



Pedagogical Policy Plan

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Reader's Guide

This is the pedagogical policy plan of Basker International Childcare. It is an informative document for parents, employees and other interested parties. The policy plan is a guiding document. It is the foundation for working at our day cares, pre-schools and out of school cares. We have specified the unique identity of Basker in an appendix to this pedagogical policy plan. In addition, each of our locations has a pedagogical work plan describing our pedagogical policy specific to that location.

We gladly share our vision of professional childcare with you. We see vision as a dynamic concept, and ours has evolved over the past few years and will continue to evolve in the years to come. Again and again, social developments, government decisions and parents' needs will be reasons to review the policy plan critically and adjust it where necessary.

To improve the ease of reading this document, we always use the term 'parents', which refers to parent(s), caregiver(s), and other family forms.

01

What we stand for

1. What we stand for

At our childcare centres, every child is welcome. No matter who they are or where they come from. We provide an environment that feels safe and comfortable, in which children can grow with confidence. We inspire, encourage and challenge, and we want to support children in their development every day. We are always curious to know if we can do things differently or better. Innovation and continuous development are of critical importance to us. We work on further improving our pedagogical policy every day, and we pay a lot of attention to our teams' professional development for the benefit of children and parents.

1.1 Mission and vision

Basker International Childcare has a vision, a goal. Our mission describes our shared ambition, which is the driving force behind everything we do. **Through sustainable education and care, we prepare children to thrive and contribute as conscious human beings.**

With this mission we want to achieve our vision, our common goal. **We shape a better tomorrow through education and care.**

1.2 Values

Our values are;

Team spirit

Together we grow

1. We support each other for individual and collective success.
2. We value diversity to build better outcomes.
3. We are kind, respectful and trusting.



Passion

Driven by a common purpose

1. We do things with heart and care.
2. We enjoy getting people on board our collective mission.



Continuous learning

Learning forever

1. We learn from each other all the time.
2. We are curious and aim for progress.
3. We learn from the environment and everything around us.



02

Pedagogical foundation

2. Pedagogical foundation

2.1 Vision on children

How we interact with children is determined by our view of them. This view on children forms the basis of our work, it is our frame of reference.

Our vision on children:

From the start, children have their own personalities. They have their own needs and they want to make their own decisions and choices. Children are naturally curious about their surroundings. They like to explore and learn through experience. Children are also curious about others, they are open to the people around them and get to know themselves by engaging with others.

2.2 Pedagogical principles

Providing a **safe environment** is the most important requirement when working with children. The environment should be both physically safe and emotionally secure. Children should be able to come and go as they please without worrying about their physical safety. It is essential that children feel safe and trusted; emotionally secure. This is our primary task as a childcare organisation. Once this foundation is in place, our attention turns to stimulating the development of children and the manner in which we do so.

We have defined **four principles** that guide our pedagogical actions. These principles represent our approach to guiding children in their development and becoming engaged and committed individuals.

Be courageous

Children learn through their own experiences. That calls for courage. Courage from our side to let a child do it himself and not to intervene immediately. But also, the child's courage to step out of their comfort zone and take on challenges. We help every child with this by letting them do as much as possible themselves and challenging them to try something new.



Be passionate

We are passionate about our profession and enthusiastic about our work. This means that we feel committed to the development of every single child. We see every child and we take care and consideration with our actions. We are actively committed to making the group a safe place for growth and development. We think in terms of possibilities and use the opportunities that every day brings us.



Be open-minded

It's important to approach children with an open attitude. We are respectful and the children and parents trust us. Children feel welcome and loved at our childcare centres. We offer space for every child's individuality and see the group as the best place for development. We recognise the added value of a diverse community and are open to others. In short: we are open-minded.



Stay skilled

Our contribution to the development of children is essential. We use our expertise to provide a child with the best possible guidance. We contribute to the child's early years education based on that expertise. Together with parents, we guide the child in their journey towards adulthood and in this respect, we are an equal partner in communications with parents. It's important to be skilled and continue to deepen our professional knowledge.



2.3 Riksen-Walraven

The Childcare Act stipulates that every childcare organisation works towards four primary pedagogical objectives:

1. Providing social-emotional security;
2. Promoting personal competencies;
3. Promoting social competencies;
4. Sharing norms and values.

