

EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION PLAN

Tasa-arvo- ja yhdenvertaisuussuunnitelma

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF VANTAA

Vantaan kansainvälinen koulu

2023-2025



**Vantaa
Vanda**

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1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this plan is to guide our staff towards non-discrimination and the promotion of equality and non-discrimination within the framework of the Equality Act and the Non-Discrimination Act. This plan focuses on operational equality and non-discrimination work, i.e. how we act in a non-discriminatory manner and promote gender equality and equality for all people in our activities related to our students and partners.

This plan is therefore

- an institution-specific equality plan in accordance with sections 5 a and 6 c of the Equality Act, drawn up in cooperation with staff and students, and
- an institution-specific plan for the necessary measures to promote equality in accordance with Section 6 of the Equality Act.

Act on Equality between Women and Men (Tasa-arvolaki 609/1986)

The Gender Equality Act is about gender equality. It also aims to prevent discrimination based on gender identity or gender expression. According to Article 4 of the Gender Equality Act, public authorities must promote equality between women and men in all their activities in a goal-oriented and planned manner and create and establish administrative and operational practices that ensure the promotion of equality between women and men in the preparation of and decision-making on matters. In particular, the conditions that hinder the achievement of equality must be changed.

According to Section 5 of the Gender Equality Act, public authorities and education providers and other organisations providing education or training must ensure that girls and boys, women and men have equal opportunities for education and professional development and that teaching, research and learning materials support the purpose of this Act. Equality shall be promoted in education and training, taking into account the age and development of children.

According to Section 5 a of the Gender Equality Act, the education provider is responsible for drawing up an annual equality plan for each educational institution in cooperation with staff and students.

The equality plan must include:

- 1) a report on the equality situation in the educational institution;
- 2) the measures necessary to promote equality;
- 3) an evaluation of the implementation and results of the measures included in the previous equality plan.

Particular attention should be paid to the selection of pupils or students, the organization of teaching, learning differences and assessment of academic performance, and the prevention and elimination of sexual and gender-based harassment.

According to Section 6 c of the Gender Equality Act, authorities, education providers and other organizations providing education or training, as well as employers, must prevent discrimination based on gender identity or gender expression in a targeted and planned manner. This must be taken into account when preparing equality plans for educational institutions and when deciding on measures to promote equality.

Non-Discrimination (Equality) Act (Yhdenvertaisuuslaki 1325/2014)

The purpose of the Non-Discrimination Act is to promote equality and prevent discrimination. Discrimination means that a person, for example a member of a minority group, is placed at a disadvantage because of a personal reason. Often several grounds, including gender, are at play at the same time (multiple or intersectional discrimination).

According to Article 8 of the Non-Discrimination Act, no one may be discriminated against on grounds of age, origin, nationality, language, religion, belief, opinion, political activity, trade union activities, family relations, health, disability, sexual orientation or any other personal ground.

According to Section 6 of the Non-Discrimination Act, an education provider and an educational institution maintained by it must assess the realization of equality in its activities and take the necessary measures to promote the realization of equality. The promotion measures must be effective, appropriate and proportionate, taking into account the operating environment, resources and other circumstances of the educational institution. The education and training provider shall ensure that the institution has a plan for the necessary measures to promote equality. The education provider and the educational establishment run by it shall give pupils and their guardians and students or their representatives the opportunity to be consulted on the promotion measures.

The Equality Act should also take into account Article 9 on positive special measures: "A proportionate difference of treatment which is intended to promote equality in practice or to prevent or eliminate disadvantages resulting from discrimination shall not constitute discrimination."

Schools have a legal obligation to address discrimination and harassment. Schools' responsibility to intervene in harassment will be strengthened by the amendment to the Equality Act from June 1, 2023, when education organizers will have a stronger responsibility than at present to identify, intervene and eliminate harassment:

- The school must take the necessary measures to eliminate harassment against the student. The training organizer is guilty of discrimination if this is not done.

- In addition, the definition of harassment changes so that harassment can target not only an individual but also a group of people.

2. PREVIOUS EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION PLAN

Period of validity: The previous plan is valid until 31.7.2023.

