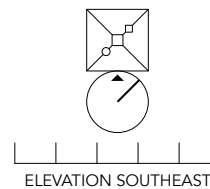


A SCHOOL IN FLATDAL

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ABSTRACT
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A small village in Telemark. 2.5 hours drive west from Oslo. 400 inhabitants. "The flat valley" is exactly what makes the place so fascinating. There is something unique about getting over the hilltop after swinging through small and narrow Telemark valleys and see the view over Flatdal. The meeting between the dramatic and steep mountains on either side and the flat agricultural landscape in the valley floor, is very special. **Picture: 3**
The school: Pupils: 60 - 70, Age: 6 - 13, Classes: 5 - 7, Employees: 16-20

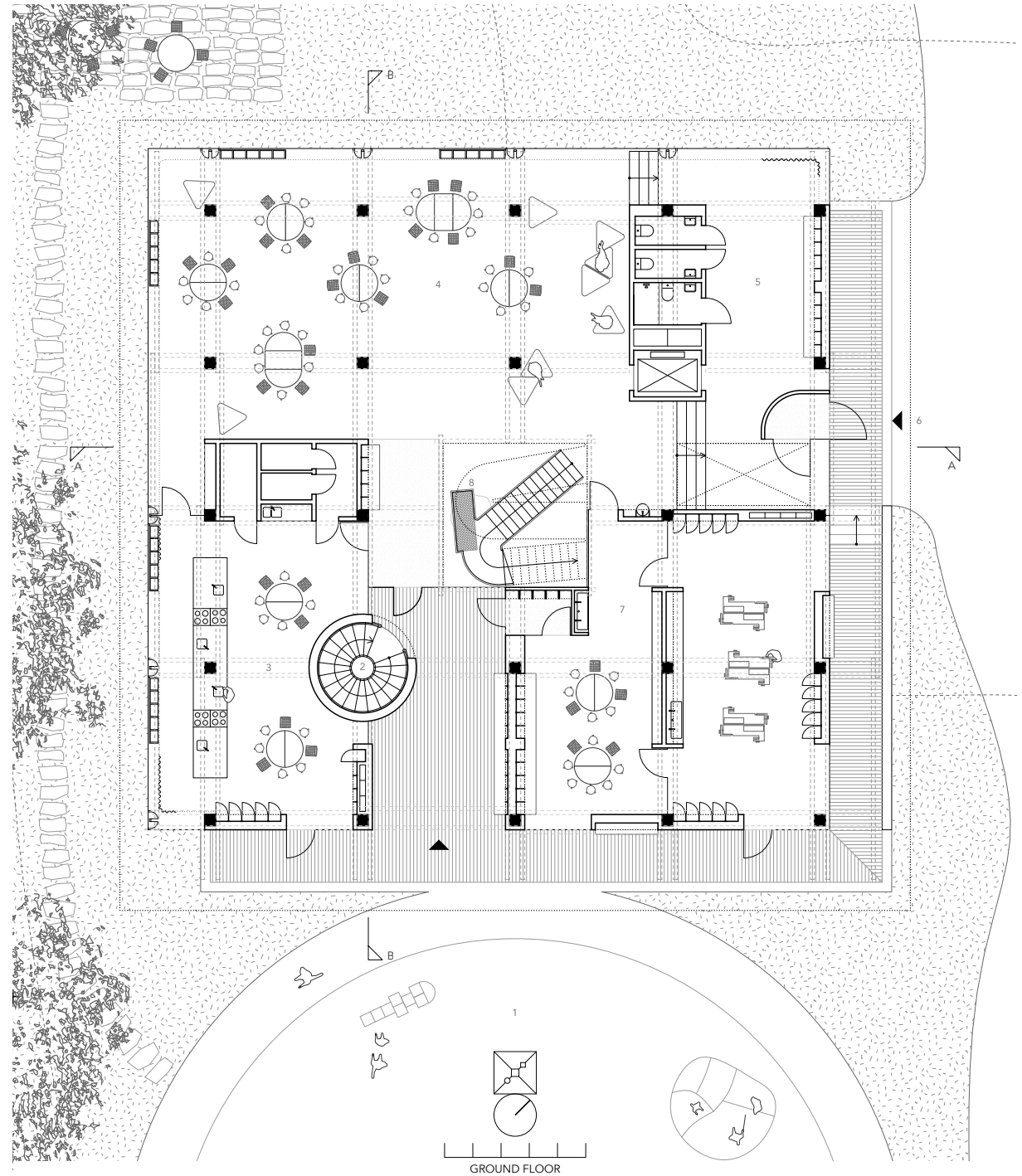
Have today's schools become another victim of the economies of scale? The small schools are unfortunately a dying race. "A school in Flatdal" is a project that explores the potential of the small school. How architecture can create space for learning and how the small school can create room for architecture.

