

# CURRICULUM FOR PREPARATORY EDUCATION

Complementary Plan for Basic Education  
Curriculum of Siikajoki Municipal Educational  
Administration 2016

## Contents of Curriculum for Preparatory Education

1. Foundations of Teaching.....	3
2. Main Goals .....	3
2.1 Goals and Main Contents of Teaching School Subjects .....	4
Contents of Teaching .....	5
Contents of Hearing Comprehension and Speaking.....	5
Reading and Reading Comprehension.....	5
Writing .....	5
2.2 Teaching Finnish as a Second Language .....	6
2.3 Teaching Native Language .....	6
3. Teaching Arrangements .....	6
3.1 Pre-primary Education.....	6
3.2 Basic Education .....	6
4. Central Aspects of Teaching.....	7
4.1 Study Plan and Study Program .....	7
4.2 Guidance Counselling .....	8
4.3 Differentiation of Teaching.....	8
4.4 Pupils with No Reading or Writing Skills.....	8
4.5 Integration .....	9
5. Cooperation between School and Home.....	9
5.1 Preparatory Education Class Teacher .....	9
5.2 Other Cooperation Actors.....	9
6. Student Welfare .....	10
7. Plan for Using Disciplinary Educational Discussions and Disciplinary Actions, and for Related Procedures.....	10
8. Working Methods .....	10
9. Distribution of Lesson Hours.....	11
10. Evaluation.....	11

## 1. Foundations of Teaching

Preparatory education for basic education is intended for all pupils with immigrant backgrounds who don't have enough Finnish language skills for studying in basic education groups. Children between 6 and 10 years of age receive a minimum of 900 hours of teaching and children over 10 years of age receive a minimum of 1000 hours of teaching. The duration of preparatory education in the municipality of Siikajoki is usually 1 school year.

Preparatory education in the municipality of Siikajoki is provided in schools to which teaching immigrants is centralized. Preparatory education groups are taught in Ruukki school. If possible, considering the pupil's age and situation, teaching can be organized in other municipal schools, as well. In these schools, multiculturalism and internationality are visible in everyday life, enrich the school community, help children become more accepting, and provide the capacity for interaction between cultures.

Teaching at a preparatory education class is individual and realized according to the pupil's personal study plan. Teaching takes into consideration different language and cultural backgrounds, the pupil's age and developmental stage, learning background, and learning skills. The teacher individualizes their teaching according to the age and developmental stage of each pupil. The preparatory education class also has a teaching assistant who can support and guide pupils in different situations during the school day.

An active and close cooperation between different actors is very important in planning and supporting the teaching strategy for a pupil with an immigrant background. A functional and confidential interaction between the pupil's home and the school is particularly significant. Cooperation between all the actors who have an effect on the education of a pupil with an immigrant background is also very important to the integration and wellbeing of the pupil. These actors are e.g., the teacher of the preparatory class, the principal, class teachers, subject teachers, the teacher of Finnish as a second language, a special education teacher, student welfare, early childhood education and care teachers, social administration, the accommodation center, and health care. Pupils in a preparatory education class are entitled to use the regular support and student welfare services available at the school.

To further the integration and adaptation of the pupil into the school community, the school aims to integrate the pupil into Finnish basic education groups already during the early stages of preparatory education. Integration is also important as it supports the interaction between the integration group and the immigrant pupil and learning of that particular school subject. Especially in subjects related to skills and arts, integration is possible already at a very early stage. Cooperation between the immigrant pupil and the basic education group that they're familiar with is gradually increased as the pupil's language skills grow.

## 2. Main Goals

Preparatory education for basic education creates the basis required for moving into a basic education group that corresponds to the pupil's age and developmental stages. The purpose of preparatory education is to further the pupil's balanced development and integration into the Finnish school and society. Learning Finnish language and key concepts and vocabularies of different school subjects are central to preparatory education. Combined with the development of the pupil's native language,

They strengthen the pupil's multicultural identity and build a foundation for functioning bilingualism. With pupils who have received little or no schooling, the main emphasis of teaching is on learning reading and writing skills and those fundamental aspects that support the pupil's integration and surviving in everyday school situations.

## ***2.1 Goals and Main Contents of Teaching School Subjects***

Teaching school subjects follows the basics of the Basic Education Curriculum of Siikajoki Municipality, when applicable. The pupil, their previous studies, and cultural background form the starting point of teaching. Teaching utilizes the pupil's knowledge on the nature, lifestyle, history and society, languages and cultures of their own language and cultural regions. Central concepts, working methods, and equipment for each school subject must be taken into consideration when planning the contents. Preparatory education includes practicing different study methods in different learning environments.

