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OULU EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES

Oulu region has a wide selection of high-quality products and services to offer to the educational world. We have many educational experts, teachers, principals, researchers, and leaders, who are willing to share their knowledge of the Finnish educational field with you!

Oulu’s special strength in the area of educational knowledge is the wide cooperation between different educational organisations in the region. This makes it possible for us to offer comprehensive, tailormade educational programmes that can include expert sections from early childhood education to primary, secondary, upper secondary, higher and vocational education. Our programmes can include visits to Oulu’s modern schools and other facilities and learning environments such as the Oulu University FabLab and Oulu City Library.

We also offer deeper professional development for teachers and leadership training for school management, and even consultation and local training at your own school or organisation.

Visits to Oulu-area educational companies can be added to create more comprehensive programmes.

The main educational organisations participating in these programmes are City of Oulu Educational and Cultural Services, University of Oulu, Diaconia University of Applied Sciences, Educational Consortium OSAO (VET), Oulu University of Applied Sciences, and Luovi Vocational College.
Would you like to learn how early childhood education and care is organised in Finland and how early childhood education and care is part of the Finnish education system? This intensive 5-day seminar offers insight into the Finnish early childhood education model and offers you a chance to have discussions on how it supports the child’s balanced growth, development and learning. It also includes visits to day-care centres.

Finnish early childhood education and care (ECEC) supports the child’s balanced growth, development and learning. Each child is seen as an active and competent agent and is valued as such one. Our main goal is a healthy, happy child who thrives and experiences the joy of learning every day. Pedagogy and practice in Finnish early childhood education and care consists of physical activity, playing, artistic experiences, self-expression, and exploration.

ECEC lays the foundation for children’s transversal competences: knowledge, skills, attitudes, and will.

Oulu’s local curricula for ECEC delivers a comprehensive learning path for each child. Each child’s personal early childhood education plan is in the central role.

A five-day Early Childhood Education and Care Training Programme could include topics such as:

1. Introduction to Early Childhood Education and Care in Finland
2. Pedagogy in Early Childhood Education
3. Developing Transversal Competences
4. Learning environments
5. Implementing ECEC in the Home Country of the Participants

Programme length: 1–5 days

The Early Childhood Education & Care Programme is jointly organised by Educational and Cultural Services of City of Oulu, University of Oulu, Diaconia University of Applied Sciences, and Educational Consortium OSAO (VET).

Contact for more information:

Ms. Eija Ruohomäki

eija.ruohomaki@ouka.fi

mob. +358 44 703 9189
CURRICULUM WORK

Oulu area schools have many exciting working methods within their local curriculum! Why not come over and learn what expertise we can offer to teachers around the world? How do students in Oulu learn 21st century skills in their daily school life?

Oulu City’s primary and secondary schools have six different curriculum paths; these are paths of wellbeing, sustainability, culture, global citizenship, information management and entrepreneurship. These paths guide towards activities that combine different school subjects, make students engage in activities, offer new experiences, and utilise cooperation and local opportunities.

In addition to the curriculum paths, learning in Oulu teaches students many essential skills and introduces many working methods, such as increased pupil participation, phenomenon-based learning, early language learning, language and culture awareness, learning to become a global citizen, ICT and information management skills, and media literacy skills.

Children and the youth in Oulu learn valuable transversal competences, future skills, that can be applied to many school subjects, skills that can help them to grow into well-functioning modern adults to help them adapt to work life and life in general.

Oulu City’s Educational and Cultural Services also have a strong background in the implementation of new curricula, which helps schools truly take a new curriculum into use in schools abroad. Through this work, new schools and existing schools can start using a Finnish-style curriculum in their daily schoolwork.

Children’s and young people´s wellbeing affects their ability to engage with their education. Therefore, the Diaconia University of Applied Sciences can offer specialist content on the Finnish social and health care system, interpretation (for the hearing impaired and languages), and multi-religion/multicultural education within the programme.

Programme length: 1–5 days. We also offer long-term Finnish-style curriculum work: design, consultation, and implementation, which can last up to a year.

