

Pedagogic Concept KiTas Bethanien

As of February 2020

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A note in advance: For reasons of better readability, the simultaneous use of masculine and feminine language forms is not used. All references to people apply equally to both sexes.

1. Introduction

1.1 Preamble

The present concept defines fundamental operational aspects for the area of day-care centres (KiTas) of Diakonie Bethanien. It is aimed at parents and their children, at authorities and supervisory bodies, but also at partners, employees and other interested parties.

1.2 Sponsorship

Diakonie Bethanien is a charitable association based in Zurich. Strategic management is the responsibility of the board of directors, operational management is the responsibility of the directorate. The members of the association are deaconesses and committed private individuals with close ties to Diakonie Bethanien. With joint efforts, the association pursues the goal of promoting social-diaconal projects and managing the corresponding institutions.

1.3 Mission Statement Diakonie Bethanien

Vision (Why)

In the spirit of the founders of Bethanien and the diaconal tradition, we are committed to the well-being and needs of our fellow human beings and work to improve their quality of life.

We are convinced that our company has a sustainable, deeply social orientation thanks to its Christian philosophy.

We offer our professional services in an appreciative attitude to elderly as well as socially disadvantaged, needy and hospitality seeking people, families and children, regardless of their national, religious or social background.

We develop new services where governmental and social offers have gaps or are missing (subsidiary offers).

Mission (What)

We provide services in social, nursing and educational areas that are geared to current needs.

We are continuously developing our offerings and looking for new solutions to meet demographic, societal and social challenges.

We are innovative and develop new service concepts, which we offer according to the identified needs.

Our services help to reduce gaps in social, educational and health care.

We respect the merits of each deaconess and take care of their evening of life.

We see ourselves as a fair employer with attractive social benefits and offer training positions in various specialist areas.

Leadership principles (With what)

It is our goal to create an appreciative and constructive cooperation between employees, people entrusted to us and reference groups.

We trust our employees, live a culture of open communication, strive for high professionalism and quality and see mistakes as opportunities to learn from them.

Our leadership style is participative, encouraging and challenging.

We define clear goals with our employees. Together we strive to do the right things right.

We offer our employees scope to develop themselves. Personal and professional development is a high priority for us.

Success Factors (How)

Our success is based on the commitment of employees and association members, material and non-material resources and our service portfolio.

Our innovative services and offerings are divided into profitable, self-supporting and charitable commitments.

In everything we do, we strive to protect and respect the dignity and autonomy of the people entrusted to us.

We rely on employees who share our vision and are passionately committed in their daily work.

We see honesty, commitment and equality towards all our contacts as an expression of our basic values.

In order to secure our financial independence in the long term, our diversified commitment is in line with the economic possibilities of our company.

Our independence gives us the flexibility we need to freely design and develop our services.

We deal with the environment and our resources in a sustainable, gentle and careful way.

2. Meaning and Purpose of the KiTa

The KiTas Bethanien support the socialisation and integration of the child into society, promote personality development and respect its individuality.

We consider contact with families from different social and cultural backgrounds as enrichment and consciously encourage this. We base our work on children's rights, which are based on 3 pillars: Protection against discrimination based on origin, gender or other characteristics, promotion in all areas of education and participation. The appropriate roof for this is the orientation towards the well-being of the child.

The day-care centres of Diakonie Bethanien offer supplementary day care for children from three months until they enter kindergarten. The day-care centres create an important prerequisite for parents to be able to combine family and career.

The KiTas Bethanien must be financially self-sustaining in accordance with the strategic orientation of Diakonie Bethanien.

3. Principles of Pedagogic Work and Childcare

3.1 Educational Mission of KiTas Bethanien

The education, upbringing and care of children should contribute to ensuring that every single child has equal rights and good opportunities for a worth living perspective in society.

Early childhood education and childcare support the social, emotional, cognitive, physical and psychological development of children into independent and socially competent personalities. For this purpose, the day-care centres create a stimulating, appreciative and protective learning environment in which professional staff cultivate a conscious, educational approach to the child.

