

Concept of Berlin Kids International Kita



Contact

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1. FOREWORD

My name is Ulrike Elfeld, and I have been the director of this Kita since March 2007. Francesca Sabella is the deputy director. We would like to welcome you, and we look forward to a positive partnership with you.

The name of our Kita, "Berlin Kids International," appropriately suggests that the pedagogical team and the children's groups are composed of multinationals. This brings with it an openness to the world from which everyone involved benefits enormously. Among other things, this is noticeable at joint celebrations or special projects, such as the "International Week" (see point 10.2.1). Many parents, children, but also team members benefit from meeting familiar (home) cultures. The bonding experience of emigration/immigration leads to quickly feeling comfortable in our house. Last but not least, the families of our Kita are united by their bilingualism or multilingualism

We are a very committed team, and the constant exchange on pedagogical topics is vital. In our Kita, we live an appreciative and promotive interaction with each other so that everyone enjoys being part of this facility, be it as a child, parent, or colleague.

This house concept has matured over the years with the cooperation of the entire pedagogical team. However, it will be subject to constant further development. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or suggestions.

Cordially,

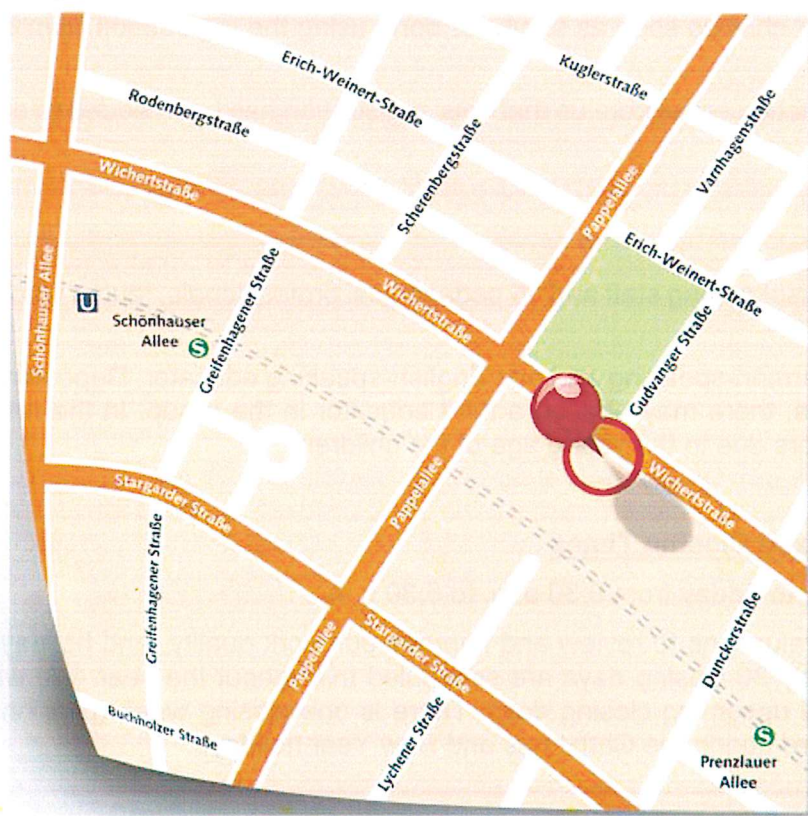
Ulrike Elfeld & Francesca Sabella



2. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FACILITY

With a total area of 952 m², there are 10 group rooms for five groups, various side rooms, and a climbing room.

Location and Accessibility




<https://www.google.de/maps/place/Wichertstra%C3%9Fe+25,+10439+Berlin/@52.5477616,13.4202367,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m5!3m4!1s0x47a84df8c18b4a89:0xc83a50fb2c4ddb2e!8m2!3d52.5477584!4d13.4224254>

Getting Here

 Line S8, S9, S41, S42 to Schönhauser Allee

 Line U2 to Schönhauser Allee

 Line 12 to Humannplatz

Size, Enrollment, and Group Structure

In our Kita, we currently care for 84 children. We maintain four mixed-age groups, each with 18 children aged from about 2 ½ to the age of school entry and one nest group with 13 children aged ten months to about 2 ½ years.

Every year in August, we admit new children dependent on the number of children departing to school. (Of course, any places that become vacant during the current Kita year are promptly filled by new admissions).

Registration and Contact

Since we have a waiting list, we recommend that you not wait too long to register. We accept children from the age of ten months. However, priority belongs to the siblings of attending Kita children. You can register your child as soon as she/he is born, using the registration form on our website:

You will then receive a confirmation email from us that your registration has been added to our waiting list.

Staff

Our team consists of three housekeeping staff and 16 pedagogical professionals, four of whom are integration specialists.

In each group, there is one German-speaking and one English-speaking educator. Depending on children with special needs, there may also be a third educator in the group. In the nest group, there are three educators due to the young age of the children.

Daily Opening Hours and Fixed Closing Times

The Kita is open from Monday to Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Due to team days, internal evaluations to review and improve our work quality, and holidays and bridge days, approximately 30 closing days are scheduled throughout the year. We will inform you beforehand of any upcoming closing days. There is one closing week (plus one day) in the summer and closure during the Christmas and New Year holidays.

Social environment

The Kita is adjacent to the youth club "W24". The club has a large exercise room that is used by the Kita for regular sports activities. In the immediate vicinity are numerous other Kitas as well as the "Humboldt Elementary School" and the "Carl-Humann Elementary School."

In the context of projects, offers of the youth traffic school "Selbst sicher mobil", the "Berliner Stadtreinigung", the "Zeiss Großplanetarium" or the "Heinrich Böll" library and others are used.

