

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Sorin Sirkus (registered association)

Sorin Sirkus is an association, whose purpose is to make circus arts more known, and to promote, maintain and develop circus arts as an interest especially for children and young people.

Sorin Sirkus started off in 1985 as a club, which was part of the Tampere City youth association. The circus established its own association in 1989. An executive committee consisting of a chairman and 6-8 regular members are responsible for the affairs of the association.

In 1993 Sorin Sirkus began providing basic education in the arts among the first institutions in Finland. The circus has about 300 pupils nowadays. There are five full-time teachers and on a weekly basis 10 part-time teachers. Sorin Sirkus also has a producer, a financial manager, a manege craftsman, a costume maker and a cleaner. In addition, a conscientious objector and a volunteer from Germany (EVS) are working as part of the staff. The premises of Sorin Sirkus are located in Nekala, Ahlmanintie 63.

1.2 Basic Education in the Arts

Circus arts is one of the performing arts orientation choices of the basic education in the arts. The extra-curricular art education offers different art forms in its syllabus, the education is goal-oriented and progressing from one level to another and it is mainly directed at children and young people. It gives pupils a foundation to express themselves and the eligibility to apply for vocational, polytechnic and university studies of the chosen art form.

The aims of the education are based on the Act on the Basic Education in the Arts (633/98), which is based on the national core curriculum, which is then applied on a local level. The basic education in the arts in Sorin Sirkus is implemented in cooperation with the City of Tampere.

In the basic education of circus arts, the physical education, arts, social and mental development, and interconnectedness of art forms are well combined. The pupils of the basic education of circus arts get to know an international atmosphere through visiting teachers and performances.

2. SORIN SIRKUS PHILOSOPHY

2.1 Better people through art

*Sorin Sirkus sows a seed in the green garden of life
It helps the sprout to grow, and creates safety for all in a common environment
When the time is ripe, the sprouts are trained as creative and colourful individuals
The Circus supports and fertilizes the demanding task of growing up
It gives water and space for each flower, for them all to rise up towards the sun
and towards their individual brilliance*

2.2 Learning by doing

Sorin Sirkus emphasises learning by doing and experimenting. The pupil is encouraged towards creativity, openness and acting in a group. The pupil is guided to practise, perform and take care of the circus equipment. The pupil learns to take responsibility for him/herself and others. Trying and applying what has been previously learnt is a way of finding his/her own personal way of approaching circus arts. Asking questions and solving problems is an attempt to create something new. In Sorin Sirkus, multiculturalism and internationality are seen as a richness, which develops circus arts. The teaching is implemented through constructivist, social and

behaviouristic learning conceptions.

2.3 ABC at Ahlmanintie

Education is provided according to the curriculum in individual and group lessons. The pupil's own goals are attempted to meet with the help of an individual study plan. The pupil chooses his/her own orientation on the basis of liking, talents and a recommendation by a teacher. The pupil's development and progress in the studies are discussed together with the pupil and his/her parents.

Sorin Sirkus has its own premises in Nekala, Tampere. The address is Ahlmanintie 63, 33800 Tampere, Finland. The four training halls have been renovated to be suitable to practise circus arts. In addition, a 13-meter-high circus center of 1000 square metres was built in the spring of 2006, which enables the performing of different shows and spectacular aerial routines. Special care has been paid to the safety of the premises and equipment.

3. SORIN SIRKUS OFFERS

The school year consists of 33 study weeks. One lesson hour (L) is 45 minutes long.

3.1 Pre-primary education

Pre-primary education in Sorin Sirkus is meant for children under compulsory school age (4-6 years old).

General aims:

- The pupil becomes acquainted with circus arts
- The pupil learns to work in a group
- The pupil learns to focus
- The development of the pupil's imagination and initiative is supported

1-3 years	1 time = 60 min. / week	44 L /year
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3.2 Basic syllabus

The basic syllabus contains 500 lessons. The studies are composed of 10 study modules, which are divided into basic studies and workshop studies. In Sorin Sirkus the basic syllabus can be completed in four years or according to an individual study plan. The focus group is children and young people of compulsory school age.