The main areas of improvement in our previous plan were language awareness, inclusion and anti-racist education.

This was implemented through monthly well-being lessons, weekly homeroom sessions and Talking Point. In Talking Point, students are invited to discuss topics that concern them with the well-being team. The objective has been to create a safe and relaxed atmosphere for students where they are welcome to discuss different topics on their own terms and get support in dealing with difficult emotions.

The results of the plan were measured through a survey given to teachers and students at different grade levels. The results of the survey will be discussed in the following sections.

3. A Review of State of Equality and Equity in the School

3.1. Statistics broken down by gender

Number of students by grade level and gender are shown in the table below. These tables reflect the data from the academic year 2022-2023.

Elementary school (1-6)

Grade level	Girls	Boys	Total
1	29	18	47
2	25	23	48
3	28	28	56
4	29	26	55
5	37	18	55
6	31	30	61
Total	179	143	322

Junior high school (7-9)

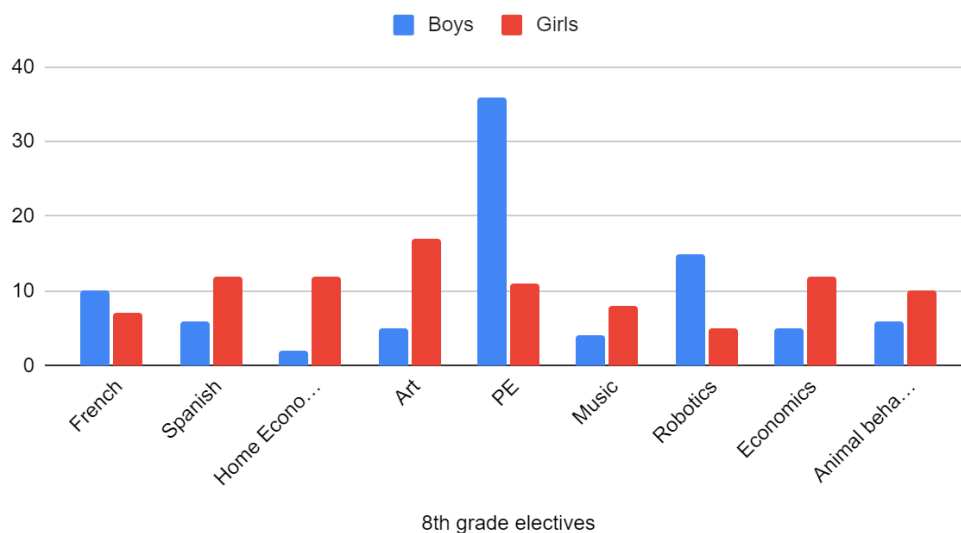
Grade level	Girls	Boys	Total
7	55	46	101
8	46	48	94
9	44	43	87
Total	145	137	282

Total girls in grades 1-9: 329 (54%)

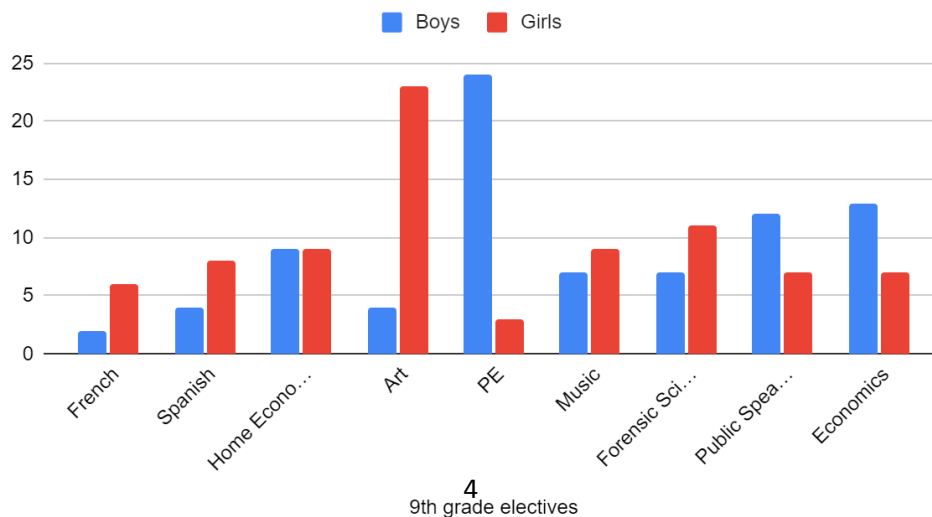
Total boys in grades 1-9: 280 (46%)

