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Concept Notes Spring 2023

The day care centre introduces itself

Our facility is a daycare centre close to the Max Planck Institute for Multidisciplinary Natural Sciences (MPI-NAT) in Göttingen. The building was built by the institute in 2018 and occupied by Kinderhaus e.V. as the operator. The facility offers up to 106 places, which are divided 2/3 between children of MPI- employees and 1/3 between children of external parents. In addition to three other MPI- locations in Göttingen, the MPI-NAT has developed its own area on the Fassberg in Göttingen. The complex appears similar to a small village, with its own carpentry, electricians and catering facilities.

The day care centre is located on the edge of this "village" right next to a bus stop that connects the mountain with the city centre. The building itself is built on a wooded slope, which invites the older children to climb and slide. The forest botanical garden, an animal enclosure and a small pond are also within walking distance.

The nursery can be attended by children aged between 9 weeks and school entry, with places in the infant group reserved for MPI staff.

Support

The Kinderhaus e.V. is the responsible body for our facility. The association was founded in 1981 as an initiative of parents and educators to offer an alternative and extension to the conventional regular facilities in the city of Göttingen.

The Kinderhaus offers all types of day care facilities for children between one and ten years of age. For over 20 years, however, it has been a leader in Göttingen in the care of very young children aged 1-3.

Since 2001, the Kinderhaus has also been a cooperation partner for the "Reliable Primary School" in Göttingen.

As the children's house wants to be open to all families, religious and political focuses are completely excluded. Instead, the focus is on the needs of the families. For example, parental contributions in the crèche are staggered and the opening hours are adapted to the needs of the parents.

On the professional side, each day care centre and its staff are entitled to regular further training and close support from the pedagogical management.

Premises

Our day care centre is located in a ground-level profiled building built on a wooded slope. All group rooms face south and have full glazing and a door to the garden. There are six group rooms in total, each of which has a bedroom. The infant group also has a breastfeeding room where parents can withdraw with their children. On the opposite side, facing north, are the toilets and washrooms, the kitchen, a kitchenette, a staff computer room, a recreation room, a toilets room and the office. The crèche rooms are each 45 square metres in size and have direct access to their bedroom, which offers 15 square metres. The groups are connected by a long corridor, which can be further divided into the individual house sections by several doors. Since the corridor is architecturally understood as a kind of communication space, it opens up into a kind of meeting place or as another group room. Two groups always share this room, which, with its full glazing facing the forest, gives the impression that the children are outdoors.

Kindergarten concept

The studio and the learning workshop

In the studio, 25 children between the ages of 2.5 and 6 are cared for by 4 teachers. In addition, we accept interns and FSJ graduates. The group room offers the children a varied range of activities. In addition to the Remida table, there is a cuddle and reading corner, a painting table, an activity table with changing materials such as modelling clay, puzzles, board games, ironing beads and much more. We make sure that the inventory in the group room is regularly changed or expanded in order to create new incentives and to make the children's everyday life more exciting. We always try to keep a certain clarity in the group room in order to prevent overstimulation. In addition, we make sure that the decorations are adapted to the season and to festivals, which are usually made by the children themselves.

Daily routine

Time	Activity
08:00 - 10:00	Bring time (until 9:30) and free play
08:30 - 09:45	Breakfast time
10:00 - 10:30	Morning circle and dialing into activities
10:30 - 11:45	Offers and free play
11:45 - 12:15	Tidying up and washing hands
From 12:00	Lunch in three groups
13:00 - 17:00	Offers and free play
From 14:30	Snack

We base our work on the situation-oriented approach by Armin Krenz. Current topics of the children are taken up and integrated into the design of the activities. In addition, we work according to the Reggio pedagogy. According to this approach, the focus is on the child itself and it actively promotes its own personal development by approaching the world with an open mind. Through targeted offers and the teaching of didactic-methodical learning structures, the pedagogical staff primarily take on a helping and supporting position. Furthermore, the philosophy of Reggio pedagogy advocates learning close to life, which is why we prefer to use natural materials and real things instead of toy replicas. The heart of the studio is the Remida. For this purpose, a wide variety of everyday materials and supposed waste are creatively and artistically re-purposed. This recycling principle gives rise to an ecological awareness that accompanies us through our everyday lives.¹ Furthermore, the Orientation Plan for Education and Upbringing of the Lower Saxony Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs serves as a model for our pedagogical work.

