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## **Pedagogical concept KIDSZONE**

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KIDSZONE is a bilingual early years setting, where both English and German are spoken. KIDSZONE was founded in 2010 and it offers care for children between 3 months and 10 years old in two separate groups from Monday to Friday between 7 am and 7 pm. The groups are called “Stars” and “Sunshine”. The team consists of experienced professionals, apprentices and trainees. Each group is lead by a group leader together with a co-educator and they are supported by at least one apprentice and/or trainee.

### **Implementation of the pedagogical principles**

In KIDSZONE the children have a chance to further develop their personality and individuality. They strengthen their social skills through everyday routines together with adults and the other children and learn to take others into consideration as well as to be emphatic. The employees of KIDSZONE believe that it is important for the children to create their own experiences and explore their surroundings in a playful way, constantly learning something new while doing it.

The qualified staff of KIDSZONE supports the children’s language, emotional, fine and gross motor skills as well as their social development in an age-appropriate way. KIDSZONE being a bilingual (English/German) setting, the children learn two languages in a playful way and it is also one way the children are intellectually supported. The bilingual setting offers also the non-german speakers a chance to express themselves and their needs in another language. Both languages are integrated to the daily routine (for example through songs and rhymes).

The motor skills are supported through regular visits to the nearby parks and playgrounds. The team believes that playing outside in the fresh air is important for children and that it has a positive effect on their development. Each child gets to go outside for an outing at least once per day and in Summer even longer outings, e.g. to the zoo, to a farm, to Grün 80 or to Lange Erlen animal park, are made. These outings are usually done in the afternoons or sometimes they might last a whole day.

Craft activities are done twice a day and through them the children develop their fine motor skills and they learn important things about a specific theme in a playful way. The themes are decided in the beginning of the year and each theme is handled in the course of 4 to 5 weeks. Through these themes the children learn and get familiar with the seasons, animals and different cultural experiences and holidays.

The team and the children of KIDSZONE come from all different types of cultures. The diversity of cultures is seen as a huge resource and advantage. Each child and an employee is allowed to live their own culture, because it is important for developing one’s identity and it is also important part of the child’s development. In KIDSZONE the children are also informed about cultural events of Basel and Switzerland so that the children can also identify with their place of residence.

The children are motivated to be independent and they are supported to follow the daily routines as independently as possible. This supports the children's self-confidence. It is also important that the children have enough time for free play, where they can decide what they want to do or play. This develops children's imagination and helps them process past events and experiences in a playful way.

The team members are aware that they are constant role models to the children. This is why it is extremely important for the team members to pay attention to their behaviour and show the children a good example of appropriate behaviour.

Through clear daily routines, rules and rituals the children have a sense of safety and stability and they can freely develop and grow.

A loving, familiar interaction with the children is important to the employees of KIDSZONE and of course an important part of this is the relationship with the parents. We value open and honest communication with the parents. The trust between the employees and the parents has an important role in working with children.

### Cooperation with the parents

The basis of a good relationship with the children is the relationship between the educators and parents. The children can only trust their care takers if the parents also trust them. This offers the children the feeling of safety and stability.

The cooperation with the parents starts already before the children start in KIDSZONE. The first contact with the parents is at a personal viewing of the setting. This offers the parents a chance to see the premises and have a first contact with the team. After the decision to enroll the child in KIDSZONE, the responsible group leader or co-educator will propose a date for the entrance talk. This talk is a chance to exchange information between the educator and the parents. The parents can inform the educator about their child and their daily routines and present any possible wishes or expectations. Then some dates will be arranged for the child to visit the setting for short periods time and in the beginning the visits will happen together with the parents (first two to three appointments). This helps the child to start creating a relationship with the group as well as the parents. The length of the visits will be slowly increased and when the child is ready, they will visit the setting without the parents at agreed times. This familiarization period lasts usually between three and four weeks before the enrollment date (for more information see the **Familiarization concept KIDSZONE**).

After the child has started in the setting, the parents have a daily chance to have a short discussion with the team members when bringing or picking up their child. Each child has a portfolio that is filled by a member of the team and this works as a basis for the annual parents' talk. If needed, additional talks can be arranged to discuss any important topics or the development of the child. It is important for the well-being of the child that possible delays in development are recognized early and that appropriate measures to support the development are taken.

## Cooperation in the team

The team of KIDSZONE works very closely together and many activities and events are organized together with both groups. The team wants to make both the children and the adults feel like they belong and therefore offer a familiar and loving environment that offers the children trust, kindness and friendship. The team communicates daily through short discussions, and any information relating to the children or the setting, is immediately shared the whole team. Also, there is a monthly team meeting where more detailed exchange of information can happen or pedagogical questions can be discussed. Meetings are regularly held also with the trainees and apprentices as a quality assurance. The team is also in regular contact with other organizations such as ZFF (Das Zentrum für Frühförderung), social welfare office and the kindergartens that some of the children in our setting attend. That is how the quality of the care in the setting can be assured.