In the graphs below, you can see the gender distributions of elective subjects. Elective subjects are chosen by the students themselves and ranked according to their wishes. The last graph shows the gender distribution in TEPPPO (Työelämäpainotteinen perusopetus). Students can apply to the TEPPPO program of their own will and they are accepted based on an interview conducted by the TEPPPO teacher.

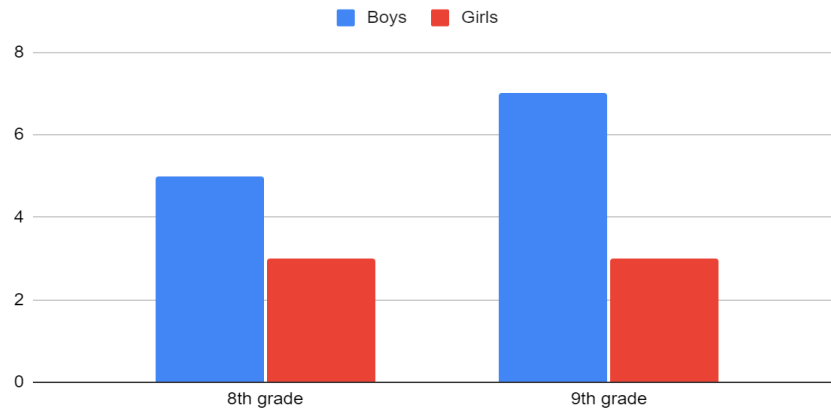
8th grade electives gender distribution



9th grade electives gender distribution



Gender distribution in TEPPPO (Työelämäpainotteinen perusopetus)

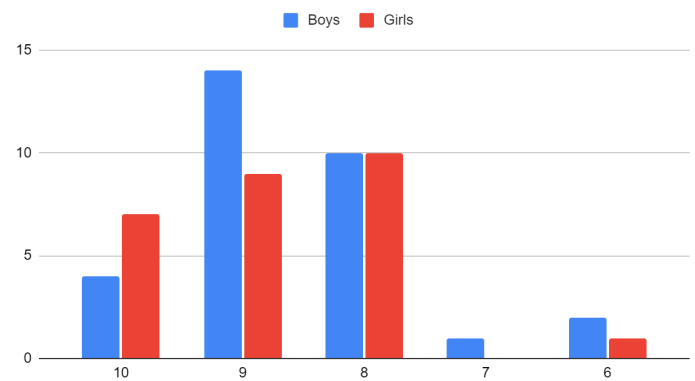


We have chosen the 6th graders as our sample for grades in the following subjects: Math, Finnish and English. In addition, we chose to include behavior grades in our data. Below you can find the grade point average (rounded up to the nearest tenth) as well as the mode for each of these variables.

Math (6th grade)

	Average	Mode
Girls	8.7	8
Boys	8.5	9

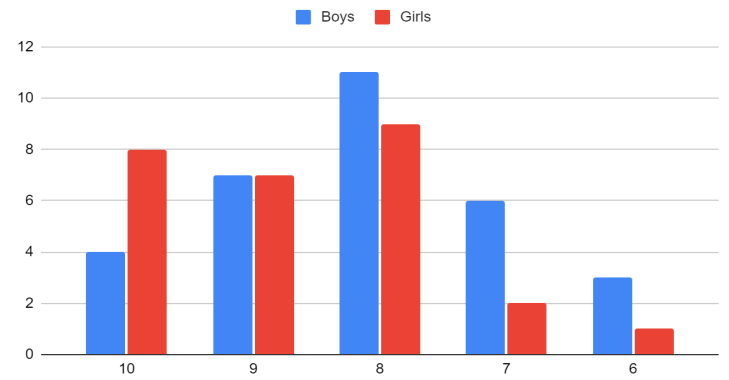
6th grade Math



Finnish (6th grade)

