



House conception

**“Sprach-Kita”
„Language, the key to the world”**

„Little Feet – big steps”

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I. Preface

We are very pleased that you are interested in the concept of the bilingual children's house "Little Feet – big steps".

This house conception was developed together with the pedagogical team of the day care center, the *Kinderland-Fachberatung* (pedagogical council) as well as the management of the supporting organization, the Kinderland PLUS gGmbH. The basis of this is the BayKiBiG (*Bayerisches Kinderbildung- und -betreuungsgesetz*) and the additional execution guidelines of the AVBayKiBiG. Our conception is essentially based on the contents of the *Bayerischer Erziehungs- und Bildungsplan* (BEP). The same applies to the overall concept of Kinderland PLUS gGmbH, which, together with the house concept, represents the pedagogical guideline of our facility.

You can get detailed information about Kinderland PLUS gGmbH at www.kinderland-plus.de. Information about the BayKiBiG and AVBayKiBiG are found at <http://www.stmas.bayern.de/kinderbetreuung/baykibig/>, about the BEP at <http://www.ifp.bayern.de/projekte/laufende/bildungsplan.html> (only in German).

II. We introduce ourselves

1. The facility

"Little Feet – big steps" is a day care center with a bilingual concept (English – German). The facility is part of *Kinderhaus Sudetenstraße* and is located in the part of the building with the street number 1. *Kinderhaus Sudetenstraße* offers a total of 39 places for children from six months to three years and 131 places for children from the age of three.

We accompany and care for the children from 6.45 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. in an open concept (*Offene Arbeit*) with functional rooms, but fixed groups for the morning circle and lunch. In this way, the children have a fixed point in their daily routine and develop a sense of belonging.

1.1 History of origins

It is scientifically proven that the effortless acquisition of a second language at an early age brings many advantages. As early as 2003, Kinderland offered a two-day English-speaking playgroup. Parents increasingly requested bilingual care five days a week. With the establishment of a bilingual kindergarten in September 2007, this was met. Initially housed in the rooms of Kinderland Fresiengasse, the bilingual group moved with 25 children into the newly built annex at Sudetenstraße 3 in September 2008.

The increasing demand for the bilingual concept as well as the wish to offer bilingual day care for nursery children prompted the supporting organization to swap the facilities at Sudetenstraße 1 and 3 in September 2010. This part of the building offers a little more space for the further development of the facility. Currently, 13 nursery children and up to 79 children from 2.5 years to school entry can be accommodated.

1.2 The social environment of the facility

Poing is conveniently located about 25 km east of Munich and north of the *Ebersberger Forst* (forest) and about 30 km from Munich Airport (MUC). The commune has a connection to the S-Bahn (S2) and fast connections to the A94 and the FTO (*Flughafentangente*, airport bypass). Poing has a lot to offer for its around 17,000 residents, including many families. There are several day care facilities and a school center with schools for all ages including a special pedagogic education center in the northern part of the commune. Another elementary school and

two day care centers are located in the southern part of the village, known as *Alt-Poing* (old part of Poing). Another elementary school and two more day care centers in the new development areas "Zauberwinkel" and "Seewinkel" opened in September 2017. Several sports halls and a large sports field are available to schools and clubs. A popular bathing lake, the *Bergfeldsee*, has been located on the northern edge for several years.

1.3 Target group

"Little Feet – big steps" is a day care center (*Kinderhaus*) for children between one year and school entry, regardless of gender, origin, religious affiliation or special needs. It is possible to create places for integration children.

1.4 Building and outdoor areas

The day care center is part of *Kinderhaus Sudetenstraße* and is located in the part of the building with street number 1. All rooms are at ground level. The building is surrounded by a large, beautifully overgrown garden with lots of playground equipment, which is shared with the day care center "kleine Hände – große Taten" (street number 3).

In addition, Poing's Kinderland facilities can take advantage of the "Lärchenvilla", a construction trailer (*Waldbauwagen*) located in *Gruber Taxet*, a small forest on the outskirts of the commune, for nature experience weeks. They can use it with different groups on a weekly basis. During school holidays, Kinderland's after-school care centers have the opportunity to explore the Lärchenvilla and its surroundings and thus have a nature-oriented balance to school. The construction trailer was financed and provided by Kinderland Poing e.V., main shareholder of Kinderland PLUS gGmbH.

2. Our pedagogical focus

In our bilingual (Latin for "bilingual") part of the children's house "Little Feet - big steps", language in general and in particular is an important and at the same time everyday topic. Many families with different origins and language backgrounds choose our bilingual concept for their child and bring many (language) competences with them into the everyday life of our day care centre. We use these competences in our pedagogical work. It is our concern to offer every child fair, equal and shared opportunities for learning and development. In doing so, we respect the individual learning speed of each child and try to create individual opportunities and break down any barriers that may exist so that everyone can participate in our community. Each child is taken seriously in his or her own situation, with his or her own prerequisites and individual abilities. In the community with other children and the pedagogical staff, the children can learn, have fun, play and flourish with each other and in (at least) two actively lived languages.

2.1 Implementation of the bilingual concept

Language learning is either uncontrolled, as in the case of the mother tongue, for example, or controlled, through consciously working on and learning the language. In the bilingual day care center "Little Feet – big steps", English is taught as a second language with the help of the immersion method. This is considered to be particularly effective and suitable for children, as the new language is not taught as a foreign language as in school, but is lived as a real second language.

Immersion method

The immersion method (Latin: *immersio*: to immerse oneself in s.th.) is currently considered the most successful language teaching method worldwide. In short, it simply corresponds to the way children learn their mother tongue: without cramming vocabulary and grammar. In immersion learning, the new language is the working and colloquial language. The language itself is not the object of instruction, but a tool.

