

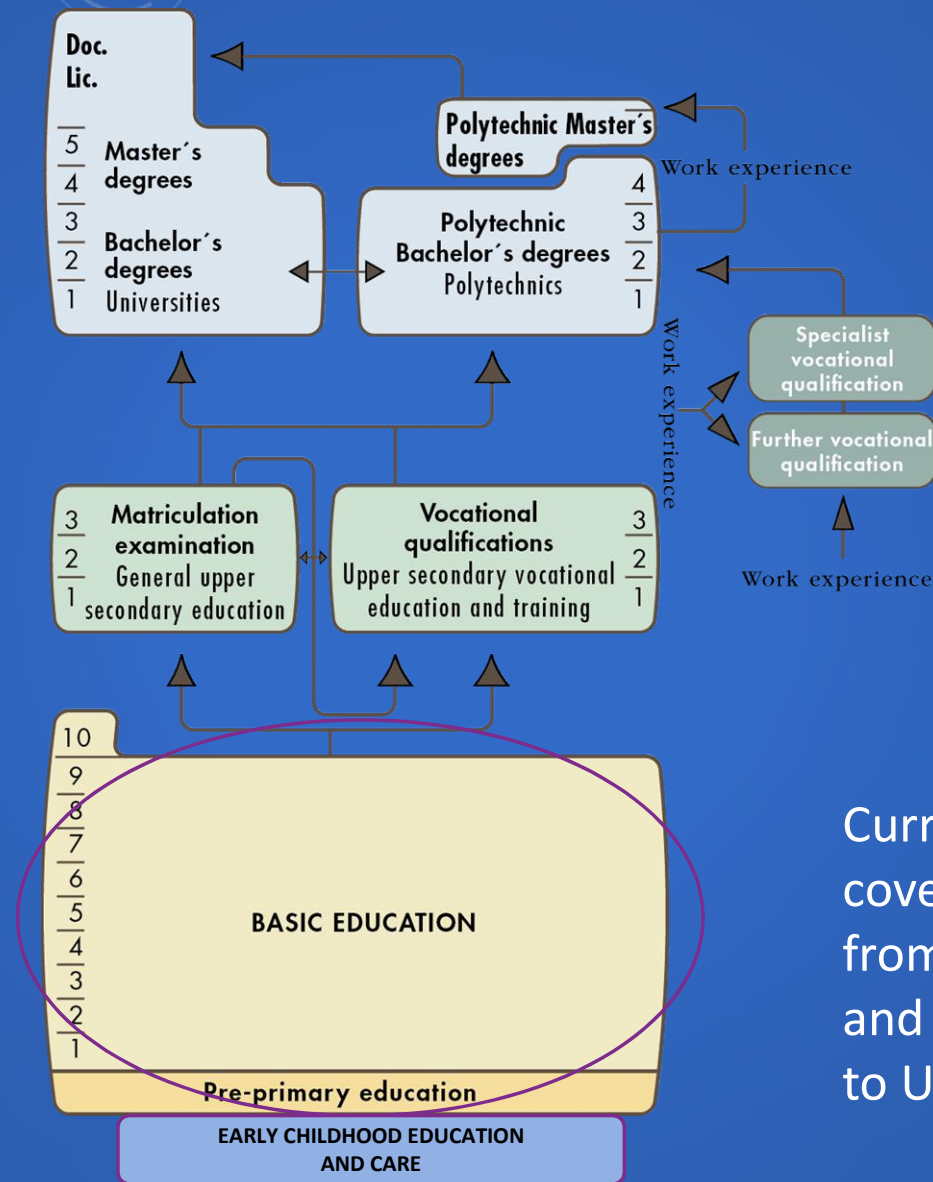
PLACING THE CHILD AT THE CENTRE OF OUR EDUCATION SYSTEMS

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Building sustainable and future-proof
education systems

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FINNISH EDUCATION SYSTEM

Education system has been developed coherently during the past 40 years



Curriculum reform 2012 - 2017 covers all levels of education from Early Childhood Education and Care to Upper Secondary Education



Child at the centre

- high quality teaching and learning processes, support and care
- good connections, respect and trust



HOW TO DO THIS IN
TODAY'S WORLD?