General aims:

- The pupil becomes acquainted with the different areas of circus arts and trains them in a persistent manner
- The pupil learns to work in a group
- The pupil learns to understand and make use of the inter-artistic quality of circus arts
- The pupil's performing skills develop

*"The happy atmosphere and joy of doing
in Sorin Sirkus meets you already at the door"
/ mother of a pupil*



4-year path 500 lessons		
1 st year	1 time = 2 L/week	66 L
2 nd year	1 time = 2 L/week	66L
3 rd year	2 times = 4 L/week	132 L
4 th year	3 times = 6 L/week	198 L
In addition to weekly lessons, productions 38 L		

3.3 Advanced syllabus

The advanced syllabus contains 1300 lessons. The syllabus is composed of basic studies, during which different areas of circus are examined diversely, and advanced studies, in the beginning of which a major subject and possible minor subjects are chosen. The advanced syllabus is completed in four years. Studying may be started at the age of 9.

General aims:

- The pupil learns to understand circus arts and its cultural meaning
- The pupil learns self-initiative, responsibility and ability to work in a group
- The pupil learns to practise in a persistent manner
- The pupil learns to perform and find his/her stage persona

Basic studies 500 L		
1 st year	3 times = 6 L/week	198 L
2 nd year	4 times = 8 L/week	264 L
In addition to weekly lessons, productions 38 L		
Advanced studies 800 L		
3 rd year	4 times = 8 L /week + 1 l/week	264 L
4 th year	4 times = 8 L/week	264 L
5 th year	4 times = 8L/week	264 L
In addition to weekly lessons, productions 8 L		

Final projects

Basic studies

At the end of the studies the pupil prepares a performance either alone or in a group under the teacher's guidance. The pupil assesses his/her own work and receives written feedback.

Advanced studies

At the end of the studies the pupil prepares a final project. The performance can be made either alone or in a group. The final project contains a written plan and report of the work. The pupil assesses his/her own work according to the goals he/she has set. The pupil receives both an oral and a written assessment.

4. I WANT TO JOIN SORIN SIRKUS

4.1 Pupil admission

Sorin Sirkus groups are filled purposefully and according to possibilities. The pupil is expected to have learning potential.

The pupils of **Pre-primary education** and **Basic syllabus** are selected purposefully and by drafting. The pupils who have participated in the summer camp are given priority when selecting new pupils. Registering takes place on the premises of Sorin Sirkus, or by e-mail on a date that is notified beforehand.

The pupil is selected as an Advanced syllabus pupil. The motivation of the pupil and the facility for long-term studies are determined by discussions. The pupils who have completed the general syllabus are given a priority. Teacher's statement of the level of skills is taken into account. The wishes and goals of the pupil are discussed with the teacher, the pupil and the guardian of the pupil.

Applicants without prior experience are discussed case-specifically.

The teachers of the advanced syllabus make the decision on pupil admission.

4.2 Admission of scholarship pupils

Scholarship pupil positions are applied for in writing from the executive committee of Sorin Sirkus. The application must contain a proof of income and a possible change thereof. The committee handles the applications case-specifically. This arrangement makes it possible, that financial matters are not a hindrance to studying in Sorin Sirkus.

5. CONTENTS OF PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION

	Aim	Core contents
Circus games	the pupil: - learns the basics of body understanding - develops coordination - has fun	- practising balance and coordination with the help of circus games
Circus skills	the pupil: - tries out different areas of circus - gets acquainted with different aspects of a circus act	- doing exercises that support different areas of circus - getting to know the equipment and learning their names - having make-up done - trying out costumes - learning to move with music
Group work	the pupil: - learns to take into account other members of the group	- doing exercises of being in a group
Expressive skills	- the pupil has the courage to be the centre of attention in the group - preparing a circus act in the group under the guidance of the teacher	- encouraging the pupil to be centre of attention - practising circus tricks in order and performing them - playing games that encourage the pupil's expressive skills
Concentration	the pupil: - learns to focus on the task at hand - learns to pay attention to instructions	- giving clear instructions - directing the pupil's concentration on the task at hand