According to the principle of “**one person – one language**”, each team member stays with his or her language. The languages German and English are represented. The central point of the immersion method is the communication in context, the so-called **contextualization**, i.e. the language must be integrated into the action. The pedagogues reinforce everything they say through facial expressions, gestures and pointing. The children then develop the language independently, bit by bit, from the context of the situation. This recreates the natural way children learn languages – including their mother tongue. They are constantly in contact with the new language and learn to use it in various areas. The children are not required to have any skills that they do not already have. They understand the situation through the activity. The immersion method thus enables intuitive language learning. It is particularly suitable for children because they are introduced to the language without pressure. Each child can go at his or her own individual pace, there are no class goals that have to be achieved. Language teaching through immersion has a motivating effect, as it takes place without any coercion.



It has been found that knowing a second language generally enhances a child’s cognitive development and even helps her or him to develop their mother tongue better – the child is more aware of its own language. Children learn to think and act more flexibly, get a better understanding of people who speak another language and can better put themselves in the mindset of others.

Parents can trust the immersion method. Neither practice at home is necessary, nor is an English-speaking parent. Due to the fact that the immersion method teaches a language without any pressure to perform, does not overwhelm any child and allows everyone to learn at their own pace, it is suitable for all children, poor and strong learners.

We implement our pedagogical focus in the different areas bilingually, according to the principle "one person - one language", age-appropriate and integrated into everyday life in our nursery and kindergarten areas. Of course, to ensure successful (bilingual or even multilingual) language acquisition, we are also in continuous contact with our families, giving tips and suggestions and accompanying them in case of uncertainty.

- **Language education in the nursery**

Children in the second year of life recognise step by step that there is a word for every "thing" and every action. Their vocabulary grows enormously fast. At this stage, adults cannot repeat a word often enough - preferably in context - to enable the child to link word and meaning. Children also begin to repeat what they have heard and experiment with sounds and words. We take up this stage of development and support it with a variety of offers for language development. Due to our practised bilingualism, this is always done according to the principle of "one person - one language" in order to make it possible for the children to distinguish between the languages in the form of the respective person. In this way, we facilitate our children's language acquisition in the different languages of their environment (English, German and possibly one or more other family languages).

Especially for children who are still learning to speak, it is important to hear language and to associate it with everyday things and actions. Thus, we accompany our children linguistically in seemingly quite banal everyday situations and use language occasions such as the children's play, dressing situations, changing diapers or at the table: on the one hand, we describe what the child is doing ("Now you let the car go over the ramp."), and also make sure to name and accompany linguistically what we adults are doing ("I'm going to take a cup from the cupboard."). In this way, we come into contact with each other, build relationships and, as a language role model and attentive dialogue partner, awaken the joy of learning to speak. Non-verbal signals from the children are also taken seriously and picked up on, linguistically formulated by the staff and thus a dialogue is created. Targeted language development activities

such as songs, finger plays, circle and movement games or looking at picture books together support the children in their acquisition of German and English.

- **Language education in kindergarten**

For most people, speaking is something that comes naturally. In a trusting environment, it is easy to communicate with each other. Children in particular need this harmonious environment to learn language. They need someone who listens, listens to their conversations and takes in verbal and non-verbal impulses in a dialogue. It does not matter whether their language development - in one language or another - is already well advanced or not yet. We are an approachable dialogue partner and active language role model for our children in English and in German. Being in conversation, showing interest in each other, asking questions, waiting for answers and listening - this is the basis for any healthy language development!

Every child has his or her own pace in all areas of development. We take a close look at each child's linguistic competencies and respond to their individual needs. Depending on the level of linguistic development - which we repeatedly ascertain over the years with standardized observation sheets (Sismik, Seldak) - we use everyday language opportunities to engage in conversation with the children and incorporate targeted, language-promoting activities into our daily routine in order to consciously support the children in their vocabulary building and further language development. Just as in the nursery, songs, finger plays, circle games, movement games and shared picture book discussions are also part of the pedagogical tools of the staff in the kindergarten.

2.2 Sprach-Kita – “Because language is the key to the world”

In our institution there is a diversity of families, languages, origins and individuals. We see this human uniqueness and diversity as an enrichment of our everyday togetherness. Thanks to our participation in the federal programme "Sprach-Kitas: Weil Sprache der Schlüssel zur Welt ist" (lit. Language Day Care Centres: Because Language is the Key to the World), we have access to an additional specialist who, together with the management and the team, keeps an eye on our pedagogical focus on language as well as the diversity in our centre in terms of the fields of action of the federal programme, namely **everyday integrated language education, inclusive pedagogy, cooperation with families** and, since spring 2021, the anchoring of **digital media** in our everyday pedagogical life.

Since the beginning of the funded programme in September 2017, we have been continuously reflecting and improving the quality of our pedagogical focus on "language" and the fields of action related to the programme with the support of our additional specialist. For this purpose, our additional specialist regularly meets with additional specialists from other language day care centres and is provided with corresponding inputs and reflections on programme-relevant topics by the specialist counsellor. For our reflections, further development and verification, we use our regular team meetings and demand-oriented further training. Furthermore, our additional specialist always has an open ear for the current concerns in the facility and in the team and specifically takes time for individual reflection and feedback discussions - for example about the daily group activities, questions about the educational partnership or generally about the support of the (linguistic) development of individual children. She also supports the team in the creative implementation of "Sprach-Kitas"-related activities and projects and acts as a contact person for the families if necessary.

3. Family cooperation & educational partnership

The families of our children are the first instance of upbringing and education. We build on this. We treat our families with respect and appreciation, regardless of their cultural background and way of life. We are a place for the whole family and therefore work openly, compe-

tently, in solidarity and with commitment with the families in the education, upbringing and care of the children. We see ourselves as advisors and companions for our children and their families. We accompany the families and the child in its development process with a variety of suggestions. Because of the shared responsibility for the upbringing and education of the children, all adults (guardians and professional staff) must pull together. Through a lively exchange with the families - for example at thematic information evenings, celebrations and festivities, scheduled conversations or spontaneous door-to-door talks - it is easier for us to understand the children and to accompany them. This results in an appreciative and intensive family partnership.

