



# Helmi Rahikainen

2022-23

Rotary Youth Exchange Student  
from Finland

Helmi arrived in Kelowna from Turku, Finland on August 24 to commence her Rotary Youth Exchange experience for a year with her host Rotary club, the Rotary Club of Kelowna Sunrise.

Helmi's family and home is in Turku, Finland. While on her RYE experience, Helmi will miss her mom, a Legal Counsel, her dad, a Finnish Navy Officer, her 15 year old sister and her five greyhounds, Henri, Kaitsu, Pauli, Nami and Nala.



Helmi's interests and hobbies are extensive; from her lust for high energy physical pursuits such as CrossFit and Hokutoyu jiu-jitsu and other martial arts which starting at the age of seven. But then, she can quickly shift her focus to low key activities such as reading, listening to music, watching movies and just spending time with her friends.



In recent years, she has begun to enjoy travelling outside the country to such exotic places like Stockholm (Sweden), Berlin (Germany) and Rome, Firenze, Amalfi Coast, and Sicily in Italy; and while doing so taking in concerts by Harry Styles and Lorde from New Zealand.

### My School Back Home: Puolalanmäki Upper Secondary School

The school with a student population of 470 is a UNESCO and Eco school, which is a permanent holder of vihreä lippu. While the school program



involves four years, most students graduate after three years, which is the year Helmi was enrolled in. She indicates that she will continue as a senior, or "abi," and will take her finals in history, geography, English, Russian, Finnish and mathematics.



Eco-Schools is the world's largest sustainable schools program. The program operates in 68 countries, and has been run in Finland under the name vihreä lippu (Green Flag) for more than 20 years. Currently there are more than 350 schools registered in the program in Finland.

## My Home City: Turku

Turku is the oldest city in Finland, and served as the most important city of the eastern part of the Kingdom of Sweden (modern-day Finland). With a population of 194,244 (2021), it is the sixth largest city in Finland.



Situated by the Baltic Sea and sheltered by the islands of the Archipelago Sea, Turku is located at the mouth of the Aura River in the southwestern corner of Finland.