

## **Pedagogical Policy Plan**

February 2009

## **Attention to quality**

Childcare is a question of trust. Parents entrust their most precious possession to a childcare centre. This should be a place where you and your child feel at home. Where staff provide care for your child in a friendly and professional manner. Only then is it possible to find a pleasurable way to combine family and work.

Parents need to be sure that their child is being cared for in a safe environment and that he or she is being educated in a responsible manner, even when they are not present. Children need to be able to trust that when their parents are not present they can rely on a trustworthy educator in order to be able to explore their environment in a carefree way and to learn from their contacts with their peers.

Attention to quality should be a given, when it comes to such an important task as childcare. This is why centres of *skon kinderopvang* devote constant and systematic attention to quality. Naturally all the childcare centres must meet the quality requirements set by the government. But we go further than that. Our attention to quality is manifested in the ongoing provision of further training to our employees. Moreover, *skon* is certified in accordance with ISO and HKZ standards, the quality certificate for childcare. This reassures parents and children that all the 'blue animal' childcare centres work in the same professional way, using fixed procedures, all focused on the central objective: the well-being and the unhindered development of the children.

This Pedagogical Policy Plan itself is an expression of our quality policy. We take as our starting points the four basic pedagogical objectives for the education of children at home and in childcare by Professor J.M.A. Riksen Walraven. We give children a sense of - emotional - safety, we provide them with the opportunity to develop their personal and social competences and we give them the opportunity to acquire the values and standards of our society.

Every 'blue animal' childcare centre has drawn up its own Pedagogical Work Plan based on this Pedagogical Policy Plan. There is a copy of this work plan available for perusal at the childcare centre. The Information Bulletin that parents are also given during the enrolment meeting contains further information about this Pedagogical Work Plan.

## **Agreed**

A childcare centre of skon is more than just a place where parents can bring their child for practical reasons. It is an extension of the child's home, a loving and stimulating environment where children feel comfortable and safe.

We share with parents the care of their children. This Pedagogical Policy Plan describes what our starting points are in the day-to-day contacts with the children enjoying our day childcare and our after-school childcare. We tell you who our staff are and what you can expect from them, what we think about the way the group is divided up and what requirements we set for the group areas. In short, we inform parents about those to whom they are entrusting their child and what they can count on.

Our staff form the cornerstones on which the quality of our childcare is built. This is why we support them with team meetings and offer them numerous courses and workshops (such as 'Babies and Music', 'Video Interaction Support', 'Sport & Games in After-School Childcare').

We make a sincere effort to build up a good cooperative relationship with the parents. We therefore welcome any information about how you treat your child at home, how your child plays at home, how he/she is developing and how he/she feels. This exchange of information, often about everyday things, enables us, together, to ensure that your son or daughter has a great childhood with us.

Agreed!

## **Through thick and thin**

Children should feel good, both at home and at the childcare centre. Therefore, what matters most to us is that we provide emotional safety. That is why we encourage children to gain experiences, to experiment and to develop through play (into independent, social, unique people). Children can count on the staff, who are always there as safe, trusted beacons to provide a cuddle to show the children how proud we are of them and to care for them if things go wrong. The staff are sensitive to the individuality of each child. They treat the children with respect and love, and they create the conditions within which each child can be him/herself, and can relax and feel comfortable.

Together

Each child has his/her own familiar room, a home basis that children know as their own room. The furnishing of the room, where furniture, toys and colours are geared to the development stage of the children, provides security. Here children get to know each other and become familiar with each other. They like being able to count on each other's presence. In fixed groups babies recognise each other and children develop from age one or two a clear preference for one or two members of their groups; already, as early as the toddler age, real friendships are being formed.

Special attention for babies

Young children, especially, babies, experience rest and regularity as a secure basis. Set routines help them with this. They know that the staff who are looking after them will read a book with them after they have drunk their milk and will sing a song to them before they go to sleep. This provides

structure and safety. Through the safety provided by this knowledge, babies feel more comfortable and they develop better as a result.

At our centres children can count on the familiar face of the member of staff who takes them on their lap, gives them a bottle, puts them to bed, sings them a song and comforts them when they are sad. The baby will feel secure with this staff member and will be given the opportunity to bond.

Getting used to things

The first time that your baby comes to us he/she will definitely have to get used to things. He/she will be given plenty of time to do this. We will discuss with you in advance how you and your child will get to know the centre, how we will get to know each other as well as possible and how the events during the different parts of the day will proceed. Your baby will determine the pace and the rhythm.

Being used to things

As children grow up, the world of their experience becomes larger. The childcare centre is familiar, they are used to the other children and adults around them. Their capacity becomes greater and they can handle more new experiences. Structures and routines therefore become less important and can be given a bit more leeway..

## **We give them space**

Children need to develop, try out new things and be proud of what they can do. They get to know their own abilities by trying things out and playing, each at his/her own speed and each in his/her own way. They explore, try out solutions and thus gain all kinds of experiences that help to develop their resilience, independence, self-confidence and creativity in a positive way.

On their own two feet

We encourage children to stand on their own two feet. We provide them with challenging materials and we respond to their initiatives. We step to one side to let them practise but we are always at hand to keep an eye on things. We encourage them, we praise their initiatives and we accept and value their solutions and ideas. And we comfort them when things go wrong. We are sensitive to and respect a child's individuality and autonomy. The child him/herself determines the content and the pace of his/her game.

Children are social beings. They learn from us and from each other. They share experiences, they look for solutions together, they learn to discuss things and they have fun together. We devote attention to their relationships with each other and to activities that stimulate their contacts with each other. Sport, play & movement, music and reading/being read to are therefore all part of the day-to-day activities. The furnishings of both the inside rooms and the outside areas and the range of materials available also naturally play a role in this.

Hand in hand

A child's world gets bigger as he/she grows up. Children of primary-school age sometimes bring along a friend, the same as at home. They look for their little brother or sister at the childcare centre in order to play with them or eat a sandwich with them. And if you're old enough to go to school, you're able to discuss what you like doing, how the room is furnished and decorated and your holiday programme.

### **I, you... we together**

Children are part of our society, along with you and with us and with so many others they will meet during their life. We help them with their moral development and teach them standards and values. We do this first and foremost through the example of our own behaviour. It is through our reactions that children learn about the limits of 'good' and 'bad', about 'different', about being allowed to do something, and having to do something, and they imitate this. Every child is unique, is different. We respect their autonomy and we always opt for a positive approach. We praise the things that go well and we respect feelings of disappointment and anger.

We are aware that we also differ from each other and from parents as a result of our own education and experiences. So we are always aware of our responsibility as professional educators. We respect parents' different styles of education and habits and we take these into account as much as possible.

### **Taking a closer look**

Educating a child is working on the future of the youngest generation, both at home and at childcare. Quality is crucial for the effects that childcare has on the well-being and the development of children. Parents have to be sure that this quality is of a high standard. They have a right to information about the quality of their childcare centres.

The Pedagogical Policy Plan provides parents and staff insight into the fundamental pedagogical principles of our childcare and also serves as a guide for our day-to-day contacts with your children. We believe that it is important that we discuss these on an ongoing basis, with both staff and academics. This dialogue is an ongoing critical process that results in a deepening of insight and possibly changed insights. Which is why our Pedagogical Policy Plan is not an end product. We will regularly revise the plan using the results of this process. We will inform you about this in the form of a new Pedagogical Policy Plan so that we and you can – together - continue to build on the future of our children.