# Pre-primary Education in Oulu 2026–2027

Information session for guardians 2.12.2025

1.12.2025







#### Welcome

#### The event will start at 17.30

The event will be recorded. The recording and a summary of the most common questions will be available at <a href="https://ouka.fi/en/pre-primary-education/what-pre-primary-education">ouka.fi/en/pre-primary-education/what-pre-primary-education</a>

Your microphone and camera have been muted by the organizer.

#### **Questions and comments**

- You can send questions or comments in the chat window
  - Your questions and comments will be visible to all participants in real time, as will your name or nickname.
  - If you do not see the action buttons (such as the chat window) on your mobile device, tap the menu at the bottom (three dots) or tap the screen once to make them visible.
- General questions and comments will be answered after the presentations.
- If you have private questions concerning your child or family, please contact your child's early childhood education centre staff or reach out to early childhood education services (<u>varhaiskasvatus@ouka.fi</u>).





## **Evening's agenda**



#### **Opening words**

Early Childhood Education Director Pirjo Koret

What is pre-primary education and what changes when it begins?

Early Childhood Education Service Manager Elina Väisänen

**Support for Learning and Participation in Pre-Primary Education** 

Regional Support Service Coordinator Linda Lahti

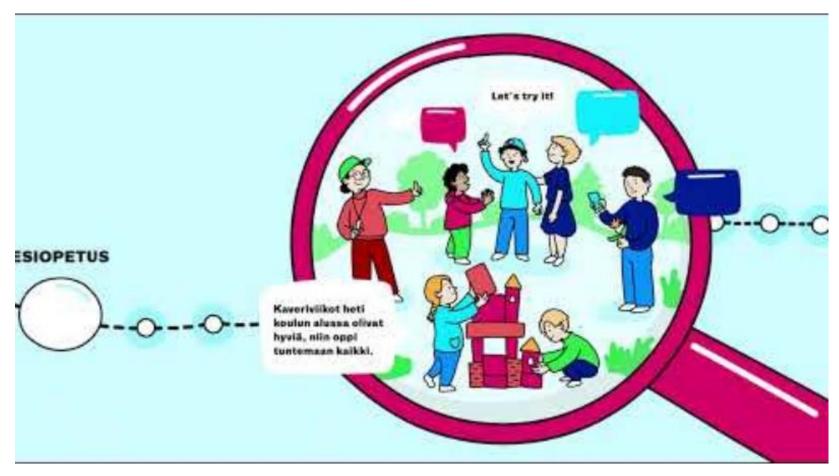
**Organisation of Pre-Primary Education in Oulu** 

Early Childhood Education Service Manager Kirsi Ranki

**Summary of Questions and Answers** 

# Welcome to a unified path of growth and learning!





https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NW ssl2M3s4

# Pre-primary education is part of children's educational path, and early childhood education complements it



- The pre-primary education year is an important and eagerly awaited stage in a child's life.
- When a child reaches the age of 5–6, they gradually prepare to move from early childhood toward the world of a young schoolchild.
- A pre-primary child is eager to learn new things and ready to face challenges. They also become increasingly aware of their own learning.
- Statutory pre-primary education is intended for all children in the year before the start of compulsory education. It is important that all children take part in pre-primary education and that parents support their child on this learning journey.
- Warm congratulations and joy to all future preprimary pupils and their parents!



# What is pre-primary education?



- Pre-primary education is free instruction that children receive in the year before compulsory schooling begins. Early childhood education including pre-primary education and basic education together form a coherent whole that supports a child's development, learning, and well-being, and lays the foundation for lifelong learning.
- Pre-primary education is an important period in a child's life, as it offers many new experiences and opportunities to learn. In pre-primary education, children can get excited, try new things, and learn in fun and engaging ways. It provides opportunities for diverse interaction and for strengthening social skills. Play, in all its forms, is an essential part of pre-primary activities.
- The goal of pre-primary education, in cooperation with guardians, is to promote each child's developmental and learning readiness, and to strengthen their social skills and healthy self-esteem through play and positive learning experiences.

