



***A unique school in Finland
in the heart of Helsinki***





The European School of Helsinki (ESH) is a school accredited to the European Schools' network. There are 14 European Schools and 10 accredited schools in different countries of Europe. The history of European Schools spans over 60 years. ESH is audited by the inspectors of the European Schools at regular intervals.

The ESH Curriculum has been approved by the Finnish National Board of Education and emphasises tolerance, multiculturalism and multilingualism. In different subjects ESH follows mainly the syllabi of the European Schools. The school's approach to religious education is to teach all pupils together as regards to ethics, knowledge of different religions and philosophical questions. Pupils get accustomed from an early age to living and learning in an environment with several languages and cultures enabling them to grow into an active European citizen. They learn to respect each other through good manners and politeness.

Learning languages to a high standard is an integral part of the curriculum, as is achieving good competences in mathematics and science. At the same time the objective is to enhance pupils' learning-to-learn, thinking and problem-solving skills as well as developing creative skills in art and music.

The total number of pupils in the school will remain around 300 pupils. In smaller teaching groups it is possible to create a village school atmosphere where a more individual teaching approach can be implemented.



Language sections and language teaching

The school provides teaching in three language sections: English, Finnish and French. A child shall be enrolled primarily into the language section of his/her native language or dominant language if such a language section exists. If the language section in question does not exist the child should be able to follow tuition given in the language of the section. If the pupil's mother tongue is different from English, French or Finnish; mother tongue teaching will be offered with certain conditions.

The main subjects are taught in the language of the section (EN, FR, FI). Depending on the year level, some lessons are organised in mixed groups with pupils from different sections.

The second language (L2) starts in the first year of primary (P1). It is taught in small groups composed of mixed nationalities and taught by native speakers, target being the A2 level (CEFR*) at the end of primary. Pupils continue to develop proficiency in the second language in the secondary cycle, and beginning in the third year (S3) history and geography are taught in the second language, as is economics for those pupils who choose this option in the fourth year (S4). The students are supposed to attain the C1 level (CEFR) at the end of secondary.

As third and fourth languages (L3 & L4), any official European Union language can be studied, if the teaching group can be created. Most common choices are German, Spanish, French, Finnish and Swedish.

* CEFR – Common European Framework of Reference for languages



Nursery

The nursery cycle covers two years (N1-N2) and follows the Early Education curriculum provided by the European Schools as well as the national guidelines of Finland. The Nursery team is composed of native teachers and assistants and has 3 language sections : Finnish, French and English. Children are welcome to join the ESH nursery from the autumn of the year they turn 4.

This Early Education curriculum is holistic and play based. It includes playing, doing and exploring, physical activities as well as various forms of linguistic and artistic expression. We aim to prepare children for the formal learning curriculum that they will follow in Primary 1.

A typical day in the nursery starts at 8.15 am and ends at 2.30 pm. The day consists of several teaching periods, snack and lunch times, nap time and outdoor play. Children can participate in afterschool activities between 2.30 and 5.30 pm.





Primary

A child can be enrolled into the first class of the primary cycle from the autumn of the year when s/he turns 6 years of age. The primary cycle consists of classes P1-P5.

In the primary school the focus is on the mother tongue (L1), mathematics and the second language (L2), but art, music, physical education, discovery of the world and religious education are important - as are the "European Hours", where mixed nationalities meet for a variety of activities. In the primary cycle ESH applies working methods with emphasis on an investigative, activity-based and problem-based approach. Play, recreation and academic results are equally valued. Our teachers come from around the world. Together they bring a variety of ideas and pedagogical knowledge which adds to the cultural diversity of our school. This allows us to keep the curriculum and learning environment in line with international best practice.

Physical education, art and music are taught by specialised teachers in multilingual classes consisting of pupils from all language classes.

A typical day in the primary starts at 8.15 and ends between 14.30 and 15.15 depending on the class level. Children can participate in afterschool activities between 14.30 and 17.30.