ACCORDING TO BASIC EDUCATION ACT

- The main tasks of education are to
 - promote the healthy growth and development of all pupils
 - enhance their development as human beings and as citizens of a democratic society
 - create a solid basis for lifelong learning and sustainable well-being
- Education must be provided according to pupils' age and capabilities, in cooperation with pupils' parents.

IMPORTANT IN THE VALUE BASIS OF EDUCATION

Basic education is underpinned by the idea of the specific value of childhood. Each pupil is unique and valuable just as he or she is. Each pupil has the right to grow into his/her full potential as a human being and as a member of society.

To achieve this, pupils need encouragement and individual support as well as experiences of being heard and valued in the school community. They also need an opportunity to feel that the community cares about them, their learning and well-being. Equally important are experiences of participation and opportunities for collaboration in order to advance the welfare of the whole community.

(National Core Curriculum for Basic Education, 2014, 15)



Child at the centre

- children as owners of their learning and life
- playful, active, enjoyable and meaningful learning

Photo: Hannu Hirvonen

IRMELI HALINEN

THE MAIN GOALS OF THE CURRICULUM REFORM

- ◆ To enhance **joy and meaningfulness** of learning and the **active** role of learners > pupil/student agency
- ◆ To promote **collaboration and dialogue** in the school community and between schools and their surroundings
- ◆ To create a strong basis for **lifelong and life-wide learning**
- ◆ To enhance **sustainable lifestyle and well-being**



Child at the centre

Learning
together,
helping
each
other,
giving and
getting
feedback



Child at the centre

Providing rich
learning
environments

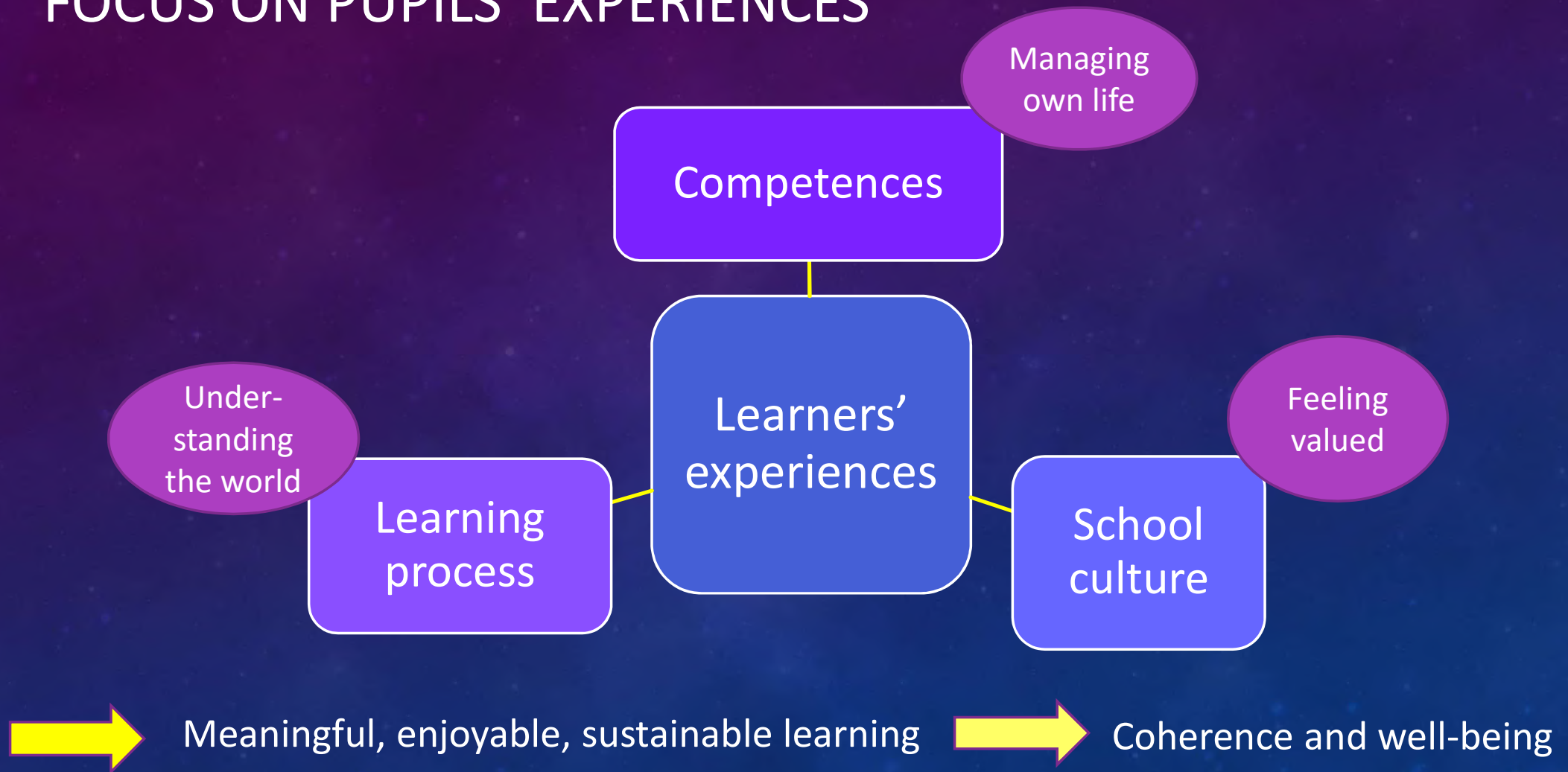
Providing space
for thinking and
inquiry