These four primary goals are embedded in our pedagogical principles.

Professor Marianne Riksen-Walraven was the first professor of Pedagogy for childcare. She saw to it that childcare organisations were recognised as the connecting environment between the family and school. According to her, educators in the three settings have the same goals: supporting children to become adults who can function well and independently in society. These basic principles are included in the Childcare Act.

Our vision on children, the pedagogical principles and those of Riksen Walraven are all interrelated.



03

How we work

3. How we work

3.1 Secure basis

The most important condition is that childcare provides a safe place for children to grow into committed and engaged individuals. Not only physically safe but also emotionally secure. When children feel safe and secure, there is room for curiosity.

Every child is different and develops in their own way, this is beautiful and what makes our job so special. Children thrive in a safe and loving environment where they can be themselves and where the individuality of each child is treated respectfully.

We create a safe, loving and respectful environment by:

- ♥ Ensuring a positive and relaxed group atmosphere, predictability in the daily rhythm and being clear about agreements within the group. The older the children are, the more involved they become in contributing to these agreements;
- ♥ Being mindful in observing and listening to children. By making eye contact or asking questions, we discover what a child likes or finds difficult;
- ♥ Respecting the child's pace and rhythm. Each child develops in their own way. We observe the child and follow its development;
- ♥ Responding to emotions and giving children space to discover their own feelings. We show that we see or hear signals from children and, where necessary, help children to express their emotions;
- ♥ Being aware of events that can be exciting for a child, such as being new to the group or the tension of a restless group atmosphere;
- ♥ Working with fixed primary groups where children recognize their regular pedagogical teachers and the other children;
- ♥ Ensuring good collaboration with parents so that we can connect the child's group and home situation.

The childcare room

All children must feel safe and familiar in the group and childcare room(s) because this is how they can develop. Young children feel most comfortable in a familiar environment with their pedagogical staff members. In contrast, older children like to explore new spaces. This means the space should be predictable, with dedicated play corners, relaxation areas, and areas for challenging play.

3.2 Be Courageous!

We encourage children to experiment, explore and make their own choices, which contributes to their personal development. Using a positive state of mind, we teach children to be proud of themselves and face the world confidently. We promote independence by letting children do what they do. Trying things out and making mistakes is part of learning to deal with disappointments and being proud of success.



This is how we are courageous:

- ♥ We let children do as much as possible for themselves;
- ♥ We challenge children to try new things;
- ♥ We give children the space to choose;
- ♥ We are aware of our influence on a child's development if we intervene. A child learns more by experiencing things for themselves than when we instruct or warn them;
- ♥ The process is more important than the outcome. Children can experiment and try things out without focusing on the end product.

3.3 Be Passionate!

We see childcare as a place where children gain new experiences, in all areas of development. We strive to take children a step further in their development every day. We hope to teach them things by letting them learn about themselves, their relationship with others and their talents. By carefully monitoring the development of the children, looking at what stage they are in, what they can do well and what they can't do yet, and responding to that.

This is how we are passionate about our job and our mission:

- ♥ Building a good relationship with children. By giving every child attention, responding to their specific needs and connecting to their world of experience, we let them know we value them for who they are and that they can come to us;
- ♥ Approach children with positivity. We give them confidence and teach them to be proud of themselves and to persevere when things don't work out immediately;
- ♥ Doing different activities every day to stimulate children's cognitive, motor skills, and social or emotional development. We connect with the children's perception of the world and their imagination;
- ♥ Looking at what children need in their development and responding accordingly. By alternating directed play, game enhancement and free play;
- ♥ Taking a step aside and letting the children practice independently. We encourage them, don't always intervene and let them come up with solutions themselves;
- ♥ Supporting children in their development. We support the child's development and challenge them to take the next step outside their comfort zone.



The childcare room

The childcare room is an inspiring, challenging environment for children to explore. The area is divided into corners where children can play and gain new experiences. Toys are neatly stored so children can find everything and help clean up, the layout supports their independence. For example, children can reach the tap to wash their hands, climb on the changing table with supervision, and grab their coats. The play material is regularly checked and adjusted to what the children need.

