

Lehmo School

The municipality of Kontiolahti

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Finland

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LEHMO SCHOOL – primary school and special education

Lehmo school is located eight kilometers north from Joensuu city. Lehmo is a small country village with about 4000 inhabitants. The old wooden school was built in 1902 and the school was expanded in 1928, 1950, 1986 and 2008.

The special school for children with special needs called Kuusela school was independent and separate until the summer of 2009 when the new school premises (about 1700m² sized) were built in Lehmo. The 40-year-old Kuusela special school and Lehmo primary school were combined on the first of August in 2009.

Nowadays we have the following classes:

- 1) primary school classes 1-6 (13 classes)
- 2) special class for extended school attendance (2 years of preschool for 6-7 -year-old pupils)
- 3) special classes for pupils with different kind of disabilities (mentally retarded aged 6-17 years), (3 classes)
- 4) special classes grades 1-6, for children with learning disabilities (5-6 classes)
- 5) special classes for children with behavioral, emotional and social problems (2 classes)



There are 80 pupils in special classes (maximum 10 pupils in each class) and 240 pupils in normal classes. There are also some children with immigrant background (from Africa and Russia).

Personnel

Principal, vice-principal, school secretary, 13 class teachers, English teacher, 12 special education teachers, 18 school assistants, nurse, 2 school cooks, 5 cleaning ladies and 2 janitors.

Curriculum

First, we have a nationwide curriculum including the school subjects and the number of lessons. Second, we have the Kontiolahti municipal curriculum for local focuses. Third, we have the Lehmo school curriculum for our own details. For the pupils with special needs we make an individualized educational plan (IEP) in co-operation with parents, psychologists, therapists and other specialists. We find out learning styles, abilities and rehabilitated areas and plan the goals for the school year. We also name the means and materials and teaching ways and the need for school assistance.



We have new experiences and knowledge about normal and special classes: we can arrange the most suitable learning group or class for pupils depending on his/her needs. For instance a student who has good knowledge in maths can study in a normal class and vice versa a student, who has difficulties in some school subject in a normal class come to get more individualized support in a special class. We try to develop and expand the integration more and more from special classes to normal classes.

We have also formed some rehabilitation groups, for example sensory integration, motor skills, speech education, dyslexia, afasia and mutism.

Computer-aided education

In every classroom we have a computer and a data projector. We have a special computer classroom with 13 computers for students. In addition, we have 6 computers in the school library.

We have computer programmers in reading, writing, mathematics, physics, chemistry and English and also many learning games.

For pupils with special needs there is a touch screen, keyboard for visually impaired students and induction loops in two classrooms for hearing impaired students.



Therapy room

We have a beautiful, 60m² sized therapy room with soft, warmed floor. The room is dimmable. You can find a movie screen and loudspeakers in the therapy room. Coloured lines and shapes have been painted straight on to the floor and on to the wall for concrete teaching. There are different kinds of removable climbing walls and swings and other playing materials.

Physio – and occupational therapists use this room also for individual rehabilitations.

Assessment

The assessment of the pupils is carried out twice a year. The intermediate report is given in the end of the autumn term in December. The school year report is given in the end of the whole school year in the end of May or in the very beginning of June.