Without the support of families for our work, children cannot develop their full potential. It is therefore the aim of our facility to make our everyday educational work transparent to the families and to integrate the families in this way and through joint activities in the annual cycle (educational partnership). Regular information evenings and individual discussions with parents give both sides the opportunity to exchange information about the pedagogical work in the facility and about the developmental status of the individual child. In order to achieve a good cooperation, the families are asked to take note of all information letters - by e-mail or posted in the entrance area - as well as information posted on the information board of the respective circles, to pay attention to them and to support the concerns of our facility as much as possible. By observing parts of the daily routine, parents and guardians can gain an insight into the daily routine of the kindergarten. After consultation with the educational staff, families can become actively involved in projects such as presenting their own job/occupation, their own cultural, national and ethnic traditions or special skills in areas such as handicrafts, art, music and sport.

In addition, families have the opportunity to participate constructively and actively in kindergarten life at any time through the parents' council. An official evaluation is also carried out once a year with the help of a questionnaire. The questionnaire primarily asks about the satisfaction of the families with the various areas of the educational and other services offered by the kindergarten, but also provides space for anonymous suggestions and proposals for improvement. The results of the evaluation are then discussed by the team, the suggestions for improvement are taken up and the strengths of our work are further developed. Afterwards, the results of the questionnaire survey are made available to all families.

III. The pedagogical concept of our day nursery

1. The room concept

Our group room is designed for 13 children. It is very friendly and openly structured, so that the children have various options for organizing everyday life. The equipment includes a kitchen for household activities. Furthermore, there are: a shelf with property compartments for each child, a doll and kitchen corner, a painting corner with pens, paper, brushes and paint, a cuddly basket for resting and relaxing, a large open shelf with different materials such as wooden building blocks, books, cloths, natural materials according to the season, etc.. Various toys such as toy animals and objects for role plays are stored in drawers. An aquarium serves not only as an example for the handling and care of animals, but also as a resting point.

The functional **bathroom** is adjoined to the group room. It offers a shower, a changing table with stairs as well as drawers with spare clothes, four washbasins at toddler height, two children's toilets and a hook rail with towels for each child.

The **bedroom** is also adjacent to the group room. Each child has its own place to sleep, bed linen is brought from home. Depending on their needs, the children sleep in a cot, on a mattress or in the cozy corner.

The **cloakroom** is located in front of the group room. Each child has its own place here with hooks and storage space. A magnetic board is available for notices. Above a small chest of drawers, where lost property, spare clothes and caps are stored, is the parents' mail.

The kindergarten rooms can also be used by the nursery children according to their interests and needs; this can be the case for projects, offers and according to the interests of older nursery children in particular.

2. Key situations in everyday pedagogical life in the nursery

We assume that every child, as a competent personality, is born with the striving for development, which is based on an individual schedule, if the child is supported by the surrounding society by providing an individual learning opportunity and the time necessary for it. This requires sensitive pedagogical staff in the nursery. This in turn requires the recognition of verbal and non-verbal signals and the appropriate reaction to them. The team therefore sets itself the task of constantly reflecting on and training itself in this regard.

Adaptation phase/Settling

Settling in is the key situation for building a good quality relationship between the educational staff, the child and the family. To ensure that the child settles in well at the facility, we place great value on a gentle and sensitive settling-in period, which lasts on average about 3 to 5 weeks, depending on the child. During this time, the child is accompanied by a parent. This gives us the opportunity to get to know the family and the child in a relaxed way. In this way, we can respond specifically to the individual children from the very beginning. In dialogue with the parent, we can form an initial picture of the child's nature and its individual interests, needs and habits during the settling-in period. Of course, there is always time for questions from the parents, because the parents and the staff also get to know each other a little better during this intensive first period.

The first two days the child is in the nursery with the parent for one hour. On the third day, the first separation attempt takes place (individually between 5 and 15 minutes), during which the parent does not simply "disappear", but consciously says goodbye to their child. This gives the child security, even if the moment of separation is often difficult. The pedagogical staff accompanies the situation gently and supports the child and parents as best as possible. Depending on how the child reacts, the time is then increased until the booked time is reached. Settling in is completed when the child has established a relationship with the educational staff. This can be recognised, among other things, by the fact that the child allows us to comfort him or her. For further information on a possible settling-in procedure, please refer to the settling-in guidelines, which will be handed out to you during the admission interview.

Morning circle

Our morning circle takes place every day. All children and adults are welcomed by name. We use photos to determine who is present and who is absent. The rest of the morning circle is designed together with the children: The children can suggest songs to be sung, all children are counted, we talk about the weather, etc. In the morning circle, current topics (e.g. topics of the children, birthdays, seasons, festivals in the cycle of the year) are taken up. We pay close attention to what interests the children and accept their wishes and suggestions. This also depends on the age structure of the nursery group.

Offers

Our offers (*Angebote*) are situation-oriented. We paint, knead, cook, bake, do handicrafts, make music, experiment with water and other materials, look at a book, etc. The content of

the targeted activities and projects is based on the needs and interests of the children. Seasonal themes are also included, as far as the children are interested. All areas of development are addressed. Participation is voluntary for the children. They can decide for themselves whether they want to participate or not. A group of interested children starts. Often, a child who initially did not want to participate decides to do so.

Free play

Free play is an essential part of our daily work. Children learn the most during free play (do I want to play alone, who do I want to play with, how do I deal with conflicts, what do I want to play, what are my interests, etc.). The freedom gives them the opportunity to get to know their own interests and to pursue them. The children decide independently between active and quiet play. With the help of free play, each child develops his or her skills and strengthens his or her own personality.