3.2 Image of the Child

From the beginning, children have a basic set of perceptions and communication skills and learn with curiosity and interest of their own accord. They want to actively explore and understand their environment. They learn to acquire new skills on their own initiative. Children are active creators of their own educational processes and we assume that they acquire their own world in exchange with other children and caregivers and seek their own learning path. We orient ourselves by the attitude of constructivism. In our eyes, children have a basic equipment of perceptions and communication skills from the beginning and discover with curiosity and interests and of their own accord their environment. Furthermore, we maintain a resource-oriented view of the individual child. Through our positive and appreciative attitude, the possibility of experiencing participation and self-determination as well as the empathic accompaniment of each child in the group, we strengthen the resilience of each individual child from an early age.

3.3 Participation of Children

Participation or involvement means letting someone participate, in other words, getting involved. This is done by having a say, participation and co-responsibility. Social participation takes place in everyday life and needs dialogue and an ear for children's questions and answers. For the daily life of the KiTa this means:

Taking the child's stage of development into account, i.e. starting where the child's development is.

Take the children's questions and wishes seriously and involve them in decisions. In addition to the development of the children, we focus on their interests and thus enable them to develop their interests in a participatory way.

The possibility of being able to make a difference and help shape something (self-efficacy) is a key experience for the development and well-being of the child, which we as an institution want to take into account.

3.4 Infants¹ and Infant Pedagogics

We work according to the pedagogy of the paediatrician Emmi Pikler². The name Emmi Pikler stands for a change in awareness in dealing with infants and toddlers. The child is taken seriously as a person and partner. Instead of simply encouraging, motivating or keeping him occupied according to our ideas, the aim is to get into real contact with him - to become familiar with him and to build a relationship based on attentiveness, empathy, love and respect.

This requires reliable caregivers who can respond with sensitive behaviour and a quick response to the signals of infants and toddlers, as they are of paramount importance for building a secure attachment relationship.

The need for a feeling of security is taken into account through loving care and undivided attention by the educators in general, but also in the care. A toddler experiences care as a gentle, attentive touch and intensive interpersonal encounter. Every action is announced. Nothing happens over his head, rather he is actively involved. Through the time we allow the child to participate and cooperate, a trusting relationship develops between the child and the educator.

In order to offer the infants in our day-care centres an environment in which they feel comfortable and are stimulated according to their individual level of development, needs and interests, it is important to us to provide plenty of space for independent exploration in addition to fulfilling their needs for exercise and play. The caregivers let the children do what they are already able to do on their own and are always ready to help.

3.5 Care Model

In the KiTas Bethanien we look after children in standard groups, which are led by us in age-reduced groups. In this way we enable the children to maintain contact between children of the same age and children similar in age (= peers). This also offers the caregivers the opportunity to carry out age-appropriate topics and projects and to support the children individually in their development.

In addition, it is important to us to promote the exchange between younger and older children. In addition to the joint activities during the morning and evening hours, we ensure this through further activities and excursions in everyday life, which are planned together on a selective basis.

In each standard group we offer 11 places daily. One standard groups take care of children from 3 months to approx. 1.5 / 2 years old, the others from approx. 1.5 / 2 years until kindergarten entry. At the KiTa Bethanien Fluntern, there is also a reduced-age group from 19 months to kindergarten entry, which offers 12 places daily.

¹ In our concept we go into detail on infant care (0-18 months) later

² Emmi Pikler: *Peaceful baby - happy mothers*, 2013, Herder Verlag
Emmi Pikler: *Give me time*, 2001, Richard-Plaum-Verlag

3.6 The Role of the Caregivers

The implementation of the educational mission with the children is a demanding pedagogical work. All our specialists have a formal qualification in the field of pedagogy and are constantly working on the latest findings in development and educational research. We carefully introduce our employees to this type of work and pay attention to appropriate training and further education opportunities.

Our caregivers are independent, professionally and personally competent employees. In regular meetings, we reflect on our pedagogical activities in an exchange among ourselves. In our KiTas, employees of all genders are treated equally. At least one specialist per day-care centre has special training in infant care.

4. Implementation of Educational Mission

4.1 Body, Movement and Health

In order for children to educate themselves and develop well, they must feel physically and mentally well. We are committed to ensuring that the children in our day-care centres feel safe, are supported in their need for autonomy and can interact with a stimulating environment.