	Average	Mode
Girls	8.7	8
Boys	8.1	8

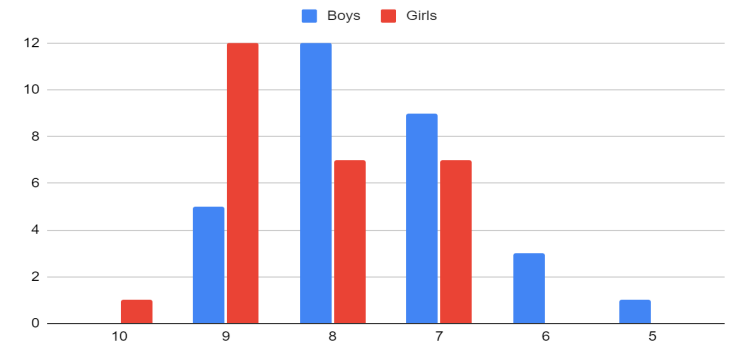
6th grade Finnish



English (6th grade)

	Average	Mode
Girls	8.3	9
Boys	7.6	8

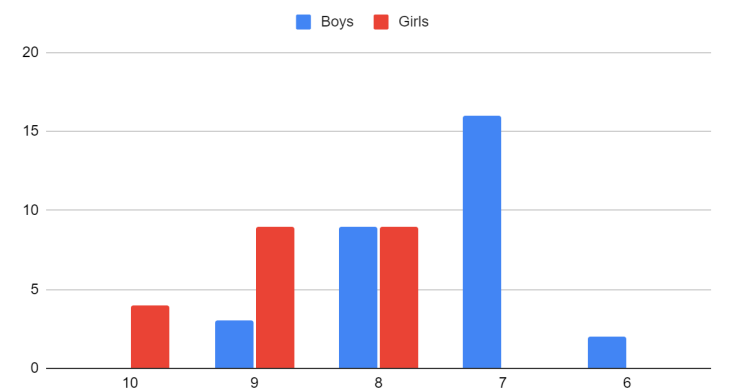
6th grade English



Behavior (6th grade)

	Average	Mode
Girls	8.6	8
Boys	7.4	7

6th grade behavior



3.2. Our specific characteristics

Our school is an international school and as such, the language of instruction is English, apart from certain language subjects (mandatory Finnish and Swedish and elective languages).

Students come from various multicultural backgrounds. Approximately 45 nationalities are represented in the student body. There are 52 different mother tongues spoken by the students. The top five mother tongues are Finnish, English, Telugu, Hindi and Tamil.

Teachers also come from various backgrounds. At the moment, 12 different mother tongues are represented. The gender distribution of staff members (including assistants and support staff) is 68% female and 32% male. The gender distribution of students is shown in the table found in the previous section.

3.3. Data sources and tools used in the design

The data used in making this plan consisted of a survey completed by the school. The survey consisted of four different versions; one for grades 1-2, one for grades 3-4, one for grades 5-9 and one for teachers. The surveys were answered in April 2023. The questions for each of the questions can be found at the end of this document. All surveys were answered anonymously through Google Forms.

Other tools used in completing this plan included the City of Vantaa Equality and Equity guidelines.

3.4. Entries

This plan was completed under the instruction of the informational workshops provided by the city of Vantaa during VESO-days in January and March of 2023. It was drafted based on the City of Vantaa Equality and Equity plan document.

This plan, including the surveys, has been completed by teachers in the Equality and Equity team and teachers who volunteered. The plan is valid until the end of the Academic year 2024-2025 (31.7.2025).

This plan will be approved in the **annual plan** and come into effect on August 1, 2023. Staff will be informed in a meeting at the beginning of the academic year 2023-2024 (August) and parents and students will have access to this document via the school's website.