There are various opportunities to experience and attend live performances in Prenzlauer Berg. Occasionally, the children visit the "Spatzenkino." Excursions to the "Labyrinth - Children's Museum" and the "Mach mit" museum are also popular. Of course, various playgrounds in the surrounding area are also well-liked destinations. The theatre "Die Schaubude" is also one of the Kita's nearby favoured destinations.

3. SPECIAL EMPHASES SET IN OUR KINDERGARTEN

Internationality and Interculturalism as a Daycare Center Focus

Our daycare center is a place of diversity where children from different cultures come together and explore the world. We place great importance on ensuring that all children feel welcome and valued. Through our focus, we aim to teach children an open and appreciative attitude towards other cultures.

The children in our families have the great fortune of being able to gain experiences with various cultures and international perspectives at an early age, and to experience a connection to other countries and cultures that is both inspiring and enriching.

In our daycare center, we live interculturalism every day. We celebrate festivals from different cultures, sing songs in various languages, and together discover stories and traditions from around the world. Through exchanges with the children's families (and the active participation of parents in festivals and projects), we learn more about their cultural roots and create an environment that promotes openness, respect, and curiosity.

We foster an atmosphere where differences are seen as enrichments and every child feels like an important part of the community. Through intercultural learning and international influences, we help children develop openness, tolerance, and empathy—skills that will accompany them throughout their lives.

With this focus, we want to contribute to our children growing up in a peaceful and diverse world—full of respect, curiosity, and joy in encountering other cultures.

The Principle of Bilingualism

By employing one German-speaking and one English-speaking educator in each group, our daycare center offers both English and German equally as languages of interaction. This principle adopts the linguistic-communicative culture from predominantly English-German-speaking families and continues it. The educators follow the principle of "one person—one language," which is very important for building relationships and the communicative development of children. This concept enables the acquisition of both languages in daily natural interactions (they are not "taught" in specific lesson units) and simultaneously paves the way for monolingual children (English or German) to learn the respective partner language.

Didactic materials (books, games, tonies etc.) are available in both languages; activities, morning circles, and projects are offered in the language of the conducting educator. Considering the special situation of bilingual (English-German-speaking) families in Germany is of particular concern to us. Priority is therefore given to children with a bilingual (English-German-speaking) background.

The Situational Approach

The situational approach is not about occupying children but engaging with them. The children's situation, their life, and their world of experience are the starting point and focus. Here, any topic that concerns the child or children can be addressed. This corresponds to the principle that everyone is a learner. The child is understood not as an object of education but as an active subject. In practice, this means that children are involved in the planning and design of daily activities (principle of participation). All participants contribute as individuals and thus bring their own personal competencies, feelings, opinions, questions, answers, prejudices, experiences, events, uncertainties, etc. We offer children the opportunity to process experiences and the associated feelings to cope with current and future situations. Through this, children develop emotional stability, which they need for their development.

4. THE UNDERSTANDING OF EDUCATION AND UPBRINGING

4.1 The Image of the Child

Every child has the right to have basic needs met, to be valued and recognised in his/her uniqueness.

Reliable relationships offer the children protection and security to explore their world through playing, experimenting, and exploring. They do this with joy, curiosity, fun, and with all their senses. They act in an independent, active, and co-determining way.

Every child is inquisitive from birth and experiences the world through their own initiative and engagement. They are motivated, they desire to reach a goal, and to overcome problems and difficulties.

Education is a lifelong process as every child develops in interaction with their environment and with other people. Education, upbringing, and care come together in unison.

4.2 Role and Responsibility of the Teachers

The most important basis of pedagogical work is a close relationship between the educator and the child. Only with a relationship based on appreciation, acceptance, and interest can the children develop.

The educators accompany and strengthen the children in their curiosity. They encourage them to transform their questions into explorative action and guide them to find their own answers. The educators provide a variety of materials and resources to create stimulating spaces for new experiences. They value and recognise the uniqueness of all children, motivate and encourage them, and search for answers and solutions together with the children.

The educators create a safe and trusting atmosphere. They promote democratic participation and demonstrate responsibility and respect. The children's suggestions are always taken seriously.

The educators regularly observe and document the development of the children and reflect on their pedagogical work. They attend further pedagogical training on a regular basis. Every two years, they also refresh their first aid knowledge by completing a course.

5. EDUCATION AND CARE OF THE YOUNGEST CHILDREN

In addition to the four mixed-age groups, there is also a nest group with twelve children from the age of ten months. Depending on their stage of development and in consultation with their parents and teachers, the children move to the mixed-age groups at the beginning of each new Kita year.

With concentrated care and attention, and abundant linguistic support, the children can develop in self-determined steps. It is also essential to provide sufficient opportunities for movement to support the children's natural urge to move and explore. We structure the layout of our rooms so that there is plenty of space for movement and fostering creativity. In addition to the indoor classrooms, the nest group has its own outdoor playground.

The fundamental prerequisite for pedagogical work is a secure emotional bond.

In addition to the Berlin Education Programme, our pedagogical work is based on the theories of the Hungarian pedagogue Dr. Emmi Pikler. Her approach is to rely on the children's already existing competencies and to give the children time to try things out in free play and to experience their world with all their senses.

We offer a variety of multi-functional materials for the youngest children, such as scooping and stacking elements (buckets, bowls, boxes), and material tables such as a water table, as well as "action tubs," are always available to the children for their age-typical urge to play and explore.

For the settling-in of the children, we follow the Berlin Settling-In Model ("Berliner Eingewöhnungsmodell," see chapter 9.1). This model enables the children to settle gradually into the daily routines and life at Kita.

6. INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

6.1 Promoting Resilience

Resilience (or mental strength) is the ability to cope with crises and use them as an opportunity for personal development.

