



Information concerning the situation at the school

As you know, we are experiencing certain challenges regarding the indoor climate in parts of the Preståsen Primary School building. This has been going on for some time and many efforts have been made along the way, but unfortunately we have not been able to solve the problems. The Local Council takes the issue very seriously and recognizes that it represents a deeply difficult situation for the school.

I have received much feedback lately that suggests that more information from the Local Council on this issue is necessary and that the information flow thus far has been insufficient and random. I sincerely apologize for that and will from now on send out information on a weekly basis.

What has been done?

The local council agency responsible for the maintenance of the school building has been working on the issue since they were first notified in January 2019. Three reports on the areas in question have been commissioned from Mycoteam. The first two reports (dated 25.02.19 and 27.06.19) showed intermediate aberration (yellow level), and the final report (dated 19.10.20) showed no aberration (green level). Improvements have been carried out in accordance with the measures recommended in the reports. Improvements have been made in many rooms, in the form of ceiling, wall and floor repairs. Within the same period, there has been water leakage from a drainpipe, leading to water seeping into a classroom wall. This was quickly repaired.

In addition to the head of maintenance agency and its employees, the Chief Medical Officer, Environmental Health Care, the Public Health Nurse, the Chief Education Officer and the Council Director have been involved in the work. The Mayor has been kept continuously informed over the past few weeks.

In August 2020, drill samples were taken from behind the walls in the rooms along the outer wall where problems have been reported. New air quality samples and the drill samples showed that there was no mould. These were carried out and analysed by ALS. Plugs have been inserted into some of the floors to be able to easily measure the degree of humidity.

The ventilation system and the rooms in question have been thoroughly cleaned.

Measurements of CO₂, mould, humidity and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) have been carried out, as well as of air pressure, temperature and light. These measurements are continuously carried out with measurement gauges (AirThings) installed in the various rooms. They are monitored by the council maintenance agency and are part of the material that has been sent to the Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority and SINTEF. The measurements have brought about the implementation of improvements at the school, and all the latest measurements show normal levels (green).

At the beginning of September this year, personnel safety representatives at the school decided that it was necessary to close some of the rooms, and the Labour Inspection Authority was brought in to give an assessment of the situation. The Labour Inspection Authority attended a meeting and carried out an inspection at the school on 24th September. They have since then reported back and decided to revoke the closing of the rooms, given that they did not find them to represent an acute danger to life and health. The decision has been appealed by the personnel safety representatives.

A health survey among the employees has been carried out by the school's health service (HMS-senteret Øvre Romerike AS). We have only recently received the results from the survey, and they will be used in the continued work to find measures that will improve the indoor climate at Preståsen Primary School. The school health nurse has mapped which students at the school that have health complaints that may be connected to the indoor climate. The school health nurse is the person whom you should contact if you have questions and concerns regarding students' health complaints.

On Wednesday 14th September, the Chief Medical Officer, Environmental Health Care and the acting Council Director carried out an inspection of the school together with the Chief Education Officer. Based on an overall assessment of the health complaints among the staff and students, an administrative decision was made by the Council Director not to reopen the closed classrooms.

Since we unfortunately have not found the cause of the problems, the council has asked SINTEF for aid. Assistance from an agency with expertise in the particular field will be of great help in finding the cause of the health issues experienced by the school staff and students.

SINTEF carried out an inspection on Monday 19th October. They will now carry out further examinations of the air quality. Parallel to the air quality examinations, floor samples will be analysed.

Status meetings between SINTEF and the Local Council are held frequently.

Where do we go from here?

The Local Council is working on finding new locales to make up for the the closed classrooms.

The Executive Committee of the Local Council decided the following on 21st October, 2020:

1. Given the acute situation we are facing, the acting Council Director is asked to carry out a survey of council locales and other suitable locales to find a temporary solution for the students at Preståsen Primary School.
2. The process that the council maintenance agency is currently involved in with SINTEF and other agencies will form the basis for the improvements to be implemented in order fully renovate and reopen the closed down locales.
3. The Executive Committee of the Local Council endorses the acting Council Director's assessment that the best financial and practical path to a lasting solution is to purchase modules that may become a permanent part of school operations. Financial aspects will be discussed at a later point.
4. The Executive Committee of the Local Council and the Local Council will be kept continuously informed.

The school is working on finding the best way to organise teaching, and we recognise that there will be a need for both outdoor and home schooling in the time to come. We ask for your patience and understanding, and we realise what this might entail for you as parents.

The use of temporary locales may mean that students will have to go to school in other places in our municipality, and that there may be a need for bus transportation for more students than those who currently use it. We will get back to you with more details regarding this issue.

Best regards

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