

Basic information about early childhood education and care (ECEC) and pre-primary education

Basic information about school and basic education





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Basic information about early childhood education and care (ECEC) and pre-primary education

- Early childhood education and care (ECEC) and pre-primary education are part of the Finnish education system.
- Every child under school age has the right to ECEC and pre-primary education.
- ECEC is provided at a daycare centre, family daycare or a club.
- Pre-primary education takes place one year before going to the first grade of basic education. Children normally attend pre-primary education in the year they turn six. Pre-primary education is provided at a daycare centre or in connection with primary school.
- The ECEC personnel is trained.
- Parents and the ECEC personnel agree together on the length of the child's day at ECEC.
- Children in ECEC and pre-primary education are insured by the city in case of accidents.
- The holidays in ECEC and pre-primary education (autumn, Christmas, winter and spring) coincide with the holidays in basic education.
- Applications for early childhood education and care and pre-primary education are submitted electronically or with an application from a daycare centre.



Cooperation with guardians

- The child's growth, development, learning and well-being is supported together with the parents.
- Parents are met every day when taking the child to daycare and picking them up from daycare.
- Mobile application Edlevo is used for example for reporting need for care, absences and reading bulletins.
- In the ECEC plan discussion, parents and personnel make an individual plan for the child.
- If necessary, an interpreter or other partners are involved in the discussion.
- If necessary, an early childhood education worker will order an interpreter.
- Early childhood education services pay for interpretation.
- Early childhood education and pre-primary personnel and cooperation partners are bound by professional secrecy.
- Educational personnel have the duty to pass on important information that



Early childhood
services application
form in English



affects the organisation of the child's education when they are moving to a new daycare centre or school.

- If the well-being and safety of a child has been compromised, the law obliges the personnel to report it.

Child's own mother tongue and Finnish as a second language teaching

- Learning the mother tongue is the responsibility of parents.
- Knowing your mother tongue helps your child learn other languages.
- When a child participates in early childhood education or pre-primary education regularly, they learn to understand and speak Finnish.
- Children learn Finnish in the diverse activities of early childhood education and pre-primary education.
- Children also learn Finnish while playing with friends.
- A child participating in pre-primary education may receive instruction in their mother tongue / heritage language. The prerequisite is that the language teaching group in question exists and that the parents take care of the transportation. The teaching group may meet in another residential area.

A child's day in ECEC and pre-primary education

- The child plays, eats, goes outdoors and rests every day.
- Versatile and goal-oriented activities indoors and outdoors include, for example, play, exercise, music, trips and handicrafts.
- Children learn many things through play.
- Even young children learn self-care and everyday skills, such as eating or dressing themselves.
- The child's age and level of development are always taken into account and an adult is always nearby to help.
- The child learns to work in a group and take other children into account.
- In pre-primary education, letters and numbers are introduced, but literacy is neither taught nor required.

"Children learn many things through play."



Meals

- The day of early childhood education includes breakfast, lunch and snacks.
- Meals are not paid separately.
- The ECEC personnel encourage children to taste new foods.
- The child is not forced to eat food and they can always get more food.
- The joint menu of daycare centres and schools can be found, for example, at daycare centres or on the Jyväskylä [website](#).
- The menu is planned in advance according to children's nutritional recommendations.
- Food restrictions and diets related to health or religious reasons are always taken into account.
- The child must have a medical certificate from a doctor or public health nurse regarding a special diet or food allergy.
- The certificate is not required for a diet based on religious reasons. In this case, a notification made by a parent on a [special diet form](#) is sufficient.



Outdoor activities

- Children go outdoors in ECEC every day.
- Children also go outdoors in rain and winter (*outdoor temperature limit in the winter is about -15 degrees, depending on the age of the children*).
- The child must have weather-appropriate clothing and sufficient spare clothing.
- Children take supervised trips to nearby park, forest, ski trail, sports field or library.
- In the daycare yard, in the forest or on the sports field, children participate in a wide range of activities, such as exercise, mathematics or arts. Children also play in the forest.

