



International Playschool “Little Europe”

General Information, Policies and Pedagogical Plan

January 2021

International Playschool Little Europe

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1. An introduction to playschool 'Little Europe'

International Playschool “Little Europe” is an international multilingual playschool set within the building of the European School Bergen. It welcomes children from the age of 2 to 4 years old, from Bergen and the surrounding areas.

There is a classroom/playroom, a spacious outside play area surrounded by trees and a large sandpit, tricycles and other outside toys.

Playschool “Little Europe” aims to give young children a fun playschool where they can enjoy new experiences, activities and materials in a safe, homely environment – a bridge between home and school in the future. This is driven by experienced play leaders that offer each child the space and support they need to be themselves. The opportunity to speak different languages and celebrate different cultures gives the playschool an international dimension and helps children from many different backgrounds feel more secure and at home.

We find it important that the transition from home to our playschool and from our playschool to nursery school be as smooth as possible. Many of the children we care for speak languages other than Dutch and we try to support them by having a language plan where we can speak to children both in Dutch and other languages. We strive to help them feel welcome culturally through carefully thought out activity themes and festive celebrations. An awareness and respect for cultural diversity is key. Parents are welcome to come in and share something about their culture if they wish.

We offer games, activities and developmental materials matched to the age and developmental stages of the children and language where possible. We do a broad range of creative, imaginative, and artistic activities. We listen to a variety of different music genres, make music and work with nursery rhymes. The play with rhythm forms a beginning for early mathematical thinking and nursery rhymes are a great tool for language development. We play with instruments, dance, move and act out and try to let children be independent about their self-care.

Of course outdoor play and exploration is vital. We try to be outside for at least 1 hour per morning where children can be free to experiment in the sandpit, practice balancing, ride on tricycles, run, explore nature, play ball games and learn about the weather. We visit the animal park nearby where children can feed the animals, stroke the sheep and ponies, hold rabbits or find freshly laid eggs in the barn. Sometimes we make small trips out into the fantastic surrounding of our school such as conker hunting or to gather apples from an orchard.

2. Our target group

The children we care for come from a range of different countries and cultures and may have one or more mother tongues or home languages. It can also be that native Dutch families with an international outlook or special link with another country or culture would like their child to attend a playschool with a broad multicultural European identity.

3. The Group size, play-leader to child ratio and the four-eyes principle

The group size can vary to a maximum of 16 children. We make use of 1ratio.nl (Rijksoverheid) when calculating the number of staff needed for any particular session.

The following play leader to child ratios are kept:

- 1 play-leader with a group of up to 8 children who are 2 to 4 years old.
- 2 play-leaders with a group of up to 16 children who are 2 to 4 years old.

We work with the four eye principle. In the mornings we always work with two staff with the whole group, all activities are carried out together with the exception of toilet visit when one play leader will take a group to the toilets while the other remains in the class with the other children. During this time the doors are kept open so that staff can see/communicate with each other. Our room is full of windows and we have a window by the door so others can see in through.

4. Staff

Our aim is to provide personal and individual care for each child, focusing on their language and social needs in English, Dutch and French to prepare them for their future in the European school and to make the transition as smooth as possible. Therefore we have two full time native speaking, professional and experienced childcare workers and one regular substitute. All our colleagues have a valid EHBO/ first aid certificate and VOG. We never work with volunteers or students. Occasionally parents may like to join the group for an activity, children are never left alone with anyone other than the two of us.

5. Our day

Playschool Little Europe operates during the same term times as the European School Bergen in which it is located (please see our calendar for details). The drop-off and pick-up times are also in line with The European school's days in the primary school.

We offer the following daily sessions (*except on Wednesday and Friday when we are open from 09.00 to 13.05*):

- mornings from 09.00 to 13.05
- along days from 09.00 to 16.25

We ask that children attend at least 3 days/mornings per week for reasons of socialisation and continuity. We are open during the same term-times as the European School this means we have the same school holidays.

We do not provide sleeping facilities and we advise parents to take this into account when selecting sessions for their child. Please also see Our Day schedule for more details.

6. Our pick-up / drop off policy

Your children can be dropped-off at 08.55 Children can be collected at 13.05 or 16.25. During the 13.05 and 16.25 pick-up we ask parents to wait at the door (children's gate) where we will bring their child to them rather than coming in. It is busy with lots of different people both from our playschool and The European School buzzing about. For our children's safety we like to individually bring them to the safety gate and directly into the care of each parent. At pick-up play-leaders share information about how each child's day went. Should either a play-leader or parent feel the need to discuss something in more detail we will ask the parent to wait until the other children have been safely collected before talking.