# **Compulsoriness of pre-primary education**



- The obligations guiding the organisation of pre-primary education are based on the Basic Education Act and Decree, the Pupil and Student Welfare Act, and the National Core Curriculum for Pre-primary Education.
  - **The municipality** is obliged to provide pre-primary education for children living in its area during the year preceding compulsory schooling.
  - **Guardians** must ensure that the child participates in pre-primary education or in other activities that meet the objectives of pre-primary education.
    - A record of participation in pre-primary education is entered into the child's educational pathway (the Koski system).
- Once a child has started pre-primary education, they are expected to take part in all activities unless there is an
  officially approved alternative arrangement due to the child's health. The basic principle is that every child
  attends pre-primary education regularly so that the goals of pre-primary education can be achieved.
  - Absences must be reported electronically through eVaka.
  - Guardians must apply for permission in advance for any planned absences.
    - Absences of 1–5 days may be approved by the group's early childhood education teacher, and absences longer than one week must be approved by the head of the early childhood education centre.

# How pre-primary education is implemented



- Pre-primary education usually lasts one school year and consists of at least 700 hours, which means an average of four hours per day.
- The daily pre-primary education hours vary by location between 8:00 and 13:00 (excluding extended-hours and round-the-clock early childhood education units).
- Children participating in pre-primary education are also entitled to attend early childhood education that complements their pre-primary education.
- Pre-primary education, the learning materials and equipment used, as well as the necessary pupil welfare services, are free of charge. Each day, children are provided with a free meal.
- In pre-primary education, every child has the right to support for learning and participation.
- Children are also entitled to free transport if the distance to pre-primary education is more than five kilometres, or if the route is considered too difficult, strenuous, or dangerous for the child.





# Operating hours of pre-primary education in Oulu for the 2026–2027 school year

**Autumn term:** 17.8. – 22.12.2026

**Spring term:** 7.1. – 31.5.2027

#### Holidays and days off

Autumn break: 19–23.10.2026 (week 43)

Christmas holiday: 23.12.2026 – 6.1.2027

• Epiphany: 6.1.2027

• Winter break: 8–12.3.2027 (week 10)

• Easter: 26–29.3.2027

Ascension Day: 6.5 2027 and the following Friday, 7.5.2027



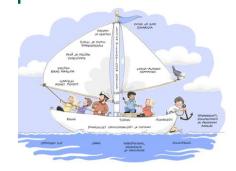
## Documents guiding the content of pre-primary education



- Pre-primary education is implemented in accordance with the National Core Curriculum for Pre-primary Education and the local curriculum based on it.
  - <u>Esiopetuksen opetussuunnitelman perusteet ja Oulun kaupungin esiopetuksen opetussuunnitelma</u>
- In early childhood education that complements pre-primary education, the Early Childhood Education Act and the National Core Curriculum for Early Childhood Education and Care are followed.
  - <u>Varhaiskasvatussuunnitelman perusteet ja Oulun kaupungin varhaiskasvatussuunnitelma</u>
- Each early childhood education centre (ECEC) prepares an annual plan that specifies how the pre-primary curriculum is implemented. <a href="Päiväkotien toimintasuunnitelmat">Päiväkotien toimintasuunnitelmat</a>. Each ECEC centre also prepares equality and non-discrimination plans.
- In Oulu, every child in pre-primary education has an Individual Learning Plan for Pre-primary Education, which includes the child's Early Childhood Education Plan and, if applicable, an individual support plan for the child.