4.2 Personal Care and Hygiene

Daily body care is an important part of building and maintaining the relationship between the caregivers and the child. The children should experience the care of their body as something pleasant.

Therefore, we take a lot of time for this and let the children participate actively according to their age. We respect the privacy of the children, which strengthens their self-esteem and supports a positive self-image.

Infants

In the personal hygiene of our infants we create a pleasant atmosphere by describing to the child what we do and why. We react to his utterances/sounds, give him closeness if desired and play with the child (re-cite verses, sing). It is important to us that the children get the opportunity to do as much as possible independently and that we support them in this process.

4.3 Eating and Nutrition

Eating should be fun, enjoyable and taste good. A relaxed and cheerful atmosphere during the meal is very important to us. We attach great importance to a balanced, tasty and varied nutrition. Fresh fruit and vegetables are offered to the children daily. The children can drink water or unsweetened tea all day long.

Specific cultural, ethical and religious nutrition requirements and medically required restrictions (allergies) are of course taken into account.

As in all areas, the children in our KiTas know no enforcement. The children are free to create and decide for themselves how much of what they want to eat.

Our nutritional principles are described in more detail in the KiTas Bethanien nutritional concept.

Infants

We adapt the infants' eating rhythm to their individual habits and needs.

If an infant enters the day-care centre, it is not necessary to wean. If the mother wishes to continue breastfeeding the baby, she may visit the day-care centre at any time and retire with the baby into a free room. Suitable furniture is available.

4.4 Movement

Children discover their environment through movement. Movement is the most important means of gaining experience about themselves and their social and spatial environment. Movement has a positive effect on psychological and physical well-being.

It is important to us that children are able to achieve something or accomplish a work themselves through physical activity. Self-efficacy is a central component in the development of self-esteem, which is essentially shaped by the way in which the children acquire and deal with their environment through their body and senses.

Infants

For our infants, the development of mobility is the focus of attention. Infants learn with their whole body and with all their senses, thus creating the conditions for the development of thinking.

They should learn to move and play without help from the caregivers. We generally lay the infant on its back until it can take up another position itself. In the supine position he can get to know his body better and move more freely. We do not invite the child to make movements that he is not yet able to make (sitting up, walking etc.).

Our movement elements for infants include surfaces of different heights and sloping elements on which the children can safely practice their gross motor skills. The group rooms are divided so that the children can choose freely between activity and retreat.

It is our goal to give the children as much free space as possible for their own development, especially for movement. They should be as unhindered as possible, adequately protected by the observing caregivers, and be able to discover the world around them. This leads to a special appropriation of space by the children.

4.5 Sleeping

For the development of the child, especially the processing of all impressions, it is important that the child is given sufficient rest.

We attach great importance to the fact that the midday rest for the child takes place in a calm atmosphere, which creates trust and relaxation and strengthens the child for the afternoon programme. In doing so, a child is neither forced to lie down nor prevented from sleeping.

Infants

As there is a risk of overstimulation for infants, they are put to sleep according to their individual need for rest. In addition to the bedroom, hammocks or other sleeping facilities are available in the group room for our little ones. Infants feel safe when they hear familiar sounds and therefore usually find sleep in the group room.

4.6 Social and Cultural Environment

The children should feel welcome and that they belong to the KiTas. The social world of the child is enlivened early through personal relationships and belonging to small groups. In this way, we provide them with a diverse environment in which they can develop their social skills. We make sure that the children discover new things together with other children and can grow from them. A reliable and trusted caregiver accompanies them in this process.

We encourage the child to try out various roles and find its place in the group.

4.7 Dealing with Rules, Structures, Conflict Ability

To feel comfortable in a community, certain intentions and rules are needed. Respect and tolerance are two important qualities that are central to the success of group life.

We give the children the freedom to argue with each other, to measure their strength, to perceive their own limits in order to assert themselves or give in. We encourage the children to solve conflicts independently and to show consideration for each other. We take the children's problems and difficulties seriously and seek solutions together with them and/or their parents.