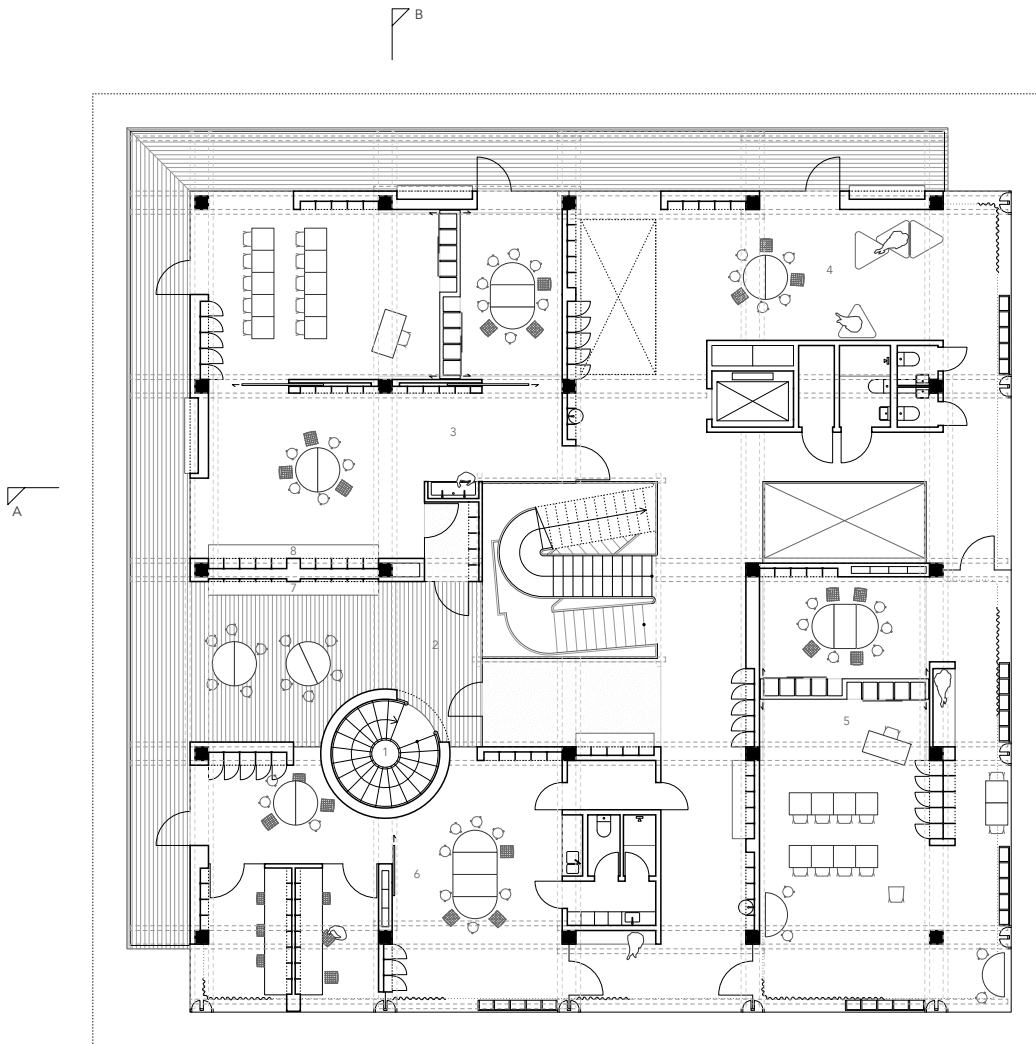
But what is really a good space for learning, or a good school? I think one answer is somewhere in the meeting between play and focus. Thoughtfulness around contact between people, buildings and nature. Equally important are the structural choices that unite the construction and technical solutions, the materials, the spatial experiences and where you take off your rubber boots on your way in from an expedition in the nearby stream. All these pieces play an important role in the whole.

Short way from focus to play. A gallery can create new communication but also deprive a room's ownership of a view. I early wanted an outdoor room on each floor. An outdoor space that could easily be reached from the schoolyard with direct contact to the classroom. A buffer zone between the play outside and the lessons inside, and something else than a common area in the heart of the school. A place to hang your rain coat or run outdoor lessons in shelter for wind and weather. A non climatized spindle staircase became an important element for linking classrooms, outdoor spaces and the schoolyard together.

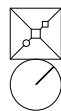
Flexibility and belonging. In a school where the classes vary in size and sometimes are merged, it became important to create flexible rooms for tuition. I found the solution in a scroll archive cabinet. The theme belonging also became important when the classes were mixed regardless of age. Together, these two issues formed a model for the classrooms.

The first and second floors are shown here. The third is similarly oriented as the first with gallery. The plan has the same room configuration as the second floor. The building goes over three floors and consists of a wooden beam and column construction. The beams have a standard dimension of 36x14cm. The columns are 40x40cm, placed in a grid with cc 540cm. The whole thing is stiffened by a circular spindle and a shaft in concrete.





