

OULU INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL



*“Where Cultures Flourish,  
Learning Blossoms”*

**2026-2027**



August 2026

*Dear Students and Guardians,*

*Welcome to Oulu International School and the new academic year. Whether you are joining us for the first time or returning to our community, we are delighted to have you with us. At OIS, our mission, "Joy of learning in a diverse and caring community," guides everything we do. It is reflected in our school logo, a student-designed owl embracing the globe, and in our motto, "Where cultures flourish, learning blossoms." Together, they represent our commitment to curiosity, diversity, inclusion, creativity, critical thinking, and global-minded learning.*

*Our dedicated staff is committed to providing high-quality, student-centred education while supporting the wellbeing and growth of every learner. In line with the City of Oulu's strategic goals, we will continue to strengthen students' basic skills, provide effective learning support, and nurture a safe and inclusive school community where every student feels valued, heard, and able to succeed.*

*Literacy is a cornerstone of learning and life. At OIS, we encourage students to develop strong home language, English, and Finnish language skills through regular reading and meaningful language use. By fostering both the habit and the joy of reading, we help students build the communication, critical thinking, empathy, and lifelong learning skills needed for success in school and beyond.*

*At OIS, we will further develop collaborative teaching practices, flexible learning arrangements, and strong learning support through co-teaching and teamwork. Student participation, wellbeing, and a sense of belonging are at the heart of our work, and we believe the best outcomes are achieved when students, families, and staff work together to support learning and growth.*

*This handbook provides important information about our school practices and expectations. Please take time to read it carefully and keep it for future reference. We also encourage all families to stay connected through Wilma, our primary communication channel, and to ensure that contact details and notification settings are up to date.*

*Thank you for being part of our vibrant learning community. We look forward to another inspiring year of learning, growth, and collaboration. Parents and guardians are warmly encouraged to take an active role in school life through cooperation with teachers, participation in school events, and involvement in the OIS Parents' Association.*

*With best wishes for the new academic year,*

*Jenni Alaniemi*  
*Principal*

*All information in this Handbook was true and up-to-date at the time of printing in August 2026.*

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# 1. WELCOME TO OIS

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Oulu International School (OIS) is a Basic Education school owned by the City of Oulu and exists to meet the educational needs of the international and internationally minded community in and around Oulu. We started in August 2001 under the administration of Myllytulli School and opened our doors as an independent school in August 2002. The teaching staff is highly qualified and experienced and offers a wide range of expertise to support all areas of the Curriculum in through the first nine years of Basic Education. We currently number about 415 children and 38 teachers. Students are taught in age-based classes, supported by a team of auxiliary staff.



## 1.1. Location

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Oulu is a favoured location in Finland for international companies and expatriate families. The school is situated in the heart of Oulu and is easily and safely accessible from all areas by bus or bicycle. Students can enjoy their studies in well-equipped classrooms, a well-stocked library, STEAM room, and a gym. Between classes students can relax at the school playground and sports field or lounge areas. OIS is located within close proximity to further playing fields, parks and a public swimming pool and an ice-rink, as well as the cathedral, science centre and museums.

☰ Oulu International School  
Kasarmintie 4  
90130 Oulu  
Finland

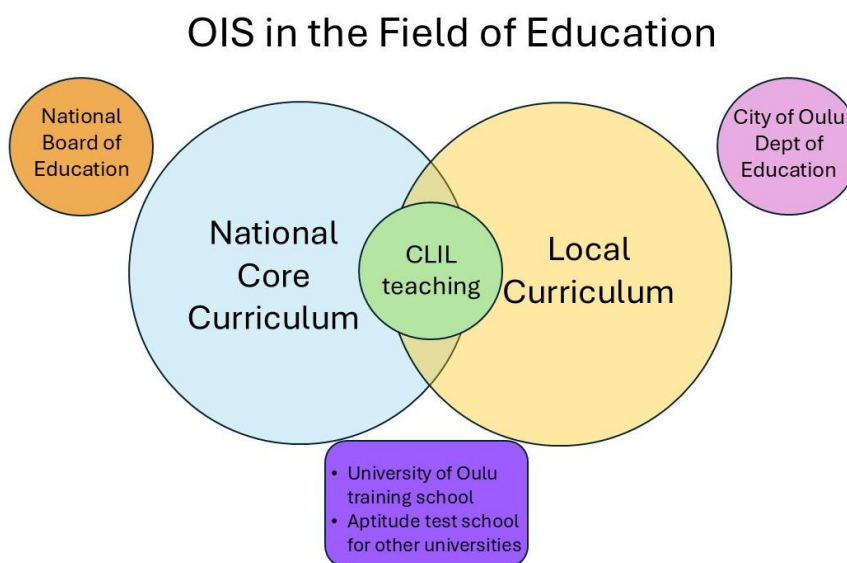
@ [www.ouka.fi/ois](http://www.ouka.fi/ois)  
[www.facebook.com/ouluinternationalschool](https://www.facebook.com/ouluinternationalschool)  
[www.instagram.com/oulu\\_international\\_school/](https://www.instagram.com/oulu_international_school/)

## 1.2. OIS in the Field of Education

The National Core Curriculum provides the structure and content for all teaching and learning. It sets out what students need to learn and is based on the Law for Basic Education. Local Curriculum means the contents and obligations given to us by the City of Oulu Department of Education and Culture.

OIS is also a CLIL school. CLIL means content-language integrated learning, in Finnish "kaksikielinen opetus". In the Finnish education system the official languages of education are Finnish and Swedish, hence in the Finnish education system we are classified as "a CLIL school providing education mainly in English", meaning that we also provide terminology in Finnish. Read more about CLIL and our language policy in **6.1**.

OIS is a training school for the Intercultural Teacher Education programme (ITE) of the University of Oulu, and we also help foreign teachers from other universities pass their aptitude tests. In addition, we have cooperated with the teacher training programmes of a few U.S. universities and one in Australia. Every year we also host a number of trainees through the Erasmus programme.



OIS provides a smooth transition to and from other national and international schools for our students. Locally, we enjoy close links with the local English-speaking pre-schools and the IB Diploma Programme of Oulun Lyseo as well as the IBCP Programme of OSAO vocational school. Our cooperation with Myllytulli School continues through shared premises, teachers and study groups. Our immediate neighbours Tiernan koulu's Kasarmintie unit and Tervaväylä School provide cooperation opportunities for our students and teachers.

Finnish is taught as a mother tongue and as a second language. Other mother tongue classes are organised by the City of Oulu Department of Education and Culture based on the need that arises. The optional foreign languages of either German, French or Spanish may be learned from Year 4 to 9.

For the schools' lesson distribution, see **Appendix**.

## 2. CONTACT INFORMATION

### ADMINISTRATION

Principal	Jenni Alaniemi	044-7039 430	jenni.alaniemi@ouka.fi
Assistant Principal	Kaisa Marjamaa	040-6276384	kaisa.marjamaa@ouka.fi
Office Administrator	Kati Tiikkainen	050-3716 977	kati.tiikkainen@ouka.fi
Caretaker	Olavi Pulkkinen	044-7039 701	virastomestarit.kasarmintie@ouka.fi
School Assistants	Erja Wikstedt Kati Mäntylä Nupur Gupta Henna Korhonen Anna Heumann	050-3781 479 050-3829 792 050-5936 835	ois-assistants@eduouka.on-microsoft.com
School Kitchen		050-362 0782	

### TEACHERS

Please contact our teachers via Wilma. If you need to send attachments, then use email. Teachers' e-mail: *firstname.lastname@eduouka.fi*. Teachers will inform guardians their work telephone numbers.

Aalosto Tyttilotta	Student Counsellor
Alajoki Riikka	History, Civics, Ethics, Ev. Luth RE
Andrésson Gunnar	Homeroom 9B, Physical Education
Arkila Riina	Homeroom 8A, Crafts, Opt. Textile Work
Bettini Lucia	Rom. Cath. RE
Elnaggar Alaa	Islam RE
Gupta Nupur	Assistant
Haataja Maarit	Homeroom 7A, Music
Hakunti Alyssa	5A Class teacher
Hakunti Tatu	3B Class teacher
Heikkilä Jussi	Crafts, Opt. Technical Work
Heikkinen Niklas	5B Class teacher
Heumann Anna	Assistant
Huhtinen Maija	Homeroom 7A, Spanish, Swedish
Hopf Andrea	Resource teacher
Ilvesviita Antti	Mathematics, ICT
Isola Anna	Homeroom 9A, Finnish
Isomaa Jukka	Homeroom 7B, Finnish
Jurvelin Maari	6B Class teacher
Kananen Elisa	Homeroom 7B, Finnish
Kandelberg Mariam	Special Education Teacher Yrs 5-9
Kontiokari-Hautamäki Sanna	Swedish
Korhonen Henna	Assistant

Kumar Duvya	Krishna RE
Larivaara-Heikkala Satu	Homeroom 8A, Visual Art
Laukka Saija	Special Education Yrs 1-5
Manninen Soile	Physical Education, Health Education
Marden Kaisa	4A Class teacher
Marden Kelvey	2A Class teacher
Mäntylä Kati	Assistant
Naakka-Rautiainen Kirsi	Orthodox RE
Niiranen Nina	4B Class teacher
Parker Karin	Physics
Peedo Marja	English
Pieniniemi Riikka	3A Class teacher, Health Education
Puutio Teija	Biology, Geography
Päivärinta Tarja	Special Education, small group
Rehula Anna	Homeroom 7B, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics
Salmi Henna	2B Class teacher
Sandman Eija	French
Seppänen Tiia	Special Education Yrs 5-9
Silveri Jenna	Transition Class teacher
Soini Anna	Finnish
Tuomela Heidi	1AB Class teacher
Wikstedt Erja	Assistant
Wuollet Maria	6A Class teacher
Yao-Juntunen Lusi (Rosy)	1AB Class teacher
Åman Sanna	Homeroom 8B, Home Economics

### STUDENT WELFARE TEAM

Principal	Jenni Alaniemi	044-7039 430	jenni.alaniemi@eduouka.fi
Assistant Principal	Kaisa Marjamaa	040-6276384	kaisa.marjamaa@ouka.fi
School Social Worker	Johanna Papunen	044-7039 672	johanna.papunen@pohde.fi
School Nurse	Jutta Huotari Mon & Wed 11:30-12:30 without ap- pointment	050-3712 018	jutta.huotari@pohde.fi



School Psychologist	Ilari Junnila	040 3185838	ilari.junnila@pohde.fi
School Doctor		Appointments through the School Nurse	
Special Education Teachers	Mariam Kandelberg Saija Laukka Tarja Päivärinta Tiia Seppänen	050-3480 156 044-7039 705 040-1851 306	mariam.kandelberg@eduouka.fi saija.laukka@eduouka.fi tarja.paivarinta@eduouka.fi tiia.seppanen@eduouka.fi
Student Counsellor	Tyttilotta Aallosto	044-7039 703	tyttilotta.aallosto@eduouka.fi

## 3. ADMISSION

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### 3.1. Application

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In principle, admission is open to all students who can profit from international and English language education. Applicants are **expected to be able to follow the tuition and express themselves in all the curriculum subjects** in English. For detailed instructions as to how to apply and the application form, see <https://www.ouka.fi/oulu/oulu-international-school/how-to-apply-to-ois>. If the applicant is other than Finnish citizen, **a copy of passport and residence permit** should be attached to the application. Under-aged applicants from abroad must provide details of a legal guardian with a shared home address in Oulu.

Formal application to OIS takes place at the same time as the other schools in Oulu, i.e. in January and the language proficiency assessment aka admission test is in February. **Students from Oulu or Oulu region apply in January-February only.** From those applicants who do not have Finnish skills and move from abroad or elsewhere in Finland, we do accept applications and conduct single admission tests throughout the year. Children moving mid-year who knows Finnish should go to their local Finnish-speaking school. For those who move to Oulu during the summer, an admission test is organised in August before the beginning of the academic year. Finnish-speaking children living in Finland must pass a Finnish language test to be admitted. For others, the Finnish language level is assessed but not scored.

Applicants may take the admission test once per calendar year only. Therefore, if the applicant fails the admission test, they are allowed to redo the test **in the next calendar year**. In practice, the earliest time to redo the language test is in the following February. When registering their child to Year 1 at OIS, guardians should at the same time also register them at their nearest primary school. Non-residents of Oulu must confirm with their local education authority that it will cover the costs of the child's education in Oulu.

Guardians who are considering sending their children to our school are advised to fill out an application form and possibly make an appointment with the Assistant Principal. This visit will provide an overview of the school's programme and facilities, and an opportunity to have any questions answered.

It is important that families share all relevant background information during the admissions process. Students with any type of physical or learning difficulties must provide documentation of their academic history, psychological/educational evaluations, and details of any academic/specialist support they have had or are currently receiving. Failure to disclose relevant information may prevent the school from meeting the educational needs of an admitted student.

We have a Transition Class to support foreign children who stay in Finland temporarily but do not pass the OIS language proficiency test (see **4.8.2.**). Foreign children whose families are planning to stay in Finland permanently, are strongly advised to go to a Finnish-speaking immigrant class to learn Finnish and to better integrate in the Finnish society. For more information about immigrant classes, go to <https://www.ouka.fi/oulu/koulutus-ja-opiskelu/maahanmuuttajien-opetus>.

### **3.2. Language Proficiency Assessment aka Admission Test**

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Admission tests are arranged twice a year, mid-February for applicants within Finland, and early August for students who have moved to Oulu during the summer. Non-Finnish speakers moving to Oulu mid-year are tested flexibly. **Applicants may take the admission test once per calendar year** (see also **3.1.**).

If the applicant is ill on the test day, a doctor's note is required to arrange a retest. If you have registered for the language test in August but you are not able to attend, please inform the school in advance. Without notice or a valid reason, the next test opportunity is in February. Students admitted to Yr 1 will be tested again in Yr 6, to ensure their eligibility to continue in Yrs 7-9.

Our Admissions Team uses established tests appropriate to each Year level to assess the applicants' language skills in English (and Finnish) and for Yr 1 students their pre-reading skills. The table below shows the minimum score required for admission:

Yrs 1-2	60%
Yrs 3-6	65%
Yrs 7-8	70%
Yr 9	75%

Students who pass the test are admitted in order of their total score. If two or more applicants receive the same test score, places are allocated by manual draw. Admission is, however, subject to space availability. From 2026 onwards, the maximum class size is 23 students in Years 1–2 and 25 students in Years 3–9. Classes that already exceeded these maximum numbers in 2026 may continue with their current number of students. The new decision applies to applicants from 2026 onwards and to applicants applying to Year 7 from spring 2027 onwards. Students who pass the admission test but are not admitted due to limited space will be placed on a ranked waiting list until the beginning of the new term. In the meantime, they should attend another City of Oulu school.

OIS follows the Finnish education system, placing students in the appropriate Year level based on age and the admission test results. **The age of Year 1 students is seven**

**(7) in the school starting year.** Earlier admission requires a psychological school maturity tests conducted by a privately practising psychologist.

