

CHAPTER 2 Basic Education in ISV as the Foundation of General Knowledge

At the International School of Vantaa education is arranged in accordance with the principles of lifelong learning and the pupils becoming responsible members of the society. Education increases the pupils' willingness to develop oneself to meet the challenges of a changing environment, and to educate themselves for new tasks. It supports the growth of individuality and a sense of community.

Education prepares the pupils for acting in a democratic society. It supports the growth of forming responsible decisions and independent choices. Comprehensive education supports the pupils' growth towards a sustainable, healthy life style and the evaluation and development of it. The pupils explore their cultural heritage and are guided in developing culture and in becoming an active member in an increasingly international world.

2.1 Underlying Values

The values of our school are:

- Belonging
- Responsibility
- Respect

The values of the basic education in city of Vantaa are:

- Well-being
- Joy of learning
- Respect of others

2.1.1 Belonging

It is important for children to feel that they belong to the school as a community. Belonging to the school community brings the children a sense of safety and self-worth and help in building confidence. Students of various ages are encouraged to interact with each other and possibilities for this are created through school activities. Students get a feeling of pride for their work when appreciation is shown by having their work on display at school. The entire school community shows its support and encouragement for the work of the children. This way the children also learn to respect for other people's work. Students get a sense of pride for their whole school community and are proud of being part of it.

2.1.2 Responsibility

We cherish responsibility as a cornerstone of the school and community. The students are encouraged to learn to be responsible for their actions. They contribute to the well-being of the school and interactions with their peers through their actions. Through responsibility they take ownership of their own learning. Teachers support students in their journey towards becoming responsible citizens. Students learn to take responsibility of their relationships to their peers

and teachers. They learn ways to resolve conflicts that they face in their everyday life. They learn responsibility for their own belongings and respect for other people's belongings.

2.1.3 Respect

Our school values respectful behavior towards people, the learning environment and our natural environments. The students are guided in their everyday life to polite ways of interaction with other people. They are taught that all people, regardless of their background, are valuable and deserve respect. Students learn that all life is valuable and learn ways in which they can take care of their environment.

These values are a part and parcel of the way of life in our school. The teachers serve as an example for our values. The values are much more than a statement of intent but are lived out by the school community on a daily basis, on lessons, in informal meetings and all interactions.

2.2 Mission of Basic Education

The pupils acquire information and skills from different content and subject areas in order to prepare them for life-long learning. The pupils develop their own way of learning and gradually take greater responsibility for their own learning. The pupils learn to study alone, in pairs and in groups. They learn to communicate their reasoning and to understand the importance that peer groups have on learning. The pupils learn critical thinking skills and how to use IT tools.

The pupils grow up to be hard-working, tolerant and responsible members of the community, and they take others into consideration. The pupils internalize good manners. They understand that humans are dependent on, and responsible for, the environment. They become aware of the impact of their own actions and act accordingly in everyday situations. The pupils learn to defend their ethical choices with facts and personal experience, and to take responsibility for their decisions. The pupils' physical and motor skills develop and they understand how health and welfare are maintained. The pupils' linguistic and cultural identities and their abilities to express themselves in different ways are developed. The pupils develop their creativity, become acquainted with different forms of art, as well as with their local and national culture.

2.3 Structure of Basic Education

The structure of education at the International School of Vantaa is shown in the division of hours, which is based on the division of hours given by the City of Vantaa and legislations. The pupils of the International School of Vantaa will proceed in their studies according to the curriculum of the grade levels.

Grade 6. students are taught according to subject teacher system.

2.4 The Concept of Learning

The International School of Vantaa curriculum is based on a conception of learning as an individual and communal process of building knowledge and skills. Through this process, cultural involvement is created. Learning is seen as purposeful action that takes place either independently, under a teacher's guidance, or in interaction with a peer group. Underlying the conception of learning is the idea of lifelong learning that puts an emphasis on acquiring new learning and work habits in addition to new knowledge and skills. Learning is based on the pupils' existing structure of knowledge. On the basis of this structure, pupils process and

interpret the material to be learned and therefore the pupils' own active role and purposeful activity are of essence. Learning also depends on the pupils' previously constructed knowledge and skills, motivation, and learning and work habits. In addition to requiring activity, learning is a process that also requires the skill to solve problems either independently or collectively.

The International School of Vantaa (ISV) is a school that teaches in English, which has a further impact on how we learn and how we teach. The core of learning in ISV is based upon the principle that teaching and learning go hand in hand with the student at the center. In addition it is based on the following principles:

- learning is interactive between students, adults, peers and the physical surroundings
- students have the possibility to learn by doing
- students learn to regard themselves as learners, learn to know their personal learning style and to know their strengths and weaknesses in order to learn and improve themselves
- students are encouraged to learn by positive feedback and support
- lifelong learning

Teaching and Learning in ISV is based on the needs of the student. This means that:

- students have individualized learning paths when needed
- teaching is connected to the students own interest and sphere of experience
- different backgrounds are recognized in teaching
- teaching builds on the students' previous knowledge
- continuous learning is promoted

Evaluation of a student's learning and the success of imparting the city goals is ascertained by using multiple tools. We, at ISV, evaluate these concepts and goals through direct communication with the students and parents as well as with other teachers within the school. We build a relationship based on a common core understanding of what learning is at ISV.