Start of school

- Guardians enrol the child to school in January of the pre-primary education year.
- Compulsory basic education begins in August of the year in which the child turns 7.
- The child usually starts basic education at a local school in their own neighbourhood.

Basic information about school and basic education

- The City of Jyväskylä provides basic education in accordance with the Finnish Basic Education Act.
- Education is compulsory for pupils of compulsory school age in Finland.
- A pupil is subject to compulsory education if they have a municipality of residence in Finland.
- It is the guardian's duty to ensure that the child completes compulsory education.
- The child starts first grade in the year they turn 7 years old.
- Basic education lasts 9 years.
- Compulsory education ends in the year when the young person turns 18.
- Basic education is free of charge.
- The learning material is free.
- The language of instruction is Finnish.
- The pupil usually goes to the school closest to their place of residence.
- If the local school is full, the pupil will be assigned another school that is within a safe and short distance.
- At school, pupils study according to the curriculum.
- The curriculum guides what is taught at school and what goals the learning has.
- Teaching in English is provided in two schools in Jyväskylä. The languages of instruction are English and Finnish.
- Swedish-language education is provided in one school. The language of instruction is Swedish.
- Other special classes include music and sports classes. There are music classes in two schools and sports classes in two schools.

At school

- The pupil needs a backpack when coming to school.
- The pupil receives schoolbooks and a writing kit from the school.
- The pupil needs a pencil and an eraser to do their homework.
- The pupil receives a timetable from the school.
- The pupil attends school according to the timetable.
- The timetable shows when the school day starts and ends.
- The timetable shows the subjects to be studied on the school day.
- The pupil must be at school at the start of the first lesson.



- The parent does not have to accompany the pupil to school or register with the teacher.
- In the morning, a guardian can accompany a small pupil to the school yard if they wish.
- The pupil waits in the school yard for the school day to start. At school, the bell rings when the lesson starts.
- Pupils are not allowed to leave school in the middle of the day without permission.
- At school, pupils go outdoors during breaks. The pupil needs clothes and shoes suitable for the weather.
- Physical education classes are indoors or outdoors. For indoor sports, the pupil needs a change of clothes: shorts, a T-shirt and a towel. For outdoor sports, the pupil needs outerwear and shoes suitable for the weather and exercise.
- The school supports the pupil in language development, learning and schooling.
- The school has rules and regulations.
- No one should be bullied.
- Pupils are insured during the school day.
- If a pupil breaks school property, guardians must compensate the broken items.
- School year and holidays.



Cooperation between home and school

- The guardian's responsibility is to ensure that the child attends school.
- The school supports the guardian in their educational task.
- Both guardians have the right to receive information about the child's studies.
- Communication between home and school takes place mainly in the Wilma system.
- Instructions for using Wilma can be obtained from the school secretary of the child's own school.
- The school invites guardians to meetings concerning the pupil and parents' evenings.
- The guardian notifies the school of health issues related to the pupil's safety.
- If a pupil falls ill, the school must be notified as soon as possible.
- The guardian notifies the pupil's absence due to illness in Wilma, by phone or text message.
- The guardian must apply for other absences in Wilma.
A pupil cannot report absences.
- The teacher can grant an absence of 1–5 days.
- Absences of more than 5 days are granted by the principal.
- Jyväskylä uses a school absence model, which is attached at the end of this leaflet.
- If a pupil has a high number of absences, the school will contact the guardian.
- The school intervenes in bullying. The guardian informs the school if a pupil tells about bullying to the guardians at home.
- Operational model against bullying is attached at the end of this leaflet.

Preparatory education for basic education

- If a pupil does not yet speak Finnish, they participate in preparatory education for basic education.
- Preparatory education is intended for pupils aged 6–16.
- A pupil can start preparatory education in the middle of the school year.
- Preparatory education is not available in all schools.
- Preparatory education has its own curriculum.
- An individual study programme is prepared for the pupil together with the guardians.
- The pupil studies Finnish language and important contents in other subjects.
- If possible, the pupil also attends basic education classes in Finnish in some

“Communication between home and school takes place mainly in the Wilma system.”



lessons. This supports the pupil's integration.