Resilient children can face difficulties with trust in their abilities and with fundamentally optimistic confidence. They trust the effectiveness of their actions with an inner conviction.

Children need adult support to overcome difficulties, accept challenges, endure setbacks, and transform negative feelings into positive emotions.

The essential factor in strengthening resilience is a stable and respectful/appreciative relationship with one or more adult caregivers.

To strengthen the children's resilience, the educators support the children in developing stable self-esteem. The educators create an environment of openness towards emotions, help children recognize their strengths, allow them to make mistakes, and support them in taking responsibility for their learning.

6.2 Child Protection Concept of the Provider (Träger)

For our educators, an appreciative and respectful interaction with the children is the basis of their pedagogical approach. We offer the children a protected place where they can develop and evolve; they should feel they can open up and dare to trust. Therefore, we implement clear rules, procedures, and standards.

The child protection concept of Pfefferwerk Stadtkultur has existed since 2014. It clearly regulates the procedures to be followed in the event of suspected and acute threats to children's well-being: The child protection specialist appointed by the provider (Träger) is called in to assess the risk and to agree on the further procedure. Additionally, the head of the Kita department is informed. In accordance with the child protection concept, the appropriate procedures are followed, and solutions are worked out together.

6.3 Integration of Children with Special Needs and Talents

Every child has the right to develop, learn and be supported within the community of other children. In our Kita the educators address each child's needs individually and accompany each child's development actively. The integration of children with special needs is a natural part of our work, using all available means.

Each child is supported through teamwork! Specialist teachers for integration work together with the educators, the parents, and the management to enable the individual support of each child in everyday life. They are in regular professional exchange with each other. We formulate development goals in close cooperation with the parents. The documentation of the developmental processes for each child is ongoing throughout the year.

With the parents' consent, we cooperate with therapists and doctors. We are happy to collaborate with external specialists (such as speech therapists). We provide parents with advice and support.

7. IMPLEMENTATION OF EDUCATIONAL PROCESSES

7.1 Goals of Pedagogical Action: Strengthening Competencies

The following is a description of the goals embedded in our pedagogical work. They guide our pedagogical actions so that our children can thrive in their environment now and in the future and actively participate in shaping society. We want to support the children's growing personalities in the development of their individual competencies.

The Berlin Education Programme (published by the Senate for Education, Youth, and Sports) formulates the Kita's educational goals as the initiation and training of the following competencies in the children.

These are divided into self-competencies, social competencies, subject competencies, and learning-methodical competencies:

Self-competence means being aware of oneself; trusting one's strengths; acting responsibly for oneself; having developed independence and initiative.

Social competence means establishing social relationships and shaping them so that they are characterised by mutual recognition and appreciation; understanding social and societal issues; acting responsibly in dealing with others; negotiating different interests.

Knowledge competence means developing an understanding of the world, opening up the factual areas of life; acquiring theoretical and practical knowledge, skills, and abilities, thereby becoming capable of judgment and action; developing the ability to perceive and express oneself.

Learning competence means a basic understanding that humans learn; what one learns and how one learns and acquires knowledge and skills; to distinguish what is important from what is unimportant; the willingness to learn from others.

(Berlin Education Programme 2004, Verlag das Netz, p. 26)

7.2 Observing and Documenting Educational and Developmental Processes

In our facility, the observation and subsequent documentation of educational and developmental processes form the basis of our pedagogical work. We follow the Berlin Education Program and use the "BeoKiz procedure for observation, documentation, and assessment in day-to-day daycare: child-centered and holistic."¹

The BeoKiz procedure involves continuous systematic observation, where we specifically and situationally observe all children and document our observations. This procedure aims to identify the interests, strengths, and developmental steps of each child and to individually support, challenge, and promote them based on these observations. Through regular observations of educational and developmental processes, we can specifically support children in various developmental areas such as language, motor skills, cognitive abilities, and socio-emotional competencies. The starting point is always the children's own interests and topics, which we incorporate into our daily pedagogical activities, such as discussion circles, activities, projects, materials, room design, and excursions.

Children are actively involved in the documentation of their educational and developmental moments. Through dialogue, we reflect their learning processes and strengths, thereby promoting the development of self-efficacy and a positive self-image. This makes the educational processes visible and tangible for the child.

¹ [BeoKiz-Verfahren - Berlin.de](https://www.beokiz-berlin.de)

Each child in our facility receives a portfolio. The portfolio is the child's book and represents their individual educational biography within the daycare. In addition to educational processes, it should reflect experiences, interests, topics, strengths, significant people, and moments in the child's life. The portfolio provides many opportunities for conversation between the child and our educators. It strengthens the child's self-confidence, supports them, among other things, during the transition to school, and gives families insight into the child's development and daily life at the daycare.

7.3 Shaping Everyday Life with Children

We use a designated preparation and follow-up time to evaluate observations, plan activities, and organise excursions and celebrations. Therefore, the colleagues of each group have a one-hour weekly meeting to discuss and exchange ideas. Additionally, each group educator uses one "group free day" per month to work on written planning, documentation and evaluation of activities within the group.

Daily Routine

We consider our facility to provide a service in the social field, which makes it possible to care for the children at any time during our opening hours. However, our interest is to establish a daily routine and useful orientation points for the children to provide quality educational work.

To ensure that all children are involved in the current projects, we ask all parents to bring their children no later than 9:25 a.m. This allows the children to participate in the daily morning circle without disruptions.