The learning workshop

In the Learning Workshop group room, the children find a cosy play corner with a large table, a corner bench and a changing selection of board games. There is also a wide range of material for research and experimentation.

Emotional development and social learning

In order to promote the emotional development and social learning of each child, we offer regular singing and play circles, free play, children's conferences and a good atmosphere at breakfast, lunch and snack. The children get plenty of time to interact with each other at these stations. In where children learn to make decisions on their own, to help other children/caregivers, to work on

¹ cf. Tassilom Knauf, Reggio: Pedagogical Approaches for the Kita, 2017

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something for the group in small groups and then share it, or to develop new rules by regularly repeating them, children learn social interaction with and among each other. The wide age range of the children also allows the older children in particular to take responsibility for the group and individual children.².

Developing cognitive skills and the joy of learning

In the kindergarten, we offer the children free play. In this phase, the children have time to exchange ideas with their friends or to make new contacts. These social contacts strengthen their confidence in themselves and encourage them to deal with their own feelings better. In the kindergarten area, the children can learn rhymes, songs and poems which help to train their memory. In our regular activities, such as experimenting with water, we encourage the use of all the senses. Thanks to our external offer of music lessons, the children learn to expand their knowledge through play. When children are enthusiastic about a topic, we try to pick up on this enthusiasm and offer appropriate materials and activities with which they can further their education voluntarily and in a self-determined way.³.

Practical life skills

We give the children enough time to try things out for themselves "Help me to do it myself" (Maria Montessori). We support the children with questions and problems but leave enough time. The children are given opportunities to support us in everyday life, e.g. sweeping, preparing snacks, emptying and putting away the dishwasher. We also give older children the opportunity to support and help the younger children. We give the children time to get dressed and undressed independently, the children fetch water on their own and at breakfast and lunch the children take their own food. Through this daily repetition, the children estimate their portion sizes. After each meal, the children clear their dishes independently. We regularly bake and cook for a group or sometimes for the whole day care centre. In the process, the children learn about different materials that are used to process food. In addition, we offer Remida in the studio, where the children also try out different tools such as saws, hammers, carving knives, etc. The children also help with gardening. In addition, the children help with gardening, learn to work on the computer, learn the basics of sewing and ironing. In the kindergarten we attach great importance to "real" play material. In the sandbox there are only old pots, spoons and other kitchen utensils. In the garden there are various boards and other remida dents such as tubes, CDs or old tyres that are used for decoration or for playing with.⁴.

Basic mathematical understanding

The pedagogical staff integrate a wide variety of comparisons into the children's everyday life, e.g. less/more, up/down, big/small, etc. We offer opportunities to try out these comparisons in the free play phase, during activities or at mealtimes. Examples: When queuing to go in we ask the children "which child is in front of you?", and another we ask "which child is behind you?". In doing so, we distract the children from waiting because not all of them can go in at the same time and work out comparisons with the children in a playful way. Furthermore, the children support us in our daily tasks, giving them opportunities to do activities where items need to be added or removed. This can

² cf. Lower Saxony Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs, Orientation Plan for Education and Upbringing, 2018, page 14-15

³ cf. Lower Saxony Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs, Orientation Plan for Education and Upbringing, 2018, page 16-17

⁴ cf. Lower Saxony Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs, Orientation Plan for Education and Upbringing, 2018, p. 22-23

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be in preparing meals or tidying up the play areas. By adding and taking away objects or food, the children develop a better understanding of quantities and numbers. In free play or in given tasks, children have the opportunity to sort, divide and distribute things. This can be in the morning circle, for example, where all the children sort themselves into a certain game and then count where there are more children. In the group and in the garden, the children discover different shapes and surfaces that invite them to compare and try them out. In the kindergarten, the children are given enough time and opportunities to experiment independently. Among other things, a wide variety of materials are provided at the supply table, which can be supplemented or exchanged again and again.⁵

