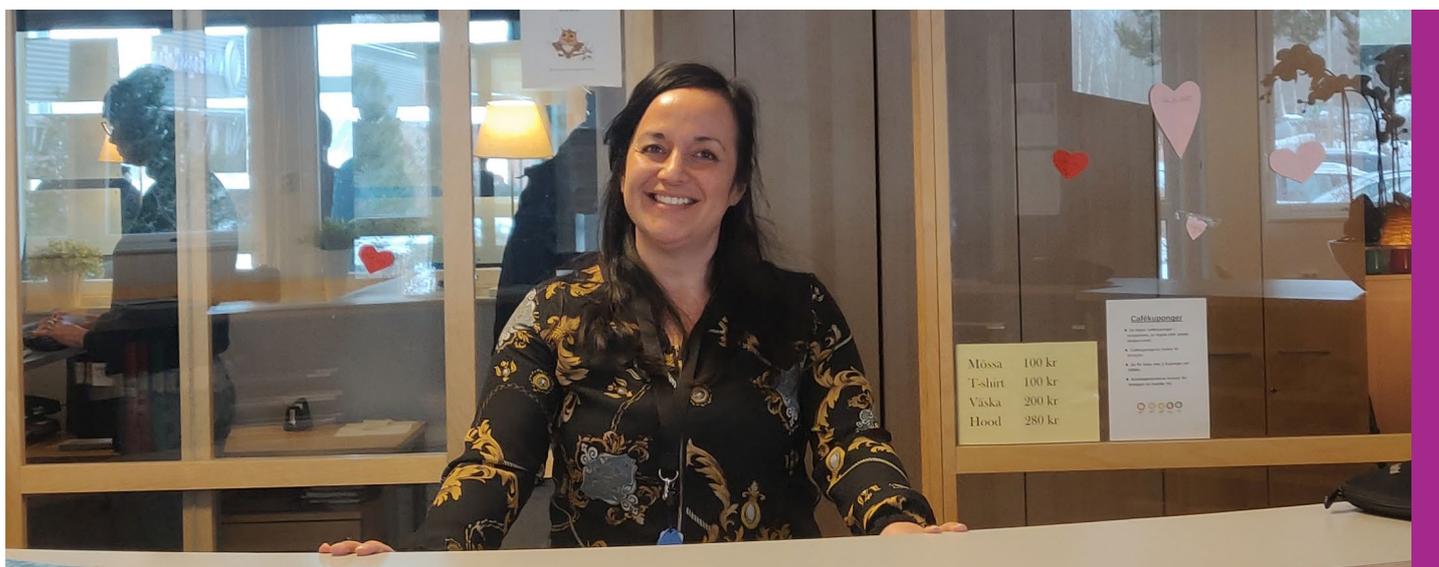


my way to something because a student remembered they wanted to ask me something when I happened to walk by. Remote teaching works, we have had our memorable moments through the screen, and I love the fact that I can still speak to students and colleagues even though we are in our respective homes. It is, however, incomparable to being in school physically. As I write this, a third of our students have classes in school and two thirds have remote classes. It is wonderful to be able to see the students in a classroom and how motivated and happy most of them are to be able to get some work done in school.

As I mentioned at the beginning of this text, I am aware that we have been lucky in this pandemic. Sweden as a country has focused on everyone's responsibility to follow given recommendations and restrictions. We have been fortunate at our school with few known cases and doing our part in eradicating this disease really must be the priority still. My greatest hope for 2021 is therefore that we as a world can work together to stabilize our societies, get this disease under control and soon, hopefully, be able to teach in a busy school full of eager students again.

Be well and take care!

# The Spirit of Kunskapsskolan



**My name is Madelene Halvarsson** and I work at Kunskapsskolan Borlänge, the most northern KED school in Sweden. Our semester has just started, and it is cold, snowy, and beautiful outside, the surroundings here are amazing now! It really shows how beautiful the winters in Sweden can be.

I think that I speak for all of us when I say that the past year has been very different, not only in Borlänge, but to the entire world. The pandemic struck us all, but I think that we were more equipped to deal with it than most other schools since we have come a long way when it comes to working with our students by the help of computers and all the different digital tools that we use in our daily work.