The success of this plan will be monitored by completing another similar survey at the end of academic year 2025 and as needed.

This plan is linked to the general anti-bullying plan implemented by the well-being coordinators as well as general guidelines about school safety.

4. NON-DISCRIMINATION AND PROMOTION OF GENDER EQUALITY

Our aim is that all genders have the same rights, responsibilities and opportunities to fulfill themselves and to participate in society. To achieve this, we need both non-discrimination in our own activities and the promotion of gender equality in all activities within our institution.

4.1. Student selection and gender equality

Students are selected based on entrance exam scores. Entrance exams for first graders and seventh graders are organized twice a year (February and August). Gender is not taken into account or recorded during this process.

Elementary students of ISV are accepted automatically to our junior high without entrance exams. In addition, students from Kaivoksela and Rekolanmäki schools' English lines are accepted to our junior high automatically without entrance exams. Gender is not taken into account or recorded during this process.

4.2. Organization of education and gender equality

Students receive instruction based on the guidelines of the National curriculum and the city of Vantaa curriculum. Students receive the support that they are entitled to by law when the need arises. Students are not grouped arbitrarily based on gender or ethnic and religious background. For example, students are not grouped into separate PE lessons, but all students from the same grade participate in the same lesson. The school makes sure that students are taught the skills and knowledge stated in the curriculum and that they receive the support they are entitled to by law.

The school makes sure that all students have the required materials needed to complete their studies at school. This includes school books and notebooks as well as any other necessary tools and materials. A students' socio-economic background should not be an obstacle in their learning process or the opportunities they are given throughout their learning.

The school makes sure that all students have the same opportunities to participate in school trips and functions regardless of socio-economic background or participating in possible fundraisers. School field trips are to be free to all students. Students who for ethical reasons do not want to participate in certain special events or trips are exempt from them.

The school makes sure to implement anti-racist and anti-sexist plans throughout the year through workshops, well-being lessons, homeroom sessions and organizing the Talking Point. Teachers are obliged to be sensitive to matters related to gender identity, sexuality, ethnicity and any other sensitive topics. These matters are discussed by the teachers throughout the year as needed during meetings. The school is committed to making sure that it is a safe space for all students and staff.

4.3 Learning differences and assessment of learning outcomes and gender equality

There is concern among teachers regarding learning differences between girls and boys. Teachers and educators are encouraged to take any possible learning gaps between genders into account in their instruction.

4.4. Guidance and counseling and gender equality

All students are provided with guidance regardless of their gender. Students are encouraged to take part in work practise programs (työelämään tutustuminen, TET) and given the opportunity to participate in working life-oriented teaching (työelämäpainotteinen perusopetus, TEPPO). The study guidance counselor encourages students to make plans regarding their academic future and provides different alternatives according to interest, not gender or any other such factor.

The school has a study guidance counselor, a social worker, a school psychologist, a nurse, a TEPPO-teacher and other support staff dedicated to the students' well-being and counseling. A school psychologist can be consulted when needed.

4.5. Facilities (physical and electronic) and gender equality

The school has both gendered and unisex bathrooms in the building. Student changing rooms are gendered (boys and girls separately). The school building is accessible through the main entrance and we have an elevator. There has been discussion about possible visitors not being aware of where the accessible entrance is - students and parents are aware of its location.

Students from grades 3 upwards have individual Chromebooks. Grades 1-2 share Chromebooks, but there are no individual Chromebooks.

4.6. Prevention and elimination of gender-based harassment and sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is also prohibited by law, as is gender-based harassment. Harassment can include (but is not limited to): degrading remarks about someone's gender; sexually suggestive expressions and gestures; sexually suggestive remarks, speech and messages; suggestive physical touch without consent. It is important that staff is familiar with different forms of harassment to be able to intervene. It is imperative that students are encouraged to inform an adult in cases of harassment. Teachers are required to inform the parents of the target of harassment as well as the perpetrator's parents. Harassment outside of school also needs to be reported. Any kind of harassment based on gender and sexuality is classified as bullying and will be resolved using the anti-bullying procedure outlined by the school as well as the disciplinary measures outlined in the procedure.

