

Education of immigrant children in the City of Oulu

Pupils with immigrant background usually begin their schooling in preparatory instruction prior to basic education. The preparatory instruction is targeted at all children subject to compulsory education, whose skills in Finnish are not yet sufficient to join the general teaching groups.

The City of Oulu Department of Education arranges preparatory instruction at schools that specialise in immigrant education. These schools gather pupils from different parts of Oulu. Preparatory instruction is offered in the Kaakkuri, Kaukovainio, Koskela, Myllyoja and Paulaharju elementary schools, and in the Kastelli, Merikoski, Rajakylä and Terva-Toppila secondary schools.

This preparatory instruction usually takes one school year. However, the duration can be longer, depending on the progress of the pupil. The preparatory instruction is individual and it is implemented according to the pupil's personal learning plan. The education acknowledges varying language and cultural backgrounds as well as the pupil's age and level of development. The pupil's education background and learning readiness are also assessed.

Preparatory instruction prior to the basic education facilitates the transfer to general teaching groups. The focus is on learning Finnish and becoming acquainted with the vocabulary of various school subjects. Education from one subject to another follows the principles of the basic education curriculum when applicable.

Pupils in preparatory instruction will begin familiarising themselves with general education first in practical subjects and arts, and then, as soon as possible, in subjects where the pupil has a strong earlier knowledge base – for example, in foreign languages or mathematics.

After the preparatory instruction, the pupils are transferred to general education groups according to their age. The pupils are directed to continue their education in schools that specialise in immigrant education or in their local schools.

The pupils with immigrant background study Finnish as a second language according to the s2 curriculum. They can also receive remedial teaching in various subjects. In addition, pupils with immigrant background are eligible for the usual support and student welfare services of the school.

The students may also receive native language teaching. A teaching group can be established if at least four pupils study the same language. The children are taught their native language for two lessons per week. These lessons are not always arranged at the pupil's own school.

The pupils have the right to study their own religion, if there are at least three pupils from the same religious group in the municipality. The teaching is arranged either at the pupil's own school, some other school or in a religious community. The parents can report the pupil's religion in connection with school registration.

For more information, please telephone the Coordinator of Immigrant Education:
+ 358 44 703 9689