The Curriculum Work Programme is jointly organised by Educational and Cultural Services of City of Oulu, University of Oulu, and Diaconia University of Applied Sciences.

Contact for more information:

Ms. Eija Ruohomäki
eija.ruohomaki@ouka.fi
mob. +358 44 703 9189
OPERATIONAL CULTURE IN SCHOOLS

Oulu does not only showcase new school buildings but also well-functioning operational culture to complete the modern Finnish school life. Schools are learning communities for everyone!

During this programme, you will learn about the pedagogical expertise Oulu schoolteachers, other educational personnel and management have, and what is needed from the physical school environment, psychological factors and social relationships of the school community.

When we are talking about teaching future skills to the students, schools should also reflect these skills in their daily work. Future skills should be seen within the daily functioning of the school, for example, in how schools are run, how cooperation between different stakeholders works and how pupils can use these skills in daily school life.

School’s Operational Culture can support the pupil’s future skills in many ways:

• Theories and principles for a collaborative school
• Collaborative learning in the school’s curriculum and annual planning
• How to organize the management system of a collaborative school
• What is required from the management, the learning environments and the school staff
• How to evaluate and develop the operational culture

The Operational Culture in Schools programme can be organised as 1–10-day programme in Oulu or with a deeper practical approach at your own school abroad.

The Operational Culture in Schools Programme is jointly organised by Educational and Cultural Services of City of Oulu, University of Oulu, Diaconia University of Applied Sciences, and Educational Consortium OSAO (VET).

Contact for more information:

Ms. Eija Ruohomäki

email eija.ruohomaki@ouka.fi
mob. +358 44 703 9189
**STEAM-BASED LEARNING**

**Oulu is known for its innovative, high-tech companies; hence it is only natural to introduce STEAM education here.**

STEAM subjects (Sciences, Technology, Arts and Engineering/manual skills, and Mathematics) are designed to teach students self-determination, interaction competence, craft skills and critical thinking. The aim is to help students to grow into resilient, responsible, cooperative and brave problem-solvers.

The STEAM-based learning path, which was developed in Oulu, has four parts: craft and building, exploring and innovation, coding and programming, and digital manufacturing. Oulu has also been the first province in Finland to have a Fab Lab in a comprehensive school. A Fab Lab is a digital fabrication laboratory, is a place where you can play, create, and invent new things. It is a great place for learning and innovation for pupils and older students as well as for teachers and other adults in the community. A Fab Lab provides the environment, the materials and the advanced technology to allow anyone to create almost anything.

"Oulu is a forerunner in the STEAM education in Finland thanks to the collaboration between schools and the University of Oulu. STEAM encourages pupils towards more skills-oriented learning, innovation, collaboration and creativity," says Arto Niva, Advisory Teacher specialised in STEAM at the City of Oulu.

Our STEAM-based Development Programme covers research done on STEAM at the University of Oulu, introduction to how Fab Labs (at the university and at schools) are used, what STEAM-based pedagogy means and how it is implemented in daily educational work.

Programme length: typically, 3–6 hours at a school or Fab Lab at the university. Longer programmes available: visits to the Fab Lab, City of Oulu schools, and some innovative companies in Oulu can be added to create an even more comprehensive programme.

**STEAM-based Learning Programme is jointly organised by Educational and Cultural Services of City of Oulu and the University of Oulu.**

Contact for more information:

**Ms. Anne Viherkari**

global.education@oulu.fi

mob. +358 40 674 4241
MULTIFUNCTIONAL COMMUNITY CENTRES

A good example of the modern, multifunctional buildings in Oulu is Kastelli Community Centre. The starting point for the design and construction of Kastelli was clear: the city needed a safe and versatile facility that has a long life cycle, and serves the needs of residents of all ages, now and in the future. Multifunctional community centres are usually created and run through a public-private partnership model (PPP).