The teachers are obliged to make sure there is no bullying or harassment in their classroom and to foster an open, safe and welcoming atmosphere.

Students answer different surveys on a regular basis (SchoolDay, Edulyzer), through which teachers can observe the well-being of students. Students are also encouraged to let teachers and support staff know when there is harassment or bullying, whether online or in real life.

Students from grade 4 upwards are made aware of Someturva, where they can report cases of online harassment, including sexual harassment. Students are made aware of appropriate online behavior and how to deal with cases of online bullying and harassment.

4.7. Other identified areas for improvement to achieve gender equality

- Stereotypical gender perceptions.
- Gender segregation in educational choices and in working life.
- Gender mainstreaming in different subjects (also pay attention to teaching materials, including illustration).
- Avoiding gendered language.
- Staff gender equality skills.

5. NON-DISCRIMINATION AND PROMOTION OF EQUALITY

We have assessed the implementation of non-discrimination in our institution on the basis of the personal criteria set out in the Non-discrimination Act 8 §. We highlight the following personal criteria for particular attention and equality work:

5.1. Race and ethnic background

- Why: Our survey showed that many of our students are facing discrimination based on race and ethnicity. As we are an international school with students from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds, it is important to understand the implications of racism and discrimination.
- Measure needed: More attention must be paid to educate staff and students on current definitions, practices and solutions. This will include more themes in school around anti-racism. Visibility of different kinds of families, traditions, cultures and nationalities, in individual classrooms, e.g. through diverse teaching materials and in school, e.g. through theme days and culture days. In cases of conflict, teachers must intervene and help resolve the situation.

5.2. Gender and sexuality

Why: Teachers and students have observed that students are using discriminatory language without considering the implications. This includes sexist and homophobic language and slurs. Gender stereotypes are observed and perpetuated at times.

Measure needed: Lessons and time put towards exploring and discussing the impact of words, e.g. during well-being lessons, assemblies or homeroom sessions.

5.3. Other areas for improvement relevant to the realization of equality

- The treatment of human rights, diversity and non-discrimination in different subjects
- Non-discrimination in educational materials (including photographs)
- Parties, excursions and visitors
- Observance of various thematic days, e.g., International Women's Day on 8 March and Equality Day on 19 March; Children's Rights Day on 20 November and Human Rights Day on 10 December.

6. INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY

6.1 Inclusion, equality and equity

Equality and equity are achieved through interaction with other people. We promote inclusion and, alongside it, equality and equity through the following measures:

- Student councils (junior high and primary school) are a part of decision-making and planning of events that promote community and belonging.
- Peer students run activities and plan events that boost school spirit and promote inclusion and community.
- Talking Point is a time reserved for Junior High students to discuss matters important to them with adult guidance and support. This is optional and meant to help students voice their opinions and feel supported.
- CWT (Community welfare team) and the well-being coordinators are in charge of producing material and monitoring the well-being of students and staff. Well-being coordinators put together monthly lessons for all grade levels. The lessons consist of different themes. Student representatives from each grade level are present at a CWT meeting once a year.
- VERSO gives students an opportunity to seek advice and solutions from other students, promoting both community and responsibility. ISV Crew2\$, a group made up of selected students, seeks to support and help students who need help with various topics, such as bullying.

6.2. Summary of measures for the period covered by the plan

Subject: Anti-racism workshops

What we do: A professional in the subject of anti-racism was invited to our school and they offered a workshop, where the subject of race and racism was discussed in an age-appropriate manner. This will be continued as possible.

Who will monitor (in addition to the principal): Culture team.

Implementation (mid-term or final evaluation): Discussion and/or survey.

Subject: Multicultural Finland

What we do: During our Independence Day celebration, students are encouraged to dress in their own cultural clothing and together we celebrate a multicultural Finland through different activities.

Who monitors (in addition to principal): Culture team.

Implementation (mid-term or final evaluation): Culture team discussion.

Subject: Annual survey for students

What we do: Students are given a survey to fill in regarding different forms of discrimination they have faced or observed. Students are asked where the measures taken to protect them have been to their satisfaction and whether the intervention has led to positive results. The results of the survey will be discussed by CWT and staff.