Aesthetic education

Through listening to music and dancing, we offer the children another form of communication and expression. They can express their feelings in their dance or movement and at the same time discover commonalities with others. In the nursery school, we offer many different ways of creating, thanks to ever-changing materials, tools and materials, the children can try out different painting techniques, among other things. The children can display their artwork in a showcase in the hallway or take it home. In the hallway there is a construction site, an area where the children can build and construct with different materials. Suggestions in the form of pictures and books with building and art works are available here. In the space in between is a role play area, the theatre. The offer is regularly adapted to the current circumstances, e.g. puppet show, shopping shop, kitchen with accessories or materials for a hospital. In addition, we offer theatre play on a recurring basis. The children can choose between hand puppets or finger puppets. We regularly offer the Kamishibai. An educator reads out the same story until the children can speak along with the story and reproduce it themselves. Either the children reproduce the story via the Kamishibai or act out the stories with the hand puppets/finger puppets.⁶

Nature and living environment

In the kindergarten and in the garden, we make sure that the children can work with natural materials. In one group we have specialised in Remida work. We regularly collect materials for the Remida with the help of the parents. Whether crown caps, cables or cassettes. This gives the children the opportunity to try out a wide variety of objects. They test out the texture or experiment with the help of tools. In warmer months, we offer water in the garden for experimenting or cooling down. We also offer boxes in the group room from time to time that contain water with different everyday materials. In spring, we start planting the raised beds. The children have the task of clearing the bed of weeds and then planting the seeds. In addition to flowers, we sow fruit or vegetables. This gives the children the opportunity to watch the plant grow from seed to harvest. Meanwhile, they have to remember to take care of it regularly and water it. On our regular walking day, the children get the opportunity to go "deeper" into the forest and observe the trees, plants and insects closely. Broken branches or even stones are gladly collected by the children and taken back to the nursery. The children then have the opportunity to take their collected things home or, for example, to paint or carve the branches. Furthermore, we offer the children to start a community project with the branches, e.g. by building a cave or a forest sofa, etc.⁷.

⁵ cf. Lower Saxony Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs, Orientation Plan for Education and Upbringing, 2018, p. 24-25

⁶ cf. Lower Saxony Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs, Orientation Plan for Education and Upbringing, 2018, p. 26-27

⁷ cf. Lower Saxony Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs, Orientation Plan for Education and Upbringing, 2018, pp. 28-29

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Ethical and religious questions, basic experiences of human existence

Due to our proximity to the MPI we have a great diversity of ethnicities and cultural differences, which we like to address and celebrate.

We offer the parents' coffee at regular intervals. Parents come to the nursery one afternoon and spend time with us and the children. The parents get to talk and get to know each other better. In singing circles or at lunch, for example, the children talk about their interests and what life is like at home. We take up the resulting interest and design projects. For example, we put up a big map of the world where each child can pin a flag on it. This gives the children a better idea of how many different nationalities we have. Through visits to the city centre or walks, the children get to know their surroundings better. At the same time, we stimulate curiosity about the city of Göttingen and try to present the possibilities of our city in discussion groups or offers. In all our actions, we act as role models and exemplify values and norms to the children, which should shape them not only for their school life but also for their entire later life. Throughout the kindergarten year, we offer recurring rituals, such as summer festivals or the Festival of Lights. Besides a fixed daily routine, this offers children an orientation for the whole year. They get a better sense of time and through festivals, for example, they can better understand which season has which meaning.⁸

Body - Movement - Health

We want to promote overall physical health. This includes not only sport and plenty of exercise, but also nutrition.

In the garden, the children find versatile movement stimuli, e.g. slide, climbing frame, boards/wood/pots everyday materials, meadow, water, movement materials: swing cloth, dance bands, balls of various sports, carving. In addition, there are many different vehicles available for all ages and development levels.⁹

Everyday situation

"Children are on a quest to feel pride in "this is who I am, this is what I can do, this is what I can do and this is what I dare to do". By being active and proactive, they manage to build a relationship with their abilities and realise that they are very capable of taking care of themselves (and others)."