The goal is to provide versatile and experiential learning environments that challenge pupils to participate and enable and support continuous studying of the Finnish language. Pupils in preparatory education are in natural language-learning situations during the whole school day, in all school subjects both inside the school building and during visits and study trips. One purpose of visits and study trips is to offer pupils meaningful and versatile situations of language use in different communication environments. These situations develop the pupils' ability to function both independently and in the community, and they receive competence for lifelong learning. Different learning environments introduce Finnish culture to the pupils, hence supporting their acculturation to Siikajoki and further into the Finnish society.

During preparatory education, a selection of visits and study trips are made e.g., to the following learning environments:

- Saarikoski Nature School
- Ranua Zoo
- University of Oulu Zoological Museum
- University of Oulu Botanical Museum
- Northern Ostrobothnia Museum or Raahe Museum
- Museum of Art
- Tietomaa Science Centre
- Kierikki Stone Age Centre
- Municipal Library of Siikajoki
- Oulu Theatre
- Visits to Sport Facilities
- Visits to Upper Secondary Education Institutions
  - Rural Institution
- City of Raahe Swimming Hall
- Visits to Different Schools
- Escorial Zoo and Flower Park
- Liminka Bay Visitor Centre

## **Contents of Teaching**

- Me, home, family, living, food, clothes
- Greeting, saying “Thank you” and “Please”
- The alphabet and numerals
- Getting around and running errands
- Transportation, store, telephone
- Amount, price, time
- Weekdays, months, clock
- Colors and basic adjectives
- Body parts and illnesses
- Introduction to Finnish culture, e.g., public holidays and customs, and nature and environment that are important to the Finns.

## **Contents of Hearing Comprehension and Speaking**

- Finnish language pronunciation exercises
- Exercises on questions and answers (questions about themselves, everyday life, family, school, and feelings)
- Basic vocabulary: food, clothes, family, basic verbs, directional words, question words
- Time vocabulary words
- Expressing feelings
- Exercises especially on oral expression.

## **Reading and Reading Comprehension**

- Reading words, sentences, and short texts important in everyday life and school
- Capital and lower-case letters in the Finnish language
- The principle of phonetic regulation between letters and sounds
- Connecting phonemes with each other, and building syllables
- Pronunciation, and practicing especially phonemes not used in the pupil’s native language
- The correct sequential flow of the writing system
- Reading familiar words and sentences from the phoneme level and syllable level towards word level, sentence level, and text level.

## **Writing**

- Learning to write capital and lower-case letters
- Learning to write central phonetic features of the Finnish language (long and short vowels, single and double consonants, diphthongs)
- Practicing motor skills is also needed if fine motor skills are underdeveloped
- Writing with a computer may help develop motor skills
- Writing easy words according to dictation, copying words and sentences and later also producing them.

## ***2.2 Teaching Finnish as a Second Language***

Teaching follows the basics of the Basic Education Curriculum of Siikajoki Municipality for Finnish as a Second Language. The goals and evaluation of language skills are based on proficiency levels described in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). When teaching Finnish as a second language, the emphasis of preparatory education is on proficiency levels A.1.1 to A.1.3. As the Finnish language is both the object of and a tool for learning, teaching takes into consideration the contents, concepts, and vocabulary of other school subjects.

## ***2.3 Teaching Native Language***

The goal of teaching the pupil their own native language is to support and further the command of their native language, knowledge of their own cultural background, and the development of their cultural identity. When possible, native language teaching is organized for the pupil.

# **3. Teaching Arrangements**

## ***3.1 Pre-primary Education***

The preparatory pre-primary education group for children with immigrant background works together with the Municipal Educational Administration. Teaching is based on the Preparatory Education Curriculum of Siikajoki Municipal Educational Administration and the Pre-primary Education Curriculum of Siikajoki Educational Administration. Its operation requires cooperation between families, early childhood education and care, and the school.

## ***3.2 Basic Education***

The municipality of Siikajoki mainly offers 1 school year of preparatory education, but the duration can vary depending on the pupil. Depending on the skill level of the pupil, preparatory education can last up to 2 school years, or respectively, based on their own competence, the pupil can move to general education even sooner. To strengthen preparatory education, simultaneous teaching or division of groups into groups according to the pupils' age and skill level are used, when possible.

When a child is accepted as a pupil or shortly after that, the goal is to pair the pupil with a suitable teaching group or a class into which they are primarily integrated. The pupil's personal study plan acts as the basis of the integration.