Child at the centre

Providing space
for creativity and
childrens'
own visions

FOCUS ON PUPILS' EXPERIENCES



WHAT IS THE STATE OF PLAY?

- Play is essential in early childhood education and care (0-6), and pre-primary education (6)
- Play is central in the primary years of basic education
- Play is important in lower and upper secondary years, and in adult education
- At school, play is embedded in lessons plus there's free time (breaks) between lessons for playing
- Playful approach
 - Creates space for learners own ideas and activities
 - Allows teachers to be more in the role of mentors
 - Sets some requirements on the learning environments
- In basic education, there's no national examinations, no competition or comparison

WHAT SHOULD WE AIM FOR TO MAKE EDUCATION MORE SUSTAINABLE, READY FOR THE FUTURE?

- We should bravely rethink education – we should have trust, respect and collaboration instead of control and competition
- When reforming education:
 - We should listen and respect people's experiences and ideas in education
 - We should think about the future much more
 - We should build on the strengths of the present system
- Teachers' pedagogical autonomy - teachers should be trusted and supported



WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS HELPING ME LEARN AND ENJOY MYSELF AT SCHOOL?

THE RESULT OF DISCUSSION OF 550 STUDENTS IN HELSINKI 2013

WHAT TRANSFORMATIVE ACTIONS CAN BE TAKEN TO TRIGGER/SUPPORT A SHIFT?

- Discussions and collaboration, thinking together:
 - How the world is changing? What is important to learn in this changing world? What kind of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes we want our learners to adopt?
 - What kind of world we want to build?
 - What are important values along which we want education to be organised?
 - What do we understand by learning? What is a good learning process like?
 - How the school should function in order to support all-round and sustainable development of both learners and the community/society?
 - What is important in pupil assessment?

EDUCATION FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Changes in the world unavoidably affect the pupils' development and well-being.

In basic education, pupils learn to encounter pressures for change openly, to assess change critically and to assume responsibility for making choices that build a sustainable future.

Global education as a part of basic education contributes to creating preconditions for fair and sustainable development in line with UN development goals.

Basic education exerts influence as a driver for positive change that contributes to society, both at the national and international level.

(National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2014, s. 19)

IMPORTANT IN THE VALUE BASIS OF EDUCATION

- Each pupil has the right to a good education and success in his/her studies. While learning, pupils are building their identity, their understanding of life and humanity, their worldview, and finding their place in the world.
- Basic education supports the development of every pupil as a human being who strives for truth, goodness, beauty, justice, and peace. In individual growth, discrepancies between these aspirations and the current reality unavoidably arise. It is important to be able to address such discrepancies or conflicts ethically and with empathy, and to have the courage to stand up for what is good.
- Becoming educated means that individuals and communities are capable of making decisions based on **ethical reflection, empathy and knowledge**.

(National Core Curriculum for Basic Education, 2014, 15-16)



THANK YOU!

