

Riksgymnasiet för rörelsehindrade /RG /The National Upper Secondary School for Physically Disabled Students

There are four national upper secondary schools for disabled students in Sweden. One of them is located at Angeredsgymnasiet in northeastern Gothenburg.

Angeredsgymnasiet is a pleasant, multi-cultural school located in a one storey building. A total of 1 100 students study at this school, of which approximately 50 attend RG; the section for physically disabled students. During the school year 2005/2006 there are RG-students studying the following national, academic, 3-year programmes: Natural Science, Social Science, Business and Administration, Media, Children and Recreation, Art and Design, Art and Music, Art and Theatre as well as specially designed programmes. There are also individual programmes for students who are not eligible for national programmes due to their not meeting the requirements for passing grades in Swedish, English or Mathematics.

The students participate actively in planning their academic programmes. A great deal of consideration is shown for individual needs and wishes. Students have the option of studying in small groups with disabled students or in larger integrated classes. They are also free to apply to other schools in Gothenburg where integrated studies can be arranged. The study period is normally extended by one year, enabling the students to get the therapy they need.

The therapy department is located near the school. An assessment of the student's needs is made during the first year. After a couple of weeks, therapy becomes a normal part of the school day. Therapy is then carried out individually or in groups. The therapists are grouped in the following categories: occupational therapists, counsellors, speech therapists, psychologists, and physical therapists. To achieve the best possible results, they have close contact with local therapy centres, equipment centres, and other government agencies. A great deal of emphasis is put on the planning of future living accommodations, vocation and leisure time activities.

Many of the students live in flats near the school. These flats are standard living units that have been adapted for the disabled. Each student has his or her own bedroom and shares other areas of the flat with two or three other students. They have the opportunity to develop their independence and social skills and to organise their daily lives. They take part in planning, shopping and cooking, and they are responsible for their own rooms. Personnel are on call around the clock to provide support.

The National Upper Secondary School is intended for students with physical disabilities who are in need of therapy. An application must be submitted on a special form to the Council for Special Education. Admittance is based on needs rather than on academic results. The national government and the students' home municipalities cover the costs of education, therapy and living expenses. Students are, however, required to pay a fee for room and board in student housing.

For more information about the Swedish school system: www.skolverket.se