



Student welfare plan of the City of Helsinki Education Division

Helsinki

The logo for Helsinki, featuring the word "Helsinki" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a black outline that forms a speech bubble shape, with a pointed bottom and rounded top corners.

Helsinki

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1. Introduction

We provide all learners with an experience of a safe, equal and healthy learning environment where they have the opportunity to develop as people and active members of the community. Together with our learners and their guardians, we create conditions that support mental well-being and encourage physical activity and healthy lifestyles. We help our learners build relationships that respect diversity and understand the importance of caring for the members of the community. We succeed in these efforts through systematic student welfare work, which is steered by a student welfare plan in accordance with the Student Welfare Act (amended by Act 377/2022).

This plan describes how we carry out communal and individual student welfare, cooperation with learners and their guardians and cooperation with parties that support the well-being of learners in the City of Helsinki's pre-primary education, comprehensive schools and upper secondary education institutions. In addition to this, the plan describes our procedures for handling bullying, harassment, violence and crisis situations.

The preparation of the student welfare plan is based on the national core curricula and the regulation concerning student welfare in vocational education and training. We have drawn up the plan in cooperation with the staff of learning communities, student welfare services, learners and their guardians. The student welfare plan is part of the welfare plan for children and young people, which is included in the City of Helsinki's welfare plan. The student welfare plan is valid for one council period of office at a time and is reviewed when necessary.

The education provider's student welfare plan of the City of Helsinki covers nine different forms of education: pre-primary education, the trial for two-year pre-primary education, basic education, preparatory education for basic education, basic education for adults, general upper secondary education, general upper secondary education for

adults, preparatory education for an upper secondary qualification and vocational education and training (VET). The student welfare plan replaces the previous sections on student welfare included in curricula and is considered equal in status to a curriculum.

Here in the Education Division, we refer to those participating in pre-primary education as children, those participating in basic education as pupils and those participating in upper secondary education (general upper secondary education and VET) as students. When talking about all of these levels of education together, we use the term learner. In accordance with the Student Welfare Act, we use the term student welfare at all levels of education in this document. However, in everyday language, we still use the term pupil welfare in the context of pre-primary and basic education for the sake of clarity. When talking about pre-primary education units, comprehensive schools and upper secondary education institutions collectively, we use the term learning community.

As an education provider, the City of Helsinki Education Division is responsible for the implementation of the student welfare plan and reports on it to the Regional Cooperation Group for Student Welfare, which also performs the tasks of the education provider's student welfare steering group.

2. Student welfare

Student welfare means the promotion and maintenance of the good learning, psychological and physical health and social well-being of learners and activities that improve the preconditions for these in learning communities (section 3 of the Student Welfare Act). Learners are entitled to free student welfare that supports learning and prevents obstacles to learning, learning difficulties and other challenges related to studies as early as possible (section 6 of the Student Welfare Act). The learner’s interests take priority in student welfare work.

Student welfare is primarily preventive communal work. Communal student welfare is the shared task of all those who work in learning communities. Student welfare is implemented through systematic cooperation between parties operating under the Education Division and the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division and with learners, their guardians and, when necessary, other cooperation parties.

Learners are also entitled to individual student welfare services, which include maternity and child health clinic services in pre-primary education, school and student health care services and the services of school social workers and psychologists.

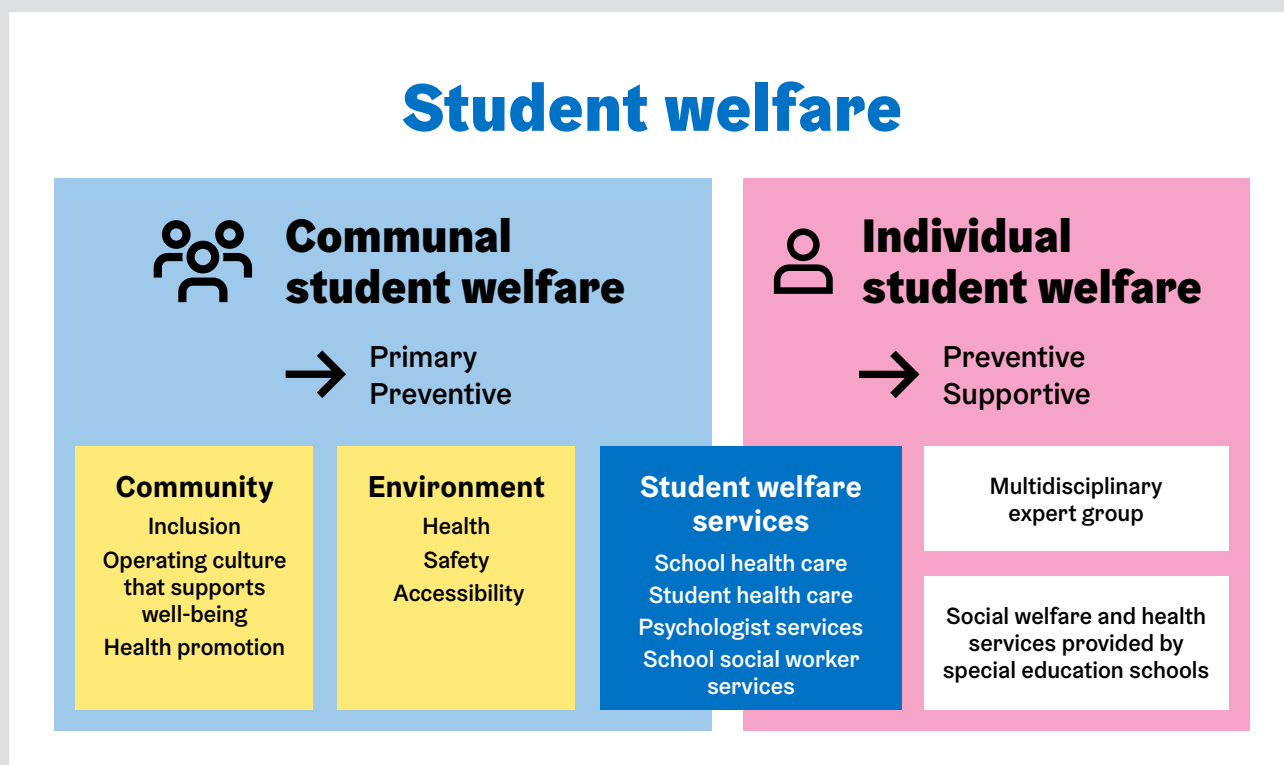


Figure 1. The student welfare system. (Source: Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare)

As an education provider, we are responsible for ensuring that learners and their guardians are aware of available student welfare services. Learning community and student

welfare staff have a duty to guide learners to the services that they need.

2.1. Responsibilities in the operational management of student welfare

The parties responsible for the operational management of student welfare are the Regional Cooperation Group for Student Welfare (which also performs the duties of the City of Helsinki Education Division's

student welfare steering group), communal student welfare groups specific to individual units or districts and individual multidisciplinary expert groups (Figure 2).