Who monitors (in addition to the principal): Culture team, CWT.

Implementation (mid-term or final evaluation): CWT and staff discussion.

Subject: Daily interactions

What we do: Teachers are vigilant and make sure to intervene in possible discriminatory situations. The staff promotes equality, respect, inclusivity and community in their daily teaching.

Who monitors (in addition to principal): Entire staff.

Implementation (mid-term or final evaluation): Staff discussion when needed.

SUPPORTING MATERIAL FOR PLAN MAKING

- City of Vantaa Equality and Equal Opportunities Work Plan

(Vantaan kaupungin tasa-arvo- ja yhdenvertaisuustyön suunnitelma)

<https://www.vantaa.fi/fi/kaupunki-ja-paatoksenteko/vastuullisuus/tasa-arvo-ja-yhdenvertaisuus>

MUKANA! Tasa-arvo- ja yhdenvertaisuustyö toisella asteella, Opetushallitus

www.oph.fi/fi/tilastot-ja-julkaisut/julkaisut/mukana-tasa-arvo-ja-yhdenvertaisuusty-toisella-asteella

Tasa-arvotyö on taitolaji, Opetushallitus

<https://www.oph.fi/fi/tilastot-ja-julkaisut/julkaisut/tasa-arvoty-toitolaji>

TASA-ARVOKOMPASSI: Työkalu tasa-arvo- ja yhdenvertaisuussuunnitteluun,

Rauhankasvatusinstituutti

<https://maailmankoulu.fi/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Tasa-arvokompassi-VAKA.pdf>

Koulu vailla vertaa, Rauhankasvatusinstituutti

https://rauhankasvatus.fi/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/yhdenvertaisuus_opas_web.pdf

Oppia kaikille! Sisäasiainministeriö

<https://yhdenvertaisuus.fi/documents/5232670/5376058/Oppia+kaikille+suomi/09dd5121-d98e-487c-9acf-ee768620da0e/Oppia+kaikille+suomi.pdf>

Tasa-arvon ja yhdenvertaisuuden käsitteiden sanasto, THL:n tasa-arvotiedon keskus:

<https://thl.fi/fi/web/sukupuolten-tasa-arvo/sukupuoli/tasa-arvosanasto>

Miehiä ja naisihmisiä – Suomen kielen seksismi ja sen purkaminen, Mila Engelberg, TANE

https://tane.fi/documents/1429808/1854322/TANE_Miehia_ja_naisihmisia_verkko_valmis.pdf/d7b558dc-74ed-4981-0b06-f890ff2973d5/TANE_Miehia_ja_naisihmisia_verkko_valmis.pdf

Sukupuolten segregaatien lieventämisestä, SEGLI-hanke

<https://www.kaikkienduuni.fi/news/2019/3/8/koulutusaineisto-sukupuolenmukaisen-segregaation-syyt-ja-keinoja-segregaation-lieventmiseksi>

Koulutustilaisuus (25.1. and 30.3.)

Turvallinen koulu on vapaa häirinnästä:

<https://syriinta.fi/documents/25249352/34268331/Turvallinen+koulu+on+vapaa+h%C3%A4irinn%C3%A4st%C3%A4.pdf/0a7d549b-8567-971a-da1d-bd7dc8fed1/Turvallinen+koulu+on+vapaa+h%C3%A4irinn%C3%A4st%C3%A4.pdf?t=1678868483542>

SURVEYS

i. Survey questions for grades 1-2

ii. Survey questions for grades 3-4

1. I have been teased because of
 - Race
 - Gender
 - Sexuality
 - Religion
 - Personal opinions
 - How much money my family has
 - Health
 - None of these things
2. The teasing included
 - Name calling
 - Leaving me out or ignoring me
 - Physical violence
 - Threatening
 - Online bullying
3. Has your teacher asked about your preferred pronouns?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Some of them

4. Do your teachers call you by your preferred pronouns?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Some of them