3.4 Be Open-minded!

We see childcare as a place where children discover the world beyond their homes, with us they are together with others, allowing them to develop socially and personally. In a group dynamic, we teach children to respect each other for who they are without judging their appearance or individual differences. In this way, children can create a positive relationship with others.

This is how we are open-minded:

- ♥ We approach children positively. We give them confidence, teach them to be proud of themselves and to persevere when things don't work out;
- ♥ We take children seriously and show genuine interest. We do not condemn behaviour but always investigate the source of the behaviour so that we can meet a child's needs;
- ♥ We teach children to be considerate of each other's feelings. By working together and guiding them in preventing and resolving conflicts;
- ♥ We take children's feelings seriously by acknowledging them. We help them put their feelings into words and teach them how to regulate their own emotions;
- ♥ We are aware of the needs of every child and, at the same time, organize the group in a way that involves everyone;
- ♥ We ensure a positive atmosphere and group cohesion where every child has their place;
- ♥ We promote and encourage relationships and interactions between children. We create space for free play and participation in joint activities and ensure every child feels included.



The childcare room

We make sure that every child feels addressed in the group room. We do this by ensuring there is play material for every area of development, and we take diversity and culture into account. We opt for sustainable material that suits a wide imagination.

3.5 Stay skilled!

We know our professional role and take our job seriously, so we continue to reflect on why we do what we do. We always consider what is best for the child in everything we do, which means we take into account the effect of our actions on the child or children in our group. Our way of working is, therefore, dynamic. What works for a group now can be tackled differently in six months' time because the group's composition may require something different from us then.

This is how we stay skilled:

- ♥ We continue to work on self-development;
- ♥ We do our job with care. Every day we make deliberate choices about what we want to offer children, adapted to the needs of the children present on that day;
- ♥ We continue to mindfully think about our actions;
- ♥ We tell parents something about their child's daily development or well-being during the pick-up moment;
- ♥ We keep communicating with parents. At least once a year, we meet with the parents about the child's development and well-being;
- ♥ If there are concerns about development, well-being or the home situation, we will discuss this with the parents as soon as possible.



The childcare room

Professional expertise was applied to the design of the areas in the childcare room, and their influence on the children's play. The same goes for the play materials available, we use certified, sustainable materials and opt for passive toys.

04

Pedagogical focus areas

4. Pedagogical focus areas

Our pedagogical approach incorporates various subjects that we consider important. These subjects are based on the latest insights from scientific research. Developments in childcare are ongoing and a lot of thorough research has taken place on all kinds of different topics relevant to childcare. This means we can and do base our approach on scientific research. We keep up to date with the latest developments and challenge ourselves to base our actions on scientific evidence, rather than popular trends.

4.1 Motor skills and movement

Exercise is an important element in our centres. Freedom to move and the space to do so contribute to better motor skills and affects children's mental health. Children who exercise regularly and often feel better. They are less likely to have emotional problems like being anxious. By moving a lot and being challenged in their movement, children get to know their bodies. This creates more confidence and better self-awareness.

Exercise also affects cognitive development. It improves blood circulation in the brain and the development of brain structure. Lots of movement makes connections in the brain which have an impact on writing and spatial insight, for example.

In practice, we give children as much space as possible to move. And we give them the chance to try to discover the world using their own body, gaining sensory experiences and getting to know their own strength.

4.2 Creative development

Creative development is an essential part of a child's overall development. Creative expression contributes to the development of free association, stimulates the imagination and creates new ideas and things.

To us, the process of being creative and having fun simultaneously is more important than the result. For example, this means we offer various materials without any expectation. We ask open-ended questions and are mindful of the process. We also encourage exploring different materials and creating something unique. Providing open-ended material is an example of this: material without a specific function is given a role in playing and contributes to children's creative thinking.

Musical development is an important part of creative development. We use music in activities or consciously use it to create a homely atmosphere in the group. We sing and dance a lot with the children.

4.3 Media literacy

New media are becoming an increasingly natural part of children's lives. We use the different media consciously, moderately and in a supporting role to the activities on offer. We choose to use media actively, with a pre-condition that it supports the development of children, individually or socially. We make a distinction between the ages 0-4 and 4-12.

Our day care and pre-schools are screen-free. Children in this age group develop through sensory experience and movement. The use of screens does not contribute positively to this. For 0-4 year olds, the need for human contact and interaction is the most important condition for language and social-emotional development.