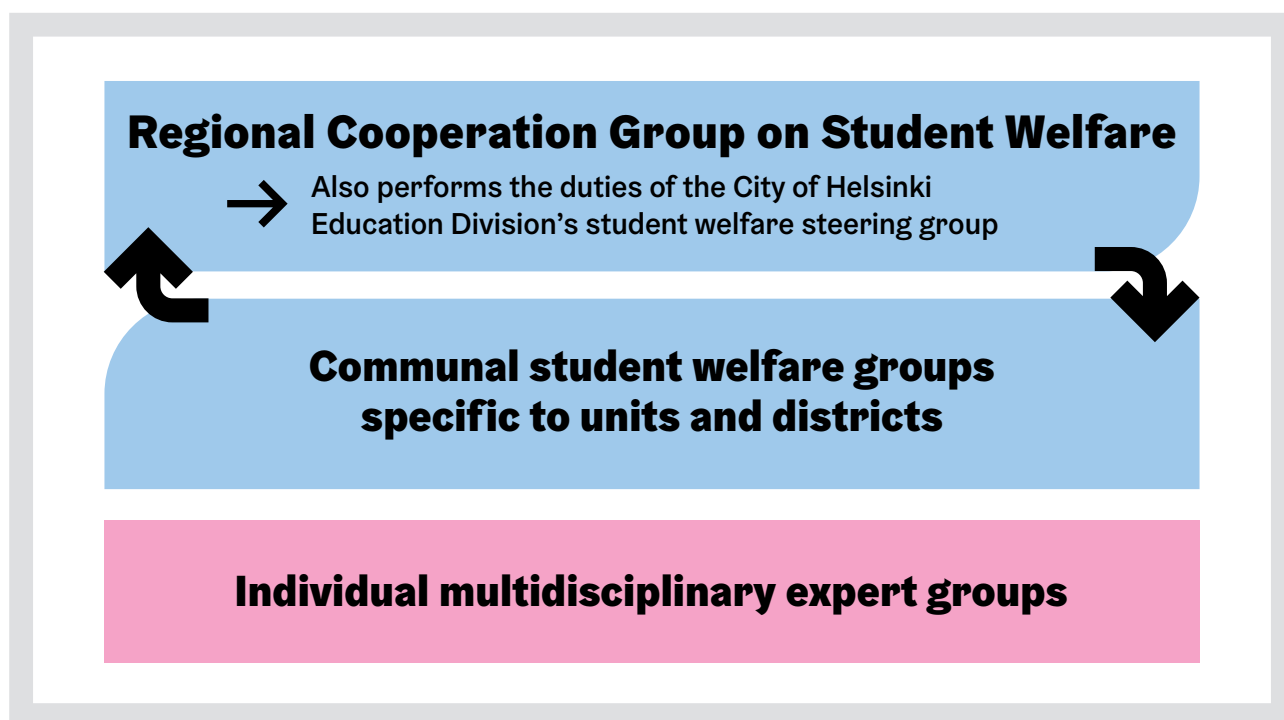


Figure 2. Parties responsible for the management and operation of student welfare.

In Helsinki, student welfare work is close, multidisciplinary cooperation that is based on the common goals of City divisions and clear cooperation structures. The Education Division provides school social worker and psychologist services, while the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division provides school and student health care services.

According to the Student Welfare Act (31 December 2013/1287), each wellbeing services county must have a regional cooperation group for student welfare and each education provider must have a student welfare steering group.

The Regional Cooperation Group for Student Welfare consists of representatives of education providers and the wellbeing services county. In Helsinki, the tasks of the Regional Cooperation Group for Student Welfare as defined in the Student Welfare Act (31 December 2013/1287) include the development and management of student welfare in the area. The Cooperation Group also monitors compliance with legislation and steers service areas in the development of student welfare practices and services.

The Regional Cooperation Group for Student Welfare prepares the regional student welfare plan, in addition to which the Cooperation Group is tasked with monitoring the implementation of the regional student welfare plan and evaluating the cooperation between student welfare services, education providers and other social welfare and health care services. The Cooperation Group also addresses cooperation issues in the wellbeing services county and between the education providers operating in its area.

The Regional Cooperation Group for Student Welfare carries out the tasks of the education provider's student welfare steering group, which include the development and management of student welfare. It is also tasked with managing the realisation of objectives for the entire Education Division and ensuring smooth cooperation with the services of the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division. The Cooperation Group also monitors the development of student welfare and compliance with legislation and steers service areas in the development of student welfare practices and services.

Communal student welfare groups specific to individual units or districts are responsible for planning, developing, implementing and evaluating student welfare at their own units in accordance with the education provider's student welfare plan. Communal student welfare groups are multidisciplinary groups that consist of representatives of various professions and carry out communal student welfare work.

Unit-specific communal student welfare groups monitor the realisation of communal and individual student welfare and report on it to the Regional Cooperation Group for Student Welfare. The consistency of the operating methods of individual units is ensured through cooperation between student welfare supervisors and the communal student welfare groups of individual units. To ensure that up-to-date information is conveyed to all relevant parties, the directors of daycare centres and the principals and education managers of schools, general upper secondary schools and Helsinki Vocational College meet regularly with student welfare supervisors. Helsinki Vocational College (Stadin AO) also has its own communal student welfare group, which ensures the consistency of student welfare work across all Stadin AO units and the effectiveness of network cooperation. The operations of communal student welfare groups are described in greater detail below in section 5.2.

Individual multidisciplinary expert groups are assembled when necessary to support the well-being, health or learning of an individual learner. The operations of multidisciplinary expert groups are described in greater detail below in section 6.2.

2.2. Evaluation and monitoring of the student welfare plan

This student welfare plan was prepared utilising a wide range of national, local and unit-specific information sources focusing on different age groups. These information sources are also utilised in the evaluation and development of the plan. The surveys and studies utilised include:

- questionnaire on the student welfare plan aimed at student welfare groups, learners and guardians
- the School Health Promotion study
- Koulun hyvinvointiprofiili
- TEAviisari
- site-specific summaries of extensive health examinations
- well-being surveys aimed at learners and guardians, focusing on specific schools and educational institutions
- surveys of general upper secondary school students in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area (PKS-kysely)
- customer experience surveys
- results of the health, safety and well-being checks of learning communities
- surveys conducted by the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) and the Finnish National Agency for Education
- surveys conducted by the National Education Evaluation Centre (FINEEC).

The content of this student welfare plan complies with the following laws and regulations:

- Student Welfare Act
- Basic Education Act
- Act on a Two-Year Pre-primary Education Trial
- Act on General Upper Secondary Education
- Act on Vocational Education and Training
- Act on Preparatory Education for an Upper Secondary Qualification
- Health Care Act
- Act on the Openness of Government Activities
- Act on the Status and Rights of Patients
- Act on the Status and Rights of Social Welfare Clients
- Government Decree on Maternity and Child Health Clinic Services, School and Student Health Services and Preventive Oral Health Services for Children and Youth 338/2011
- EU General Data Protection Regulation
- Data Protection Act.

