

Erasmus+ project,



How Children Learn 21.-23.1.2015

The second project meeting in Kausala, Finland

Tuesday 20.1.

All participants arrived to the railway stations during the evening. Our five Scottish guests accommodated in Hotel Vaakuna, Kouvola. Spanish, Swedish, Norwegian and Dutch guests went to the country hotel Lomakivi, Kausala. Our Norwegian friends came a bit earlier by their rented car. They surprised the others having %a snow bath+between sauna sessions.

The weather was -15 °C, dark and lots of stars in the sky



Wednesday 21.1.

The participants met at Kausalan koulu. The whole +crew+of the school greeted visitors in the gym hall. There were music performances by pupils and the visitors introduced their schools shortly to everyone.





The official meeting began by professor Brian Boyd. We handled the feedback from research undertaken by the project schools. Three teachers from Kausalan koulu took part in this part of meeting. There was very good discussion concerning those quite various research. The results were congruent:

functionality adds motivation and learning.



After the school lunch Lorraine Napier and Ann Brown cleared up the timescales, budget and work plan agreement of the project.

In the afternoon pupils went home and the staff gathered to hear Brian Boyd's lecture. His subject was *Cooperative Learning and Pupils Voice*. That lecture aroused interest and new ideas

concerning learning and teaching. Thank you Brian!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1VTq9Sy5IV8>



The project meeting continued after the lecture. We heard some details about next meeting and the learning/teaching week in Spain (in May 2015). The outlines of May are clear but lots of details still need to map out. Now it's important to know who are going to participate Spanish +events+.

At 14.30 we visited in a typical Finnish nursery school. Because quite many of Erasmus+ colleagues work in nursery schools we wanted to show how that goes here in litti. In that nursery school they don't have any special ideology in their practices. It's a very +normal+ municipal nursery school here in Finland. They have very committed, talented and knowledgeable staff, an impractical building from 1970s and pretty low budget. And it works.



After short resting in hotels we had a dinner in Lomakivi country hotel. There we met also Mayor Riku Rönnhom. He told facts about the municipality of Iitti.

Thursday 22.1.

Thursday began in the meeting of the Pupils council. The visitors saw how Finnish school democracy works at the grass-roots level. There is one representative from each class in those meetings and they all are equal. There is also one teacher guiding the action but pupils do the hard work. The president and the secretary negotiate with our headteacher about important decisions and proposals.

The deputy headteacher introduced the anti-bullying strategy (KiVa). It is a very effective way to decrease bullying and increase the feeling of comfort at school.

<http://www.kivaprogram.net/>



During the forenoon the visitors familiarized to the working in classes in Kausalan koulu. The members of Erasmus+ club (pupils from classes 4-6) guided the visitors around the school building. There was much to see. The guests also attended the breaks.



After school lunch there was a possibility to try cross-country skiing and over half of guests did it. There were pupils skiing with them and they helped beginners. The snow was slippery, there was -16 degrees frost and the equipment weren't the most appropriate but almost all skiers looked happy.





council introduced oneself too.

Thursday was a very busy day. We visited in a small village school in the countryside. They explained how they put into action the anti-bullying strategy. They work a bit differently compared with Kausalan koulu. The Parents

Haapa-Kimolan koulu is a quite typical village school in southern Iitti. The staff is three classteachers (one of them is also the head teacher) and one class assistant. Each teacher has two grades in her/his classroom. There are about 60 pupils in their school. Haapa-Kimolan koulu is a member of The Eco-Schools Network.

Tiina Aro is the headmaster of Haapa-Kimolan koulu →



At Iitti high school we first visited (very quickly) our distant learning teacher of German language. In Iitti it's possible to learn German in small village schools just because of that distant learning. We have one teacher who is planning educational contents and resources for that use. She is one of the best in Finland.

At 3 a.m. began Brian Boyd's lecture for teachers of nursery, primary, secondary and high schools. That happened in the high school auditorium. In this time his subject was *Pedagogy in action*. We Finns can use our knowledge we got from Professor Boyd when we will begin to renew our curriculum in this spring. The Finnish national curriculum will be changed till 1.8.2016.



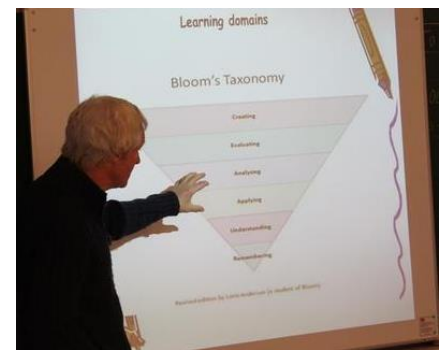
We had a social evening for our guests in Kausala. The staff had prepared evening meal and we had nice time to get to know each other. The rest of researches were presented in that occasion. All of us had done good work. *The Parents Council of Kausalan koulu was also there (two members in picture with Margareta).*



Erasmus Knights of The Square Table ☺.

Friday 23.1.

We had a very compact project meeting before 11.30. There we designed next steps, actions for everyone and timescale for our future. In each school will be some kind of co-operative project in which pupils do teamwork.



The Class 6A sang to visitors.



The first participants departed to the airport from Kausala railway station. It was really nice to have you here!