Here is a brief overview of the 'usual' day at the Kita:

6:30 - 9:00 a.m. Early shift (children play in one group, breakfast: until 8:45 a.m. - the children bring a breakfast box from home)

9:00 a.m. Open groups (teachers pick up children from early shift)

9:30 a.m. Morning circle

10:00 a.m. Activities/project work, outside play, free play

11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Lunch (variable according to age group)

12:00 p.m. - 14:00 Mid-day resting time: sleep/rest time

14:30 - 15:00 Snack time

15:00 - 16:30 Outside play, activities, free play

16:30 - 17:30 Late shift

7.4 Stimulating Play that is Fulfilling and Rich in Experience

Play is the primary acquisition tool for children. Play is a self-determined activity in which children construct and reconstruct the reality of their lives. In play, children engage and interact with their environment from an early age; exploring, understanding, and conquering the world. Children always associate a meaning with their play and its content. For those who play, it is not the result but the action which is essential.

In all groups, the children have access to areas for various role-playing games, dress-up boxes, make-up pencils, dolls, card and board games, and construction toys (building blocks, Lego, Duplo). The children also appreciate play with different light sources and calming elements, to hide, rest or be on their own.

In addition to these offers, it is essential that the educators accompany the children in their play to some extent, give them impulses, play along and allow enough time for free play. Objects from everyday life, e.g., telephone, iron, broom, pots, tools, doctor's case, enable the children to re-enact their experiences.

During morning circle the group gets together to sing, play and talk together. The educators also introduce new toys, games, and activities during morning circle. Once a week there is "show & tell," where the children talk about their experiences or bring in an object or toy from home to talk about.

The garden design and several excursions to the forest per year (especially during the toy free time - see below) give the children numerous different opportunities to play and explore with natural materials. Research materials such as magnifying glasses, beakers, scales, and tweezers are popular. To widen experiences with different elements, we have acquired a large fire bowl in the garden. In addition, there is a water and mud table in each group.

Toy-free Time

"Toy-free time" is a project we carry out once a year for six weeks. All toys (objects manufactured as toys) are removed. Material for crafting, building, and playing is offered to the children. During this period, the educators don't initiate pedagogical activities, nor give (set) impulses. The children get plenty of space and time to explore new ideas and inventions. This stimulates the children's initiative and creativity.

Stimulating Material

A wide range of age-appropriate materials invites the children to play, experiment, research, and work creatively. The materials and play areas are mostly freely accessible to the children and are geared to their interests and learning processes.

7.5 Planning and Designing Projects

We plan new projects based on our observations. The children express their wishes, ideas, and interests. Through democratic participation, we decide together with the children on the project and how to name it.

Together with the children, we determine the project's emphasis and collect information (literature, Internet, parents, etc.) Our goal is to address the different learning areas and competencies defined in the Berlin Educational Programme. Through the children's active participation, we develop and encourage skills such as self-initiative, acceptance of different interests, acquisition of knowledge, and willingness to learn from others.

In the implementation of our project, we are open to new impulses/ideas and integrate them. We document the course of the project visibly for everyone.

At the end of the project, we reflect with the children and evaluate the results.

7.6 Designing Stimulating Spaces

Rooms and Outdoor Areas

A well-thought-out room design, materials and equipment choice in which the children are involved should inspire the children and promote their own initiative, social togetherness, and aesthetic sensibility.

Our spacious room concept allows the children a variety of play opportunities and activities and the option to have time to themselves. Each group has two large rooms designed in a colourful and child-friendly manner. By dividing the rooms into different, thematically arranged areas, the children can play and act undisturbed in small groups of their choosing.

Furthermore, each group has a larger cloakroom, a bathroom (with shower), and three toilets.

Since April 2017, a regularly used climbing room also belongs to our Kita.

The entire Kita was completely renovated in 2010.

Our facility has a large outdoor area with many opportunities for movement, hiding places, slides, swings, a large boat, and a large open space with trees. There is also a courtyard with a "water trail" built into the ground and greenery.

Since we value ecological and nature-based education, the children also tend and harvest plants in the courtyard garden and discover natural scientific connections.

The next group has its own accessible playground in the adjoining courtyard.

Excursus: Duty of Supervision

Supervision as a principle does not mean constant control and overprotection of the children and their play, but rather the guidance for independent action and enabling the child to deal with and avoid dangers. Experience in dealing with potentially dangerous materials and situations (you can cut yourself with a knife, burn yourself on the stove, fall from a tree) enables

children to deal with them in a more careful, thoughtful, and competent manner. Here, the competence of the educators is required to draw the line between experiential learning and protecting the child from serious danger. This results in an understandable and transparent system of rules.

We strive to design the rooms and outdoor areas of the kindergarten so that we can implement our pedagogical concept, i.e., the children can act independently in their Kita.

The possibilities and limits of supervision are mainly determined by the children's age and development and by what agreements we have made with the parents. This requires a fair assessment of the situation by the educator and close cooperation with the parents.

8. EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

8.1 Principles of Educational Partnerships with Parents

We see parents as educational partners with whom we want to cooperate in mutual trust and open dialogue. We depend on this mutual cooperation for successful pedagogical work.

Cooperation between parents and educators means holding conversations and exchanging mutual expectations and ideas. Our educators work transparently and are open to parents' wishes and suggestions. Parents should not be onlookers but should also look for opportunities to meet and exchange ideas about everyday experiences.

8.2 Educational partnership in the context of accompanying the development of the own child

We consider a regular exchange about the child's development, at least once a year, to be essential. The teachers describe the child's behaviour, interests, and abilities that they observe in the Kita and emphasise the developmental progress since the last meeting. Parents bring their observations from everyday life in the family into the conversations.

8.3 Educational partnership in the context of participation at the facility

Forms of parent partnership in our Kita:

- Regular parent afternoons, possible thematic parent events
- Parent committee, Kita committee, parent meetings, consultation meetings
- Development discussions (language learning diary, educational goals, and learning stories)
- Talks at drop-off or pick-up situations
- Consultation hours with the Kita management
- Involvement of parents in celebrations and other activities of the Kita
- Parent/Carer survey (annually)

9. SHAPING TRANSITIONS

9.1. Settling-in as a transition from the family to the Kita

For this topic, there is a detailed information sheet on the "Berlin Settling-In Model", which will be gladly made available to you. At this point, we will only briefly mention a few aspects.

