

QUALITY MUSIC EDUCATION, WELLBEING AND JOY

Finnish music education is a success story worthy of pride.

Music schools and their satellite learning spaces are the only culture service network among the libraries that cover the whole nation and offer children and young people an opportunity to enjoy top quality music education regardless of their location.

Music education has a strong foothold in the society and it enjoys the support of the citizens. One key factor in the success of the Finnish music education has been its funding model. The government and municipal support combined with tuition fees guarantee a very solid base for music schools to operate on.

Public funding enables children and young people to participate in arts education regardless of the financial situation of the parents. On top of this, free student option as well as sibling and other discounts increase the reach of music education in Finland.

Another noteworthy strength of Finnish music education is the competent and committed teaching staff. The jewel in our crown is the early childhood music education which offers children an opportunity to grow and develop in the world of music, activities and stories.

The advanced syllabus of music education, as part of the basic education of arts, offers, as its name suggests a great range of opportunities to learn music. Learners are taught their main instrument, additional instruments, musical theory, composing, history of music, music technology, playing in ensembles and orchestras as well as on other studies of their interest. Although the main goal of music education is to create positive life long relationship, the learners also gain the ability to continue towards professional and university level studies. Also, the future of Finnish music life is being created in the music schools.



Music has kept its place as a favourite hobby for children and young people. Music schools are only able to accept approximately half of the applicants. Fortunately, music education is also offered by adult education sector, schools providing the general syllabus of the basic education of arts, schools, religious communities, various organisations, choirs and other orchestras. In a functional music education system, children and young people are able to pursue their studies based on their own goals and wishes.

The third factor in the success of Finnish music education has been the ability to change with the times. The personal study plans are used and students have a lot of flexibility in planning their learning.

Music schools have expanded their scope further and further away from the class rooms only. Typical collaborators are daycare centres, hospitals and old age homes. It is great that music schools can participate in improving the wellbeing in Finland and bring joy to the everyday experiences.

Music schools are also a significant cultural service provider. Both on their own as much as in collaboration with other cultural entities, music schools produce a significant number of concerts and other cultural services every year.

The future of Finnish musical life can be further built on top of strong and traditional music education system.

THE FINNISH ASSOCIATION OF MUSIC SCHOOLS



"Music schools open a pathway to the world of music and provide an opportunity for children and young people to make their dreams come true."

Sauli Niinistö
President of Finland



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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

I became a music school headmaster in 1995 in Lieksa. It might have been the autumn of the same year when I first participated in the biannual meeting of the Association of Finnish Music Schools. As a young headmaster newbie, I felt I was allowed in with the wise and experienced colleagues. I could gain information about the diversity and the best practices of music education from different institutions. I was able to visit music schools around the country and to hear interesting lectures as well as the subsequent vibrant conversations. I made friends and met new people.

In my view, the conversations about topical challenges and practices that work, as much as the ones that do not, have always been one central aspect of these conferences. Peer support among headmasters have been both valuable and empowering. We are no longer alone with our challenges. There is always a colleague who has time to listen to me and who I want to listen to.

It is always possible to hear refreshing innovative angles as well as questioning of the dominant practices. It would be great, if in future we could also see more staff and teachers participating with the headmasters. That seems possible at least from the surrounding areas of the organising music school. This is a challenge I would give to our members to mark our 60th anniversary year.

Genuine face-to-face time without a rush is important in the midst of our everyday work as much as it is on our spare time. By being interested in people and things happening around us we are able to create wellbeing to ourselves as well as others. That is the very same thing that the music education we represent achieves.

Congratulations and many happy returns to our Association – to all of us – celebrating the 60th anniversary this year.

Jouni Auramo
Chairperson of the Board

Finnish Association of Music Schools
Headmaster of the Pirkanmaa Music School



The Finnish Association of Music Schools was formed in 1956 by thirteen music schools.

These days the association has 97 member schools and conservatories from north to south and east to west covering the whole country.

Milestones:

- 1969 legislation for music schools
- 1992 legislation for the basic education of arts
- 1999 new legislation that combines the above mentioned laws into one holistic legislation for all basic arts education

The duties of the association

- To enhance the artistic and professional standard of music schools in Finland
- To be responsible for creating, updating and distributing the level requirements for the basic education in arts for music
- To look after the interests of music schools within the national culture policy
- To maintain and develop international connections.

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