- The pupil participates in preparatory education for one year.
- After preparatory education, the pupil moves to their own local school for basic education in Finnish.
- Children between the ages of 7 and 10 receive 25 hours of preparatory instruction per week.
- Children between the ages of 11 and 15 receive 26 hours of preparatory instruction per week.

Finnish as a second language (S2-teaching)

- After preparatory education, the pupil moves to a local school for basic education in Finnish.
- Finnish as a Second Language and Literature (S2) syllabus is for pupils who are just learning Finnish.
- The syllabus can be changed when the pupil's language skills have developed sufficiently.
- The guardian decides on the syllabus.
- S2 teaching is available in all schools.
- S2 teaching is available in all subjects.
- S2 education is not special education or remedial education.
- The S2 syllabus is of the same value as Finnish as a mother tongue.

Heritage language / mother tongue learning

- Heritage language learning is intended for children and young people aged 6–18 whose native language or one of the family's languages is other than Finnish.
- Heritage language teaching is provided if there are at least four pupils in the same language group and there is a teacher for the language.
- In Finland's official minority languages (Finnish Sign Language, different Sami languages and Romani language), there must be at least two pupils in the language teaching group.
- Participation in heritage language lessons is voluntary.
- After registration, the pupil commits to participating in heritage language lessons regularly.
- Lessons and teaching is free of charge.
- There are two hours of lessons per week.
- Lessons are after the school day.
- The teaching group may be in another school.
- The guardian takes care of the transportation. Pupils can get free transportation to their heritage language lessons.
- Registration for heritage language lessons is done in the spring in April-May.
- If you do not register, you cannot attend classes.
- Registration in the middle of the academic year takes place on a paper form.





- Registration for the heritage language lessons is done separately each year.
- For more information, please contact Service Manager Pia Bärlund, pia.barlund@jyvaskyla.fi

School meals

- The pupil receives a free lunch at school. Schools do not serve breakfast.
- The schools serve Finnish food and dishes.
- The school follows Finnish table manners.
- The pupil uses a fork and knife when eating. Food is not eaten with fingers.
- The guardian must notify the school kitchen of the pupil's special diet or food allergies on a separate special diet form.
- The child needs a medical certificate from a doctor or dietitian regarding a special diet or food allergy. A public health nurse's certificate is also valid if it is based on a doctor's diagnosis.
- A certificate from a doctor or dietitian is not required if the diet is lactose-free, vegan or vegetarian.
- The certificate is not required for diets based on religious reasons. In this case, a notification on the special diet form is sufficient.
- In some schools you can buy snacks.
- You can bring your own healthy snack to school.



School commute

- School commute should be carried out safely according to traffic rules.
- Shorter school commutes are usually made on foot or by bike.
- It is recommended to practice the safest route to school together with the child.
- School transportation benefit is only available if the pupil attends a school assigned by the City of Jyväskylä.
- Pupils in grades 1-2 are granted free school transport if their travel to school exceeds 3.5 kilometres.
- Pupils in grades 3-9 are granted free school transport if their travel to school exceeds 5 kilometers.
- You do not need to submit an application for school transport.
- When the distance limit is exceeded, the school will automatically grant free school transport.
- The pupil receives a free bus card from the school.
- If a pupil has an illness or disability and cannot travel to school by themselves, a separate application must be submitted. The pupil must have a medical certificate.
- If a pupil is granted a taxi transportation, guardians use the MunSchool app.