It is important to plan the transition from the family to the Kita in such a way that your child has time and peace to find his or her way in the new situation and therefore gets used to the daily routine of the Kita step by step. During the first few days, the educator settling-in your child will tend to take a 'wait-and-see approach' and observe your child. Your child will be able to decide when to make contact with the teacher. Your presence in the room during the first few days is important to create a "safe haven" for your child, to which he/she can retreat to at any time if he/she feels overwhelmed.

After a few days, our teacher will suggest that you say goodbye to your child for a short time and leave the room. Your child's reaction to this first separation in the new environment will tell us if and how much support your child needs from your presence. If your child is more relaxed about the new situation, the teacher will consult with you about how to proceed. In this way, the amount of time your child is alone in the Kita increases slowly.

9.2. Transitions within the Kita

To make the transition from the nest group to the mixed-age group easier for the children, they visit their future group several times before the change. A nest group teacher accompanies them during the visits.

9.3. The transition from Kita to school

We are committed to the goal of educating children in all aspects of personal development. In our view, preparation for school cannot be described as the act of learning how to read and write. Rather, the ongoing objective during the entire Kita period is to teach children to become socially active, independent thinkers. This is ensured through comprehensive project work in all areas of life, based on the situational approach.

In accordance with this approach and the particular interest(s) of the children, we discuss with them ideas but also possible fears in this context and thus prepare them for a new phase in their lives. We visit a neighbouring elementary school and provide first impressions.

A fixed farewell ritual of the daycare center is the handing over a "Schultüte" (a traditional German school cone) for each child starting school, as part of a celebration.

It should be emphasised that attendance at the Berlin Kids International Kita does not automatically lead to admission to the Berlin Bilingual School. The school follows its own criteria for admission.

10. THE EDUCATIONAL AREAS

The basis of our work is the Berlin Education Programme (BBP), which you can find [here](#).

You can find further information about our provider, Pfefferwerk Stadtkultur gGmbH, in our "Welcome Folder" or on our [website](#).

10.1. Educational area: Health

For our children to grow up healthy and resilient and to satisfy their urge to move, it is essential that they spend time outdoors every day. Accordingly, only extreme weather conditions prevent us from spending as much time as possible in the fresh air.

As in all other areas, it is essential to strengthen the children's perception of their own needs.

Thus, we support the children in assessing what and how much they would like to eat and developing a feeling of warmth and cold.

We also accompany them in the process of transition from diaper to toilet use. The basis for this is the child's **OWN** desire to use the toilet or, if necessary, a potty.

Non-violent education

We accompany the children in the non-violent resolution of conflicts and make sure that no child is hurt physically or emotionally. We ensure a climate of mutual respect and appreciation throughout the Kita.

10.1.1. Nutrition concept

A healthy and balanced diet is very important to us. For this reason, for lunch, we have chosen to have frozen food delivered by the supplier "Apetito."

The food is flash-frozen, without additives, and is delivered in individual components. Special cooking and heating ovens allow fresh preparation and flexible meal design.

Naturally, we strictly adhere to religion-specific eating habits and alternative vegetarian options for the weekly fish and meat meal.

The midday meal is supplemented by a snack in the afternoon, which parents provide for their children. We ask that you only pack sugar-free, nut-free, healthy snacks in the children's snack boxes. Of course, we attach great importance to offering fruit and vegetables regularly as a morning snack.

Children who have not yet eaten breakfast at home before attending Kita can do so daily from 7:00 - 8:45 a.m. For this purpose, we ask the parents to provide the child with a box of his/her own breakfast. Tea (unsweetened) and water are available to the children throughout the day. Milk is offered in the afternoon.

10.1.2. Sex education concept

Healthy physical, mental and social development also includes the perception and exploration of one's own body. Physical changes also influence the personality development of children.

Shortly after birth, children discover their hands and feet; sucking conveys closeness, feelings of pleasure, and reassurance. A little later, children discover and intensively explore their genitals. Sexual curiosity is part of healthy physical and psychological development - as is enjoying feelings of pleasure of one's own body. Self-determination is crucial here.

Our sexual pedagogical concept requires all educators to challenge and deal with their personal attitudes regarding questions of sexuality and develop a common basic approach. We believe in a sex-friendly and sensory-promoting attitude which we integrate into our pedagogical concept.

To develop an affirmative attitude towards sexuality we combine elements such as continuous reflection and conscious observation of one's own sexual biography, expert knowledge on the psychosexual development of children, understanding of sexual forms of expression in childhood, as well as competencies in conducting sensitive conversations with parents and colleagues

By observing the children in everyday life, exchanging their perceptions and subjective interpretations with each other, and documenting them if necessary, the educators become aware of signals or actions that indicate possible sexual assault and potential risk to the child's well-being.

If such suspicions arise, consistent action is required. To this end, there is a uniform procedure for all Pfefferwerk facilities on how to act in cases of suspected violation of physical, mental, or sexual self-determination.

Children should be strengthened and supported in taking responsibility for themselves and their bodies following their own needs. Daily situations - such as changing, eating together, and brushing teeth - are educational opportunities, provided that the educators turn their undivided attention to the child and respect his or her needs for closeness or distance.

(Abridged from: Senate Department for Education, Youth and Science: Berliner Bildungsprogramm für Kitas und Kindertagespflege. Updated new edition, Berlin: Verlag das Netz 2014).