Newly admitted students will either be directly integrated into mainstream teaching or supported in class by a Special Education Teacher or a school assistant. Those students who do not pass the admission test, may attend the Transition class (provided that there is space in the class) for a maximum of three years (see **4.8.2.**). OIS reserves the right to conduct a new language test on an admitted student within two years from the test date.

Students whose first language is not Finnish, learn Finnish as a Second Language (S2).

## 4. OUR SCHOOL

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### 4.1. Important Times

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#### 4.1.1. School Calendar 2026-2027

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##### **Terms**

Autumn term 12.8. - 22.12.2026

Spring term 7.1. -5.6.2027

**Saturday school day** 5.9.2026

##### **Holidays and days off**

Autumn holiday 19.10. – 23.10.2026 (week 43)

Day off 4.12.2026

Christmas holiday 23.12.2026 - 6.1.2027

Winter holiday 8.3. - 12.3.2027 (week 10)

Easter holiday 26.3.- 29.3.2027

Ascension Day 6.5.2027

Day off 7.5.2027

#### 4.1.2. School Day Timetable

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School hours are from **8:15** to **15:45** but vary by Year level. Class timetables are shared in *Wilma* at the start of the academic year. Occasional changes may occur staff training, meetings etc. Guardians will be notified of any exceptions via *Wilma*. Afternoon care is available even on the shorter school days.

Please note that students are **not supervised and thus are the responsibility of their guardians before and after school hours**. They should arrive shortly before school, and leave within 30 minutes, going to afternoon care, an organised club activity, or home. They are only insured 30 minutes before and after school.

Years 1-6 students go outside for all breaks. Years 7-9 students go outside for all breaks, unless instructed otherwise.

During the last break of the school day, the Student Council's snack bar may be open. Students who do not have an indoor break must go outside, and any snacks they buy must be eaten outdoors.



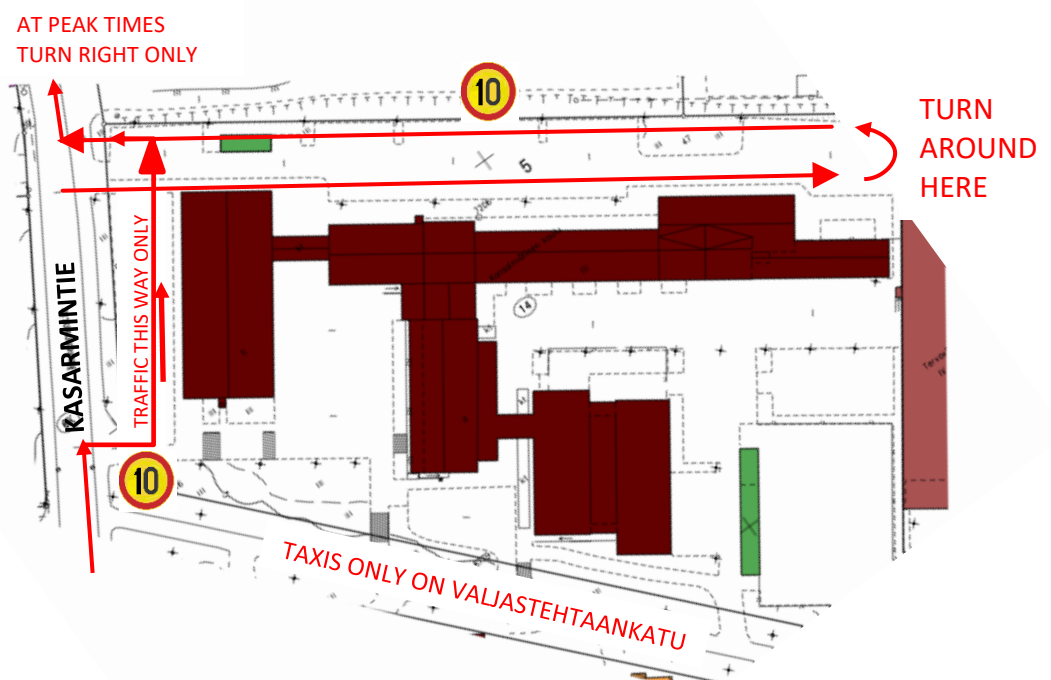
## 4.2. Transportation

Kasarmintie and OIS driveway are very busy especially between 8-9am. We teach students safe traffic behaviour and ask guardians to support this effort.

Guardians driving their children to school are asked to be extremely cautious on or near school grounds. The speed limit in the OIS driveway is 10km/h. For smooth traffic flow, please drive all the way up **to the designated drop-off point** at the **end of the driveway** (see the map below).

Guardians should **not stop or park in staff parking spaces**. Reversing cars endanger our students and block traffic on Kasarmintie. The traffic **on the parking lot parallel to Kasarmintie should only flow one-way**. Turn right when exiting the OIS driveway at peak times.

Only taxis transporting children to and from Tiernan koulu school may use the Valjastehtaankatu bike path.



Parking at the school's parking lot is only possible at the two visitors' spots for 30 min. at a time between 6-16 o'clock.

Transportation to sports venues and any other school-related events is planned and arranged by the school. For yard safety, see also **5.6. Playground**.

Please ask the Office Administrator about income-based transport benefit for bus tickets. Families outside Oulu should check with the education authority of their home municipality about the coverage for transport to OIS.

### 4.3. Ethos and Discipline of Our School

The values of Oulu International School are **responsibility, respect, joy of learning** and **community**. These values are promoted throughout the curriculum in and outside the classroom.

#### 4.3.1. Positive Behaviour Support

The school's Positive Behaviour Support Programme sets a number of simple and practical behavioural expectations and guidelines for different everyday situations in school, e.g. breaks, lessons, lunch, assembly and corridor/lobby. The desired behaviour is stated clearly and positively. For example, 'respecting others' can be expressed as 'I greet others'. The desired behaviour is systematically reinforced through positive feedback and encouragement.

#### 4.3.2. OIS Mission Statement

*"Joy of learning in a diverse and caring community"*

In practice this means that we aim to:

- provide students with the skills they need to thrive in an increasingly interrelated and complex world.
- accommodate speakers of many languages and backgrounds who may join the school at any time of the year.
- ensure that students receive the individual attention and support they need to succeed.
- encourage students to become creative problem-solvers and independent thinkers.
- sustainably develop ethical standards, appreciate diversity, and create an active concern for care of the community and environment.
- allow students to make smooth transitions to other international schools or back to their national school systems.

Through its **curriculum**, the school

- Places strong emphasis on acquiring the knowledge, skills and attitudes to be active members of a global society.
- Encourages students to solve problems and to become critical inquirers.
- Emphasises the importance of students to become literate in Finnish and English whilst maintaining their own mother tongues.

Through its **ethos**, the school

- Promotes the importance of showing care and respect for others.
- Encourages the development of responsibility and self-discipline.



- Promotes value and respect for human aspiration and achievement.

Through its **community involvement**, the school

- Promotes partnerships amongst students, guardians and staff.
- Creates a happy, safe and secure environment, with students showing respect for their school.
- Celebrates the success and achievement of all its students.

### 4.3.3. School Rules

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We promote a positive, responsible attitude by setting clear expectations and fostering strong staff-student relationships to help prevent behaviour issues. Should any problems occur, however, further support can be given through the Principals, Student Counsellor, Special Education Teacher, School Nurse, School Social Worker as well as the Behaviour Support Team (see **4.4.6.**).

According to the Basic Education Act, teachers and principals may intervene in students' disruptive or inappropriate behaviour by **confiscating items** (e.g. mobile phones or any other objects) **or substances if they are dangerous or disturb or distract teaching and learning** in any way. Naturally, teachers are not allowed to use their right to disciplinary measures without a good reason.

The main response to misbehaviour in basic education is Guidance Discussion (kasvatuskeskustelu). If issues continue, parents are invited to school to plan support for the student's behaviour (see **4.4.4.**).

Our school rules aim to uphold order, discipline and a healthy, safe and supportive learning environment. Students are made aware of the School Rules (below) and the benefits of following them.

## **GUIDELINES FOR OULU INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL**

(based on the general City of Oulu guidelines for schools)

### **1 Why we have rules**

The purpose of rules is to help organize the school, to help students learn and to make sure that the school community is safe.

### **2 Students' rights and responsibilities** (Basic Education Act § 35, 36)

Students have the **right** to receive teaching based on the Curriculum.

Students are **responsible** to

- attend school according to their timetable and inform the school of any absence
- do their homework conscientiously and to inform the teacher of any missed homework or test
- respect everyone's right to a safe learning environment by following the school's guidelines.

### **3 Safety, wellbeing and learning**

### **1) Polite, considerate behaviour**

Students are to

- always follow the staff members' instructions
- behave in a polite manner, using appropriate language
- respect everyone's right to a safe school day. They treat everyone with respect and inform the school's adults of any bullying.
- respect everyone's physical or mental personal space
- take care of both their own, their peers' and the school's equipment. They always ask for the owner's permission if they want to borrow something.
- come to lessons with the right materials and equipment e.g. sports clothing
- always ask for the author's permission or cite the original source when copying, editing or sharing someone else's work, including text and picture (plagiarism)
- show respect for members of all ages and backgrounds in the school community, and express romantic affection, if any, in a discreet and appropriate manner.
- leave their bags in the classroom during assemblies or performances.

### **2) In school, on the way to school and back home**

Students are to

- follow the traffic rules and any other rules set by the City of Oulu e.g. regarding travelling on buses and during any transitions within the school day
- behave kindly and considerately towards others
- only enter the school building when school starts
- leave the school premises as soon as possible, and no later than 30 minutes after their lessons have ended. Those waiting for an after-school club or a lift wait outside. Year 1 (and 2) students may go to afternoon care.
- stay on school premises and only leave with permission. Only the Class/Homeroom Teacher or the supervising teacher may grant permission to leave a lesson for an appointment.

### **3) Taking care of oneself, others and the school environment**

Students are to

- take off their outdoor clothes and shoes and place them neatly in the assigned place when inside the school. Hats are to be taken off in the Big Bite and assemblies.
- be considerate towards people with perfume allergies and wear only mild scents
- bring only healthy snacks (fruit, sandwiches, muesli bars) to school. Sweets, crisps, soft drinks or energy drinks are not allowed during the school day.
- chew xylitol gum after lunch and on the snack break only, and dispose of the gum in a litter bin after use
- keep the school tidy. They clean what they mess up and if they deliberately break something, they pay for its repair.

### **4) Safety**

Students are to

- only bring to school items that are safe to use
- hand over a disturbing or dangerous object or substance to the Principal or a teacher
- behave in a way which maintains safety
- lock their bikes, scooters, etc. and leave them in the designated area

- understand that tobacco or alcohol products are allowed for over 18-year-olds only
- use the WC one at a time

#### 5) Use of own devices

- 'Devices' refer to **laptops, tablets, mobile phones, phone/smart watches and ear-phones**.
- Students' personal mobile devices are not allowed to be used **on the school premises** (indoors and outdoors) and during other school events.
  - **Years 1-6 students** must keep their devices turned off or on silent mode (with vibration disabled) **in their bags**.
  - **Years 7-9 students** must keep their devices turned off or on silent mode (with vibration disabled) in their personal, school-assigned **lockable lockers**. If the first or last lesson of the day takes place outside the main building, students may keep their devices in their bags during that lesson.
- Students are allowed to use their devices for educational or health-related purposes, or to urgently contact their guardian, with permission from a teacher or the Principal.
- Students may always make an emergency call to 112 without needing permission from school staff.
- Sharing photos or videos online without the consent of the individual(s) in them is a criminal offense.
- The corridors and the Brainary/Library are designated quiet working areas.

#### 4 Breaking School Rules results in disciplinary action (POL§ 35, 36)

- Discussion or reprimand by a teacher
- Dismissal from the class
- Guidance discussion
- Guidance discussion with parents at school
- Detention
- Written warning
- Suspension

#### Consequences of acting against school policy:

- Using own devices during the school day
  - if the student is found with their phone without permission outside lesson time
    - during breaktimes: they are asked to return the phone to their locker (Yrs 7-9) or backpack (Yrs 1-6) and *unauthorized used of a mobile device (mobiililaitteen luvaton käyttö)* – mark is put into Wilma
    - during lesson times: the teacher takes the phone for the rest of the day and *taking away an item disrupting a lesson (oppituntia häiritsevät esineen poisto)* – mark is put into Wilma
    - after 3 marks, a guidance discussion is had with the student
    - **if the behavior continues** after the guidance discussion, **detention is given for 45 minutes** for each time student is found having their phone without permission

#### Our Breaktime Agreements

- I go out straight away.

- I stay in the school area.
- I walk in and out calmly and use the right door.
- I line up when the bell rings.
- I let the plants and other small creatures live in peace.
- I welcome everyone to join in.
- I take turns on the playground equipment.
- I play ball games in the designated areas.
- I follow the guidelines regarding the use of the football field.
- I spin in the “liito-orava” spinner when I can reach it myself from the ground.
- I leave my bike or other vehicle in the bicycle rack.
- I leave the other students' bikes or other vehicles alone in the racks.

### Swings

- I wait for my turn in safe distance.
- One person at a time can swing on the swings.
- At busy times, I take a 3-minute turn on the swings.
- I stay sitting or standing on the swing while swinging.

### Winter

- I play responsibly on the snow hills.
- I only throw snowballs against the grey wall at the end of the football field.

### Lunch agreements:

- I leave my coat, hat and shoes in the rack.
- I do not cut the line or push in the line.
- I try to taste a bit of everything.
- I do not waste food.
- I keep my voice level low.
- I remember good table manners.
- I push my chair under the table when I leave.
- I leave the space clean and tidy for the next user of the Big Bite.

#### 4.3.4. Early Intervention

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OIS prides itself on being a caring school. We strongly believe that the students need to know that we care and that they need a disciplined learning environment. Our staff consistently uphold these values through our Positive Behaviour Support Programme (see **4.3.1.**), which sets clear and simple behaviour expectations and guidelines for daily school life.

OIS encourages students to take responsibility for their learning and their own and others' personal growth. While they are guided to learn to resolve conflicts independently, support is available from Class/homeroom teachers and the Behaviour Support Team, which is a team of teachers who educate students in emotional and social skills and help them settle conflicts.