Pupil welfare

- Pupil welfare supports pupils' well-being and health.
- Pupil welfare is free of charge.
- Contact information for Pupil welfare can be found on the schools' websites.
- The school nurse and school doctor monitor the pupil's health and well-being.
- The pupil is invited for an extensive health examination in the 1st, 5th and 8th grades.
- An extensive health examination includes both a public health nurse's examination and a medical examination.
- Both parents of the pupil are also invited to an extensive health examination.
- The pupil is invited to a dental health check in the 1st, 5th and 8th grades.
- A school social worker helps pupils if they have concerns or difficulties.
- The school psychologist assesses the pupil's competence and need for support.

- School coaches also work in schools. The school coach supports the pupil's well-being and helps the pupil.
- Schools have youth workers who support young people's growth and wellbeing.

Morning and afternoon activities Jälkkäri

- Morning and afternoon activities before and after school are intended for pupils in grades 1-2.
- Pupils in grades 1-5 who have received a decision on special support can also participate in morning and afternoon activities.
- The activities are subject to a charge.
- Supervised morning and afternoon activities are organised in connection with schools in Jyväskylä.
- Afternoon activities take place on school days between 12:00 and 17:00.
- Morning activities are organised as morning clubs if there are enough children registered.
- An application must be submitted for morning and afternoon activities.
- If the pupil has intellectual disability, you can ask for the right to Vertti activities. Ask the school.



Absence model for schools within basic education in the City of Jyväskylä

The education provider must prevent and monitor the absences of pupils in basic education and systematically intervene in them. The education provider shall notify the pupil's guardian or other legal representative of any unauthorised absences. (The Basic Education Act, Section 26)

Children permanently resident in Finland are subject to compulsory education. According to the law, the parent/carer of a pupil in compulsory education shall see to it that compulsory schooling is completed. (The Act on Compulsory Education, Sections 2 & 9)

In the calculation of pupils' school absences, all absences during the school year are to be taken into account, including authorised absences. Absences are monitored systematically, with the collective pupil welfare services group meeting four times each academic year.

1. Prevention of absences

Activities supporting pupils' wellbeing, participation and sense of community.

- Pupils' and staff's emotional, safety and interaction skills are strengthened.
- Staff connect with pupils on an individual level and support their commitment to and presence at school.
- The staff support interaction, grouping and loneliness prevention in groups and peer groups throughout the school pathway.
- The whole community is involved in creating a safe learning environment and intervening in all instances of violence, bullying, harassment and discrimination.
- The staff build interactive cooperation between home and school.
- Systematically monitoring absences at individual and group level as part of the operations of the collective pupil welfare services and the pupil welfare plan.

2. Intervene immediately and resolve with the pupil and the guardian

- Worrying changes in the pupil's behaviour.
- Reluctance to attend school



- Repeated late arrivals.
- Leaving in the middle of a lesson or school day.
- A pupil is present at school, but does not attend the lessons.
- Unauthorised absences.
- Unresolved absences or insufficient explanations relating to absences.
- Repeated absences from the same subject or on certain days of the week.
- Repeated and prolonged absences.

3. Early intervention

- The teacher gets clarification on the absences by discussing them with the pupil and the guardian.
- The teacher monitors the progress of learning, identifies learning difficulties and assesses the need for support.
- The teacher consults a special needs teacher and pupil welfare services if they have any concerns, big or small, about a pupil's wellbeing, learning or schooling.
- The teacher agrees, if necessary, on support measures along with the next review date with the school pupil and the parent/carer.
- Unauthorised and unresolved absences are intervened in immediately.

4. Targeted actions

- The teacher contacts the guardians and if necessary requests permission

to assemble a multidisciplinary expert group and launch individual pupil welfare support.

- If necessary, the teacher consults a special needs teacher and pupil welfare services.
- The teacher convenes a multidisciplinary expert group if it is deemed necessary for the pupil's schooling or wellbeing.
- At the meeting, those present explore the reasons behind the absences, check the level of pedagogical support, and agree on objectives and school and home support measures.
- Additionally, the person responsible and the date for the next review are agreed on.
- If a multidisciplinary expert group is not convened, the teacher agrees on support measures and follow-up monitoring with the pupil and the guardian.
- Communal targeted actions are also agreed on.