10.1.3. Sleep and rest phases

Children have different needs for sleep and rest, depending on their age and individual needs. We want to ensure a good balance of activity and rest phases and support the children in finding a healthy circadian rhythm. During the course of the day, the children can use our cuddle corners for smaller rest phases. In addition, there is a fixed time of rest for all children in our Kita every day after lunch.

Children who need to sleep have the opportunity to do so in a designated room (slightly darkened and well ventilated) in a relaxed atmosphere, accompanied by an educator. During the initial interview with the parents, we find out about the children's sleeping habits and rituals in order to continue these where needed. The educator continues to practice these habits/rituals needed by the child to help them relax and sleep.

There is no compulsory sleeping in any of the Pfefferwerk Kitas, so children who are not asleep (after half an hour at the latest) or are awake again can get up on their own and join the children who are awake. Children who do not sleep are given the opportunity to pursue

activities of their own choosing. Here we encourage a quiet atmosphere, which can be introduced, for example, by a round of storytime.

Each child has his or her mat and bedding with a place to sleep and the opportunity to bring a pillow, pacifier, or a cuddly toy.

For children around and under one year of age or children who tire even more quickly, the offer of sleep is to be arranged individually. We provide parents with regular feedback on their children's individual sleeping habits and respond to changes after mutual consultation.

10.2. Educational area: Social and cultural life

Social relationships are a basic prerequisite for all educational processes. Without social relationships, education is inconceivable. From birth, the impulses that the child experiences through its first caregivers impact its educational development.

In dialogue with their caregivers, children develop their self-competence. They gain an idea of their individual uniqueness. However, identity includes not only personal characteristics but also identifications with social groups. The first social group with which a child identifies is his or her family; with the visit to our Kita, it is the group of children and their teachers.

It is very important to us that the reference persons for your child(ren) reflect the greatest possible diversity in culture and society. We are therefore happy to have colleagues, not only from all over the world, but also progressively more male educators in our facility. In addition, diversity is also reflected in many different family constellations, which is, of course, natural for us educators and families. The existing social-cultural diversity within the Kita can thus be consciously used for educational processes.

It is equally important for us to familiarise the children with different cultural traditions. This plays a role not only in the "International Week" but also in everyday pedagogical life. Children ask questions that are taken up by the educators without stating "one truth." We consider it essential to clarify and discuss differing views on various topics, such as death and religion, when talking to the children.

Intercultural Orientation

In our kindergarten, children and families from different cultures come together. These are characterised by different world views, religions, and family structures.

The different culturally shaped experiences of the families flow into our everyday life.

The children's origins can also play a role in the selection of individually organised celebrations and rituals in the groups, which deviate from our annual festivities.

A highlight is the six-week Kita-wide project "International Week," which ends in a presentation for the families and children. Each group chooses the country of origin of at least one of their children, their parents, or an educator. The children have the opportunity to immerse themselves in different cultures by learning about customs, eating habits, clothing, music, dances, etc. This provides an essential foundation for the development of values and respect for other cultures.

10.3. Educational area: Communication: Languages, written culture, and media

Accompanying and challenging the language education process of children is a central task in Kindergarten. Language education permeates almost all pedagogical situations and educational areas and begins before the first words are formed. Language education is based on dialogue and participation of the children. Through a jointly designed and stimulating everyday life, the children receive a variety of impulses, and they expand their abilities to express feelings and ideas. They negotiate ideas with each other, reflect on their experiences, and learn to explain their own views. Language development and cognitive development are closely related. Through languages, written culture and media, children also acquire the wealth of experience of their own and other cultures.

Linguistic competencies develop through the child's independent acquisition skills in the family, the Kita, and the child's environment. Children learn to speak in actions and dialogues that make sense to them and that they practise together with others. Their attention is focused on what is perceived, expressed, and understood, not on the utterances themselves.

The repetition of daily routines brings a feeling of security. An essential prerequisite for language development is reliable relationships with people, especially those who communicate with the child using their bodies, expressions, voices, and gestures.

Young children depend on a dialogue in one-to-one situations (e.g., diapering, dressing), eye contact, speech that accompanies actions, and corrective feedback to develop their language skills.

Children also learn that their own voice is an unmistakable part of their personality.

The diversity of voices in the group opens up opportunities for playful discussion. Imitating and inventing voices and sounds is fun and promotes their speech.

Children learn languages from the use of language in their groups. The way of greeting, addressing someone, or asking for something can be completely different in the family than in the Kita. If children experience value and equality of all languages and cultures represented in the Kita, it is easy for them to build a positive relationship with their respective language and culture. The educators, who know the child's environment, can build on his or her experiences through a dialogue with the children. If linguistic diversity is dealt with respectfully, all children experience the importance of languages in a globalised world and for their own cultural identity. Bilingual and multilingual education generally have a positive impact on the child's overall development. Parents should be encouraged to speak with their children in the language(s) they themselves feel most comfortable with.²

We use media in such a way that it creates additional benefits for the projects carried out and topics discussed. According to their stage of development, the children should have the op-

² (Abridged from: Senate Department for Education, Youth and Science: Berliner Bildungsprogramm für Kitas und Kindertagespflege. Updated new edition, Berlin: Verlag das Netz 2014).

portunity to deal with media of various kinds, including the so-called "new media," autonomously or with pedagogical support. The educators support and accompany the children in their critical and responsible use of media.

Photos and pictures serve to document what the children experience and allow for a high degree of transparency. Through inputs from various print media, the children are encouraged and accompanied to experience diverse creative expression. Photos present the children's learning processes and encourage them to reflect and comment on what they have experienced.

Books are freely available to children in both English and German. The teachers create a framework that enables the children to learn how to handle books with care.