After preparatory education, the pupil becomes a basic education pupil. During the transition phase, the pupil's study plan is revised and, if needed, proper support measures are planned. During the transition phase, cooperation between the preparatory class teacher, teacher of the receiving class, teacher of Finnish as a second language, and a student welfare representative is particularly important. The education path is guided to be continued in schools that focus on immigrant education because they are equipped to provide the best support measures for pupils with immigrant backgrounds.

## **4. Central Aspects of Teaching**

In preparatory education, the age and developmental stages, learning capacities and backgrounds, as well as the personal histories of the pupils vary greatly. Therefore, teaching is to take into consideration especially the following aspects related to differentiation and integration, cooperation, and student welfare.

### ***4.1 Study Plan and Study Program***

A study plan is a plan to execute the pupil's study program. Making a study plan requires enough knowledge on the pupil's capacities. A study plan is made not later than 3 months after the beginning of teaching. The teacher has a discussion with the parents and the pupil. Based on these discussions, the teacher creates a study plan. The study plan is revised and supplemented during the next parent-teacher meetings.

The study plan determines:

- The pupil's starting level
- The pupil's personal learning goals that are revised regularly
- Tracking of the pupil's progress
- The pupil's studies in their own group, and integration into basic education groups
- Arranging of personal guidance and other support measures, if needed, and
- The school subjects to be studied, lesson hours, and the content of teaching.

The study plan is a functioning tool for monitoring the pupil's progress and a good guidance when changing teachers. When the pupil is transferred into a completely Finnish basic education group, e.g., the pupil's capacities and the need for support are evaluated. The study plan can be found on the municipality of Siikajoki website. Close cooperation between the guardians and the school supports the integration of the whole family into the Finnish society. The study plan made together with the family is attached as part of the child's or adolescent's integration plan.

## ***4.2 Guidance Counselling***

Starting in preparatory education, guidance counselling supports the growth and development of the pupil in such way that they can further their own social maturity and develop knowledge and skills needed for planning their life. The pupil is guided towards handling schoolwork and assignments responsibly, using versatile working methods, and finding information from different sources. The pupil receives personal guidance to support their studies and choices and to help answer questions related to everyday life. Guidance counselling follows the guidance counselling goals defined in the Curricula of the municipality of Siikajoki and the schools of Siikajoki.

The pupil's safe transfer in transition phases is to be supported by cooperation between guidance counsellors, upper secondary school guidance counsellors, and teachers across school institutes and school levels.

Assertive guidance and support towards the learning paths of pupils with immigrant backgrounds requires flexible cooperation between all actors when a study plan is created to be part of the pupil's family's immigration plan.

## ***4.3 Differentiation of Teaching***

Differentiation ensures goal-directed learning for the pupil according to their personal study plan. Teaching is differentiated with choices regarding contents, varied working methods and teaching methods, and teaching arrangements (e.g., integration into Finnish basic education groups).

## ***4.4 Pupils with No Reading or Writing Skills***

The main emphasis of teaching pupils with insufficient or no reading or writing skills is on learning to read and write Finnish language. The planning and execution of teaching follows the Basic Education Curriculum of Siikajoki Municipality for Finnish as a Second Language.

When a curriculum is created, one must take into consideration how much time it takes to acquire and confirm reading and writing skills of the Finnish language. Lack of reading and writing skills mustn't prevent integration into skills and arts subjects.



## ***4.5 Integration***

Pupils in preparatory education start integrating into Finnish basic education groups in the beginning of their education. The integration starts mainly with skills and arts subjects and, as quickly as possible, with subjects in which the pupil has a strong previous knowledge base, such as a foreign language or mathematics. The pupil's personal study plan acts as the basis of the integration.

Integration supports the pupil's integration and sense of belonging into the school community and strengthens their Finnish language learning and subject competence. Integration into a group consisting of the pupil's peers improves the pupil's development as a whole. Integration is supported with motivation and encouragement towards the pupil. Integration also guides the pupil towards taking responsibility for their own learning.

Integration subjects, time, and teaching groups are decided by the preparatory class teacher or the pupil's integration class teacher and the principal of the school or their authorized representative. Integration requires constant cooperation between the preparatory class teacher and the basic education teachers. In grades 7 to 9, also a guidance counsellor monitors the implementation of integration. In the end, the principal is responsible for the implementation of integration. Especially at the transition phase, a planned cooperation between the sending and receiving actors is important.

