

Tartu Raatuse School in brief 2026

Tartu Raatuse School is a primary or basic school, with 9 grades. Today about 675 students are studying and 68 teachers and other members of pedagogical staff (incl SNE teachers, social pedagogues, psychologists, supportive teachers) + 15 members of school support staff and a school nurse are working in our school. Not using a traditional grading system in primary classes with the years 1-6, has been well received. Students and their parents get oral and written feedback on the child's personal development, skills and knowledge in different subjects.

Overview of educational approach and methodology

Our educational framework is built upon a social-constructivist and transdisciplinary foundation, designed to foster holistic development and 21st-century skills.

Social-constructivist foundation: Following Lev Vygotsky's theory, we view learning as a process that occurs through active social interaction and cultural experience. Our teachers act as guides within the students' zone of proximal development, supporting them in constructing knowledge by connecting new information with prior experiences. Knowledge is co-constructed through collaboration, where students exchange ideas, analyze contributions, and solve problems together.

Transdisciplinary (TD) framework: We organize learning around global inquiry questions (e.g., "Who we are", "How the world works", "How we organize ourselves"). This approach moves beyond fragmented subject boundaries, integrating different disciplines to explore real-world issues and create a coherent worldview.

Integrated and project-based learning:

In grades 1–3, we implement general education, where core subjects like Estonian, Math, and Science are integrated into thematic blocks.

From grades 1–9, we use topic- and project-based learning. Projects follow a three-stage inquiry cycle: research and analysis, creative execution and presentation, and self-reflection.

Student autonomy and modern skills:

Guided independent learning days: Once a month, students work independently to develop self-regulation, digital literacy, and deep learning strategies.

Drama education: Integrated from grades 1–8 to enhance social-emotional competence, empathy, and public speaking confidence.

Evidence-based well-being: Our school day is structured according to the science of learning. This includes a later start to the school day to ensure better sleep and focus, and regular movement breaks through the "Moving Schools" (Liikuma Kutsuv Kool) program to stimulate brain function and memory.

The school provides a variety of after school activities including sport, music, arts, crafts, drama club, programming, chess, creative writing etc. The school has two children's choirs that are regularly working, supervised by our music teachers. We are traditional participants in national song and dance festivals.

In 2018 drama lessons and extra movement were included into the curriculum. Classes are not only run in the classroom but they are also taken outdoors to offer children support in developing practical skills and broadening their minds.

Tartu Raatuse School has always paid great attention to language learning among our students. School provides English or German language learning from the first grade. From year 4 pupils can choose between English, Spanish, Russian, and German. From year 7 they can take optional classes of Spanish.

Our pupils are continuously successful with academic achievements and representing the school in different contests and events. They have a great chance to participate in international and national projects which give them an opportunity to take part in the events in their own school and also widen their minds and experience while visiting other cultures all over Europe and even further.

The school is continuously working toward finding new opportunities to make studying more challenging through new different projects. The project days in October 2013, which took place for the first time, gave students freedom to choose and participate in almost 100 different workshops within 2 days. Since then, regular city-funded topic-based learning weeks have been organized at least twice each year, involving teachers, other staff members, and people from outside the organization.

School gives great emphasis also in cooperation between different subject teachers to make a better impact on students. This is reached through different topic based activities where the students are even evaluated and receive the feedback for different project activities they do on the same topic in different subjects.

Tartu Raatuse School gives a great emphasis on the topics related to this project and wants to reach the next level with the help of international collaboration with partner schools from abroad. Over the past decade of years our school has been very active in the world of international projects. We are most probably one of the most active basic schools in Estonia in this field, have been cooperating with different schools from around 30 countries in Europe, so we do have some important experience under our belt.

[Erasmus accreditation goals and important information to the panthers](#)

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