



## Child care and development concept for the Daycare centre at Oberrieden

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# PARKSIDE SCHOOL

## 1) Educational Stance

Children are born with many talents. They are able to find ways to express themselves, draw attention to themselves and to make sense of their environment. A child searches for human contact, and finds ways to make contact. They can hear, feel, taste, see, smell and from an early age and communicate non-verbally with their peers.

We understand the importance of the early formative years on an individual's development. Everyday, we remind ourselves anew of our great responsibility to enhance that development. We maintain a respectful approach that is geared to the needs and interests of our children. In our daycare children and parents feel assured that they are in safe hands.

We are completely opposed to any form of physical or emotional punishment.

In our centre, the children have time and space to become independent, self-confident individuals. They learn how to ensure that their wants and needs are fulfilled.

The children are not forced to do anything. If a child does not want to join in, we first try to motivate them to have a go. If they still refuse, then we find something else for them to do.

Our children feel secure and safe, cared for by trusted, familiar and reliable carers.

## 2) Role of Staff

When selecting our caregivers, we value reliability, a good tone and a sensitive perception of the children.

The caregiver plays a central role for the children, as she is the first point of contact for the children during the day. She is available, encourages, listens, comforts, mediates, and gives the child trust and support.

Our generous staff ratio ensures that the children are always well looked after and that each one can be encouraged individually, as well as that an exciting day with lots of interesting teaching content is planned and carried out.

## 3) The importance of the group

The group enables the children to learn and practice the rules and rituals of living together. They form friendships, learn to discuss and distance themselves, to be considerate or sometimes to have to withdraw or share. The group gives them a sense of togetherness and home.

## 4) Group size / Composition

Currently, we have 6 Groups in Oberrieden.

Our Baby group is suitable for children 3 months to about 18 / 24 months (German speaking).

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Our three Toddler groups are for children aged from 3 months up until Kindergarten age. There are 12 children per day in each group. The Toddler groups are bilingual German/English.

And then we have our pre-school group Oberrieden for children as of 3 years and a Montessori Kindergarten.

## 5) Induction

It is very important that a child is introduced to the new childcare setting in an optimal way. We believe that a child should be slowly introduced to the new environment and carers, initially accompanied by a parent. A main carer is assigned to the child and works hard to develop a trusting relationship with the child. This helps the child feel secure and become familiar with the environment and the other children.

The initial phase lasts for 3 days. The child and parent visit the daycare together, for an hour at a time. They use this time to get to know the new room and carers.

The parent remains present, but passive during these visits. This gives the carers a chance to work intensively with the child, so that they can get to know each other.

The separation from the parent begins on the fourth day, and is carried out in small steps. The child spends half an hour at the centre without the parent, then 2 hours, then stays over the lunch break, then for a sleep. The amount of time spent at the daycare without the parent is gradually increased until the child is comfortable and able to spend the whole day here.

If a child finds the separation from the parent too difficult, then the separation times are shortened. The goal is that the child should be able to spend the whole day at the daycare, and should be familiar with the other children and carers. This phase usually lasts around two weeks.

The Induction is adapted for each individual child. A child that settles well, without problems, may only require a short induction. A child that has difficulties will need longer. In this regard, we are completely open and flexible.

## 6) When a child leaves our care

Leaving the daycare centre has a big impact on both the child and the whole group. Therefore, we think that it is important to mark this event with a ceremony for the children at the School.

## 7) Dropping off and collecting children

In the morning, the parents should bring the child into the cloakroom. The parents then have a chance to tell staff of anything that they should know. The children can wave to the parents from the window.

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In the evening, the staff will inform parents how the day has gone, and let them know if anything unusual has happened.

## 8) The daily routine

Children thrive on a daily routine that is varied and stable. Planned into the routine is freeplay, directed play and fun in the fresh air.

### 7:30am to 9:00 am

Children that attend all day or just mornings can arrive at the Daycare centre at any time between 7:30 and 9 o'clock. During this period, the children and babies are all together. This gives them a chance to interact, play and to learn from each other. It also gives the older children a chance to learn how to be loving and gentle with the babies.

At around 9 o'clock, we split off into our separate groups.

At 9.30, the children in the Toddler groups have circle time. Circle time is an important daily ritual in which each child is greeted individually, and given the chance to tell the group something. Circle time helps the children feel part of the group, and part of the overall school. We finish circle time with a song, and our morning snack, (Znüni).

After snack, we engage in our morning activities: freeplay, directed play, walks etc.

### 11:15 to 11:30 am

Children that attend for mornings only - without lunch, go home at 11:15, and children that attend in the afternoons with lunch, arrive between 11:15 and 11:30.

We eat our lunch together at 11:30. We have a salad followed by a warm meal.