4.8 Daily Routine

In order to meet the children's needs for play, movement and orientation, our daily routine in the KiTa has a few cornerstones. These cornerstones provide a rough orientation in the daily routine, but also allow a lot of freedom. The daily planning depends to a large extent on the situation of the children's group and is

therefore adapted to the situation and the needs and interests of the children in order to neither under- nor overburden the children.

6.30-9.00	KiTa opening Children are welcomed and integrated into the group. Breakfast is offered until about 8.15 am.
9.00	Common beginning in each group with a morning ritual
9.15-10.30	Specific activities in the group or cross-group offers for the encounter of younger and older children indoors or outdoors
10.30-11.00	Personal hygiene and preparation for the lunch/lunch ritual
11.00-12.00	Meal times
12.00-14.00	Resting time on the group
14.00-15.30	Specific activities in the group or cross-group offers for the encounter of younger and older children indoors or outdoors
15.30-16.00	Common "z'Vieri" on the group
16.00-18.30	Free play and free play offers, first children are picked up
18.30	KiTa closing

4.9 Cooperation within Groups

The individual groups form autonomous units in the KiTas. The children have their own rooms, their reference persons and a daily routine adapted to their needs. However, the individual standard groups, which as mentioned above are run on an age-reduced basis, are in binding contact with each other.

In addition to the structured, joint encounters, such as bringing and pickup times or playing together outside, we carry out targeted, cross-group offers, activities and projects.

It must be ensured that the interactions of older children with infants and toddlers are closely monitored by the carers in order to intervene in the event of aggressive behaviour by the elderly. The little ones must also have opportunities for retreat at all times.

4.10 Communication

Language development is a matter of course for us and is integrated into everyday life. Continuous social contacts (bonds) aim to awaken and promote the joy of speaking. The prerequisite for this is a climate of well-being and feeling of security in the KiTas.

- The official KiTa language is Swiss German.
- We communicate in an appreciative and friendly tone and deal with the children at eye level.
- We enter into serious dialogue with the children. This means that we listen to them, ask questions, give answers and are interested in what they want to tell us. The linguistic accompaniment of everything that is experienced and done is lived by the caregivers in an exemplary manner. In this way, the children learn to name things, exchange thoughts and name and share experiences and feelings. Furthermore, they acquire vocabulary and knowledge and learn to use it.
- Fingerplay, rhymes, poems, morning circles and songs are part of the daily program.
- Picture books are available to all children at all times. They are viewed alone, read aloud by the caregivers or viewed together, motivating the child to tell what they see.

Infants

When communicating with our infants it is important for us to "read" their individual body language, which expresses their inner experience (facial expressions, gestures, sounds etc.), in order to be able to react sensitively.

4.11 Creativity and Sensual Experience

We support and accompany the children in their creative development. By providing them with diverse materials and the necessary time, they can engage in the process of creating and experimenting. The joy of new discoveries contributes to active learning and strengthens self-esteem. The process of creating is important to us and is in the foreground.

Infants

The infant develops a "body-self" feeling through sensual experiences and thereby gains a consciousness of his own person. We support the child with different sensory stimuli to get to know its body, body limits and its position in space.

4.12 Music

Music is an element that addresses the children individually and holistically and triggers spontaneous reactions such as satisfaction, feeling of security and "feeling good".

From infancy to kindergarten age, singing as the actual "language of human" is fundamental for development. For this reason, singing together is given special importance in our day-care centres. The use of instruments, singing circle and rhythm plays as well as dancing with music are further elements that support the development of the child's sensory and expressive possibilities. We use the cultural diversity in our KiTas to integrate songs and rhymes from the children's countries of origin into our everyday life.

4.13 Numbers and Counting

The foundations for mathematical thinking are developed in the first years of life. When the child can make the first experiences with time and space, but also mathematical operations such as measuring, estimating, ordering and comparing, the understanding of abstract thinking begins to grow. We enable the children to develop a feeling for numbers, shapes, mass and spatial perception through various playful activities (e.g. setting the table, scooping, sharing, counting).

4.14 Nature und Environment

With all senses, the child opens up nature and builds the first scientific experiences on it. In our educational work we promote a holistic inclusion of nature, the animal world and physics. Through scientific experimentation and research, the children learn about the different principles of their environment. In various activities and excursions, we enable the children to gain a broader understanding of nature. At least once a day we are outdoors (garden, forest, with animals or on walks etc.).