Of course, it was hard for all of us when the pandemic started but we worked as a team and helped each other. I am proud of being a part of this school but also a part of Kunskapsskolan. We helped each other in various ways, here among us colleagues in Borlänge,



Together as a team, we have dealt with, and solved, all the problems that came up.

between the different schools by social network and our head office helped us. We have shown the spirit that we try to achieve locally here in Borlänge, The Spirit of Kunskapsskolan, that we collaborate with focus on problem solving instead of just the problem itself. Together as a team, we have dealt with, and solved, all the problems that came up.

I am most proud of all our amazing students who handled all this very well, as they went from their ordinary school days to working from home every other day. I must admit I did not think it would work out as well as it has done. I can only agree with the saying that together we achieve more, that has shown to be true during this last year. I am optimistic about the future, and I am not worried about what might happen, because I know that we are more than well equipped to handle whatever the future brings. ■

**Madelene Halvarsson**  
English and Swedish Teacher,  
Kunskapsskolan Borlänge

# The Power of Personal Coaching



**I am sure that all teachers would agree** that there is nothing quite like teaching in a classroom. The sound of pen strokes, discussion, exciting 'a-ha' moments and all the pleasant and less-pleasant moments in between.

One of my greatest worries was how we would support and care for our students' well-being through the internet. For some students, school is the safest place in the world, and to suddenly be pulled away from it proved difficult.

Not only was there the worry for our students, but teachers felt the impact too. I particularly struggled with school having moved into my dining and living rooms. With my husband being a teacher too and having two young children needing to learn at home, the hardest part of the year was the lack of privacy. At any given time during the school day, a camera or microphone was on around us. Home became a classroom and became exposed to hundreds of students a day. Supporting my own children in their learning became exceedingly difficult, so without the support and love of our friends, our children would have missed so much.

Upon leaving my old school in Bahrain in July, I joined Nün Academy Kunskapsskolan, Jeddah in August 2020. This was a totally new experience. Not just because it was a new school, but because I would be teaching students in September that I had not ever met in the flesh and, furthermore, would be teaching all the way from the United Kingdom, as Saudi Arabia had not yet opened their borders. Trying to forge relationships with new colleagues whilst being over 6000 kilometers away was a mind-boggling notion.

In the beginning of September, I was finally able to meet my new students over Zoom and begin teaching them. I was anxious that I would struggle to build a rapport with them, but I got pleasantly surprised. It really is a testament to the sheer adaptability of this young generation that they can, in the face of unprecedented adversity, soldier on, make meaningful relationships and continue striving for success despite it all. KED's focus on coaching really helped with this too. The personalized coaching allowed me to get to know my students in a less superficial way, as if we were not over 6000 kilometers away.

One of the most amazing realizations in the face of this pandemic was just how resilient children are. Both my own children and the students I have taught have been able to show true grit despite the circumstances.

In January 2021, I finally arrived in Saudi Arabia, and it was such a pleasure to meet my colleagues. There was no awkwardness; no forgetting of names or faces; it was like meeting old friends. Something I would not have believed possible before this pandemic.

Teaching in a pandemic is not for the faint of heart, and virtual teaching – though a blessing – will never ever replace the energy of a bustling classroom, but I feel so fortunate that we have been able to continue meeting the needs of our students, both academically and socially. This new normal, though not ideal, has drawn attention to the brilliance of the indomitable human spirit, and I look forward to the day when we will look back and celebrate all that we have achieved during this time. ■

**Yasmine Bouroubi**  
English Teacher, Nün Academy  
Kunskapsskolan, Jeddah

# I Teach for Life

**Emma Rova**  
Science Teacher,  
Kunskapsskolan Enköping

**My name is Emma Rova** and I work as a senior lecturer at Kunskapsskolan Enköping, where I have been teaching science and technology since 2014. I love teaching and guiding the path my students walk through lower secondary school and early adolescence. I would not choose to do anything else for a living. Ever.

In the early spring of 2020, many things changed in schools all over the world. In the beginning I was not too worried about the Coronavirus, thinking it was just another variant of the winter flu. But as time progressed and the world was set in alarm, shutting and locking down societies, I started to feel concerned about the somewhat laid-back approach that Sweden chose to adopt at this point.