If a student's condition or disease causes absences, open discussions related to educational arrangements and welfare are held between school and home. Even one **(1) hour of unexplained absence** is addressed (*Wilma* > Puheeksi ottaminen). For **1-30h** absences, the teacher contacts guardians if the absence from school connects with changed behaviour, or if the absences have regularity or a pattern. The *Wilma* mark

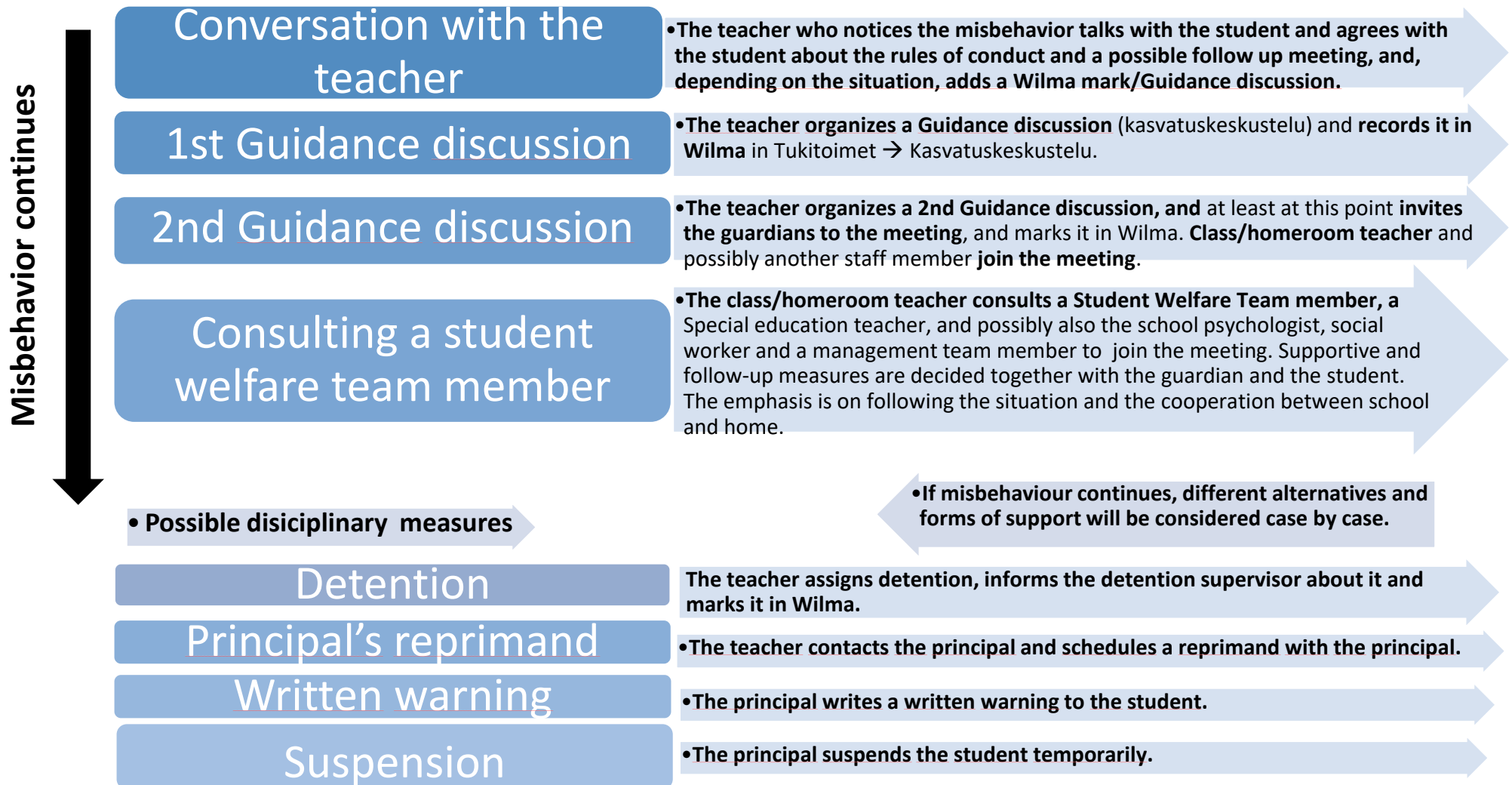
'Puheeksi ottaminen' (Concern expressed) is used by teachers when they start a conversation based on their observations. If the absence takes longer than three days, the class/homeroom teacher will check the student's progress. If absence continues, Child Protection Authorities will be contacted.

Guardians are informed of any disciplinary actions. Any violation of the school rules leads to disciplinary action (Basic Education Act; Perusopetuslaki §36). School rule violation leads to a **Guidance Discussion** (kasvatuskeskustelu) with a teacher. If the student's behaviour does not improve, then the student's parents are invited to a meeting with the teacher and possibly another member of staff. The Student Welfare Team may be involved, and further actions may include **detention, principal's reprimand, written warning or temporary suspension**.

Our policy is to act immediately if any concerns about a student arise. All members of staff are responsible for the wellbeing of the students. The model below shows the responsibilities of the staff members and professionals involved in the early intervention of using guidance discussions.

## A Misbehaving Student\*

\*A student who violates school rules or behaves in a disturbing manner.



### 4.3.5. Disciplinary Measures

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#### Guidance Discussion

A student who disturbs class or otherwise disrupts the school order, behaves dishonestly or disrespects others or offends their dignity (e.g. by swearing, vandalising or by endangering the safety of others), can be ordered to attend a Guidance Discussion (max. 2 hours) as soon as possible after the incident. The discussion is led by a teacher or the Principal. Other persons involved in the student's teaching or welfare may also attend. See also **6.3.4. Academic Honesty**.

Guardians can join the Guidance Discussion. They may come to school if possible, or the student in question calls their guardian during the discussion. If the guardian cannot be reached, the teacher contacts them later that day. The Guidance discussion is marked in Wilma.

The aim of the session is to discuss how and why the student broke the school rules and how they should rectify their behaviour in order to follow the rule. If misbehaviour continues after the Guidance Discussion, parents will be invited to school for another Guidance Discussion. Members of the Student Welfare Team will be involved as appropriate, and disciplinary action like detention, Principal's reprimand, written warning and temporary suspension may be taken.

#### *Objectives of Guidance Discussion*

- To keep guardians informed about any problems the student may have during the school day
- To better support student's personal development and educational progress
- To allow responsibility to students for themselves and others
- To reduce undesired behaviour among students
- To improve communication between school and home



## Detention

All the adults of OIS assume responsibility for educating and bringing up our students. This includes contacting home during Guidance Discussions, contacting the members of the Student Welfare Team and giving detention if several discussions do not help. If considered necessary, detention can also be given without prior guidance discussions. Detention is an opportunity for the students to reflect on their undesired behaviour **outside school hours** and to think of ways to correct it. We therefore ask for guardians' full support in detention cases.

In detention, students can be told to do written or oral tasks, exercises and tasks that support those educational goals that will prevent the student from repeating or continuing the behaviour that led to the detention. The tasks are justified in regard to the seriousness of the offence or negligence and suitable to the student's age and level of development. This can be e.g. an activity that promotes sense of community or involvement, such as helping in arranging a common activity.

The Detention time for Yrs 7-9 students is on **Fridays at 15:15–16:00** (16:45).

## Special learning arrangements

The school is responsible for making sure that all students can enjoy learning in a peaceful and safe environment. A student behaving disruptively in class can be arranged to learn in a separate space for a duration of one hour to up to several weeks, or be sent home for the rest of the day. At the discretion of the Student Welfare Team, the student can also be asked to follow a modified timetable or be suspended from school for a period of time.

At the teacher's discretion, students may be told to stay back in class after the lesson or school day to do any unfinished homework or project. Students may also be advised to attend Catch-Up Study Hall or *Läksyparkki* to do any homework that has not been done, to compensate for any unauthorised absences or to do missed tests.

The Catch-Up Study Hall/Läksyparkki for Yrs 7-9 students is on Wednesdays at 14:15-15:45.

## Confiscation of dangerous or disruptive items or substances, searching student possessions

See **4.5.1. Student Possessions** and **4.5.3. Smoking and Tobacco**.

## Written warning, suspension and expulsion

A student whose behaviour has not changed after Guidance Discussions, detentions and meetings between the guardians and student welfare professionals, can be given a written warning by the Principal. The decision on expulsion is done by the City of Oulu Educational Committee.

#### 4.3.6. Anti-Bullying Procedures

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We have a zero-tolerance policy against bullying. We act immediately if we suspect, or are reported of, bullying during school time. Guardians are asked to talk with their children about bullying, even if they have been neither a victim nor a bully. It is important to discuss with children how to act if they witness bullying at school.

Guardians are responsible for handling incidents outside school hours (birthday parties, social media, video games etc.) or on the way to and from school. However, if bullying, violence or such is brought to the school's attention, the school will inform the guardians. The school may, offer support, such as discussions with the school social worker for both the victim and the perpetrator. **Please note that school rules and disciplinary authority do not extend beyond school grounds.**

OIS takes a variety of behavioral support actions to increase students' wellbeing, to create a safe atmosphere at school and to prevent and reduce bullying. We organise lessons, assemblies and theme days to teach children how to act against bullying.

Guardians who suspect that their child is the victim of bullying or have reason to believe that s/he is bullying others, are encouraged to contact the school so that the matter can be handled as quickly and effectively as possible. Our Behaviour Support Team cooperates with the class/homeroom teachers to investigate any cases of bullying that come to light. The guardians or the school may report any bullying activity to the Child Protection Services (*lastensuojeluilmoitus*) or the Police (*rikosilmoitus*) at any point. The handling process is documented and any guidance discussions are recorded in *Wilma*. Students may sometimes find it intimidating to approach a teacher if they feel they are bullied. In this case they may approach a *tukioppilas* student (see 5.2.) who finds an adult in the school to handle the issue. Parents are advised to encourage their children to always tell someone about bullying.

**See next page for OIS Anti-Bullying Plan**

# Behavior Support When Conflict Occurs



At any point, a meeting may be marked as a Guidance Discussion.

1

**ALWAYS TELL AN ADULT!**

if conflict continues

2

**MEETING WITH THE  
HOMEROOM TEACHER**

Discussion is marked in Wilma

if conflict continues

3

**MEETING WITH THE  
BEHAVIOR SUPPORT TEAM :  
EVERYONE INVOLVED**

All sides are heard and a resolution is reached. Parents will be informed. A follow-up after two weeks.

Social services may be contacted at any point. In case of violence, the Police may be contacted at any point.



if conflict continues

4

**MEETING WITH PARENTS**

5

**MULTI PROFESSIONAL MEETING:  
THE SOCIAL WORKER JOINS IN**

**IF THE CONFLICT STILL CONTINUES,**

6. A written warning is given.

7. The student is temporarily suspended.

## 4.4. Home-School Cooperation

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### 4.4.1. Guardians in School

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To get involved with the school, you can join OISPA, Oulu international School Parent Association. This group works closely with school management to organize community events, fundraisers, and theme days. All guardians are encouraged to participate, and all updates regarding meetings and events will be posted on Wilma.

Parents are also welcome to share their personal expertise directly with students. If you have a specific skill, resource, or experience that you would like to share during a lesson, for a special project, or by running an after-school club, you may reach out to the Assistant Principal to arrange it.

### 4.4.2. We All Have Responsibilities

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We strive to provide the best educational experience at OIS. Below are key wellbeing factors and responsibilities that greatly affect this.

Matter	Guardians	Student	School
Waking up in the morning	Guardians make sure the child learns to wake up independently.	Student must learn to wake up on time.	School contacts home if student is repeatedly tired.
Personal hygiene	Guardians teach the child to take care of their personal hygiene. Guardian makes sure the child sees the school nurse and dentist regularly.	Student must learn to take care of their personal hygiene independently, understanding that strong scents are not allowed in school.	The importance of hygiene is taught by class teachers and the Health Education teacher. School nurse conducts regular health check-ups.
Breakfast	Guardians teach about regular mealtimes and make sure the child has access to nutritious food.	Student must learn the habit of eating breakfast.	The importance of breakfast is taught by class teachers and by the Health Education and Home Economics teachers.
Learning equipment	Guardians make sure the student is well equipped for lessons.	Student packs their school bag ready on the previous evening.	Teachers expect student to be equipped for class, and inform the home if not.
Following rules	Guardians set rules at home and make sure they are followed.	Student follows the rules set by home and school.	School sets rules and teachers make sure they are followed.
Manners and language	Guardians show example and teach their child manners and respectful use of language.	Student behaves and speaks respectfully towards others.	Teachers show example and expect students to have good manners and respectful use of language.
Stress management	Guardians set an example, guide, encourage, support and give positive feedback.	Student learns to use a calendar. Student learns to set realistic goals. Student learns to speak about their concerns with adults.	Teachers set an example, guide, encourage, support and give positive feedback.

School lunch	Parents discuss the importance of school lunch at home and encourages the child to eat it.	Student understands that lunch is an important meal during the day and eats it.	School educates students about regular meal rhythm and table manners.
Communication	Guardian is interested and asks the child regularly about school. If needed, guardian contacts the school. Guardian checks their <i>Wilma</i> regularly.	Student tells their guardian about their school day, tests and events. Student checks their <i>Wilma</i> daily.	Teachers use <i>Wilma</i> to communicate the guardians about the student's progress and behaviour. Teachers inform guardians about school's events and contact them if any concerns arise.
Exercise and fresh air	Guardians provide the equipment and resources for exercise and make sure the child gets fresh air daily.	On PE and Health Education lessons, student learns about healthy lifestyle choices, and is able to do suitable form of exercise in their free time.	School educates about healthy lifestyle choices, provides experiences of different types of sport, and teaches basic skills to take care of one's health.
Homework	Guardians make sure that the child has time and a peaceful spot for doing their homework. Guardians oversee that homework gets done and help if necessary.	Student does homework every day without reminders and asks for help when needed.	Teachers give a reasonable amount of homework, check that it is done, and inform home of undone homework.
Leisure time	Guardian knows where and with whom the child spends their free time.	Student makes respectful and protective choices regarding their free time.	Teachers express their interest in how students spend their free time.
Bedtime	Guardians make sure the child switches off their devices and goes to bed at 22:00 at the latest.	Student understands the importance of sufficient amount of sleep and acts accordingly.	School contacts home if student is repeatedly tired.

#### 4.4.3. Communication

Please update your *Wilma* profile promptly if your phone number, e-mail or home address changes, so we can reach you in an emergency.

Please note that students keep their mobile phones off or silent (with vibration mode disabled) in their bags or lockers throughout the school day. To contact your child, kindly call the school office to leave a message.

Visit <http://www.ouka.fi/ois> for updated school information. We encourage guardians to communicate directly with the school. For class or subject concerns, contact the relevant teacher first. If you are not satisfied, then contact the Assistant Principal or the Principal. Both can be reached via *Wilma* or phone during office hours. Teachers are best reached via *Wilma*. Please respect that they are busy with their classes during the lesson times. If the Class/Homeroom Teacher gives you their personal mobile number, **avoid calling outside office hours**. In general, we prefer face-to-face discussions over long messages.

Please inform your child's teachers of anything that might affect their work or behaviour. Teachers and the Principal will only discuss matters related to your own child and do not share information about other students (e.g. their behaviour or academic progress). In cases of incidents or accidents at school, we only contact the guardians of those students who were directly involved.

Events, holidays, visits, closures etc. are communicated via *Wilma* and the school website. **Guardians should check *Wilma* regularly for updates and note important dates.** The teachers and the administrative staff send general messages and bulletins to keep guardians and students updated throughout the year. Students must bring letters and forms home and return them signed when needed.