3. Objectives of student welfare in the City of Helsinki Education Division

The Helsinki City Strategy 2021–2025 and the City of Helsinki Welfare Plan state that Helsinki is the most equitable and effective place to learn and that in Helsinki, every learner has the right to a safe learning path. The objective of the Welfare Plan is to reduce health and welfare disparities and reduce inequality. To this end the Welfare Plan defines six priorities for promoting health and welfare: mental well-being, leisure and recreation, physical activity, healthy lifestyles, good relations and a safe and beautiful city. In Helsinki, emphasis is placed on promoting the community cohesion and sense of togetherness of learners, strengthening participation and promoting physical activity as part of comprehensive well-being work.

In learning environments, the objectives and priorities of the City Strategy and the Welfare Plan are promoted through high-quality and effective student welfare work. Through this work, we support the building of an operating culture for the learning community that is based on inclusion, equality and social responsibility. We ensure that the operating culture supports the well-being and learning ability of learners. Through systematic work, we create a better foundation for the inclusion, hope, security and future of learners.

The City of Helsinki's student welfare is part of the promotion of well-being and health carried out in pre-primary education, basic education and upper secondary education. Helsinki's aim is to ensure that all of its daycare centres, schools and educational institutions are equally good, and we create the preconditions for this through goal-oriented well-being work. This ensures that all of our learners perceive themselves to be part of the community, feel safe and have the opportunity to grow up to their full potential. In addition to this, our aim is to ensure a smooth path from early childhood education to basic education and upper secondary education.

3.1. Objective and focus areas of student welfare in Helsinki

The City of Helsinki's student welfare focuses on the well-being of learners by clarifying service chains and access to care and treatment through cooperation between City divisions. The overall objectives of the Education Division's student welfare work include strengthening community cohesion and the compassionate interaction of learners and preventing loneliness.

In the communal student welfare work carried out in pre-primary and basic education, we also focus on the commitment to school and school attendance of learners and intervening in bullying. We emphasise the importance of emotional and interaction skills in supporting the well-being and learning of learners.

To this end we teach learners to recognise, regulate and process their emotions and strengthen their ability to listen, respect and anticipate the feelings, views and expressions of others. This way they learn to use emotions as a resource when interacting with others and to understand the importance of interaction skills as part of a safe society.

In upper secondary education, our aim is to strengthen the ability to study and future work ability of students by building upon the well-being and interaction skills of learners.

4. Assessment of overall student welfare needs and available student welfare services

The Regional Cooperation Group for Student Welfare ensures the adequacy of student welfare services by assessing overall student welfare needs. The assessment of overall needs includes the needs of learners and learning communities, the implementation of health examinations and staffing and the organisation of services within time limits. The assessment is carried out by the Regional Cooperation Group for Student Welfare and reviewed annually. Based on the assessment, the Regional Cooperation Group for Student Welfare plans student welfare and allocates student welfare resources based on needs.

4.1. Assessment of overall student welfare needs

The assessment of overall needs includes the human resources needed for individual and communal student welfare work and for student welfare cooperation. The assessment of overall need takes into account the number of education units and the numbers of pupils and students and the special characteristics of the operating environment, for example. It also takes into account the numbers and proportions of learners of different ages who need intensified and special support and of foreign-language speakers.

The assessment makes comprehensive use of local monitoring data on the health, well-being and living conditions of learners (section 2.2), which is also provided by learners, guardians, teaching staff, student welfare professionals and network partners.

4.2. Available student welfare services

Student welfare services are provided by school social workers, psychologists and maternity and child health clinic, school health care and student health care nurses and doctors. In upper secondary education, student welfare services are also supplemented by mental health and substance abuse nurses. Student welfare staff engage in close cooperation with

each other, teaching and counselling staff, the other staff of educational institutions, learners and their guardians. In addition to this, student welfare staff also engage in network cooperation with other operators and, when necessary, consult other social welfare and health care services and refer learners and their guardians to them.

Numbers of learners per employee

	Pre-primary education	Basic education	Upper secondary education
School social workers	670	670	670
Psychologists	780	780	780
School nurses	320	460	570
Doctors	2,270 (0.5 positions for pre-primary education)	2,100	1,800

Table 1. Numbers of learners per employee in accordance with the Student Welfare Act and the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare's recommendations.

Person years in student welfare

	Pre-primary education	Basic education	Upper secondary education
School social workers	8	80	56
Psychologists	3	62	38
School nurses	4.25	116	83.12
Lääkärit	0.5	13.68 (School and student health care total)	13.68 (School and student health care total)

Table 2. Person years in student welfare.

School social workers support learners and their guardians through social work methods at both communal and individual level. School social workers provide support in situations where a learner is facing challenges that affect their learning or studies, social relationships or general life management, for example. The work is aimed at increasing the learner's resources and finding positive solutions by analysing the learner's situations.

The work of school social workers focuses on the everyday life management, functioning and relationships of learners and is aimed at promoting mental health and preventing substance abuse. In addition to these, the work includes consultations, promotion of the well-being of learning communities and cooperation with teaching staff, families and various stakeholders.

School psychologists carry out work that promotes mental health, well-being, studies and learning and prevents problems. The individual and client work of school psychologists includes investigating and assessing issues related to the learner's development, learning and studies. This may include psychological evaluations of learners and related procedures and individual support and counselling for problems related to emotional development, social interaction or learning. In addition to these, the work includes consultations, promotion of the well-being of learning communities and cooperation with teaching staff, families and various stakeholders.

School nurses monitor the growth and development of learners and monitor and promote their ability to study and well-being. School nurses also carry out the regular health examinations of pupils, which serve as the basis of student health care services. The examinations involve comprehensively assessing the physical and psychosocial health, well-being and learning of pupils.

The extensive health examinations carried out by school health care services in 1st, 5th and 8th grade also involve assessing the well-being of the pupil's parents and entire family. In addition to these, the tasks of school nurses include health guidance, birth control and sexual counselling, mental health promotion and substance abuse prevention.

The special support consultations carried out by school health care services involve assessing the need for special support and examinations and referring the learner for further examinations or follow-up treatment, when necessary. Any social welfare and health care services that learners need are primarily provided by their local health station and the health station closest to their educational institution.

The health examinations carried out by school nurses involve assessing the learner's state of health from the perspective of coping with studies, providing the learner with information about available health care and student welfare services and examining the learner's health, life situation, lifestyle, social networks and academic performance together with the learner as part of their overall well-being.

School doctors work closely with school nurses. The work of a school and student health care doctors include the extensive health examinations carried out in 1st, 5th and 8th grade of basic education and the 1st and 2nd years of upper secondary education. School and student health care doctors also assess issues related to growth, adolescence and posture and, when necessary, other medical problems identified during the health examinations.

School and student health care doctors also carry out special support needs assessments, which involve assessing issues related to learning, mental health or other medical problems that affect study progress. Other medical challenges and urgent matters are handled at health stations.

Maternity and child health clinic services provided by nurses and doctors are a part of the student welfare services of children of pre-primary education age. Student welfare support can also be provided by maternity and child health clinic psychologist.