Integration proceeds systematically while taking into consideration the pupil's previous knowledge and skills, and their study progress. The pupil's studies in basic education groups and level of integration are constantly evaluated. If the school providing preparatory education is not the pupil's local school, they can be integrated into their own local school if it's practical in terms of teaching arrangements and the pupil's further studies.

## **5. Cooperation between School and Home**

### ***5.1 Preparatory Education Class Teacher***

At the beginning of preparatory education, the teacher meets the pupil and their guardians. During these meetings, the teacher receives information about the pupil's previous schooling and the culture and customs of the family. The pupil and the guardian receive information about the Finnish school culture, teaching methods, pupil evaluation, and practices. The evaluation discussion focuses on how the pupil's school going has progressed in relation to the study plan goals, and the goals are updated. Information is conveyed on both sides also in prospective parents' nights. If needed, an interpreter is available for all meetings between the school and the guardians. Siikajoki mainly uses Pohjois-Suomen Tulkkipalvelu (Northern Finland Interpretation Service).

### ***5.2 Other Cooperation Actors***

During preparatory education, the pupil is taught by class teacher(s) or subject teacher(s), possibly a part-time special needs education teacher, and the pupil's native language teacher, in addition to the preparatory class teacher. Cooperation is important between the teachers teaching the pupil. In lower secondary education, the guidance counsellor's role is particularly important. Cooperation between teachers is also needed when the pupil transfers from pre-primary education to preparatory education, from preparatory education to basic education, and from preparatory education to upper secondary education. Cooperation actors include e.g., the municipality of Siikajoki Social Services, Ruukki Accommodation Center, Pohjois-Suomen Tulkkipalvelu (Northern Finland Interpretation Service), and [Ruukki Rural Institution](#).

## **6. Student Welfare**

Pupils in preparatory education are eligible for the school's student welfare. In the school, student welfare services consist of client work by school health care, school psychologists and/or school social workers. Student welfare is executed in cooperation with health services, social services, youth services, and other actors.

## **7. Plan for Using Disciplinary Educational Discussions and Disciplinary Actions, and for Related Procedures**

Discussion is the primary way of intervening with a pupil's inappropriate behavior. The goal of discussion is to ascertain the situation and find a solution together with the pupil and/or the parents. An interpreter may have to be used for the discussion. Depending on the situation, also the school principal or the school admin of the accommodation center can participate in the discussion. A pupil disrupting the classroom can be controllably removed from the room in which teaching is organized. In addition, to guarantee a peaceful learning environment, the pupil's right to participate in education can be denied for no longer than the duration of the rest of the school day if there's risk of compromising the safety of other pupils or people due to the pupil's violent or in other ways disruptive behavior. These matters are always agreed on with the principal based on the situation.

## **8. Working Methods**

Teaching utilizes working methods that are versatile and specific to different school subjects. The teacher selects working methods so that they diversely support the acquisition of knowledge and skills, the pupil's development as a learner, and provide opportunities to grow as a member of the school community. The skills of learning to learn, cooperation, and interaction are important.

Pupils from different school cultures may need significant amount of familiarization and practice in working in groups and pairs, collaborative learning, and on the other hand, in independent knowledge acquisition and independent working. Guiding the pupil towards independent knowledge acquisition,

evaluation, and cooperation are central to choosing the working methods for preparatory education. It's relevant to practice skills that help to navigate basic education studies despite the lack of language skills (e.g., techniques for searching for information from textbooks). Especially at the transition phase, the pupil must be familiarized with the new learning environment.

## **9. Distribution of Lesson Hours**

The planning of preparatory education aims at making the pupil accustomed to the study routines of their own age group. The curriculum basis of basic education of the municipality of Siikajoki is applied to the teaching of school subjects. A pupil in preparatory education may have more lesson hours than a pupil in equivalent basic education grade.

## **10. Evaluation**

Evaluation in preparatory education is guiding, supportive, individual, and versatile. Evaluation in preparatory education is based on the personal study plan made for the pupil and on the goals of preparatory education. Evaluation is done by the preparatory class teacher in cooperation with other teachers who are involved in the pupil's teaching. The pupil's prerequisites for self-evaluation are developed. Evaluation is to be based on versatile and continuous observation. Evaluation in preparatory education is verbal.

The guardians of the pupil must receive information about the principles, procedures, and methods of evaluation. The school can arrange parent information nights for all guardians or discussions between teachers and guardians. If needed, an interpreter is used for the meetings. During preparatory education, the pupil can receive an interim report card, as well. At the end of preparatory education, the pupil receives a participation certificate that shows the school subjects and their scopes, and the content of the education. The certificate verbally evaluates the pupil's Finnish skill levels and mathematical skills.