6. CONTENTS OF BASIC SYLLABUS EDUCATION

Study module	500 L	When	Goal	Core contents
1. Technique	238	continuously	the pupil: - gets acquainted with different circus acts - learns the motor skills necessary in circus tricks - learns safety	- experimenting with different areas of circus and learning necessary skills - learning safe practising
2. Body understanding	50	continuously	the pupil learns: - body understanding and coordination - taking care of his/her body - to trust him/herself and others - to get to know and respect his/her own body	- doing coordination exercises - doing strength-, stretching and relaxation exercises - doing group and trust exercises - getting to know the possibilities of his/her own physique through circus
3. Circus games	20	1-3 class	the pupil: - gets to know the group, equipment and premises - learns coordination - learns concentration - has fun	- playing different games of warming up, coordination, balance, expression and circus
4. Performing	22	1-3 class	the pupil: - has the courage to perform in front of an audience - learns self-expression	- doing different expressive exercises - experimenting with performing
5. Knowledge of circus arts	30	continuously	the pupil: - gets to know the basic concepts of circus - views circus performances	- viewing different circus performances - learning the names of circus equipment and acts
6. Diversity of circus art	15	continuously	the pupil: - gets to know the different aspects of a circus performance	- practising make-up - designing a costume - choosing music
7. History and present-day of circus art	5	final year	the pupil: - gets acquainted with circus of the history and the modern day	- studying the history and modern day of circus arts
8. Preparing a circus act	64	every spring	the pupil: - prepares a circus act in the chosen orientation under the teacher's guidance, and performs it in the annual spring show - practises being a part of a work team	- preparing an act either alone or in a group
9. Experimenting circus acts	20	continuously	the pupil: - prepares small acts in the chosen orientation and performs them	- encouraging the pupil to plan and practise acts on their own
10. Preparing a circus act independently	36	spring of final year	the pupil - prepares a circus act independently or in a group in the chosen orientation	- the pupil chooses a skill, which is practised all spring - the pupil plans and prepares a circus act

7. CONTENTS OF ADVANCED SYLLABUS EDUCATION

7.1 Basic studies

Practising continuously	500 L	Stress	Goal	Core contents
Technique	254	- acrobatics - balance - juggling	the pupil learns: - the basic techniques of different circus acts - to value the beauty of different circus acts - purity of movement, aesthetics, and safety	- practising techniques of different circus acts persistently - getting to know different acts as diversely as possible - getting to know the safety aspects of circus training
Body understanding	54	- body management	the pupil learns: - the meaning of stretching and strength exercises - to get to know and respect his/her own body - to trust him/herself and others	- doing strength exercises, stretchings and relaxing exercises - emphasising the pupil's positive and natural relationship with his/her own body - doing trust exercises and exercises that develop coordination and rhythmic skills - getting to know the possibilities of his/her own body through music and dance
Knowledge of circus arts	47	- viewing performances - circus knowledge - portfolio	the pupil learns: - circus knowledge and history of circus - the meaning of cooperation between different art forms - to make a portfolio	- getting to know the operation of a performing circus, viewing shows and learning to analyse and interpret what has been experienced - developing circus knowledge, know-how and terminology - getting to know the history of circus and circus arts - studying their own learning with the help of a portfolio
Performing	70	- performance experiment	the pupil learns: - performing skills - to enjoy performing	- developing performing skills as an individual and a group through improvisation and games -encouraging the pupil to perform - preparing different acts and getting performing experience - getting to know the creation of a circus performance as a whole
Final project spring of 2 nd year	37		the pupil: - prepares a circus act under the teacher's guidance	- planning an act - practising a circus act in a group or on their own - self-assessment

+ productions 38 L

“Considering the fact that Sorin Sirkus is a youth circus, the technical skills are fantastic”, / Helsingin Sanomat (a national Finnish newspaper)