5. Communal student welfare



In Helsinki, we believe that a healthy and safe learning environment is a prerequisite for learning and well-being. Communal student welfare means preventive communal work that supports the entire learning community. It is the primary form of student welfare.

With communal student welfare, we promote the community's operating culture and the individual's experience of equal membership in their community. Through communal student welfare work, we also contribute to measures for promoting learning, health and well-being, interaction, inclusion, the health and safety of the environment and accessibility.

Communal student welfare in support of well-being is targeted at the entire learning community, but it can also be targeted at certain grades or groups, such as those starting or finishing pre-primary education or basic education, or on the basis of identified issues related to a specific group. Examples of the focus areas of communal student welfare are provided in Figure 3 below.



Figure 3. Examples of the focus areas of communal student welfare.
(Source: Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare)

5.1. Areas of responsibility of and participation in communal student welfare

Communal student welfare is steered by various types of information on the well-being of the community and the environment. We utilise a variety of national, local and unit-specific information sources in the monitoring well-being and safety (section 2.2).

Responsibility for the development, planning and implementation of communal student welfare is shared between everyone working in the learning community. Everyone has a duty to promote the well-being of learners and the community as a whole and cooperation with guardians. Primary responsibility for the well-being of the community lies with the staff of the entire learning community, especially teachers. Responsibility for implementing communal student welfare rests with daycare centres directors, principals and education managers. Individual employees take health and well-being perspectives into account in all everyday activities: the content, methods and practical arrangements of teaching as well as other activities, such as play, recess and meals.

Student welfare staff, meaning school psychologists, social workers, nurses and doctors, also participate in communal student welfare work. Communal student welfare work can include group building during lessons, running themed groups, organising targeted activities for groups of learners and the everyday encounters and events of the entire learning community, for example. Communal student welfare work is also contributed to by multilingual instructors, school coaches and fixed-term employees operating with special government grants, among others. Other employees working at educational institutions, such as site managers and kitchen and cleaning staff, also participate in the implementation of communal student welfare.

The communal well-being work of the learning community is planned, implemented and evaluated in collaboration with learners, guardians and other authorities and operators promoting the well-being of learners. The participation and consultation of learners and guardians is an integral part of communal student welfare. Learners have a duty to promote the well-being of their own learning community and to support and encourage all members of the community to improve well-being. All learners must have the opportunity to participate in the development of communal student welfare practices and to express their opinions on issues concerning learners and the learning community.

5.2. Unit-specific communal student welfare groups

In Helsinki, every school and educational institution operating under the Education Division has a unit-specific communal student welfare group and every pre-primary education unit has a district-specific communal student welfare group that steers communal student welfare. The key task of these communal student welfare groups is to plan, implement and evaluate student welfare at their own units. In addition to this, the groups also evaluate and develop their own operations on a term-by-term basis. The work of the communal student welfare groups is community-oriented and preventive. The groups convene systematically and frequently enough to be able to perform the tasks assigned to them. The groups process matters at a general and communal level and never process matters concerning an individual learner.

Here in the Education Division, we consider it important that the work of the communal student welfare groups is systematic and planned. Their work is based on up-to-date information on the state of the learning community. Meeting times, planning dates and any other joint events are agreed upon at the beginning of the school year for the entire school term or year. The timetables are also communicated to learning community staff, learners and guardians. The meetings of communal student welfare groups are based on prepared agendas, which are sent to the staff in advance. The meeting memorandums of the communal student welfare groups are not subject to any specific storage requirements because they do not contain any confidential or individual information. The meeting memorandums are accessible to all staff.

In pre-primary education, district-specific communal student welfare groups are headed by early childhood education district managers and include the managers of daycare centres in the area, student welfare staff, itinerant early childhood education special needs teachers, representatives of social welfare and health care services and other district-specific cooperation partners. The groups meet at least twice a year.

In basic education and upper secondary education, each unit-specific communal student welfare group is headed by a principal, vice principal or education manager responsible for student welfare. The groups also include student welfare staff and other persons agreed upon on a unit-by-unit basis, such as special needs teachers and guidance counsellors. The groups draw up a plan for the implementation of communal student welfare, which is included in the unit's action plan or year clock. The implementation and evaluation of the plan are reported on annually in the unit's annual report. In addition to this, the groups' meetings are systematically and regularly attended by representatives of learners and guardians and, if necessary, external cooperation partners. Unit-specific communal student welfare groups meet regularly during the school year and in accordance with agreed upon practices at least once a month.

Information on the realisation of student welfare is gained from the results of School Health Promotion studies and other surveys and from feedback received from learners, guardians and staff. This feedback and statistical information on student welfare is used by the communal student welfare groups to develop their operations.

Learners, guardians, staff and the necessary cooperation partners are kept informed of the well-being work carried out in accordance with the student welfare plan. City-level communication is the responsibility of the Regional Cooperation Group for Student Welfare. Daycare centres, schools and educational institutions also communicate

about their own student welfare services and the operations of their communal student welfare groups through their own communication channels. Information about the key results of the School Health Promotion study and other surveys is provided at city and unit level.

5.3. Measures for ensuring a healthy, safe and thriving learning community

A healthy, safe and thriving learning environment is an essential prerequisite for the healthy growth, development, ability to study and other well-being of learners. All the members of our learning community contribute to the health and safety of our learning community through their own actions. A thriving and safe learning community encourages learning, attendance and the establishment of social relationships.

A healthy, safe and thriving learning environment is built upon the well-being of the learners, the well-being of the staff and the physical learning environment. The building of such a learning environment is promoted through statutory (Health Care Act 1326/2010) inspections. The multidisciplinary implementation of these inspections and the division of tasks and responsibilities between different operators are decided by the Regional Cooperation Group for Student Welfare. In Helsinki, the multidisciplinary inspections of learning communities are detailed in the [cooperation practice model](#).

Inspections are carried out every three years as multidisciplinary cooperation between different authorities and parties, and the rectification of the deficiencies identified in the inspections is monitored annually. The inspections also cover the self-supervision of units, requiring plans intended to promote safety and well-being to be updated and processed by the learning community annually.

The inspections carried out in cooperation with the authorities consist of several stages that involve evaluating the physical, psychological and social conditions at the unit. The inspections focus on things such as the health and safety of facilities and the well-being of the community.

The multidisciplinary inspection of the health and safety of the educational environment and the well-being of the community is a task assigned to several different authorities. The rectification of any deficiencies identified in the inspections is monitored annually. In the following subsections, we also describe other measures by which we build healthy, safe and thriving learning communities.

5.3.1. Absence prevention, systematic monitoring and intervention

A sense of security and community cohesion, the respectful treatment and consideration of learners, practising emotional and interaction skills and intervening in disrespectful behaviour contribute to learners' commitment to their school and prevent absences.

The support for learning ability and well-being offered to every learner strengthens the learner's experience of agency, inclusion and dignity, thus increasing their willingness to participate in studies. We also support the school attendance and commitment to studies of learners through cooperation between teaching and student welfare staff and regular cooperation with guardians.