#### Esiopetuksen opetussuunnitelm perusteet 2014 ja Oulun kaupun; esiopetuksen opetussuunnitelm

sisältäen perusopetukseen valmistavan opetuksen opetussuunnitelman kuusivuotiail



# The value base of pre-primary education



- Pre-primary education is based on the understanding that childhood has intrinsic value every child is **unique and valuable** just as they are.
- Every child has the right to:
  - be heard, seen, acknowledged, and understood, both as an individual and as a member of their community
  - learn and build their understanding of themselves and the world according to their own starting points
  - learn through play and take joy in their learning
  - experience appreciation for diversity and for different ways of acting and learning
  - participate in shared activities and in shaping their learning environments
  - receive high-quality instruction that includes encouraging feedback and fair treatment
  - express themselves and their thoughts, process emotions and conflicts, and try and learn new things

# The operating culture of pre-primary education



- The development of the operating culture in preprimary education is based on the idea of a shared pre-primary education for all, which promotes learning and well-being for every child.
- The operating culture is developed and organised in accordance with the principles of inclusion. An inclusive operating culture supports children's participation and learning and responds to the diverse needs of all children.
- In Oulu, the communal and inclusive operating culture of pre-primary education is supported through the principles of positive pedagogy. This means fostering children's participation and joy of learning through timely positive feedback, strengthening positive emotions, and creating moments of success.



# Children's thoughts about pre-primary education and what it's like to be a pre-primary pupil





"Playing is the best part"

"Pre-primary is fun because I have friends, and it's also nice to have some quiet time and play alone sometimes"

> "Pre-primary is fun because there are all kinds of activities"

"There are such nice friends here, and it's lovely to play with them"

> "The best thing was swimming week because we got to go swimming"

"I've learned letters and numbers and crafts and rules"

"Pre-primary has been wonderful and fun, and I'm proud that I got to come here"

"We built a shelter in the forest for animals together with the schoolchildren"

> "Pre-primary is fun, but sometimes it can be a bit boring too"



## The joy of learning and discovery

In pre-primary education, children learn through play, movement, exploration, self-expression, and artistic activities.

Children's previous experiences and skills are an important part of their learning path.

The pre-primary community encourages children to try, experiment, make mistakes, and notice the positive aspects of things. Successes and discoveries are celebrated together.









#### Pre-primary education is:

- Pedagogically planned, implemented, and evaluated
- Meaningful for the child
- Supportive of the child's participation

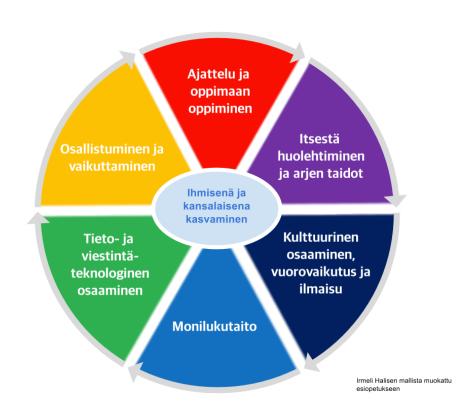
#### What matters is:

- The child's experiences of success
   the feeling of being capable
- Positive feedback praise
- Feeling accepted and heard
- A sense of belonging and participation

## **Broad-based competence in pre-primary education**



- Broad-based competence consists of a combination of knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, and will. Competence also means the ability to use knowledge and skills and to act appropriately in different situations.
- The development of competence continues throughout life.
- Broad-based competence includes six interconnected areas:
  - Thinking and learning
  - Cultural competence, interaction, and expression
  - Taking care of oneself and everyday skills
  - Multiliteracy
  - ICT competence
  - Participation, influence, and a sustainable way of living



## **Shared learning objectives and learning modules**



The shared goals set for instruction, arising from different areas of knowledge and skills, are grouped into five modules in the curriculum:

- Many forms of expression
- The rich world of languages
- Me and our community
- Exploring and interacting with my environment
- Growing and developing







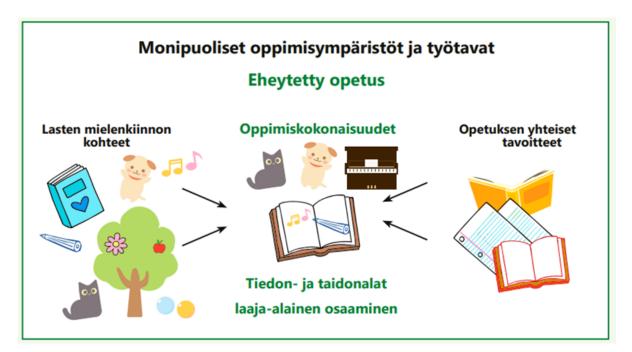
# Learning modules in pre-primary education

Pre-primary education is activity-based. It includes a variety of methods designed to promote learning through play.