In addition to communicating about our events and happenings in *Wilma*, we also report about them through Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/ouluinternationalschool> and Instagram [@oulu\\_international\\_school](https://www.instagram.com/oulu_international_school)

#### 4.4.4. *Wilma*

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*Wilma* (<https://ouka.inschool.fi/>) is used for messaging (without attachments) between students, guardians and the staff. For attachments we use e-mail. Guardians can use the City of Oulu's secure email service when sending personal data or other confidential information to the city <https://securemail.ouka.fi/>. In *Wilma*, Guardians can also view their child's records (achievements, attendance, behaviour and learning support). **Please check your child's records regularly** to stay informed.

New parents receive *Wilma* setup letter and can create a password and edit profiles on their first visit to the site. Guardians are advised to enable notifications to stay updated. Do not **give your password to your children or outsiders** - teachers expect only guardian to read and respond to the messages sent to them, as well as to acknowledge the absences or any other records. Forgotten passwords can be reset at <https://ouka.inschool.fi/>.

All student absences must be authorised. Guardians are advised to use *Wilma* to approve absences and provide a reason, rather than calling or emailing the teacher. If the Class/Homeroom teacher marks your child absent in *Wilma*, please authorise and write the reason for the absence. **Please do not authorise your child's absence if they do not have a valid reason for it.**

#### 4.4.5. Parents' Evenings and Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences

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General parents' evenings are organised to inform guardians about general school issues, and individual Class/Homeroom Teachers organise class-specific sessions. Guardians are informed of these evenings via *Wilma*.

Guardians are invited to Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences once a year to discuss their child's goals and progress. We expect guardians and students to make every effort to attend these conferences. Guardians may also request a conference at any time. There are two types of conferences: (1) assessment discussions (väliarviointikeskustelu) for Yrs 1-2, and (2) learning discussions (oppimiskeskustelu) for Yrs 3-9.

### Assessment discussions in Years 1-2

- Discussion between student, guardian and class teacher
- Discussion covers the student's competence and agency, learning and working skills in relation to the objectives of the Curriculum and assessment criteria, as well as behaviour in relation to criteria of the local curriculum.
- The discussion may include topics related to learning support or student welfare issues.
- No mid-year report cards

### Learning discussion in Years 3-9

- Discussion between student, guardian and the class/homeroom teacher
- Discussion takes place at a time determined by the school.
- Focus on the student's strengths, learning, competences and agency, working skills and behaviour, as well as current topics related to learning and age.

Any agreed matters are recorded in the *Arviointi- ja oppimiskeskustelu* form available on *Tuki* → *Muut asiakirjat*. See also **7.4. Assessment**.

*Lapset Puheeksi* is a structured discussion method used with individual students as needed. Families answer questions in advance, which are then discussed in the discussion.



## 4.5. Items in School

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### 4.5.1. Student Possessions

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**All student items including books, bags, PE gear and outdoor wear should be labelled.**

School is not liable for lost, stolen, or damaged belongings left unattended. Teachers are not responsible for solving the loss or damage of students' belongings e.g. during breaks or after school. Students are therefore advised not to bring valuables to school and only bring what is needed for lessons.



Coats and shoes should be left neatly on the racks. Students are encouraged to wear indoor footwear. Misplaced items will be put to 'Lost and Found'. Valuables can be asked from the caretaker. Unclaimed items are donated to charity.

Hallway lockers for Students of Years 7-9 are for storing mobile phones, books, papers and helmets. They are the school's property, and the school administration has the right to search them if misuse or safety concerns arise. Students may lose the privilege of using a locker if they use it irresponsibly.

Students are not allowed to bring any electronic devices that could interrupt the educational process or break easily. Use of mobile phones is not allowed during the school day. **Mobile phones (if brought to school) must be turned off or set to silent (with vibration mode disabled) and kept in bags or lockers during the school day unless the teacher instructs otherwise for educational purposes.** Students should not bring mobile phones or other valuable items to the PE lessons or the swimming hall.

Please note that there are bike thieves operating in the central area of the city. Students are advised to

- take a photo of their bike
- write down the brand, model, colour, serial number and any other special features.
- lock their bikes
- leave their bikes in the bike racks (these areas are covered by the surveillance cameras)

If your bike does get stolen, the theft should be reported to the Police (rikosilmoitus) at <https://asiointi.poliisi.fi/yksityis/rikos>.

The possession of any weapon or dangerous item or substance in school or during school-related activities is strictly forbidden. See **4.5.3**.

### ***Teachers' right to search and confiscate***

In order to seize an **item or substance that is potentially harmful**, a teacher or the Principal have a right to **search a student's belongings** (e.g. bags, pencil cases), any storage space in the school that the student is in control over (e.g. lockers, desk) and superficially their clothing (e.g. pockets, wallet) if

1. it is obvious that the student is in possession of such an item or substance and
2. despite requests, the student refuses to give them up or is not able to prove that they do not have them.

The Principal or the teacher have a right to order a student to **give up an item that distracts learning or teaching (e.g. a mobile phone) or is prohibited or dangerous**. If the student refuses to give up the item or substance the teacher and the Principal can **confiscate** it from them using reasonable force for the remainder of the lesson. If the student resists violently then the police will be called.

Any search and confiscation is always recorded in *Wilma*. Any confiscated items or substances are handed back to the student or the guardian as soon as possible (see also **4.5.3. Smoking and Tobacco**).

### **4.5.2. Dress Code**

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Under the Basic Education Act (Board of Education, 2022), students must behave and dress appropriately. While personal style and taste is respected, clothing that may offend other members of the school community, such as shirts with offensive logos or texts, should be avoided.

For reasons of hygiene and safety, on some lessons, such as PE, Home Economics, Crafts (hard materials), Physics and Chemistry, certain requirements or restrictions can be imposed on the students' clothing. See **5.5**.

Students spend all their breaks outside, except Yrs 7-9 during scheduled indoor turns. **Parents are asked to make sure their children have suitable outdoor clothing for all weather.**

OIS is a shoeless school. While indoors, we leave our outdoor shoes in the shoe racks. Students are encouraged to wear indoor footwear. Visitors are asked to take their shoes off or wear slip-on shoe covers. Outdoor shoes are allowed to be worn in Building A (Technology).

Coats and shoes are left neatly in the racks for the duration of the lessons. Hats or headgear are allowed to be worn during lesson times, but they **must be taken off for lunch, and during assemblies and celebrations in the Gym Hall.**

### 4.5.3. Smoking and Tobacco

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Smoking is prohibited everywhere in OIS. Possession of tobacco, snuff, e-cigarettes, chewing tobacco, nicotine sachets, nicotine replacement products, tobacco products and smoking accessories is prohibited for under 18-year-olds. Smoking and possession or use of tobacco, e-cigarettes, tobacco products, electronic tobacco or smoking devices during the school day will be reported to the School Police. The ban is applicable also outside school hours including holidays.

If a student is suspected of possessing tobacco products or smoking devices, teacher and principal may request them to hand over the items. If tobacco, e-cigarettes or tobacco products are used to disrupt learning or teaching, the principal or teacher has the right to use force to remove the item or substance. Refusal to comply or failure to prove otherwise results in contacting the guardian, disciplinary action and a child protection report.

The school's anti-smoking policy is implemented as follows:

1. Guidance discussion or detention, contact home.
2. If student continues to consume or possess any of the above products, written warning, contacting the School Police and Social Services.

Tobacco products or smoking devices confiscated from a student are only handed over to the guardian or other legal representative, except for snuff, which will be handed over to the Police.

## 4.6. Festivals and Celebrations

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### Traditional celebrations

Celebrations are part of teaching and a form of home-school cooperation. As part of Finnish culture, the school's celebrations may sometimes include elements referring to religion, e.g. a hymn. Students are encouraged to foster religious tolerance and diversity in school. A single hymn, such as *Suvivirsi*, sung in a school celebration does not make the event religious.

### Religious Education lessons

R.E. teaching includes pedagogically reasoned methods of familiarization with forms and means of practicing a religion (prayers, hymns, ceremonies, familiarisation with the life of a religious community), which are not considered religious practice.

### Religious events

Religious events, as decided by schools, such as church services and morning assemblies, are organized separately from school's other functions. These functions are considered religious practice, and guardians are informed of them in advance. Guardians are given an opportunity to choose whether or not their child participates in



them. Student's participating or not participating does not cause any stigmatization or jeopardize equal treatment of students. During religious functions and ceremonies that takes place during school hours, the school organizes alternative programme for those students who do not attend the religious event. The alternative program is similar to the religious event in terms of its nature and goals except without religious content.

#### **Guardian's notification about their child's attendance**

Guardians notify the school whether their child attends religious functions and ceremonies, only some of them, or the alternative program at the same time as they register their child to school, or if necessary, by each case. The school is responsible for making sure that the child attends the religious or alternative program as notified by the guardian.

## **4.7. Student Welfare**

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Student Welfare means **promotion, maintenance and facilitation** of successful learning, good mental and physical health as well as social wellbeing in the school community. It is organized cooperatively with the Education Department and the *Pohjois-Pohjanmaan hyvinvointialue* Pohde (North Ostrobothnia Wellbeing Services). Student Welfare is the joint responsibility of all those who work in the school community. There is both **communal** and **individual** student welfare work.

OIS has a **Student Welfare Team** which aims to develop, evaluate, plan, and coordinate the school's student welfare work. The members of the Team are the School Social Worker, the School Psychologist and the School Nurse. Other members are the Principal, the Assistant Principal and the Special Education Teachers. In addition, other professionals, teachers, or counsellors may be invited to the meetings. The Team may also have a student or a parent member.

See p.9 for the contact information of the Student Welfare Team. See also **4.3.5**.

### **4.7.1. School Nurse and Doctor**

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Please inform your child's class/homeroom teacher of any medication, illness or condition which may have an effect on their school work. For emergency purposes, please remember to update your Wilma profile if any of your contact detail changes.

#### **If student is ill**

Please keep your child home if they are ill and notify your child's teacher via Wilma. If you stay at home to care for a child under the age of 10-12 (depends on the guardian's employer), call the School Nurse on the day of illness for a certificate. The certificate cannot be provided afterwards.

If a student starts feeling ill during the school day, guardians will be contacted to collect the child, or the child may travel home as agreed. The School Nurse may assess the situation if needed. Students must inform their Class/Homeroom Teacher first before leaving. The school reserves the right to ask for a medical note from a doctor or nurse in the event that a student is absent for a test and/or assignment due date and/or if there is concern about the child's wellbeing.

The school has an emergency first aid kit to provide immediate care for bruises and cuts. Only the nurse is allowed to give painkillers to students. In case of a more serious accident or injury, parents are contacted as soon as possible and student is taken to the nearest health care center (Kontinkankaan hyvinvointikeskus, Kajaanintie 46A) or straight to the Accident and Emergency Department of Oulu University Hospital (Kajaanintie 50).

### **Health check-ups**

School health care services are available free of charge. The aim of school health care is to monitor children's growth and development, to encourage students to take care of their own health, and to identify students requiring additional support as early as possible. Our School Nurse has a **walk-in hour on Mondays and Wednesdays at 11:30-12:30**. This is when students may come to meet the nurse without prior appointment to discuss any matters relevant to their physical, mental and social well-being.

Students have a short health check-up with the School Nurse annually. Newly arrived students are checked as required. Each student's unique needs are considered, and, if necessary, the nurse refers students to a doctor or other professionals. Vaccinations are administered according to the national immunization program including protection against tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis, polio, measles, mumps, rubella and varicella. New families moving to Oulu are asked to submit their child's immunization documents to the School Nurse as soon as possible (send scanned documents to [jutta.huotari@pohde.fi](mailto:jutta.huotari@pohde.fi) as an encrypted email). Everyone in Finland is advised to take vitamin D supplement 10 micrograms per day around the year.

Extensive health check-ups are offered for students in Yrs 1, 5 and 7-8 by the School Nurse and Doctor check-ups are in Year 1, 5 and 8. Guardians are also invited to these meetings. All information shared with School Nurse or Doctor is handled in the strictest confidence. Guardians are notified by the School Nurse via Wilma about booking and the contents of the health check-up. Additional check-ups can be administered if necessary. School Doctor appointments are available for these extensive check-ups only. If your child needs urgent medical attention, including long-time injuries and accidents occurred during free time, please go to your nearest the health center.



#### 4.7.2. Incidents and Accidents

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OIS students are insured by IF insurance company during school hours, including P.E., school trips, and travel between home and school. Injuries must be reported immediately to the supervising staff member. Treatment is free if the injury occurs during these times or within 30 minutes after school ends.

Our school insurance does not cover accidents if a student breaks school rules or leaves school without permission. Therefore, students and guardians are expected to understand that leaving the school premises during breaks or lunch is strictly forbidden. Medical visits (e.g. dentist or physiotherapy) are outside school hours and not covered. Parents are asked to inform the school of the medical visit in writing via *Wilma*.

If the services of a private GP are required because of a school-related injury, guardians pay the bill first and then claim compensation from IF. Instructions for claiming compensation are available from the Office Administrator or on the school's website under Student Welfare. Injuries outside school hours (e.g. hobby or sports training) are the guardian's responsibility and usually covered by the sports associations' licenses.

Students can be told to clean or reorganize areas they have deliberately or due to carelessness littered or damaged, or pay for the deliberate damage (Personal Injury Law, vahingonkorvauslaki). The task is supervised and done outside class time. If the task is done out outside school hours, the guardians will be informed.

#### 4.7.3. Dental Care

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OIS students are mainly treated at Dentopolis, Aapistie 3. Students are invited to a dental check-up in Year 1, 5 and 8. Newly arrived families with children in other classes than these should make the first dental appointment themselves. The frequency of further check-ups depends on each student's individual dental health plan.

**NOTE:** Dentist visits are not part of the school day and any accidents happening during the dentist visits are not covered by school insurance. Please inform the school of a dentist visit **in advance** via *Wilma*.

Non-Oulu residents can have a dental check-up in Oulu. For further treatment, guardians must get approval from their home municipality. If approved, care continues in Oulu. If the home municipality denies dental care in Oulu, care continues in the home municipality.

To keep teeth in good condition, remember the following:

- Eat regularly and avoid extra, especially sweet snacks
- Drink water if you are thirsty
- Brush your teeth with fluoride toothpaste twice a day
- After meal, take a xylitol pastille or chewing gum

Students are allowed to have a xylitol chewing gum after lunch and the afternoon snack so long as the gum is disposed of in the litter bin before the next lesson.

