

FAITH COMMUNITIES



IN PARTNERSHIP

**with daycare centres, schools
and educational institutions**



INTRODUCTION

The “basket” cooperation model is aimed at education professionals in daycare centres, schools and educational institutions, as well as faith community partners. It is important that the model is open to decision makers and guardians as well as pupils and students, giving due consideration to their needs and hopes in cooperation.

The model consists of four different baskets and their principles. The baskets are based on the Finnish National Agency for Education’s current  **guidelines** (baskets 1–3) and the Ministry of Education and Culture’s memorandum  “**Together for the benefit of children and young people**” (basket 4).

For years the basket model has proved an illustrative and functional structure for local cooperation and its goals and opportunities. The National Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, working with the FOKUS Forum for Culture and Religion, the Finnish Ecumenical Council, and the National Forum for Cooperation of Religions in Finland (CORE), has now revised the basket model to encompass other faiths. This should also encourage local faith communities to cooperate with each other.



KEY VOCABULARY

A neutral approach to faith means faiths are viewed as equal without being judged. The child is not steered towards any particular faith, and there is no attempt to influence their beliefs.

Positive and negative religious freedom guarantees everyone the right to belong or not belong to a faith community, to believe or not believe, and to practise or not practise a religion. Both freedoms must be recognised.

Student care that is community-based is usually preventive and aimed at a group or the entire community. It is the responsibility of the education organiser, but the partnership of local actors is welcome.

Broad-based competence refers to the totality of knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and volition built in early childhood education and the curriculum – for example, cultural competence and multiliteracy.

Religious practice here refers to religious activities such as worship and prayer.

Religious traditions are associated with culture, customs and identity – for example, the celebration of holidays.



1 EDUCATION AND TEACHING

POLICY PRINCIPLES

- ✓ The cooperation partner is an expert in their field, and the teacher is responsible for pedagogy.
- ✓ Topics are planned together and are based on early childhood education and the curriculum.
- ✓ Projects can also be interdisciplinary.
- ✓ Activity is non-religious and non-ideological.

EXAMPLES

Visitor interviews, study visits to sacred places, interfaith encounters, material banks, joint theme days



CRITERIA: GENERAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

FOR CONSIDERATION

What kind of learning environments can different faith communities offer?

What outside expertise does a daycare centre, school or educational institution need?

How does cooperation achieve the goals of broad-based competence?

*#thinkingskills
#dialogueskills
#lifeissues
#globaleducation
#skillsrelatedtoconviction
#culturalheritage
#religiousliteracy
#emotionalskills
#interactionskills
#worldinterfaithharmonyweek*



2 SHARED CELEBRATIONS

POLICY PRINCIPLES

- ✓ This is a shared celebration at a daycare centre, school or educational institution in which everyone must be able to participate.
- ✓ Guardians are informed in good time about the celebration's content and arrangements.
- ✓ A neutral greeting from a faith community or a celebration associated with a religious tradition does not make an occasion religious.
- ✓ In selecting a venue, issues of equality and religious freedom must be considered.

EXAMPLES

Celebrations of the school year

Independence Day, Christmas and spring celebrations

Celebrations of cultural traditions

Lucia festival, Nowruz, Ramadan, Divali



CRITERIA: LOCAL CELEBRATION TRADITIONS

FOR CONSIDERATION

What is the significance of celebrations in a daycare centre, school or educational institution?

What might be included in formal and informal celebration traditions?

How do we realise the right to one's own language and culture in shared celebrations?

*#adventcalendar
#culturalheritage
#academicyear
#diversity
#inclusion
#Finnishflag
#summerhymn
#graduation
#hospitality
#minority*



3 RELIGIOUS OCCASIONS

POLICY PRINCIPLES

- ✓ A religious occasion entails religious practice like devotion or prayer.
- ✓ The freedom to choose is genuine and real, regardless of religious affiliation or participation in religious or ethics education.
- ✓ A brief description of the religious event's content is required so that the daycare centre/school/educational institution can prepare a corresponding non-religious alternative and announce it in good time.
- ✓ Regardless of the venue and host, the organiser of education is responsible for both events.

EXAMPLES

Religious assembly, blessing of palms, Christmas service, musical devotion, prayer time



CRITERIA: RELIGIOUS PRACTICE



FOR CONSIDERATION

What do freedom of and from religion mean in cooperation?
How do we ensure their balance?

What sort of cultural customs are learned in religious and alternative events?

*#devotion
#spirituality
#silence
#worship
#reverence
#meditation
#thesacred
#recitation
#rituals
#prayer
#blessing
#culturalcustoms
#religiouspractice*



4 SUPPORT FOR WELLBEING

POLICY PRINCIPLES

- ✓ Support for wellbeing is preventive, community-based, safe and open to everyone. It is also neutral in terms of religion and conviction.
- ✓ The perspective is the holistic wellbeing of children and young people.
- ✓ Support can also be provided for the wellbeing of staff.
- ✓ Cooperation between various professionals is based on local plans and any agreements.

EXAMPLES

Playground and afterschool activities, group activities, excursions and events, support in bereavement and crises, strengthening participation through dialogue on beliefs, staff recreation and retreats



CRITERIA: COMMUNITY AND RESILIENCE

FOR CONSIDERATION

What forms of cooperation promote both individuals' and communities' wellbeing in daily life?

What expertise in wellbeing do churches and other faith communities have?

How can belief and identity be related to wellbeing?

*#antiracism
#identity
#friendshipskills
#crisiswork
#encounter
#mobility
#mentalhealth
#studentcare
#inclusion
#safespace
#wellbeingatwork*



Curricula and degree principles

<https://eperusteet.opintopolku.fi/#/en/>

Finnish National Agency for Education's instructions for religious and ethics education, celebrations and religious events

<https://evl.fi/plus/yhteiskunta-ja-kirkko/koulu-ja-kirkko/#edufi-instructions>



Other useful links

evl.fi/plus/yhteiskunta-ja-kirkko/koulu-ja-kirkko/#other-useful-links

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