5. Are you given opportunities to learn about different cultures and beliefs?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Sometimes
 - I don't know

6. Do you think that your teachers can have open conversations with you about race?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Some of them
 - I don't know

7. Does your school speak out against racism?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Sometimes
 - I don't know

8. Does your school speak out against sexism?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Sometimes
 - I don't know

9. Does your school teach you to respect everybody and to treat everybody equally?

-Yes

-No

-Sometimes

-I don't know

10. Do your text books have pictures of people who look like you?

-Yes

-No

-I don't know

11. Does your school make you feel like you are an important part of the community?

-Yes

-No

-I don't know

12. Do you feel comfortable sharing your culture and background with everyone at your school?

-Yes

-No

-Sometimes

13. Do you feel like you can talk to your teachers about race, gender, religion or sexuality?

-Yes

-No

-Some of them

iii. Survey questions for grades 5-9

1. I have been bullied because of my
 - Race
 - Gender
 - Sexuality
 - Religion
 - Political views
 - Socioeconomic background
 - Health
 - None of these things.

2. The bullying has consisted of
 - Name calling/teasing
 - Excluding
 - Physical violence
 - Online bullying
 - Threatening

3. Have you been asked about your preferred pronouns by your teachers?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Some of them

4. Do your teachers address you by your preferred pronouns?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Sometimes.

5. Are you given opportunities to learn about different cultures, ethnicities and beliefs?

-Yes

-No

-Sometimes

-I don't know.

6. Are you confident that adults at school can have honest conversations with students about race?

-Yes

-No

-Some adults

-I don't know

7. Does your school speak out against racism?

-Yes

-No

-Sometimes

-I don't know

8. Does your school speak out against sexism?

-Yes

-No

-Sometimes

-I don't know

9. Does your school encourage you to respect people from different backgrounds and to treat everyone equally?

-Yes

-No

-Sometimes

-I don't know

10. Do your textbooks and learning materials include people who look like you?

-Yes

-No

-Sometimes

-I don't know

11. Does your school make you feel that you are an important member of the community?

-Yes

-No

-Sometimes

-I don't know

12. Do you feel comfortable sharing your culture and background with everyone at your school?

-Yes

-No

-Sometimes

-I don't know

13. Do you feel like you can talk to your teachers about matters related to race, gender, religion or sexuality?

-Yes

-No

-Some teachers

-I don't know

14. Do you feel like you have the same opportunities as everyone else (for example in future education, work, and so on)?

-Yes

- No
- I don't know

iv. Survey questions for teachers

1. I have faced harassment or bullying based on
 - Race or ethnicity
 - Gender
 - Sexuality
 - Religion
 - Political views
 - Health
 - Socioeconomic status
 - I have not faced harassment or bullying.
2. The harassment or bullying consisted of
 - Name calling
 - Excluding
 - Less opportunities
 - I have not faced harassment or bullying
3. Do you think our school is proactive in reducing the gap in learning between boys and girls?
 - Yes
 - No (skip next question).
 - I have not noticed a gap in learning between girls and boys.
4. If yes, how? (open question)

5. Do you think our school is proactive in finding ways to promote students' mental well-being?
- Yes
 - No
 - Sometimes
6. Does our school group students into girls and boys in our day to day without justification?
- Yes
 - No
 - Sometimes
7. Our school has a clear definition for gender discrimination and a plan for how to deal with it.
- Yes
 - No
 - I don't know
8. We encourage students to learn about different topics and career options regardless of gender or ethnicity.
- Yes
 - No
 - Sometimes
9. Our learning materials do not include gender stereotypes.
- Yes, they do.
 - No, they don't.
 - They sometimes do.

10. Does our school promote anti-racism (do we actively intervene in racism and try to prevent discrimination based on race, language, ethnicity, religion?)

-Yes

-No

-Sometimes

11. Is our school building accessible to everybody?

-Yes

-No

-I don't know

12. Do you think you have had a say in our school's equality and equity plan?

-Yes

-No

-A little

-I did not know we had one

13. As we are moving forward with our school's equality and equity plan, please write down what you think our school's main priority should be. (open question)