The role of the pedagogical staff during free play

We deliberately hold back to watch the children carefully while they are playing and yet still being there for them in situations in which the children need help and support. We react to the children's signals, but don't intervene too quickly. The play is free and not directed by us. We help the children to find their way into the game and then withdraw again, depending on the situation.

Changing diapers / Cleanliness development

Diapers are changed as needed as well as before and after sleep. We design the intimate changing process and care situation as well as the "getting clean" individually with particular sensitivity. If the children wish, they can go to the toilet or potty at any time. We make sure that the will really comes from the child and that it is not under pressure. During diapering, it is important to us that the pedagogical staff takes time for the individual child, actively accompanies his or her actions with language, and also uses this situation mindfully and builds on the positive relationship with the child.

Sleeping

Sleep is a basic human need, not having enough can lead to health problems. With us, each child has its own place to sleep and we take into account the individual sleeping needs of the children.

There are always transitional phases in which the children's need for sleep changes, i.e. they no longer need a rest break at lunchtime, but are tired in the afternoon. To accompany them well in this phase and to respond their needs requires good cooperation between the pedagogues and the parents.

Meals

All meals are taken together at the tables in the group room. Depending on their development, the children learn to eat independently, how to use cutlery, how to drink from glasses and then how to clean themselves up afterwards. We encourage the children to try dishes that are unfamiliar to them. Tea and water are available for the children at any time of the day. The times of the various meals can be found in the daily schedule.

Transparency

The parents are informed about the key situation events on a daily basis via an information sheet. The information is encrypted – each child has its own sign. In this way, the parents can i.e. find out whether their own child has slept, how big its appetite was at lunch, etc.

The daily work is made transparent for the parents through pictures and/or reports in the entrance area.

The transition to kindergarten

A few weeks before the transition to kindergarten, the gradual familiarization to the new environment begins. The transition is accompanied by the nursery staff the whole time. Initially short visits to the nursery are gradually extended. If the child feels comfortable and has established contact with the kindergarten staff, he or she can stay in the kindergarten without a reference educator (*Bezugspädagog*in*) from the nursery. The transition is simplified by the concept of inner opening (*innere Öffnung, Offene Arbeit*) in our house for children. Especially the gym and the garden, which are used by all children, are already familiar to the nursery children. The nursery children are often out and about in the kindergarten. For example, they take part in a creative offer or build with different materials in the construction room. Through this, the children get to know the pedagogical staff in a playful way through joint projects across all ages.

3. A day in the nursery "Little Feet – big steps"

06.45 – 07.30 am	<i>Early service</i> The first children arrive at the nursery of "kleine Hände – große Taten" All the early service children always meet there with a nursery teacher. At 7:30 the children are picked up by the "Little Feet - big steps" nursery team.
08.00 am	At around 8 am, the children have breakfast together with the snack they have brought with them.
09.00 – 09.30 am	<i>Morning circle</i> The children are welcomed and the morning circle is designed together.
09.30 - 10.30 am	<i>Free play / offers</i> Free play takes place during this time and is supplemented by walks, time spent in the garden and targeted educational offers.
10.30 - 11.00 am	<i>Tidying up and changing time</i> We tidy up together. While the children are being changed one by one, the others have the opportunity to look at books.
11.00 am - 12.00 pm	<i>Lunch</i>
12.00 pm - 02.00 pm	<i>Rest time / lunch nap or rest period</i> The children are allowed to sleep as long as they want during this period and get up when they have slept off their sleep. Children who are no longer sleeping use this time in the group room as a rest period. It is also possible for these children to visit the gym or the garden.
01.00 pm	<i>End of core time</i>
02.45 – 03.15 pm	<i>Tea time (Teestündchen)</i> After the nap, there is tea time - a small snack. Attention is paid to a healthy and varied diet and the children's wishes are taken into account. The nursery team buys the food, which - depending on the booking time - is financed by the parents' contribution.
from 03.15 pm	<i>Late service</i> After tea time, the children from the different areas come together in a group, i.e. nursery and kindergarten children are usually looked after together during free play. The children often meet in the gym, creative room or in the garden, where they spend the rest of the day together.
05.30 pm	End of the day in the nursery At 05.30 pm our house closes and everyone leaves.

IV. The pedagogical concept of our kindergarten

The day care center "Little Feet – big steps" is an open and mixed-age facility. This means that children of all ages can move freely in the **functional rooms**. These are set up according to the varied interests of our children and are constantly adapted by us according to the wishes, interests and needs of the children. As a rule, the rooms are divided into different stations / corners. These not only help to organize the room, but are also designed to be self-explanatory for all children. The clear structure also helps the children to concentrate better on a game.

The **open work** with functional rooms and the opening of the rooms by the staff enables the children to orientate themselves in the facility according to their current interests: they can decide on a daily basis, quite individually and freely, which room or rooms they want to use, with which pedagogical staff they want to spend their day, in which offers they want to participate, in which language(s) and with which children they want to play. At the same time, they can use the full area of our kindergarten and can also fulfil their natural need for movement.



However, in order to offer the children a feeling of security through fixed points of reference and clear structures in everyday life, in addition to the large selection of rooms and the associated diverse opportunities for decision-making, development, occupation and play, the morning and closing circles as well as lunch take place in fixed circles and fixed rooms assigned to the respective circles. The circles are always accompanied by fixed reference persons - usually with one representative of the English and one representative of the German language per circle. If necessary, kindergarten conferences with all children take place instead of the morning circle, in which current topics can be discussed with the children (see also key situations).

1. The room concept

Entrance area/corridor

In the entrance area, there is a lot of current information for the families (menu, excursions, appointments, list of current illnesses, information letters...). After the entrance area, the long corridor opens up, leading to all rooms, the gym and the garden. Right at the beginning of the corridor, our families can get an overview of the pedagogical staff of our facility. Our large screen in the foyer provides daily updates on the current interests of the children and the pedagogical offers. Here, photos are shown that the children ("camera kids") and the colleagues have taken throughout the day and the week - which always stimulates conversation. During pick-up time, there is also a display next to the screen that shows the pick-up staff where and with whom they have to sign out their child that day. Our ball pool, which is very popular with the children, is also hidden in the wall at the front of the corridor. It doesn't matter if the children are big or small, here they can romp wildly, but also play comfortably with each other, climb in and out and let their imagination run free in a joint game.



