

School Square of Kauhajoki – where ICT is a way of life

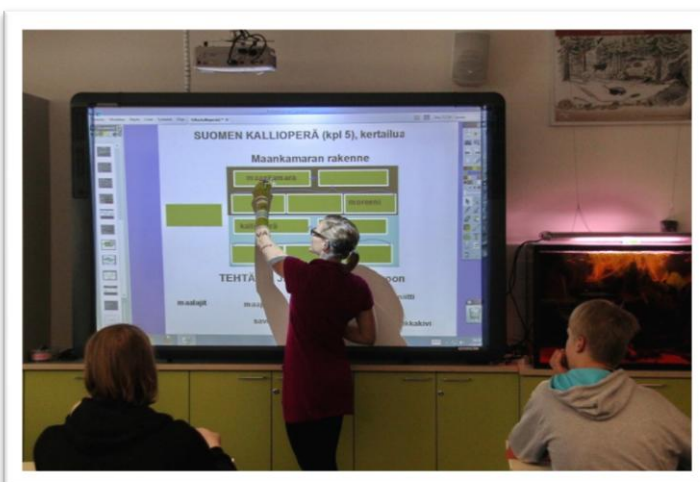
School Square of Kauhajoki is extremely unique comprehensive school in Finland. The main point of the planning has been to create a learning environment which supports strongly children's eager to learn and respects the differences of the children. The environment of the school square enables different teaching methods to be used. There are different workshops for example for arts and crafts, for sciences and for sense perceptions which enable the learning by mixing different subjects. The joy of learning is developed by working in a concrete way, co-operating and doing research of own environment. For example learning mathematics could be funnier and easier at the same time when you are cooking or doing something by your own hands! It is very important to find students' individual strengths and use them to develop strong self-esteem. They are encouraged to play, move and do exercise by providing them with stimulating environment. Even though the School Square of Kauhajoki is a quite big school in Finland, it does not feel so large because students of various ages can be composed to smaller "village schools". The School Square of Kauhajoki is the first Workshop Village School in Finland!



Religion class where Buddhism is the topic of the day and students are learning it by trying Taizé

The school square includes two different levels; primary school (grades 1-6) and secondary school (grades 7-9). Special education has been integrated into each class. Optional upper secondary general school (grades 10-12) is also located in the same area. Primary school was built in 2011 and secondary school got brand new facilities in 2013. In the school square there are almost 1000 students who are being taken care of by staff of 130 people including school nurse and psychologist. The new school has many special features such as the whole area is totally smoke-free and also inside the building you are not allowed to wear shoes or take pictures.

The building is highly equipped with different ICT-related services. The building is connected to the regional FTTH-network but actually it doesn't stop there because fibre network has been built all the way to the classrooms! Surveillance and access control work via fibre and every classroom has smart boards and



document cameras, even the cooking classes. Students already use electronic books in some classes and are allowed to use their smart phones, tablets and laptops during the lecture since 1Gbits/s wired connection and 100Mbits/s Wifi don't set any limits. Web-based student information system is used in the whole county where students and their parents see their schedules, exam results, grades, communicate with teachers, leave notes of absence etc.