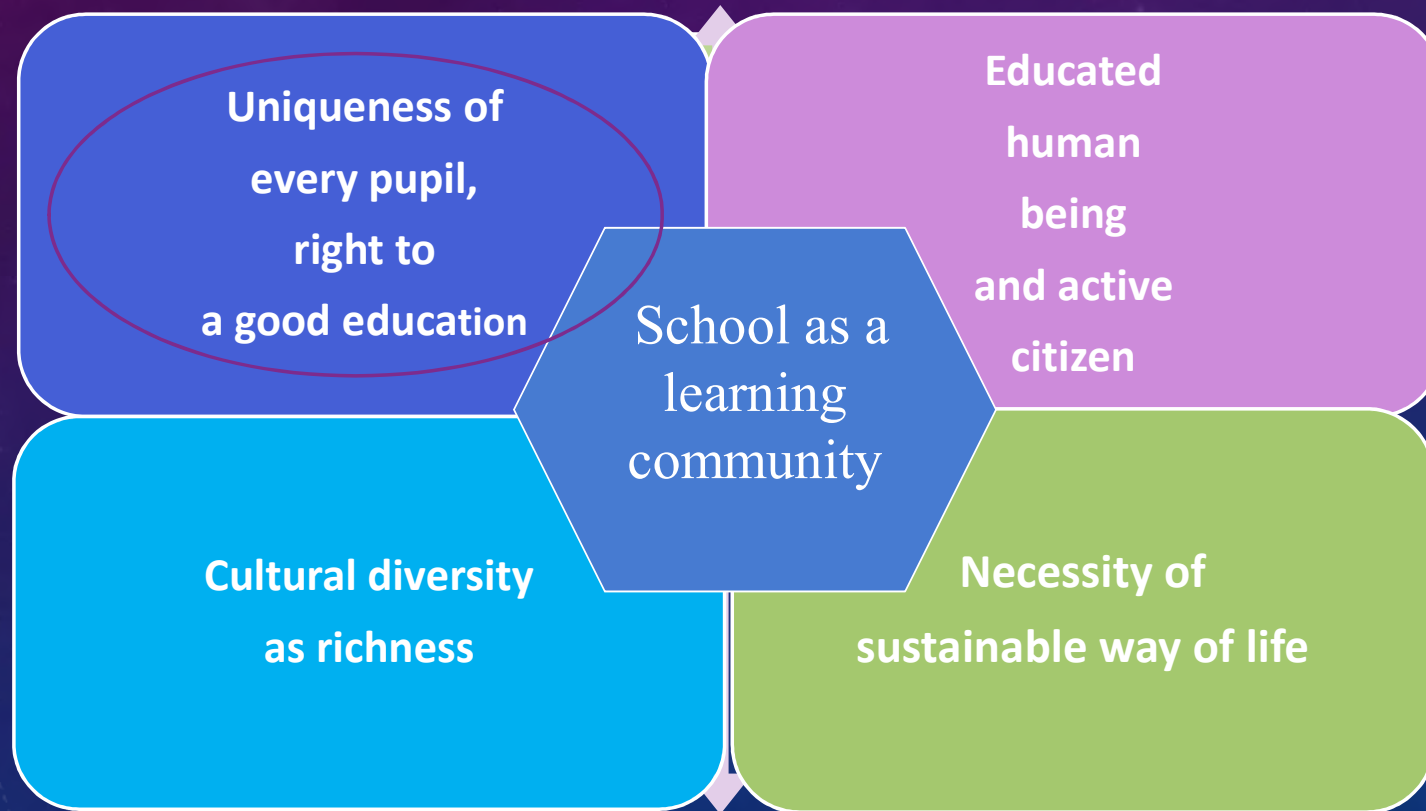
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Next slides: more material for discussions

RETHINKING THE VALUE BASIS OF EDUCATION



RETHINKING THE SCHOOL CULTURE – SCHOOLS AS LEARNING COMMUNITIES



FOCUS IS ON MEANINGFUL LEARNING

- Integrative approach in order to improve the meaningfulness of learning
 - Transversal competences
 - Multidisciplinary learning modules
 - Formative assessment
- Pedagogical approach based on the defined learning conception
 - Strengthening student agency
 - Space for thinking
 - Positive experiences and emotions promote learning
 - Learning to learn
 - Collaborative, explorative, creative way of working

