

Thank you so much for your support in giving me the wonderful opportunity to go to Finland. This report will be a brief summary of my trip and what I have learnt.

During the 11 days I spent in Finland, 8 of which at an international camp, I learnt so much and improved lots of my skills. The thing I learnt that had the biggest lasting impression on me was independence. I returned from the trip much more self-reliant. This was because it was the first time I have travelled abroad anywhere alone, and the longest I've ever been away from home without my parents. We also had to make sure we had everything ourselves, pack our bags ourselves and also decide what we needed for each day and for the overall trip.

I also worked in a team, mixed with Finnish people as well as English people from my group.

Another thing I learnt was about Finnish culture. Because of the nearness of lakes and forests, fish, berries and mushrooms play a very important role in the food that the Finnish eat. The people are very clean and very kind. Saunas are very important and a strong tradition in Finland, as I found out due to the amount of saunas on the camp.

During the camp, we used a lot of carpentry skills, which are quite uncommon in England, so it was very new to us. By the end of the camp, my woodwork was quite a bit better – but I was still not even a fraction as skilled as the Finnish people are!

Throughout the trip, there have been so many amazing experiences. All of the things I did were so diverse – from making clothes to an earthquake simulator. One of the highlights of my trip would have to be the lake trampolining. During the water day, we took part in a number of water-based activities, one of these being water trampolining. There was a big inflated round ring with a trampoline on the top. It was such great fun!

Another activity I really enjoyed was souvenir making. You were given a square piece of copper and the materials to make a piece of jewellery or a neckerchief woggle. I chose to make a bracelet with a pendant in the shape of the Roihu symbol. There were powdered colours that you place on the metal and it colours it when it is heated.. I used a lot of new skills such as

cutting the copper, shaping it, sanding it, using the powdered colours and more.

One of the most amazing things about the camp was how many people from around the world there were. There were people from countries such as, Greece, Israel, America, Canada, Mexico, Singapore and so many more. I made friends with two Canadian girls, who lived in Hong Kong and were travelling with the Hong Kong troop. I interacted with many people from different countries whilst swapping badges. I have now got quite a few different badges from all around the world, which I think is really quite cool!

On the tour after the camp, I got a glimpse of the beauty of Finland. We travelled to Tampere, a beautiful city situated between two lakes, where we went to a spy museum, which was very educational. We took a boat trip to Hämeenlinna and went to Hämeenlinna castle, which was once again, very educational and we got an insight into what life was like for people in Finland in the Medieval times.

On the last day of the tour we went to a national park, in the middle of a forest and cooked our own food on the campfire, next to a beautiful lake.

In reflection, I think that this Finland trip was by far one of the best experiences I've ever had and I am so incredibly grateful for your grant.

Yours truly,
Grace Fuller