At out of school care, media is used as part of an activity. We always make sure there is a balance between the use of media and sufficient exercise. We also supervise the correct and moderate use of media. We encourage children to use media for their own creative expression and see active use of media as a means to involve the world in a theme or activity.

4.4 Healthy eating

We want to teach children a healthy lifestyle, and food is an important part of that. Therefore, we adopt a healthy eating policy and follow the advice of the Netherlands Nutrition Centre (Voedingscentrum). Our nutritional policy offers a broad and diverse range of food. We encourage children to try out new foods to experience different smells, flavours and structures and develop their tastes.

Interest in food is also reflected in the daily routine. Fixed eating times are a regular element of the day and, therefore, recognisable to children. We eat and drink deliberately and mindfully. At meal times, pedagogical staff provide a relaxed atmosphere so that the experience of eating is pleasant for everyone.

4.5 Sustainability

We contribute to the children's development into conscious individuals who are aware of themselves and their environmental impact. For us, sustainability is about the following topics:

Experiencing nature

We let children be in touch with nature as much as possible by spending a lot of time outside and bringing nature inside. Contact with nature is good for motor skills, cognitive and social-emotional development. It also has a positive effect on children's general health. Playing outside reduces stress but also raises awareness of the value of nature. We think that it's important to get to know the seasons and types of weather.

Growing food in a vegetable garden or on the windowsill helps children learn how nature works and helps them make healthier food choices.

Using and handling materials

There is an added value in learning about materials. We create a deeper awareness by explaining where materials come from and their journey. We minimise waste by reusing, repairing and preventing wastefulness.

We encourage the use of natural materials, loose parts and free materials to work with. Loose parts or open-end material stimulates creativity and can be used and reused in many ways. The same goes for free material, which is also a sustainable alternative.

Considerations for others and the world

One part of a sustainable world is a diverse one in which everyone is connected. At our centres, everyone feels like they belong because we strive for inclusiveness. Recognising that the world around us consists of a rich array of cultures, backgrounds, and languages contributes to a broader worldview for every child. By consciously choosing the (play)materials in the group to represent a diverse society in which every child can recognise themselves and feel included, we aim to foster inclusivity.

We think that being part of the community by making the world a little more beautiful with social initiatives is a part of this world view. For example, by doing something for a charity, or visiting a local care home. We want to let children see that helping others will have a positive effect on themselves and the other person.

4.6 Children's Involvement

It is important to us that children feel heard and seen. We involve children as much as possible in the choices that are made, whether they are big or small choices. Children develop a positive self-image by being able to decide for themselves and being allowed to contribute. They feel that they matter, and it challenges them to think about what they want. Regardless of their age, we aim to involve the children in shaping the day.

For young children, this means they can make their own decisions. We consider their age capacity by letting them choose from a limited number of options.

In older children, the degree of collaboration is extended. This means they think along with us about the themes and activities. They also play an active role in choosing the toys on offer.

05

Development and signalling

5. Development and signalling

Keeping in mind the pedagogical focus area Be Passionate!, we observe children carefully and monitor their development. This is also the foundation of providing a safe and secure basis. If we identify particular details, we will discuss them and look for a suitable response with their parents. A good transfer to primary school and out of school care ensures a continuous learning path.

5.1 Child monitoring system for children from 0-4 years

We closely monitor the development and well-being of children with a child monitoring system. Pedagogical staff observe each child according to a system, and look at key areas of development; speech and language, motor skills and social-emotional. They record the results in a child monitoring system. With this information, pedagogical staff see where the child is in their development areas and general wellbeing. Using this they can then adapt their guidance. There are several observation stages from the start of childcare at the centre until 4 years old. The mentor discusses the results in the mentor meeting with the parents. If we notice any particularities, we will discuss them with the parents and make a joint decision on the best approach for the child. When children go to primary school, parents receive the child monitoring system report.

5.2 Mentoring

Every child has a mentor, including the children who have flexible childcare. The mentor is a pedagogical staff member in the child's group. Upon starting childcare, we inform parents via the parent portal who their child's mentor is. When transferring to another group, an update is sent. The mentor is the point of contact for parents regarding the development and well-being of the child.

With the parent's permission, the mentor may also play a role in contacting other professionals.