7.2 Advanced studies

Practising continuously	800 L	Stress	Goal	Core contents
Technique	562	- finding the chosen orientation	the pupil: - learns the know-how in the chosen major - continues versatile practising	- deepening the know-how in the chosen major - practising art forms that support circus training - developing the skills in the minor subjects
Body understanding	50	- the body as a tool	the pupil learns: - to use his/her own body in a versatile manner when performing - to take responsibility of his/her body	- learning to maintain and develop balance: flexibility, strength, durability and coordination - deepening body language through music and dance - guiding the pupil towards independent training
Knowledge of circus arts	38	- analyzing performances	the pupil: - deepens his/her circus knowledge - gets acquainted with modern circus - gets acquainted with the internationality of circus - expresses the circus world orally	- viewing shows and learning to assess them in writing - getting to know the history and terminology of the major and exploring its possibilities - acquiring international circus experiences - producing texts in the topic of circus
Performing	82	- creating an act	the pupil learns: - to understand a circus act as a multi-artistic unit - to find his/her own stage persona	- exploring and training to prepare a circus act - deepening performing skills by concentrating on individual expression
Final project final year	60		the pupil: - prepares a circus act according to set goals	- making a written work plan - practising an act either alone or in a group - self-assessment according to the goals he/she set for him/herself

+ productions 8 L

8. ASSESSMENT DEVELOPS SORIN SIRKUS

Sorin Sirkus follows the level of education and the learning environment through assessment. The circus creates a safe and developing environment for their pupils and staff, and takes care of the condition and safety of the premises and the equipment. Sorin Sirkus pursues to train their staff. Sorin Sirkus evaluates its own operation when drawing up the annual report. The City of Tampere and the Ministry of Education follow the operation of Sorin Sirkus annually by reading the report of the association.

The development of the professionalism of the teachers is monitored, updated and feedback is aspired to give. Once a year the pupils give feedback on the activity and operation of the circus and the teachers in a written form by answering a questionnaire. The teachers assess their own activity and the quality of the teaching on a weekly basis in teacher meetings and half-yearly in an assessment meeting of the institute.

8.1 Pupil assessment

The assessment given by the teacher is always encouraging and positive. The teacher gives oral feedback on the pupil's progress during lessons. The given assessment strives to strengthen the motivation of the pupil and ease learning. The assessment is given in a discussive manner; the teacher and the pupil assess together the pupil's progress. The pupil learns to follow up his/her own progress and assess his/her achievements according to the goals he/she has set.

The pupil of the general syllabus receives a transcript of completed study modules at the end of the spring term. The pupil of the advanced syllabus receives a certificate annually containing a written evaluation.

8.2 Certificate of the basic syllabus

After completing 10 study modules the pupil receives a certificate of the basic syllabus for the basic education in the arts. All the study modules the pupil has completed are marked down in the certificate.

8.3 Certificate and assessment criteria of the advanced syllabus

Certificate of the basic studies

The pupil receives a certificate and a written description made by two (2) judges of the final project.

Final project of the advanced studies

The pupil receives a certificate, which contains a written assessment and a grade of the advanced studies and the final project of the advanced studies. There must be at least two (2) judges to assess the final project.

Assessment criteria of the basic studies

Basic studies are completed, when the pupil has prepared a final project. Performance and technical skills are the objects of assessment.

Assessment criteria of the final project of the advanced studies

Advanced studies are completed, when the pupil has prepared a final project, a written work plan and a report. The assessment stresses the achievement of set goals, the performance and technical skills.

8.4 Certificates

Contents of the transcript of completed study modules

- Sorin Sirkus ry
- pupil's name
- duration of studies
- studies provided
- signature of the teacher and stamp of the institution

Transcript of completed study modules of the basic syllabus of circus arts

- Sorin Sirkus ry
- transcript of completed study modules of the basic education of circus arts
- pupil's name and date of birth
- pupil has completed _ lesson hours in the basic studies of circus arts
- signature of the principal and stamp of the institution
- City of Tampere authorization to provide education 93/ 574/KUL 549
- education is based on the Act on the Basic Education in the Arts (633/1998)
- curriculum is accepted by the City of Tampere Culture and Leisure Board, June 7th , 2006

Certificate of the basic syllabus of circus arts

- Sorin Sirkus ry
- basic education of circus arts, containing basic studies
- pupil's name and date of birth
- pupil has completed 500 lesson hours of the basic education in the arts
- date of completion
- pupil's participation in projects
- signature of the principal and stamp of the institution
- education is based on the Act on the Basic Education in the Arts (633/1998)
- curriculum is accepted by the City of Tampere Culture and Leisure Board, June 7th 2006