Three small bays lead off from the corridor: the cloakroom areas. Each child has its own place there with hooks, storage facilities and space for a change of clothes. In the corridor itself, each child also has a place for his or her rubber boots in the respective rubber boot shelf. Since we offer our children the opportunity to go outside (mostly into the garden) in (almost) all weathers, all children need weather appropriate clothing as well as a

sufficient change of clothes at their place - always seasonally adapted.

About halfway down the corridor - at the level of the second cloakroom area - there are photos of all the function rooms and the corresponding photos of the teachers who are opening the room that day. This makes it easier for our children to remember, even after the morning circle, which rooms are open or closed that day and which teacher is there today. In addition, the corridor offers the possibility to display works created by the children in many places.

Building room

In this functional room there are various building and construction materials with which the children can occupy themselves independently, e.g. cross-cut bricks, cars, wooden trains, Lego etc. The materials are adapted to the current interests and needs of the children. In addition to building blocks and Duplos, the children will also find building materials that can be played with at the table, such as lattice blocks, plug-in beads or magnetic rods. In addition to the various building materials, there is also a workbench with various tools in the building room. With the tools and various pieces of wood as well as wooden discs, nails, screws and wood glue, the children can become active and create something themselves. In doing so, they learn basic skills in handling real tools. This room is the meeting place for the morning and closing circle and for the lunch of a circle.



Role play room

By trying out roles or even swapping roles, children practise social behaviour, develop their linguistic skills word by word in joint play and expand their ability to deal with conflict in contact with the other children. The role play room therefore deliberately offers a lot of free space with little furniture in order to provide enough room for free role play and thus give the children as much freedom as possible for their development. They can dress up, cook in the play kitchen, experiment with a green screen wall or play with dolls. In the role-play room, the children can let their imagination run wild: they can be animals, superheroes, characters from books or series, for example. They can also re-enact their everyday life by cooking and eating together, going shopping, to the post office or the doctor, re-enacting the morning circle or going on an excursion with a picnic. A wide variety of professions can also be acted out, e.g. policeman, doctor, construction worker or fireman/woman. There are also large cardboard building blocks in the role play room. Here, the children can take on the role of an architect and build towers or houses, for example. The room is constantly redesigned according to the children's interests and needs. This room is also a meeting place for the morning and closing circle and for the lunch of a circle.



Kitchen

Our kitchen is the space for scientific experiments as well as for activities related to cooking, baking and eating. Here, physics and chemistry are experienced in a very concrete way and with all the senses. In addition to guided activities such as baking and cooking, there is freely accessible material for the children, such as Montessori material that is close to life, e.g. for pouring and decanting exercises, a scale with weights and various objects for measuring. At the table for water experiments (change of clothes!), they can try out what floats or what material sinks immediately, what effects are achieved with paper in combination with water and much more. Colour experiments show the changeability of colour through mixing and the influence of light and shadow. In small groups, the children also carry out age-appropriate experiments under supervision, for example when electrical equipment is used or a special experimental set-up is needed. In the mornings, the children can have breakfast in this room until 8:45, after which the morning and closing circle as well as lunch for one circle also take place here.



Library

Next to the kitchen is our library. Here the children find a large selection of thematically well-assorted books - of course in English and German - and many cosy reading and snuggling corners. The room invites the children to withdraw from the hustle and bustle, to snuggle up in blankets and cushions and to let their souls wander. Reading aloud stimulates the children's imagination, they discover new worlds and reflect on past experiences together. In addition to books, new media also play a major role in the library. On our ipads at the listening station, the children have access to a large database full of music, audio books and audio plays, which can be listened to via headphones - also together with friends. A selection of "talking pens" (Tiptoi, Tellimero) enables the children not only to acquire knowledge independently, but also encourages them to become creative themselves and, for example, to think up stories and dialogues and to make them accessible to the other children for a longer period of time with the help of the pens. In addition to the pencils, our children always have the opportunity to take one of our digital cameras and, as "Camera Kid", take photos of all the events, people and situations that are important to them - or simply to experiment freely with the camera. A selection of these photos is finally published by the educational staff on the screen in the foyer at pick-up time. Another highlight of our library is our beamer and screen, which regularly turn the library into a picture book cinema in no time at all.



Creative room

This room offers the children many opportunities to be creative. The children have various everyday and creative materials at their disposal, such as different pens, wax crayons, scissors, glue and papers, which they can use independently. Parents and children often bring along everyday materials such as toilet paper rolls, packaging materials, fabric and wool scraps, which enrich the choice of materials.

Specific offers are made based on project topics and the seasons. The children learn the correct and appreciative use of scissors, glue, paint and paper.

It is important to us that the children experience joy in their own work of art.



Discovery room

The discovery room offers a wide variety of opportunities for concentrated play. In particular, a wide variety of Montessori material invites children to discover the world of numbers and letters in a playful way. In order to introduce the children to the processes of how computers



"think" in a playful way, there are different play possibilities in this room with which the logic of programming and coding can be explored and practised independently or with the help of the teachers. In the laying corner, it is possible to create patterns, mandalas and works of art with a variety of laying materials at a light table. Puzzles, table games and ironing beads are also very popular with our children in the discovery room. This room can also be a meeting place for the morning and closing circle and for the lunch of a circle.