If the mentor is absent, parents can, of course, also contact other permanent pedagogical staff, who will ensure good communication with the mentor. In the event of a long-term absence of the mentor, we will ensure that the child is temporarily assigned another mentor. When a child moves on to the next group, the mentor provides a smooth handover to the next mentor.

5.3 Transfer to primary school and out of school care

We create an ongoing development path to primary school and out of school care. Pedagogical employees ensure an excellent transition using a transfer form. The form describes the child's characteristics and the course of their development. At the end of the period at the day care centre, there is a final interview with the parents to discuss the content of the transfer form and evaluate the service. Parents receive a copy of the child monitoring system, and, with parental consent, the transfer form is sent to the primary school and out of school care.

If there are particular circumstances, pedagogical staff ensure a smooth transfer with a verbal explanation.

5.4 Dealing with special situations

Pedagogical employees are familiar with the development of many children. Sometimes they identify particularities in the child's development or well-being. The mentor discusses this with the parents and can invite a pedagogical coach for further group coaching if necessary. We would also like to hear directly from parents if they have concerns. Together we will look for a suitable plan.

If particular signals persist, specific action may be necessary to change behaviour or development. Together with parents, we determine which action plan is needed, and if necessary, we draw up an extensive plan of action, which states how we can give the child extra support or stimulation. Ours is an identifying role, but we do not make (medical or psychological) diagnoses. Sometimes a concern persists, or it's necessary to have something checked out by an expert who can provide advice or support. In that case, we will refer you to an appropriate agency for further help. For the first contact with additional support, we refer to the consultation office, CJG or the general practitioner.

We sometimes also have to deal with behavioural problems, developmental disorders, and physical or mental disabilities. Our frame of reference is always the well-being of the child and the other children in the group. We look at our capacity to provide the proper care and attention that the child needs, and we always ask ourselves whether our childcare is the best place for the child. Sometimes we conclude that a child is not at home with us, and we look at other options with the parents.

06

Safety

6. Safety

Until now, we mainly described pedagogical topics. In addition, there are a number of topics that provide a framework for our work. First of all, safety on location. Then, how we work together with parents. And finally, how we guarantee our (pedagogical) quality.

6.1 Attention to safety and hygiene

We provide a safe and clean environment for children. An environment in which children can move freely within the space to explore, jump and scramble as fits their development needs. We are always looking for a balance between offering children the challenge they need and the safety that we want to provide. We teach children to recognize dangers, to take responsible risks and to deal with them as best as possible. Rooms are cleaned on a daily basis according to the hygiene rules.

We adhere to the legal frameworks and regulations in the field of health and safety. Risks have been defined and are tested annually. We take measures to limit risks and potential injuries.

6.2 The four-eyes principle

At day care and pre-school, we work according to the statutory four-eyes principle. This means a second person must always be able to watch or listen in with a pedagogical staff member to guarantee safety. The implementation of the four-eyes principle is evaluated annually and discussed with the parents' committee. The four-eyes principle contains concrete measures that apply in day-to-day practice. These are part of the health and safety policy at each location. In addition, general measures have also been drawn up to ensure the safety of children.

We ensure an open and professional working climate, we use a selection procedure for new employees and some regular trainees are extra to the group. All employees have a valid VOG (certificate of conduct) and are registered in the Childcare Persons Register. Whenever possible, the four-eyes principle is applied in out of school care.

6.3 Reporting code for child abuse

Concerns may arise about a child or family. We discuss these concerns with parents and see whether we can provide appropriate support or refer them. We are alert to signs indicating child abuse or domestic violence and work according to the 'Protocol on child abuse and transgressive behaviour for Childcare'. Professionals in childcare are legally obliged to act according to the reporting code. The reporting code describes the procedure we follow in the event of signs or suspicions of child abuse or transgressive behaviour in childcare and the cooperation with Veilig Thuis where we contact conform with the child abuse reporting code. Our pedagogical staff know the reporting code and our internal protocol and act accordingly.

07

Collaboration with parents

7. Collaboration with parents

Keeping in mind the pedagogical focus area Stay Skilled! a good collaboration between pedagogical staff and parents is important and is what increases pedagogical quality for the children. Moreover, through mutual coordination, childcare becomes an extension of the home situation and vice versa, contributing to children's development.

