



## **Using a learning platform for distance learning to prevent exclusion and support the learning of special groups**

### **The context for the use of ICT for Inclusion**

Co-ordination project for distance teaching.

Distance teaching is provided and developed around Finland. There are several development projects within the co-ordination project. The target groups range from children to adults. Projects are financed by the Finnish National Board of Education (FNBE).

Examples of distance teaching projects:

- AntiVirus+ – distance learning in case of illness

*Realiser: Viikki mainstream school of the University of Helsinki*

The project creates operation models with which school continuity can be guaranteed in case a pupil falls ill and has to be absent for a long period. Distance teaching tailored with IT applications and social media tools is used to help. The AntiVirus unit has three iPad-tablets: the pupil, the teacher and a co-ordinating special needs teacher get their own devices. With the tablet, the pupil can follow classes in real time and interact with others.

<http://antivirushanke.blogspot.com>

- SATULA – Electronic platform to support children's learning

*Realiser: City of Riihimäki*

The programme aims to develop the Fronter learning platform used by the city of Riihimäki and to create an electronic learning environment for pupils with special needs. The electronic platform facilitates video-conferencing, real-time learning support, saving personal learning objectives and documents, distance teaching and use of learning tasks. A common platform enhances openness and speeds up decision-making. The same communication channel is used by pupils, their parents and other people.

<http://satulahanke.wordpress.com>

[Katso esitys \(PDF\)](#)

### **The policy context**

These projects are financed by the state budget and administered by the FNBE.

Application announcement: The projects to be funded should develop new sets of methods, modes of operation, spaces and devices for teaching and learning or implement ones developed in earlier projects. Primary and pre-primary education projects emphasise pupil co-operation, participation and activeness in functional learning environments.

Distance teaching can bring the school to those who cannot go there themselves, for example due to an illness. Distance teaching can prevent exclusion and support the learning of special groups.

### **The use of ICT**

Distance teaching methods, implemented in the distance teaching project:

#### Lesson recordings

Recording makes it possible for pupils who cannot participate in the traditional way to follow classes, regardless of time or place.

#### Web meetings



Web meetings involve connection via computers, the internet and web meeting applications. Depending on the application, different types of media can be broadcast, in addition to video and sound connection.

### Web courses

Learning mostly takes place on a platform (for example, Moodle), where participants can save teaching materials, have discussions and return assignments and exam answers.

### Video-teaching

Video-teaching means a connection via a video-conferencing device. The devices conform to a common standard that different manufacturers use.

### **Key outcomes and benefits**

- The project aims to create a model that is nationally applicable and to consolidate and disseminate the results, also with the help of other projects.
- The return to school is easier if contact has been maintained during periods of absence

### **Main challenges and obstacles**

- On too many occasions only cognitive skills are emphasised during time away from schools
- Merely transmitting assignments does not constitute special education or distance teaching.

### **Additional information**

<http://info.edu.turku.fi/etaopetus/index.php> (Only available in Finnish.)