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### **The city of Kerava invests in science education and begins co-operation with Kide Science**

In January 2019, Kide Science and the City of Kerava started co-operating in early childhood education and pre-primary education in public sector. The purpose of the co-operation is to find out how best to utilize the Kide science classes as part of early childhood education.

Kerava's municipal educational administration is currently working on the "I'm a Researcher, I'm an Inventor" -project which aims, among other things, to promote exploratory and functional learning combining different subjects, to increase interest in natural sciences and mathematics, and to promote and diversify the use of teaching technology as support and enrichment for learning. During the past year, the project has produced three circling MiniLabs for pre-primary education, with research tools and supplies to carry out exploratory learning. There are movable FabLabs in schools that have technology as well as research tools. Teachers have been provided with diverse training.

Co-operation with Kide Science has provided all early childhood education units embarking on the pilot phase with a Kide Science lesson plan package aimed at nurseries and preschools, as well as support training to implement it. The lesson plans are based on the research by Ph.D. Jenni Vartiainen at the University of Helsinki, which also created the Kide Science education model. The aim is to teach children science and research skills with playful means, leaving a positive mark on the hearts of little researchers.

The primary objective of early childhood education is to support the child's growth, development, learning and holistic well-being. To this end, Kide Science's lesson plans are perfect because the pedagogical approach is based on the child's experience and natural sciences are combined with stories and art. Every child practices research skills and scientific thinking at their own level, allowing every child to develop according to their own pace.

The curriculum for pre-school education in the city of Kerava includes "I study and act in my environment" -multidisciplinary module, which has set goals that can be reached more effectively when supported by science education. We strive to support teachers in their work by providing them with training and ready materials, says Pi Yli-Penttilä, coordinator of the "I'm a Researcher, I'm an Inventor" -project.

Kide Science aims to strengthen science education as part of early childhood education worldwide. Children from different backgrounds would have a more equal starting point for adopting a scientific mindset. It would benefit society as a whole, says Vartiainen, founder of Kide Science.

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