Gym

The children are allowed to let off steam in the gym, both during free play and during activities. The pedagogical staff supports the children in discovering their gross motor skills with specific offers (balancing, games and parcours of skill, etc.). The aim is to give the children a positive body feeling. Different types of exercise are offered, which become versatile sensory experiences through the targeted use of materials such as chiffon scarves. Through team games, the children get to know rules, adhere to them and act within a group. The gym is open every day to all children in the house. It provides an additional space. By forming tandems from both areas, one pedagogue always opens the gym every day.

Train station

At the end of the corridor - next to or behind the gym - we have set up a small play area: our train station. Here, our children can build landscapes and routes with the wooden railway on a wide area. The platforms invite the children to build their infrastructure on different levels and from different perspectives. The station is equipped with trains, several battery-powered locomotives and various forms of wooden landscape objects, such as rails and connectors, which allow them to build tracks exclusively from wood or in combination with DUPLO blocks. With houses and building blocks, the children can eventually create entire worlds around their rail network. The station is open during the day as an additional area for the children to play responsibly. The area is equipped with two sofas where the children can relax and get inspiration for their next building project from picture books about the countries of the world. The windows of the station are regularly decorated according to the seasons and festivals.



Garden

The spacious garden is divided into several areas.

There are climbing frames, swings, sand play areas and retreats for every age group. On a large terrace, the children have the opportunity to exercise their urge to move in a variety of vehicles. In addition to a play and toboggan hill with a slide, there is a small vegetable garden with a raised bed and a composting area. By actively helping out, the children can experience the plants growing and flourishing and experience the seasons up close. This offers countless opportunities for conversation with the teachers.

In our little wood, the children can play with our mud kitchen and find a shady spot in the summer. Especially in summer, our children love to use our water playground to splash around and cool off. As we go out into the garden in almost all weathers, the children need to be dressed appropriately for the weather (and a sufficient change of clothes at their place in the cloakroom) - always adapted to the season.



2. Key situations of everyday pedagogical life and recurring everyday components

Adaptation phase / Settling

The children are exposed to a multitude of new impressions and experiences. Therefore, the familiarization to the new environment is handled extremely sensitively. It is always important that parents have the time and patience to help the children to settle in. The exact design and process of the familiarization depends on the individuality of each child. The pedagogical staff develops an appropriate procedure for each child. Usually, the children who are new to our kindergarten, start with an attendance of about one hour. At first, they are accompanied primarily by the care staff of their circle - depending on the child's previous language skills, they also tend to be accompanied by the English- or German-speaking specialist. We take enough time for each child and help them to find their way in their new environment and to make first bonds with the staff and the other children. This time is eventually extended bit by bit until the child gradually stays for the entire booking time. The settling-in process always takes place in consultation with the parents and is based on the child's needs, which can vary greatly. For some, a parent stays for a while in the first few days before saying goodbye. Others may separate from their parents immediately for a period of time. Most of the time, the new child does not stay the full, booked time right away, but slowly feels its way towards the full booking time until it finally knows the whole daily structure. This can take days, but also weeks.

Pick-up & drop-off situation

In the morning, the children are met by a member of staff at the reception desk in the corridor after they have changed. From here, they can find out which room is already open and decide independently which room they would like to go to. When picking up the children, they should also be actively signed out at our reception so that our staff is informed about the pick-up of the child. The drop-off and pick-up situation is not only important from an organisational point of view, but also plays a central role, especially from a pedagogical point of view, because it is (also) here that the children get a feeling for time sequences, social framework conditions and socially appropriate behaviour. We therefore ask our families to plan enough time for arriving, changing and saying goodbye in the morning and to keep saying goodbye and changing within their booking times when picking up. A look on the face, a friendly "Good morning!" as well as

a conscious "Goodbye" are for us a natural part of good manners, which we would like to pass on to the children by setting an example.

Morning & Closing circle

The morning and closing circles are led individually by the children's caregivers - of course according to our rule "one person - one language". The circles are fixed rituals in our daily routine and offer a short and intensive time that is used to discuss and pass on certain things and information to and with the children. In the morning circle, for example, songs are sung, experiences are told, current topics are addressed, the days of the week are discussed and the presence or absence of the children is noted. The children are also allowed to open the "treasure chest" and discover which rooms will be open after the circle, or tickets are distributed for the garden, gym and/or special activities that can only be opened or offered to a certain number of children. In the closing circle, the children can come to rest briefly, for example play a game together or listen to a story and prepare for the remaining steps until lunch. Birthdays are also celebrated in the circles after consultation with the parents.

Free play

It is particularly important to us that the children have plenty of time for free play. Free play promotes the child's development in a holistic way. The children have the opportunity to process what they have experienced by playing together with other children. An environment is created in which the children can prepare for future life situations and work through and "grasp" present life situations.

In our different function rooms, the children find a variety of opportunities to freely decide, according to their inclinations, abilities and interests, what, with whom, in which language, where and for how long they would like to play. Play is the most important form of experience, expression and learning for children. "Play" always means an engagement with people, materials and situations. It involves the use of imagination, it provides affirmation, it brings about joint action. The child discovers its environment in a self-determined way, comes into contact with other children and thus learns social interaction. It learns - also with the help of the educational staff - to express its emotions (e.g. anger, disappointment, joy, etc.) in an appropriate way. Thus, among other things, play always promotes the children's language development.

The role of the pedagogical staff during free play

We deliberately keep a low profile so that we can observe the children attentively during play and yet be there for them at all times in situations where children need help and support. We pay attention to the children's needs, react to their signals, but do not intervene too quickly. Children should be given the chance to solve their own problems, but be able to rely on help when it is needed. The play is free and is not directed by us. We help the children to find their way into the game and withdraw from the current game if we notice that they do not need us. Free play offers the educational staff many opportunities to observe and document the developmental steps.

Participation

Participation is a fundamental pedagogical principle and a lived culture that permeates the everyday life of the entire facility. Every child has the right to express his or her needs and to actively influence the design of his or her environment. The experience of active participation and co-creation enables children to assume personal responsibility and to experience themselves as an important part of the community. In this way, democratic behaviour and living together are lived out in the everyday life of the day care centre. For this, the children need adults who trust them to cope with these tasks and guarantee child-friendly forms of co-determination.