Quiet time follows lunch, and children sleep from 12:30 until 2pm. Children that don't need a nap can rest, looking at books or listen to stories.

### 2:00 pm

Children that attend mornings only – with lunch, go home at 2pm, and children that attend afternoons only – without lunch, arrive at 2pm.

Our afternoon activities take place between 2pm and 3:30pm. Children have the chance to engage in free play, individual projects, directed play and to go out. If possible, we ensure that we go outside at least once per day.

At 3:30pm, we eat our afternoon snack, (Zvieri).

### 4:30pm to 7:00 pm

Children can be collected between 4:30pm and 7pm. At around 5pm, we have a singing circle.

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After singing, the children on each floor of the building are brought together to enjoy quiet play and story telling.

## 9) Free play

Free play is an extremely important aspect of our daycare. It is vital that children are given the opportunity to use their imagination, creativity and interests in play. They make their own experiences and become independent. Freeplay also helps improve a child's social competence.

During free play, the children freely choose their activities and toys. We follow the Joseph Chilton Pearce theory of child "flow". What this means is that, when a child is self motivated to engage in an activity, and is allowed to follow through using their own imagination, a creative flow is created. The child forgets the surroundings and becomes completely engaged in the activity.

A child in the "flow" is in a state of complete concentration. The flow state enhances creativity, sociability and intelligence. It helps develop a child's ability to learn.

To have a satisfying freeplay experience, the children need both time and space.

We give the children time to develop and build their play, with a variety of equipment and locations, allowing their imaginations to run free.

## 10) Instructed or directed activities

Adults regularly lead various activities, such as crafts, singing, story telling and movement. Much of the directed activities are theme based, allowing children to understand the various themes in a playful and fun way. Whenever possible, we round off a theme with an outing.

Our led activities encourage the use and development of gross and fine motor skills, socialisation and speech, and much more.

The themes are carefully selected by the group leader, taking into account the tastes and interests of the children in their group..

In addition, we have a daily welcome circle every morning, and a singing circle every evening. During the day, we also sing, developing the children's musical and linguistic skills.

## 11) English / Swiss German bilingual

In Oberrieden, we have bilingual groups, catering for our many international and English speaking families. The bilingual groups, are a great preparation for future attendance of our bilingual Kindergarten in Thalwil.

Being bilingual means being able to effectively communicate, in all situations, in either language. The bilingual group setting allows children to learn all three languages by absorbing them.

Young children intuitively and naturally learn a second language as they learn their mother tongue.

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The phonetics awareness and flexibility are picked up by listening and speaking. Emotions and feelings play an important role in young learning.

In this way, children learn language from staff and other children, as well as our directed activities.

## 12) Forest Days

During the warm season (from about April to October) our groups (with the children that can already walk) go to the forest on changing days. In good weather conditions we even stay in the forest for lunch and nap time. We then cook or have a picnic at our place in the forest. We combine the excursion with pedagogic topics such as the seasons, forest animals, plants and much more.

## 13) Kindergarten Preparation

The children that will become kindergarten children the following summer are invited to visit our kindergarten preparation lessons. For that, we collect all the pre-kindergarten children of all groups.

The lessons are held 1-2 times per week, in German and English. As the concentration time of the children is somewhat limited, the lessons are short, but the pre-kindergarten children are very proud of participating.

## 14) Sleep

Sleep is an important part of a child's day, giving them time to relax and process what has been learned. Children can bring a teddy or pacifier (soother) from home for nap time. A carer remains with the children whilst they sleep. The babies do not have fixed nap times and each individual can sleep when and for how long they want to.

## 15) Food

Our hot lunch is cooked and delivered by the Kilchberg hospital kitchens, providing us with a varied and balanced diet. We have meat 2 or 3 times per week, and every three or four weeks, fish. Care is taken over the selection of seasonal products.

Every meal starts with a salad that we prepare ourselves.

We prepare the snacks (Znüni and Zvieri) ourselves. For morning snack we usually have fruit and crackers. In the afternoon, we have various healthy snacks such as fruit skewers, vegetables and dips and fruit and crackers, etc.

Lunch and snacks are important times at the setting, and we endeavour to make them relaxing and pleasurable. Whenever possible, children help with the food preparation.

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- Each child can choose where to sit
- The children serve themselves
- The children do not have to eat everything, however, we do encourage children to try new foods
- We wash our hands before and after
- Our staff act as role models during meals
- We prepare the baby food ourselves, with regional vegetables and fruits. Parents must provide baby milk powder.