B



FIRST FLOOR

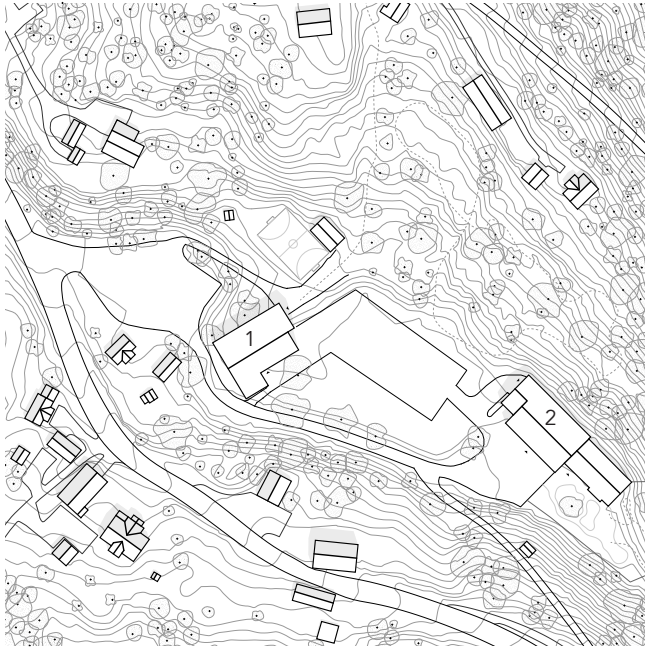
The construction offers a certain flexibility. The beams are each in their own layer. Here, technical guides can be drawn in two directions without taking holes in the construction. This is more an opportunity than a desire to add up to a large range of technical installations on the roof.

At this school there may be five classes one week, while another week it may be seven. Therefore there are two different teaching rooms with over six different configuration options. With teaching that takes place at the crossroads of age, the need for flexibility will be great. Flexibility has been important to achieve a good teaching situation. But flexibility is not necessarily only positive for creating a good learning environment. Somewhere along the way, a limit must be set. The limit for flexibility in this project is set in the form of a rolling cabinet. Quite like these heavy cabinets that are shining in archives. A removable element in each room can provide just the right flexibility for both large and small teaching situations.

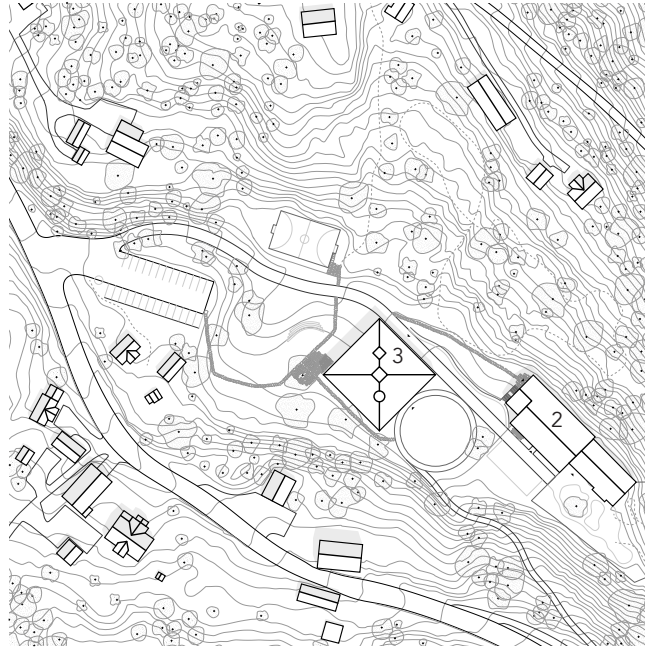
Room for focus and work is separated from the social communication area. Each room is located in a corner and is directed towards outside. The social communication area in the middle of the building links everything together. A large skylight in the middle lets in light over the central staircase. Rooms located in corners provides advantages in the desire to effectively replace the air in the room. This can be done by opening separate air slots in the facade. The building can easily be adapted to different methods of ventilation, both natural and mechanical.

The thickness of the columns of 40 cm gives possibilities for thick inner walls. These are walls that can accommodate everything from technical guidelines to practical functions such as cabinets and shelves. With a technical basement, all rooms can be accessed in the vertical axis with both water and air.

What is a good schoolyard and what should it be used for? This is a place covered in fine gravel that is surrounded by a circle in concrete. The circle defines the frames. The gravel offers creativity. Here the children can stretch courses for ball games and activities. Here, the people of the village can gather for band music on May 17th.



1.



2.

Short about the plot

1. Today, the school area is perceived as unclear. There are many ways to the goal, and no clear main entrance to the building. The area is also used by the community center and a kindergarten (2). This helps create a messy traffic situation. Cars are parked both in the car park and outside the existing school (1). The large school space in the middle is not much in use and has few qualities beyond that it is a large space.

2. In a new situation plan, I emphasize the access road for pedestrians from the south, from the town and on the path from the north. The car needs a defined space where it should be parked. New access road is laid on the north side of the new school (3). This activates this side of the school, which otherwise would be seen as the back of the school. All roads ends up in a more intimate space framed by the school and the community center (2).



3.