Despite the strong opinion that the Swedish elementary schools should avoid lockdown if possible, we all started to keep alternative lesson plans allowing for high-quality online education, should a lockdown come to be. And eventually it happened. In the late autumn of 2021, the rate of infected people in our region increased dramatically and we had to decrease the number of students in school to counteract the proliferation of the virus. We created a shifting schedule, whereby students were taught at school for three to four days a week, and then participated in online education for the remaining days of the week. We rotated the schedule so that students in different grades had online studies on different days each week.



We are evolving and that is a good thing.

First it was hard to imagine how to create a lesson plan allowing for lectures and labs to fit into this new way of teaching and learning. It was a jigsaw puzzle and we all had to work together even more closely than before to make the pieces fit.

There have been many changes to how I perform my work during this pandemic. It has been exhausting at times, but I have learned to seize the challenges and turn them into something good. For example, the pandemic reached its height at about the same time that I was teaching about global health, bacteria and viruses, and the human immune system. I interweaved everything I learned about Covid-19 into my lectures and created discussions amongst the students about the different approaches to counteract the plague in different parts of the world, generating an interest in and understanding of viral proliferation, population immunity and the process of vaccine development and function.

I worried about the online lectures, knowing it can be hard to reach all students even when you are in the same room. How would I make sure that everyone was following when just facing a screen? But my worries were unnecessary. The students soon found the chat function, and questions flowed in. It turned out to be a great forum, and even the quietest students started using it. As a result, my lectures have become more vibrant with more questions and reflections from a wider spectrum of students. Another great effect is that I started recording all my lectures, online and offline, so that I can upload them for my students to review later.

Overall, I think both teachers and students have grown in confidence, ingenuity, and responsibility, facing this pandemic. Life might never quite go back to the way it was, but that is not necessarily something to lament. We are evolving and that is a good thing. ■

# Grandmothers in Nightgown on Zoom

**Callie Hershey**  
Grade 4 Teacher and  
Director of the Lower School,  
Woodstock Day School

## Who still uses an overhead projector?

I do. Well, I did. At Woodstock Day School, our philosophy for teaching students under ten puts off using technology. We make handmade posters and create dioramas in shoe boxes. We do research projects with piles of books; we do not Google the topics. In my 4th grade (ages 9-10), we sing songs every day. We go into the woods. We do weaving, beadwork and sewing. We play math games made of cardboard. We never used devices during our teaching at this age.

When the pandemic shut our school down a year ago, we all had to learn how to teach and learn online, and fast. We teachers spent one day gathering all the books and materials we could to send home, and I sewed a tote-bag from a T-shirt for every student as a farewell gift, knowing there was a chance we would not be together again. Over the course of the next three months, the students did the bulk of their work independently. Over Zoom, I held Morning Meeting, individual coaching twice a week, and math class. We scrambled to get devices in homes that only had one and were now being shared between

We all had to learn how to teach and learn online, and fast.

By this year, we were better prepared. We were in person: mornings with just half of my class, then afternoons with the other half. That brought out some unexpected sweetness.

the whole family. I found an old laptop in my attic, wiped its memory, and gave it to a student. Instead of launching my unit on Colonial America with the Fur Trapping & Trading Game, I found a good children's historical drama on TV and we watched and discussed the episodes. I learned how to use my computer's whiteboard and invited the kids to annotate. We tried to look on the bright side as we had "breakfast in bed day" and "bring your pet to Zoom day". But we all felt shock and strain. I had one grandmother come to the Zoom meeting in her nightgown, crying, "I just can't do this."

(That is why I found that old laptop and got it to her grandson lickety-split!) In the end, we made it, as you all did too. We muddled through and kept a sense of togetherness. We were blessed to not have lost any community members to Covid. The students learned. We all adjusted. As happens in most challeng-



ing or even tragic situations, there were some good parts. We discovered that the one-on-one coaching sessions were much better online than while trying to manage a class of other students.

By this year, we were better prepared. We were in person: mornings with just half of my class, then afternoons with the other half. That brought out some unexpected sweetness – the children started writing pen-pal letters to the student who sits at their desk in the other half of the day! Also, having a very tiny class has made the six students nearly as close as siblings, and when one person is upset, the rest of them rush to give aid and comfort.

As we plan for our reunification next year, we will keep the technology that did it better, and we will blend our half-classes back together again, and we will all be different, stronger, and I think, sweeter, for it.