Information regarding access to Little Europe (European School Policy)

Entering at 09.00:	from 08.45 you can enter through the primary gate.
Entering at 13.00:	from 13.00 (Mon & Thur) main gate. (Tue, Wed, Fri primary gate)
Entering at 16.25	through the primary gate

Please note that the primary gate will be locked each morning after drop-off at 9.10

The European School asks that parents leave the corridors promptly before and after pick-up in-line with The European School's own policy.

The ESB teaching staff kindly asks that you do not let your children play in The European School Nursery display area just outside our room nor on the theatre stage.

When you enter the European School you will need to have an ID badge. If you are new and will only have children in Little Europe then you need to go to the guard at the main gate and get a badge made-up. The guard will produce the badge.

7. Contact with Parents, Alternative PAC (Parents Association)

For a child to feel at home and parents to feel confident about their child's care we know how important it is to keep good contact between play leaders and parents.

The best time for parents to speak to play-leaders informally, without an appointment, is during the morning drop-off. Children are calm and arrive slowly between 8.55 and 9.05 where parents come into the room to settle them. It is time for free-play so staff are not overly occupied with a children's activity at this time and are ready to receive any special information about the child that day. "He didn't sleep well last night so he might be a bit out of sorts today etc".

During pick-up play leaders exchange some comments about how the day went as they give the child to their parents. Because all the parents are picking their children up at the same time it can be busy and not the best time to talk at length. We ask parents who would like to speak to us in more detail to wait until most children have been collected and then we can give them our full attention.

Alternative Parents Association.

For the school year 2020-2021 we will be operating an Alternative Parents Association (PA)

As a small independent playschool we have in the past struggled to form a group of parents who are available to take on the duties required to form a Parents Association. Therefore The Childcare and Quality Pre-school Act dictates organisations like ours should provide a good framework for parental involvement. Parents should be well informed about their child's development, changes within the organisation and the laws governing it.

We also feel it is important to bring the parents and families of Little Europe together to create a supportive community especially for those who are new to the Netherlands.

Below are the ways we will endeavour to support open communication, the sharing of news and information and the building of a supportive transparent community. If you are willing to form a PAC with between 2 and 4 other Little Europe parents or want to know what is involved please feel free to ask us.

Partnership with parents and quality communication are vital to providing the very best care and support, not only for our children but for their families too.

Daily Chat

Play leaders will be available to talk to parents between 08.55 and 09.05 as the children settle in for the day. If necessary an appointment can be made if more time is needed.

Whatsapp

To send pictures or to share quick updates.

Newsletter

Each half term, 6 times a year, parents will receive a newsletter containing changes, proposed changes in policy, parent community news such as new families, local events, Little Europe events and the educational planning (theme weeks) for the upcoming half term.

Coffee & information meetings

Parents will receive a calendar when they can join Little Europe with the dates for planned coffee and information meetings and special events. Coffee meetings will be held both on Mondays and Tuesdays of the week to allow all parents to join as all the children attend on either/both a Monday or a Tuesday. A gathering of children, parents and play leaders.

Family events

Three times a year Little Europe hosts family events where all family members can join to socialise and have fun. At these events staff can also address the group as a whole about any important issues and events.

Individual parent meetings

Once a year parents are invited for a 10 minute private discussion about the development of their child. Parents may request a private meeting with staff at any time during the year if they have questions or worries about their child's development.

Evaluation Survey

Parents will receive a yearly written evaluation survey where they can comment on all aspects of the service provided by Little Europe. Little Europe will then address these comments with a written response and make changes as necessary.

BOink / Complaints procedure (de Geschillencommissie)

All new parents will be given a written copy of the complaints procedure and access to information regarding parental rights and up to date regulations governing child care, BOink.

8. Initial registration

Parents can register their child for a place in Little Europe using the Registration Form. After receiving the registration form 'Little Europe', receipt will be confirmed and children will be added to the waiting list and assigned a place in application date order. *However, we do not make a reservation until the final contract is made by our administrator at DebiCare and signed by the parents/caretakers.*

In most circumstances a child starts on or after their 2nd birthday and leave when they turn 4.

We ask that children select a minimum of 3 sessions per week. This is in order to provide continuity and aid socialisation.

We have no fixed policy on the placement of siblings or twins and discuss the best options with the parents as to whether they would like them to attend together or separately as we have only one group. If parents wish their children to attend separately then they would have to attend alternate sessions to one another.

9. Placement

As soon as a place becomes available on the preferred days or on alternative days, contact is made with the parents to discuss the placement possibilities.

If one of the possibilities is agreeable to the parent, then an intake appointment is arranged.

During this appointment parents come to visit with their child and we talk about the child's personality and needs.