Through our role model attitude, we teach the children an ecological awareness in dealing with electricity, water and waste.

5. Portfolio – Work

The portfolio serves to document the individual learning steps of each child. The portfolio is also a support during parent-teacher meetings, as it illustrates the children's learning processes. The children deal with their portfolio and are allowed to determine the content themselves. It is their individual collection which they can take home as a souvenir at the end of their time in the day-care centre.

With the help of the portfolio, the children can remember past experiences and fall back on familiar ones. Through the portfolio the children become aware of everything they have learned.

By making visible to the children what they have already learned, we also strengthen their resilience.

6. Projects

In various projects we work intensively with the children over a longer period of time and in a variety of activities with a theme (annual cycle, cultures, forest, etc.) from their real life. Projects are realised without any specific results and can be implemented across groups. The choice of topics for projects is based on observations of the children and their interests.

7. Observing and Documenting

In order to find out where a child's current needs and interests lie, it is necessary for the caregivers to observe them closely. The basic prerequisite for successful observation is a neutral, positive and resource-oriented view of the child: What is he doing? What does he like to do? Where is it all about?

Further development requires a high degree of well-being; a child who does not feel comfortable cannot be sufficiently committed to his interests. Therefore, we give priority to the well-being and interests of the child.

Our observations take place in everyday life. The standardized and written observations of the children are recorded and collected. They serve as a basis for the annual individual meeting between parents and caregivers.

8. Integration of Children with Special Needs and Abilities

Living and experiencing together connects, creates understanding and promotes tolerance. It gives every child a feeling for the diversity of us humans.

Children with special needs or talents are accepted if the general conditions (ratio caregivers-children, expertise of the carers, spatiality, willingness of the parents and the company) are conducive to the child. Additional support is sought in an interdisciplinary exchange with various specialist institutions.

We support and motivate all children with special needs or talents in the development of their mental, spiritual and physical abilities and provide them with a selection of play opportunities and support material.

9. Design of the Rooms

Interior design is designed reality. A stimulating room is often named as the third educator. Rooms should be fields of research and experimentation in which children can develop an image of themselves, of others and of the world with all their senses.

In the interior design and the choice of materials, we are guided by the needs of the children and the focus on the different areas of education, which were explained under point 4.

Most of the toys and materials are placed in such a way that the children can reach them independently.

Infants

The infants' rooms are equipped in such a way that they can pursue their interests and exercise-intensive movements in a protected area as far as possible safely and undisturbed.

In early childhood, the possibilities of locomotion and with it the experience of space and interests in action constantly change. An appropriate environment creates stimulation for the various developmental periods. We work with different spatial elements on which the children can move and play independently in a variety of ways.

10. Transitions

A new period begins for the child and the parents with the entry into the KiTa. We enable the child a gentle transition into the new area of life of the KiTa by providing a professional and individually designed settling-in period and for the welfare of the child. During the settling-in period with father or mother, the child is given the necessary time to become familiar with the caregivers and the new environment. This intensive acclimatisation, which is adapted to the child, has a positive long-term effect on the child's well-being.

10.1 Settling-in: The Transition from Family to KiTa

During the initial interview by the management, the parents receive information on contractual and operational provisions and on the settling-in period, which is carried out by the responsible caregiver of the group. In the settling-in phase, the foundation for a trusting cooperation between parents, child and caregiver is laid. During the acclimatisation, the parents gain an intensive insight into the daily work and can experience the family-friendly climate at the KiTas Bethanien. The gentle settling-in period is the first

building block of the educational partnership. The settling-in process is described in detail in a separate acclimatisation concept.

10.2 Bringing and Picking up the Children

The organizing of handing over the child in the morning is central to his well-being. It is important to us that children and parents feel welcome in the morning and that the goodbye is individual and in accordance with the ritual adapted for the child. After the children have said goodbye to their parents, we make sure that the children are able to settle into the daily group routine at their own pace.

Not only when bringing but also when picking up children need a transitional period and react very differently to the appearance of their parents. That is why we take the opportunity to exchange information with the parents and pass on the most important information and events.