# We Never Lowered Our Expectations

**Aisse Marena**  
English and French Teacher,  
Kunskapsskolan Gävle

**My name is Aisse Marena.** I currently teach at the secondary school Kunskapsskolan Gävle, Sweden. I started my teaching career in Senegal, my native country, before moving here 22 years ago.

I have had the joy of working in two different school systems: the Senegalese and the Swedish one. Diving into a completely different school system was not easy. From being the temple of the knowledge of the learners (teacher centered) I found myself endorsing the role of a coach guiding autonomous pupils through the acquisition of knowledge.

March 2020, what a time! We just came back from Easter break and I can still recall how lost, devastated, scared and clueless the staff was. We were to get ready and welcome our colleagues from Kunskapsskolan Borlänge to a “cluster day” when the board informed us that it was cancelled.

We had to quickly plan for online teaching because schools could be closed any time. Luckily, we were already equipped and prepared for online learning. Every student has a Chromebook; only the scheduling team had to add a plan. Strict rules were and still are implemented.

People with the slightest sign of a cold and the flu must stay home and no external people are allowed at school.

I was among those who thought Sweden’s way of dealing with the pandemic by not having lockdowns and quarantine was wrong. But I had to put aside my fears and concerns about my health and join the other teachers in the front line with our students. I gradually realized that it was the best thing to do, because the human condition is not to be socially isolated – even more so when it comes to children and teenagers. The workload was heavy, and in our profession, we not only deal with academic needs but emotional ones as well. Crises bring people together and the plague made us stronger and more efficient than ever. We never lowered our expectations but had to be more flexible about the requirements.

The plague has deeply marked us and will forever be remembered. Online schooling will certainly take over traditional learning, but it can seriously jeopardize both teachers’ and students’ mental and physical health when we get deprived of social interaction. ■



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# Our Community is Stronger Now



**Manasie Ahluwalia**

English Teacher, Kunskapsskolan International

Kunskapsskolan has been a second home to me since 2013

**Kunskapsskolan has been a second home** to me since 2013, the year I joined Kunskapsskolan Gurgaon, India, and worked for a glorious six years before joining Kunskapsskolan International in the same city in 2019. I am a teacher of English and teach the national curriculum, CBSE, and the international Cambridge IGCSE to grades 9 and 10.

Is there a toolkit to survive the pandemic? Among the grief, exhausting routines and non-stop newsfeed, teachers faced a radical shake-up. We got tools to be more creative and engaging in the virtual classroom. Our WhatsApp team group, aptly titled “VR Together” provided a sense of comfort and solidarity, and so did the regular addresses by our leaders.

With no roadmap for living through and processing a unique catastrophe, a teaching routine with a well-structured plan gave meaning to our lives. In my interactions with the learners, I realized the Pygmalion effect could work; high expectations of students lead to improved performance. The virtual routine reinforced resilience and self-efficacy in the learners.

Since feedback is the bedrock of KED philosophy, we were more active than

ever before to inform parents about each student’s progress. Online meetings with the students created greater camaraderie within my base group. We shared personal stories and fears and built a lasting sense of trust in each other.

But there is a burgeoning need to meet students where they are, in person. The pandemic has exacerbated the inequalities and prevented most students from realizing their true academic potential. ■

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# Finding Some Positives in the Crisis

**Richard Loader**  
English and German Teacher,  
Kunskapsskolan Trelleborg

and socialization, and I would remind them, as it got later and later, that I would soon need to get to bed because it was 'work as normal tomorrow'.

As a teacher, the chance to help and support a student online, face to face, without the distractions normally associated with school life, has at times been an unforeseen advantage.

Here, there was nothing even resembling a lockdown until late in 2020, and never has there been in place a series of restrictive measures of the like seen in most comparable European countries. For this reason, I cannot say that my work as a teacher was affected much from March to summer 2020. Some distance learning was introduced. However, this was on a non-official basis and became difficult to implement as lessons were held partly online and partly 'live'. Pupil attendance sank to fifty per cent some days but increased to normal

levels again when remote teaching was no longer offered as an option.

Now we are operating a system of partial return to physical classroom teaching. Our older students are prioritized, coming into school three days a week. The two year groups below them come in one day each. The youngest three years are here every day. Given that this situation has been forced upon us, I think this solution has worked well. Some students clearly miss the crucial social element of meeting their peers at school, whereas others seem to appreciate the opportunity to study in the familiar and comfortable environment of their own home. They are in regular touch with each other, either through conventional meetups outside school hours, or through other social media platforms.

