

Nepenmäki Comprehensive School 2021-2022



**M.Ed. Principal
Special Education Teacher
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Nepenmäki Comprehensive School

- **principal**
Maija Salo-Vartiainen
- **assistant principals:**
- Tero Kainulainen (1-6)
- Juha Kettunen (7-9)
- Pia Kokkonen
(Special Education)
- Marika Mervola
(Hospital Special Education)



Nepenmäki Comprehensive School

Comprehensive school:

grades: (pre school), 1 – 9, (hospital school E-9)

Age of the pupils: from age 6 to 16

Number of pupils: 650

Number of teachers: 60 (+ 30 assistant teachers)

Number of teaching groups:

27 mainstream classes

20 class teachers

20 subject teachers

21 special education classes/teachers:

4 special education classes for children with 10 years comprehensive school path (down syndrome, etc.)

5 teachers for children with learning difficulties (dyslexia, etc.)

3 special education classes for children with severe learning difficulties

One education teacher for multilingual children (migrants)

6 hospital school classes

English, Swedish, French, German, Spanish, Russian

Characteristics of Basic Education in Finland

- free basic education (teaching, textbooks and teaching materials, school transport and school meals)
- same nine-year comprehensive curriculum for the whole age group
- teaching is arranged by schools near home
- almost all children in Finland complete comprehensive school - dropping out of school and repeating years are rare
- basic education includes one-year long pre-primary education in a school or day-care centre
- local authorities can arrange voluntary morning and afternoon activities for pupils in basic education

Teachers in Finnish School System

- Teacher education:
University degree (master degree) in every level of school system
- Teachers are in active role in school development:
teaching arrangements, materials, curriculum



Differences in Finnish System Noticed by Our Foreign Visitors

- No national exams, no school ranking, no teacher ranking
- School starts at age of seven
- Short school days (20-30 lessons per week)
- School culture:
 - culture between principal and teachers
 - culture between teachers and pupils
 - culture between principal and pupils
- Pupils role:
 - a lot of independence and responsibility given in early years
 - feeling of positive (natural) respect (adults -> pupil and pupil -> adults)

New School Building (22,3 M€)

- City level decision 2010
- Planning project for a new school (financed by National Board of Education)
- Teachers active role in planning (school visits)
- Active discussion about our vision -> what kind of school do we want to have?
 - School for EVERY child
 - Active co-operation
 - Possibility to make changes
 - Open from 7 am. to 10 pm.
- Opened in August 2018

Nepenmäki School +

- City library
- Vocational education
- Music education
- Cultural services (main hall)
- Societies, sport clubs, associations



Special Needs Education in Nepenmäki School

The three-stage support system

The new systematic way of organising support has been implemented nationwide since 2010 in pre-primary and basic education.

The focus is on providing support as early as possible in order to prevent the emerge and growth of problems.

Support is shaped into three categories:

1. **General support** (Everyone is entitled to general support. It is a natural part of everyday teaching and learning process.)
2. **Intensive support** →130 students
3. **Special support** →80 students (Intensive support and special support are based on careful assessment and long term planning in multi-professional teams, using individual learning plans for pupils.)

Nepenmäki and Special Education

- 650 students, around 200 students get intensive or special support services
- 14 + 8 special education teachers
- 27 + 2 special needs assistants
 1. Part-time special needs education, provided by special education teacher
 2. Special needs education in a special group (Tupa)
 3. Special needs education for handicapped students
 4. Hospital special education

Part-time Special Needs Education, Provided by Special Education Teacher (Intensive or Special Support)

- The first alternative for providing special education is to include pupils with special needs in mainstream classes.
- Special education in small teaching groups is provided when necessary by a special education teacher.
- Given if pupils have minor difficulties in learning or adjustment.
- One special education teacher/ 2 age groups
 - Preschoolers - 1st graders, 2nd - 3rd graders, 4th - 5th graders, 6th - 7th grader, 8th - 9th graders



Special Needs Education in a Special Group (Tupa)

- The reason for the transfer to this class can be one or more learning disabilities, emotional disorder or other comparable reason. In this case support in the mainstream class is not enough.
- Official decision needs to be made for this transfer. The decision is made by the school board.
- Decision requires consultation with the parents or legal guardians.
- Individual education plan for each student.
- Maximum number of students per teacher is 10.
 - tupa 1-3
 - tupa 4-6
 - tupa 7-9



Special Needs Education for Handicapped Students (Special Support)

- mentally handicapped, autism spectrum, severe learning difficulties
- Students come from around Joensuu region.
- They have 11-year compulsory education.
- Official decision needs to be made by the school board, to study in these classes.
- Individual education plan for each pupil.
- 4 groups in Nepenmäki school, A-D.
- In class A and B student study normal school subjects. (8 students/teacher)
- In class C and D students study motor-, social-, everyday-, kognitiv-, language and communication skills. (6 students/teacher, personal special needs assistants)
- Afternoon care is provided at school for children who need it.

Hospital Special Education

- Tikkamäki School at the Joensuu central hospital.
- Students come from North Karelia region and they are being examined or treated in the hospitals children's psychiatric-, children's and youth neuropsychiatric- or somatic wards.
- Students are from pre-primary and basic education.
- 8 special education teachers and 2 special needs assistants.
- Project for 2021-2022 for two special education teachers to do consultative work in schools.



Thank you