5. Strong actions

- Individual pupil support is strengthened.
- Actors external to the school are consulted and invited to the meeting as necessary.
- In multidisciplinary expert groups, teachers and pupil welfare services professionals agree on broader mapping of the reasons for the absences with the pupil and their guardians.
- The level of pedagogic support is reviewed and support measures agreed, such as flexible teaching arrangements or special pedagogic arrangements.
- The agreed person responsible takes care of the progress and monitoring of the process.
- The teacher, if necessary, 1) initiates social welfare contact in accordance with the Social Welfare Act to assess the need for support or 2) submits a child welfare notification.

6. If the absences continue

- The multi-agency cooperation is strengthened and clarified.
- Special teaching arrangements (Basic Education Act, Section 18), special areas of focus, multi-age education (VSOP) and individualisation of subjects.
- The person responsible supports the pupil's return to school systematically.



Absences as a percentage and in hours per academic year in Jyväskylä

School grade	5 % absence rate	10 % absence rate	15 % absence rate	20 % absence rate
Grades 1.-2	38 h	76 h	114 h	152 h
Grade 3	42 h	84 h	125 h	167 h
Grade 4	46 h	91 h	137 h	182 h
Grades 5.-6	48 h	95 h	143 h	190 h
Grades 7.-9	57 h	114 h	171 h	228 h

An absence rate of 10 % has been shown to be a wellbeing and learning risk factor.

Instructions for the classification of absences

Recommendation of the ministry of education and culture

● Absence related to health reasons

The pupil is physically absent from school (due to illness or an event/appointment related to physical and/or mental health care, e.g. dentist, therapy or surgery). The absence can be recorded by a guardian or a teacher based on a notification received from a guardian.

● Pre-requested leave

Leave requested by a guardian in advance, including individual lessons and school days (holiday trip, absences related to hobbies, staying with a remote parent). The absence is recorded by a teacher on the basis of information/a request submitted by a guardian.

● Other authorised absence

Used only in cases where the absence does not fall under any other category (e.g. section 36 of the Basic Education Act, self-quarantine, unexpected family situation). Recorded by a guardian or teacher.

● Unauthorised absence, explained

An absence classified as unauthorised, but explained by a parent or teacher (truancy or tardiness longer than one lesson).

● Unexplained absence

The school does not know why the child is absent. The absence can be explained by a teacher or guardian, after which the category can be changed.

● Other school work, present

The child is physically at school, but absent from a lesson with permission (pupil welfare services, pupil association tasks, guidance counsellor, etc.).

Not counted as an absence in statistics.

● Studying elsewhere

The pupil is physically absent from school due to attending a hospital school or doing a shortened school day or week according to agreement, for example (section 18 of the Basic Education Act). **Not counted as an absence in statistics.**

● Tardiness

Instances of tardiness shorter than one lesson are recorded as lesson attendance entries (number of minutes). **Not counted as an absence in statistics.**

Operating model against violence, bullying, harassment and discrimination in basic education in the City of Jyväskylä

A pupil participating in education shall be entitled to a safe learning environment. (Basic Education Act, section 29)

Child Welfare Act, section 25 – duty to file a child welfare notification and a report of an offence.

Prevention and early intervention

1. Systematic approach

- A team is set up in each school, or a responsible person designated, to coordinate and maintain the activities to prevent bullying, harassment and discrimination in their own unit. The responsible person is a member of the collective pupil welfare services team.
- The persons responsible for the prevention of violence, harassment, discrimination and bullying, the goals, the operating practices and an assessment at the end of the operational period are recorded in the annual plan for the implementation of the local curriculum.
- The school's rules, operating instructions and the equality and non-discrimination plan are discussed with the pupils, their guardians and the staff.
- The equality and non-discrimination plan must contain clear policies on how to create and maintain an accepting and respectful atmosphere.
- The collective pupil welfare services team systematically promotes the welfare and safety of the community.