The starting points for implementing the learning modules are the children's interests and the shared learning objectives.

The aim is that learning new knowledge and skills inspires children to want to learn more.









# Some key objectives of pre-primary education include, for example:

#### **Practising emotional and interaction skills**

- Emotional skills and their regulation are practised in a variety of interaction situations.
- Children are guided to act considerately and to take others into account in different conflict situations.
- Emotional and interaction skills are strengthened as children play and work together in their peer group within safe and diverse learning environments.

#### **Self-care skills**

• In pre-primary education, children learn to take care of themselves, each other, their belongings, and their environment.

#### **Practising working skills**

Attention, concentration, and self-regulation.





# Cooperation between pre-primary and early primary education



- In Oulu, pedagogy for children aged 5–8 is implemented to support a smooth transition from early childhood education to pre-primary education and further into basic education.
- A successful transition promotes children's sense of security and well-being, as well as their readiness to grow and learn.
- During the pre-primary year, groups cooperate with their local school in accordance with the principles guiding pupil admission to pre-primary education.
- Cooperation between pre-primary and early primary education takes place in various ways each month. It is carried out according to the curricula and in many different group formats. During the pre-primary year, children become familiar with the school's learning environments. The cooperation flexibly utilises a variety of learning environments and remote connections. The goal is working together and building and developing a shared operating culture.
- In Oulu, units engaged in local cooperation prepare an annual cooperation plan for pre-primary and early primary education.







## **Digitalization in Pre-Primary Education**

- Digitalization is part of the pedagogical activities and learning environments in pre-primary education, with an emphasis on the responsible and safe use of digital devices. Only devices intended for educational use by the city are used in teaching. Devices, applications, and digital learning environments support the child's development and learning. They have been selected for pre-primary education based on pedagogical criteria.
- In pre-primary education, your child does not need their own smart device.
- In Oulu, digital everyday recommendations have been prepared for familiesdigiarjen suositukset perheille. These are based on screen time recommendations and research data from the WHO and the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL).

## Languages in pre-primary education



- In pre-primary education, children are introduced to different languages. They observe the languages around them, and their interest is encouraged, for example through language showers. Children explore different languages and cultures in an active, playful way by playing, singing, listening, and repeating. They "taste" and try out languages, getting to know them at the word level and learning simple phrases.
- Language showers help children prepare for choosing their A1 language for Grade 1
  - In 2026, first graders' language choices will be made already during the pre-primary year, in spring 2027





## Guardians' thoughts and expectations for the pre-primary year

- Learning through play
- Recognising and supporting the child's strengths
- Variety in activities
- Practising emotional and interaction skills
  - Supporting children's friendships and sense of belonging in different ways
- Regular cooperation between pre-primary and early primary education
  - Children have the opportunity to get to know the school with their own group during the preprimary year

# Support for learning and participation in pre-primary education



- In pre-primary education, children receive support for their learning as part of everyday activities within their own group. Support is provided primarily at the group level and, when necessary, at the individual level.
- Support is also provided in complementary early childhood education in accordance with the Early Childhood Education Act.
- Pre-primary education is developed and organised according to the principles of inclusion:
  - Equality
  - Non-discrimination
  - Appreciation of diversity
  - Social participation
- Difficulties in learning or participating in pre-primary education are prevented in advance, for example through diverse working methods and pedagogical approaches, flexible grouping, and staff collaboration. The staff adapt and develop their practices and learning environments to meet each child's needs.
- In pre-primary education, every child has the right to student welfare services (health care, school social worker, and psychologist services).