Information about a child's favourite toy or game, allergies, how to comfort him or distract him and any special transitional objects he would like to bring from home all helps to settle the child in.

All personal data is confidential and is stored in a locked cupboard accessible only to staff.

The child's place is reserved when a 'Contract' has been signed. If the place is cancelled before the actual daycare starts the client is liable for €100,00 administration costs.

10. Settling in period

The settling-in period is about helping the child feel secure and safe in a new environment. Helping the child feel at home in 'Little Europe' is also about giving the parents the chance to feel at home too. We invite parents to come and stay for a while and get a feel for our educational policy, the warmth of our play-leaders and the interactions between everyone. We know that it is vital for the child to have some time to observe and interact with the safety net of their parent nearby. Once agreed with the parents, we help the child to take the next step, and stay for a while alone.

Using the individual information about the child, taken during the intake appointment, and our observations, we try to find the best approach for that child. Some children will want the physical reassurance of a play-leader, whereas others will want their personal space respected. They might have a special comfort object with them or a favourite song or game that helps them feel at ease. We get down to the child's level to speak to them and use body language to help with understanding. We introduce them to our routines and rituals, but are flexible about their partaking over the settling-in period. This gives them the chance to observe and see that they will be safe.

There are opportunities throughout the day for new children to begin to socialise and develop a sense of belonging within the group. The settling in period lasts as long as it takes for the child to feel settled. We see it as a two way process between parent and playschool and keep the lines of communication open to allow this to happen.

11. Extra sessions

If the parent would like their child to attend an extra session, they can ask one of the members of staff in person, on the telephone or by e-mail. If there is a space available then the place can be reserved for that child for that session. Because we are a small playschool with only one group we do advise parents that we are often full and it is sometimes not possible to offer extra ad-hoc sessions or swaps..

Should parents wish their child to attend extra sessions for a longer period, then as soon as that place is available they are informed. Then the placement agreement can be updated and signed to finalise the new arrangement.

12. Notice period

The full or part cancellation period of a child's place is 1 month notice at the 1st of each month. It should be given in writing to the leadership of Playschool "Little Europe" and by mail to Debicare.

13. Toys, equipment and resources

When selecting toys and resources we look for things that are challenging both physically and emotionally. We ensure that there is a variety of toys and resources for a range of ages, developmental stages and individual tastes. Toys and resources are regularly rotated, cleaned, checked for safety and replaced, as is equipment. Equipment is selected with the size and needs of the age group in mind and its suitability for our setting.

14. Food and drinks

Our food choices are based on the guidelines of the nutrition centre in Holland. Playschool "Little Europe" assumes that the healthy whole diet of each child is based on food both eaten in our playschool and outside of hours at home.

We use suitable facilities for the hygienic preparation of food and a large group dining table with different sized chairs so that staff and children can sit together. We have fixed snack times and mealtimes, but should a child need water between those times they can of course. If a child needs to follow a special diet or avoid certain items on the menu we make individual arrangements with the parents.

At morning snack-time we offer different kinds of fruit to share with the group, this helps children to feel involved and experience the reward of sharing. Also water and juice is served. After they finish their fruit and drinks the children will get a whole wheat biscuit, or two.

At lunch-time all children bring their own individual healthy lunch, we offer water/juice and a yoghurt. Because of all the different cultural backgrounds and eating habits Little Europe stopped providing a Dutch lunch.

Since our parents evaluation survey in March 2018 it was suggested by some parents to give their children home cooked traditional meals kept warm in a thermos. Of course children can also bring the Dutch Boterhammetjes (sandwiches)

At afternoon snack-time we serve water, juice or milk and a variety of whole grain based crackers with a choice of toppings like cheese, pate, hummus and appelstroop. We also offer more fruit or raisins.

There are occasional times in the year when we celebrate with a cake or something special such as christmas or cultural days. We believe that everything in the right amount is a healthy attitude to food and can assure you that this kind of food will be kept occasional. If we celebrate a child's birthday we ask the parents to bring a healthy, non sugar treat. We of course take into account the age of the child and if necessary any special needs, dietary requirements or guidelines for children with allergies.

15. Pedagogical Policy

Our central goal is to offer children a place for optimal development. It is important that they grow into independent, well balanced, resilient individuals who have respect for themselves, for others and their environment. We hope they will grow into people who are confident to make their own choices and to work with others around them. Development starts at conception and continues throughout life. Many goals we have for children may not be fully realised until they become adults. We are passionate about the role we can have in the 2 to 4 year phase of these children's lives and take it very seriously. We support the educational goals of the Dutch Childcare Act.