2. Boosting community spirit

- Emotional, safety and interaction skills are practised as part of the annual welfare plan and in all daily interactions.
- The staff consciously support interaction, team building and the prevention of loneliness in groups and peer-to-peer relationships.
- The entire school community promotes the giving of praise, positive interaction and positive feedback.

3. Safe school community

- Bullying in any form is not condoned. The entire school community

systematically intervenes in any and all inappropriate behaviour.

- The principal systematically manages the activities to prevent violence, bullying, harassment and discrimination.
- The staff are familiarised with the operating model and trained in dealing with violence.
- The staff are aware of the risk factors for bullying and able to recognise the telltale signs of being bullied.
- The staff give related lessons and organise themed days.

4. Operating culture that boosts involvement

- Pupils understand what violence, bullying, harassment and discrimination mean, learn to recognise them and know how to act when encountering them.
- Pupils are encouraged to tell the staff about any and all violence and intervene in any incidents.
- Pupils and guardians are actively involved in creating a culture that promotes safety and boosts the community spirit.
- Guardians are informed of and given an opportunity to discuss the school's activities to prevent violence, bullying, harassment and discrimination.

Intervention

- The school staff always intervene in any violence, bullying, harassment or discrimination they notice or become aware of at the school and clarify the situation with the parties involved. Please note: Separate instructions must be followed in case of violence or the threat of violence.
- The staff will talk with the victim of violence, bullying, harassment or discrimination first and then with the other parties involved.
- At the end of the investigation, an agreement on follow-up measures will be made and documented.
- The staff will inform the guardians of the incident by the end of the day.
- If the incident is suspected to meet the criteria for a criminal offence, the staff will contact the police and file a child welfare notification, a report of an offence or both as necessary (based on a consultation with the Anchor police, the child welfare services or the mediation office).
- The staff will improve cooperation with the guardians and convene them to a meeting.
- The staff will report any violence occurring during a trip to or from school to the guardians and offer support to investigate the incident as necessary (e.g. a referral to mediation).

Follow-up phase and aftercare

- The staff will regularly monitor the situation for a sufficient period of time to ensure that the pupil feels safe at school and during the trip to and from school: weekly for the first month, every two weeks for the following month and as necessary thereafter.
- The follow-ups will be handled by the class teacher, tutor or responsible person, unless otherwise agreed.
- The staff will assess all parties involved and the entire group to see whether they need support. An agreement on individual and joint support measures will be made on a case-by-case basis with the pupil welfare services. An agreement on individual pedagogical support arrangements will also be made.
- If necessary, the staff will refer the pupil to support services outside the school such as the Anchor work, the Mannerheim League for Child Welfare Selviytyjät peer groups or the Tukipysäkki kiusaamisasioissa service.
- If necessary, a disciplinary educational discussion will be arranged or disciplinary measures will be imposed on the pupil, taking into account the pupil's age and level of development and the circumstances and consequences of their actions.
- The activities are annually assessed and developed on the basis of collected data such as the pupil and school satisfaction survey, the school health survey and the TEAvisari health promotion tool.



Violence may be psychological, physical or sexual in nature. Violence refers to the intentional use or threat of violence, control or physical force. Acts of violence may occur between pupils or between a pupil and the school staff.

Bullying, harassment and discrimination are forms of violence.

Bullying refers to the repeated and intentional harming of another person by psychological, physical or social means. Bullying can also take place online.

Harassment refers to behaviour by which the dignity of a person or a group of people is intentionally violated, threatened, humiliated or degraded by words or actions.

Discrimination refers to the rejection or inferior treatment of an individual or group, or putting them at a disadvantage.

All the above-mentioned acts may constitute criminal offences.

**More information about early childhood
education and education:
www.jyvaskyla.fi/en/daycare-and-education**



JYVÄSKYLÄ 

Hyvä kasvu kaikille -hanke

Kasvun ja oppimisen palvelut, Jyväskylän kaupunki

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