

Tips to pick up from Finnish Lessons

Finnish Education is a book by Pasi Sahlberg which explains how the Finnish education system has been built up to be one of the best in the world. Many people admire the way that children are schooled in Finland and so it can be a good thing to try to copy some of the things that they do with your children to help them benefit more from their education.

Reduced Reliance on Tests

Finland do not have lots of testing but rely on teachers using continuous assessment for children although they do have examinations before leaving mainstream education. Although a parent cannot change how a school assesses their children, they can make sure that the children do not feel too worried about testing. Allow them to understand that it is good practice for when they are tested at a later age but that the results will allow the teachers to see where there are gaps that need filling with regards to the child's understanding. It should not be a source of stress for the child, they should think of it as a test to see how well the teacher has taught them.

Trust in Teachers and Schools

In Finland there is a big trust in teachers and schools. This is not the case in many countries with parents having every high expectations of teachers and being critical when these are not met. It is important, as a parent, that you do have respect for the teachers as this will reflect on your child. If they feel that you do not trust their teachers then they will not either and it could mean they have a lack of confidence which will lead to them not performing as well as they potentially could.

Reduced Competition

Competition between students is not encouraged. This may motivate some but many students will not feel good if they have not performed well and it could make them less confident. Therefore as parents it is really important to not compare your child's scores to other children but just to their own capability. So if they are improving then this is a good thing, even if they are not improving as well as others or are not at such a high standard as others.

Focus on Lifelong Learning

There is a focus in Finnish education on lifelong learning. This means that it is not felt that learning ends in school but that it continues. Not just into higher education but beyond in the workplace as well. This is something which a lot of people could benefit from and if children see their parents learning it could encourage them to work hard in their learning too.