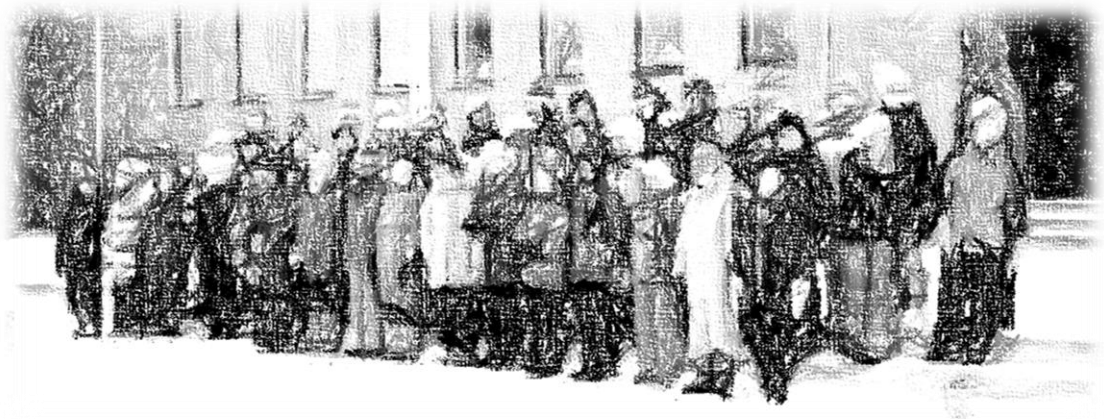
#### 4.7.4. Child Protection

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Under the Child Welfare Act (lastensuojelulaki), guardians are responsible for their child's wellbeing, supervision, and development in a safe, supportive environment that fosters independence. The school supports guardians and provides early assistance, referring families to receive further support from the child protection professionals if needed. If staff become concerned about a child's safety or development, they are required to notify the social services. This can also be done with the child or guardians as a request for an evaluation.

The School Social Worker helps address social and psychological challenges affecting the child's learning, school life or social and psychological development. This service is also meant to improve the cooperation between home and school.

If bullying, violence or such is brought to the school's attention, the school will inform the guardians. The school may, offer support, such as discussions with the school social worker for both the victim and the perpetrator. **Please note that school rules and disciplinary authority do not extend beyond school grounds.**



#### 4.7.5. TCK (Third Culture Kids) Groups

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We are delighted to welcome many new or returning students to OIS. Moving from one place to another involves both negative and positive feelings, such as looking forward to the familiarity or newness of things or missing what has been left behind. Therefore, our school provides students who have recently moved (back) to Finland with an opportunity to share and reflect on these feelings with others in a similar situation.

"TCK" (Third Culture Kids) peer group activities will run again this year. The meetings are run by an OIS teacher and they take place during school day. Our "TCK guardians" will receive a letter concerning the TCK groups in the beginning of the autumn term.

We strongly advise guardians to read the Oulu International School's *Muuttajan opas/ Mover's Guide*, which we give to all new families.

## 4.8. Support for Learning

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### 4.8.1. Support for Learning and School Attendance (National Core Curriculum, Ch 7)

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Support for learning and school attendance means more than subject-specific support. Basic education aims to foster ethical, responsible growth, provide essential life skills, promote equality and participation, and ensure equal opportunities for healthy growth and learning nationwide. Its purpose is to offer quality education and support so every student can meet learning goals and complete the Curriculum.

Teaching arrangements that support learning conditions create a strong foundation for both academic success and the provision of support for learning and school attendance. Accessibility and inclusivity are considered in all school activities. Students are given opportunities to succeed in learning, participate in group activities, and develop a positive self-image as learners and members of the community.

The school maintains efficient and purposeful cooperation with guardians, who play an active role in supporting their child's learning and school attendance.

Support for learning and school attendance is based on each student's and group's strengths and needs. Students have opportunities to have their support needs recognized and addressed. Support is inclusive, with early identification as the key. Learning support is primarily provided within the regular teaching group and is flexible, well-planned, and adaptable to the students' changing needs. In addition, the student may receive individual support in a smaller group provided by a special education teacher.

### 4.8.2. Transition Class (1-9C)

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**Transition Class** (siirtymäluokka) accommodates children who move from abroad but do not have the required English skills to attend OIS mainstream teaching full time. These students may attend the Transition Class for a maximum of three years. Their full integration to the mainstream class takes place through a passed language test. The maximum number of students in the class is 10.

The Transition Class is for students who

- are not Finnish citizens
- are not born in Finland
- have not lived in Finland before
- live temporarily in Finland in the Oulu area
- whose home language is not Finnish or English
- did not pass the Language Proficiency Test
- do not have Finnish skills to attend a Finnish school

All of the above conditions must be met for a child to be admitted as a student to the Transition Class. There is no waiting list in the TC; students are admitted as a vacancy opens. Students cannot apply for a study place in the Transition Class in the February language tests.

Admission to transition classes for Years 7–9 is discretionary. The student must have the ability to learn English well enough to continue studying in English after basic education. Therefore:

- For Years 7 and 8, the student must score above 50% on the language test
- For Year 9, the student must score above 65%

The right to study in the Transition Class may be extended to a third year at the teacher's discretion if the student has made good progress in English but remains within 10 percentage points of passing after two years, or if the family is moving out of Finland within a year.

## 4.9. Afternoon Care

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Students should either **go to afternoon care, an organised club activity, or home** within 30 minutes after their lessons.

Afternoon care is organised by Oulun 4H-yhdistys for students of Yr 1 (and 2 if there is space) on our school premises with stimulating indoor and outdoor activities and a snack. For more information about the afternoon care, please go to <http://oulu.4h.fi/iltapaivatoiminta/>

Afternoon care will be provided also when school ends earlier e.g. due to teachers' training. Guardians are notified of exceptions in the timetable via Wilma.

## 5. FACILITIES

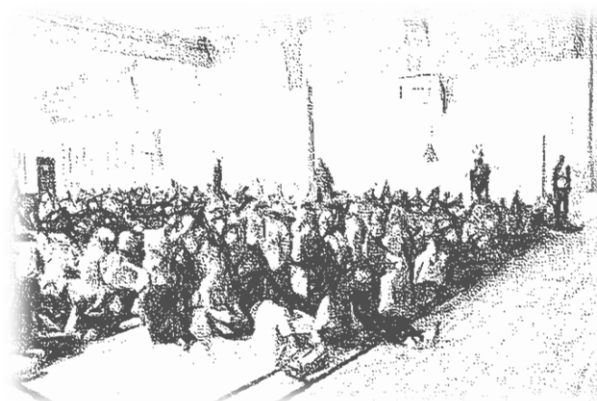
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### 5.1. Security

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OIS provides a secure and safe environment for its students. During breaks, students are supervised both indoors and outdoors. Please note that **students are not supervised and thus are the responsibility of their guardians** before and after their school hours, i.e. they should not come to school too early. After school, students are expected to go to either **afternoon care, a club or home**.

They are not allowed to stay unsupervised on the premises.



The school entrance doors are kept locked during lessons. Guardians or students wishing to enter the building outside these times are advised to call the telephone number on the door.

OIS has crisis plans in place for emergencies, reviewed annually by the Principal and staff. Evacuation drills are held regularly and procedures follow the guidelines of the Department of Education and Culture. Evacuation routes, fire blankets, and extinguishers are clearly marked, and each class has an assigned assembly point.

Smoking is prohibited everywhere in OIS. Use of intoxicants will be reported to the police. Bringing pets into the school building is not allowed unless agreed otherwise.

Guardians and former students are welcome to visit as long as attendance does not disrupt the classes. Teachers should be informed in advance, and, for security, all visitors should wear a visitor badge, available from the Caretakers.

## 5.2. Safety Precautions

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On a weekday, school is the place where the child may spend longer hours than at home. It is natural for parents also to ask if the school is a safe place. We have briefly listed below what we do as a school to make sure your child *is* and *feels* safe at OIS.

**Welcome day.** A great majority of our new students are admitted in February. The newly admitted students have a welcome day in May, when they can spend a day at OIS and get used to the new school. Knowing what is coming up relieves a lot of stress and brings a feeling of safety for the students.

**Buddies.** Newly arrived Yr 1 students get a “buddy” from Yr 5.

**School rules.** These are revised at the beginning of each school year. School rules work like traffic rules: there are no collisions when everyone knows and follows the rules.

**Anti-bullying procedures.** Procedures are followed when the school’s adults are informed of bullying. Bear in mind that we can only act on cases we know of.

**Break time supervisors.** During breaks, there are supervisors both outdoors and indoors. They wear yellow vests so students can easily see them.

**Student Council and tukioppilaat.** These active students take initiative to create a good spirit amongst OIS community. Their actions include running the snack bar to raise funds for common purposes and organizing theme days or breaktime activities. *Tukioppilas* students also take care of new students in the class.

**Traffic.** There is a 10km/h traffic sign to remind parents to slow down on the OIS driveway. Another sign is placed to guide parents to drive one-way on the parking lot parallel to Kasarmintie. The central location of the school gives us many opportunities to practise traffic rules.

**Police visits.** The School Police visits the school to talk about safety matters and legal issues. Generally, the message of these lessons for everybody is to use their brain and common sense.

**Assemblies.** Our assemblies are usually hosted by students. Showing others what we have learned generates a good spirit in school.

**Student Welfare.** Our Student Welfare Team consists of professionals who cooperate closely with teachers and guardians in matters concerning the students’ physical, social or psychological wellbeing.

**Crisis Team.** The Student Welfare Team also functions as the Crisis Team in case an emergency should happen.

**Safety Plan.** We have a City-level safety plan as well as a school-specific plan, both of which are reviewed and updated annually.

**Class-specific safety guidelines.** Each classroom is equipped with instructions for what to do in an emergency. Every other classroom is equipped with a fire blanket.

**Outdoor and indoor evacuation drills.** We have evacuation drills twice a year in cooperation with Tiernan koulu and IB Diploma school. Evacuation drills are the only emergencies that, according to the City of Oulu guidelines, are and can be practised. Other emergencies are authority-led, i.e. we wait for instructions from the authorities.

**Home-school cooperation.** Pulling the same rope, i.e. an open and supporting relationship between parents and teachers gives children a feeling of safety: *“They all care about me!”*

**Spirit of OIS.** This is something that people visiting OIS always pay attention to. People at OIS are friendly, caring and polite. This creates a feeling of safety. However, we must remember that it does not happen on its own. Each one of us has to do our own part by being friendly, caring and polite towards others. *The Spirit of OIS* is actually the key factor to the safety felt and experienced at OIS. After all, OIS is nothing more but a regular building, but it is the *people in it* who, by their own actions, create its safety.

As a parent, by doing a little you are actually doing a lot to help your child feel safe at OIS: be interested and talk positively about school, ask your child about their day, help your child in their homework, teach them good manners. Show by your own example in traffic, on the street and in social situations your consideration and care towards others. **By creating a feeling of safety, we create safety.**

### 5.3. Library

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We are continuously organising and stocking up our library, with fiction, non-fiction and reference books. The library supports inquiry-based learning. Students grow as readers by engaging with the challenge of varied and increasingly demanding texts and through sharing their reading experience with others.

Students may borrow books for home loan and at all times they are encouraged to use the library to find information for various purposes. Students are responsible for the books they borrow, therefore if a book is lost or returned in damaged condition, it must be replaced.

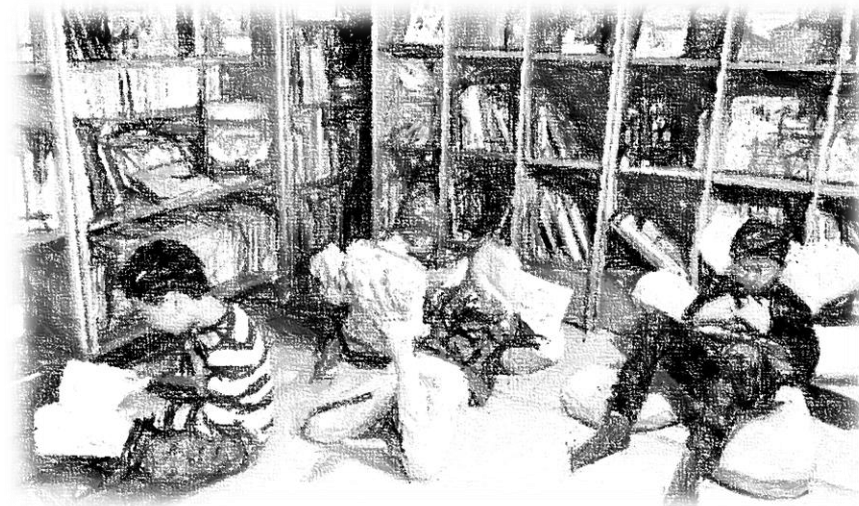
We are grateful for any donations of books or magazines or e-books. Guardians are encouraged to contribute to our library with books in their native languages other than Finnish or English.

Reading in Finnish, English and one’s mother tongue is essential for OIS students, developing skills for learning all subjects. Reading also develops vocabulary, textual skills, comprehension skills, imagination and empathy. They are also lifelong learning

and everyday life skills. Therefore, it is important that children read at home daily, and we hope parents to support this habit.

Our students can enhance their reading and communication skills by completing a **Bilingual Reading Diploma** (adapted from the Oulu City version). For questions or donations, please contact your child's class/homeroom teacher.

We use the same OUTI card as the City Library. However, the card needs to be synced with our system, as we have a separate loaning system, KOHA. **It is very important that all students have the card**, as they will need to have access to the library throughout their school year.



**Instructions for using the City's library card:**

If a student does not have an OUTI library card, they must first apply for the card through any local Oulu City library. Once they receive the card, guardians should ensure that all permissions are updated and current before OIS library can sync the card to work.

**Wilma instructions** (the English *Wilma* permission site might not have the following information – you might need to use the Finnish version of *Wilma* to complete the following:

Please make sure to fill in **Wilma's form "Huoltajatiedot koulukirjastojärjestelmään"** (guardian information – school library) so that your child's information gets transferred to the new system – we should have information about which guardian's information will be transferred with the child's information for the new system, so please make sure to include **guardian's name, social security number and address**. Your information is secure and will only be used to manage your child's account. **Also make sure to click the box "Huoltajan tieto saa siirtää koulukirjaston tietokantaan"** so that you give the permission for your child to have a school library account.

## 5.4. Educational Technology

ICT is integrated into all subjects to support learning in all year levels: In line with the City of Oulu ICT policy, each student receives an *eduouka* e-mail account.

Laptops and tablets are available for student use. Each student has a personal login to access these devices. The users of the computers are expected to be responsible, recognizing that access is a privilege. This also goes for the use of mobile devices. We expect everybody to follow a few simple rules:

- 1) Usernames and passwords are private; do not share them with anyone once you have received them.
- 2) Computers are used for schoolwork.
- 3) Downloading or changing any of the computer settings is not allowed.
- 4) The Internet is used for learning purposes.
- 5) If you come across anything that can be regarded as bullying, immediately contact your homeroom teacher. Save any messages or e-mails as proof.
- 6) Visiting sites with indecent content is not allowed.

## 5.5. Physical Education

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OIS offers a balanced P.E. program at OIS, following the National Curriculum for Physical Education (P.E.). We have the use of the multipurpose gym hall with a stage and dressing rooms, playground, and nearby sports facilities including further playing fields, skiing tracks, an ice rink, and a public swimming pool in the Oulu City area. **All guardians are expected ensure students have suitable gear for both indoor and outdoor P.E.** We are happy to receive donations of clean P.E. equipment of all kinds and sizes.

