

Job Shadowing in Finland (Orivesi)



Prior to the Job Shadowing, TEAMS meetings, whatsapps and emails were held with our guest Jenni Decandia. Jenni helped us to prepare our arrival and accommodation in both Tampere and Helsinki. She also helped us with the transfers from Tampere to the centre of Orivesi, where her high school was located. The weeks before, she was informed about the courses, classes and meetings we wanted to attend and she prepared everything for us.



The first day we arrived at the centre, we were welcomed in the different classes and Jenni had prepared a timetable for us to attend with different teachers and we would be able to see the classes of different subjects. The students at Orivesi did not study Spanish. It was a bit complicated in the classes where only Finnish was spoken. You can understand a little bit, but it is quite complicated. The English class was one of the most productive and the Swedish class was also very productive because they let us teach Spanish and we taught the numbers in Spanish to

the little ones with our methodologies and games. This was very enriching because in this way we exchanged methodologies with our Finnish classmates.

We were able to talk to the management team and see how a Finnish school works, which is a bit different from ours.





The main objective of this mobility was to get to know at first hand the functioning of a Finnish school which is quite similar in characteristics to ours. Oriveden Lukio is a rural school, not very big and they teach more or less what we teach. From year 7 to year 12, which corresponds to our ESO and Bachillerato. They start classes at 8 o'clock in the morning, where it is still very dark, and they leave at 14:00. Their hours of daylight are few, so they wear reflectors and at school they are taught from a very early age to wear reflectors so that they can be seen. Pupils go to school on scooters, quad bikes and even bicycles, apart from those who use the bus. When it snows a lot in winter they take off their boots when they arrive and walk in socks and so do the teachers. We saw that the teachers' room is full of a wardrobe for clothes but also for shoes. Their temperature in the school is 18 or 20 degrees but they are not cold. They are very used to it.

We were very struck by the fact that in year 7, which corresponds to 1st ESO, they have subjects such as Home Economics that teach cooking, sewing, ironing or how to remove a stain. A subject that we should have in our education system, very useful in our daily lives. In Physical Education they have ice skating, like the Canadians.



Their classes are 75 minutes long with a 5 minute break in the middle. In this sense, our educational system has classes of 50 or 55 minutes and I consider that it is better because their classes are too long and you can lose concentration. They have four subjects per day, which is better than having six subjects. They eat at school but at different times depending on the day. We had

lunch at 11:50. We have the whole day in a row and we go home for lunch. In the afternoon they have extracurricular activities at the centre. They have their break rooms, which our students unfortunately don't have.



The ratios per class, which are around 15 pupils, and the fact that they have the subject teacher, another teacher to control behaviour or to provide support in case they have not understood and another teacher from time to time if they have to do practical work and so can make even smaller groups (this is something we should learn from in the Spanish education system), is very striking. Another point in their favour is that they have many counsellors in the school (the one for the educational system, the one for extracurricular activities, the one for bullying help...).

For Finns, education is paramount and the government invests large amounts in public education and parents respect the authority of the teacher above all else.

Something very curious is that they don't have as many meetings as we do. They are more independent. The principal is the one who organises the meetings and within the departments they don't coordinate. In Spain, this is done better. We coordinate and make decisions agreed upon by the whole department and centre. It is also striking that the head teacher and the head of studies are on the management team, but the role of secretary is more of an administrative role and is not part of the management team. All the management team and guidance counsellors teach except the secretary.

All teachers participate in an interdisciplinary project. At least one per year.

The Finns are like us, they have large and broad curricula which there is no time to teach and also a lot of bureaucracy. They only give marks to the students at the end of the school year but the tutor has to meet between December and January with the parents of his or her tutor in individual meetings to follow up the student.



This is the tool that Finnish people use to leave their mobile phones before going inside the class and in case they have to use them, teachers will give them back to them.

Their music room is huge and has a lot of instruments compared to ours, and the labs are similar to ours, but they have for example gowns in there. The school buys gowns and all the pupils wear them and they are passed from one pupil to another.



Their level in terms of subjects is more or less the same as ours. In terms of technology in the classroom, all classrooms are equipped with a computer, projector and screen in addition to the traditional blackboard, but in our school it is the same. We also have our own Smartboards.

Those rumours that go around that in Finland they don't have homework, it's not true because they have it and the way the teachers give marks is based on the evaluation instruments such as notebooks (which by the way are free and the material is given to them in the school, we are talking about a public school), exams, observations in class, mini tests... We are not so different.



We are very happy to have enjoyed such an experience because it allows us to value the Finnish education system, but it also helps us to value our own education system and especially the way our school and our colleagues work. To value our students who, although we sometimes think that they behave badly, they are still teenagers and the same thing happens everywhere in the world, even in Finland.

Attending the teachers' meetings and having access to the programmes of their subjects have been of great interest to us in order to improve our teaching work in this language, as well as to learn about methodological and organisational aspects that can complement and improve our daily work in class.

This experience has also allowed us to transmit to other members of our staff some aspects of the general organisation of the host school which, in our opinion, may be very useful in optimising the management of our material and personal resources.