Early Years Twilight Seminar

14 August 2019 video transcript

Video 14: Challenges for Swedish early childhood educators

SUSANNE GARVIS: One thing across the world, especially in Sweden, is that preschool work is very hard. It's very stressful. It's one of the hardest jobs in society. And this is shown in Swedish statistics as well. So, Swedish preschool staff have one of the highest sick rates and work illnesses to do with hearing, physical – physical injuries as well compared to other professions in Sweden. So there's a recognition that preschool work is really hard, and what this actually leads to is a bigger problem that we're having in Sweden as well of actually having enough staff for preschools, and this is quite a universal problem, I think, of actually having qualified staff who are able to be there for the children.

As part of that as well has been this tension that has come with the new curriculum around these learning areas, so science, maths, digital technologies, techniques, for example, and what does this actually look like in a Swedish preschool? And so there's a lot of professional learning activities on at the moment to try and demonstrate and work with the preschool teams that they are already doing these things. It's the curriculum that is catching up with the preschools, not the other way around.