We have agreed to follow the four educational goals of the Dutch Childcare Act. We believe that children

should always be treated with respect and will strive to achieve these goals for each child. These goals are:

- a. **Social and emotional safety** - to provide emotional safety, a secure base like a 'home from home' where children can relax and be themselves.
- b. **Personal competence** - to provide opportunities to develop a broad variety of personal skills, from problem solving through to self-care.
- c. **Social competence** - to provide opportunities to develop social skills.
- d. **Socialisation, values and cultural norms** - to give children the chance to take on and realise values and norms, to internalise the culture of the society in which they are now in and make links with the one where they are from, if different (for us this is more complex because the two are often different for our target group).

We will now look at these goals in more detail.

a. Social and emotional safety

How do we know a child feels safe and secure? He feels good and seems at home in the playschool. In his own way he makes contact with the play leaders and other children in the group. He is content and dares to express his feelings. If he is sad he can be comforted. A child who feels emotionally safe shines. He is enterprising, he investigates and follows his own interests when he plays. He says goodbye easily at the end of the day.

We try to settle children in gently and build up the amount of time they spend with us so that is manageable for them. We try to give each child the time they need for the playschool and play leaders to become familiar and for him to feel safe. If a child needs more adjustment time than our usual settling in period then he can have it. We comfort the child, give him the attention he needs or sometimes it is space he wants. We use distraction techniques and gently help him go a step further. As the basis for trust and security we take this process carefully. Perhaps a child will spend a lot of time on the lap or playing alongside one play-leader who he makes a bond with. When he feels safe he may venture to play on his own and then in turn with other children.

Often a child who felt upset inside feels more at home outside in the fresh air. Our outside space is well designed, surrounded by trees and offers children a lot of freedom with different experiences, boundaries and rules. Sometimes a trip outside can be the perfect distraction and returning to the playroom can also then become somewhere more familiar.

Basic rules for emotional safety at Playschool "Little Europe":

- Everyone is different and everyone should feel free to be themselves. We try to create an atmosphere where everyone feels welcome and at ease.
- We try to be predictable with our day and manner so that the child can feel safe about what will

happen. We help the child to feel secure by showing that we are in control of what is happening in the room (behavior between children) and that we are caring, fair and consistent in our reactions/moods. By providing safety and security we invite the child to feel at home and to make new attachments.

- We take each feeling a child may have seriously (e.g. happiness, excitement, anger, sadness, fear, confusion). We try to give children the room to discover their own emotions. Sometimes a child needs his emotions just to be acknowledged, at other times it requires actions such as comfort, intervention, explanation or modeling. For example if a child is angry and hitting another child, we intervene to stop the hitting, reassure the other child then try to help the angry child understand that it is ok to be angry, but not ok to hit. We could model a better scenario.
- We pay attention to body language and try to be empathetic. We keep informed about anything that might be going on in each child's life that could be affecting them and use our knowledge of child development to be insightful and realistic about expectations.
- We keep fixed play leaders who the children trust and can attach to.
- The groups of children attending each session are largely fixed, this also helps children feel secure and form peer attachments.

To help our children to feel safe and secure in our play environments we have:

- A hug corner/sofa with pillows and stuffed animals.
- A confined or private space like a playhouse with blankets and pillows if they choose, or a play or reading corner where they can retire to and do not feel overlooked.
- Books, puzzles and toys that children can help themselves to.
- Opportunities to talk, dress-up, dance and sing together.
- Rituals such as tidying-up to a special song, eating around a big family table, sitting in the circle, celebrating birthdays.
- A welcome attitude to transitional objects from home that help the child to feel secure (a blanket, special teddy bear, dummy, favourite toy or book) and the option to take something they like from playschool home with them.
- A special place the children know where play leaders will put transitional objects if they find them laying around.
- Acknowledgement of home languages (maybe a few keywords from the parents at the start) and appropriate use of the language the parents have agreed will be used.
- A special place for each child's things.

b. Personal competences

We try to allow the child to move towards independence so that he has both the mental and physical confidence to try things for himself and ever more frequently succeed at doing things for himself. The more autonomy the child has, the more he attempts. He solves problems and his confidence grows, he dares to try ever greater self designated challenges. He is the entrepreneur who discovers his own talents. We are there to be sensitive to his intentions and facilitate him only when and where need be. We want each child to develop a strong self image through positive experiences of a well thought-out environment, resources, activities and social encounters. There is a great difference between a 2 year old and a 4 year old and between individual children so this requires staff to differentiate at all times. Everything is chosen with care so that it is safe for a child to select and do things for himself. There are several activities and materials offered simultaneously. This allows each to choose and engage in what

stimulates him and enough variety for children to be challenged in different ways and at different levels.