We want to give the children free space in everyday situations or in free play "to move, to run, to romp, to jump and hop, to roll or to lie down, in order to make basic physical experiences for their development".¹⁰ During this time, the children can persistently occupy themselves with things from their everyday lives. Alone or together with their friends, they explore and discover the kindergarten and find time to finish things in peace. The children can decide for themselves where they want to play. They can go play in the garden, in the gym, in the theatre, in the library, in the group rooms, or in the construction site. Visits from the crèche children are also possible.

The children use their environment to develop individually. In free play, children are given the time and opportunities to try things out, make mistakes, socialise and learn how to deal with their feelings

⁸ cf. Lower Saxony Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs, Orientation Plan for Education and Upbringing, 2018, page 30-31

⁹ cf. Lower Saxony Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs, Orientation Plan for Education and Upbringing, 2018, pp. 18-19).

¹⁰ Armin Krenz, Der "Situationsorientierte Ansatz" in der Kita, 2008, page 50

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and world events. In these everyday situations, the children have a measure of time in which they can freely express their ideas without being crowded.¹¹.

Food

There are three meals in the kindergarten. The open breakfast, joint lunch in three groups and an open snack in the afternoon. Breakfast is freely available for both kindergarten groups. From 8:30 to 9:45, the children can go to the large kitchen to eat breakfast on their own; a specialist accompanies the children. We place a table in the middle of the kitchen (16 places). We place the cheese plates, vegetable plates and many different spreads and bread on it. The children take their dishes from the trolley, sit down at the table and have their breakfast. After the children have finished their meal, they put their dishes away again and go to wash their hands and mouths. On Mondays, they have muesli for breakfast, which is in jars on the trolley. The children mix their breakfast together and can then sit down at the table.

Lunch is served in three small groups. Children can eat with their friends. Before we take our food from the bowls on the table, we all say a chant together. Afterwards, each child clears their dishes and gets in line to wash their hands and mouths. Snack is held individually each day, we snack inside or outside depending on the weather. The pre-school children prepare the snack together with a teacher. Here too, the children wash their hands before and after eating. During snack time, we make sure to use up the leftovers from breakfast and lunch (e.g. noodles or potatoes) and supplement them with fruit or vegetables.

We have high standards for the food that is eaten in the kindergarten. So at lunchtime we are supplied by the organic kitchen Leinetal. Breakfast is supplied in organic quality by Lotta-Karotta. We attach great importance to balanced meals and closely follow the Lower Saxony Education Plan. This means, for example, that we only eat meat once a week and that our daily routine is sugar-free. The entire nursery is nut-free.

Sleep and care

If children feel the need to rest or sleep, there is the possibility to lie down in the library after lunch. For this, we put a mattress, pillows and blankets in the room and darken the windows. If the children wish, a radio play can be offered or they can find their way to sleep in silence. For staffing reasons, sleeping cannot be accompanied by a specialist.

In the kindergarten we have fixed diaper changing times, once before lunch and once before snack. Of course, we also change nappies in between if the nappy is full. If there is only urine in the nappy, the children try to undress themselves, take off the nappy, dispose of it and then put on a new nappy and their clothes again. Depending on their age, the children then go to the toilet and check whether they still need to go. This regular process helps the children to become dry. They are always accompanied by a specialist who offers assistance if necessary. If there is faeces in the nappy, the children try to take off their shoes and trousers themselves, after which the specialist places the child on the changing table and changes the child. Afterwards, the child puts his or her clothes back on and washes his or her hands.

¹¹ cf. Armin Krenz, Der "Situationsorientierte Ansatz" in der Kita, 2008, page 51

The crèche groups

The Stargazing Group

Group name / A short introduction to your group

We decided on the name 'Sternschnuppen' (shooting stars) or 'Sternschnuppengruppe' (shooting star group) because there was a consensus in the house not to use 'typical' nursery group names, such as colours or animals. In addition, the group name should fit the name of the institution "Kita Entdeckerland" as well as the theme "Entdeckerland", therefore we called ourselves "Sternschnuppengruppe".

Our group emerged from one of the two pre-existing crèche groups on the grounds of the MPI. This meant that there was already a group concept and a fixed structure for action. Within the framework of the IQUE process 2019/-20, we have also developed an internal group staff guideline that serves as a basis for our work.