In basic education, we have built a model for a committed school community, which is based on providing learners with the feeling that they can influence, make choices, keep up and be accepted as who they are. These factors have been found to strengthen the learner's commitment to the learning community. At the same time, absences are monitored systematically and intervened in at an early stage. Whenever concerns about absences arise, it is essential to immediately investigate them in cooperation with guardians. In upper secondary education, we employ the 'steps of support' operating model, according to which we intervene in absences in a multidisciplinary manner and strive to prevent learners' studies from being delayed.

It has been found that prolonged absences from the learning community are often a symptom of a factor that is endangering the learner's development. The reasons for absences can include issues related to learning, physical or mental health, the learning community, friends or challenges at home or related to parenting. Increased absences hinder a learner's learning and sense of community cohesion and inclusion, thus increasing the risk of their study path being interrupted and of social exclusion.

The responsibility for monitoring a learner's absences lies with the teacher, homeroom teacher, the teacher assigned to the student and other employees participating in the learner's education. Absences are discussed with the learner and, if the learner is underage, their guardian to determine their causes. Employees are responsible for consulting student welfare staff at an early stage if a learner starts accumulating absences. If necessary, the employee refers the learner to student welfare services or assembles a multidisciplinary expert group to investigate the situation.

At the City of Helsinki Education Division, we monitor absences at all levels of education. Absences are also monitored by unit, site and group. We have various guidelines on how to prevent and intervene in absences at different levels of education.

In pre-primary education, measures related to absences are detailed in the [levels of addressing absences](#) (only available in Finnish). In pre-primary education, absences are dependent on guardians.

In basic education, measures related to absences are detailed in the [absence prevention handbook](#) (only available in Finnish). Measures related to absences are also described in local curricula, sections 5.1 Shared responsibility for the school day and 5.6 Matters decided upon locally. School-specific solutions, the division of tasks and responsibilities and other practical matters are specified in school action plans.

In general upper secondary education, measures related to absences are described in the [levels of support in general upper secondary education](#).

In vocational education and training, instructions and measures related to absences, suspension of studies, qualification-specific health requirements and other prerequisites for studies are detailed for the staff in the [Stadin AO Operations Manual](#) (only available in Finnish). For learners and guardians, more information is available on the [Stadin AO website](#) (in Finnish).

5.3.2. Prevention of and intervention in the use of tobacco products and other intoxicating substances

Learning communities are intoxicant-free operating environments. Learning communities engage in substance abuse prevention to support the intoxicant-free lifestyles of learners. In addition to this, we also work to reduce the harmful impacts of intoxicants and problematic intoxicant use. Intoxicants include intoxicating substances such as alcohol, drugs, medicines, nicotine and tobacco products. Our substance abuse prevention plan also covers the prevention and reduction of harmful gambling.

Substance abuse prevention is part of the communal student welfare of learning communities. Substance abuse prevention means activities aimed at reducing the use of intoxicants and the negative health, social and communal impacts of the use of intoxicants. It must be based on monitoring the use of intoxicants and the resulting harmful impacts, available scientific evidence and good practices. The Education Division has clear guidelines for substance abuse prevention and intervention, which are known to all staff, learners and guardians. The implementation of substance abuse prevention is planned and carried out by the staff of the learning community and communal student welfare groups. As part of substance abuse prevention, communal student welfare groups can also engage in cooperation with other partners (such as the Substance Abuse Outpatient Clinic, the Youth Station, Klaari Helsinki and Ehyt ry).

The substance abuse prevention plans of learning communities are included in pre-primary education guidelines, basic education action plans, [Stadin AO's plans for supporting student well-being](#) and [general upper secondary schools' plans for supporting student well-being](#). Substance abuse prevention plans are drawn up utilising a [guide](#) aimed at the City of Helsinki's schools and educational institutions.

6. Individual student welfare



The purpose of individual student welfare is to provide individual support and guidance to a learner when necessary. It involves monitoring and promoting the learner's overall health, well-being, inclusion and learning, preventing problems and providing early support. Teachers play a key role in identifying the need for support.

Individual student welfare means maternity and child health clinic services, school and student health care services, services provided by school social workers and psychologists as part of student welfare and multidisciplinary individual student welfare services provided to individual learners. The extensive health examinations carried out by school and student health care services, other regular health examinations and special support consultations are also part of individual student welfare. Individual student welfare is subject to regulations concerning disclosure of, access to and confidentiality of information.

Individual student welfare is always based on the learner's consent, and the support is planned taking into account the individual circumstances, resources and needs of the learner. The learner's inclusion and opinions are taken into account in the measures and solutions in accordance with their age and level of development. The aim is to ensure interaction that values the learner and their opinions and builds trust and the learner's independence in matters related to student welfare.

We must provide learners with the opportunity to engage in a personal discussion with a student welfare psychologist or social worker within seven learning community working days of the learner requesting it. In urgent cases, we will provide an opportunity for such a discussion on the same or following working day. A learner must also be provided with the opportunity for a private discussion at the request of their guardian or other person, unless the request concerns counselling or guidance provided by the person who made the request or if organising the discussion is for some other reason evidently unnecessary. (Section 15 of the Student Welfare Act.)

In pre-primary and basic education, the well-being and learning of each learner is primarily monitored by their teacher. In general upper secondary education, primary responsibility for monitoring learners' well-being and study progress lies with their homeroom teacher, while in vocational education and training, the responsibility lies with the students' designated teacher. When a teacher or other learning community staff become concerned about a learner's situation, the matter should immediately be discussed with the learner and, if the learner is underage, their guardian. After this, it is possible to consult a school social worker, psychologist or nurse, for example.

Student welfare experts can also be consulted anonymously about concerning situations. Multidisciplinary guidance on how to proceed can also be provided anonymously. However, before consulting, it is good idea to discuss the matter with the learner and, if necessary, their guardian. If the situation is serious, the learner is informed that due to the severity of the matter, student welfare staff will be contacted and provided with the information necessary to assess support needs.

Learners have the right to receive sufficient support and guidance to prevent and eliminate difficulties related to their studies and development based on the assessment of a student welfare worker. If necessary, the learner must be referred to other student welfare services and/or support services provided by other parties.

We take into account the independent status of the learner as a student welfare client in situations where they are mature enough to assess and assume independent responsibility for the matter under consideration. If the learner wishes to prohibit the participation of their guardians in the processing of the matter or the disclosure of information on the matter to their guardians, social welfare or health care professionals will assess whether the child is capable of making the necessary decisions on the basis of their age and level of development. There is no age limit defined in legislation concerning a child's ability to make decisions concerning themselves. The assessment is always carried out by a professional on a case-by-case basis.

Individual student welfare services provided are recorded in a client record by student welfare staff.

6.1. Special features of individual student welfare

6.1.1. Practices concerning notifications regarding special diets or medication

We provide special diet meals based on medical grounds to learners in pre-primary education, basic education, general upper secondary education and vocational education and training organised by the City of Helsinki. Educational institutions must be notified of special diets using a dedicated form. If necessary, a medical certificate shall be attached to the notification. No medical certificate is required if the child or young person follows a religious or vegetarian diet, for example.