Young children identify with adults and aspire to be like them. This can be seen through dressing up and role-play and the desire to help with adult tasks. Trying to achieve things yet beyond him can lead to frustration and he may need help from staff to deal with this. Of course he will also have conflicts with others as he gradually learns his boundaries. Staff can intervene and model good solutions. We provide lots of resources that allow children to role-play adult tasks and invite children to help with the register or snack and meal times or pressing play on the CD-player for our tidy-up music.

Our children can or will very soon be able to do much of their own personal care such as dressing, going to the toilet, cleaning their face etc. We try to leave enough time for children to do things on their own and for younger children to see what the older children can achieve or are striving towards. We also encourage peer help.

Playschool "Little Europe" is a unique place, a 'playschool' where young children can make the step from home towards school. Within our vision and approach, we offer children the opportunity to playfully to prepare for the teaching and learning that is to come. We do not ask them to do things that are beyond them, but move them towards these things. We encourage them to sit together in a circle and try to develop the patience and self control to stay there for a while and listen to others without interrupting. We encourage them to ask for things or say rather than screaming, pushing or grabbing. The children learn to be a part of a group of peers and this can be a big transition. Our rules are more like goals.

"Little Europe's" basic rules for personal competences:

- The staff give the children lots of opportunities to choose what they want to do, giving them confidence and independence. If it is not going well the staff do not immediately step in to help, but give children the opportunity to find a solution or try another angle.
- We provide a challenging environment that meets the child's need to explore, discover and answer questions of their own.
- We provide a variety of activities from peaceful to more active, alone and in groups. We give differentiated materials and focuses so that children can playfully learn the limits of their own knowledge and skills and shift their learning in response to the activity and their own desire to grow.
- We help children to develop their self-confidence by appreciating their unique attributes, encouraging them, and praising them.
- We promote healthy and safe behavior with an ever present oversight and intervention and modeling where needed.
- We gear activities to the development of gross and fine motor skills, speech and language, mathematical thinking, creativity and the development of spiritual and emotional health. These things are usually addressed tacitly through our weekly 'themes' and daily routines.

In promoting personal competence we pay attention to the following developmental areas:

Physical development

- Gross motor skills: walking, running, climbing, sports and games, self care activities (putting on a coat, going to the toilet).
- Fine motor skills: drawing, painting, cutting, sticking, threading beads, building with small blocks, hammer and nail activity, cooking and food preparation, self-care tasks (cleaning your own face, doing a zip up, hanging up your bag).

Cognitive development

- Critical thinking: activities that help them to ask questions and draw their own conclusions.
- Mathematical thinking: shape, number, many-few, size, large-small, etc.
- Spatial concepts: big-small, high-low, above-below, under-over, awareness of self in space and where they can fit, what is strong enough to hold them etc.
- Sensory perception: see, hear, touch, taste smell.

Musical development

- Listening to different types of music.
- Responding to different types of music (mood, movement, association).
- Awareness of rhythm, pitch and volume.
- Making music using instruments and other objects of the child's choice.
- Listening to songs/nursery rhymes, learning songs from different cultures and in different languages, making up songs.

Creativity (expression) and fantasy

- Making things both in 2D and 3D in a variety of materials and in a range of ways.
- Learning making skills which can be both staff led and child led.
- Creative activities that are purely about the process of doing and discovering what is possible.
- Creative activities that have an end product in mind (this can be child led).
- Listening to and creating stories, role-play and acting things out (this can be staff guided or something spontaneous that a child initiates).

Language development

Our setting is unique in that it celebrates different languages and tries to support each child individually as agreed with the parents. Some families would like staff to continue to speak to their child in their native tongue, whereas other parents may want a child to be exposed to a new language, which is often the case with English. The chosen languages are usually French, English or Dutch like the sections of the European School that we share our space with.

All day the children are speaking and listening. We have focused language activities, but we are also aware that much language acquisition occurs when we are getting on with our day. It is impossible to separate the children out and expose them only to one language and neither is that our intention.

We are a multilingual playschool where children will hear a range of languages. Staff is aware of the language orientation for each child and focus on this within a group setting in three ways:

1. As a whole playgroup

The whole group does an activity together (listens to a story, shares something in circle time, sings a nursery rhyme, eats a snack, a group game, watches a little film). This will be in one language, then repeated in another

2. In small language groups

Small groups can be made where children are focusing in one language. For example a specific language group may be formed with those children who are native speakers or who are meant to be learning that language. These groups often develop organically with children inspired by a similar game, song or activity.

3. Individual

Play leaders speak their native language to children on a one-to-one basis and if required use sign language to communicate. This could occur at any point during the day in which there is interaction between the child and a play leader, such as free-play, nappy change or going to the toilet, outdoor play, etc. This also occurs naturally with dialogue between children.