Transcript of completed study modules of the advanced syllabus of circus arts

- Sorin Sirkus ry
- transcript of completed study modules of the advanced syllabus of circus arts
- pupil's name and date of birth
- pupil has completed _ lesson hours in the basic studies of circus arts
- signature of the principal and stamp of the institution
- curriculum is accepted by the City of Tampere Culture and Leisure Board, June 7th 2006
- education is based on the Act of the Basic Education in the Arts (633/1998)
- education is implemented according to the national core curriculum adopted by the National Board of Education (regulation 10/011/2005)

Certificate of the basic studies of the advanced syllabus of circus arts

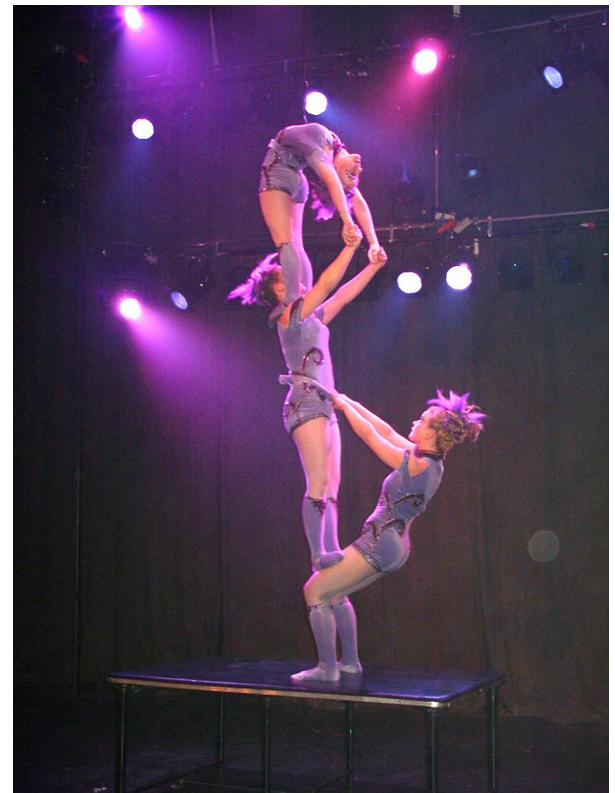
- Sorin Sirkus ry
- basic education of circus arts, advanced syllabus, containing basic and advanced studies
- pupils's name and date of birth
- pupil has completed 500 lessons of the basic education in the arts
- pupil's final project, date of completion
- pupil's participation in projects
- signature of the principal and stamp of the institution
- curriculum is accepted by the City of Tampere Culture and Leisure Board, June 7th 2006
- education is based on the Act of the Basic Education in the Arts (633/1998)
- education is implemented according to the national core curriculum confirmed by the National Board of Education (regulation 10/011/2005)

Certificate of the advanced studies of the advanced syllabus of circus arts

- Sorin Sirkus ry
- basic education of circus arts, advanced syllabus, containing basic and advanced studies
- pupil's name and date of birth
- pupil has completed 1300 lesson hours of the basic education in the arts
- pupil's final project, grade, written assessment, date of completion
- pupil's participation in projects
- signature of the principal and stamp of the institution
- curriculum is accepted by the City of Tampere Culture and Leisure Board, June 7th 2006
- education is based on the Act on the Basic Education in the Arts (633/1998)
- education is implemented according to the national core curriculum confirmed by the National Board of Education (regulation 10/011/2005)
- scale of grades 1-5

The certificate of the advanced studies also acts as a document for completing the advanced syllabus of the basic education of circus arts. In the basic education of circus arts, the pupil receives **a certificate** after completing the advanced studies, **a certificate of basic studies** after completing basic studies, and a **transcript of completed study modules** if needed.

“Sorin Sirkus has become a trademark, whose quality is guaranteed”,
/ Aamulehti (newspaper in the Tampere region)



9. COOPERATION

Sorin Sirkus cooperates with many different people and institutions. Cooperation is developed and increased according to possibilities.