#### Lapsikohtaiset tukitoimet

- Erityisopettajan antama opetus osittain pienryhmässä ja muun opetuksen yhteydessä
- Erityisopettajan antama opetus pienryhmässä
- Tulkitsemispalvelut
- Avustajapalvelut
- Apuvälineet





Lapsikohtaisten tukitoimien tarpeen arviointi, jos ryhmäkohtaiset tukimuodot eivät ole riittäviä ----> arvioinnin kirjaaminen tuen toteuttamista koskevaan suunnitelmaan



Ryhmäkohtaiset tukimuodot Yleinen tukiopetus, opetuskielen tukiopetus, erityisopettajan opetus muun opetuksen yhteydessä.

#### Oppimisen edellytyksiä tukevat opetusjärjestelyt

Mm. eriyttäminen, kielitietoinen opetus, opetusryhmien muodostaminen siten, että opetukselle asetetut tavoitteet voidaan saavuttaa, erilaiset pedagogiset järjestelyt (esim. toimintojen toisto ja ennakoitavuus sekä ryhmäkohtaiset apuvälineet), erilaiset rakenteelliset järjestelyt (esim. avustava/ohjaava henkilöstö ryhmässä) sekä vahvuuksien huomioiminen.







# Organising Pre-primary Education in Oulu



**OULU** 

# Pre-primary Education in Oulu in the academic year 2026-2027



- Pre-primary education is provided in designated municipal early childhood education (ECEC) centres and as purchased services from selected private ECEC providers.
- Pre-primary groups are formed according to the principles of pupil admission for pre-primary education.
   Every child is assigned a place in a pre-primary group within their local area. If a child is already attending
   early childhood education in their neighbourhood ECEC centre that will also have a pre-primary group in
   the autumn, the child may continue in the same ECEC centre.
- Pre-primary education locations are planned regionally so that cooperation with the local school can be ensured.
- Guardians may also apply for a secondary placement for their child in another area or in a ECEC centre offering an alternative pedagogy or language option. A child may be admitted to another area only after local children have been placed and only if space remains. Secondary placements must not create the need to establish a new group. Guardians are responsible for transportation to secondary pre-primary locations, even if the distance is long.
- Pre-primary units can be viewed at <a href="https://www.ouka.fi/en/pre-primary-education">www.ouka.fi/en/pre-primary-education</a>

# Pre-primary Education Locations in the Northern Area, Preliminary Information



- Aseman päiväkoti (Haukipudas)
- Herukan päiväkoti
- Jatulin Tarhan päiväkoti (Haukipudas)
- Kellon päiväkoti
- Kiviniemen päiväkoti
- Kolistajantien päiväkoti (Ritaharju)
- Kuivasjärven päiväkoti
- Kuivasrannan päiväkoti
- Länsituulen päiväkoti (Haukipudas)

- Touhula LystiVekara (Ritaharju)
- Martinniemen päiväkoti
- Palokan päiväkoti
- Pilke Usva (Pateniemi)
- Pöllökankaan päiväkoti
- Riekonmarjan päiväkoti
- Ritaharjun päiväkoti
- Ruiskukan päiväkoti (Rajakylä)
- Tuulikellon päiväkoti (Teknologiakylä)
- Touhula Ritaharju

# Pre-primary Education Locations in the Eastern Area, Preliminary Information



- Haapalehdon päiväkoti
- Hintan päiväkoti
- Hiukkavaaran monitoimitalon päiväkoti Taikapolku
- Hönttämäen päiväkoti
- Kiiminkijoen päiväkoti
- Laivakankaan päiväkoti
- Loikkeliini (Kiiminki)
- Mansikkamaa (Kiiminki)
- Metsämansikka Kiiminki)
- Myllyojan päiväkoti
- Muurahaisen päiväkoti (Yli-li School)
- Pilke Pikkukiulu (Kiulukangas)
- Runokerä (Kirkkokangas)
- Pilke Soittajankangas

- Saarelan päiväkoti
- Satusiipi (Haapalehto)
- Soittajankankaan päiväkoti
- Talvikankaan päiväkoti
- Tipitii (Alakylä)
- Touhula Kivikkokangas
- Touhula Satumetsä (Jääli)
- Vaskikankaan päiväkoti
- Vekara-ahon päiväkoti (Kiiminki)
- Vesalan päiväkoti
- Välikylän päiväkoti
- Ylikiimingin päiväkoti

