

Evelin Ilves met with pupils and teachers from Metsküla Elementary School in Lihula municipality today and shared lunch with them in the school canteen.

"Metsküla is the quintessential little school, setting its own pace, and what it offers would make anyone from the city green with envy," Mrs Ilves said following her visit. She explained that in addition to the normal school curriculum there are a number of camps for the pupils each year, lasting from 3 to 5 days each, at which they learn about nature and culture and surviving in the forest.

"There are all sorts of cultural events, too, plus excursions, and a real sense of family and community," Mrs Ilves said. "And of course there are the school dinners, the ingredients for which are sourced locally – all from within a radius of around 50 km. These are the kinds of values that small country schools can offer."

"They've come full circle here, too," she added. "Some of the children who are at the school now are the children of former students. And if parents move back to the place they used to call home because of their children's school, well – that's a minor miracle!"

Last year Mrs Ilves paid visits to a number of schools around Estonia: those to the Russian-language Tallinn Secondary School of Humanities, Valga Elementary School and Tabasalu Co-Ed Secondary School in October, November and December followed a trip to Lauka School on the island of Hiiumaa in September, during which she also consulted those behind the Western Estonian LEADER project on ways of providing children's institutions with locally sourced food. During 2012 Mrs Ilves also visited the Johannes School and Kindergarten in the village of Rosma in Põlva municipality, which is a Waldorf school, was introduced to students from Jüri Secondary School in Rae municipality and met with students and teachers from Muhu and Valjala Elementary Schools.

Evelin Ilves is also the patron of the 'School Bread' project.

Office of the President

Evelin Ilves visits Metsküla Elementary School

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