OIS students actively join various sports meets organized by the City of Oulu and sports associations. The school is responsible for transport and other arrangements.

### 5.5.1. Important Issues about P.E. lessons

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P.E. is part of the National Core Curriculum and mandatory for all students. Guardians cannot withdraw their child from P.E. classes.

The content and venue of the P.E lessons are planned and organized by the P.E. teachers. **Students must wear suitable clothing and be ready for all weather.** In severe weather (NOTE: this is estimated by the teacher), teachers may decide to have the lessons indoors.

Please note these issues about P.E. lessons:

- All clothes items **must be labelled.**
- Students **change into their sports clothes** before the P.E. lesson.
- Students must have **outdoor sports shoes for outdoor P.E.**
- Students must have a **towel for showering** after the P.E. lesson.
- Students must **change into clean clothes** after showering.

**Example of outdoor gear:**

- Comfortable running shoes
- Socks
- Sweatpants
- Long sleeve shirt or jacket (depending on the weather)

- Gloves and hat for cold weather

**Example of indoor gear:**

- Shorts
- T-shirt
- (Yr 5 and up) indoor shoes

### 5.5.2. Swimming

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In Finland, swimming is a vital life skill and part of school education. Students must attend swimming lessons unless temporarily exempted for medical reasons, such as e.g. an acute illness diagnosed by a doctor or serious conditions like severe atopic dermatitis.

**Swimming tests and objectives**

**Yr 4:** The first swimming test. Students should be able to swim 25-50 metres.

**Yr 6:** The second swimming test. The expectation for students in Oulu is to meet the Scandinavian level - swimming 200 metres (50 m by backstroke) after jumping into deep water. Results are documented by the swimming instructor, together with the class teacher, and noted on the Yr 6 report card if the student passes.

**Summer lessons and tutorials for Yrs 1-4 students**

Swimming instructors inform the school of students needing extra swimming lessons. The class teacher notifies the guardians, who are responsible for enrolling and transporting their child to the extra lessons.

**Tutorials for Yrs 5-6 students**

If a student lacks sufficient swimming skills, they can join free tutorials at the swimming pool. The class teacher will inform guardians via *Wilma*.

### 5.5.3. Move! Measurements

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As part of the P.E. curriculum, Move! measurements (*Move! mittaukset*) are done for Yr 5 and 8 during the autumn term. The results go into a national database, and are shared with families. With guardians' consent, they may also be shared with the school's student welfare services (school nurse).

The Move! measurements consist of five sections:

- 20-metre dash
- Five-step leapfrog drill
- Throw-and-catch combination
- Upper body raise
- Push-ups
- Mobility drill

More info at <https://www.oph.fi/fi/koulutus-ja-tutkinnot/move-palaute-huoltajalle>



## 5.6. Playground

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See **4.3.3.** for Breaktime Agreements. The playground is supervised by school staff during school hours. Students are required to remain in the designated play areas. **Students may not leave the school during school hours without permission** (see **4.7.2.**).

Students spend all their breaks at the playground (with the exception of Years 7-9 students who have indoor day turns).

Bicycles must be placed in racks and should be locked for safety. See **4.5.1.**

See **4.2. Transportation.** Guardians driving their children to school should be extremely cautious on or near school grounds, as reversing cars pose a serious risk to our younger students. **The designated drop-off point is at the very end of the drive** - please do not use the teachers' car park as this increases danger on Kasarmintie. Guardians are asked **not to stop or park in any teacher parking spaces.** Only taxis transporting students to and from Tiernan koulu school may use the Valjastehtaan-  
katu bicycle path.

As a school we want to promote students' physical activity during break times as well as during the lessons. Our Student Council runs a Break Time Rental of equipment for students to borrow during the long breaks.

Donations of **new or used sports gear or games** (e.g. balls, rackets, bats, skipping ropes, floorball sticks, Mõlkky, playing cards, board games) are greatly appreciated.

## 5.7. "Big Bite" Dining Hall

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**Please make sure your child eats a proper breakfast** at home.

OIS provides a free hot lunch, which is an important part of students' daily nutrition. Guardians are therefore advised to encourage children to value this meal. School lunch is also meant to teach healthy eating habits, good manners and sustainability. Students should take only the amount of food they intend to eat - they can always return to take more. The *Big Bite* dining hall should be kept as a neat and comfortable place to eat in. After lunch, students should leave their space tidy and push their chairs under the table.

Please inform the kitchen about the student's special nutritional or dietary needs via *Wilma*. For weekly lunch menus, see Oulun Tilapalvelut website <https://www.ouka.fi/ruokalistat/koulut-ja-paivakodit?accordion=accordion-6150>.

'Junk food' (e.g. crisps, carbonated drinks, sweets) is not allowed in school. Students are welcome to bring healthy snacks (e.g. fruit, yoghurt, crackers, juice) or they may buy a snack from our Student Council's Snack Bar at **14:00**.

## 5.8. Sustainable Development

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OIS follows expectations and principles of sustainable development to improve local, global and virtual communities. All teachers include sustainability as stated in the

curriculum and ensure that classrooms are safe, comfortable, ergonomic and stimulating.

We teach about sustainability by for example encouraging students to recycle and conserve energy and take only the amount of food they intend to eat at lunch. Everyone is responsible for reducing waste and turning off lights, devices and water taps when not in use. Recycling bins are available throughout the school.

## 6. SCHOOL WORK

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### 6.1. Language Policy

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#### 6.1.1. OIS Framework

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OIS is a CLIL school, where students learn content and language simultaneously in English. According to our admission policy, students must be able to learn and communicate in English across all curriculum subjects.

We follow the National Core Curriculum. Our classes are linguistically diverse with most of our students non-native speakers. We aim to educate students to be proficient, literate and knowledgeable in two or more languages. By the end of Yr 9, students aim for Level B 2.2. (European Language Framework) in English. Our students must be ready for secondary education in Finnish or English (School Act of Basic Education, Perusopetuslaki). Finnish and Swedish languages have a special legal status, guiding our educational approach.

#### 6.1.2. Guardians' Role

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Learning through a non-native language is challenging and takes time to reach the same level in academic language proficiency as those expected for learners learning in a mother tongue. Guardians' role is to support the child's mother tongue, for example helping with homework, providing resources at home which relate to the school assignments, and



discussing school topics at home. They can also encourage the use of English, e.g. providing materials and games. Guardians are encouraged to be involved in ordering school-funded materials in their child's mother tongue(s) for use at school.

Guardians of Finnish as Second Language (FSL) students are encouraged to support their child's active learning of Finnish, both at school and during free time. Strong Finnish skills support social wellbeing and integration into society.

Guardians can support their child's Finnish learning e.g. by making sure they

- read/speak or watch Finnish programs at least 10 minutes every day

- visit the library and borrow Finnish books
- listen to Finnish children’s music
- find a Finnish speaking friend
- find a Finnish speaking hobby
- help their child with Finnish homework:
  - sit down with their child and be interested in their Finnish homework
  - encourage them to do all the tasks carefully.
  - ask them to "teach" you words in Finnish.
  - help them do their reading homework especially well. If there is a recording, listen to it and repeat multiple times.
- Links and apps:
  - Yle kielikoulu: <https://kielikoulu.yle.fi/> (children’s programs with English subtitles).
  - Lasten Areena: <https://areena.yle.fi/lapset/>
  - Download *Ekapeli* and play (letter sounds and reading)
  - Download *Pikku kakkonen* and/ or *Pikku Kakkosen eskari*
  - Online games or platforms: <https://www.kielibuusti.fi/fi/opiskele-suomea/itseopiskelu#/>

### 6.1.3. Principles of Language Policy

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In schools where instruction is not in most of the students’ mother tongue, measures are taken to ensure that the students have the full opportunity to succeed regardless of the language. This may mean simplified language, differentiation of tasks, or resources in the student’s native language. The main concepts are also provided in Finnish.

Swedish is compulsory in Finnish schools from Yr 6 onwards. Students may also study their home language, if available in the City of Oulu. From Yr 4, students may choose an optional A2 language (Spanish, German, or French), taught in Finnish (see 6.1.4.).

In Year 6 and 9, students receive their grade for English based on the national A1 English assessment criteria. This exception is required by national assessment standards in the curricular transition point.

#### **Language of Instruction**

- Teaching of language includes learning about language, through language, and language as an art.
- Students start learning Swedish from Yr 6.
- All teachers are language teachers.
- Teachers exercise contextual sensitivity using the student’s most comfortable language, ideally their mother tongue, in cases like learning difficulties or bullying. Special Education is given in Finnish for Finnish students and in English for others.

#### **Mother Tongue Support**

- We are sensitive to diversity and actively cooperate with guardians in supporting mother tongue teaching and resources.

- We create opportunities to represent and celebrate different mother tongues, as well as make this ongoing practice in classrooms. Natural situations should represent the multilingual student body.
- The library supports mother tongues.
- Other mother tongue lessons are organized depending on whether the City of Oulu is able to provide it, and held outside regular school hours.

#### 6.1.4. Optional Foreign Language (A2) (vapaaehtoinen A-kieli)

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Students will have a new opportunity to choose an optional language (A2) of Spanish, French or German in Yr 3, to start as of Yr 4. Depending on the choice of the majority, a group is then formed together with other nearby schools. Please note that according to the Finnish National Core Curriculum, students start to learn Swedish as a compulsory language in Yr 6.

**Once a student chooses an A2 optional language, the choice remains in effect through Basic Education.** If the learning of the second language A becomes overwhelming (e.g. due to illness, or significant academic or wellbeing concerns), guardians should first consult the language teacher and student welfare professionals before requesting an exemption from the Principal with clear reasons. Exemptions are granted only at the end of the school year, unless the case is exceptional.

## 6.2. Attendance

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### 6.2.1. Compulsory Education until 18 Years of Age

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Compulsory education continues **until student turns 18 or completes the secondary-level education.** The Compulsory Education Act imposes an obligation on all Year 9 students to apply to secondary level schools in the Joint Application (yhteishaku). Guardians are advised to discuss and find information about their child's future study opportunities. Information about education options in Finland after Basic Education is available from the Student Counsellor or at <https://opintopolku.fi/konfo/fi/>. Once completed the secondary level, student is eligible to apply to University and University of Applied Sciences.

**NOTE!** Guardians are advised not to take family holidays during school times. If you plan to move abroad or take a long holiday whilst your child is in Basic Education, you will need to apply for suspension of compulsory education (oppivelvollisuuden suoritamisen keskeyttäminen). The form to apply can be found in *Wilma* > *Hakemukset*. In the application, you will need to provide information on how your child is educated during the absence from OIS.

At the request of their guardian, student has a right to have their compulsory education suspended for a specified period

- due to a long-term illness or injury
- during maternity, paternity or parental leave
- for the duration of a temporary stay abroad of at least one month, if the student attends similar education abroad
- for other compelling reasons related to the life situation



### 6.2.2. Absences

We are grateful that our guardians recognise the importance of their children's regular attendance at school and therefore unauthorised absences rarely occur. Teachers record students' absences in *Wilma*. See 4.4.4. School attendance is directly related to academic progress. **We expect guardians to see that their children attend school every day, are punctual and properly equipped.**

Absences can be authorised for illness, religious observance, bereavement or special circumstances. **Guardians are advised not to take family holidays during school time.** Teachers are not required to provide extra work for such absences. If the reason for absence is other than illness, guardians must apply for leave of absence well in advance. The Class/Homeroom Teacher can approve absences **up to five days**, longer absences require the Principal's approval. The application form is available in *Wilma* > *Hakemukset (Applications)*.

If the absence is longer than one month, guardians should apply for **suspension of compulsory education** (oppivelvollisuuden suorittamisen keskeyttäminen). The form to apply can be found in *Wilma* > *Hakemukset*. In the application, you will need to provide information on how your child's education is arranged during the absence.

**If a student is ill, guardians must notify the school by 12:00.** If no notification has come from home, Class/Homeroom Teacher will contact guardians. Unauthorised absences must be made up in *Catch-Up Study Hall/Läksyparkki*. **Students must inform their class/homeroom teacher they are late (e.g. due to late bus).** For health appointments, a notification from home or a note from the doctor or nurse is required. See 6.2.2.

If a student feels ill during the school day, they must ask the teacher to send them to the School Nurse. **It is essential that students do not leave school without informing their Class/Homeroom Teacher first.** The school may require a medical note from a doctor or nurse if a student misses a test, assignment, or if there are wellbeing concerns. If a student is absent due to an illness on a test day, the teacher will reschedule the test. If the absence is unauthorised, a retest is not guaranteed. See 6.3.2.

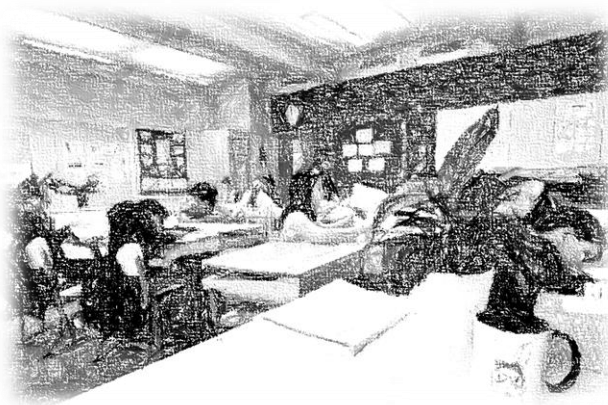
If a student needs to leave school for **other than medical reason**, the class/homeroom teacher must always be notified **by the guardians**.

When absent from class, students are responsible for making up any missed work. They should make sure that they have all the necessary material for e.g. revising for a test. **Therefore, it is important that students approach relevant teachers for missed material (instructions, handouts etc.) as soon as they are back to school.**

If student has a condition or illness causing absences, open discussions will be held between school and guardians related to the student's learning and wellbeing. Even one **hour of unauthorized absence** is addressed and clarified (*Wilma > Puheeksi ottaminen – Concern expressed*). For other absences (**1-30h**), the Class/Homeroom Teacher will contact guardians if the absence from school is connected to changed behaviour or some kind of regularity or pattern. The '*Puheeksi ottaminen*' note is used when a teacher talks about the absences or raises a concern based on their observations. If the absence exceeds three days, the class/homeroom teacher will check that the student is back on track. Ongoing absences lead to a meeting with the professionals of the Student Welfare Team to discuss how the student could be supported. If needed, the Child Protection Authorities may be contacted.

### 6.2.3. School Attendance Model

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As a school we take measures to make sure our students experience agency and belonging, with all the school's adults supporting their wellbeing and safety. We practice emotional and social skills daily, celebrate students' successes and strengths, and continuously seek pedagogical solutions to support our students' wellbeing and attendance.

Parents are asked to monitor their child's behaviour or reluctance to attend school. **If the school marks your child's absence as unauthorized, please do not approve it without knowing the reason.** Talk with your child, making sure that they are heard and understood. If concerns arise or difficulties persist, please contact your child's class/homeroom teacher or a Student Welfare professional.