In our relationship with parents, we strive for an equal partnership: partners join a dialogue and invest in a relationship of trust. Our common goal is to equip a child as best as possible to develop optimally. Pedagogical employees are committed to this daily and actively coordinate everything with the parents.

It's important to us to know how the children are doing and where they are in their development. This way, we can respond precisely to their needs and stimulate them where necessary. Therefore, we have a fixed method to monitor development, and there are planned moments when we communicate with parents:

- ♥ Pedagogical staff observe the development and well-being of children systematically. We do this through a child monitoring system for children at day care and pre-school. This way, we know where children are in their development and can identify any concerns at good time;
- ♥ All children have a mentor, a permanent pedagogical staff member who monitors the development and well being of a child. The mentor is the regular point of contact for parents when it comes to the development of the child;
- ♥ Handover during drop-off and pick-up times: pedagogical staff and parents inform each other about the well being and development of the child;
- ♥ Mentor meeting:
 - ♥ KDV/Day care: at least once a year, the development and well-being of the child is discussed and the cooperation is evaluated. If necessary, agreements are made to improve cooperation;
 - ♥ BSO/After school care: either the mentor or the parents can initiate a meeting. A mentor meeting is a time for exchange of information and ensure good coordination. If necessary a follow-up meeting can be planned.
- ♥ Parent meetings: concerns about development, well-being or the home situation may be reason for a more detailed discussion.

7.1 Parents' committee:

The parents' committee represents the interests of the children and parents of our childcare centre. The parents' committee advises on pedagogical policy, safety and health, opening hours and rates. Every year we evaluate the implementation of our pedagogical policy with the parents' committee.

We strive for a parents' committee at every location with periodic consultations. We are working towards a Central Parent Committee (Centrale Oudercommissie COC). The local Parent Committees focus on the subjects relevant to their location, whilst the Central Parent Committee will concentrate more on the general developments.

The jurisdiction and working method are described in the Parent Committee Regulations. The parents' committee meets several times yearly, either with or without the location manager. The minutes are accessible to all parents. The location manager is also available for questions or comments from the parent committee.

08

Quality

8. Quality

8.1 Professional pedagogical staff

Our pedagogical staff are the basis of our care. Parents can rest assured that pedagogical staff are professional, have obtained a relevant education and are passionate about their profession.

All our pedagogical employees are qualified and meet the legal qualification requirements described in the Collective Labor Agreement for Childcare. As a recognized SBB training company, we offer interns from the Vocational Training Course (BOL) and Occupational Guidance Training Course (BBL) the opportunity to learn the trade with us. They follow qualified training to be allowed to work in childcare.

We ask pedagogical staff to adopt a reflective attitude. They always consider their own actions and those of other pedagogical employees in a reflective manner. They give feedback, and improve where necessary, and do so with an open attitude which means they are able to give feedback and also receive it. Every year, all pedagogical employees formulate their personal development goals and how they will work towards them.

In line with our focus area Stay Skilled!, we think that it is important that pedagogical staff continue their professional development. That is why we support them individually, in team meetings, and offer training and courses. They also get coaching in pedagogical behaviour by pedagogical coaches.

We provide an open and professional working environment. As a result, the threshold to address each other is low. Our policy explains how we work together and what behaviour we expect from each other. The policy is periodically discussed in team meetings, and pedagogical employees are encouraged to think critically about quality.

8.2 Quality and evaluation

The quality of our childcare significantly impacts the well-being and development of children. Attention to quality is, of course, important to us, and it is an integral part of our business operations. All day cares, pre-schools and out of school cares pay attention to quality regularly and systematically. We ensure that we meet the quality requirements of the government at a minimum.

Our attention to quality is also reflected in the attention to the development of our pedagogical staff. We all work according to established procedures so parents can be assured of consistency throughout all locations. Our working methods and procedures are continuously optimised, and we base this on recent scientific research. The experiences and opinions of parents always help us improve our services.

We use different ways to measure quality and to receive signals:

- ♥ Parents provide direct feedback to our staff. We are thorough with suggestions for improvements and ideas;
- ♥ The pedagogical policy is evaluated annually and discussed with the parent committee;
- ♥ We organise internal audits to examine and improve quality;
- ♥ We conduct an annual customer satisfaction survey among all parents;
- ♥ Evaluation of our services is part of the parent meetings;
- ♥ We ask parents who have stopped using our services for their opinion about our childcare.