As a teacher, the chance to help and support a student online, face to face, without the distractions normally associated with school life, has at times been an unforeseen advantage. In some of the best cases, I have seen 'other sides' of students, focused and motivated. We should make the best of the situation and must not forget the wider picture of a pandemic that has cost so much for so many. ■

**I live and teach in the far south of Sweden**, at Kunskapsskolan Trelleborg. My subjects are English and German. I have worked at this school for two and a half years and for a total of nearly twenty-one years in Sweden. My background is in England, where I also taught for three years. It goes without saying that in all these years as a teacher I have never experienced anything like the current pandemic. The world is in lockdown. Unless you go back to measures taken during major conflicts, the restrictions to free movement are unparalleled.

It is interesting to think back a year to the beginning of the virus's grip on the nations of the world, because at first Sweden seemed impervious to its consequences. The policy here was to try to achieve a kind of immunity, the hope being that the virus would be neutralized by a natural resistance we would all build up through exposure to it. Life went on, to a large extent, unchanged. I would feel left out of the conversation when talking to family in the UK; they would be listing the various limitations on free movement



# Family Members Picking Up KED Core Elements

I am Ilse Winters, a math teacher at Dr. Nassau College, one of the Kunskapsskolan Partner Schools in the Netherlands. A few years ago, I made the conscious switch from regular education to personalized education. I think it is wonderful to let students enjoy math and develop their confidence in their own abilities, especially to help them a step further in their personal development. I noticed that our working methods and approach in the KED Program helped students pick up the online lessons as our school closed.

The contact and relationship we build with our students and the ownership they develop have proven to be very valuable. As a result, students dare to discuss difficulties and ask questions while working independently at home. The lockdown presented new challenges, but we can ensure that they do not have to face them alone. The weekly contact with the personal coach is essential here.

My children (Zoë aged 8 and Gwen aged 3) heard me coaching my students from home during the lockdown. Gwen now regularly plays coaching conversation with her dolls; we were told in the beginning not to disturb her. Now Zoë also notes her weekly learning goals and takes this to her teacher in elementary school. Great to see that our education has come to life here at home as well.

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My online learning activities have evolved during the year; I want to teach the students new skills, let them experience the fun in mathematics and have more interaction. This requires more preparation. I enjoy online breakout



rooms, board games, and quizzes with my students. I do notice that it is difficult not to lose myself completely in this. Letting go of work is sometimes difficult when my workplace is no longer 35 kilometers away, but in my kitchen.

As a work team, you are not only there to support your students but also to support each other. Together, we enthusiastically try making our teaching as good as possible. I am proud to be in this team, not thinking in terms of difficulties but in terms of solutions. The students remain at the center of everything we do. Fortunately, we can see them more often now as the lockdown has been lifted. ■

**Ilse Winters**  
Math Teacher,  
Dr. Nassau College Norg



# Spanish Assessment via Snapchat

**My name is Lotte Parmatow** and I work as a Spanish and Music teacher at Kunskaps gymnasiet Malmö, in the south of Sweden. When we said goodbye on March 18, 2020, we thought we would be back in school after Easter. Nobody knew the impact this virus would have on our lives nor did we realize how long we would have to adapt to a new lifestyle both privately and at work. On a gloomy Wednesday, the government decided to shut down all high schools in Sweden. The following day, our students had a home study day and the teachers had one day to prepare for a whole new situation. Friday the same week we sat at home in front of our cameras with Google Meet, Backchannel chat, Classroom, and nervous students.

In fact, the students adapted well to the new digital environment. Teenagers are fast learners and soon they could help me out. Once in the middle of an oral assessment in Spanish, my internet connection broke down. A student then called me and told me to enter a Snapchat group and within seconds the assessment continued.

I have heard that the digitalization of our society fast-forwarded five years due to the pandemic. We would have gotten here 2026 if it were not for the virus. I guess it is positive!



Teenagers are fast learners and soon they could help me out.

Living in southern Sweden we did not have many cases during spring 2020, and in summer the spread of the virus slowed down. We went back to teaching in school in August. Later in October it became more serious here and several students tested positive. Some days it has been a challenge to keep cool in school when the Public Health Authority recommended everyone to stay in quarantine, but we kept teaching full classes. Right now, we are teaching digitally but every third week students are in school. I do not know how it is possible, but until now I did not get the virus, nor do I have antibodies.