On a small scale, participation can be seen in the independent choice of play partners, play spaces, play materials or, for example - in a very practical way - in the child's self-determined decision about the amount and choice of food offered at lunch. On a larger scale, participation takes place in our kindergarten through co-determination in the daily pedagogical routine or in the design of the common togetherness in the kindergarten. Our kindergarten conferences are particularly suitable for this. The educational staff takes up impulses from the children and helps, for example, to find an appropriate and practicable solution for recurring conflict situations in the large group. In this way, the children learn in the course of their time in the kindergarten how rules can be created for everyday life in a large group and that sensible rules contribute to relaxed interaction with each other. In addition, the children learn to think and act democratically and are allowed to determine many different things themselves in elections. For example, in the course of the year they choose their own carnival theme, any other mottos for festivities and/or the implementation of special themes on certain days, among other things. Things that are discussed here are eventually followed up in the morning or closing circles and in everyday life.

Offers / Projects

Different activities are offered to the children on a regular basis. An activity is a structured educational activity. Participation is voluntary, but the children are encouraged to take part. There are offers for specific age groups or mixed-age activities that are oriented towards the children's abilities and interests.

Projects - unlike educational activities - are planned and designed together with the children according to their interests and current issues. Longer projects are also accompanied by suitable offers. Often, despite a certain basic framework, the projects change during implementation. It is therefore important to observe everything well, to document, to reflect and to react flexibly.

Projects offer the opportunity to get to know the world together with the children. Our families are cordially invited to submit project ideas to the circles or to contribute to existing projects. If it suits, excursions and outings can also take place within the framework of a project.

Experimentation

Experimentation takes place in kindergarten during free play and as a pedagogical offer. Most children start exploring the world around them at a very early age by conducting a variety of experiments, such as mixing water and sand. Guided experimentation builds on this natural exploratory behaviour by offering specific experimental set-ups that enable the children to get to the bottom of a scientific phenomenon and deal with it intensively. Experimenting primarily conveys scientific, mathematical and technical educational content.

Observation and documentation

The observation and documentation of the developmental steps of the individual child is of central importance for our pedagogical work. Targeted observation helps us to identify interests, needs, abilities, possible deficits and progress. Our pedagogical work is based on these findings. For example, in team meetings, observations are exchanged, the educator's behaviour is reflected and reconsidered, and the further procedure to support the current stage of development is discussed and determined. The documentation - including standardized observation forms such as Sismik, Seldak and Perik - serves as the basis for our discussions with parents.

Digital media

Smartphones, tablets, computers and/or laptops are often used in the everyday life of many families - mostly by the older members of the family - and are therefore already a natural part of the lives of our nursery and kindergarten children, along with CD players, radio and TV. If you look at digital media from a pedagogical point of view, they offer great potential, for ex-

ample, to create new language opportunities for children, to work out answers to children's questions together, simply and quickly, and at the same time to continuously strengthen the children's (and the staff's) media competence. We see digital media as "tools" - comparable to scissors, glue and pens. The linking of analogue and digital learning is therefore always in focus. In the guided confrontation with this tool, the children become more confident in using it and use it specifically for the things or in the situations in which they can use the tool in a meaningful way. Our children can be creative with our digital media and in the end often have a result in their hands that they can be proud of. Media use is an integral part of our everyday life. It is especially important for us to accompany and support the children in a critical, responsible, socially competent and creative way.



Catering & Meals

Healthy and balanced food and drink maintain the children's health, promote their growth and contribute to their well-being. Eating lunch together in the community of their circle not only increases the social and language skills of the children, but is also an important part of the daily rhythm. By setting the table themselves, the children learn which dishes and cutlery are needed for which meal. In addition, the children are usually allowed to take their food and drink independently, accompanied by the teacher. In this way, the children learn to estimate quantities themselves and practice their motor skills at the same time.

Quiet time

Unlike in the nursery, we no longer offer our kindergarten children a bedtime after lunch. As a rule, all children go to the garden after lunch. However, there is the possibility - especially for the younger children who would still like to take advantage of a time-out at lunchtime - to rest for a short time after lunch if needed. A short story is read in a quiet atmosphere or some music is played to relax. Afterwards, the children are allowed to rejoin the other children in the garden, invigorated for the afternoon. Should a child fall asleep during this time (or at any other time of the day), our staff will of course make sure that there is a safe place for the child to lie down and allow the child to get the sleep it needs.

Cleanliness development & education

Not every child is already diaper-free before entering kindergarten. Some are in the process of coming to terms with this sensitive topic, others still need some time before they can say goodbye to their nappies - or even don't think about it for a long time because they currently have other issues to deal with that are more important to them personally. We therefore organise the "getting clean" process individually with particular sensitivity. It is important for us to give the child the time it needs in its development to control its body function. It is important for us to work closely with the families on this topic and to support the child's healthy development of cleanliness - which includes not only being free of nappies, but also later on, for example, changing clothes more and more independently when they are dirty, wiping oneself confidently or the obligatory washing of hands after going to the toilet.

Nature & Environment

No matter what time of year it is and what the weather is like: we love to be outside in the great outdoors with our children. In the garden, in the forest, at the nearby lake, in the park or at one of the playgrounds in Pointe - our excursions, forest days, walks or rides with the cargo bikes are always very popular with the children. Excursions and walks in the immediate and

closer surroundings take place at different intervals, both in small groups and in the large group, and can have different aims. On the one hand, they serve the gradual expansion of the child's everyday world. During walks in the neighbourhood, the children can find links between individual places they know and thus gain an increasingly accurate picture of their immediate surroundings. Excursions that lead out of this limited environment usually serve to deal with a specific project topic that has significance for the children at the time.