Secondary

The secondary cycle consists of seven classes, S1-S7.

For the first three classes, pupils follow a common course. Most subjects are taught in the mother tongue. In the first class pupils start studying a third language (L3). In the third class all begin to study history and geography in their second language (L2).

In classes 4 and 5 the compulsory course in integrated science is subdivided into physics, chemistry and biology, and pupils may choose between the advanced or the normal course in mathematics. Other options include economics, a fourth language, art, music and ICT.

Classes 6 and 7 form a unit which leads to the European Baccalaureate. Although there is a core of compulsory subjects including mother tongue, L2, mathematics, a science subject, philosophy, physical education, history and geography, students have a wide range of further options and may choose to study some subjects for two periods, four periods or at an advanced level.

European Baccalaureate

The final examination in ESH – like in all the European Schools – is the European Baccalaureate (EB) which is taken at the end of the 7th year of secondary. The EB is recognised throughout the European Union by an intergovernmental agreement giving the same rights as the respective national examinations (access to universities). It is also recognised in a number of other countries such as USA, Canada and Australia. The first European Baccalaureate exam in ESH took place in 2013.



The course of study at ESH

BACCALAUREATE				
Secondary S6/S7	English section	French section	Finnish section	Preparation for the Baccalaureate: Individual choice of options e.g. physics, chemistry, biology, economics, history, geography, music, art, sociology, philosophy, psychology
↑				
Secondary S4/S5	English section	French section	Finnish section	Choice of courses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Math 5 periods / math 3 periods Choice of at least two additional options: e.g. economics, arts, music, language 4, ICT
↑				
Secondary S3	English section	French section	Finnish section	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human sciences in L2
↑				
Secondary S1/S2	English section	French section	Finnish section	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entry to secondary cycle Integrated science Language 3 starts
↑				
Primary (P3 to P5)	English section	French section	Finnish section	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> European hours Deeper study of L2
↑				
Primary (P1 to P2)	English section	French section	Finnish section	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Second language (L2) starts (French, English or German)
↑				
Nursery (N1 to N2)	English section	French section	Finnish section	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early education



Cooperation between home and school

There is a Parents' Association (ESHPA) which actively contributes to the dialogue between parents and school. ESH is happy to involve parents in different activities organised in the school. Parents' evenings as well as individual meetings between parents and the child's teacher(s) are organised regularly. The learning portal Fronter facilitates exchange of information between homes and school.

Pupil welfare

Pupils come to ESH with different backgrounds, skills and competencies. Especially during the first year in ESH they often need learning support for example in the language of the section or in the second language. The school's pupil welfare group monitors the progress of these pupils and if necessary takes action and organises extra tuition for these pupils. The services of the school psychologist, school nurse and special educational needs teacher are available. Learning support is given within the scope of school's resources.

Teaching Staff

Our teaching staff is highly qualified and committed and they represent - like the pupils – many different nationalities and cultures. Language 1 and Language 2 teachers are always native speakers of the respective language as well as most of the other teachers.

Modern technology

ESH has the latest technology for teaching and learning (computer labs, laptops, Ipads, tablets and interactive whiteboards). Teachers use technology to adopt student-centered and collaborative teaching practices as well as practices that support student-based activities, project work, independent work and learning-to-learn skills in all subjects.



After-school activities

The school organises after-school activities until 17:30. These are open to all pupils of the school and include sport, musical and artistic activities, Finnish language, homework, play etc. The school charges an hourly fee for after-school activities which covers the organisational costs.

School Transport

The School does not organise daily transportation for the pupils to/from school.

School year

The ESH school year is comprised of 180 school days. With some exceptions the yearly timetable follows the one used in the Finnish schools in the capital area. The school year starts in the middle of August and ends in the middle of June. There is an autumn break of one week (usually in October), a Christmas break of two to three weeks, a week's winter break (usually in February) and a week around Easter.