We use 4 playschool keywords every week matching our theme of the week, these words get more attention and we ask the children to try to remember them by the end of the week. These words are in Dutch, English and French.

To encourage personal competence at Playschool 'Little Europe' we need the following:

- A place to try a variety of different puzzles.
- A craft table and places to explore different materials and processes.
- Child appropriate toilets, chairs and coat hooks, etc so that children can gain independence and practice their own self-care.
- Developmentally appropriate resources, books, spaces and activities, including those in different languages.
- Outdoor space with the possibility for messy play, climbing, balancing, games, ride-on toys, running and coming into contact with nature.
- Space for doing specific activities such as music, dance, singing, eating.
- A weekly theme based learning plan, with activities and learning goals that is shared with parents.

c. Social competence

Children with well developed social skills can function well in different groups. They take account of others, and are well able to share together, play together, overcome difficulties and make peace and cooperate well with one another.

They can empathize with others and make good contact with other children and with adults. They are self aware and know how they appear to others. They know others' limits and do not go over them. They can cope with winning and losing and can also handle setbacks. They adapt easily to different environments with different rules. They are resilient and assertive without being aggressive.

Social skills really depend on age, maturity, nature and the prior experiences of the child. Social skills affect each child's relation to others and the group as a whole. A young child is still very much in the "I" phase and finds it difficult to share things. He is not fully aware of himself, his effect on others and the feelings of others. At the nursery we work on social skills, knowing that they are still developing. Good sample behavior of the pedagogical staff and the oldest children play an important role here.

Basic rules for social competence:

- We encourage a positive group atmosphere and encourage children to play together and share together, both with toys and activities and when it comes to feelings.
- Some activities are not suitable for the whole group. We ensure activities are appropriate, for example perhaps it is just the older children who make a visit to the library while the younger children take part in something more suited to them.
- We encourage children to take turns at having a special responsibility such as offering the food around the table.
- Children develop different friendships with different children and we try to give them the space to do that (or example an older child may have a caring friendship with a younger child which has grown out of help with self-care tasks).
- We offer group activities and ensure a balance between group and individual activities.
- We teach children about 'give and take' and how they can resolve conflicts by taking turns or offering to swap a toy.
- We help them to understand how the other feels so that they can empathize.
- We teach children that everyone is different and that everyone is equal.
- We encourage exploring other cultures through books, games, food, parties, etc.
- We give attention to good communication, both between children and between pedagogical employees themselves (children learn much tacitly by the examples around them).
- We respect friendships between children and allow them to flourish for example by letting children sit together at snack time or select twin tricycles together.

The following is required to encourage the development of social competence:

- Sharing, eating together, playing together, cuddle up on the couch, listen to a story
- Singing songs and sharing in playschool rituals and routines.
- Dancing together.
- Group discussions where we listen to each other, use language and sign language.
- Going on outings together.
- Playing musical instruments and acting out nursery rhymes together.
- Several different play areas where children play together and act out a fantasy.
- Outdoor games and shared areas.

d. Socialisation, value and cultural norms

Children become 'socialised' as they become familiar with the norms and values of the environment, as they follow the rules (of home, of playschool, a club, friendship groups) and know how to deal with themselves in these situations. They know what they can and cannot and what they should do. They are aware of the environment, take others into account and are still themselves. They have found their own way to adapt and manage in different settings. They can be part of their family and understand the cultural norms, traditions and values within that family. They can also adopt and adapt to different cultural norms and values outside of the home, society as a whole or that of the host country which might be different to that of their home country or culture. They know the differences between people and people of different cultures and they can handle this.

With the transfer of values and norms, children learn what is and what is not, what is right and what is wrong, who the other is and develop an opinion about everything around them and see. This transfer occurs daily in the playschool and the pedagogical staff play an important role: they exhibit exemplary behavior and express respect for all differences that children experience.

The pedagogical staff acknowledge the differences between people, for example between boys and girls, or between different needs and capabilities. Often this is worked on over a longer period of time through a theme using books and selected activities. Examples include themes such as family, emotions, countries or holiday. The children then talk about the subject and learn to be positive about others and to celebrate the differences between people.

In Playschool "Little Europe" the children are sometimes together in a larger group, sometimes together in smaller groups or just in a two. Sometimes that's with children of their own age, sometimes with older children or younger children. Sometimes they are with children who share the same language and often not

Younger children can find it very fun to be with older children and look up to them. Older children often enjoy helping younger children.

All this time spent in different groups means the children learn how to interact in a variety of situations under the care of sensitive play leaders. They create things together, learn to share, wait, take turns, take each other into account, empathise with others and help one another. They imitate each other, learn from each other and discover each other.

