

What is preparatory education for preschool-aged children?

Preparatory education is intended for children aged 6–17 years who do not yet speak Finnish well enough to begin their basic education. The teaching is based on a separate curriculum for preparatory education for comprehensive education. Preparatory education is provided for a maximum of one year.

Preparatory education for preschool-aged children is provided as part of other preschool education. Normal preschool education is provided for 20 hours per week. Preparatory preschool education is provided for 24 hours per week. For this reason, pupils in preparatory education receive slightly more teaching than others. There are usually four hours of teaching on four days per week and five hours on one day.

The preparatory education is free of charge. Additionally, the child may go to day care, depending on the family's needs. Day care hours are subject to a fee.

Goals

As the preparatory education begins, a personal plan for learning the Finnish language is created for the child. The plan is created in collaboration with the guardians.

The general goal of the preparatory education is to provide the learner with language skills and other skills necessary for moving on to basic education. The preparatory education also promotes learners' balanced development and integration into Finnish society.

In terms of understanding speech, the goal is to understand

- words and instructions commonly used in activities
- common questions (what, where)
- simple concepts and aspects such as opposites and comparisons
- simple communicated text

The goal for speaking skills is that the child

- is able to express their basic needs
- knows words and expressions related to social interaction and short phrases related to familiar things and situations
- is able to ask and answer simple questions.

In preschool education, pupils practise skills preceding reading and writing, such as recognising various written texts, identifying numbers, connecting letters and speech sounds and the reading order of Finnish. The goal of the preschool education is not to teach the child to read or write yet.

Native language

In preparatory preschool education, attention is also paid to the development of the child's native language skills and supporting them. Supporting the development of the child's native language skills involves discussions regarding matters such as how the guardians can reinforce the child's native language skills at home and how the native language skills can be supported in preschool education.

Evaluation

The evaluation is based on the goals. The evaluation is carried out for the same education plan that was created for the child at the start of the preparatory education. It describes the child's learning of language skills and the teaching methods.