

MATERIAL FOR SCHOOLS

HOW DO I ORGANISE AN INTERNATIONAL VISIT?

Finnish schools attract international visitors – both teaching staff and pupils. Naturally, hosting visitors in your school requires a lot of planning, especially the first time, but both teachers and pupils have always agreed that it was worth the effort. To help you plan and organise your visit, here are some proven tips.



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HOW DO I ORGANISE AN INTERNATIONAL VISIT?

1. Select a **coordinating teacher** and **pupil hosts** for your guests.
2. Work with the hosting teachers and pupils to create an assignment, such as a **phenomenon-based multidisciplinary learning project**, which will include the visitors and contribute to the National Core Curriculum's goals. The project can be started before the visitors even arrive and may also continue after their visit.
3. With visitors, the following **transversal competence** themes are recommended:
 - Cultural competence, interaction and expression (L2)
 - Multiliteracy (L4)
 - Working life competence and entrepreneurship (L6)
 - Participation, involvement and building a sustainable future (L7)

Additionally, encounters with international visitors can help develop the pupils'

- self-knowledge, self-appreciation and life management skills
- awareness of their values and attitudes
- ability to face different people now and in their future studies, work and free time.

For visits involving pupils from year 1-6, the following subjects are particularly popular:

- English (and other foreign languages)
- Mathematics (functional)
- Environmental studies (e.g. nearby nature)
- Music (e.g. typical instruments in Finnish schools)
- Physical education (e.g. outdoor games, winter sports, dancing)
- Crafts (e.g. woodwork, felting)
- Art (techniques from Finland as well as visitors)

From year 7 and up, also consider the following:

- Biology
- Geography
- Social studies
- History
- Religion and ethics



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4. During visits, **classes are (usually) in English**. It's also a foreign language for the visitors, so don't worry about your pupils' language skills. If the visitors have trouble with foreign languages, consider having an interpreter that can translate for both groups.
5. For the duration of the visit, a substitute should be provided for the **coordinating teacher** to allow them full focus on the visit.
6. The **pupil hosts** can give a tour of the facilities, help the visitors with lunch and discuss things the way children and young people do. You can provide a **diploma** for the pupil hosts after the visit.
7. **The more you give, the more you get** – visits are a rewarding addition to your work, and after the first time, you'll find that they become routine.
8. While **some nerves are to be expected**, the visitors are not here to criticise you but to see and admire a school that is different from theirs. Meanwhile, you will find out how other cultures pursue the same goals we do.
9. Conversations during breaks and **other discussions are a valuable part of the visit!**



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