Audio media and visual media are also used selectively, according to the age of the children. The teachers introduce the children to the use of the Internet for research purposes. Every group is equipped with a laptop and PC-tablet as tools for project work. In this context the children can use selected computer programs (such as photo editing, image design) for creative and interactive work.

Working with (digital) media

In our increasingly digitized world today, it is essential to introduce children to the conscious and creative use of digital media at an early age. Therefore, our daycare concept specifically integrates digital educational offerings that both promote children's creativity and strengthen their media literacy. For us, the pedagogical added value is always the priority, and we ensure that important tactile experiences do not fade into the background.

We use various digital tools to promote creativity, for example, to create animated films or audio stories. With simple, child-friendly apps, children can develop their own stories and turn them into moving images. This not only fosters their imagination but also their ability to structure and tell stories. Children learn how to plan scenes, design characters, write and narrate texts, and enhance them with sounds and music, as well as create simple animations. They often work together in small groups, which strengthens their social skills and teamwork abilities. Activities like these also promote language development and auditory perception. Additionally, it gives children the opportunity to share their stories with others, thereby strengthening their self-confidence.

In our daycare, we place great importance on the conscious and responsible use of digital media. This means we do not use pure entertainment games or apps without pedagogical value. Instead, we specifically use digital tools to promote the cognitive, social, and creative abilities of children.

Educators support children in using digital media and provide assistance when needed. We ensure that children use digital tools as a supplement to their tactile experiences and not as a replacement.

10.4. Educational area: Art: visual arts, music, theatre

In order to express themselves artistically, many materials are freely available to our children. We offer various types of pencils, paper in different colours, sizes, and thicknesses, glue sticks, brushes, paint, cloth. We also provide natural materials such as shells, pasta, sand, and much more to promote their creativity. We place great value on the children trying things out for themselves and letting their imagination run free. We as educators do not correct the children in their creative endeavours, as this could discourage them from finding joy in creative and artistic projects or activities. However, we do show and teach the children various techniques and styles in our creative activities. The children should develop their own ideas instead of copying the educator or adult. Their crafted objects and/or painted pictures are then presented to others in the form of small exhibitions if the children so desire.

All groups have various costumes and clothing available so that the children can express themselves in theatrical form. With these costumes and clothing items, they can assume different identities and play and understand with different roles, forms of identity, and everyday actions. Often this leads to the children not only implementing role plays but also bringing small theatre games to life. This shows how improvisational the children are and their ability to combine reality and fantasy. Small plays or performances are sometimes directed by the educator(s) based on the interest and participation of the children.

Music in the form of singing, dancing, or instrumental music plays an important role in everyday life. Various musical instruments are available to the children to play and experiment with sound and rhythm. Rituals such as morning circle songs, table rhymes, or nature sounds are part of the daily pedagogical routine. It is important to us to introduce the children not only to songs and music known here in Germany, but also to songs and music from other cultures, as well as from different musical genres.

We pay attention to all these three areas when planning excursions: be it a visit to an art exhibition, a play, or the musical instrument museum.

In May 2022, we were delighted to open our own workshop in the garden of our daycare center with numerous tools and many different materials. With this, we expanded our pedagogical offer in the educational area of visual design as well as the area of nature-environment-technology. In the workshop, the children work undisturbed on various small and large projects with the greatest possible independence in small groups, together with a teacher. The introduction of the workshop was accompanied by professional training for the pedagogical staff and the purchase of a wide range of materials.

The workshop was financed by the prize money for the German Kitapreis, which was won in 2021.

10.5. Educational area: Mathematics

Mathematics in the Kita is more than just calculating and counting. The children encounter mathematics throughout the day. Whether it is in the morning when matching slippers with the help of symbols and photos, at lunchtime when tidying up the group rooms and sorting the toys, or in the afternoon when balancing on a wooden beam. Mathematics is everywhere: e.g., we assign items of clothing, determine the sizes of our cuddly toys and compare them. We divide our fruit fairly and measure the flour we need for our baking project. We form rows of collected stones and put puzzle pieces together.

The children have various measuring tools at their disposal, such as measuring cups, rulers, scales, and other containers. We estimate how many chestnuts we have collected in the autumn months and expand our spatial imagination by filling them into assorted containers. Our daily structure and its repetitive sequences, rhythms and time indications can also be assigned to mathematics. Various geometric shapes and angles can also be found in each group room. Another example of mathematics in action can also be found in graphic representations: for example, by making the result of a democratic decision-making process visually appealing and understandable for the children.

10.6. Educational area: Nature - Environment - Technology

Gathering experiences of nature plays a major role in our Kita. The children can try out planting and harvesting different types of fruits and vegetables in the group's own beds. They are familiarised with the growth cycle and growing conditions and take responsibility for these plants in alternating duties. Among other things, our children learn where our food comes from. In addition, we go on excursions into nature. Forest days, especially in the toy-free time, are noteworthy. In addition, we explore the city of Berlin together as our place of residence. We get to know playgrounds and visit the neighbouring library, among other things.

At least once a day, the children go out into the Kita's own garden, dressed appropriately. Here the children experience the different seasons, perceive flora and fauna and play with water, sand, leaves, stones as well as sticks. Thanks to our fire pit, the children can gain experience with the element of fire, of course only when accompanied by the educators.

The children learn about different ways of life. Within the framework of various projects, they learn how we live here and now and get to take a look into the past. As an international Kindergarten, it is also important for us to show how people live in other countries and continents. We show the children how important it is to use vital resources carefully, be it water and/or electricity.

Together with the children, we look for answers to the children's "why" questions. In this way, we support the spirit of inquiry and keep the children's curiosity alive. Our children are given plenty of time to experiment. In this way, we learn about material properties and try to explain scientific phenomena, such as gravity.