General conditions / number of children, information about the professionals, daily routines, room layout

In our crèche group, there is room for 15 children aged 1 - 3 years, who are cared for by four permanent pedagogical specialists.

If possible and available, we are supported by an FSJ worker. We are also open to interns from the SAS or SFS training.

The most prominent feature of the group is certainly the raised platform built in cooperation with a wood workshop from natural wild woods.¹² This was developed in close cooperation between the master carpenter and the educational staff and is perfectly adapted to the needs of the group: it offers a variety of movement possibilities for the toddlers as well as numerous play stimuli for the older crèche children. Underneath the raised platform, there are several mattresses and a hammock as well as many opportunities to hide from the prying eyes of adults.

On the other side of the room there is a reading-play corner where most of the toys are located. To create another play area, the bedroom is often converted into a play and romp room. In addition, other special play materials are stored there.

Our daily routine

08:00 - 09:10	Bring time
09:15 - 09:45	Breakfast
09:45 - 10:00	2. bring time
09:45 - 11:15	Free play / Offer
11:15 - 11:45	Diapering / nursing (earlier if needed) Clean up
11:30 - 12:00	Singing circle
12:00 - 12:30	Lunch
12:30 - 15:00	Sleep / Rest
14:30 - 15:25	1. pick-up time
14:30 - 15:30	Free play / Diapering
From 14:30	Afternoon snack
16:00 - 17:00	Free play / pick-up time

¹² cf. Kinderhaus e.V. (2009).

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Methods and pedagogical principles | What do you base your work on? What is your basic attitude towards the children and their parents? What methods do you use?

It is important to us as pedagogical staff in the "Sternschnuppengruppe" that we observe the children's interests. We see it as our task to recognise and take up their topics. To do this, we enter into a dialogue with each child individually about the current topics. This is the basis for our further planning of offers to promote and deepen the children's educational paths. To this end, we provide each child with the space, time and material they need to pursue their individual learning processes. Likewise, we offer the children in special activities a varied occupation with topics that we consider meaningful for early childhood education, e.g. sowing and planting, seasons, baking and others.

When arriving in the morning, each child and his or her parents are greeted personally in order to make the start of the day easier for everyone. When picking up the child, the parents are informed about the day in the day care centre, e.g. about activities, special events and successes of the child, sleeping time, meals, etc.

Another important pillar of our work is the area of social behaviour and (independent) conflict resolution. The children learn responsibility for themselves and their own environment, for example, by being playfully motivated to clean up after themselves after play.

Focus of the group | Which areas of education do you work on particularly intensively?

It is important to us to promote movement as well as experiences of nature and the environment during regular walks in the surrounding area and play in the nursery garden. In order to broaden the children's horizons, we regularly go on excursions to the outdoors in the immediate vicinity with forests and fields, to the alpacas and to the forest botanical garden. In this way, the children learn a lot about the local flora and fauna through first-hand experience with all their senses and experience the environment in all seasons. We want to set as few limits as possible to their urge to move and explore. We collect natural materials such as leaves, sticks, stones, flowers, snail shells, acorns and everything that the children find interesting and discover. Photos and documentation support us in our dialogue with the children about their activities, experiences and adventures. The children can (re)remember, share their thoughts and also contribute wishes and ideas about what they would like to do and discover in the future. We also involve their parents in these retellings and reflections, which is enriching for all involved.

In the learning environment of the nursery garden, the child can independently pursue its educational processes through movement and perception, natural history experiences, research and experimentation. To this end, we offer them a wide range of movement opportunities such as swinging, climbing, driving vehicles and opportunities to experiment with natural materials such as sand, water, stones, grass, earth, etc.

Here the children learn about their potential - balance, strength, muscle building. They practise independence, self-confidence, imagination, self-awareness, planning and carrying out projects alone and with others.

We attach great importance to the education of independence and the promotion of practical life skills. Thus, the children are encouraged to undress and dress themselves independently whenever possible, to clean themselves up after meals, to put their own food on the table or to hang out their laundry. We actively encourage the children to communicate their wishes and needs to us, e.g. by allowing them to choose their toppings or asking us to pour them more water .