As most of the building is used for educational purposes, the spatial design was created based on pedagogical expertise. The idea was that the building offers diverse opportunities for activities, stimuli and possibilities for studying both alone and in groups using diverse equipment. A good learning environment is flexible and adaptable, but also pleases the eye and creates a sense of security.

As Kastelli school is a sports-oriented school, and there is an upper secondary school specialising in sports operating on the premises, the community centre features an extensive range of sports facilities. The facilities are also available to other sports enthusiasts outside school hours. The auditorium, equipped with advanced ICT and stage technology, offers opportunities for arranging various educational and cultural events and seminars.

"Kastelli community centre is an active centre of growth, learning and well-being. More than 2,000 children, young people and adults play, study, exercise and work in the building. Kastelli is for everyone — and together we can do more at Kastelli. In our work, we aim to shift from a culture of doing things alone to a culture of doing things together. Our operations are guided by our values of community, sustainable development, safety and courage."
— Timo Salmi, Kastelli School Principal, Director of Kastelli Community Centre

The Multifunctional Community Centres Programme at Kastelli, Hiukkavaara, Metsokangas or Ritaharju covers themes such as:

- Changing from the culture of working alone to working and acting together in cooperation with different units
- New structures and methods to help children have more harmonised days at school and increase their wellbeing
- How multifunctional community centres offer inspiring growth and learning paths, which take individual needs of children and adults into consideration
- How management supports wellbeing of the people working at the community centre
- How the shared use of the building and networking help develop activities in the building and improve cost-efficiency

Multifunctional community centres host multiprofessional teams, which can include staff from, for example:

- schools
- a daycare centre
- youth services
- a library
- community colleges
- cultural services
- sports services
- health services

Programme length: 3–6 hours

Presentations from architectural agencies and construction companies can be added to create an extended programme. The Multifunctional Community Centres Programme is organised by Educational and Cultural Services of City of Oulu, University of Oulu, and Diaconia University of Applied Sciences.

Contact for more information:

Ms. Eija Ruohomäki

eija.ruohomaki@ouka.fi

mob. +358 44 703 9189
ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AND PEDAGOGY

Oulu is full of special entrepreneurial spirit! Would you like to know how it is taught to students?

Oulu offers Arctic entrepreneurship education expertise! Oulu has been known as a high technology town for a long time already. First thanks to its successful telecoms and ICT companies and nowadays also for, medical and wellbeing/health technology, IOT (internet of Things), and gaming companies. Oulu’s unique Polar Bear Pitching event, where companies pitch their business ideas standing in an ice hole has caught world-wide attention.

The early childhood education, primary and secondary school education follows a unique entrepreneurship curriculum path in Oulu with an aim to teach students a variety of skills from team working and societal skills to innovativeness and understanding one’s strengths. Vocational schools and universities also have wide entrepreneurship course offerings for their students. All levels of education have strong connections to the business world in the area. University of Oulu also offers 1-2-week long entrepreneurship-themed summer and winter schools for university students.

At Oulu University of Applied Sciences, you can learn about the innovation ecosystems available in the Oulu region and pedagogical methods which are used to support growth and new businesses.

The Entrepreneurship Pedagogy Programme offers a deeper introduction to entrepreneurship pedagogy from childhood education all the way through primary, secondary to upper secondary, vocational and higher education. You can see how students from early on learn to identify their own strengths, work in a team, take responsibility, adopt an innovative attitude, and how they can learn to apply the entrepreneurial mindset in everyday life – and later on, in work life.

The programme can also include visits to schools and campuses to see how entrepreneurship pedagogy is implemented in reality and meetings at interesting local companies.

Programme length: 1/2–5 days

Entrepreneurship Pedagogy Programme is jointly organised by the University of Oulu, Educational and Cultural Services of City of Oulu, Oulu University of Applied Sciences, and Educational Consortium OSAO (VET).

Contact for more information:
Ms. Anne Viherkari
global.education@oulu.fi
mob. +358 40 674 4241
Adopting a sustainable lifestyle is crucial for the survival of humanity and the environment. Educating people about sustainability is important when we want to change people’s behaviour, where ever we live in the world. Would you like to learn how to make sustainable development studies more meaningful?