10.6.1 Sustainability

In our Kita, we place great emphasis on education for sustainable development as part of our pedagogical concept. Our goal is to raise the children's awareness of this important issue and provide them with knowledge and practical skills that can contribute to a more sustainable life.

We use different projects and activities with the children to create a greater awareness of our environment, its beauty, and its problems. We also implement practical solutions in the Kita, such as waste separation and the best possible reduction in the use of water, electricity, and other resources. Since the energy renovation of the building, we also use solar panels on the

roof for a more sustainable energy supply. In addition, our rooms are equipped with dimmable lights and motion detectors.

We promote the appreciation of nature, and through our own cultivation of plants, vegetables, flowers, and herbs; the children directly experience how growth works and which environmental influences are needed or harmful.

Forest excursions are also part of the special nature experiences we want to offer the children. These excursions often take place during the "toy-free time." It is also important to us that we act as role models. The educators themselves exemplify sustainable habits, such as reusable water bottles and coffee cups.

In the Kita, we use sustainable materials wherever possible (and increasingly). Some examples include snack boxes out of recycled plastic for field trips, cool packs made from canola seeds, and wooden toys instead of short-lived plastic toys. We also repair, reuse, and recycle the materials we have available wherever possible, which in turn instills in the children a sense of responsibility and appreciation for our resources. At this point, we would also like to highlight the significant role of our maintenance woman, who involves the children in repairing things.

Please note, however, that for hygienic reasons, we are unable to offer cloth diapers or reusable wipes in the nursery. Fortunately, there are environmentally friendly disposable diapers and biodegradable wipes on the market.

Emphasising the importance of sustainability is key to creating a better future for our children. To maintain a high standard of sustainability awareness, we have a sustainability officer at each Pfefferwerk Kita who keeps an eye out for potential improvements in this area. We welcome parents' support to implement our goals, and we are always open to suggestions.

11. DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION

11.1. Cooperation and communication in the team

In regular team meetings, we exchange ideas about pedagogical, organisational, and other topics. Our Kindergarten uses a total of six closing days per year for further training, teacher education, and for team development. In order to engage in a lively exchange with other Pfefferwerk Kindergartens, there are regular meetings, each attended by a representative of the Kita. In the various working groups, topics such as integration, child protection, language development, and early childhood education for children under three years old are discussed.

11.2. Participation and Complaints Procedures for Children

The participation of our children in projects and in everyday pedagogical life is very important to us. Following the situational approach, the children themselves decide which topics they want to learn about in more detail together. First, the educators observe the children and take note of the topics the children are currently engaged. Afterwards, several interests are

summarised together with the children in the form of a morning circle. We talk about the topics in detail, collect any questions they have, and in the end, a topic is chosen collectively in a democratic decision-making process. Here, the majority decides.

The children's opinions are very important to us when making new purchases for the indoor and outdoor areas. They make suggestions and express wishes, which we try to fulfill if possible. For example, we purchased a stage for the garden and new outdoor toy vehicles.

The children are also involved in the decision-making process when it comes to ordering meals (taking into account the meal guidelines of the German Nutrition Society - Deutsche Ernährungsgesellschaft -DEG). The children decide on the meals they want to order, and these are evaluated by the children afterwards. The results are taken into account for future orders (e.g., in the case of majority and multiple negative evaluations).

In all the decision-making processes listed here, the children should be made aware that they themselves make the decisions. Participation is understood here as the basis for responsibility. Co-thinking and co-deciding are required and leads to consequences. This leads to increased self-confidence and makes the children aware that each individual can make a difference.

Participation and Complaint as a Child Right

Involving the children as much as possible, and also allowing them to make their own decisions is already standard practice at our Kita.

Encouraging them to express criticism and disagreement is not only a matter of concern to us, but is also included in the Child and Youth Welfare Act since 2012 (§ 45 SGB VIII).

Children express complaints not only verbally, but also through their behaviour - for example, by crying, running away, doing things secretly, questioning rules. Most of the time, children show disagreement immediately and on the spot, which is why the topic of complaint management can be difficult to structure as part of the daily routine. We try to do justice to this by taking the children seriously, listening to them and observing them throughout the entire day. This is achieved by encouraging open discussions, explicitly asking children for their opinion on a specific question/topic, encouraging them to express themselves, giving all children the space to do so, and accompanying democratic decision-making processes.

Sometimes, however, children only express complaints when explicitly asked, such as evaluating a project or how the food tasted. Therefore, an evaluation takes place at the conclusion of all projects. However, because it is also important to us to give space to and visualize the children's concrete complaints, we have set up an "I have a voice" place in the rooms of the mixed-age groups. In addition, from now on we will not only survey the parents, but also the children once a year about their satisfaction in our Kita.

Why do we do this? Children should know that their voices and opinions are both heard and taken seriously (and thus are socially relevant). They are part of a group in which what they think, say and decide is significant. The children also practice dealing with other opinions. Last but not least, participation and complaint management is an important cornerstone as a preventive measure against child endangerment.

12. QUALITY ASSURANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

We are involved in various committees at the provider level, in which the specialists deal intensively with pedagogical issues and incorporate these into the further development of the quality of the pedagogical work.

We also ensure continuous quality development through internal and external evaluation. In doing so, we reflect on the implementation of the Berlin Education Programme (BBP) in our Kita using the methods of KiQu (Quality for Children) from EuroNorm MBT GmbH.

Our internal quality management complies with the requirements of DIN EN ISO 9001:2015. We are a subsidiary of the Pfefferwerk Foundation and a member of the German Parity Welfare Association and the Association for Socio-Cultural Work.

13. LITERATURE LIST

Senate Department for Education, Youth and Science: Berliner Bildungsprogramm für Kitas und Kindertagespflege. Updated new edition, Berlin: Verlag das Netz 2014.