If a child is struggling to attend school, they may show subtle signs that parents should watch for. If you notice early symptoms, talk with your child first. If the difficulties continue, then contact the school for support. The early signs may include:

- Frequent difficulty leaving to school in the mornings
- Difficulty returning to school after a holiday or absence due to illness
- Increased messaging with parents during the school day
- Increased tardiness (late for lessons)
- Skipping individual lessons


- Repeated days of absence
- Repeatedly goes home in the middle of the school day
- Unauthorized absences
- Repeated undone homework
- Is present in class but does not participate in work
- Changes in school grades
- Difficulty transferring from class to class
- Repeated desire to leave the classroom
- Difficulty with friendships
- Loneliness or withdrawal
- Increased psychosomatic symptoms (stomach pain, headache)
- Changes in behavior and mood

The table below shows the procedure we follow in cases of students' absences:

OBSERVATION	
<b>Unauthorised and unexplained absences (1 h &lt;)</b>	Reason(s) clarified without delay
<b>Authorised absences (1-30 h), other lesson marks and observations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If they raise concern               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- individual absences due to illness, recurrence, regularity</li> <li>- changes in behaviour</li> </ul> </li> <li>• After a longer continuous period of absence, e.g. more than 3 school days               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- teacher checks with the student to make sure the student has caught up with homework and has sufficient knowledge and skills</li> <li>- adults' concern is conveyed to the student</li> </ul> </li> <li>• If student has a high number of authorised absences, e.g. due to an illness or condition:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- discussions related to pedagogy and/or student welfare are held with the student and guardians</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



ENCOUNTER	
<b>1-30h of absences</b> →unauthorised absences without delay	Bringing up the observation (puheeksi ottaminen) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When a change in behaviour or the reason of absence has raised concern.</li> <li>• Observations are discussed with the student.</li> <li>• Student's viewpoint is heard.</li> <li>• Need for learning support is identified.</li> <li>• Guardians are contacted.</li> <li>• Observation (puheeksi ottaminen) is recorded in <i>Wilma</i> in tuntimerkinnät.</li> <li>• Student and the Guardian are aware of the record and its reason.</li> <li>• Student welfare services are consulted if necessary.</li> </ul>



ACTION	
<b>More than ~30 – 50h of absences</b>	<b>1) Mapping out the situation in a Multiprofessional Team</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The observation or absence has been brought up and home-school cooperation has started, but concern prevails</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reasons for the absences have not been clarified</li> <li>• Reasons for the absences cause concern</li> <li>• Delay of academic progress due to absences raises concern</li> <li>• Absences continue</li> </ul>		
2) <b>Action Plan</b> One or several of the following is done:			
Student Welfare Professionals or other experts are consulted	<p>Guidance Discussion (<i>kasvatuskeskustelu</i>), Let's Talk about Children (<i>lapset puheeksi</i>) discussion is held, or other means are used to determine the need for support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the latest when student has 30h of concerning absences (unauthorised absences always without delay)</li> <li>• Guardians are offered an opportunity to participate the Guidance Discussion (Pol35a§2).</li> <li>• If guardians do not participate, support measures will be agreed upon in other ways.</li> <li>• Follow-up is agreed upon.</li> </ul>	<p>An individual multidisciplinary team of experts is summoned</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the latest when student has 50h of absences (unauthorised absences always without delay)</li> <li>• A person in charge is named</li> <li>• Action plan is recorded in the Student Welfare Report (<i>oppilashuoltokertomus</i>).</li> <li>• Pedagogical issues are recorded in pedagogical documents.</li> <li>• Agreement on communication and follow-up meeting.</li> </ul>	<p>Networking in line with the Community Effectiveness Model</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When the support of local support providers is not sufficient and cooperation with outside stakeholders is needed e.g. social or health services.</li> <li>• Phone call to <i>Luuri</i> for consultation:</li> <li>• Before calling <i>Luuri</i>, the guardians have been offered a <i>lapset puheeksi</i> discussion, or the need for support has been determined in other ways.</li> <li>• Guardians are asked for their consent to call <i>Luuri</i> and they have been told what the consultation involves.</li> </ul>

#### 6.2.4. Support Procedure for School Attendance

Students are expected to arrive to school punctually. Coming late affects both their own and the class's progress. **NOTE: Students must contact their Class/Homeroom Teacher or the supervising teacher if they will be late for a lesson or a test for any reason (e.g. bus is late).** Contact details will be provided.

This is the support procedure for school attendance in Years 7-9:

- Teachers record late arrivals in *Wilma* (e.g. 5/10/15min).
- Once the late minutes total 45 (one lesson), the student must attend *Catch-Up Study Hall/Läksyparkki* to compensate for the missed time.
- Homeroom teacher gathers tasks from subject teachers for the compensation session.

- After 5 late *Wilma* marks: *Puheeksiotto*, after 10: Guidance Discussion (KaKe); after 15: Detention.
- Unauthorised absences for full lessons will lead to *Catch-Up Study Hall/Läksyparkki*.
- **NOTE!** Guardians **should not** mark an absence as *hyväksytty* (authorised), if e.g. the student overslept.

## 6.3. Homework and Projects

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### 6.3.1. Homework

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Homework is an important part of students' learning, ranging from just a short exercise to long-term projects. Guardians should provide a suitable environment and structured routine for doing homework, as well as **support their child in tasks, e.g. to search for information for projects etc.**

Students are responsible for writing down their homework assignments and test dates. Guardians are encouraged to provide a calendar and to remind their child to use it regularly, whether it is a school diary or a preferred alternative (digital or paper).

### 6.3.2. Projects and Tests

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Students and guardians can view test and project due dates in *Wilma's* online calendar. Assessed tests and projects are not sent home, but results are available in *Wilma*. Guardians who wish to see a test should contact the relevant subject teacher.

Here are some informative notes about the *Wilma* calendar and test/assignment policy.

#### General

- Teachers will mark the dates of upcoming deadlines and summatively assessed work (tests, projects, essays etc.) in *Wilma*.
- **NOTE!** Students will also have many formatively assessed tasks which are **not** recorded in *Wilma* (e.g. homework assignments, vocabulary tests, minor tasks). In addition, many essays and projects with deadlines are done during the lessons and the deadline can be on the same day as a test.
- A student who misses a test due to illness or other reason authorized by the school, is responsible for approaching the teacher and agreeing on a new test date. In this case the student may have more than 3 tests per week.
- Any undone assignments/tests can be done at *Catch-Up Study Hall/Läksyparkki* on Wednesdays at 14:15. Therefore, it is sometimes possible for a student to exceptionally have two assessed assignments on Wednesdays: one during the school day and one at *Catch-Up Study Hall/Läksyparkki*.

#### Exceptional test arrangements

##### 1. Absence agreed beforehand

- A student whose guardian has requested permission in advance to be absent on a test day, may agree on a new test date with the teacher. The student

may do the test either on the following Wednesday in *Läksyparkki* or as soon as possible at another agreed time.

## 2. Absence due to illness

- Parents are responsible for notifying the school of absence. Student is responsible for approaching the teacher to agree on a new test time.
- The student may take any undone test in *Läksyparkki* on the first possible Wednesday or as soon as possible at another agreed time.

## 3. Matters to consider

- If the student is absent from a test without permission, they are not given a new opportunity to redo the test.
- If the student takes a test and hands in a blank paper, the result is a failing grade.



### 6.3.3. Catch-Up Study Hall/Läksyparkki

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We do not expect students to have a computer, access to the Internet or a printer at home. To help students to get assistance or to finish off their projects, we run a *Catch-Up Study Hall/Läksyparkki* on Wednesdays after school where students may come voluntarily or as advised by a teacher to do any unfinished homework or project, or to do tests missed due to e.g. illness, or to compensate for any unauthorised absence.

### 6.3.4. Academic Honesty

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#### Plagiarism Guidelines at OIS

OIS encourages students to think independently and take pride in their own work. **Plagiarism means using someone else's words or ideas without credit**, i.e. the student is saying that someone else's work or ideas are theirs when in fact they are not. Plagiarism is not allowed, and it is actually against the law. Although teachers encourage students to peer teach, copying or letting others copy assignments or answers is cheating, and a violation of academic honesty.

All of the following are considered plagiarism

([http://www.plagiarism.org/plag\\_article\\_what\\_is\\_plagiarism.html](http://www.plagiarism.org/plag_article_what_is_plagiarism.html)) :

- turning in someone else's work as one's own
- copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit (including copying your friend's schoolwork)
- failing to put a quotation in quotation marks
- giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation
- changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit
- copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of the student's work, whether credit is given or not.

If a Yr 7-9 student is caught plagiarising or cheating for the first time, they will have a Guidance Discussion and an opportunity to redo the task. If they are caught cheating and plagiarising repeatedly, they will have to do the task to an acceptable level but the work will be marked as failed. Failed work will be affect the report card grade. If needed, further disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the Basic Education Act.

If a student is caught a second time, it is counted within the same academic year. All plagiarism incidents are tracked over the course of one school year.

**NOTE:** Plagiarism can take many forms, and students will be listened to. Teachers use their professional judgement to assess each situation. The use of AI is regularly addressed, and students are provided with clear guidelines and instructions on its appropriate use.

Plagiarism cases are tracked by the homeroom teacher in *Wilma*, where they are recorded by the teachers involved. (*Tuki->Kasvatuskeskustelu->Luntaus kokeessa*)

### 6.3.5. Hazardous Work

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In Years 1-6, hazardous work is not allowed. According to the Government Act (475/2006), students in Yr 7-9 may do hazardous work under the direct supervision of a teacher, including mechanical, chemical, physical, electronic, biological hazards, and physically demanding tasks.

In Years 7-9, tools, machines, substances and products defined by the above Act are used in subjects like science, crafts, arts, and home economics when needed to meet the objectives of the Curriculum. Any practical work is done under teacher supervision, with a strong focus on safety, and suitability and safe use of equipment and protective gear.

## 6.4. Extracurricular Activities

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### 6.4.1. Clubs

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After-school clubs support students' educational, personal, and physical development. We encourage all our students to participate in some type of extracurricular activity. The clubs' primary function is social and they are not specifically related to subjects or graded. Club activities are free and held outside class hours. New clubs are formed based on student interest and available supervisors. Information about clubs and their starting times will be shared separately.

Before signing up for a club, it is important to consider the child's school schedule. A child cannot join a club that overlaps with their school hours, and they may wait on the school premises for a maximum of 30 minutes after the end of their school day before the club starts. During this waiting time, they must participate in regular break times and follow normal school rules.

#### 6.4.2. Class Trips and Excursions

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Educational visits enrich classroom learning and they may last from part of a day to several days. Guardians are informed of any educational visits, their purpose, schedule, rules and supervision. Teachers and supervisors plan the visits with the Principal, who gives final approval.

**Class trips** are made to destinations in Finland only, except those funded by Erasmus or Nordplus. The directions from the Finnish National Board of Education state that education should not create costs to students, so any extra expenses may be covered through voluntary fundraising by students and their guardians. Every student is allowed to take part in the planned activities whether they or their guardians have taken part in the fundraising or not. **Note: organising fundraising or class trips, or handling class funds, is not part of teachers' duties.**

The school provides supervision and insurance for all school-related trips. Trip plans will not proceed without sufficient supervision. As in school time, the students are expected to follow the school rules to ensure everyone's safety.

Students not attending a visit for any reason will be given curriculum-based work to complete at school under teacher supervision.

#### 6.5. Student Participation

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Students are encouraged to take an active role in the school community, with teachers providing only supervision for the activities. Each class selects a representative to the Primary and Middle Schools' student councils, which hold regular meetings led by a student chairperson.

The **Student Council's** main task is running the Small Bite snack bar. Proceeds are used to sponsor items, like the ping-pong table, for the school community that would not otherwise be possible.

**Tutor Students/Tukioppilaat** are volunteer students who act as the school's "eyes and ears". Their goal is to foster a positive school spirit by organizing assemblies, breaktime activities, theme days, and we also have **Mentor** students to look after new students.

**Library Reps** volunteer to assist in the library. The **Eco Team** organizes a clean plate campaign several times a year, manages the school's recycling and hosts events focused on nature and sustainability. As part of the *Liikkuva Koulu* program we have students serving as **Football Referees** and **Movees** (*Liikuttajat*) during breaks.

OIS is a *Liikkuva koulu* school (School on the Move), promoting an active and enjoyable school day through events, active lessons, gym breaks and breaktime activities led by the Movees and Football Referees. These all support students' wellbeing, participation and learning.

## 6.6. Familiarisation with Working Environments (TET)

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Years 7-9 students take part in work experience. Yr 9 students have a 5-day placement in autumn, Yr 8 a 5-day placement in February, and Yr 7 a one-day placement in the school canteen. Years 8–9 students are encouraged to choose placements that match their career goals.

## 6.7. Optional Subjects

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Year 7 students choose optional subjects for Years 8 and 9. These are assessed according to the City of Oulu guidelines and criteria. The available subjects depends on the school's resources each year. Optional courses are offered in cooperation with Myllytulli School. For further information, please contact the Student Counsellor.

# 7. CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

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The framework for all the learning functions is provided by the National Core Curriculum, which is guided by the Law for Basic Education. Local Curriculum, the contents and obligations given to us by the City of Oulu Department of Education and Culture, gives local guidelines for teaching and assessment.

OIS is also a CLIL school. CLIL means content-language integrated learning, in Finnish "kaksikielinen opetus". In the Finnish education system, the official languages of education are Finnish and Swedish, hence in the Finnish education system we are classified as "a CLIL school providing education mainly in English", meaning that we also provide terminology in Finnish. Read more about CLIL and our language policy in **6.1**.

## 7.1. Implementation of the National and Local Curriculum

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The National Core Curriculum for basic education gives us the content for teaching and basis for assessment. It sets common goals for all schools in Finland. We focus on student well-being, equality, and lifelong learning. We encourage active participation, problem-solving, and collaboration. In our teaching we include cross-subject themes like sustainability, digital skills, and cultural understanding. Students are given a chance to set goals, reflect on their learning, and grow as individuals. We emphasize project and phenomena-based learning as well as focus on creating a safe, inclusive, and motivating learning environment.