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In addition, we attach central importance to the development of creativity and imagination in our pedagogical work by regularly carrying out corresponding offers. For this purpose, we have a repertoire of creative and Remida materials.

Everyday situations | Small introduction to the general attitude towards everyday situations

After breakfast together with the children, the children have the opportunity for free play. During this time, we regularly offer activities that pick up on the children's interests as well as current topics such as the seasons or holidays. Depending on the weather, we organise excursions into the surrounding area or offer the children the opportunity to play in the garden. In all activities, we always try to find a balance between planned activities and the opportunity for free play¹³. In this way, we encourage the development of creativity in the children and provide a framework in which their own interests can be developed and lived out.

A fixed element in the daily routine is the singing circle, which takes place before lunch. This ritual not only strengthens the feeling of togetherness in the group, but also provides the children with a framework for creative activities and a chance to relax after an exciting morning.¹⁴

Eating | How do the eating situations work for you? What are the rules?

Mealtimes are important elements in our daily routine and should take place without disturbances, otherwise the children are too distracted. That is why we hang the sign with the respective meal time and "please do not disturb" on the group door.

We all eat together at one big table, so the older children can be a role model for the younger children, and at the same time this strengthens the group feeling. Before lunch, we recite a common table saying that marks the beginning of the meal; at the other meals, the children just start eating like that. Since we attach great importance to the children being aware of what they are eating, the children are given salad before the hot meal and dessert only afterwards. At all meals, fruit and vegetables such as apples, pears or cucumber are eaten with their peel. During mealtime, the children should remain seated at the table, except for the children who are settling in. The older children take their own food and gradually get an idea of how much they can eat. If there are difficulties during the meal, we help the children. All children are allowed to decide whether they want to eat something or not, whereby we always motivate the children to try and make sure that the children are also full. The smaller children are fed if necessary, but at the same time we guide them to eat with the spoon themselves. During mealtimes, we encourage table conversations with the children. After eating, the children clean their faces and hands in front of the mirror next to the group door, and we help them again if necessary.

Sleeping | How can outsiders imagine your sleeping situation? Rituals, rules, habits

Before sleeping, the "sleep sign" on the group door is turned around so that there are no disturbances, as children who do not sleep for long or wake up restlessly sleep in the group room.

Basically, it is important for children of this age to take a nap, which is why all children are encouraged to sleep. We also do not consider it beneficial to wake children. We only do this in emergencies, e.g. upcoming appointments, in consultation with the parents.

If dummies and/or cuddly toys are present, they are placed in the children's respective beds. Before the door of the sleeping room, the children take off their slippers, if possible independently, and put

¹³ Cf. Lichtblau, Michael (2018), p. 13.

¹⁴ Cf. Lower Saxony Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs (2012), p. 33.

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it in the box. Depending on the temperature in the sleeping room, the children's jumpers or trousers are taken off, if necessary, so that they do not sweat. Each child is placed in their own bed and covered, one person remains in the sleep room until all children have fallen asleep. Lullabies are sung or relaxation music is switched on. The BabyCam is then switched on. If a child wakes up after a short time, we try to get him or her to sleep again. After the first children have woken up, a quiet game is played in the group room so that the others are not disturbed.

Care | How are the children changed? How do you go about teaching cleanliness? Are other care activities carried out?

In the course of the day, we check the children's "full nappies" from time to time and then change the children if necessary. "Poo-poo nappies" are changed immediately. Children who touch themselves in the nappy area or use the toilet while changing their nappies wash their hands afterwards. Each child has their own wipe when they are changed during bowel movements. When nappies or wet wipes run low, we hang the relevant cards outside on the group door. When we notice that children are beginning to be interested in the toilet etc., we ask them every now and then if they want to go to the toilet in order to slowly introduce them to it.

The Rainbow Group

We work according to the concept of Emmi Pikler. *"Emmi Pikler believed that a child's personality can develop best when it is allowed to develop as independently as possible."*¹⁵

The "Pikler pedagogy" comprises 3 aspects:

Care: Gentle physical care and communication with the child. The child is basically involved at his/her request.

Movement development: The child develops on its own initiative and according to its own rhythm. There is no directing or accelerating intervention by adults.