By engaging in playschool they have fun, but can also meet frustration or experience sorrow. They learn to comfort each other and anticipate each other's feelings. By keeping the playroom tidy together and eating together they learn to be responsible for things as a group and share a feeling of togetherness.

Basic rules for socialisation:

- Respect others / children and give them the space to be who they are. Diversity is to be celebrated and makes life more interesting.
- Respect for the world, our environment, nature and all life, respect for nature. We learn why we should not destroy plants or hurt animals or insects.
- We encourage solidarity among children whilst celebrating diversity.
- We help the children to learn about the customs and rituals of other cultures and to respect them by looking at books, songs, games, foods and festivals. We also invite parents to come in and share something about their culture.
- We teach the children to respect their playschool and the things inside it. Everyone tidies up together when they hear our tidy-up song. We also teach them to respect each other's belongings and things children have made or are playing with.
- We intervene when children cross boundaries and explain to them what should and should not happen, as caretakers, we sensitively monitor those limits.

For a young child values, appropriate behavior and expectations are difficult subjects. There is so much to take on, the memory is not yet fully developed so the young child can immediately forget what a play leader has just said to them. Rules are learned through repetition, consistency and lots of good role modeling. When a young child challenges a boundary, this means he feels safe. He should not be

crushed, but we need to make the boundaries clear to him each time something occurs and redirect inappropriate behavior.

Values and norms have been translated into our 'House Rules', which are really a set of behavioural goals. Staff understand that children develop at different rates and that not all children will be developmentally able to achieve all the goals

Most rules are about physical safety, hygiene and health, but there are also rules about socially acceptable behavior, respect for others, their feelings and belongings and general rules that help us function as a group rather than just individuals (between the ages of 2 and 4 children move from thinking about the world just in terms of "I" to "me.....youeveryone" and how others might feel .

Staff strive to be consistent and fair but the rules are not so rigid that staff cannot use their professional insight when interpreting them and applying in a range of circumstances.

A good example is the rule that all children sit at the table for snack time. While this is very important, for a new child it might be so intimidating that on their first day they refuse to leave the book corner. On this occasion staff may quietly encourage them to join when they have been able to watch from a safe distance for a time first.

We correct inappropriate behaviour by getting down physically to the level of the child, ensuring we have eye-contact and their attention. We calmly tell / show them what they may not do (the wrong behaviour). We then tell / show what they should do (the right behaviour for that situation in the future). For some children this is enough and anything more would confuse them. For older children, we can discuss why the behaviour is not appropriate and make agreements not to do it again. It may be necessary to correct the same behavior with the same child many times, before they internalise it. Staff can be firm, but will not use anger. Sometimes the behavior requires that the child be removed from the situation to a quiet space. This may be because he needs to focus on what the play leader is saying without all the distraction. We have a low stool for the child to sit on, in a quiet corner, set back away from the main room where the play leader can get down to the child's height, with good eye contact and explain things clearly. The child may need to be removed from the situation because his behavior is dangerous or very negative for other children. If it is a conflict with another child, we will discuss the situation with both children and try to solve it together.

A consistent, positive and creative coaching approach is important to us. Thus, children can play and develop within the safety of these boundaries and mature socially as they encounter these rules. Our rules give us the structure needed for children to be free within the space and the safety needed for children to gain trust and step forward in the confidence that they are secure. It almost goes without saying that 'prevention is better than cure' and in that same way we reward the desired behavior which often removes the need to correct unwanted behavior. Often it is enough to remind children of the rule, starting with what we do want, for example "place the toy in the box, do not throw it". Children want to belong and to be praised and they quickly take on values if they see other children being praised for doing them. Children prefer positive attention. Negative attention seeking is often a late cry for help.

To help share and transfer cultural values we:

- Celebrate various festivals from the Netherlands and abroad, seasons, birthdays and farewells.
- Costumes from different countries.

- Intercultural play materials, such as dolls that are from more than one ethnic group, traditional toys or games from other countries.
- Music and instruments from other countries.
- Books about other cultures.
- Books about values.
- Try food from other countries made by our parents
- Inviting parents or visitors in to talk about where they come from or share something special with us.

16. The role of the play leader / mentorship

The play leaders substantiate the pedagogical principles and goals within the organisation. This work requires a flexible and professional attitude, enthusiasm and empathy. Because we are a small company with only two childcare workers we mentor all children between us. Child development meetings, observations and the child's portfolios are worked on together. As a result we develop our weekly activity plans based on the development needs of the individual children and the group as a whole.