CHANGING ROLES OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

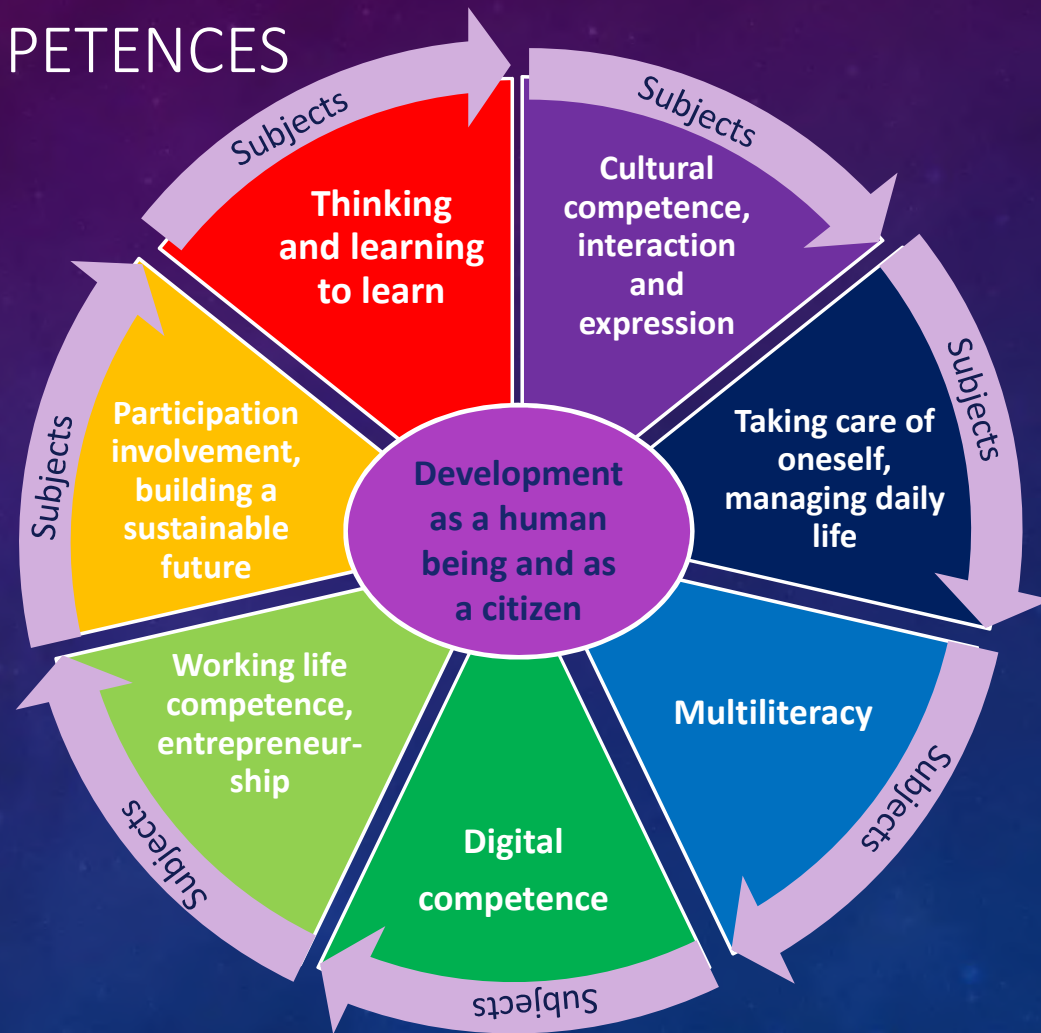
- **Teachers**
 - Talking less during the lessons
 - Focusing more on encouraging and guiding the students to think and talk, ask questions, look for information, and collaborate
 - Collaborating more with colleagues, other school staff, parents and experts outside the school
- **Students**
 - Working less individually and more with fellow students
 - Answering less to ready made questions, formulating more their own questions, looking for information, analysing, evaluating and sharing it, creating new knowledge and ideas
 - Learning better to plan, do, reflect and evaluate their own and common work and, slowly, take more responsibility on it

RETHINKING THE COMPETENCES IN BASIC EDUCATION

Transversal
competences
(promoting every pupils
growth as human
beings and as citizens)

demand:

- knowledge
- skills
- values
- attitudes
- will/volition



RETHINKING PUPIL ASSESSMENT