Play: Free, undisturbed play in a protected, age-appropriate environment. *

But what exactly does this mean for everyday life in the Rainbow Group?

Since we work according to the Pikler pedagogy, we try to implement as much of it as possible. Our daily task is to adapt the environment to the children's needs for play and movement and to meet them at eye level. In the washroom, there are stairs leading up to the changing table, which the children can climb independently. Our tables and chairs have different heights and are adapted so that the children can sit down and stand up themselves for the most part. The play materials and play opportunities are also adapted to the age of the children.

We give the children the appropriate space for their free development. The freedom of movement and independence serves as the basis for the development of the personality. As a rainbow group, we pay special attention to free play. It promotes motor skills, self-confidence and the well-being of each child.

Every child has its own pace of development. That is why we try to take as much time as possible for each individual child. No pressure is put on the children. We professionals intervene as much as necessary and as little as possible in the children's activities. All children are allowed to make their own decisions, be it where and next to whom they sit at mealtime or what they eat. When changing diapers, whether yes or no, by whom they want to be changed or with whom or what they want to

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play. The children are not pushed to do anything they do not want to do. If they do not want to participate in an activity, they do not have to.

The everyday language support with and among the children is particularly important to us professionals. We pay a lot of attention to naming processes in everyday life, children's feelings, looks, gestures and facial expressions of the children, to accompany them linguistically and to give corrective feedback.

The Swallow's Nest

The "Schwalbennest" area contains two groups, a regular crèche group with up to 15 places for children between 1 and 3 years of age or until they move on to kindergarten, as well as the baby group, in which babies between 9 weeks and their first birthday are cared for.

The whole area is a barefoot zone, all children and staff are invited to walk barefoot.

In this area there is an open breakfast, which is accompanied by a pedagogical assistant from 8.30 to 9.30 am. There is bread, cheese boards, various spreads and vegetables on the table. The children take a plate and cutlery as independently as possible and choose a place at the table. Each child is perceived and supported in its individuality and self-activity. The accompanying teacher offers his or her support, e.g. in greasing the bread, but allows the children to work independently if they wish. After the meal, the children clear their dishes as independently as possible. At a prepared cabinet, the children find flannels to clean their faces and hands.

Also at the beginning of lunch, the children take dishes and cutlery as independently as possible. We offer bibs that the children can put on and take off without assistance. The individual components of the meal are placed in glass bowls on the table, and the children take what and how much they want themselves.

A water dispenser with small, handy glasses for independent drinking is available to the children throughout the day. At mealtimes, especially small carafes (0.2 l) of water are also provided.

The focus in the Schwalbennest is on healthy physical / motor development. Currently, one room in this area is set up as a movement room explicitly for children under 3. Various materials, boxes, ladders, tunnels, different levels invite the children to experience crawling, crawling, balancing and climbing.

The group room is comfortably divided into different areas. Various everyday materials and toys are available to the children. Great importance was attached to offering materials that are as close to nature as possible. Books are freely accessible to the children, and all materials are regularly exchanged according to the children's themes.

The dormitories of the groups are designed as family rooms. Every noon, the children are free to choose which teacher will accompany them and in which bed they would like to sleep. There are cosy nests, large mattresses, partitions with breastfeeding pillows and various cuddly toys. The professionals stay in the sleep room until all the children have fallen asleep, then the doors remain ajar to hear the children directly after they wake up and to enable them to get up on their own.

After nap time we offer the children a snack, this consists of fruit and vegetables, if possible potatoes or noodles from lunch, possibly bread or rice cakes.

During the day, nappies are changed as needed. Every child should have a fresh nappy before lunch at the latest. The children decide which teacher accompanies them to change their nappies. In the changing room, the children climb the stairs to the changing table as independently as possible.

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Getting undressed and dressed is also done as independently as possible. The attitude of the professionals is based on the pedagogy of Emmi Pikler.

All actions of daily life are accompanied by the teachers through language. Each child is given enough time to communicate verbally and / or non-verbally. Before lunch, a short sitting circle takes place, in which stories are told, a song or finger play is offered or a Kamishibai theatre is presented. Of course, the children's interests and abilities are constantly monitored and systematically observed in order to be able to carry out targeted activities.

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