In Oulu, the aim for sustainable development teaching in schools is to create eco-socially aware citizens, who understand what effects their actions have on other people, the environment and the society as a whole and who also act according to this knowledge.

Schools in Oulu offer sustainable development themed studies every school year from early education all the way up to the university level. The teaching includes ready-made material packs, nature school programmes, activities with cooperation partners and online learning environments. Students in Oulu can participate in activities, for example, at the Oulu University or at the Nature School of Oulu City, in any season of the year. Furthermore, options for Oulu’s pupils range from bringing things from nature to the classroom, to going out to explore nature, or even participate in one-week long hiking trips in Lapland.

Some Oulu-area schools and early education centres have eco-certifications, such as the Vihreä Lippu (“Green Flag”) which is a sustainable development programme for early education centres, schools, and youth organisations. Vihreä Lippu is part of the international Eco-Schools programme by FEE (Foundation for Environmental Education).

Sustainable development education is one of the local curriculum paths in Oulu. The curriculum path ideology stresses the student’s own role in learning and building his or her knowledge. Learning happens as a result of the student’s own actions, which take place in cooperation and interaction with other learners, teachers and other adults and learning environments. The sustainable development path also teaches students to respect one’s own cultures and languages as well as those of other people, and to take responsibility of the wellbeing of others. Being part of the curriculum, the learning experiences, starting from early childhood, progress as a learning path towards a more sustainable lifestyle.

There is an option to add specialist presentations from the University of Oulu, for instance, on industrial management and engineering, science, or economics. Sustainable development is in the focus of many fields of research and study.

Programme length: 1/2–5 days

Tour organisers can add additional outdoor activities or company visits to interesting local sustainable development oriented companies.

The Sustainable Development Programme is jointly organised by the University of Oulu, Educational and Cultural Services of City of Oulu, and Educational Consortium OSAO (VET).

Contact for more information:

Ms. Eija Ruohomäki
eija.ruohomaki@ouka.fi
mob. +358 44 70 39189

Ms. Anne Viherkari
global.education@oulu.fi
mob. +358 40 674 4241
LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

The Finnish National Core Curricula is based on a conception of learning that sees students as active actors. Learning takes place in interaction with other students, the teachers and other adults, and in various communities and learning environments. It involves doing things alone and together, thinking, planning and exploring, and assessing these processes in versatile manners. The pupils’ willingness to act and learn together and their improving skills in doing so are keys to the learning process.

Learning environments refer to the facilities; locations, communities and operating practices where learning and studying take place. The learning environment also includes the tools, services and materials used for studying. Learning environments must support the growth, learning and interaction of the individual and the community. Well-functioning learning environments promote interaction, participation and communal building of knowledge. They also enable active cooperation with communities or experts outside the school. What comes to the vocational studies, Educational Consortium OSAO (VET) in Oulu also has over 3,000 working life partners, which enables learning on the work places.

In the development, planning, implementation and use of facility solutions, factors to be accounted for include ergonomics, ecological qualities, aesthetics, accessibility and acoustic conditions, as well as the lighting, indoor air quality, comfort, order and tidiness of the premises. The facility solutions of the school, including the furniture and equipment, can be used to support the pedagogical development of instruction and active participation of pupils.

An effort is made to give the pupils access to the facilities, tools and materials as well as library services so that they can also provide opportunities for independent study. Not only the indoor and outdoor facilities of the school but also nature and the environment of the buildings are utilised in the instruction of various subjects. Libraries, sports, art and environmental centres, museums and many other facilities offer diverse learning environments.

Information and communication technology (ICT) has a key role in versatile learning environments. It can help to reinforce the pupils’ participation and skills in team work and support their personal learning paths. The diverse media culture is taken into consideration in the development of learning environments. Educational organisations in the Oulu region also use simulations as learning environments (for example, in logistics, forestry, social and health care, and in other technical fields of education of VET).