A play leader at 'Little Europe':

- Is sensitive and responsive.
- Respects the autonomy of the child, by supporting personal choices, process rather than result driven activities and is aware of different interests, learning styles, opinions and cultures.
- Provides structure and protects boundaries.
- Communicates with the children by getting down to their level physically and appropriately at their mental level by taking the time to talk to them and explain.
- Stimulates the development of the child by doing all of the above and putting the pedagogical plan into action.
- Guides social interactions between children

As a staff member a play leader should be:

- Approachable, warm and caring.
- They hold to the agreed standards, communicate well with parents and take complaints seriously to share them with the rest of the staff.
- Cooperative and involved in the whole team and respect the unique differences between staff character and philosophy in so much as it does not clash with the playschool or rights of others.
- They contribute to the pedagogical, implement it and help review it. They participate in meetings, exchange ideas and observations and work on common goals.
- Flexible and willing to learn.
- They can be self reflective and change what they are doing when need be. They keep up to date with developments in childcare, child development, nutrition and individual information about children in their care.
- Proactive and creative. They are active, enthusiastic and willing to try new things. They remain constantly aware and are quick to offer solutions if they see a problem. They take responsibility for life in 'Little Europe' and focus on innovation and challenge.
- They operate through the correct channels. For example, ideas and complaints, as far as possible, be added to the meeting agendas and addressed then. These things should not be raised during the working, taking staff concentration away from the important role of the present.
- Well organized and reliable. They carefully keep registers and personal records, consult with parents, keep to deadlines, punctually attend meetings. They remain well-informed Produce

planning on time and keep to the daily routine (unless of course there is good reason to be flexible)

17. Anti-discrimination Policy

In our playschool, we have an anti-discrimination code and in no way distinguish between persons based on race, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, disability, religion or belief.

Should a parent/guardian or colleague consider that the anti-discrimination code has been violated by an employee of the organisation then we follow the complaints procedure (see below).

18. Information about the child

We hold information about each child. This information is confidential, it is kept in a locked cupboard and is only available to the staff and parents of that child.

19. Outings

Children must be kept safe while on outings, and we obtain written parental permission for children to take part in outings. We as staff must assess the risks or hazards which may arise for the children, and must identify the steps to be taken to remove, minimise and manage those risks and hazards. The assessment must include consideration of adult to child ratios.

The risk assessment does not necessarily need to be in writing.

20. Risk Assessment, Health & Safety, Child Protection.

We take health and safety seriously at 'Little Europe' and follow the guidelines from the Dutch childcare act and the GGD. Our child 'House Rules' and staff 'House Rules' have been specifically designed to ensure these guidelines are put into action. These are available to view in our classroom. Our parents can look into the quality of our policies and protocols in these matters alongside regular GGD inspections. Along with the management our Health & Safety coordinator carries out risk assessments, keeps essential records, carries out regular reviews and form plans of action to keep 'Little Europe' healthy and safe. We have regular 'in-house' staff training sessions and external training for First-Aid, Fire Safety and Child Protection to keep staff up-to-date. We are all qualified in child EHBO/First Aid.

There is a trained child protection officer (aandachtsfunctionaris) who is responsible for child protection. She is aware of the signals and de Meldcode around child abuse. This officer has followed training at LVAK, Landelijke Vakbond Aandachtsfunctionarissen and has an official certificate. The aandachtsfunctionaris formed child protection policies and protocols specifically designed for 'Little Europe'. This officer works alongside all staff to support them. We work according to de steps plan developed by Veilig Thuis, advies en meldpunt kindermishandeling. www.vtnhn.nl All staff are trained to be aware of the signals associated with child protection issues and the correct steps to follow.

21. Accident or injury

We ensure there is a first aid box accessible at all times with appropriate content for use with children in

line with Dutch law. We keep a written record of accidents or injuries and first aid treatment. Please see our 'Accident Policy'. All staff is qualified in child EHBO / First Aid

22. Sickness

We have guidelines about when a child should be collected due to sickness, when a child should not be brought to playschool due to sickness, when we call a doctor, what to do about contagious diseases. Please see our 'Sickness Policy'.

23. Complaints procedure

If for any reason the parent/guardian of a child is not fully satisfied with the service that we provide and has a complaint, they can go straight to de Geschillencommissie. However, we will always ask the parents to let us know the reason for the complaint and we will do our utmost to find a solution. We are happy to announce that we never received any official complaint :-)

Detailed guidelines about our complaints policy can be found hard copy in our classroom.

Parents can also submit their complaint externally and directly to: De Geschillencommissie Kinderopvang
De Geschillencommissie, Postbus 90600, 2509 LP, Den Haag. Phone 070-3105310
www.degeschillencommissie.nl

24. Inspection reports GGD/ Dutch childcare act

Just like any other daycare in the Netherlands, we are inspected every year by the GGD. This inspection report is available in our classroom and on our website for everyone to take notice.
www.europeanplayschool.com