Notifications for these diets are submitted using the same special diet notification form. ([Instructions for special diets](#) and [the special diet manual](#))

In pre-primary, basic and upper secondary education, pharmacotherapy is implemented utilising [the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health's Safe pharmacotherapy guide](#) (available in Finnish and Swedish). As a general rule, pharmacotherapy is carried out by a health care professional.

Pharmacotherapy prescribed by a doctor and administered naturally or injected under the skin can be administered by a person who has not been trained in pharmacotherapy. In this case, the administration of pharmacotherapy is based on the employee's consent, induction, additional training and authorisation issued by a doctor. The learner's guardians must provide the educational institution with clear and simple written instructions on the dosage and other treatment instructions and information on their possible effects on care. Guardians must ensure that the administration of the learner's pharmacotherapy is agreed upon with student health care and the staff of the learning community.

6.1.2. Practices regarding the assessments of pupil performance and well-being provided by teachers for the extensive health examinations (grades 1, 5 and 8) at school (including consent)

With the consent of the pupil's guardian, the extensive health examinations include an assessment of the pupil's learning, development and well-being at school provided by their teacher. The assessment must include the information necessary to assess the need for health care, medical care or support and to organise and implement it. Basic education in Helsinki follows the instructions of the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) ([THL Pupil's learning and well-being at school form](#), only available in Finnish).

The practical implementation of the examinations is agreed upon on a school-by-school basis by student welfare. Matters related to the use of the above-mentioned form, such as access to the form and timetables, are discussed at schools together with school health care services and the teachers or homeroom teachers of the classes undergoing the examinations.

6.1.3. Providing necessary student welfare in connection with disciplinary actions or the exclusion of a learner from studies

When it comes to planning, organising and making decision about education, priority must always be given to the best interests of the learner. Those participating in education are entitled to a safe learning environment where they can work in peace and progress in their studies unimpeded. A learner who disrupts teaching, otherwise violates the order of the learning community or acts with intent to deceive in basic education and upper secondary education may be ordered to undergo disciplinary action as laid down in legislation or reprimanded in ways defined in legislation. As an education provider, we must ensure that a learner who has been ordered to undergo disciplinary action or a learner who has been excluded from teaching is provided with the necessary student welfare support in connection with the disciplinary action or after it. The organisation of the necessary student welfare is agreed upon in cooperation with the learners, guardians and learning community staff. A plan will also be drawn up for the learner to support their return to education.

6.2. Multidisciplinary expert group

We assemble a multidisciplinary expert group on a case-by-case basis to support a learner when the early assessment and tackling of their situation requires experts from different fields. In particular in situations requiring multidisciplinary cooperation between teaching staff and student welfare professionals, assembling a multidisciplinary expert group facilitates the provision of smooth and timely support. The group is assembled by a member of teaching or student welfare staff who has become concerned about the learner's situation. The members of a multidisciplinary expert group consist of the persons required to process the matter, who are invited into the group with the learner's or, if the learner is underage, their guardian's consent. A multidisciplinary expert group should especially include the learner's teacher or homeroom teacher, as they are usually the most familiar with the learner's everyday studying-related problems. The composition of the groups is based on individual consideration, the matter at hand and the expertise required to tackle it.

If necessary, external experts or people close to the learner can also be invited to participate in the group.

Multidisciplinary expert group meetings that involve the matters of an individual learner are documented in a student welfare report. In basic and upper secondary education, the student welfare report is recorded under the student welfare report (opiskeluhoitokertomus) section in Wilma. In pre-primary education, student welfare reports are recorded in the Efficia client database.

If information contained in a student welfare report is disclosed to a third party upon request, the recipient of the information must be recorded in the document along with the information that was disclosed and the reason for the disclosure. The functioning and exchange of information of a multidisciplinary expert group must be ensured especially during transitions, such as when a learner proceeds from basic education to upper secondary education.

The meeting of a multidisciplinary expert group begins with the appointment of the person in charge of recording the information necessary for the organisation and implementation of individual student welfare in the student welfare report. The report is drawn up in a continuous format, proceeding in chronological order. The report shall include the following information:

- the name, personal identity code, municipality of residence and contact details of the individual learner and, if the learner is underage, the name and contact details of their guardian or other legal representative
- the date of the entry and the person making the entry and their professional or official position, the persons attending the meeting and their positions, subject matter and initiator
- measures taken during the assessment of the learner's situation, such as assessments, examinations and studies
- measures taken, such as cooperation with various parties and previous and current support measures
- information on the processing of the matter in the group's meeting, the decisions made and a plan for their implementation and the parties responsible for implementation and monitoring.

Student welfare reports form a student welfare register. The party responsible for instructions related to the processing of personal data and maintaining the student welfare register is the Education Division. Any information entered in the student welfare register concerning an individual learner or other private person is confidential. (Section 21 of the Student Welfare Act.)

6.2.1. Process description of multidisciplinary work in individual student welfare

The process description of multidisciplinary work in the City of Helsinki’s individual student welfare activities describes the multidisciplinary work carried out between teachers and other professionals in pre-primary, basic and upper secondary education.

The process description is based on mapping the learner’s overall situation, timely support and systematic multidisciplinary individual student welfare work within the framework of the Student Welfare Act (section 2). A systematic and learner-oriented approach supports the building of an inclusive operating culture for the learning community, in which the learning community is suitable for every learner and each learner receives support at an early stage. Transitions between different levels of education have been found to be particularly challenging for learners who need support. Multidisciplinary expert group work ensures a smooth transition and commitment to studies through the continuation of timely support. ([Process description of multidisciplinary work](#), only available in Finnish)

