

# Dalskoli

## – School of the Valley

Recent examinations show that many European children seem to be falling behind in basic subjects. At the same time, others argue that the traditional education system is repressing creativity and imagination by valuing academic subjects above arts and physical activity. Furthermore, the mental and physical health of today's younger generations seems to be declining, likely due to the lack of play, exercise and bad diet. The fact that educational buildings are places where the majority of us spend most of our younger formative years, their design plays an important part in reversing these trends and therefore in improving the education level and wellbeing of society.

A number of changes have been made to the traditional design of educational buildings in the last few decades. The old education system, where the teacher solely acts as an informer and the children as receivers, is by and large outdated. Joined classrooms in open spaces, digital learning, outdoor class rooms and learning through nature, exercise or art, are among other concepts that are becoming more common in today's schools. Architects have to find creative ways of mixing public and private spaces and variations in between those, by breaking up the openness without the limitations of the closed, rectangular class room. The key seems to be variety and flexibility, where every space can be adopted to different situations and changes in time.

The aim of this thesis is to design an education building that offers various ways of teaching and learning, play and creativity. By working with the surrounding landscape and bringing natural elements into the building, it tries to create an attractive learning environment that provides inspiration and improves the wellbeing of its' users. A center for learning that connects with both community and nature and draws forth the best from each individual.