## 16) Changing from one situation to another

Changing from one activity to another, or one place to another can cause distress, and we manage the following changes very carefully :

- Arrival at the daycare (home to daycare)
- Preparing to go home (daycare to home)
- Play to Sleep
- Changing room
- Eating to Play
- Going outside and coming back in
- Farewells
- Personal hygiene

Rituals are important for child development, giving the child a feeling of security and wellbeing. We have built a number of rituals into our day : Every morning, we have a welcome ritual. We wash our hands before we eat, and our teeth afterwards. Every evening, we have a singing circle. These are just a few examples of our rituals, that we have built into our day.

## 17) Infants

Babies need gentle acclimatisation, allowing them to become accustomed to the new caregiver. We try to run the baby room with the same rhythm as at home. Parents are free to phone at any time to check on their baby.

Babies are given bottles and baby food as needed. As the babies grow, their mealtimes are gradually brought in line with the rest of the centre, so that they can enjoy lunch together at 11:30 with their teachers.

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Mothers of small babies are welcome to breastfeed throughout the day.

During nappy (diaper) changes, we take time to communicate, mirror and have contact with the baby. New employees don't change the babies until they have had time to form a relationship with them.

## 18) Hygiene / personal care

We have many opportunities to develop the children's personal care skills. Children in nappies (diapers) are changed numerous times during the day. Children learn to wash their own hands before and after meals. They wash their own teeth and face too, with support when needed.

We feel it is important to help motivate the children to become self confident and self sufficient.

## 19) Staff hygiene

To protect ourselves from sickness and disease, our staff follow strict hygiene procedures. They wash their hands with soap before and after nappy changes, before eating, after using the WC and when they come in from outside. After changing a nappy, we also disinfect our hands.

We wear rubber gloves when dealing with a child that has diarrhea or vomiting.

## 20) Rooms and Equipment

Children develop better in pleasant, well equipped rooms. We regularly remodel our rooms to reflect the interest of the children. In our rooms, children feel comfortable and secure. There is space to let their imaginations run free, and play just how they please.

Our equipment is also periodically changed in accordance with the interests of the children.

We provide children with space to Roleplay, to play with cars and railways, a place to retreat and be quiet, somewhere to let off steam, a place for craft, painting, puzzles and board games.

Our spacious sleeproom is kept separate from the play areas. Here, children can completely relax, awaking refreshed for the further adventures that await in the afternoon.

## 21) Sickness and Accidents

If a child in our care becomes unwell, we contact the parents immediately, so that they can quickly collect their child. In emergencies, we administer first aid, and if necessary, call an emergency doctor.

Sick children are not allowed to attend the Parkside School. Children with a fever of 38.0 °C or higher, must remain at home. If a child has taken a fever reducing medicine in the morning, they must also remain at home.

If there is doubt, the line manager will ascertain the risk of cross infection, and whether home care



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is required or not.

Known illnesses and allergies must be reported to staff on registration, and must be supported by the relevant documentation.

Returning after sickness : A child may return to daycare following sickness only when they have been fever free for at least 24 hours, and only 48 hours after the last episode of vomiting or diarrhea.

## 22) Prevention of child sexual abuse

When using the toilet, children are only helped as much as needed.

When nappy changing, we explain to the child exactly what we are doing.

We respect that children might want to feel physically close to us, or might want to maintain their own personal space.

The Parkside School has a separate child sexual abuse prevention charter, that each staff member is familiar with, and agrees to. All new staff are background checked and referenced.

## 23) Teamwork

Our teams operate in an open, respectful and constructive way. Cooperation is achieved through communication, helping and supporting each other, mutual trust, personal responsibility, autonomy as well as commitment and expertise.

The job descriptions outline the competences required for each job. Continuing training deepens our expertise.

## 24) Working with parents

Parents support us, not only financially, but also at the conceptual level. We appreciate the importance of Parent's evening and other events, and welcome parent's input into our operating concept and practice. We enjoy working with parents in a respectful and solution orientated culture.

The Parkside School is a family-orientated institution. It is important for us to maintain an open, respectful and trusting relationship with our parents. We see the mutual understanding as a prerequisite for cooperation.

A mutual exchange develops trust between the daycare and parents.

We work with parents through the following :

- Parent's evening
- Meetings with parents, annually, when their child changes group or leaves

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- Festive events, e.g. Summer party, New Year party, Santa Claus
- Visiting days
- Sleepovers and Spaghetti dinners for the children

Parents are welcome to help set up and run events. We notify the parents of new events, changes and special occasions in writing, and expect the parents to do the same.

Furthermore, we invite ideas, suggestions and comments that help our development process, from parents. We appreciate word of mouth advertising, and reward parents that find new starters with vouchers for extra sessions.

## 25) Public relations

We aim for constructive and transparent public relations. Visitors are always welcome, (please book).

We maintain a good relationship with the local population. We advertise various events on different media, giving people the opportunity to get to know us.