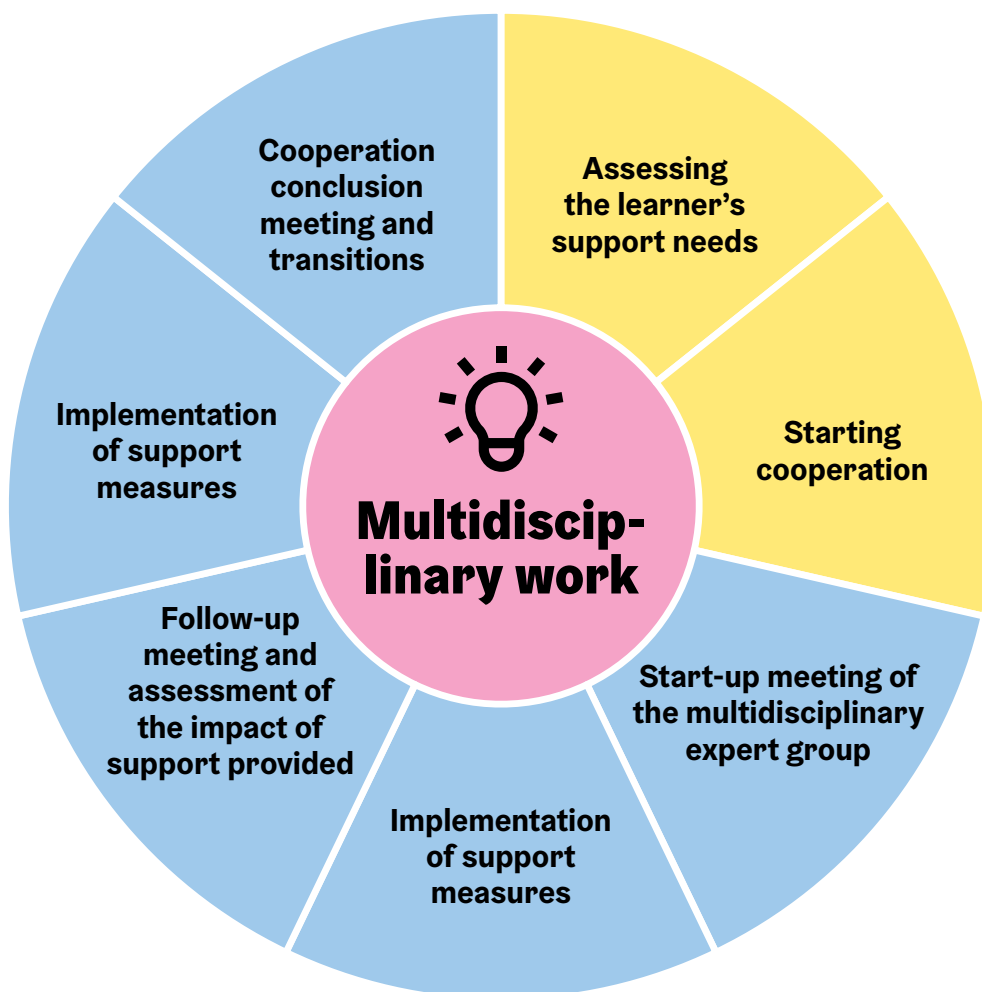


Figure 4. Process description of multidisciplinary work in individual student welfare.

6.3. Confidentiality and disclosure of information

To ensure cooperation and trust, the City will always primarily try to obtain consent for the disclosure of confidential information concerning a learner from the learner or their guardian. The obligation of non-disclosure notwithstanding, parties participating in the organisation and implementation of a learner's individual student welfare have the right to obtain from each other and disclose to each other and to the authority responsible for student welfare any information that is necessary for the organisation and implementation of individual student welfare. In addition to this, they have the right to obtain from and disclose to each other and the learner's teacher, principal and education provider essential information necessary for the appropriate organisation of the learner's teaching. The disclosing party must consider whether the information is essential for ensuring the safety of the learner or other learners, for example. The information to be disclosed can concern a learner's illness that must be taken into account in teaching situations, among other things.

If the learner transfers to an educational institution run by another education provider, the previous education provider must request consent from the learner or, if necessary, their guardian, to disclose to the other education provider confidential information recorded in the student welfare register that is necessary to ensure the continuity of student welfare. On the other hand, information that is essential for organising teaching is disclosed to other education providers without delay regardless of confidentiality. Similar information can also be provided at the request of the new education provider.

More information about the confidentiality of student welfare is provided in the [Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare's guide on multidisciplinary student welfare](#), chapter 6 (in Finnish).

7. Cooperation with learners, guardians, those working in learning communities and parties supporting the well-being of learners

One of the key strategic objectives of the Education Division is to strengthen the well-being of learning communities. We take this objective into consideration in all decision-making and solutions that affect the everyday lives of learners. Our decision-making and solutions are steered by the student welfare plan.

Student welfare is planned and implemented in active cooperation with learners, their guardians, the staff of learning communities and parties that support well-being. We ensure the competence of the entire learning community's personnel in communal student welfare through regular induction and training.



7.1. Cooperation with learners and their guardians

We promote the well-being and learning of learners through cooperation with their guardians. We follow procedures that have been jointly agreed upon by the learning community in cooperation with guardians. The inclusion of learners and their guardians must be reflected in all student welfare operations. These operations are based on building trust and respectful interaction. Cooperation is carried out at both individual and communal level, taking into account the interests of the learner. The importance of this cooperation is emphasised particularly during transitions between different levels of education and in the planning of support in learning and schoolwork. The cooperation is carried out taking into account the diversity of families and individual support needs.

The inclusion of learners is central to all the work and operational planning of the learning community. Inclusion promotes community cohesion and well-being and strengthens learners' commitment to their studies, the rules of the learning community and responsible interaction. The impacts of operations and work on learners must be assessed in all operational and work planning. In addition to this, the fact that the learner's interests take priority must also be taken into account.

Learners and their guardians participate in the planning and development of student welfare. Communal student welfare groups and the boards of schools and educational institutions regularly include learner and guardian members. Learners' and their guardians' views on operations are regularly examined through surveys and guardians' evenings, for example.

This facilitates the evaluation and development of student welfare. In addition to this, cooperation with guardians can be carried out through parents' associations.

In line with the City's well-being and health promotion objectives, an important objective of communal student welfare is to strengthen the inclusion of different population groups in society and the interaction between people for the purpose of preventing tensions. Community-wide shared activities that guardians also participate in increase positive interactions between people and their sense of community belonging. Cooperation helps prevent the emergence of unwanted group phenomena.

The involvement of guardians promotes community cohesion, supports the networking of guardians and participation in the activities and development of the learning community. The involvement of guardians takes place in the structures of the learning community, such as planning and evaluation activities and cooperation, events for guardians, community events and learner-specific discussions. Accessibility, multilingualism and the participation opportunities of guardians must be taken into account when organising joint events.

Our interaction with guardians is open, clear, systematic, regular and equal. In pre-primary education, communication with guardians is carried out by teachers via email and daily encounters. In basic and upper secondary education, we use the electronic information system Wilma.

At the beginning of the school year, we inform learners and their guardians about the implementation of student welfare as well as the procedures and information processing related to the handling of individual learners' affairs. Our communication methods include unit-specific guides, bulletins, websites, other electronic communication channels and events for guardians. The aforementioned information must be readily available at all times.

If concerns arise about a learner's situation or if it seems that a learner might need individual student welfare support, we contact their guardian without delay. In such acute, difficult or otherwise sensitive matters, the guardian is primarily contacted by phone or by scheduling a personal meeting. In communication with guardians, we take into account the learner's wishes, their level of development and the severity of the matter (section 4).

Guardians must ensure that the learning community has the necessary information relevant to organising teaching. Guardians are responsible for regularly monitoring the progress of their child's studies and the communication channels of the learning community. In basic and upper secondary education, guardians are responsible for monitoring Wilma and providing explanations for their underage child's absences without delay. Guardians should not hesitate to contact their child's teacher or homeroom teacher in the event of any changes in their child's life situation that affect their participation in teaching or the progress of their studies. Guardians must provide their children with guidance on good life management, such as adequate sleep, food and coordination of studies and leisure time.

7.2. Cooperation with those working in learning communities

Student welfare staff, teachers and other operators in learning communities work together to build a community and operating culture that supports the learning and well-being of learners. In individual student welfare, teaching and student welfare staff plan and implement learning support together, when necessary. In basic education, measures to support learning are implemented not only by class teachers, special needs teachers and subject teachers, but also by special needs assistants and school coaches, among others. In upper secondary education, learners' commitment to studies is also promoted by exercise coaches, for example. In addition to these, learning communities can also include various other personnel, such as everyday instructors, youth workers and multilingual instructors. Their work contributes significantly to the objectives

of an inclusive learning community aimed at promoting commitment to studies and strengthening attendance and community cohesion.