New ICT solutions are introduced to promote and support learning. The pupils’ and students’ own ICT devices may be used to support learning. At the same time, it must be ensured that all pupils have possibilities for using information and communication technology.

Feelings of success and positive experiences gathered in various environments and learning situations inspire pupils to develop their personal competence. The pupils take part in developing learning environments. The pupils’ individual needs are taken into account in the planning of learning environments. This way needs of intensified support for learning and special measures for school attendance may be prevented.

Oulu offers interesting opportunities to learn about many online learning environments! Faculty of Education at the University of Oulu specialises in digitally enhanced learning. The Diaconia University of Applied Sciences is known for blended learning, which strongly utilises online learning environments. eLukio upper secondary school runs dozens of online courses for students.

Programme length: 1/2–3 days

Learning Environments Programme is jointly organised by Educational and Cultural Services of City of Oulu and University of Oulu, Diaconia University of Applied Sciences, and Educational Consortium OSAO (VET).

Contact for more information:

Ms. Anne Viherkari
global.education@oulu.fi
mob. +358 40 674 4241
INCLUSION AND SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION

The development of basic education in Finland is guided by the inclusion principle. The accessibility of education must be ensured for all children. Each school providing basic education has an educational task, which means supporting the pupils' learning, development and wellbeing in cooperation with the home.

The organisation of instruction and support is based on the strengths as well as the learning and development needs of each pupil and teaching group. Attention shall be paid to the accessibility of learning and the prevention and early recognition of learning difficulties. Support for learning and school attendance comprises communal and learning environment related solutions. The focus is in meeting the pupils’ individual needs. When planning instruction, it must be taken into account that the need for support may vary from temporary to continuous or from minor to intensified, and that the pupil may need one or several forms of support.

The purpose of support is to prevent diversified and more serious problems as well as their long-term effects. It must be ensured that the pupil has opportunities to gain experiences of success in learning and as a group member, and his or her positive self-image and attitude towards schoolwork must be supported. Pedagogical expertise and cross-sectoral cooperation between teachers and other professionals providing support is important in identifying and assessing the need for support and planning and implementing support measures. The professionals who take part in the cooperation are decided on a case-by-case basis.

Primarily, support is provided for a pupil in his or her own teaching group and school by means of various flexible arrangements, unless the pupil’s best interests necessitate his or her transfer to another teaching group or school in order to provide more support. All in all, inclusive schools offer support for learning, special needs education and counselling.

The Faculty of Education at the University of Oulu has done a lot of research on special needs education. Special needs education is one separate study path at the university. The Diaconia University of Applied Sciences specialises on teaching special needs interpretation, for example, for people with hearing difficulties.

Programme length: 1/2–5 days

Learning Environments Programme is jointly organised by Educational and Cultural Services of City of Oulu, University of Oulu, Diaconia University of Applied Sciences, and Luovi Vocational College.

Contact for more information:

Ms. Anne Viherkari

global.education@oulu.fi
mob. +358 40 674 4241
Our comprehensive training programmes help you take your teaching and leadership skills onto a new level! During the training you will get a fresh, new perspective and learn to use new tools for your daily work. Our training programmes are tailor-made to suit your organisation’s specific needs.

Our teaching and leadership programmes can either be tailored to give you an overall training in handling topics such as the Finnish educational system and its specific features, transversal skills, innovative learning environments and materials, ICT skills, international skills, entrepreneurship pedagogy, and school management. Or the training programme can be tailored to cover some specific needs your organisation has.

The Professional Development and Leaderships Programmes available in Oulu are not limited to primary and secondary school context but can also handle early, university and vocational school education too.

Programme length: starting from 1–2 weeks

Professional Development and Leadership Programmes are jointly organised by the University of Oulu, Educational and Cultural Services of City of Oulu, Diaconia University of Applied Sciences, and Educational Consortium OSAO (VET).

Contact for more information:

**Ms. Eija Ruohomäki**
eija.ruohomaki@ouka.fi
mob. +358 44 703 9189
Oulu area educational organisations also offer consultation related to the Finnish educational systems and can help you find answers to your specific questions.