My husband tested positive in December, but he isolated himself in his music studio and we fed him from a distance. One day at work I called my 15-year-old daughter and asked if her dad got any food today? The kids had forgotten! Despite this he survived the virus and we never got infected. ■

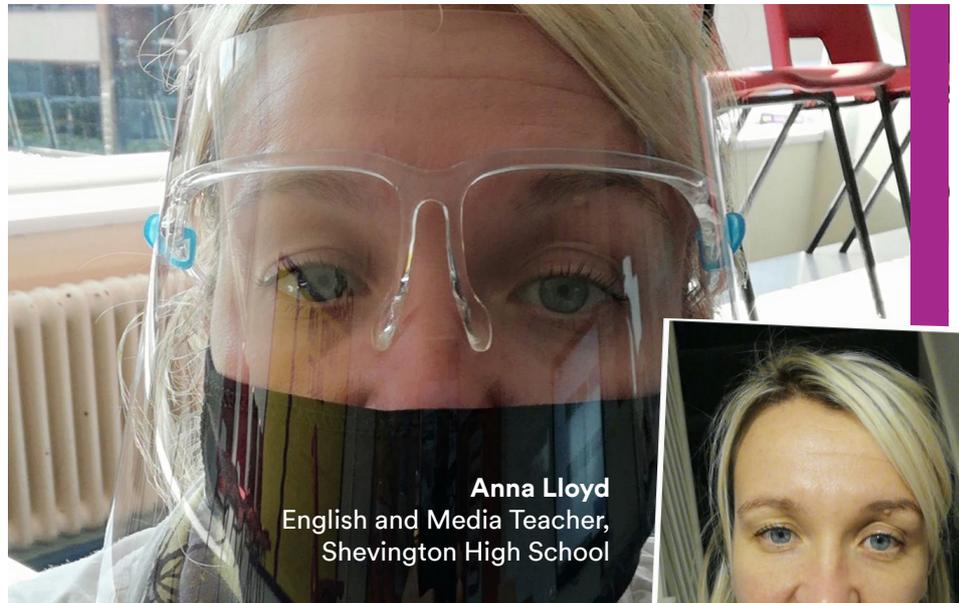
**Lotte Parmatow**  
Spanish and Music Teacher,  
Kunskaps gymnasiet Malmö

# Good- Bye to the Old Red Pen

**So, what has it been like** to be a teacher during the pandemic? For myself and my amazing 'Team English' at Shevington High School (SHS), this year can only be described as a 'rollercoaster'! Twists, turns, dips, loops, and those ever so high climbs of struggles followed by the exhilarating and speedy rushes of success. I love a good rollercoaster.

School shuts. Having two teenage boys of my own – are they ok? Is my family safe? Are all the SHS students ok? Are their families safe? Is my team ok? What happens now? How will we deliver lessons? How do I record audio clips? How do I embed video clips? Writing a transition package for Year 6. I want to go home and visit Wales – open the border? Working in a downstairs bathroom. Crying on a Google Meet for the Year 11 leavers assembly. Back to school. Bubbles. Burst...and so on!

Learning new ways of teaching, through technology that we were not familiar with, was our biggest struggle – initially. But in true 'Team English' fashion we took a leap of faith in March 2020 and have not looked back since. Google Classroom and blended learning with on-line feedback will be 'forever tools' for us



**Anna Lloyd**  
English and Media Teacher,  
Shevington High School



in our department – with hopes of saying 'good-bye' to the old red pen. We are loving the challenge – bring on blended learning and give me 'Mote' (audio feedback) any day of the week – the students love it – they can listen to my advice, rewind me, pause me, and repeat me.

Impact on students – in the most part this has been a positive experience.

Success, for me, was when I asked for HELP to record an audio book – it was an amazing effort – staff across the whole school volunteered and recorded themselves reading. Students were not going to be forced to listen to the same dulcet tones of one teacher every single lesson – this also enabled us to continue to move through our scheme of work. I thank team SHS for that.

Impact on students – in the most part this has been a

positive experience. This has been down to the efforts of the finance and pastoral teams: firstly, for identifying a student that was without a device and secondly making sure they were delivered one. Some students have excelled; making huge progress due to them being able to work at their own pace with a teacher on the other end of the screen to answer questions. Students are growing in skills of independence, resilience, and confidence. Other students that have needed persuading to use the new ways, have been given support and time to adapt – most of these students are engaging in lessons and trying the new methods.