We like to use these experiences as particularly varied language opportunities, as there are many new things to discover there that the children can talk about with each other, with the teachers and later with their families.



Transition to school/preschool

The entire time in the bilingual kindergarten is preparation for school. The last year of kindergarten is used to prepare the children for the transition to school. After this year, the children should have acquired the necessary skills to successfully start school.

Many skills, such as independence, social skills, fine and gross motor skills, which the children need for this, they develop from birth and refine themselves further in the course of kindergarten.

For a successful transition to school, children need basic skills in the areas of language, social behaviour, motor skills and cultural techniques. In order to get to know these and practice them, the children are offered appropriate activities on a weekly basis. This gives us the opportunity to experience and observe the children in a school-like situation and to support them accordingly. The following preschool offers are compulsory:

- **Preschool**

In the weekly preschool, the understanding of numbers, letters, shapes, colours and quantities, etc. is deepened. Practical life exercises such as tying shoes or behaviour in traffic are also trained. The preschool activities take place alternately in German and English. For the parents, there is a detailed information parent's evening in autumn, during which the preschool work is explained.

- **"Listening & Learning": Würzburger Trainingsprogramm**

The *Würzburger Trainingsprogramm* was developed to promote the phonological awareness of kindergarten children in the last year before school starts. Phonological awareness is a crucial component for successful written language acquisition in primary school. This takes place weekly and in German.

- **Cooperation with primary schools**

Organizing the transition to school is a joint task of parents, day care center and school. For this purpose, discussions take place together with the pedagogical specialists from the facility, teachers and parents. After the school teachers have observed the so-called "school play" in the kindergarten, observations and questions are discussed. Since the school year 2017/2018, there are three primary schools in Poing: the *Anni-Pickert primary school (Anni-Pickert Grund- und Mittelschule)*, the *Karl-Sittler primary school (Grundschule an der Karl-Sittler-Straße, Alt-poing)* and the *Am Bergfeld primary school (Grundschule Am Bergfeld)*. In recent years many forms of cooperation have taken place, such as mutual visits, a joint sports festival and joint school plays.

Many of these forms of collaboration have proven successful and will be maintained. In particular, the visits to the schools are very important for a good transition.

- **Pre-course German (Vorkurs Deutsch 240)**

Children who have special needs in the German language should take part in the *Vorkurs Deutsch 240*. This applies in particular to children whose parents are both non-German speaking. This course concept begins 18 months before school enrolment. The need for support is determined on the basis of the standardized language development questionnaire *SISMIK*. Only children who have demonstrated a need for special support on the basis of this development documentation should take advantage of this course offer. The aim of the *Vorkurs Deutsch 240* is to teach children basic language skills in the German language in order to give them a good start in school.

3. A day in the kindergarten „Little Feet – big steps“

until 09.00 am	<p><i>Arrival of the children</i></p> <p>The children meet for early service in the nursery of "kleine Hände – große Taten". At around 7.30 a.m. they move to the other side of the Little Feet - big steps children's house in the kitchen. Children who are brought in by 8.30 a.m. have the opportunity to still have breakfast with us.</p> <p>In order to start the day together and on time, it is important to us that all children have arrived by 9.00 a.m. so that the respective morning circles can start. All parents should have left the centre by this time.</p>
09.00 – 09.30 am	<p><i>Morning circles</i></p> <p>The morning circle with its recurring rituals plays a central role in the kindergarten's daily routine. Here, the children immerse themselves in an English language bath. They receive many linguistic stimuli (e.g. songs, verses, games, stories). Typically, the children count themselves, look at the weather and discuss what day of the week it is and which rooms are open that day. Parents who arrive at the centre after the morning circle has started wait with their children in the cloakroom until the morning circle has finished.</p>
09.30 – 11.15 am	<p>Free play time & activities/offers</p> <p>The children have the opportunity to play in the open rooms and to pursue guided and free activities there.</p> <p>The pedagogical offers change depending on the day of the week, the project theme and the season; e.g. handicrafts, experimenting, gymnastics, playing in the garden, reading aloud, picture book cinema, group games, working with Montessori materials, preschool, Würzburg training programme, use of digital media, singing or rhythmic, cooking/baking or similar.</p>
11.15 - 11.30 am	<p><i>Clean-up time</i></p>
11.30 am – 12.00 pm	<p><i>Closing circles</i></p> <p>There is usually a short, second circle to gather once more in the fellowship of the circle before lunch, to sing together, play a game or listen to a short story.</p>
11.45 am – 01.00 pm	<p><i>Lunch</i></p>
01.00 pm	<p><i>End of the core time</i></p> <p>The display in the entrance area indicates where and with whom the children should be signed out.</p>
01.00 - 2.30 pm or longer	<p><i>Garden</i></p> <p>To ensure that all children have been outside at least once a day, we all go into the garden together at this time and use our outdoor area.</p>
02.30 – 03.30 pm	<p><i>Tea time (Teestündchen)</i></p> <p>From 02.30 pm we go back to the kindergarten rooms. Tea time is held in the kitchen. The parents of the children who are still here at this time bring food every week. A small snack is prepared with these and all the children take a short break. Afterwards, depending on the needs and interests, the rooms are opened for play again.</p>

04.00 - 5.30 pm	<p><i>Late service</i></p> <p>All children from the house meet at this time in the areas: garden, gym, playroom and/or the premises of the kindergarten "Little Feet – big steps". The late service asks the children about their needs and these rooms are opened if possible.</p>
05.30 pm	<p><i>End of kindergarten day</i></p> <p>At 5.30 pm all children have left the house.</p>

V. Closing words

The concept presented to you represents the current pedagogical work in the day care center of the facility "Little Feet – big steps".

Life is change, which is why our everyday educational work is also subject to a process of constant discussion and adjustment. This concept is therefore not a final product, but will continuously grow, change and be adapted to new developments.

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