In Finland, students who have completed basic education choose their upper secondary pathway, general and/or VET (vocational education and training). Both pathways are equal in value and provide access to studies at the university level.

Education is one of the Finnish cornerstones and it’s a fundamental right of all citizen. The main goal of Finnish educational systems is to offer all citizens equal opportunities to educate themselves.

Finland is a forerunner in life-long learning. Opportunities are available to increase one’s knowledge and acquire new skills, regardless one’s age.

Please contact us for more details and a quote.

Expert Consultation is offered by Educational and Cultural Services of City of Oulu, the University of Oulu, Diaconia University of Applied Sciences, and Educational Consortium OSAO (VET).

Contact for more information:

**Ms. Eija Ruohomäki**
eija.ruohomaki@ouka.fi
mob. +358 44 703 9189

**Ms. Merja Paloniemi**
merja.paloniemi@osao.fi
mob. +358 50 594 9182
(for Educational Consortium OSAO VET)
ENGLISH LANGUAGE SCHOOL PROGRAMME

City of Oulu’s Community College offers 5- and 10-day English language courses for foreign student groups (10–20 persons). The course days include many types of learning methods such as

- Conversations over morning coffee or tea,
- Pronunciation exercises to encourage speaking,
- Grammar and vocabulary lab to smooth out grammatical hiccups and to widen vocabulary use,
- Learning through action (e.g. cooking or baking, doing handicrafts or sports), and
- Learning the language while exploring the local surroundings and the Finnish culture.

Target group: Students with English as foreign language
Minimum age: 16
Participant minimum/maximum: 10/20
Service languages: English
Availability/Seasonality: August–June
Length of the program: 5 days or 10 days
Location of the activity/program: Oulu city centre
Certificate/Diploma of participation: Yes

Local transportation, accommodation and meals are not included in this programme. Tour operators, DMSc and product coordination companies can add these elements to the language programme to create a full camp school package.

The English language programmes are offered by Oulu-opisto Community College.

Contact for more information:

Ms. Minna Hukkanen
minna.hukkanen@eduouka.fi
mob. +358 44 703 9102

Ms. Outi Lohi (cc.)
outi.lohi@ouka.fi
mob. +358 40 555 0064
You can also learn Finnish while you are visiting Oulu! Experienced teachers of the Oulu City’s Community College offer Finnish language tuition for total beginners to more advanced Finnish language learners.

The following courses are offered as options for one or two-week tailor-made programmes:

- Finnish for beginners
- Intermediate Finnish for foreigners
- Advanced writing and conversation course in Finnish
- Advanced grammar course in Finnish

Target group: Students with English as foreign or native language
Minimum age: 16
Participant minimum/maximum: 10/20
Service languages: English
Availability/Seasonality: August–June
Length of the program: 5 days or 10 days
Location of the activity/program: Oulu city centre
Certificate/Diploma of participation: Yes

Local transportation, accommodation and meals are not included in this programme. Tour operators, DMSc and product coordination companies can add these elements to the language programme to create a full camp school package.

The Finnish language programmes are offered by Oulu-opisto Community College.

Contact for more information:

**Ms. Minna Hukkanen**
minna.hukkanen@eduouka.fi
mob. +358 44 703 9102

**Ms. Outi Lohi (cc.)**
outi.lohi@ouka.fi
mob. +358 40 555 0064
The History, Science and Arts Programmes are offered by the Museum and Science Centre Luuppi. Luuppi’s programmes are based on phenomenon-based learning, and Finnish nature and creativity are in focus on these scientific and artistic programmes.

Children and youth learn transversal skills, important future skills, not only at schools but also through extended learning environments. Luuppi is one of these extended learning environments for Finnish school groups and for visiting, foreign groups.