As in the morning, it is our concern to see off the children and parents individually.

10.3 Group Change

Usually, there is a change of group at about 1.5 - 2 years. The farewell from the group is themed with a farewell ritual. At the same time there is a short period of acclimatisation, in which the children visit the future group by the hour. In this way they can slowly get into the mood for the new children and the new group life.

10.4 Transfer to Kindergarten

The kindergarten entry is thematized in the groups. We prepare the children carefully for the transition and discuss the children's stage of development with the parents. In the group, the farewell is consciously celebrated with all children. Rituals support the children who leave the KiTa and the children and caregivers who stay behind.

11. Cooperation with Parents

11.1 Educational Partnership between Caregivers and Parents

"Educational partnership" comprises the joint responsibility of parents and caregivers for the educational and developmental support of the child. In most cases, the day-care centre is the first socialisation instance outside the family structure. It is therefore also the first place where parents and child are separated. It is therefore important that the parents and the child find a social space here that is fundamentally characterised by understanding, acceptance and interest.

11.2 Possibilities of Contact

The daily exchange between parents and caregivers takes place in the short door-to-door talks.

At least once a year, an individual meeting takes place between caregivers and parents. It focuses on the resources, interests and activities of the child in the day-care centre and its upbringing. We take the concerns of the parents seriously and address them in the meeting. Together we can thus create a basis for support. We maintain an open and appreciative communication. We are happy to discuss with the parents their educational concerns or other questions.

11.3 Parental Event

Various events for parents with or without children take place throughout the year (summer party, parents' coffee, parents' and theme evenings, etc.), which are intended to promote contact with the KiTa but also among parents.

12. Leadership and Cooperation within the Tseam

We strive to create a respectful and constructive cooperation between employees, people entrusted to us and reference groups. This goal has resulted in the following management principles, which are anchored in the Mission Statement of Diakonie Bethanien:

- We trust our employees, live a culture of open communication, strive for a high level of professionalism and quality and see mistakes as opportunities.
- Our management style is participative, encouraging and challenging.
- We define clear goals with our employees and together we strive to do the things right on the one hand and to do the right things on the other.
- We give our employees the space they need to take initiative and act on their own responsibility. We attach great importance to personal and professional development.

All new employees at the KiTas Bethanien are carefully introduced to the educational work of the KiTa and to all processes and structures.

The teams at KiTas Bethanien consist of KiTa management, the person responsible for training, specialists, apprentices and interns.

Regular meetings are held at all levels. These include organisational matters, planning of the pedagogical work, professional exchange and reflection on the care work. Interdisciplinary cooperation within Diakonie Bethanien plays an important role.

With external and internal training and further education, we specifically promote the professional competence and knowledge development of our employees.

13. Child Protection

In our KiTas, we focus on the well-being of the children. The safety of the children has a high priority for us. The rules laid down in our Code of Conduct enable caregivers to identify border violations at an early stage and react accordingly. Sexual assaults can be prevented by preventive procedures (e.g. the doors remain open at all times in changing situations, children are looked after in groups, ...).

14. Quality Management

The Pedagogic Concept is binding for all employees. It is available to all parents and the responsible authorities.

The management of KiTas Bethanien is responsible for the elaboration and further development of the Pedagogic Concept under the supervision of their supervisor.

The individual managers of the KiTas are responsible for ensuring that the Pedagogic Concept is continuously implemented and reviewed in regular operations (team meetings, development meetings, further development of the work).

The Pedagogic Concept is approved by the directorate of Diakonie Bethanien.

Furthermore, within the framework of quality assurance at Diakonie Bethanien, processes are defined for various areas, which are checked annually by internal or external audits. This results in a further review of the Pedagogic Concept.

The results are first evaluated and assessed with the Management of Care & Support and the Management of KiTa and then presented to the team and discussed. From this, change processes are jointly developed and implemented in everyday life.

15. Final Provisions

This Pedagogic Concept replaces the one of 1 November 2016 (approved by the Directorate on 3 October 2016) and comes into force on 1 February 2020.

Zurich, 19.05.2020

Andreas Winkler
Director

Matthias Volkers
Head of Operations