8.3 Can we do better? We'd like to hear from you

We aim for happy children and parents. We dedicate ourselves to this every day. Complaints or suggestions for improvement are always heard and taken seriously. If a parent is unsatisfied with our services, we are happy to discuss this. We ask parents to discuss wishes, comments or complaints in the first instance with the pedagogical staff or the location manager. If they cannot agree, parents can submit a formal complaint via our website. We are affiliated with the Disputes Committee for Childcare (Geschillencommissie Kinderopvang). The complaints procedure is available on our website.

8.4 In conclusion

This plan provides guidelines and frameworks for our methodology in caring for children and illustrates how we create a professional environment for children. We invite everyone to read the plan and send any questions, comments and suggestions to: beleid@babelou-family.nl.

We always welcome feedback and suggestions; an excellent pedagogical policy is a joint effort. We can work together to provide our children with the best possible upbringing and guidance.

09

Basker International Childcare

9. Basker International Childcare

Basker International Childcare is an international childcare organisation that understands the value of embracing the advantages that growing up in an international environment brings to children. We deliver an approach to childcare that pays particular attention to the uniqueness of growing up in an internationally-oriented learning environment – focussing on the need to make children feel at home away from home and at ease during transitions.

We are able to work with the opportunities and challenges that an international lifestyle brings to children and their families. Children growing up outside of their parents' cultures, multilingual households, parents on extended leaves of absence abroad, a lack of extended family members living nearby, the emotional strain of saying goodbye to homes and friends and setting up again are all situations our international families face every day.

We understand that every child, and family, is unique – whatever their background – and we make it our mission to ensure that each and every one of them is not just looked after but truly cared for and understood whilst in our care. Our philosophy is based on providing an internationally-oriented nurturing learning environment that seeks to understand cross-cultural experiences and their impact on children and others. Through our programmes, we aim to provide children with the foundations needed to cope with their constantly changing settings and environments, we nurture an international perspective and recognise the unique potential of the children in our care as global citizens of tomorrow's world.

Our pedagogical approach

All our teachers use a unique guidance system, the Basker Methodology. The system offers children a fun and playful environment in which they learn the vital link between actions and their consequences. Once children learn to become aware of this link, their self-esteem starts to grow as they discover a new level of responsibility within themselves, as well as enjoying more trust from their caregivers. This guidance system also increases their general reasoning and decision-making abilities.

The Basker Methodology is not based on rewards and punishments. We do not punish children for simply being themselves and discovering the world around them - what we aim to achieve is to demonstrate to the child that every choice they make has consequences. By using this system, we guide the children into making choices that have positive consequences for them, and others around them. A choice made that may have negative consequences is not punished; it is simply met with a reduction of the future choices that are available to the child. Not only do children love this system, but they were also instrumental in developing it. Eventually, the system developed into one that is now universally applicable to children of all ages and all settings, be it childcare, school, home etc. The system has gradually been customised according to age group, from toddlers right up to teenagers.

Our guidance system aims to help children of all ages feel positive about themselves, their abilities and the people around them. Some of the social-emotional competence we strive to incorporate in children are:

- ♥ **Self-esteem** - good feelings about oneself;
- ♥ **Self-confidence** - being open to new challenges and willing to explore new environments;
- ♥ **Persistence** - Never giving up with willingness to try again when attempts are not successful;
- ♥ **Self-regulation/Self-control** - Understanding rules, following them, controlling impulses and acting appropriately;
- ♥ **Patience** - learning to wait and taking turns;
- ♥ **Conflict resolution** - learning to resolve issues in a peaceful way so that no one feels like a loser;
- ♥ **Communication skills** - ability to understand and express a range of positive and negative emotions;
- ♥ **Empathy** - understanding and responding to the emotions and needs of others;
- ♥ **Social skills** - making friends and getting along with others in a good way;
- ♥ **Morality** - learning a sense of right and wrong.

Basker programmes

Attending Basker provides children with much more than just 'care' whilst their parents are at work or studying. Through our programmes, we aim to provide children with the foundations needed to cope with their constantly changing settings and environments, we nurture an international perspective and recognise the unique potential of the children in our care as global citizens of tomorrow's world.