## **Pre-primary Education Locations in the Central Area**



- Lintulan päiväkoti
- Heinätorin päiväkoti (city centre)
- Kaarnalaiva (Lintula)
- Kaijonharjun päiväkoti
- Kastellin monitoimitalon päiväkoti
- Kisakentän päiväkoti (Tuira)
- Koskelan päiväkoti
- Merikosken päiväkoti (Tuira)
- Meri-Toppilan päiväkoti
- Mäntylä-Snellman -päiväkoti (Mäntylä)

- Pikku-Ainon päiväkoti (Myllytulli)
- Pikku-likan päiväkoti (Heinäpää)
- Puolivälinkankaan päiväkoti
- Sampolan päiväkoti (Kaijonharju)
- Touhula Toppilansalmi
- Välkkylän päiväkoti
- Värtön päiväkoti

# Pre-primary Education Locations in the Southern Area, Preliminary Information



- Heikkilänkankaan päiväkoti
- Kaakonpojan päiväkoti (Kaakkuri)
- Knuutilankankaan päiväkoti
- Kuukkelin päiväkoti (Kaakkuri)
- Lämsänjärven päiväkoti
- Maikkulan päiväkoti
- Metsokankaan päiväkoti
- Merikotkan päiväkoti (Kaukovainio)
- Metsälinna (Kaakkuri)
- Mäntypellon päiväkoti (Oulunsalo)

- Niemenrannan päiväkoti (Oulunsalo)
- Oulunlahden päiväkoti
- Pikkulinna (Kaakkuri)
- Pilke Viljami (Kaakkuri)
- Pitkäkankaan päiväkoti (Oulunsalo)
- Salonpään päiväkoti (Oulunsalo)
- Sarasuon päiväkoti (Kaakkuri)
- Savotta-aukion päiväkoti (Metsokangas)
- Touhula Hiirulaisenkuja (Hiironen)
- Touhula Metsokangas
- Touhula Oulunsalo

# Secondary placement options include programmes offering alternative pedagogies and language options:



- English Speaking Playschool of Oulu (Intiö)
- Musiikkipäiväkoti Taikatahti (city centre)
- Oulun Montessoripäiväkoti (city centre)
- Päiväkoti Saksanpähkinä (city centre)
- Pikku-Ainon päiväkoti bilingual group Finnish-English (Myllytulli)

Pre-primary education is also provided under their own operating licences by:

- Oulun steinerkoulun päiväkodit <u>Steinerpäiväkoti Punavarpunen</u> (Intiö) ja <u>Steinerpäiväkoti Taivonkaari</u> (Puolivälinkangas)
- <u>Svenska Barnträdgården</u> (city centre)
- <u>Oulun kristillinen koulu</u> (Toppilansaari)

# **Assignment of a Pre-primary Education Place**



- Guardians do not need to register their child for pre-primary education. All children born in 2020 and living in Oulu will be assigned a pre-primary placement automatically. Guardians will receive the decision electronically via the Suomi.fi service, provided they have activated it. Otherwise, the decision will be sent by post. The decision includes the name of the child's preprimary education centre and the starting date. The decision is also visible in eVaka.
  - In the spring, pre-primary units arrange an opportunity for families to visit the centre, and by that time the child's future pre-primary group will also be known.
- A place in early childhood education that complements pre-primary education is also reserved for every child. If you do not need this service, you can easily cancel the early childhood education place in eVaka.
- More information and detailed guidance for different situations can be found on the city's website: <a href="https://www.ouka.fi/en/pre-primary-education">www.ouka.fi/en/pre-primary-education</a>



- If the pre-primary place assigned to your child is not what you hoped for, you can apply for
  a secondary pre-primary placement in another ECEC centre or another area through eVaka.
- In this case, however, it is recommended that you first **accept the assigned place in eVaka** and then submit a new application. This ensures that your child has a reserved place until the secondary placement is confirmed.
- The application period for secondary placements is 19 January –1 February 2026.
- If, for some reason, the child does not participate in the organised pre-primary education, the guardian must ensure that the child takes part in **other activities that meet the objectives of pre-primary education**. The responsibility for participation, the related costs, and the achievement of the objectives lies with the guardians.
  - It should be noted that in such cases, the activity is **not considered official pre-primary education**, and participation will **not be recorded** in the child's learning pathway in the national Koski data system.