Admission to School

The application period is in January. In order to assess a child's capability to study successfully in ESH or to define the correct class level there are entrance tests. The scope of tests differs according to the level of studies:

- Nursery: interview with skills test
- Primary year 1: language test and skills test
- Primary year 2 – 5: language test and math test
- Secondary: language test(s) and math test

In all classes an interview can be included.

Entrance tests are organised in February. In certain cases the tests can be organised outside the application period.

Further Information

The ESH website www.esh.fi provides for more information on the admissions procedure as well as on rules and regulations of the School.

The contact details of the School are also available on the website.



Premises

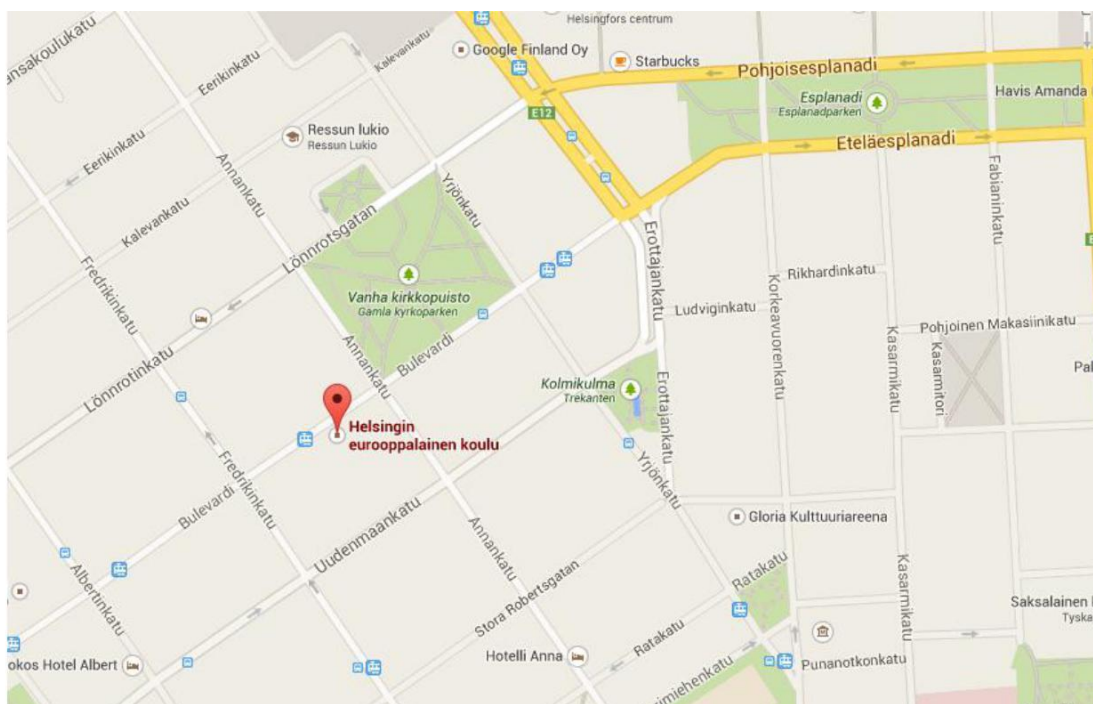
ESH occupies a historical building built in 1884-85 in the heart of Helsinki. Its first occupant was a Swedish-speaking school for girls, later it belonged to the University of Helsinki. The renovation of the building was conducted under surveillance of Museum authorities and was completed in December 2009. The building now houses up-to-date learning facilities in an aesthetically pleasing and prestigious environment.

The school building consists of five floors and 45 classrooms. There are two ICT-class rooms, three science laboratories, a language laboratory, a music class room and an art class room. Most classrooms are equipped with interactive whiteboards. There is also a canteen, a library, a gym and an assembly hall.





“European Schooling Helsinki shall provide its pupils with such prerequisites for learning that educated side by side, untroubled by divisive prejudices, acquainted with all that is great and good in the different cultures, without ceasing to look to their own lands, they will become in mind Europeans, and work for a united and thriving Europe” (according to Jean Monnet).



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