1. Day Care & Pre-School

Basker's Early Years approach aims to support and promote a positive growth and development pathway. Children learn through play and exploration. Educational experiences focus on helping children understand their environment and follow a themed approach. The pedagogical influences of Reggio Emilia and Montessori combine in a detailed monthly, weekly, and daily programme structure that covers visual arts, music, science and creativity, language development, cognitive development along with problem-solving skills, and gross and fine motor skills.

Of the seven areas of early years learning and development, we place a particular focus on social and emotional development and helping children explore, understand, and interact with their environment. Our programme supports positive and observable development and builds independence and confidence for an easy transition into junior or primary school.

2. After School & Holiday Care

Basker's After School Care programme provides a worthy and enjoyable extension of every child's day by recognising the uniqueness of each child and their need to relax, refresh and engage differently at the end of a formal school day. Our programme is based on a combination of monthly themes and (bi-)weekly topics. In the design of our programmes, we place a particular focus on encouraging peer-

to-peer relationships and increasing community awareness and nurturing an international perspective.

The varied programme of activities, sports, and projects that children follow at Basker after school and during the holidays often build new skills and confidence as they are guided in a do-it-yourself format and create a physical outcome that children can be proud of. Older children are also supported through the provision of quiet homework time and appropriate resources.

The foundations of the Basker approach

Basker is a childcare company with a commitment to setting the standard in the childcare provided to international children and their families. This commitment is reflected in several key components that, together, form the foundations of the Basker approach.

Recognition of the needs of Third Culture Kids (TCK's)

The Basker philosophy recognises that international children, and today's children in general, experience many cultures at an early age and how this can impact who they will become. Staff strive to provide children with the skills needed to cope with their continuously changing settings and environments and help them feel at home and at ease during transitions – for example, when leaving to move abroad or arriving in the Netherlands.

Supporting children of all mother tongue languages

Basker offers English-speaking and bilingual (English-Dutch) options. As many of the children speak a different language at home, staff applies specific techniques and materials to support language development and create a sense of understanding and familiarity. Pictorial representation is used to explain the daily routine and a child may be connected to an international colleague who understands their primary language, for example.

Positive behaviour guidance system

All staff use the Basker Methodology, a child-centred approach to behaviour guidance. The system supports children in learning the vital link between actions and their consequences. Once children learn to become aware of this link, their self-esteem starts to grow as they discover a new level of responsibility within themselves, and their general reasoning and decision-making abilities start to increase.

Intentional teaching of social emotional competences

The Basker approach recognises the demonstrated link between children's social and emotional competence and their cognitive development, language skills, mental health and (future) school success. By supporting the development of competencies such as self-esteem, persistence, conflict resolution, and empathy, staff aim to equip children with the skills, knowledge and attitudes that contribute positively to their friendships, school life and home life.

Serving of warm, organic meals

As good health and development are intertwined, ensuring healthy eating patterns is core to Basker's approach. Basker's menus aim to meet the varying nutritional wishes of families of all cultures. Lunch is warm and produced using wholesome organic products whilst breakfast and snacks alternate between cold and warm options. For the youngest, an on-site chef prepares the meals, also accounting for allergies and other feeding requirements.

Learning and exploration through learning zones

At Basker, the groups are designed with freely accessible learning zones and materials to create an environment rich in diverse opportunities that support the different areas of development positively. The zones and materials promote learning through curiosity and discovery. Examples of zones are: House and Imagination, Construction, Book & Conversation, Art & Craft, Science and Nature, Physical Activity, Transport etcetera.

A home away from home

Many international families do not have grandparents or a wider social support network in the Netherlands. At Basker, these families find a welcoming, home-like environment and a sense of community. Making families feel at home away from home goes beyond the personal approach and service levels; it is also reflected in the homely, luxurious interior design of the centres and additional facilities such as, for example, the kitchen, an inner hall or living room and a parents' room.

Professional international staff

Basker staff are professionals who truly love working with international children. Our team is as internationally diverse as the community we serve. This approach is about their ability to empathise with the experiences and challenges faced by international mobile children and their families. It is about their ability to use their own experiences and background to add a richness to the care they provide.