9.1 Circus and the home

Sorin Sirkus encourages its teachers towards openness and good relations with the pupils and their parents. The circus strives to organize “Get to know the circus” –evenings twice a year, where performing, spending time together and the possibility for open discussion make the relations of the circus and the home closer. The input of the parents in different volunteer work is greatly valued.

9.2 Art institutes etc.

The teachers of Sorin Sirkus act as visiting teachers in many art institutes, courses and camps all around Finland (The University of Tampere / Department of Acting, Art Academy at Turku University of Applied Sciences, Lahti Institution of Arts and Crafts).

The cooperation of Sorin Sirkus with different youth circuses has continued for years. Sorin Sirkus wants to help smaller circus clubs to develop. Sorin Sirkus wants to create good friendships between the teachers and pupils of different circuses.

Sorin Sirkus acts as a good place for practical training for students of many art institutes. Different art forms meet in productions, where there are circus trainer students, costume makers, set designers, make up designers, sound and lighting designers, graphic designers etc.

The circus is in cooperation with the professionals in the field of circus, theatres and television.

9.3 Memberships and representation

Sorin Sirkus is a member of the Finnish Youth Circus Association (FYCA). Sorin Sirkus teacher Mette Ylikorva is the chairman of the association, Seela Wanvik is a member of the committee, and Jani Suihkonen acts as a deputy member.

FYCA office is located at the premises of Sorin Sirkus on Ahlmanintie.

Sorin Sirkus is a member of “Tampere for Children” and Tampere Tunnetuksi ry (“Make Tampere Known”), and thus it helps the development of children and young people’s culture in Tampere.

The ringmaster Taina Kopra is a member of the circus arts section of the Arts Council of Finland, and is involved in the national development of circus arts.

9.4 City of Tampere and the Ministry of Education

The City of Tampere and the Ministry of Education support Sorin Sirkus in a substantial manner. Tampere and the Ministry of Education have made it possible for Sorin Sirkus to acquire the new premises and their renovation in Nekala in 2005-2006.

9.5 Internationality

Internationality is an essential part of circus arts. Sorin Sirkus strives to give their pupils a touch of the international circus world.

International professionals and teachers are always welcome to visit. According to possibilities, the circus participates in international festivals and happenings.

The circus is a part of international N.I.C.E network (Network of International Circus Exchange). Sorin Sirkus has been invited to join the European Caravan-project of six other youth circuses. Its function is the exchange and development of the contentual and productional know-how of circus schools. The reputation and relations of Sorin Sirkus in the world are outstanding. International interaction is aspired to develop still.

10. OTHER ACTIVITY

10.1 The performing group

The ringmaster Taina Kopra chooses the performing group. The group represents Sorin Sirkus in Finland and abroad. Performers practise throughout the year for 42 weeks: 12-30 lesson hours a week; 504- 1260 lesson hours a year. Their privilege is to train a lot in a versatile manner and with top teachers. The duty of the performing group is to perform in small and big happenings. Each member of the performing group has at least one major and several minors. They have one or more circus acts suitable for performance

12-30 L/week	44 study weeks/year	504-1250 L/year
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10.2 National development

During its 20-year existence Sorin Sirkus has become one the most substantial youth circuses in Finland. 20 years of know-how is a valuable asset, which Sorin Sirkus is more than happy to share. Sorin Sirkus is ready and willing to develop circus arts also on a national level. The teachers have been to many cities and towns in local circus schools to give orientation-specific teaching, and also to train teachers. The circus pursues to increase workhops and performances for different happenings in areas, which don't have a circus of their own. Sorin Sirkus has been developing circus arts nationally as part of the Magic Lamp -network. Cooperation will continue in the future.

The ringmaster Taina Kopra is in a work group of the National Board of Education to formulate the national core curriculum of the advanced syllabus of circus arts for the Basic Education in the Arts 2004-2005. In the autumn of 2007 the group continues to develop the pupil assessment of the education of circus arts and its criteria under the leadership of the Councillor of Education Matti Pietilä. The webpages of the National Board of Education (Edu.fi) section of circus arts are also under construction. Our new premises enable the visiting performances of different art forms, and the production of camps and different happenings. This will develop arts and cooperation between different people affiliated with culture.