## Principles of pupil admission to pre-primary education



- If a child is already attending early childhood education within the catchment area of their future school, the pre-primary placement will be assigned in the same ECEC centre that provides pre-primary education and where the child has already been in early childhood education.
- If the child's current ECEC centre does not offer pre-primary education, or the child is not yet in early childhood education, the pre-primary placement will be assigned in a unit within the child's designated local pre-primary area based on the home address.
- If the child requires, for example, **evening, weekend, shift care, or special support needs,** the preprimary education placement may be assigned to a unit other than the one based on the child's home address.
- A pre-primary education placement will not be assigned to a ECEC centre for which the municipality would be required to arrange transportation if there is another ECEC centre in the area that does not create such an obligation. If the municipality must assign a placement that requires transportation, the pre-primary education place will be allocated to a unit where transportation can be arranged, preferably using public transport.
- If a child moves to another area during the pre-primary education year, a new placement will be granted where possible in the pre-primary education unit corresponding to the child's new home address.





- 1. There is space in the pre-primary education unit after primary admissions have been made
- 2. A health-related reason or another special reason
- 3. Distance to pre-primary education (the child's route to the pre-primary education unit is as short as possible)
- 4. Need for school transportation
- 5. Sibling criterion
- 6. Other possible reasons

The decision regarding a secondary pre-primary education placement will be sent by the end of March, either via the Suomi.fi service or by post.

# Fees for early childhood education related to pre-primary education



#### Pre-primary education is free for all children (4 hours per day).

- If a child needs early childhood education in addition to pre-primary education, the fee charged will be a maximum of 60 % of the full-time early childhood education fee. The fee is based on the family's income and the amount of early childhood education needed.
- For early childhood education provided in connection with pre-primary education in a private ECEC centre, the fees are determined in the same way, because the city purchases the service from private providers. Any possible fee reductions follow the same rules. The early childhood education invoice is sent by the city; the private provider does not charge families directly.

# **Preparatory education for six-year-olds**



- In Oulu, preparatory education for basic education is provided for six-year-olds in municipal units alongside pre-primary education. Preparatory education for six-year-olds is intended for children with an immigrant background whose Finnish language skills and/or other skills are not yet sufficient for learning in a regular pre-primary education group.
- The aim of preparatory education is to give multilingual children the skills they need to use Finnish and to participate successfully in pre-primary education.
- When preparatory education begins, an individual plan for learning Finnish is created for the child together with the guardians.
- You can find more information about how preparatory education is organised on website: <u>www.ouka.fi/en/pre-primary-education/preparatory-education</u>.

# **Guidance and instructions from Early Childhood Education Service Counselling**



- If you would like information about, for example, the practical arrangements or implementation of pre-primary education, you may contact the head of your child's future pre-primary ECEC centre. Their contact details are shown in the pre-primary placement decision.
- If you need more information about issues such as placement decisions or applying for a secondary pre-primary education place, you may contact Early Childhood Education Service Counselling.
  - The email address <u>varhaiskasvatus@ouka.fi</u> responds within three working days.
  - Telephone service is available from Tuesday to Thursday at 9:00 to 12:00 tel. 08 558 45300 / select option 1.
  - In-person service without an appointment is also available at Ympäristötalo (Solistinkatu 2) on weekdays from 9:00 to 15:00.

### **Questions and answers**



The general questions published in the Q&A section will be reviewed together. The questions and answers will also be published on the city's website.

If you have private questions concerning your child or your family, please contact the staff of your child's ECEC centre or Early Childhood Education Service Counselling.



# Thank you!

The recording of the event and a summary of the most common questions with the answers are available at:

www.ouka.fi/en/pre-primary-education/what-pre-primary-education

### Seuraa meitä somessa



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