Personally, my family and I have been lucky – Covid has kept its distance. I have taken time during this pandemic to reflect and I have realized that I REALLY do LOVE my job, but my work-life balance, pre-Covid, was not fair. I have had an amazing opportunity this year and that has been the ability to watch my very own children grow and for that I am grateful.

# Back to Where It All Started

Johanna Warén  
English Teacher,  
Kunskapsskolan Spånga



**Great, I have your attention** as a reader, I am thrilled. This is me, Johanna Warén, an English teacher at Kunskapsskolan Spånga, Sweden. I am 43 years old and have been working at Kunskapsskolan since 2004, loving it every day. The best part of my job is that one day will never be like the other, but oh boy, I did not expect a pandemic to rock my world.

It is February 2020. I remember being at a restaurant with five other people, talk-

ing about Corona. As I recall, one of my friends had already started storing wine bottles at home, giving us all a good laugh, since we thought she was silly. This was the weekend before our winter break and Corona did not bother me.

When we came back from the break, my Head of School acted a bit more worried, but I was still not convinced that this was something horrible. One of our students informed us that he had to

stay at home for two weeks since his father had caught the virus while being in the Alps during the break. Our students started talking and rumors spread, we were told to keep quiet about this, but it was hard, especially among the students who are living through social media. Still, it was just one student, and it was his father who had the virus.

Then it escalated, more students started calling in sick, and the two o'clock report from Aftonbladet, a Swedish newspaper, became very important, which stated how many people had died in the last 24 hours. All the notifications became important, and while a third of our school's students were called in sick, the government closed all high schools in Sweden, so what was going to happen next?

You might think that it was sort of a vaccination for us, having so many students sick at the same time. Then you should have seen the list of sick staff members. There were days when 20 out of 40 teachers were sick. I cannot remember when I last worked as much as I did; all the texts I got in the morning from co-workers who called in sick that day, covering for colleagues who were not here no matter what subject. Helping with the crisis plan that we had to complete in just a couple of days – which turned out great by the way.

“We have to make it until the Easter break, we have to make it,” my deputy Head of School said.

“We have to make it until the Easter break, we have to make it,” my deputy Head of School said.

We did make it, and the secondary schools did not close (yet).

So, it is April 2020, and I remember saying to my mother-in-law that I wish we had a date when this is over. The rest of the semester turned out okay, our school never closed but we had to reconsider our behavior. Imagine a bunch of ninth graders who were not allowed to go on a language trip because of Corona, who were not allowed to have their final summer party because of Corona. Imagine a group of 15–16-year-olds who did not take this as seriously as adults, because “the experts” said the disease would not hurt them. It was tough and hard to make these adjustments, because in their world, it did not make sense. But they accepted it. The ninth graders had one of the best endings that semester, my colleagues made it awesome despite all the restrictions.

The summer passed and Corona was no longer the main topic. The 2 pm notifications from the newspaper went by unnoticed. It was time to start a new school year. We had our development discussions online: the student was at school with their teacher and the parents joined a Google Meet, easy and convenient. I do not think anyone disliked this. The rest went on as usual, except the reminders about keeping distance, washing hands, and not showering after PE. We had adapted. It all went along smoothly; not too many teachers sick, not too many students absent, but then suddenly in December, BAM! The death rate escalated. Sweden had reached Covid’s second wave.

But we solved it again. We went digital in a flash and adjusted in just a few

days. Today we are working remotely a few days a week. It works, but I am tired of it. I want my students here. I want to work with mixed year groups like we used to. I want to plan the best ending for our ninth graders. I do not want the language trip to Spain to be cancelled. I want normal back. Stop rocking my world Corona! What scares me the most right now is what will happen to humanity when Corona is defeated. How will my students feel inside?

In one way I would like to thank you Corona. You have shown that I work at

one of the best places, with co-workers who are flexible, who are there for anyone when needed, and who are willing to learn new things. You have shown that I teach the world’s greatest students who are willing to question, but mainly accept, whatever we decide. You have shown that I have a great Head of School who works day and night to make this school as good as possible. I feel lucky. We will get through this. ■

**Be well and take care!**

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