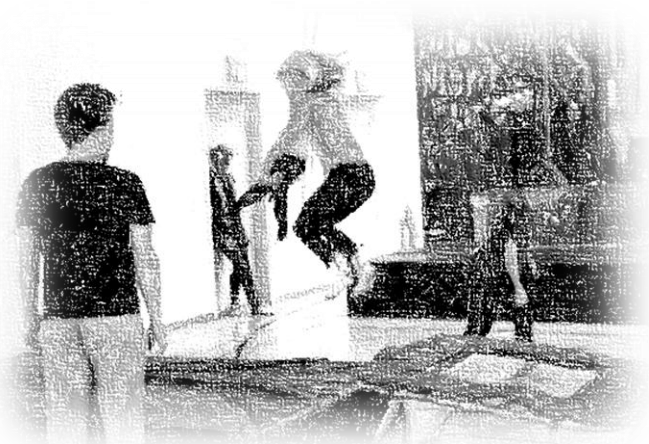
## 7.2. Transdisciplinary Themes (Laaja-alaiset Oppimisen taidot)

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The seven transdisciplinary skills of the National Core Curriculum are interconnected and aim to support students' growth, participation in a democratic society and sustainable living. The emphasis is on helping students to recognize and value their unique strengths and development opportunities. Transdisciplinary skills are integrated and practiced across all subjects. They are included in subject assessment and are not assessed separately. The skills are:

- 1. Thinking and learning to learn (L1/T1):**
  - a. We learn to grow and learn new things throughout our lives.
  - b. We ask questions, share ideas, and explore new ways of solving problems.
  - c. By setting goals and finding what works best for us, we can become confident and curious.
  
- 2. Cultural competence, interaction and self-expression (L2/T2)**
  - a. We learn and practice to respect different cultures, religions, feelings and languages while understanding other's backgrounds and identities.
  - b. We appreciate our environment, traditions, and art and encourage creativity and self-expression.
  - c. We develop skills to communicate in many ways, like through language, music, art, and movement.
  - d. We understand human rights, work well with others, and make thoughtful, ethical choices.
  
- 3. Taking care of oneself and managing daily life (L3/T3)**
  - a. We learn to share, be thoughtful, and make choices that are good for ourselves and the world around us.
    - staying healthy and safe
    - being responsible in daily life
    - planning use of time
    - making good choices about what to buy and use
    - safety in traffic and technology
  
- 4. Multiliteracy (L4/T4)**
  - a. We learn to understand and express our ideas by creating different kinds of "texts," like words, pictures, sounds, videos, and numbers, to learn and communicate.
  - b. We practice finding, combining, and sharing information in creative and thoughtful ways, using both traditional and digital tools.
  - c. We learn to think critically, do teamwork, and problem-solve.
  
- 5. ICT competence (L5/T5)**
  - a. We use ICT to create, explore, and work on projects, while learning to use it safely and responsibly.
  - b. We practice organizing information, solving problems, and working with others using different digital tools.
  - c. We use ICT to help us express ideas, build teamwork skills, and understand its role in daily life and the global world.

6. **Working life competence and entrepreneurship (L6/T6)**
  - a. We learn to understand the value of work, teamwork, and entrepreneurship by practicing real-world skills and working on projects.
  - b. We learn about local businesses, working together, solving problems, and staying determined, even when tasks are hard.
  - c. We practice planning, managing time, and being flexible when things don't go as expected, and learning to finish what we start.
  
7. **Participation, involvement and building a sustainable future (L7/T7)**
  - a. We learn how to be active, responsible members of our community and make good choices for the future.
  - b. We learn about teamwork, decision-making, and problem-solving by helping plan and improve school activities.
  - c. We practice speaking our opinions respectfully, understanding others, treating people fairly, following rules and solving disagreements peacefully.



### 7.3. Transdisciplinary Units (Monialaiset oppimiskokonaisuudet)

Subjects are not taught in isolation; our learners explore real-world problems by going beyond subject boundaries, seeing connections between subjects and the real world. Concept- and context-based learning promotes interdisciplinary understanding, helping students recognize that real world issues require insights to multiple fields.

At OIS two or more subject teachers from different disciplines collaborate to plan a transdisciplinary unit (monialainen oppimiskokonaisuus). Each year level completes at least one such unit per year. Topics are drawn from subject curricula and chosen for their relevance to interdisciplinary cooperation and potential collaboration with external stakeholders. They also support transdisciplinary themes.

These units are assessed within each subject, with students also engaging in self- and peer-assessment. Final “products” may be shared with other students and families through e.g. displays or exhibitions.

Yr 1-6 students study six transdisciplinary themes per year. Most of the units are around six weeks long, but one can also be a year-long unit. These transdisciplinary themes come from the Finnish core curriculum and together provide children with authentic learning experiences that are not confined to the boundaries of traditional subjects. Students have opportunities to reflect on the significance of their learning to take meaningful action in their community and the wider world.

## How parents can support their child's learning

You can help your child by:

- maintaining regular contact with the school
- sharing books with your child
- supporting your child's mother tongue
- assisting your child with research projects
- attending parents' information sessions and parent-teacher-student conferences
- providing an appropriate setting and structured routine for doing homework.

See also **6.1.2. Guardians' Role.**

## 7.4. Assessment

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We follow the assessment guidelines set by the Finnish National Board of Education, using a grading scale from 4 to 10. This scale reflects students' achievement in relation to the national curriculum objectives, where 10 indicates excellent performance, 8 good, 6 satisfactory, and 4 represents a failing grade. Assessment is both continuous and varied, aimed at supporting learning, guiding progress, and providing feedback to students and guardians throughout the year.

Years 1-3 students are given written assessments on their own personal goals and against the curriculum goals on a scale of 1-4.

We use a variety of assessment strategies to provide a clear and comprehensive view of each student's progress. For more details about assessment, go to <https://www.ouka.fi/en/oulu-international-school/assessment>. Students are informed subject objectives and assessment principles in an age-appropriate manner. The assessment of the evidence of student's learning that the teacher uses for summative assessment is documented.

Guardians are invited to discuss their child's learning at school (see **4.4.5.**). Report cards will be given at the end of the spring term for Years 1-3 students, and at the end of both autumn and spring term for Years 4-9.

### Assessment

- is equal and transparent
- requires cooperation and participation
- is planned and consistent
- is variable
- is based on objectives and criteria
- takes into account the age and conditions of the students.

### Formative assessment

- the feedback the student receives throughout the learning process through different activities to help improve learning and discover their strengths and weaknesses e.g. small quizzes, discussions, and mind-maps

- the purpose is to guide and improve teaching and learning in relation to the set goals
- helps students to understand their learning processes, identify their strengths and develop working methods to achieve their goals

#### **Summative assessment**

- the purpose is to evaluate students' learning according to the curriculum goals at the end of a learning unit e.g. projects, tests and report card grades.
- the overall evaluation carried out at the end of a school year is a summative assessment of the student's performance during the entire school year.

#### **Assessment discussions in Years 1-2**

- Discussion between student, guardian and class teacher
- Discussion covers the student's competence, learning and working skills in relation to the objectives of the curriculum and assessment criteria, as well as behaviour in relation to criteria of the local curriculum.
- The discussion may include topics related to learning support or student welfare issues.
- No mid-term report cards

#### **Learning discussion in Years 3-9**

- Discussion between student, guardian and the class/homeroom teacher
- Discussion takes place at a time determined by the school.
- Focus on the student's strengths, learning, competences, working skills and behaviour, as well as current topics related to learning and age.

#### **Mid-year assessment (väliarviointi)**

- Years 1-2 students have an assessment discussion with no separate report card.
- Mid-year report card in Years 3-9
  - Yr 3 assessment is verbal
  - Yrs 4-9 assessment is numerical
  - In Yrs 4-9, the teacher may, if they wish, provide verbal assessment to support the numerical assessment.

#### **End-of-year assessment (lukuvuosiarviointi)**

- In Yrs 1-3 report card, the assessment of subjects and behaviour is verbal.
- In Yrs 4-9 report card, the assessment of subjects and behaviour is numerical.
- In Yrs 4-9, the teacher may, if they wish, provide verbal assessment to support the numerical assessment.

### **7.4.1. Report Cards**

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Report cards are issued at the end of Autumn and Spring Terms, following the guidelines of the National Board of Education. Grading follows the national 4-10 scale. The language of the Report Cards is English in all year levels, except in Yr 9 in English and Finnish. Working skills are included in subject grades but not graded separately.

If a student misses the last day, the report card can be mailed home with a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

### City of Oulu Schools' Grade Descriptors

Grade	Descriptor
10 exemplary	Student demonstrates a thorough understanding of the required knowledge and skills. Able to work independently and in groups, to apply knowledge into practice, creative expression and problem solving. Works towards the achievement of the objectives and shows special interest towards the subject.
9 excellent	Student demonstrates a better understanding of the required knowledge and skills than in the description of grade 8. Able to apply knowledge into practice, Shows eagerness to achieve the set objectives and has the required working skills.
8 good	The objectives for each subject have been described grade-specifically in the local curriculum. The objectives describe good (8) knowledge and skills. In addition, the Board of Education has provided specified descriptions of good knowledge and skills for different subjects for certain transition stages. The descriptions of good knowledge and skills are attached to the local curriculum. The student with good knowledge and skills has a good general understanding of the key objectives of the subject and strives to use the required working methods. The underachievement of some criteria may be compensated by an overachievement of some other criteria levels.
7 satisfactory	Student demonstrates knowledge and skills in several sectors of the subject. May have difficulties. Working skills are somewhat limited and needs support occasionally.
6 fair	Limited achievement of the objectives. Guidance and supportive measures are often required
5 adequate	Student has difficulty achieving the set objectives. Working skills are very limited. Need of constant guidance and supportive measures.
4 failed	Minimal achievement of the objectives, despite supportive measures and offered opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skills. Student will not be able to achieve the objectives in the subject in the next year level

The behaviour of Yrs 4-9 students is assessed numerically. In the autumn term, Yrs 7-9 students receive a grade for either Physics or Chemistry, and for either Biology or Geography depending on which subject was taught. In the spring term, they receive a grade for both, i.e. both Physics/Chemistry and Biology/Geography.

#### Report cards

- For Yrs 1-3, written assessment at the end of school year
- Written behaviour assessment in Yrs 1-3 is given as an attachment to the report card
- Numerical grades are given in Yrs 4-9
- The numerical grade may be supplemented by descriptive written assessment attached to the report card.
- Behaviour is assessed numerically in Yrs 4-8

#### Final Assessment in Year 9

In the spring term of Year 9, students receive their Final Report Cards both in English and Finnish. History and Civics are assessed as separate subjects.

On the contrary to the general assessment guidelines of Language and Literature – English at OIS, the English grade in the final report card is based strictly on the Finnish National Curriculum assessment criteria for A1 English. This ensures a seamless transition for students moving on to further education within Finland.

#### 7.4.2. Criterion-based Assessment

Teachers assess tasks using subject-specific criteria, giving points to reflect achievement. Parents are informed about their child’s progress via Wilma. Points do not directly determine report card grades. Working skills are part of assessment and include listening, following instructions, teamwork, independence (working responsibly, in good cooperation and trying their best), planning and self-assessment. Students demonstrate these through active participation, discussions, pair or group work, and completing written tasks. Self- and peer assessments also support evaluation.

Before each assessment task, teachers provide students with written goals and clear criteria outlining what will be assessed, so students know what to focus on. Students receive a numerical level and a description for each assessed criterion. Each assessed criterion receives a numerical level and a descriptive explanation. Mid-term assessments offer feedback on current progress, while end-of-term assessments reflect the student’s performance over the full school year. Final grades on the report card consider performance across all three years of middle school, not just Year 9.

#### 7.4.3. Promotion and Retention

We aim to keep students with their age groups whenever possible. Retention decisions involve consultation with teachers, student welfare professionals, guardians, and the student. The final decision regarding a student’s promotion or retention rests with the regional coordinator of special education.

A student following a goal-based learning structure (*Opinnoissa eteneminen tavoitekokonaisuuksittain*) progresses in accordance with the curriculum objectives, either more slowly or more quickly, within the grade level phases 1–2, 3–6, or 7–9. This concerns one or more learning objectives in one or several subjects. For a student progressing more slowly than their grade level, this is the last resort measure to avoid, for example, a failing grade or repeating the school year is to provide additional time to achieve certain learning objectives. Before transitioning to goal-based learning, a student progressing more slowly must have been provided with group-level support measures and individual student-based support interventions. For a student progressing faster than their grade level, there is an opportunity to study the objectives of the next grade level(s) when upward differentiation and group-level support is not sufficient. Goal-based learning structure requires an administrative decision and a plan based on assessment.

#### 7.4.4. Behaviour Assessment in Years 4 – 9

Exemplary	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is considerate of others and the learning environment and influences other students and learning environments with a positive example</li> <li>• acts constructively for the best of the group and school community in different situations</li> </ul>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• takes initiative in taking care of common* affairs</li> </ul>
Excellent	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is considerate of others and the learning environment</li> <li>• acts responsibly in the school community according to the agreed rules and instructions</li> <li>• is kind and helpful and strives to build a positive working atmosphere</li> </ul>
Good	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• behaves appropriately according to the situation</li> <li>• follows school rules most of the time</li> <li>• usually demonstrates good manners</li> <li>• is able to solve conflict situations independently</li> <li>• is able to work in a group</li> </ul>
Satisfactory	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• behaves appropriately in different situations most of the time</li> <li>• knows and accepts the school rules</li> <li>• is able to solve conflict situations with guidance</li> <li>• is able to work in a group with support</li> </ul>
Mediocre	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• often shows indifference towards other members of the community, to school work and the school environment</li> <li>• breaks school rules repeatedly</li> <li>• creates a negative atmosphere through their attitude and behaviour</li> <li>• needs constant guidance and advice about behaviour</li> </ul>
Poor	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• shows extremely indifferent behaviour towards other members of the community, to school work and the school environment</li> <li>• requires special measures to guarantee learning</li> </ul>
Very poor	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• behaviour is totally inappropriate for the normal school environment</li> </ul>

\*common affairs refer to: following school rules, supporting other students (e.g. in their studies, being a good friend) and/or having an active role, e.g. in the student body.

#### 7.4.5. Assessment of Second Language Learners and Immigrant Students

S2 students receive a written evaluation if they have studied less than one year of the Finnish language, and a numeral assessment if they have more than one year (supportive evaluation).

ESL students receive a written evaluation if they have less than one year of Language and Literature English studies, and numeral assessment if more than one year. If an immigrant student has been at OIS for such a short time that numerical evaluation is not possible for the mid-term or end-of term report card; “H” (pass) and written assessment evaluation is used.

## APPENDIX: OIS Lesson Distribution 2026-27

Subject /Year.	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Y9
FMT/FSL	7	6	6	5	4	4	3	3	4
EN A1	4	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3
Swe B1						2	2	2	1
<i>Fre/Ger/Spa A2/A1 Optional lan- guage</i>				2	2	2	2	2	3
Mathematics	3	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	4
Environmental Studies	2	2	2	3	3	2			
Bio/Geo							2	2	3
Che/Phy							2	2	3
History					1	2	2	2	
Civics				1	1				3
RE/Eth	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1
Music	1	1	2	2	1	1	2		
Visual Art	1	1	2	1	1	2	2		
Crafts	2	2	2	2	2	2	3		
Home Economics							3		
Health Educ.							1	1	1
P.E.	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	2
Student Couns.							0,5	1	1
Optionals								6	4 (5)
Homeroom						1	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24+2</b>	<b>25+2</b>	<b>25+2</b>	<b>31,5+2</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30+1</b>

