

Guide for a family moving to Turku in Finland

Welcome to Turku! Welcome to school!

This guide tells you what going to school in Turku in Finland is like, as well as what kind of activities, rights and obligations it involves.

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Welcome to Turku! Welcome to school!

What is preparatory education?

Education preparing for basic education is meant for children and young persons aged 7 to 16.

Preparatory education includes studies in the Finnish language.

All children and young persons living in Finland who do not speak Finnish yet have the right to attend preparatory education.

Preparatory education means teaching during which the pupil learns Finnish and acquires the skills needed to study different subjects.

The language of instruction in preparatory education is Finnish.

There are 23 to 26 hours of teaching per week.

The preparatory education lasts approximately one year.

After preparatory education, you will move on to comprehensive or upper secondary education.

The next level of education depends on your age and educational background.

You will have your own group and own teacher.

Many groups also include a teaching assistant to help the pupils during lessons.

What is the aim of preparatory education?

The aim of preparatory education is:

1. To allow the pupil to get acquainted with the Finnish school system
2. To allow the pupil to learn Finnish
3. To gradually move the pupil from preparatory education to comprehensive education

Study programme for each pupil

A study programme is prepared for each pupil. The study programme is a plan that tells you what your goals at school are. The study programme is prepared in cooperation by the teacher, the pupil and the pupil's custodian.

Where is preparatory education available in Turku?

Preparatory education is available at many schools in Turku.

If the school closest to your home does not offer preparatory education, you will have to travel to another school.

You can walk, cycle or take the bus to school.

If your school journey is long, you may receive a bus ticket free of charge.

A pupil will receive a ticket if his/her journey to school is more than 5 km.

Important things about Finnish schools

What does a pupil need at school?

- A backpack and a pencil case
- Comfortable and elastic clothes for physical education lessons

What will a pupil receive free of charge from school?

- Books and booklets
- A pencil and an eraser
- Lunch

What is studied in Finnish comprehensive schools?

- Finnish language
- Mathematics
- Physical education
- Music
- Visual arts
- English language
- Swedish language
- Biology and geography

- Physics and chemistry
- History and social studies
- Health education
- Home economics
- Handicraft
- Religion or ethics

Not all subjects are studied in preparatory education or in all grades.

The teacher will give you a timetable.

The timetable shows when school starts and ends on different days of the week.

You can also study your native language after school.

For more information, please ask the teacher.

The school year starts in the second week of August and ends in week 22.

During the school year, there is an autumn holiday, a Christmas holiday, a winter holiday and a few other days off.

School clothing

There is no school uniform. You can wear your own clothes that are comfortable to study in.

You will go out during breaks.

Bring outdoor clothing suitable for the weather.

You will need comfortable and elastic clothes for physical education lessons.

The teacher will tell you whether your lesson will be outdoors or indoors, and what kind of clothes you will need.

What is important at school?

Learning is the most important thing at school.

It is also important that everyone is as comfortable as possible at school.

Be a good schoolmate and kind to everyone.

During lessons, you will have to be able to cooperate with all your classmates.

Discrimination is prohibited. Everyone has the same rights and opportunities.

Discrimination based on gender, religion, skin colour, native language, nationality, sexual orientation, origin, age or opinions is prohibited.

Come to school every day.

If a pupil is absent (because he/she is sick, for example), the custodian must inform the teacher by sending a message.

Tell the teacher about the absence as soon as you become aware of it.

What must the pupil do?

Be a good schoolmate and kind to everyone.

Do schoolwork carefully and on time.

What must the custodians do?

'Custodian' means the pupil's mother, father, youth worker or other adult with whom the child lives. A custodian is an adult who is taking care of a child. The custodian must make sure that the pupil attends school and does his/her homework. The custodian may help the pupil but is not allowed to do schoolwork on the pupil's behalf.

What is Wilma?

Wilma is the school's own messaging and information system. You will receive your Wilma login credentials from the teacher. In Wilma, you can view the school timetable, messages, homework assignments, tests and other important information. You can also reply and send messages to the teacher via Wilma.

Custodian's checklist:

- Check every day that your child has done his/her homework.
- Check that all the necessary clothes and other things for the next day are ready.
- Inform the teacher if the child is absent from school (due to illness, a doctor's appointment, etc.).
- Support and encourage your child in his/her schooling.
- Ask for help from the school if you don't know how to support your child.

I want my child to attend preparatory education. What should I do?

Apply for a place in preparatory education for your child as soon as the child has arrived in Finland. You can also apply for a place as soon as you know when the child will be arriving in Finland. You can submit an application for a place in preparatory education at any time of the year.

How to apply

You can apply for a place in preparatory education for your child using the pupil enrolment form available on the City of Turku website. Complete the form and send it to Tenna Käpylä by email (tenna.kapyla@turku.fi).