Learn, be active and be creative! The Inspired by Nature, History, Science and Arts programme leads the children and youth to Luuppi’s unique world of art, history and science which are inspired by nature and the natural phenomena. The workshops are designed and run by pedagogical professionals. The aim is to teach and learn team work, problem-solving skills and enhance creativity. The approach is multi-sensory, interactive and unique.

Programmes at Valve Cultural Centre can be combined to Luuppi’s provision. They are either live action or animation workshops or workshops where video camera is used as a pen.

An example three-day programme:

Day 1 – At the Kierikki Stone Age Centre
• Arrival at the Kierikki Stone Age Centre
• The Sun Stone – film
• Stone Age Tribal Competition

Day 2 – At the Turkansaari Open-air Museum and Science Park Tietomaa
• A visit to the historical open-air museum
• A science workshop and 3D film

Day 3 – At Oulu Art Museum and the Cultural Centre Valve
• A guided tour at the Art Museum and a workshop
• Valve Film School workshop

Local transportation, accommodation and meals are not included in this programme. Tour operators, DMSc and product coordination companies can add these elements to the programme to create a full camp school package.

History, Science and Arts Programmes are offered by the Museum and Science Centre Luuppi, City of Oulu.

Contact for more information:

Ms. Tuija Hoikka
myynti.luuppi@ouka.fi
mob. +358 44 703 1335

Mr. Tommi Nevala
tommi.nevala@ouka.fi
mob +358 44 703 7547

The film workshops are offered by Valve Film School.
Summer and Winter Wellbeing and Activity Programmes
(Virpiniemi Sports Institute)

Virpiniemi Sports Institute is a multi-faceted educational and recreational environment on the shore of the Gulf of Bothnia, 20 minutes from the centre of Oulu. It is an ideal location for both leisure and active meetings and wellness days.

The surroundings of Virpiniemi Sports Institute offer active pursuits for every taste. The area is by the sea, on a pine forest ridge with illuminated jogging paths and ski trails. Virpiniemi's facilities include a ski stadium and a ski jumping tower, the Virpiniemi golf club, a disc golf course, an animal sports centre, a beach, a marina and a caravan area.

The summer programme in Virpiniemi offers many options for activities such as rope landing from the ski jumping tower, wilderness track walking by orienteering, team building in the nature, fun ball games, wall climbing, and disc Golf.

Here is an example of a one-day summer programme:

8:00–9:00 Opening event
9:00–10:00 Team building activities
10:15–11:15 Fun ball games
11:15-12:15 Lunch
12:15–13:15 Optional activity, choose one: Wall climbing, Rope landing, Floorball, Disc golf
13:30–14:30 Optional activity, choose one: Wall climbing, Rope landing, Floorball, Disc golf
14:45–16:30 Wilderness track walking by orienteering with the snowshoes. Making a campfire in a Lappish hut (grilling sausages, tea on open fire and use local ingredients as a snack)
16:30–17:00 Diplomas

Programme length: 1/2–14 days

Activities for the winter programme include options such as team building, wilderness track by orienteering with the snowshoes, snow sculpting, fun ball games in the snow, sledding, snowshoeing, and wall climbing.

Here is an example of a one-day winter programme:

8:00–9:00 Opening ceremony
9:00–10:00 Team building activities
10:15–11:15 Fun ball games in the snow
11:15-12:15 Lunch
12:15–13:15 Snow Sculpting
13:30–14:30 Sledding
14:45–16:30 Wilderness track walking by orienteering with the snowshoes. Making a campfire in a Lappish hut (roasting sausages, tea on open fire and use local ingredients as a snack)
16:30–17:00 Diplomas

Programme length: 1/2–14 days

Local transportation, accommodation and meals are not included in this programme. Tour operators, DMSc and product coordination companies can add these elements to the language programme to create a full camp school package.

Summer and Winter Wellbeing and Activity Programmes are offered Educational Consortium OSAO (VET).

Contact for more information:

Mr. Antti Rovamo
antti.rovamo@osao.fi
mob. +358 50 560 8392

Ms. Merja Paloniemi
merja.paloniemi@osao.fi
mob. +358 50 594 9182