7.2.1. Multidisciplinary student welfare cooperation in the context of intensified and special support and flexible basic education

In pre-primary and basic education, support in learning and schoolwork consists of general, intensified and special support. Special support can also be provided in vocational education and training, where necessary. In general upper secondary education, learners can be provided with special needs education and learning support. Planning comprehensive learning support for a learner involves close cooperation between student welfare staff and a special needs teacher. The support

provided to learners is flexible and planned for the long term, and it can be adapted when necessary. Support is provided as soon as the need for it arises and for as long as is, at the level and in the form necessary.

Flexible basic education is provided at four Finnish-language and one Swedish-language comprehensive schools in Helsinki. Flexible basic education is implemented in accordance with regulations concerning basic education and the national core curriculum for basic education, and flexible basic education pupils are provided with student welfare services by their own schools. If a flexible basic education pupil has external support networks, the role of student welfare in the pupil's affairs is assessed at school. When transitioning to upper secondary education, the pupil's information is transferred in accordance with agreed upon operating models in the context of discretionary admission, for example.

7.2.2. Multidisciplinary student welfare cooperation in the context of hospital school

If necessary, student welfare staff can be involved in the matters of learners in hospital school and in transfer negotiations concerning a learner transferring to hospital school or returning to the learning community, for example. Communal student welfare is carried out in hospital school in the context of group building, for example. Where necessary, individual student welfare is implemented through multidisciplinary cooperation with specialised medical care and other operators.

7.2.3. Multidisciplinary student welfare cooperation during transitions, in the context of upper secondary workshop activities and in the planning of further studies

Special attention is paid to the continuation of support during transitions, meaning when the learner proceeds from pre-primary education to basic education, from basic education to upper secondary education and from upper secondary education to further studies, and when the learner transfers from one learning community to another. Guidance and open cooperation with the learner and their guardian are emphasised in all exchanges of information related to transitions.

Pedagogical expertise and multidisciplinary cooperation between teachers, other support professionals and student welfare are important for identifying and assessing support needs and for planning and implementing support. The professionals participating in the cooperation are selected on a case-by-case basis.

Where necessary, student welfare staff take care of the transfer of their own clients' student welfare information during transitions. The information transfer is carried out in cooperation with the learner and their guardian(s). The aim is to transfer information relevant to the learner's studies, taking into consideration the learner's best interests. Multidisciplinary student welfare cooperation is particularly important during the transitions between levels of education of vulnerable learners.

Youth workshops are aimed at young people between the ages of 17 and 29 living in Helsinki who are not studying or working. The workshops provide young people with opportunities to learn new skills and practise the rules and everyday rhythm of working life. During workshop periods, participants are also provided with guidance for planning the future and strengthening their resources based on personal needs. When necessary, the work coaches of the workshops engage in multidisciplinary cooperation with student welfare staff, for example when a learner

transfers from preparatory education for an upper secondary qualification to the workshop. If a learner in preparatory education for an upper secondary qualification participates in a youth workshop as part of their studies, they continue to be provided with student welfare services by their educational institution.

Multidisciplinary student welfare cooperation is also carried out in the context of planning further studies, when necessary.

7.3. Cooperation with parties supporting the well-being of learners

In Helsinki, student welfare services are provided in cooperation with the Education Division and the Social Services, Health Care and Rescue Services Division. Learners are provided with seamless guidance across different services, and professionals ensure that no learners are left without support. Cooperation with cultural and leisure-time operators, such as youth work, provides significant support for the realisation of student welfare objectives. Cooperation with third sector operators is valuable and improves the effectiveness of local work in particular. Student welfare cooperation partners also include the police, with whom we develop preventive approaches to support learners whose symptoms include engaging in criminal behaviour, for example.

Cooperation between student welfare operators and HUS promotes the smooth functioning of service chains and the consideration of learners' individual circumstances. Cooperation is also carried out with the parish and other religious communities.

In pre-primary education, we use the [Mitä kuuluu? workbook](#), which describes the principles of multidisciplinary consultation and provides instructions for referring children of pre-primary education age to services provided by external operators.

The cooperation partners of the work carried out with social welfare and health care services are described in [the low-threshold service model](#). The service model is intended to support the work of all professionals working with children between the ages of 7 and 17, young people and families. The service model helps professionals to identify concerns and organise support. The description of student welfare service for upper secondary students guides the learner to the right services.

8. Plans for protecting learners from violence, bullying and harassment and crisis plan

Here in the Education Division, we do not tolerate bullying, violence, harassment, racism or discrimination, which is why we prevent and intervene in them. We build safety, non-discrimination and equality together with the management and staff of learning communities while promoting the extensive and equal participation of learners and their guardians. Our staff must be able to identify discriminatory aspects in encounters between learners and intervene in them consistently. Our staff encourage learners to make choices without stereotypical roles and preconceptions tied to gender, ethnic background, language or other personal characteristics.



Cooperation with learners' families is important in the promotion of equality and non-discrimination. It is also important for guardians to understand the importance of good manners and practices that take account of others in the prevention of discrimination.

The teaching of emotional and interaction skills is important for the prevention of bullying, violence and harassment.

We promote and monitor the well-being and study progress of learners and prevent conflicts during studies through proactive and early support, intervention and guidance. It is the duty of all staff to promote and build a good and safe study and working environment. Our learning communities have prepared rules of conduct to ensure that they are pleasant for everyone. These rules of conduct must be followed by everyone. In upper secondary education, we also promote safety with the rules for a safe community drafted by each unit. In the rules for a safe community operating model, the whole community commits to responsible interaction.

Our safety and security plans are unit-specific. Safety and security issues are reviewed and practised annually with learners and staff.

The responsibilities of learners to behave without engaging in bullying and harassment are described in curricula and the qualification requirements for vocational education and training. Learners must conduct themselves in a way that does not endanger the safety and health of other learners or the learning community. In pre-primary education, we instruct learners both as individuals and as groups to take responsibility for their own behavior and for not harassing, discriminating or causing danger in their group.

[The Helsinki ABP13 anti-bullying programme for basic education](#); the guidelines for pre-primary education is being updated.

[Helsinki Vocational College's plans for supporting the well-being of students](#)

[Plans supporting the well-being of students in the City of Helsinki's upper secondary schools](#)

[Policy on preventing and responding to bullying, harassment and violence \(PDF in Finnish\)](#).

Crisis plans



In basic education, each unit prepares its own crisis plan.

- [Basic education crisis management model](#)
- [Crisis plan for Helsinki's general upper secondary schools](#)
- [Crisis plan for Helsinki Vocational College](#)

The logo for the City of Helsinki, featuring the word "Helsinki" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The text is enclosed within a black outline that forms a speech bubble shape, with a pointed bottom and rounded top corners.

Helsinki

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